

Class differentiation in contemporary rural Galiza: A first approach

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Abstract. The article aims at making a first approach to the study of class differentiation in rural communities of contemporary Galiza. First, the author reconstructs the debates on the 'agrarian question' in the history of the Spanish state — from the reformist thought of the late 19th century to the present, focusing on how this question was discussed in the Galizan context, in the field of Galizan agrarian historiography. This field of research developed mainly from the study of the peasants' access to land ownership in relation to various disentanglements introduced by the liberal capitalist state. The author pays particular attention to the consequences of the land tenure regime that prevailed in Galiza — *foro*, a long-term lease: the increasing number of peasants were becoming owners, which agrarian historiography considered a key element of social-economic changes from the late 19th century to the first third of the 20th century. Another interrelated processes were the *antiforal* agrarian mobilization, growing commercialization of agrarian production, remittances of Galizan migrants from Americas, and technical development of production. The author emphasizes how social inequalities have changed in rural communities, focusing on the consequences of the liberal capitalist state in social structure and referring to different studies that prove the intensification of social inequalities. Finally, the author describes social changes at the last stage of the Franco dictatorship. Thus, this article is a first step in the study of how class inequalities have transformed contemporary peasant communities.

Key words: class differentiation, rural history, Galiza, agrarian question, peasant communities, 19th — 20th centuries

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Introduction: questions about inequality¹

The article reconstructs explanations of the transition from feudalism to capitalism, i.e., the end of the *Ancien Régime* and the bourgeois revolution in Galiza. This article is based on the Galizan agrarian historiography placed in the context of discussions of the agrarian question in the Spanish state from the 19th century to the middle of

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the 20th century, in which different stages can be identified. The *fin-de-siècle* agrarian crisis and the modernization under Franco's dictatorship seem to be two milestones, although 'borders' of certain social processes are difficult to set. The paper starts with the debate on the bourgeois revolution in Galiza, especially on the transition to the capitalist mode of production as affecting social inequality in peasant communities. Thus, the question is what type of social structure the bourgeois revolution created; what changes it determined; and how social inequalities evolve in rural communities before, during and after this long transition.

The article begins with the debates on the agrarian question in the historiography of the Spanish state, which became more intense in the 1980s — the 1990s, when the fragmentation of knowledge affected the development of historical science. The article focuses on the Galizan agrarian historiography explaining the 19th century's effects of disentanglements (*desamortizaciones*) for the social agrarian structure and the consequences of agrarianism movement, partial commercialization of the agrarian production, technological advances in peasant households² and remittances from Galizan emigrants. Special attention is paid to the subjects of changes, participation of different peasant groups, and the impact of these transformations on subaltern groups and ruling classes. Thus, the transition to the capitalist system aggravates social inequalities in peasant communities and leads to a dependent and subordinated integration of peasant economies.

'Agrarian question' in the historiography of the Spanish state

For the Spanish state, the starting point would be the reformist thought of the late 19th century, in which the 'agrarian question' was understood as the 'social-agrarian problem'. Intellectuals of the Regenerationism movement criticized the liberal 'individualist revolution' of the 19th century and the unifying model of the French Revolution. The radicalism of the Spanish revolution, imitating the state centralization and the French legislative uniformization, determined the double-sided agrarian problem: peasant proletarianization and rural *caciquismo*³ which led to the decadence in Spain. Thus, this was a break from the national past, against which the reformist project was proposed 'from above' — nationalist, ethnical, based on the Spanish political traditions and customary law — for the regeneration of the nation based on the organicist conception (Ruiz Torres, 2004: 189–190). One of the main representatives of this movement was Joaquín

2. I use 'peasant households' instead of 'peasant farms', because peasant economies had a very limited market orientation throughout this historical period.

3. *Caciquismo* — a distorted way for local leaders to exercise power on a patronage basis.

Costa, whose understanding of the ‘agrarian question’ in Spain was highly influential during the first third of the 20th century. During the Second Spanish Republic (1931–1936), this reformist movement had diverse allies in contrast to other proposals to address the agrarian problem through the social revolution (Ruiz Torres, 2004: 170–195).

After the Franco’s counterrevolution (1936–1975), the influence of Regenerationism was determined by the renewed interest in the ‘agrarian question’ from 1950s, opposing the organic and evolutionist interpretations of the nation as the main historical subject (Ruiz Torres, 2004: 194–196; 2020: 60–61). Researchers considered the extent to which the *Ancien Régime* had been abandoned, compared to other parts of Europe as a reference and model. Thus, it was declared an unfinished change (agrarian reform) cut off by the military coup. Furthermore, there was a clear image of the ‘dual’ reality: on the one hand, an advanced capitalist industrial sector; on the other hand, a backward agrarian sector as a burden (Ruiz Torres, 2004: 197, 227–231; Villares, 1999: 223).

