

## THE “CAMPEIRO” CONCEPT IN THE GAUCHO REGIONAL MUSIC: A RECONFIGURATION OF THE ARTISTIC/ CULTURAL ORDER

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### ABSTRACT

Since 1971, with the festival *1ª Califórnia da Canção Nativa*, music has established itself as a field of disputes between innovative and traditionalist tendencies in the *Movimento Tradicionalista Gaúcho*, and in the last four decades it has assumed a central role, constituting a language that causes transformations in the discourses and in the cultural order of *gauchismo*. Here, the concept of “campeiro” is presented as a reconfiguration of the idea of nativism established after the festival *1ª Califórnia da Canção Nativa*, a kind of ontological transformation that approximates and intensifies the musical language directed towards life forms present in the region of campaign in South Brazil. This paper is supported by interviews and conversations with musicians, poets and composers, and artists that participate in regional *gaucho* music events.

**KEYWORDS**  
Campeiro;  
transformations;  
aesthetics;  
ideology; culture.

## BRIEF CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT REGIONAL MUSIC IN RIO GRANDE DO SUL, BRAZIL

Before the emergence of festivals in the country in the 1960s, the repertoire of the gaucho<sup>1</sup> regional music was summarized to the works that represented this regional expression, sung and performed by interpreters such as Pedro Raymundo, Teixeira, Gildo de Freitas and José Mendes. These artists achieved great audience in rural areas, but were stigmatized with the term “grossura”<sup>2</sup> (grossness). At that time, this regional artistic expression was reduced to some musical genres inherited from European ballroom music, such as waltz, mazurka, schottische, *habanera*, transformed in southern Brazil, giving rise to other genres such as *rancheira*, *toadas*, *arrasta-pé*, or remaining with some regional particularities, such as the waltz. The musical festivals and the expansion of the repertoire would also contribute to a new style in the songs and to the search for sounds different from those of the 1940s and 1950s, based on a differentiated melodic and harmonious construction, which would be the musical elements of this new conception, together with the characteristic instruments. The so-called “Brazilian gaucho music” (also known in the state of Rio Grande do Sul as “música nativista” – “nativist music”) emerged as one of the free expressions in the gaucho music scene after the festival named *1ª Califórnia da Canção Nativa*. In my field research, the creative and transformative potential of this new style has always been evident, without, however, losing the thematic axes of the rural context and the figure of the gaucho. The combination of music and poetry in the compositions of musical nativism in the search for a new aesthetic<sup>3</sup> brought a transformative discourse to the regional artistic scene, diversifying the proposals of gaucho traditionalism towards a modernizing expansion. Through this intention of renewal, musical discourse takes a place of privilege in the cultural manifestations of traditionalism. In this musical discourse, life situations and scenes, desires and feelings are expressed and portrayed as an ideological set. Therefore, it was evident in my fieldwork that music would occupy a central place in the movement as the most intense form of communication and expression.

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1. In the original text in Portuguese, music located in southern Brazil is characterized as “*música regional gaúcha*”. In the translation I chose to respect the term “gaucho music” according to the rules of the English language.

2. Grossness (*grossura*) refers to a simplicity, without refinement, in the aspect of social behavior, portrayed in musical works.

3. I refer to the concept of aesthetics in the sense of the specificity of this field in the study of art and as a category of analysis for understanding transformations. Aesthetics would serve as one of the parameters for understanding gaucho music concerning musical construction and performance, in the sense of the beautiful, in contrast to the old aesthetics of “grossness”. For a more in-depth look at aesthetics, a Kantian approach to this concept is possible, either through the proposal of other authors such as Heidegger, Lukács, or from the Frankfurt School, as Herbert Marcuse (2007) in *The aesthetic dimension*.

### CENTRAL ROLL OF MUSIC IN THE GAUCHO TRADITIONALIST MOVEMENT

It is important to note the central role of music, especially in the publications of the Traditionalist Gaucho Movement (MTG) that emerged in the mid-1950s. The bibliographic records of the ideologists of the traditionalist movement show an intention to control these artistic activities by establishing patterns that gaucho music should follow. Much of the preparation of these books and documents was in charge of Paixão Côrtes and Barbosa Lessa since the founding of the first Center of Gaucho Traditions (CTG)<sup>4</sup> in 1948, who dictated through their bibliographic records the parameters that governed gaucho music in all its segments (Côrtes 1985). This type of hegemony would persist for several years, until the moment of the creation of the festival *1ª California Festival of Canção Nativa*, in the city of Uruguaiana, state of Rio Grande do Sul, in which three lines for gaucho music were proposed: a traditionalist line, who would follow the MTG<sup>5</sup> standards, a regionalist line, more committed to the market or cultural industry and a nativist line, renovating the regional music in an esthetic sense.

