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# Spaces for Collaborative Arrangements as Social Sustainability in Rural Accommodation in Brazil: Pouso dos Paula

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**Abstract:** Studies of collaborative arrangements are usually based on socioeconomic interpretations, with little research exploring the socio-spatial perspective. The assumption is that space (as an epistemic category) can promote collaborative arrangements. Thus, the objective of the research was to describe the spaces of rural accommodation establishments as a sign of collaboration, which is understood as a socio-spatial entity. For this purpose, Pouso dos Paula (Nova Friburgo, RJ, Brazil) was the object of the study. This study was qualitative, exploratory, and descriptive in nature with a phenomenological approach. Primary data was collected from websites, leaflets, and videos about the object of study and in situ (photographic and architectural survey and reading of space). Secondary data was collected from the literature. The data collected were analyzed in the light of the theory of montage, based on the idea of abduction of Peircean semiotics. The results showed collaboration in spaces of the rural accommodation studied, which generally signifies and reveals spatial conditions for carrying out civic initiatives, meets social demands, and for gives rise to collaborative arrangements in rural areas which, together, can lead to political empowerment in rural Brazil, which are understood as a factor of social sustainability. The originality of the study lies in the recognition of the role of space of rural accommodation in promoting social sustainability.

**Keywords:** collaborative arrangement; space; accommodation establishment; rural space; Brazil

## 1. Introduction

The current study has two main focuses: spaces of rural accommodation establishments in Brazil and space for collaboration—these topics are seldom discussed together. These topics were addressed in studies of North American hotels' history [1,2]. However, it comes without adequate justification for space for collaboration categories. Acknowledging this gap, the research hypothesis of this study emerged as innovative: the need for research that reveals the role of space in promoting collaboration in Brazilian rural accommodation. This led to the following research question: Can space promote collaborative arrangements in a rural territory from an accommodation establishment? In addition, to what extent can the rural lodging environment in Brazil contribute to social sustainability, given that collaborative governance is critical to achieving social sustainability objectives [3]?

The research question was also derived from the identification of three research problems. The first is that research on lodging has not been based on predicates of space as an epistemic category, but on socioeconomic interpretations [4], since hotel hospitality is understood as the need of the guest as a consumer. For example, Pezzotti [5] argued that, in the hotel industry, hospitality should be the profit strategy, whereas service should be its tactics. Additionally, Knutson, Beck, Kim, and Cha [6] pointed out that the hotel industry is a hospitality service, and should be understood as a social relationship

rather than as involvement with objects (understanding space as such). On their part, Tasci and Semrad [7] have addressed hospitality as a construct measured by social “intentions,” since human values are those which can create different objects.

However, the interpretative lenses of socio-spatial dialectic [8,9]—coupled with the idea that “hospitality is a gift of space” [10]—may question hotel hospitality studies that consider space as a simple social product and, therefore, a space devoid of signs that also influence social conditions. Likewise, studies by Andrea Cornwall [11,12] showed the significant role of space in collaborative arrangements and popular participation in the social community development.

The second research problem is in line with the first problem. Collaboration has been investigated as a socioeconomic factor of competitiveness, such as business or small groups of entrepreneur arrangements that come together for productive, commercial, and technical relations, with formal or informal links [13]. Collaboration provides an opportunity to improve the local cluster of suppliers in order to increase income [14,15] and even the geographical proximity. The historical, social, cultural, and institutional identities are seen as competitive market advantages. Lastly, Jaakkola, Helkkula, and Aarikka-Stenroos [16] pointed out that utilitarian social motives and sociability, which are critical for collaborative markets, are still poorly understood in the literature. Nevertheless, some current studies of collaboration have shown that business arrangements can stem from affective relationships and family ties, rather than economic interests [17].