The historical research of both regional or local character contributed to “diversifying the understanding of the ‘agrarian question’ in the Spanish state, opened new sides of the issue and provided new plural interpretations according to the territorial agricultures (Ruiz Torres, 2004: 209; 2020: 66–67). In the last years of the dictatorship, the historiographical renewal of this field was determined by the contributions of the Annales School, British Marxism, development of the economic history and other social sciences contributing to the peasant studies (Villares, 1999: 229)⁴. Although under general influences, there is no uniform perspective (Ruiz Torres 2020: 64–65) but a progressive discussion space for diverse issues, which contributed to the creation of the agrarian history in the Spanish state.

Different access to the property rights was considered the main factor of social relationships. The starting point of many studies was an assumption (quite debated) that the development of agriculture would involve land concentration and expropriation. The research results were diverse, although many studies revealed the strengthening peasant property rights from the second half of the 19th century to the first third of the 20th century. Garrabou warns that this statement does not mean that capitalism implied a certain rural egalitarianism: in fact, a greater access to property for a part of the peasantry was only possible due to the expulsion of many other peasants. On the other hand, the strengthening peasant property did not imply the disappearance neither of the unequal land distribution nor of

4. In the 1970s, in this field, the unknown Marx’s texts such as *Grundrisse* were discovered and the re-edited Chayanov’s works were published. From the 1970s to the 1980s, there was an influential debate on the transition from feudalism to capitalism — ‘the Brenner debate’ (Brenner, 1982; Hilton, 1982).

large properties, although in some cases inequalities were mitigated (Garrabou, 1992: 13).

In the most representative case of the agrarian question in the Spanish state, the *latifundio* or large estate, the new research proposed that the key to the agrarian structure was not in the large estate but in its dialectical relationship with small holdings (*minifundio*). In the historiographical perspective, this explains the capitalist large estates' penetration in the Andalusian countryside, although combined with the 'peasant way'. Despite the assumption of peasant proletarianization, the sources show a consolidation of peasant households (peasantization) as a result of the liberal revolution. However, the re-definition of the peasant reproductive strategies deepened an increasing formal subordination of peasant households to the capitalist market (Gonzalez de Molina, 1993: 267-308).

Some representatives of the agrarian historiography of the Spanish state opposed perspectives which, by identifying the 'agrarian question' through structural elements, diluted or denied the action of the peasant subject (Millán, 2020). To highlight the peasant capacity for action, their interpretations can be considered in terms of confrontation or adaptation: the peasant response to the pressures of the capitalist market and the peasant resistance capacity to these pressures and their consequences are non-exclusive options and can accompany dissimilar or opposing historiographical interpretations. The Galizan agrarian historiography is based on 'adaptation' as a conceptual tool that stresses the role of the peasantry in the capitalist mode of production, not excluding structural limitations. In the Galizan case, the agrarian problem was not determined by large estates, quite the contrary — by the most exacerbated small holdings (*minifundio*).

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Peasantization vs proletarianization in Galiza

The Galizan agrarian historiography proceeds largely from the study of peasant access to land ownership. The question of this article is whether the peasantry has access to land, which peasantry and when, and how the answers to this question contribute to the interpretation of class inequality in rural communities. Before answering these questions, we must consider the Galizan agrarian historiography in context. It is based on dialogue with other historiographies of the Spanish state, the Annales School, British Marxism and other social sciences. Thus, unlike the studies of the 1960s — 1970s, which focused on the permanence of agriculture (limited changes and a prevailing orientation to subsistence), since the 1980s, historiography aimed at providing a more dynamic interpretation of the Galizan rural areas, paying attention to different processes of a subtle adaptation to new social relations. From the late 19th century to the first third of the 20th century, there was a configuration of the smallholders' agricul-

ture, its growing integration into the Spanish capitalist market, and its progressive technical transformation (Quintana Garrido, 1990; Artiaga & Baz, 1993: 289–290; Fernández Prieto, 2000: 15–16; Villares, 2000: 61). Moreover, an increasing number of peasants were becoming owners, which was accompanied by the *antiforal* agrarian mobilization, growing commercialization of agrarian production, remittances of Galizian migrants from Americas, and technical advances in production (Villares, 1982: 361–415).