Since the emergence of nativism<sup>6</sup> in 1971, considered as a renewing trend in *gaucho* music, new paths have been opened in the musical sense, in addition to the political and social expansion of themes related to the traditionalist gaucho context. This was essential for a change in social criticism and intellectual discourse, which brought both dynamism to the culture<sup>7</sup> of traditionalism and a reformulation of the posture and relation with the current world. With the regional music festivals in Southern Brazil, a significant change was manifested in the way of composing and executing the new works. Authorial music, in a new

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4. The 35 Centro de Tradições Gaúchas was the first CTG, founded on April 24, 1948 by the ideologist of the Traditionalist Movement Gaucho Paixão Côrtes and a group of students from Colégio Júlio de Castilhos (Grupo dos Oito), in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul. Available from: <https://bitly.com/>

5. The Traditionalist Gaucho Movement (MTG) was officially constituted at the 12th Traditionalist Gaucho Congress, in the city of Tramandaí, on October 28, 1966. Available from: <http://bitly.com/>

6. Nativism as a social and cultural movement is characterized by Anthony Wallace (1956, 267) in his study published in the *American Anthropologist* magazine as a revitalization movement formulated based on Ralph Linton's concept: "Nativist movements, for example, are movements of revitalization characterized by a strong emphasis on the elimination of foreign people, customs, values, and/or materials". The definition of nativism expressed by Linton says that it is about: "any conscious and organized attempt by members of a society to revive or perpetuate selected aspects of its culture" (Ibid., 267). The nativist tendency was soon appropriated by some MTG ideologists such as sociologist Luís Carlos Barbosa Lessa (1985), Glaucus Saraiva and Paixão Cortês (Lessa and Côrtes, 1975). The first mention of the term "nativist" in the Brazilian gaucho context appears in the MTG *Charter of Principles* of 1961, approved in the edition of the VIII Traditionalist Congress (Santi 2004, 49), still in force. Regardless of theoretical formulations, the nativist movement emerges within traditionalism. Soon after, in 1971, in the 1st California da Canção Nativa it would become a line of musical artistic creation.

7. In this case, I refer to the culture as the set of symbols, legends, narratives, metaphors, and mainly the way of life experienced and described in the gaucho universe through the literature and music mentioned here.

guise, becomes one of the centers of attention, for what it expresses in the aesthetic sense and the message of its lyrics. Thus, musical nativism and festivals become vehicles for a different way of thinking and representing the gaucho and his way of living.

#### **AESTHETIC, IDEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS THROUGH MUSIC**

There have been several signs of a musical transformation since the appearance of gaucho nativism. The main sign might be the creation of compositions that configure a new repertoire, which would transmit more clearly the contemporary ideas and posture of the movement, mentioning political and social issues. Festivals that came after the 1<sup>st</sup> *California* became arenas of esthetic and ideological disputes in *gauchesca* music. These events are based on regulations that determine some guidelines for compositions. These regulations characterize different festivals, that is, they both provide opportunities for more innovative musical lines and maintain more traditionalist lines.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, esthetic, ideological and cultural issues underwent important changes driven by the musical activity and artists' discourse. Gauchos' music as a dynamic artistic expression has undergone substantial transformations in several aspects; then, we observe that issues related to musical gender, style, form and performance function as classificatory categories (Guerrero 2012, 3-4) that generate differences in the interpretive postures of the artists. In the forms, there are changes with mixtures of musical genres and instrumentation. In the thematic content, the central role of the figure of the gaucho and the campaign environment was maintained; however, with changes in the poetic and discursive proposal in the songs, that is, in what the lyrics express. This form of speech present in the lyrics shows a new representation of the countryside, changing the esthetic, and somehow, its ideological sense.

In the field of *gauchesca* musical esthetic, the most important changes are seen in the performance of the musicians, in the mixes and in the new configurations of the musical genres, and the thematic content of the songs. The esthetic transformation changed the type of narratives. Since the middle of the 20th century, the literary form of the 19th century has been replaced by a musical discursive form for these representations; and this change in musical aesthetic allowed showing and formulating a new ideological panorama. Aesthetics and ideology intertwine in a dialogical way in the discussions of the *gauchesco* world.

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8. I cite as an example the regulations of the festivals *Sapecada da Canção Nativa*, in Lages, or *Coxilha Nativista*, in the city of Cruz Alta, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, observed and recorded in my field research. The regulation serves to establish conditions of participation, judging commission, allowance for participating musicians, musical lines to be followed and their characteristics, and cash prizes for each category.

The proposal of the new musical esthetic is directly related to the way of representing the countryside universe. Thinking esthetic as the study of the nature of the beautiful and artistic foundations, it is important to observe the native construction of this concept, which is based on the perception of what is considered beautiful. The question is the combination of a representation of emotions and an aesthetic ideal, as well as different ways of understanding the work of art and creation, relating new materials and ways of making music. In several interviews with musicians, composers and poets, the importance of the ideal of a beautiful work in the musical and poetic order was notorious; however, these musical, aesthetic and ideological transformations are always permeated by tensions, as described in the following paragraphs.