The third research problem stems from the fact that spaces for collaboration in Brazil have been studied, mainly, in city spaces [18] and in virtual social networks [19,20], taking collectivization and consensus as premises for collaboration. Studies have given the space of cities of the 21st century the effective “place” for expressions of collaboration [21]. Thus, there is almost no research addressing the spaces of rural accommodation in Brazil as an attribute of space for collaboration. Therefore, this study was able to highlight the role of a rural accommodation establishment in promoting collaboration and social sustainability in rural Brazil.

Against this background, it was possible to define the research objective: to describe the spaces of rural accommodation establishments as a sign of collaboration, which are understood as a socio-spatial fact. Therefore, the originality of the research is the recognition of the role of the space of a rural accommodation in promoting social sustainability. It should be noted that previous studies have recognized the role of space in social sustainability. This includes the study of self-built housing [22], the dependence of social sustainability on spatial climate changes [23], or the interdependence between environmental and social sustainability, without competing with each other [24]. However, the relationship between the space of rural accommodation and social sustainability has not yet been addressed.

By hypothesizing that space is a sign of collaboration and can be understood as language, it becomes possible to infer the qualitative nature of the research, with a phenomenological approach at an exploratory and descriptive level. Phenomenological studies are adequate for social sciences to address nonquantifiable phenomena, and, therefore, consider the environment as a primary source of data and the researcher as the “instrument” of knowledge production when describing phenomena, until arriving at results considered as a sign, and not necessarily as a deduction from the reality. The exploratory stage consisted of literature review [25].

The primary data were collected from websites, leaflets, and videos, and in situ (photographic and architectural survey and reading of space). The secondary data were collected from the literature. The data were analyzed in the light of the theory of montage [26], based on the ideal of abduction of Peircean semiotics [27]. To this end, Pouso dos Paula (Nova Friburgo, RJ, Brazil) was chosen as research objects because it is a consolidated accommodation establishment in the Brazilian Rural Tourism landscape, under the Programa Novos Rurais [rural development program], and it presents empirical signs of collaboration such as photography and bread making workshops, and reception of campers with a shared interest in mountaineering in the Serra dos Três Picos.

In addition, in the context of the Brazilian Rural Tourism, the region where Pouso dos Paula is located is a reference (as rural experience) in terms of lodging establishments [28], which is contrary to other regions where Rural Tourism is based on agricultural production, local culture, ecotourism, and more.

It can be assumed that Pouso dos Paula is similar to other Brazilian rural accommodations, which would justify a generalization from one case as well as a characteristic of qualitative, phenomenological, and descriptive research [25].

The need for socio-spatial conceptions for collaboration, which adds to the prevailing socio-economic perspective, justifies this study. In addition, there is an understanding that new spaces for collaboration create consensual conditions for civic life [29] and meet social objectives that, together, denote empowerment and social sustainability in rural Brazil. In the field of tourism, this study is justified because accommodation is part of the infrastructure and production chain of tourism [30]. Since Pouso dos Paula is a rural accommodation, the study adds value to the Rural Tourism field as an option for local communities to create jobs and income and a way for economic sustenance between harvests, or even to encourage people to stay in rural areas [31].

In addition, this research is justified because there is very little literature on collaboration and social entrepreneurship in Brazil [32].

## 2. Theoretical Background

### 2.1. Rural Tourism and Sustainability in Collaborative Spaces

The concepts of sustainability have matured in the late twentieth century and some are related to the evolution of global environmental awareness. In this regard, the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was one of the first milestones. Later, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) produced a document called “Our Common Future,” released in 1987, in which the term sustainable development was widely used. This expressed concern for present and future generations [33]. According to Dias [33], the report “Our Common Future” was a reference and basis for discussions at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (ECO 92), which strengthened and spread the use of the concept of sustainable development. The document—also called the “Brundtland Report”—defined sustainable development as that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs [34].

In this sense, from the 1990s onwards, under the auspices of Rio 1992 and Agenda 21, the concepts and principles of sustainability were gradually adopted by regions, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, and civil society in general. Sectors of the economy and public policy—at the municipal, state, and federal levels—have adopted sustainability as an alternative mode of production that is more environmentally-friendly and responsible [34].