In the study of the peasant access to the full land ownership, various disentailments of the liberal state throughout the 19th century were considered. First, it is necessary to explain what were the mechanisms that regulated land relationships. In Galiza, a large part of the peasantry had access to land through the *foral* contract. It is not easy to define the *foro*⁵, but we can consider it as a long-term land tenancy. During the modern period, *foro* became a core of the agrarian social structure: proprietor of the direct domain (often the church), owners of the useful domain (peasants who cultivate land and pay *foro* taxes), and a noble class acting as an intermediary and often having a *foral* contract with the church through the *subforo*. This intermediary class is *fidalgúa* or rural gentry. While *foro* is the predominant form of land relationship, there are also areas in Galiza with the prevailing *arrendamiento* (short-term tenancy) or *aparcería* (sharecropping) — of a shorter duration and lesser stability for peasant households⁶.

The study of the effects of various disentailments shown the limited impact of the liberal reform and of the transformation of the legal system of land ownership. At the end of the 19th century, the *foral* regime persisted as the organizational framework of agrarian social relations and of communal lands that had not yet been privatized (Artiaga & Baz, 1993: 280–281). What the liberal state nationalized and transferred to private individuals was not land or its full ownership but rather the right to get rent, i.e., the direct domain was transferred, but not the useful one. In other terms, the beneficiaries of the rent changed, but the system was maintained. In other words, one of the main modifications was that after the disentailment of Mendizábal in 1836, the Catholic church was no longer the main holder of the cultivated land in Galiza, and the right to collect rent was bought by nobles, merchants, professional or civil servants (Balboa, 2005: 450). In some cases, rents were redeemed, and redeemers become full owners. This trend intensified after the disentailment of Madoz in 1855, with the increasing sales of free properties, which was another way of turning buyers into owners with full ownership rights.

5. *Foro* or chartered tenancy, — a long-term contract of the medieval origin with a division of domains, hereditary in practice; the tenant, or *foreiro*, would pay rent annually.

6. *Foro* — long-term tenancy, *arrendamiento* — a short-term tenancy.

During the First Spanish Republic (1873–1874), the *Foral* redemption law of 1873 contributed to the conditions for the *foro*; unfortunately, the enforcement of this law lasted only for half a year. The financial crisis' impact on cereals' prices reduced the income of collectors of *foral* rents mostly paid in kind, which could have affected the sale of *foral* rents. This process was stopped by the Decree of Redemption adopted by the dictator Primo de Rivera in 1926, which stipulated the redemption in favor of the payer that was to pay a compensation the average value which multiplied by twenty times the rent paid annually (Balboa, 2005: 452–453; Artiaga, 2000).

In the last quarter of the 19th century, the peasantry was the group with the highest share of redeemers; however, it is not easy to identify which type of peasants this was. According to Artiaga (2000: 464), in 1873–1874, the affluent peasantry prevailed (or peasant-owners). Then the number of peasant redeemers increased, partly due to redemptions. However, unlike buyers of rent, peasants' redemptions did not start a process of accumulation as they aimed at tax liberation (Artiaga, 2000: 464). Rodríguez also confirms this for *foral* redemptions in Lugo during the First Spanish Republic. In fact, redemption entails decapitalization of most peasant economies that participate in it (Rodríguez, 1985: 247–248; Bouhier, 1996: 383–384; Villares, 1982: 236). Fernández Prieto argues that the subject of the action was not the entire peasantry but rather the peasantry with the full land ownership, which was a diverse group. In general, this was the affluent peasantry that had managed to keep the core of the agricultural holding under *foros* as more favorable than short-term tenancy or sharecropping and more beneficial due to economic contributions from immigrants or commercialization of a part of the surplus. Other groups of the rural community, such as *caseiros* (tenants with houses and land owned by the rich), day laborers or servants, did not have access to the full land ownership (2005: 149–150).

However, in the central moments of *foral* redemption, there was also a purchase of rent. The purchasers of *foral* rents were mainly landowners, free professionals, merchants and sometimes affluent peasants, i.e., the same social groups that sold rents. According to Artiaga, this can be understood as a transfer of rents within the same social sectors. In the process characterized as “the end of the rentier”, there would be an intermediate stage in the transition from beneficial ownership to full ownership. At this stage, new receivers joined the rentier group, reinforcing the situation, while then there was a decline in the same social groups. In other words, the decline of the rentier would benefit peasants (a part of them) due to redemptions, and new people (from dominant groups) joined the rentier group by the purchase of *foral* rents. After this intermediate period, new receivers would probably make the last redemption in the 20th century (Artiaga, 2000: 467; Artiaga & Baz, 1993: 289). However, the end

of the *foral* regime does not completely explain the access to the full land ownership by a part of the Galizan peasantry as a large part of plots was accessed through short-term tenancy or sharecropping.