#### **BRIEF ETHNOGRAPHIC REFERENCES: ON TRANSFORMATIONS AND TENSIONS**

I have participated as a researcher and musician in several events<sup>9</sup> related to the *gaucho* music since 2006. My entry into this universe was in the *Corredor de Canto e poesia* festival, in the region of Lages, in the state of Santa Catarina. I have been in contact with several nativist musical groups and artists ever since, with whom I have observed the ways of making music and the transformations that I mention in the text. In these investigations, I have registered the circulation of musical genres, their appropriation in regional contexts, and the transformations in the *gaucho* cultural context through music. My participation in several editions of the *Corredor* showed how the use of genres and their mixtures promoted transformations, and the musicians participating in this festival pointed out important information on these issues.

In the dialogues with these artists, I noticed that the *Corredor* festival is also crossed by tensions that seem to permeate the relations of the *gaucho* musical context as a whole. These tensions were basically those between conservative and renewing trends in music, putting generations in conflict either to keep traditions in the old ways or to let them change naturally, since the movement adapts to the current world. I observed that the tensions mentioned were due to what was played, interpreted and composed in matters of musical genre. Fabrício, one of my main interlocutors and a participant in the festival, stated that the pioneers of the *Corredor de Canto e Poesia*, organizers of the first editions, complained that some musicians played very modern “things” that came out of the traditional molds. Thus, it became clear that music has become a field of conflict, in the sense of how old or traditional genres compete for place with new genres that come from innovations and mixtures with other types of music, such as jazz and other Brazilians musical genres.

9. In this section I describe some events and research situations that I have developed continuously since 2006, both at festivals and with the musicians with whom I have frequent contact. Here are some examples to show the idea of transformations and tensions in this music scene.

Outside the context of the festivals, I spoke at different times with nativist musicians from the city of Lages. These interviewees mentioned the sophistication of the lyrics in the new songs, implying that this would be like an improvement that gradually emerges in the literary constructions of poets and lyricists. These musicians also mentioned the current theme of giving life to inanimate objects that are part of the reality of the campaign and that come to life in stories, especially in the poems, which, in turn, are transformed into music. Many examples of these objects were given, such as knives, horsehair, ropes for dealing with cattle, among others. The vast majority of these interlocutors pointed out that the elements of transformation appear through music in the context of festivals, and in free or thought production for the consumer market. Music was also mentioned as the center of the disputes and the fundamental mark of the transformations in the *gaúcho* cultural scene.

At another point of my investigations, I went to the city of Pelotas, state of Rio Grande do Sul, where there is a very important nucleus of nativist musicians and renowned artists. The first musician I managed to interview was the percussionist Vitor, who worked in music groups in the state and was a music educator. He participated in the group of composer Fabiano Bacchieri and in several projects that showed Argentine folk music, especially the genre *chacarera*. One of the issues mentioned in the interview was the dispute between tradition and innovation. He noted that the music scene in the Pelotas region was divided: many people defended conservative ideas, and there were rare cases that pointed to some stylistic diversification. Regarding the changes in musical genres, he had no doubt that the use of Argentine or Uruguayan folk genres contributed to the changes.

After the interview with the percussionist, I made an appointment with three well-known nativist artists from the city: the composer and interpreter Fabiano Bacchieri, the poet and songwriter Xirú Antunes and the singer Rui Ávila. I talked with the three in a very relaxed environment, addressing topics of importance both for my research and for them. These artists observed a series of problems that led me to other views on transformation. Concretely, the three interviewees pointed out a serious problem with poetic issues in music and composition. They claimed the new composers do not know poets like Aureliano de Figueiredo, João da Cunha Vargas and Simões Lopes Neto, or Jayme Caetano Braun, considered as the basis<sup>10</sup> of poetry and *gaúchesca* literature. Consequently, there was no continuity for these poetic lines, with which

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10. This was a definition given to these three generations of poets by the interviewees, configured as if they were the basis of the poetic construction of *gaúchismo*, which would come after and remain until today.

they justified the existence of a crisis in the poetic and compositional production. The artists affirm that there is no need for the exaggerated use of literary resources, or excessive sophistication, justifying that the basic poets had a direct and beautiful language at the same time. All three coincidentally mentioned the tension and complexity of the music scene, a tension between what they called “foundation”<sup>11</sup> and commercial music. The discussion established by these two trends is pointed out as an uncomfortable relationship, as a type of wear and tear in the cultural context. The commercial aspect appears in a negative way, contradicting the positivity of the festivals and their transforming effect in the discourse of the *gaucho* social movement.