From these discussions, the ideal of sustainability has evolved, emerging, from the work carried out by Sachs [35], the following dimensions: social, economic, ecological, spatial, cultural, political, environmental, territorial, national policy, and international policy. Although some dimensions proposed by Sachs [35] are complementary in a given context, social sustainability stands out in collaborative spaces, where the process of civic development based on ‘being’ takes place, which is supported by greater equity in resource allocation, rights and conditions of broad sections of the population, and narrowing the gap between the richest and the poorest. From these movements, sustainability became an important concept in many fields, including tourism.

There is research relating sustainability and rural areas, viewing rural areas essentially as a “source” of economic production or energy production. For example, Stattman and Mol [36] showed that subsistence farmers do not fit into rural development models of market policies aimed at large estates. Research by Ubilla et al. [37] linked the rural local economy to the level of electric power in rural dwellings. Sharifzadeh and Abdollahzadeh [38] created a model of analysis to assess the

sustainability of agricultural production in Golestan Province, in Iran. Babych [39] examined the role of short supply chains in ensuring sustainability among others.

Some studies have examined social sustainability and the rural environment. Maleki [40] listed basic criteria for ensuring social sustainability in rural Iran, which includes security, population, social collaboration, health, leisure, employment, and education. Tulla et al. [41] proposed social agriculture as an opportunity for social sustainability for all of Europe. Nirathron and Whitford [42] studied the political influence on social and economic sustainability in rural areas of Thailand and Australia. Wan and Ng [43] concluded that there are, as yet, no effective methods for assessing social sustainability in the built environment of rural China.

In general, current space research has focused on urban areas, to the detriment of rural areas, which regains its importance in food production, as a necessary natural environment, and in the conservation of endogenous crops [44].

The study by Vuin et al. [45] investigated idle rural areas and heritage tourism. However, categories of analysis of social sustainability were not used. In the same vein, Rover et al. [46] demonstrated the contributing role of a Brazilian agroecology network to social innovation and sustainable rural development, but used socioeconomic categories of sustainability.

This literature “scan” showed that there are no studies regarding social sustainability, collaboration, and the space of Rural Tourism (as an accommodation establishment).

According to the UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) [47], sustainable tourism means that natural, historical, and cultural resources are preserved for continuous use in the future as well as in the present. Sustainable tourism also means the practice of tourism that does not generate serious environmental or sociocultural problems, by preserving or enhancing environmental quality and maintaining a high level of tourist satisfaction, in order to preserve markets for tourism and spread its benefits across society.

Rejowski and Solha [48] report the explosion of mass tourism since the 1950s, which is linked to major political, economic, social, and cultural transformations. However, the authors argue that the last decades (between 1974 and 2000) brought new challenges for tourism, with two forces standing out—“globalization” and “sustainability”—which emphasizes the importance of strategic planning and management, training and qualification of human resources, and the development of research and tourism studies. The authors question whether tourism promotes or hinders integration and respect among peoples. The author questions if it is beneficial to host communities while satisfying tourists, considering the interests of all stakeholders, and if it can contribute to sustainability in the broad sense of practice.

Against this background—and opposed to mass tourism—an alternative tourism began to emerge, seeking to promote a more sustainable development, especially for promoting greater integration and positive effects for residents. Pires [49] argues that, in response to mass tourism, expectations for alternative tourism arise, which are inspired by counterculture movements opposing technological-industrial society and consumerism, including ecological and environmental issues, anti-militarism, pacifism, and minority rights. This presents a protest and innovative character.

Community-based tourism (CBT) has gained prominence as an alternative to mainstream mass tourism. Grimm and Sampaio [50] define CBT as a segment composed of social undertakings that offer their visitors activities, which, by their sharing character, are called experiences or interactions. The authors explain that these experiences occur, mainly, during visits to conservation units, where there is a stronger “connection between hosts and nature, staying in family houses where relationships become closer, more intimate, and authentic, as well as participation in local folk festivals where the community culture is experienced ( . . . )” [50] (p. 8). The term “community” is related to the values and norms that govern the forms of coexistence and organization, adopted by a certain human group, and that differentiates it from other actors in society [51].