In explaining the access to land ownership for a part of the peasantry, it is important to mention the role of agrarianism — an important social movement that deeply affected the Galizan peasantry, although it was a rather diverse combination of organizations and orientations of different ideologies. Thus, among thousands of agrarian societies that were created in most Galizan parishes since the end of the 19th century, at the time of the expansion of the suffrage and the rights of association (Act of Universal Male Suffrage of 1890, Act of Associations of 1887, Act of Agricultural Unions of 1906) (Cabo, 1998: 20–24), there were agrarian societies from anarchists and socialists to catholic or non-denominational. The agrarianist movement can be interpreted as a tool of the peasant groups interested in the capitalist market, a means of the social-political awareness or a defensive and counter-revolutionary instrument (for the Catholic agricultural unionism) (Cabo, 1998: 101; Artiaga & Baz, 1993: 293). One of the main struggles for agrarian societies was the fight against *foros* (Cabo, 1998: 57; Hervés, 1993; Villares, 2000: 75). In this sense, there was a transfer from the redemptionist views to the abolitionist ones (Cabo, 1998: 119, 125–127).

Still the question is who belonged to these societies. The answer is not easy: community and households played a role as societies were created at the parish level and the membership was not individual. In general, agrarian societies represented the community microcosm of parishes, but the wealthier strata of the peasantry was overrepresented, while agricultural proletariat and marginalized groups of the rural society were underrepresented (Cabo, 1998: 49). Both Cabo and Durán argue the more demanding agrarian societies (anarchists, socialists, communists) tended to exclude the peasantry that hired workforce (Cabo, 1998: 50, 193–197; Durán, 1977: 149). The coup d'état of 1936, which started the Spanish Civil War, put an end to this complex movement, allowing only some of the livestock societies to survive.

In addition to the agrarianism mobilization, the access to the full land ownership for a part of the peasantry depended on other contemporary processes such as the growing orientation towards the capitalist market, in particular in the beef cattle export. It is worth mentioning that the liberal state shaped the life of people through three main elements: repressive apparatus, military service (recruitment), and fiscal pressure. The growing tax pressure and the increasing demand for its payment in cash (payment in kind was more frequent in the past) added to the demand for payment during the times of the agricultural wage, forcing an initial orientation of peasant economies towards the market to cope with these burdens (Alonso Álvarez, 2005: 42; Cardesín, 1997: 411–412).

After the industrial revolution, the industrialization of some led to the deindustrialization of others. Thus, the increase in fiscal burdens on peasant economies coincided with the loss of support activities used to compensate for their scarce agricultural income, such as linen industry and fish salting, over which they no longer had control (Alonso Álvarez, 2005: 43). The recourse to these complementary activities was greater in areas with the greater demographic pressure on land (more single women and harder earning a living) due to the fact that the peasant economy was more heavily taxed (Saavedra, 1985: 353). Moreover, the competition of cotton fabrics first from the English industry and later from Catalonia with the corresponding legislative measures contributed to the decline of the linen industry without the development of other industrial activities. It is no coincidence that at this time the emigration to the peninsula and Americas intensified (Alonso Álvarez, 2005: 43; Artiaga, 2005: 75-76; Vázquez González & De Juana, 2005).

The need to send a part of produce to the market was manifested in the export of live cattle. First, in the 1840s, exports were directed to the United Kingdom and determined by previous traditions of cattle commercialization in local markets. With these exports, Galiza was partially integrated into the economic area of northern Portugal, which traditionally exported primary products to England in the situation of semi-colonial dependence (Carmona, 2000: 326)⁷. All the above explains that this market orientation does not result in capital accumulation. By the end of the 19th century, in Galiza, there were no cattle farms as such. Cattle breeding was a part of the peasant economy which, in certain areas, after being used for work, was stabled and used for fattening. No reorientation of the crops production was observed, only a small advance in the extensive use of pastures with no productive specialization (Carmona, 2000: 345). Given the small size and division of lands to which peasant households had access, specialization was not possible for the majority. Among few having such a possibility, the transformation entailed did not offer any guarantee of survival as most lands

7. This idea has several reasons. First, fattening of cattle was oriented almost exclusively to the foreign market. The consumption of beef was a privilege forbidden for the Galizan peasantry. Furthermore, the exporting group acted as a buying bourgeoisie, which in the final years of this business English commission agents joined. Unlike other areas as Denmark, in the Galizan-Portuguese area, there was no agricultural industrialization that would allow to stop exporting live cattle and start exporting processed products. Upon completion of the exports to England, it was necessary to find another market for the same product (Carmona, 2000: 326-327). The competition with American meats under the fin-de-siècle agricultural crisis forced reorientation to the Spanish market with its railroads, which strengthened the integration of Galiza in the Spanish market in a subordinate position and as a supplier of primary products (Carmona, 2000: 338).

were not their own, in many cases even cows were owned by the *amos* (masters) by either thirds or halves⁸. Thus, only the moderately supplied peasant (who could have some cattle stabled and freed from work) could maintain the mixed system of work and fattening. In addition, this demanded a greater intensification of the agrarian work, since additional resources were needed to maintain the cattle, which were obtained either by reducing fallow areas or by focusing on crop rotation to forage and demanded a greater workforce (Carmona, 2000: 348).