I also consider my participation as a guest instrumentalist in a song that competed for the regional phase in the festival *21ª Sapecada da Canção Nativa*, an important experience. The composition was one of those selected during the selection phase in April of that year, before the festival. I played the soprano saxophone, with a musical group of varied instruments, which included violin, quena,<sup>12</sup> electric bass, accordion, guitar, saxophone and two voices (one male and one female). The particularity of this band’s composition was its musical genre, the *candombe*, very popular in Uruguay. These new genres in *gaucho* music mix and give a new meaning in the regional context, being also appropriated and thought by artists as transforming elements of *gaucho* music. Participating in the festival allowed me to observe the structures of the event in all sectors, such as the organization part, the judges, the interaction among local musicians and those coming from other states, and the aforementioned tensions as part of an artistic scenario that would become a field of dispute between the traditional and the new.

My research work continued with the observation of the *Coxilha Nativista* festival, which has been held since 1981 in the city of Cruz Alta, Rio Grande do Sul. I met one of the judges on the occasion, Beto Barcellos, who is a musician, composer and music producer from the city of Cruz Alta. We talked a lot with Beto and his wife, people very involved in the activities and organization of *Coxilha Nativista*. Beto was a judge in this edition of the festival, along with important names of the nativist music such as Luiz Carlos Borges, Marcelo Caminha, Erlon Péricles and Tadeu Martins. In these conversations came out some interesting information that helped me to compare my participation and observation at *Sapecada da Canção Nativa* in Lages and also to get a closer look at how one competes musically in an important festival like *Coxilha Nativista*.

11. These interlocutors used the word “foundation” several times. It appears with a sense of maintaining bases, of not leaving tradition.

12. Andean instrument of indigenous origin. It is a peculiar type of flute that is played in vertical position, has a bevel where the wind is directed and a series of holes over which the fingers are placed to make the variation of musical notes.

The interviewees told me that there is a decree that establishes the festival, and there are several side events that are also competitive, such as *Coxilha Piá*, a show of competitive *gaucho* music for children and youth held since 1985, also a *trova*<sup>13</sup> contest called *1º E major de Gavetão*, in addition to the festival itself, which has a local phase for artists in the city and a general phase for competitors from other cities in Brazil. There are four days of uninterrupted activities, in parks and places of the city of Cruz Alta, and the main events are held at the Municipal Gymnasium. In the first observation made on Friday night, songs classified in the general category competed, this being the second group of classified. On Thursday, a group the general category had already passed the phase and the regional phase had taken place on Wednesday. This type of organization is similar to that of the festival *Sapecada da Canção Nativa* in Lages, with a regional phase for artists in the city and a general phase for those from other states in the country. I watched all the songs from that round, and there was no evidence of innovation or notorious transformation in the set of compositions. The works have always been within the well-known genres of *gaucho* music, and the arrangements and instrumentation also responded to the pattern observed in almost all festivals. On Saturday, all songs classified for the final competed, both those from the regional and general phases. In this final phase I managed to observe some differences in terms of interpretation and musical genres. Among all these musical types, two differences appeared: a *rasguido doble*, an Argentinian genre from the Corrientes region, and a *mazurka*, a European genre that was played in the Rio Grande campaign. The latter brought a differentiated arrangement and instrumentation, with symphonic eardrum, violin, acoustic double bass, guitar and a male voice. However, the winner of this edition was a *milonga*, a rhythm that has been consecrated in the *gaucho* music scene. An interesting question was to see again a group of renowned musicians and composers competing for the best awards.

Making a comparative analysis, I realized that *Coxilha Nativista* festival has a more traditional or conservative character than *Sapecada da Canção Nativa*, as seen in the works, although the performers and musicians that compete for the best awards were basically the same, usually renowned figures in this artistic milieu. In both events, I noticed the traditional and new trends in dispute, with some kind of tension that traced the path to not only musical, but also ideological and cultural changes and transformations in the *gaucho* social movement.

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13. The *trova* is a form of reclamation widely used in the Campaign. It is accompanied by an accordion and there is always a challenge among two or more troubadours. In this case, the accompaniment of the accordion was in E major and there was always a challenge between two troubadours evaluated by five jurors. The theme was proposed by the judging panel. The *trova* is very similar to the Rio-Platenses *payadas*.



The ideological and sociocultural perspective in the context of *gauchismo* has always been conditioned to the reproduction of hierarchies and permeated by tensions, both in CTG, as in nativist and artistic festivals (Golin 1983). It is important to point out what this category of ideology would be for the people of *gauchismo*, how they build it, the objective, and how they use this concept. Such as aesthetics, these subjects do not explicitly express neither an ideology, nor the power relations that it implies, but deal with a set of ideas and values, often grouped under the name of “culture”. Both in the definition of authors from sociology or anthropology such as Žižek (1996, 9) and Dumont (2000, 201),<sup>14</sup> the proximity between the theoretical formulation of the concept of ideology and what would be considered as culture is observed. Likewise, most of the interlocutors understand that these concepts are intertwined in their manifestations, in this case the “culture”<sup>15</sup> appropriate for them, as the author Manuela Carneiro da Cunha (2009, 313) points out.