Community-based tourism emerges as a form of resistance to the global tourism market pressures resulting in the exclusion of local populations, weakening the potential benefits of tourism, and

threatening their social, cultural, and environmental cohesion. Thus, in contrast to mass tourism, and based on a socially fairer and environmentally-responsible development proposal, a model of sustainable tourism development has matured in the last decade in Brazil. In this sense, community-based tourism embraces sustainability as a *raison d'être* and core commitment in its planning, which encourages cultural exchanges between visitors and residents [34,52,53]. This can be translated into collaborative attitudes. Lodging, as part of the community-based tourism chain, is also imbued with community values.

## 2.2. Space for Collaboration

Utilitarian and social reasons motivate collaborative practices. Utilitarian reasons are based on financial interests or access and acquisition of resources [54–57], whereas social reasons are related to the search for ways to live together [58–62]. The practice of social relations can occur in a virtual world or in the physical space. In this study, the space for collaboration occurs in an accommodation establishment. Thus, the focus is on understanding real-life practices in the physical space—sign of collectivization—as transference of what is possessed by third parties or what belongs to third parties for their own use (information, ideas, knowledge, values, feelings, etc.) [57,63], to establish the idea that what is done is also done in consensus with others [64–70].

It should be noted that the space for collaboration based on collectivization and consensus, occurred effectively in the public spaces of cities [18,71–77]. In addition, the Brazilian urban public space was, for a long time, impaired by the dominance of the rural over the urban, which originated in colonial times—and that still affects the morphology and conviviality in Brazilian cities [18]. Thus, accommodation establishments in Brazil are “rooted” in the rural territory, when travelers stayed in the large plantation houses [78]. However, rural accommodation in contemporary Brazil has developed other features, especially within the community-based tourism (CBT) model.

## 2.3. Rural Accommodation Establishments and Space for Collaboration

First, it should be noted that no studies to date have considered spaces of rural accommodation and collaboration together, despite evidence indicating a relationship between them. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that accommodation establishments have maintained a collectivist nature (as a condition of collaboration) throughout its history, guided by the search for conviviality among people. This is a fact demonstrated by the American ‘love’ of socializing in Grand Hotels (private spaces only from the legal perspective, because they were, and still are, “public spaces”) [1,2].

Relational social collaboration can be traced back to the Greeks and Romans hospitality [79], which was not necessarily a paid service, and was rather a moral obligation and gift (as signs of generosity and ethics) that overlaps market relations [4,80–82]. Therefore, according to Sales and Salles [83], there is a need to go beyond the economic and utilitarian paradigm of research on collaboration, which takes on a more collective “outlook”, not limited to the individual, and that establishes unusual social relations. The works of sociologists Goudbout and Caillé advocate forming new networks of thought where each individual has shared identities with others, where the gift would be the condition of belonging and solidarity in the community.

The consensual and collectivist dimension of collaboration explains the common and essential motivation for traveling to natural destinations and in rural areas: escaping from everyday city life, seeking to live together, experiencing the culture, and contacting with nature. Brazil has invested in activities in rural and natural areas, be it rural tourism, agritourism, or ecotourism [84–86]. Rural tourism in Brazil has been diversifying services that enable partnerships within cooperation and collaboration networks, with close relationships between farmers and exchange of information among visitors [50,80,81].

Among the activities of rural tourism, hospitality practiced by farming families has enabled different cultural experiences for “city” guests [50,80,81,83,85,87–89]. Rural tourism in Brazil has fueled processes of social transformation that accumulate and interact with human, physical, and

institutional capital [50,85] where rural accommodations (often built by *mutirão* [communal work]) are a source of pride, appreciation of local identity and culture, promotion of community participation, exchange of learning between residents and tourists, failure mitigation, and acknowledgement of joint achievements [80–94].