The commercialization network of cattle exports to England was small but significant. From 1860 to 1885, the average exports to England were about 33,000 heads of cattle. Given this data and the fact that very few peasants sold more than two heads of cattle per year, at least 15,000 peasant households were involved (Carmona, 2000: 348). Concerning all peasant households with bovine cattle in Galiza, about 10% of them were involved (Martínez, 2000: 355). The commercialization of the state market increased in the next decades, reaching more than one million heads of cattle exported in the 1920s (Villares, 2000: 80). This would have led to minimal modernization of the Galizian production, but in the first third of the 20th century, peasant economies continued to use their workforce mainly for self-consumption, and it took decades, till the middle of the 20th century, for some signs of what could be considered an agrarian bourgeoisie to appear (Villares, 2000: 74–75). This process was not so much important quantitatively as initiating transformations that would be carried out in the last years of the Franco dictatorship (Villares, 2000: 81).

In short, for those strata of the peasantry, for which participation in the cattle trade could have implied a relative improvement in the availability of liquidity, this could be oriented to the redemption of *foral* rents or to the purchase of land, cattle and livestock. On the other hand, families continued to suffer the increasing tax pressure of the liberal state, which forced commercialization and a resort to usury. Failure to make payments in time meant that many peasants lost their social status (Cardesín, 1997: 411–412). It is not by chance that there was a correlation between an increase in fiscal pressure, decline of the linen industry, intensification of the marketing of goods, and increase in outflow from the countryside (Alonso Álvarez, 2005: 42–45). Finally, migration remittances also played an important role in the redefinition of the *foros*, but this was not their only purpose — to pay travel expenses, rescue the *gando posto* or, if possible, to get land and houses (Villares, 2000: 77).

8. The *gando posto* was a system of cattle sharecropping — the master owned the animal, the peasant took care of it and could work with it, giving the master a part of the produce.

How did the above-mentioned processes affect the structure of rural society? Which rural society was produced by the intensification of capitalist social relations? Some authors stressed the need to examine differences within rural communities (Fernández Prieto, 2000: 35; Artiaga & Baz, 1993: 286), and such studies revealed an increase (Domínguez, 2005: 462–465) or consolidation (Villares, 2000: 74) of social inequalities. In the previous, modern period, Saavedra identified a strong ‘peasant civilization’ in which neither the ruling gentry nor the subordinate peasantry were homogeneous due to the generalized impoverishment — the differences were both considerable and relative (Saavedra, 1985: 567–623).

According to Cardesín’s studies based on oral history, the elders recalled the time between their grandparents’ life and their youth (1860–1930) as represented by four main social groups. The ‘*ricos*’ (rich people) or ‘*propietarios*’ (owners) had a property to work with and organized others in ‘*lugares acasados*’ (bourgeoisie, noble or gentry with a family of tenants taking care of the household), in which the family of ‘*caseiros*’ (a kind of tenancy) lived and worked the land. Peasants worked their own or ‘*aforada*’ (‘*foro*’ contract) land. Not all peasants had the same resources: the prosperous ones had an ox or six cows, some had only two cows in ‘*aparcería*’ (kept cows and shared meat or calves with the cow’s owner). The ‘*camareiras*’ were women servants who lived alone or with their child, worked for a daily wage and had a pair of sheep. Several studies from the last quarter of the 19th century to the first third of the 20th century in different regions of Galiza confirm this typology (Vicenti, 1875–1879; Rovira, 1904; Tenorio, 1914, Durán, 1983; Cardesín, 1999: 133–135; Velasco, 1987).

Cardesín explains how in the long 19th century the reproduction of families was subordinated to “the needs of the state and capital. For him, the market and the state defined the position of *propietarios* with respect to the subordinate social groups and, to a lesser extent, the position of *labradores* with respect to *caseiros* and *camareiras*”. Thus, such management promoted a double process of social differentiation. On the one hand, not all domestic groups had the same production capacities and were limited by the family cycle: in families of *caseiros* and *labradores*, the capacity would be higher when the new generation prevailed and lower when the older and the younger dominated, and the household resources were produced by the intermediate generation. On the other hand, marriage and inheritance affected productive and reproductive possibilities, even more so since the liberal legislation distinguishes between legitimate and illegitimate children and the peasantry practice aimed at transferring the inheritance of legitimate children to one child (Cardesín, 1997: 434).