Based on the aforementioned concepts of ideology and culture, associated with the idea of tradition, I am interested in expanding these ideas on what would be the country life form, referred to the regions in southern Brazil. Therefore, I will describe this way of life that will serve as inspiration for a new trend in the *gaúcho* music.

#### **THE “CAMPEIRO” AS A WAY OF LIFE**

The subject’s life is spent entirely in the Campaign, or in the transit between the rural and urban world, being marked by different levels of “being more or less *campeiro*” (countryman). These subjects can be referenced in different categories, such as artists, traditionalists, cattle producers, rural workers and that of other professions associated with the universe of the campaign. The categories in which they belong are partly the product of historical processes, as well as the processes of geopolitical and economic transformation. The subjects are also characterized in terms according to knowledge, work functions, artistic knowledge and economic status.

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14. For Žižek (1996, 9), Ideology can mean anything “from a contemplative attitude that ignores its dependence on social reality, to a set of beliefs focused on action; from the essential means that individuals experience their relations with a social structure to the false ideas that legitimize a dominant power. It seems to arise exactly when we try to avoid it and stops appearing where it would clearly be expected to exist”. For Dumont (2000), ideology designates the entire system of ideas and values, in a stricter or broader sense, or in the North American way, as culture, or even as society.

15. Here I refer to the concept of culture as expressed by Manuela Carneiro da Cunha (2009). The author comments: “In the Marxist language, it is as if they [the ‘natives’] already have ‘culture in themselves’ even though they may not have ‘culture for themselves’. In any case, there is no doubt that most of them have acquired this last kind of ‘culture’, ‘culture for themselves’, and can now show it off to the world. However, [...] this is a double-edged sword, since it forces its owners to demonstrate ‘their culture’ performatively” (Ibid., 313).

The current field workers, called *peões* or *paisanos* are reminiscent of the category named by the history as *gaúcho* or *gaucho*.<sup>16</sup> In these subjects, the basic knowledge of the *campeiro* (countryman) is condensed, acquired mainly through experience and contact with other subjects of the same social context. The acquisition of knowledge is directly related to the work with different animal species, which is one of the main components of the subjectivity of the *campeiro* from the Pampa, and from southern Brazil. The degree of knowledge of the environment<sup>17</sup> categorizes the subjects; being “more” or “less” *campeiro* is shown in the nativist discourse by the knowledge and proximity to these animals, by the integration with the landscape,<sup>18</sup> and by the knowledge developed in the experience.

The subjects of traditionalist institutions and those that manifest themselves through artistic expressions have common concepts of country life, especially regarding its representations. Perhaps the most prominent difference from the previous categories is the representation and the creation of a way of life, materialized in the reality of the Campaign and in the subjects that inhabit it. Traditionalist subjects move between the urban and the rural, but this community has mostly country experiences. *Gaucho* traditionalism as a social movement<sup>19</sup> has an artistic

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16. In this case, I refer to the Spanish term *gaucho*, homonymous with the Portuguese *gaúcho*, as a historical category that refers to the *campeiro* subject of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, inhabitant of the Argentine, Uruguayan and Brazilian Pampa.

17. I will use the concept of environment in this text based on the concept of Tim Ingold (2000, 20), when he says that the environment “is the world as it exists and takes on meaning in relation to me, and in that sense, emerged and underwent development with me and around me. Second, the environment is never complete. If environments are forged through the activities of living things, then as long as life goes on, they are continually under construction. So, of course, are the organisms themselves. Thus, when I spoke of ‘organism plus environment’ as an indivisible totality, I should have said that this totality is not a limited entity, but a process in real time: a process, that is, of growth or development”.

18. I adopt as a theoretical reference the concept of “landscape” by the anthropologist Philippe Descola (2013). He points out that we access the landscape through a series of material and cognitive mediations that allow us to see it as such. The landscape, in this perspective, does not materialize as a set of objective properties before an observer that contemplates it. It is the result of interactions that combine an individual and a place that makes that place, for that individual and not for others in the same place, be a landscape. The notion of landscape, therefore, implies the existence of perceptual models that work and integrate the properties that emanate from the object and the culturally established representation schemes of that object (Ibid.). It is worth clarifying that both the concepts of environment and landscape are used analytically to understand how the *campeiro* subject integrates and interacts with the world around him. Native concepts are expressed through other terms like “land”, “place”, “nature”, and also in the term “culture”. Thus, both the analytical theoretical concepts and those expressed by the natives point out the problem of diluting the binomial nature / culture. I further explore the theme in my work *Ser ou não ser gaúcho? A perspectiva do sujeito campeiro contemporâneo no Pampa latino americano* (Ferraro 2018).