Grimm and Sampaio [50] define Brazilian rural accommodation as an enterprise that offers activities imbued by social sharing, especially in family lodging (when relationships become authentic and intimate), as well as in folk and popular festivals in the region. These social relations are more emphasized in the “alternative” accommodations, away from large cities. They are simple, welcoming, and favor social contact, respect, and retribution as signs of collaboration, consensus, and collectivization [50].

### 3. Materials and Methods

#### 3.1. Type of Research

The study was qualitative with a phenomenological approach, mainly because space (while an epistemic category) is viewed as language [27]. As for procedures—and inherent to phenomenology—a descriptive design was used. Regarding the objectives, the study was characterized as exploratory, since, according to Gil [95], the results obtained from an object of study could be applicable to other studies, and because the study addresses two phenomena that have not yet been described together—rural accommodation and collaboration. These two factors denote, at the same time, an interdisciplinary attempt inherent to exploratory research [25,96].

#### 3.2. Procedures, Tools, and Instruments for Data Collection

This article presents the research results of Pouso dos Paula as object of study. However, case studies using the same methodology are part of a larger research study that aims to generalize the demonstration of spaces of rural accommodations as a sign of collaboration and, therefore, of social sustainability. The other cases are: Chácara Santa Eulália (Ferreira Martins, RS), Espaço Clarear (Camboriú, SC), Hospedaria Montanha Beija-Flor Dourado (Morretes, PR), and Sítio Matsuo (Mogi das Cruzes, SP), which are cited in CITURDES (International Congress of Rural Tourism and Sustainable Development). Then, research should be conducted in emerging countries such as China, Mexico, and South Africa, some of which still lack studies on collaboration and social entrepreneurship [32].

For contextualization and justification of the research object, academic papers about “Pouso dos Paula” were surveyed in university libraries in the region where the said establishment is located as well as the search for information in EBSCOhost and CAPES Journals Brazil (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel) databases, to provide context and theoretical foundation of the key research issues. Primary sources (leaflets, websites, and videos) that focused on “Pouso dos Paula” were also surveyed.

The space for collaboration, understood by the phenomenological content, leads to research in the socially constructed physical space [8,9], which determined, therefore, a reading of spaces of the accommodation establishment in the light of the theory of montage [26], which selected the uses of space and awoke past fragments of signs [26]. The selection and the awakening of past fragments of signs [26] drew on the researchers’ repertoire of History and Theory of Architecture and Urbanism inherent to a previous knowledge needed to select topics and key contents for describing the research object [97]. Past fragments of signs [26] were used as keywords (in Spanish and English) for data collection in the last 20 years (2000 to 2019) in CAPES Journals Brazil (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel), Elsevier, SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library Online,) and EBSCOhost databases comprising the references used.

The reading of space was made in situ or by the observation of photographs and architectural survey of the accommodation establishment (represented space). The in situ spatial reading as well as architectural and photographic surveys were conducted between 5 and 8 October, 2018.

### 3.3. Descriptive Method of Data Collection

Since the study assumed the empirical space as language, polysemic space is a condition that provided a set of interrelated descriptions and meanings [27]. Thus, the descriptive method did not start from contents “imposed” to the object of research for the purpose of theoretical deduction. Nevertheless, from the object of study approached by the in situ reading of space, observation of photographs, and architectural survey, abduction [27] was conditioned as hypothetical reasoning inherent to spatial language (and, therefore, inherent to polysemy and Peircean idea of sign).

Adequate to the idea of abduction [27], Walter Benjamin’s theory of montage was used for the reading of space. “The reading of space in the de-characterization of a daily continuum presents a close methodological and epistemological union between Walter Benjamin’s reasoning and the proposals that we derive from the study of various concepts of Charles Sanders Peirce, above all, his phenomenology ( . . . )” [98] (p. 127). In this study, the past fragments of signs [26] presented and brought past situations that denote social collectivization in the present-day space of the object of study. Therefore, the possibility of collaboration as a sign of social sustainability was constructed.