Cardesín mentions the asymmetric relationship of interdependence between subordinate groups. Thus, the reproduction of *labradores* was based on the continuous generation of sons and daughters who became *caseiros* and *bodegueiras*. The affluent *labradores* would coincide with the *ricos* in closing the gap between their consumption needs and production capacities by the exploitation of *caseiros* and *bodegueiras*. These subordinate groups provided workforce such as day laborers in moments of special need, servants (sometimes living with masters) or sharecroppers (Cardesín, 1997: 434): “The kinship ideology legitimates the reproduction of social differences, transferring to each peasant family a previous contradiction between growers and dominant groups. Thus, the market and state disclaimed responsibility for proletarianization and impoverishment of a part of the Galician peasantry, including for the overseas emigration, since it is the family that is in charge of processing the effects of state policies: those affected were to find responsible in their own family, and the literate bourgeoisie pointed accusingly at the peasants’ ignorance as making them to have more children than they could support (Cardesín, 1997: 436)⁹. This reminds of Marx’ *Communist Manifesto* — his ideas about the origin of the word proletarian.

It would seem that the long construction of the liberal capitalist state increases social inequalities, which led in the territory under study to the proliferation of poor houses of single women, sharecroppers and day laborers working at the households of other peasants. The reproduction of all these classes was determined by the production needs of a new system of social relations between the old and the new rich. “*We were seven, we worked in the household... And I didn’t go to school much because I had to work... Then there was a war, and the time of the war was bad... many people died... There were three years of war... We didn’t go hungry, we worked hard. We had a place to work... We lived well, the well-off peasants [labradores] lived well.*

9. According to Cardesín, “the modern state legitimizes the peasants’ stratification as it redefines the literate conditions for production and reproduction. A large part of the elements in the social structure I analyzed already existed in the 18th century: land titles (common property, leasing, *foros*, etc.); alternative forms of reproduction (celibacy or marriage); ‘major landowners’ that managed their lands in an enterprising manner... But the liberal legislation, by creating a very clear distinction between individual and collective property, contracts of *foro* and leasing, legitimate and illegitimate children, ...established new bases for a distinction between *labradores* and other two groups — *caseiros* and *camareiras*. The recognition of *labradores* as citizens and property owners allowed them to control the reproduction of subordinate social groups. The ‘rich’ obtained, through the monopoly on local bodies, control over the application of new laws and the productive and reproductive process of *labradores*, *caseiros* and *camareiras*. The patronage, or the holding of the curates, turned the ‘rich’ into administrators of the peasants’ production and reproduction and of the doctrine legitimizing the social order thus renewed (Iturra, 1991). That doctrine would be the ethics of work, social relations and social hierarchy (Cardesín, 1997: 436).

*Those who did not live well were poor peasants [bodegueiros], who had no bread to eat during wartime, did not have anything to eat*¹⁰.

We should also mention changes brought by the Second Republic (1931–1936), the Civil War (1936–1939) and the fascist dictatorship to the class differentiation system. In the post-civil war period, in the 1940s, and then in the “developmentalism period” of the 1950s–1960s, there were new changes in social differentiation. The oral memory of the postwar period allows to validate a four-strata differentiation that we outlined earlier, referring to the last decades of the 19th century — the first half of the 20th century: “*Landless peasants were known as bodegueiros, and the large ones were called labradores grandes or xente rica [rich people] had money and grew crops to eat... And little people, the bodegueiros, had no cattle, they had a pig or maybe a calf and nothing else, and they worked for whoever would hire them... they were called to reap, to plow, to go to the forest, and all that... when I was a child, there was less of that, in my parents’ household, and it was the same for everybody... there were households with three cows and others with six, depending on how many they could raise*”¹¹.

The social memory of the post-war years is the memory of hunger — houses and roads full of poor people: “*Long ago poor people were welcomed. Many poor people came to beg, and we gave them dinner and they slept on some blankets or grass given to cows. They slept and in the morning left... There were many poor people every day, it a rare day without a poor man sleeping at home*”¹².