19. I have observed that, in the traditionalism of the three countries of the Pampa, the subject chooses the type of activity he develops for reasons that are convenient or for his taste, configuring a very particular diversity within the movement. Within the traditionalist groupings, we can also see groups exclusively dedicated to rural or artistic activities, whereas other groupings have both aspects, so I refer to the diversity of the subject within groups and movement.

and a country line, in which the subjects are grouped by preferences, manifesting themselves through music festivals, dance competitions and rodeos organized by the traditionalist associations. The subject of traditionalism is diverse within the context of the cultural movement, but also configured based on rules and conventions dictated by institutions for all its sectors. Obviously, there must be knowledge about what they agree on to establish the rules. Traditionalists express their concepts based on these conventions and conceptions. Traditional dances, their choreographies and specific songs, or country events in rodeos, are based on historical matters, as well as in the real experiences of the Campaign activities. Therefore, traditionalists must know this knowledge and use it in pre-established formats for their activities.

*Gauchesca* art mediates rural and urban contexts, creating a relationship between both places at festivals, shows or exhibitions, through poetry, songs and the landscape represented in paintings or sculptures. We noticed it in several areas of *gauchesca* art, such as literature, plastic arts and music, all representing the countryside world. The *gauchesco* artist and his manifestations place him as another specific and distinct subject in this universe. Thus, sculptors, painters and musicians observe the life of the Campaign and represent it through their works. This representation is based on observation, perceptions, as well as experiences. In paintings, sculptures, or in the poetry used in music, expressions require a kind of knowledge that results from the artist's involvement with the environment. Most of these artists travel and live in the rural area, no matter how much they express themselves or take their production to the urban area.

We note that music in particular has always been present in the countryside context, in the socialization in the sheds, at parties and dances, since remote times when there were no recreations of symbolic figures, nor definitions or formulations about the *gaucho* tradition. Music consolidated itself as a path to the discursive, aesthetic and ideological transformations of the *gaucho* cultural movement, using the experiences and the campaign as a source of inspiration in their works.<sup>20</sup> In this musical discourse, artists create, express and portray scenes of life, desires and feelings in a set of representations, so music takes on a place of importance, being one of the most intense forms of communication and expression in this universe.

This way of life would appear portrayed after 1970 and with more intensity in the music of festivals and in the phonographic works of several *gaucho* artists since 1980. Later, in the 1990s, a different movement

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20. I approach this theme in my master's thesis: *Transformações culturais no gauchismo através da música* (Ferraro 2013).

to musical nativism emerged. In this movement or reconfiguration of musical art, the Campaign becomes again a creative inspiration, that is, artists compose and make their music in places this way of life is found. The reference of this reconfiguration is noted in composers and artists that return to farms and rural properties to live and create music. Likewise, several music creation festivals based in Campaign locations bring together artists in search of new compositions inspired by their own environment.

#### **THE "CAMPEIRO" CONCEPT FOR MAKING MUSIC**

As previously mentioned, there are particular characteristics in the regional *gaucho* music, also called regionalist music, and later, nativist music. By researching, some musical genres common between *Rio-Platense* music and Brazilian *gaucho* music, such as *milonga* and *chamamé*, emerge. I consider these expressions as genres of dialogue between these regional musicalities (Ferraro 2006). With the aesthetic changes in music, transformations is seen in the traditionalism of the state through musical discourse, that is, music is the transforming element of the cultural order. These transformations, driven by musical poetics, gave a unique dynamism to the *gaucho* traditionalist movement in social terms, in artistic aesthetics, in ideology and political thought.

The transformations referred here emerges from art as the representation of the world and life forms in the Campaign. Particularly, music has become one of the main forms of representation, and in the same way, of creating this world. Music historically replaces literature and *gauchesca* poetry, also including a renewing discourse in its complete expression of melody, harmony and lyrics. In the *gaucho* musical context, there are also important changes in the aesthetic order. The aesthetic reasons in these regional expressions conditioned the order of the discourse, in terms of poetic refinement and content. The discursive poetic refinement will be the main element of these changes, together with a type of opening and fusion with other styles and musical genres. The convergence of different musical forms to that of the *gaucho* music that will be present in new compositions, in the production of different festivals and in new phonographic works would bring a feeling of the lack of characterization of what traditional regional music "should" be. For this reason, and within the nucleus of nativist artists, a turning point or a return to the countryside environment would begin to take shape, another transformation instrumentalized in aesthetic terms, in poetics and musicality.

According to musicologist Clarissa Figueiró Ferreira (2014), there was a movement in the 1990s within the *gaucho* musical nativism that aimed at recovering the themes referred to the Campaign in a simpler way,

opposing a vanguard current in nativism that used a mixture of musical elements, some of them external to the *gaucho* universe. This return stream that the musicologist mentions is called musical *campeirismo*. She points out that festivals have lines that emphasize this idea of the *campeiro* in music as a style that refers to the telluric, to the lyrics that exposes the Campaign experience. In particular, it is important to emphasize the existence of a fluid dialogue between avant-garde and more traditional musicians in the very frequent use of different mixed artistic proposals (Ibid.). However, for the purposes of analyzing music and musician subjects, we are interested in reflecting upon the concept of *campeiro* or *campeirismo* based on Ferreira's assertion, pointing out the tendency campaign experience of several composers and singers of the genre. Clarissa Ferreira states, in a part of her study, that:

Based on the reports and experiences acquired in the field, it is noted that most of the festival participants corroborate the information of Rosangela Araújo. With the new understanding of country music in the mid-1990s and the need of a countryside experience to be able to describe it in music, a larger space was opened up for professionals from different areas connected to the countryside, due to the initial interest of writing lyrics for festivals and also to the consolidation of these events after some decades. (Ibid., 62)<sup>21</sup>

The artists' knowledge of the Campaign, which is their environment, makes them subjects of this universe. All categories of *campeiro* subjects express a perspective of life based on the knowledge and specific knowledge of their universe, such as the interaction between animals and humans, and on the knowledge of the land, configuring and acting together in the campaign landscape. The categories of rural workers, or *paisanos*, that of breeders or ranchers, as well as those that work in the science applied to the Campaign, are related by experiences and knowledge, and based on that, they create the concepts and perspectives of life. Other subjects, such as artisans, traditionalists and different artists observe and create this universe based on the representations shown in the works, but we must not forget that the basis of these representations is largely the knowledge and actual Campaign experiences.

Ferreira (Ibid.) raises a very important issue: the construction of an identity based on an affirmation originated in the musical representations

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21. Original: "A partir dos relatos e das experiências adquiridas em campo, nota-se que grande parte dos participantes dos festivais afirmam e atualizam a informação de Rosangela Araújo. Com o novo entendimento da música campeira em meados da década de 1990 e a compreendida necessidade da vivência com o campo para poder descrever em música, abriu-se um espaço maior para profissionais de diversas áreas, porém ligados ao campo, devido ao interesse que se criou em começar a escrever letras para festivais e também à consolidação destes eventos após algumas décadas de realização".

of the Campaign world. This statement raises another issue: the legitimacy of musical interpreters and composers, in the sense of experiences and a relationship with the environment, which is why the author states that:

As I could perceive in some recurring conversations at festivals, the composers of this segment need knowledge and practice in the experiences and ways of working in the countryside to tell in songs to obtain legitimacy through what they portrayed and still portray. Thus, the argument that they really know what they are describing is noticeable in their speeches. (Ibid., 60)<sup>22</sup>

Likewise, Ferreira expresses in her work what the composer Gujo Teixeira, also a veterinarian, says about the works and the *campeiros*' expected relationship with the country experiences:

The *campeiro* is in what is told, we don't need to tame it, *pealar*, to be *campeiros*, I believe much more in a feeling that holds us to what we like than in labels, I think that the *campeira* poetry is in what we feel and in the originality of what we write, I see a lot of people say that they write *campeiro* just because they use *campeiro* terms, that is an invention. (Teixeira, apud Ibid., 61)<sup>23</sup>

In these excerpts, we note two important issues: on the one hand the need for experience, pointed out by some artists, and on the other the issue of feeling and taste, mentioned by Teixeira, as impellers and inspiration for poetic creation. Involvement with the campaign environment is notorious in both cases.

Based on Ferreira's statements, I believe it is important to note that there is something beyond the idea of identity. When we mention identity, legitimacy, tastes and feelings, these concepts can be understood as a process in continuous construction. When I mention that there is something beyond these concepts, I affirm the constitution of subjectivity from experience, as a life process, in short, as a type of ontology.<sup>24</sup> The

22. Original: "Nota-se que para os compositores desse segmento obterem legitimidade através do que retrataram e ainda retratam, como pude perceber em algumas conversas recorrentes nos festivais, há a necessidade do conhecimento e prática nas vivências e meios de trabalho *campeiro*, para poderem relatar em canções. Assim, é perceptível em seus discursos o argumento de que conhecem de fato o que estão descrevendo".

23. Original: "O *campeiro* está naquilo que se conta, não precisamos domar, *pealar*, para sermos *campeiros*, acredito muito mais num sentimento que nos prende àquilo que gostamos, do que rótulos, acho que a poesia *campeira* está naquilo que sentimos e na originalidade daquilo que escrevemos, vejo muita gente dizer que escreve *campeiro* só por usar termos *campeiros*, aí já é invenção".

24. According to Feuchtwang (2014, 383-387): "The most basic starting point, which will also be my end point, is the rhetorical – that is, persuasive – role played by 'ontology'. I understand that it is a superior substitute for both 'culture' and 'ideology'. Superior to culture because it goes beyond values, even the widely expanded theory of values in economic and moral anthropology, to include values with a type or mode of knowledge of the world. Superior to ideology, for the same reason and because it includes not only

difference between the aforementioned concepts and ontology lies in the absorption of knowledge through experience, and consequently, in the constitution of subjectivity, in this case, a construction that goes through being (existing) and being (belonging) in that Campaign environment.