For Benjamin [26], montage explores and exposes references from the past—past fragments of signs—which, although historical “discontinuities”, provide contemporary spatial recurrences. Montage implies a space reader with a repertoire [97] to recognize, redeem, and reveal the past in the present [98]. Thus, spatial reading is always possible (abduction), never absolute, and unrestricted [98], which draws on qualitative and phenomenological research [99].

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Research Object

Community-based tourism and community tourism (and rural tourism ramifications in Brazil) have reported local cultures, and conservation and protection of tangible and intangible heritage as motivations for residents, visitors, and tourists. Some examples can be found in the cases of Assentamento Coqueirinho in Fortim, CE, Batoque in Aquiraz, CE, communities of Trairi, CE [31] (pp. 59–103), Serra Gaúcha, RS, Rota da Liberdade, Recôncavo Baiano, BA, Caminhos Rurais, RS, Acolhida da Colônia, SC, and Alto Vale Tietê, SP [100], among others.

Rural tourism in the mountainous region of the state of Rio de Janeiro—where Pouso dos Paula, Nova Friburgo municipality is located—began with European colonization, because the mountainous lands of the region were unsuitable for large monoculture crops that are important for the economy back then. At the same time, “second-home” developments appeared as an alternative to coastal “sun and sea” tourism, which have the mountain and Rio de Janeiro State countryside as attractions. This ideal was emphasized in the 1970s with hippies (and New Age tourism) and ecotourism (hiking, climbing, and mountaineering) and the search for nature. In this context, rural accommodation emerged to support this demand [28].

It should be noted that the experience of Rural Tourism in the mountainous region of the state of Rio de Janeiro stands out for the provision of lodging facilities as part of the tourism production chain i.e., the region where Pouso dos Paula is located was chosen for this study because it sets an example for rural tourism in Brazil while modeling for lodging. In this context, the owner of Pouso dos Paula opened the pousada [inn] in 2010 near Serra dos Três Picos, with the objective of offering collective experiences of the rural way of life and cultural activities (such as bread making and landscape photography workshops, for example). Pouso dos Paula was funded under the New Rural program (an initiative of the company Souza Cruz and the Instituto Bélgica—Ibelga of Nova Friburgo aiming to keep new generations of farmers in rural areas) and it offers spaces for collective training [101].

## 4.2. Description of the Spaces of Pousada dos Paula Using Montage

### 4.2.1. Internal Spaces: Dining Room and Bedrooms

The dining room (Figure 1), with a large table, offers conditions for bringing people together at mealtimes. The collective dining room goes back—while the past sign fragment [26]—to Brazilian cuisines as a primary space for family gatherings and reception of intimate visits [102]. As such, the collective dining room describes the occasion of the meal as a shared experience. Therefore, it refers to the act of eating as the primary driver of socialization, which reifies social codes that define, for example, with “whom” and “how” food is shared, which can denote collective limits and conquests. Therefore, the network relationships are a sign of collaboration. Collectivization in food practices can be effective in the collection of ingredients and condiments, in the preparation of food, in the very act of eating, or even in the nap after it [103].



**Figure 1.** Still from the video “Pousada dos Paula—Salinas, Nova Friburgo—RJ” (2:12). Lombardi, F. (2016). *Pousada dos Paula—Salinas, Nova Friburgo—RJ* [Film-video]. F. Lombardi, Prod., F. Lombardi, dir. Nova Friburgo: Aventura em Vídeo. 1 DVD, 22 min. Color. Son.

In the same vein, Maffesoli [104] points out that the act of eating, as close as possible to others, promotes communication because it brings individuals together. This gives rise to information exchange as a condition of collaboration: “( . . . ) the meal is a fundamental social act, in that it offers fellow diners an impressive experience of social relations, solidly establishing cohesion, momentarily eliminating impositions and differences (and) exacerbating them ( . . . )” [104] (p. 132).