Collective memory (in this case of women) allows to see both social differences and their temporal transformations. Land access, cattle property or availability served as a criterion of social differentiation during the 19th century and centuries before. We believe that in the second half of the 20th century, cattle property or availability continued to be a social marker but in a different way. In 1961 the Civil Governor of Lugo wrote in his annual report: “In this regime of self-sufficient economy... the unit of exploitation is the ‘*lugar acasurado*’ composed of a house and land, sometimes of thirty and more plots per place. Of these plots some are for cereals, potatoes and turnips — *labradíos*, others for meadows — most natural, and still others are in high and low mountain and gorse. The *labradíos* are worked by peasants [both men and women] helped by the animals; the cattle is fed on meadows, turnips and even potatoes; from the gorse space and the common forest, peasants get charcoal and firewood that are used for the ‘bed’ of the cattle, the basis of organic fertilizer for land. All these constitute an economic self-sufficiency to the extent that an exploitation of our days can be autarkic. The

10. Interview with Rosa, peasant. She was born in 1925. Interview in Galizan. The name modified to preserve anonymity.

11. Interview with Luisa, peasant. She was born in 1934. Interview in Galizan.

12. Interview with Concha, peasant. She was born in 1928. Interview in Galizan.

farm is estimated by the number of cattle it can keep. The average farm — of the so-called ‘ordinary farmer’ — keeps 4–6 cows; a number of less than 4 means a ‘poor farmer’, of more than 6 cows — a ‘rich farmer’. Except for some very rich and very progressive farmers that have rationalized their economies and have new stables (very few), the richest farms do not usually have more than 10–12 cows”¹³.

The number of cows that indicates the wealth or poverty of the peasant household depends on the area and time. Changes in cattle property as a social marker were determined by the productive specialization in Galiza in the 1960s — dairy production. Until that time, animal husbandry and mixed farming were integrated strategies. The sale of milk was an income resource for households, although that was not the only or the main reason to keep the cow — it was a multi-purpose animal that gave work, fertilization and warmth to the household, provided the family economy with income from the sale of limited amounts of milk in nearby markets (by women) and of calves (by men) at fairs or to dealers. The former income was considered supplementary whereas the latter as the main one. Thus, in the second half of the 19th — first third of the 20th century, some households participated in the limited market activities by selling cattle for meat. The dairy specialization of the 1960s developed in a different context, thus, determining other social markers.

Agrarian historians often mention that the Minister of Agriculture in 1951–1957 Rafael Cavestany gave a speech “Less farmers — better agriculture” on October 8, 1955, to summarize the agrarian policy reorientation since the 1950s. Old policies (such as colonization) were based on many small working units, and either large estates or microplots were to become a focus of the state agrarian transformation policies. To achieve agricultural modernization, agrarian technicians had to vanquish what they considered ignorance and traditional cultivation systems. During the 1950s, some new policies were turned into the Law of Land Consolidation (1952) and the Agrarian Extension Service (1955) under the Stabilization Plan (1959) that aimed at overcoming the previous autarchic strategy and at promoting liberalization measures of the capitalist market, entry of the dictatorial regime in international organizations, and integration of new mechanisms necessary for the expansion of the consumer society.

Agrarian policies focusing on productive and reproductive specialization helped to reconfigure community internal hierarchies. According to Cardesín, modification of the social structure intensified after the adoption of the Stabilization Plan in 1959, which promoted the national and international integration of the Spanish economy and triggered the outflow from rural areas to Spanish and European cities, or to more urbanized villages in Galiza. Day laborers were the first to move; thus, the masters could not find *caseiros* and began to sell their land (see

13. Civil Government of Lugo, 1961 (IDD (08) 003. 002 Box 44/11320), AGA.

also: Soutelo 1998). Sons and daughters of wealthy owners migrated to cities, hoping to find jobs as civil servants or in other positions. *Labradores* had fewer children and compensated for the lack of workers by changing their crops and introducing machinery in the 1960s. During this period, the memories of these social strata began to fade, which benefited Francoism: the regime could claim that it had solved the ‘social question’ in the countryside (Cardesín, 1999: 135, 146–148).

So, the peasant differentiation established by the civil governor according to the number of cows persisted during the ‘developmentalist’ phase of the Franco dictatorship which attempted to modernize agriculture following the guidelines of international institutions such as the World Bank. The gradual productive specialization promoted in the next decades create differences between households — some became small businesses, while others could not and were forced to migrate or abandon their agricultural activities. The number of cows still had a differentiating meaning but not the same as before: since the 1960s, greater or lesser number of cows distinguished not peasants but small farmers on the market as increasingly dependent on external inputs. This does not exclude either the continuation of inherited farming practices or the survival of peasants maintaining self-subsistence patterns complemented by jobs outside agriculture.