Thus, musical creation within the aspect of *campeirismo* would have a close relationship with the ontology of the Campaign, with the way of life based on experiences, perception, the creation of the environment, as well as being part of it, leaving aside the theorization coined in the music festivals called “nativism”. Therefore, it is possible to emphasize a type of transformation that would occur in the transition from nativism to *campeirismo*. I understand that it would not be just the fact of changing the labels of the same strand, but a replacement of concepts: the concept of nativism, of a purely theoretical tone, by another that represents more concretely what is the way of life in the Campaign, the *campeirismo*. Making *campeira* music would then be a condition for composers and performers to have experiences, to know the environment, to be part of it, – in short, to be a country musician. As already mentioned, in the transformation or replacement of nativism by *campeirismo* the movement is observed, or better, the return of the artists to the Campaign environment, that is, the search for inspiration in field locations, farms and sites, seeking contact with animals, constituting and being part of this landscape in the sense of experience.

Another situation that favors this return and the emphasis of this musical aspect are the composition festivals held on farms or Campaign places. The characteristic of these events is the gathering of poets, composers, instrumentalists and performers in these Campaign locations, where they will concentrate for a few days to compose music, write poetry, tell stories, legends and country narratives. These festivals are organized by traditionalist associations, and their guests are usually members of these groups, as well as being closed to the public, that is, the works are done and evaluated by the participants themselves. The themes of musical compositions always have an intense relationship with the festival itself, the place where they are held, and obviously, with the Campaign environment. The most well-known and active

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institutions, such as state devices and fertility rituals, but also a way, or way of experiencing the world that tests the cognition of the world in practice”. Ontology can also be defined as in the text “The politics of ontology: anthropological positions” (Holbraad, Pedersen and Viveiros de Castro 2014, our translation), in which the authors address: “the anthropological concept of ontology as the multiplicity of the enacted forms of existence in concrete practices, in which politics becomes the non-skeptical elicitation of this multiple of potentials about *how things could be* – what Elizabeth Povinelli [...], as we understand her, calls ‘the different’. [...] Ontology, as far as anthropology is concerned in our understanding, is the comparative transcendental deduction, ethnographically based on Being (the oxymoron is deliberate) as one that differs from itself [...] – being-as-another as immanent to being-as-such. The anthropology of ontology is anthropology as ontology; not the comparison of ontologies, but the comparison as ontology” (Ibid.).

events that are held annually with these characteristics are the *Festival da Barranca*, the *Paradouro Minuano*, the *Rinconada da Arte Nativa*, the *Renascer da Arte Nativa*, and the *Corredor de Canto e Poesia*, an event in which I participate since 2006. Therefore, the concept of *campeiro* in the regional music in southern Brazil or musical *campeirismo* has become the main aspect of these artistic expressions, both in festivals and in the regional phonographic industry.

#### **AT THE END OF THE *CAMPEIRADA* (SOME FINAL REMARKS)**

The Campaign's creations and representations are consolidated with art, through literature, painting and sculpture, and with regional music. This music is directly related to the *campeiro* discourse through folkloric genres, and the lyrics that tell about the life of the countryside subjects. Music has established itself as one of the strongest expressions in the representation of the Campaign, becoming a discursive vehicle for all situations. The musical artists of the *campeiro* segment are the agents in these innovative discursive transformations and of resumption in the *campeirismo*.

It should be noted that both the subjects that live in the Campaign and those that move between rural and urban contexts manifest themselves or imply that the Campaign is more important in its subjectivities. These subjects integrate the environment, and based on the contact with that particular place, they think and create concepts for life. Based on the possession of the land, some cattle, horses and dogs (and other domestic animals), these subjects configure a different perspective of life that is present and is continually recreated in musical works. Therefore, *campeiro* subjects articulate their concepts and life perspectives in a notoriously different way when compared with other contexts. The interaction and reciprocity between living beings in the countryside become crucial in the matter of "to be or not to be" in the countryside, as a form of identification. It is important to emphasize the complexity of the countryside universe, manifested in a multiple and heterogeneous way in the relationship between beings and objects, finally represented in music.

This is what is portrayed in the compositions of *campeirismo*, a particular universe that is articulated in an ontological way, that is, a form of existence that manifests itself in concrete practices, creating a different image. Thus, the *campeiro* concept in *gaucho* regional music would be a type of musical transformation that not only points to artistic, style or aesthetic issues, but also reconfigure cultural concepts. Artists have a profound intention to replace a theoretical concept, such as nativism, with another concept of ontological order, such as *campeirismo*, as a concept of experience, of life – essential both to pep the culture, as to recreate it in musical works.





PHOTO 1  
Performing the  
*candombe* "Duda?",  
21th *Sapecada* of  
the Native Song  
(*Sapecada da*  
*Canção Nativa*),  
Lages (Author's  
collection).



PHOTO 2  
Participants of the  
15th *Corredor* of  
Song and Poetry  
(*Corredor de*  
*Canto e Poesia* ),  
Lages (Author's  
collection).

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