From the 1960s to the 1970s, Colino identified ‘agrarian bourgeoisie’, ‘capitalized peasantry’ and ‘subsistence peasantry’. There is a correlation between these three strata and the farm’s size: less than 5 hectares for subsistence, 5–50 for capitalized peasants, and more than 50 for the agrarian bourgeoisie. The first stratum was hardly represented in the 1960s, and the 1972 agrarian census showed only some seventy farms with more than a hundred cows in Galiza. The capitalized peasantry was growing faster — from 29% to 35% — as share of their cattle. The share of ‘subsistence peasantry’ was decreasing, including due to aging (Colino, 1978: 27–30).

By the end of the 1970s, Díaz distinguishes:

1. Traditional marginal farms not being able to adapt to the market demands (subsidies and emigration remittances).
2. ‘Transitional’ farms in the process of productive specialization, but with a high degree of self-sufficiency due to both custom and limited income. Such farms relied on family workforce; did not follow the strict capitalist rationality; preserved (as the traditional marginal ones) the workforce reserve of international capitalism.
3. Few modern family farms that completed modernization of production, sometimes with the support of the ‘viable’ public aid. Their dependence on the market was greater than of the previous types, they followed capitalist logic, although inherited some survival elements, such as food self-consumption.
4. Capitalist farms, generally private industries with waged workers, benefitting to a greater extent from public aid.

5. Cooperative farms — either community managed or capitalist companies (Díaz, 1979: 81–90).

Thus, the number of cattle or hectares is only a part of the picture — to understand the ways in which the forms of social inequalities in rural communities were changing, we need to examine how the patterns of differentiation were transforming among those who remained, among those who left, and in the relationship between these two groups.

Rupture as built into reproduction

We started the paper with how the agrarian historiography of the Spanish state defined the ‘agrarian question’. Then we focused on how the Galizan agrarian historiography studied the changes in the Galizan rural society — from the end of the *Ancien Régime* to the first third of the 20th century — in the dialogue with other agrarian historiographies and with different social sciences that studied the end of the Galizan peasant world. These studies highlighted the relevance of the access to full land ownership by a part of the peasantry for understanding the increase in the commercialization of animal husbandry, the role of the agrarian movement and the help of remittances from the mass migration overseas. The end of the *Ancien Régime* exacerbated the already existing social inequalities in peasant communities as their reproductive strategies became subordinated to the demands of the liberal capitalist state. Most of the peasantry with the full land property got it already in the middle of the 20th century when the family histories were supplemented by the American migration and the European urban migration. When rural houses were abandoned, those that remained tried to survive in a process of always insufficient specialization or in a symbiotic strategy that has more of parasitism on the part of the new capitalism, social-democratic or neoliberal, with respect to the permanence of that old peasant civilization. Although we are offered the image of an apparently homogeneous rural area, we believe that inequalities were renewed. We should look for them in the itineraries of daughters who work in urban houses of the old rural rich and follow them in the future of granddaughters. We ask ourselves also what happened to those old rich, to their children and their granddaughters.

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Классовая дифференциация в современной сельской Галисии: первые результаты исследования

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Аннотация. Статья представляет собой первую попытку исследования классовой дифференциации в сельских сообществах современной Галисии. Сначала автор реконструирует дискуссии по «аграрному вопросу» в истории испанского государства — с реформистской мысли конца XIX века по настоящее время, сосредоточившись на том, как данный вопрос преломлялся в галисийском контексте и в галисийской аграрной историографии. В значительной степени это исследовательское направление оформилось благодаря изучению доступа крестьян к собственности на землю, в частности, различных инструментов либерального капиталистического государства, посредством которых оно ущемляло крестьян в правах. Автор уделяет особое внимание последствиям того режима землевладения, что доминировал

в Галисии, — «*форо*», или долгосрочной аренде. Все больше крестьян становились собственниками земли, что аграрная историография считала важнейшим фактором социально-экономических изменений с конца XIX века до первой трети XX века. Другими взаимосвязанными трансформациями этого периода стали: аграрная мобилизация против режима долгосрочной аренды земли, возрастающая коммерциализация аграрного производства, денежные переводы галисийских мигрантов из двух Америк и технологическое совершенствование производства. Автора особенно интересует, как социальное неравенство меняло сельские сообщества, и акцент сделан на последствиях либерально-капиталистической государственной политики для социальной структуры, для чего привлекаются данные многочисленных публикаций об усилении социального неравенства. В заключении автор описывает социальные изменения в последние годы диктатуры Франко. Таким образом, статья представляет собой первый шаг в исследовании того, как классовые различия трансформируют современные крестьянские сообщества.

Ключевые слова: классовая дифференциация, сельская история, Галисия, аграрный вопрос, крестьянские сообщества, XIX–XX века

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Class differentiation
in contemporary
rural Galiza:
A first approach