The collective meal is not just an experience of pleasant civility among individuals. (Maffesoli, 2002) argues that the act of eating together can also lead to conflicts: “theatrical” outrages during the ritual of eating—the plating of food, the choice of healthier food, how to handle cutlery, preference by certain condiments, how to serve oneself—establishes a dynamic “equilibrium” [104] (pp. 132–133): “( . . . ) they are signs of a symbolic exchange that tries to escape the domination of power or various rules” [104] (p. 135); “We ‘rival’ our gifts, our feasts, our nuptials, our invitations, and we still feel compelled to revanchieren ( . . . )” [104] (p. 133).

Rooms in the pousada (Figure 2) are also collective. As such, collective rooms go back, while past sign fragment [26], to dormitories for groups of people from the first lodgings for religious pilgrims in the Middle Ages [33], or they go back to collective rooms of colleges and boarding schools [105,106]. In these examples from the past, strict discipline and rigid rules underpinned the learning of mutual respect when adhering to egalitarian codes of conduct i.e., they established the social (de)hierarchization for inmates [105]. Rizzini and Rizzini [106] have shown that children of former Brazilian black slaves confined to orphanage rooms have developed a collective consciousness of their ethnic and social insertion in republican Brazil.



**Figure 2.** The inside of the rooms. Pouso dos Paula. Source: Authors' collection.

#### 4.2.2. Nature, Campsite, and Hammock Spaces

Pouso dos Paula, located in the rural territory of the mountain range of Rio de Janeiro (Figure 3), reveals values of escapism from urban living. According to Bauman [107], rural and natural areas can foster closer affective and social relationships because they are far from everyday tasks and city life. Therefore, Bauman [107] concludes that community values have weakened with the Industrial Revolution urbanization, due to the search for work and the emergence of a new model of life guided by monetization and accumulation. Thus, people's common interest in escapism is a sign of collectivization (as a condition of collaboration) i.e., the space of nature promotes collectivization.



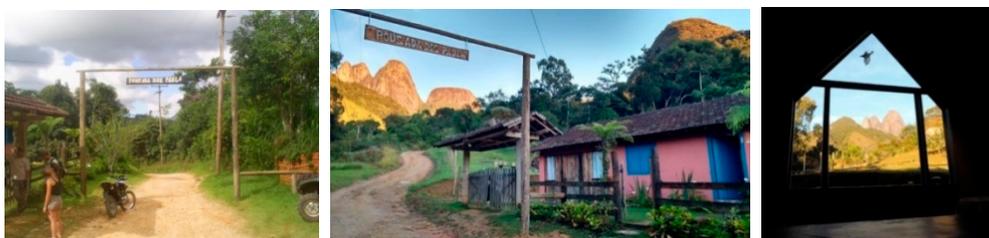
**Figure 3.** Still from the video “Pousada dos Paula—Salinas, Nova Friburgo—RJ” (1:16). Lombardi, F. (2016). *Pousada dos Paula—Salinas, Nova Friburgo—RJ* [Filme-vídeo]. F. Lombardi, Prod., F. Lombardi, dir. Nova Friburgo: Aventura em Vídeo. 1 DVD, 22 min. Color. Son.

The return to nature may be explained by the fact that it offers opportunities for sublimation, since many cultures represent asceticism as a metaphor for nature: the “beyond-the-grave” life amid flowering fields, the Garden of Eden, peaks and tops of mountains as symbols of divine proximity to the celestial vault, and the ziggurat as a metaphor for the mountain built to approach heaven [108].

Thus, in the course of time, nature was assigned symbolic meanings as idealization of the concreteness of tangible goods beneficial to human well-being. In the absolutism and mercantilism period, overseas conquests were grounded in an interest in nature (with emphasis on vegetation). Botanical gardens were laboratories to test spices and condiments, to find ways of sweetening food in large quantities, and to test natural pigments to dye clothes, tapestries, and works of art (liturgical communication of the time). In the baroque period, vegetation was an identity condition for the affirmation of the French kingdom (the French garden as a style) and the English kingdom (the English garden as a style). In the nineteenth century, art nouveau is expressed by nature and, from the mid-twentieth century onwards, environmental awareness and respect for nature stand out [108].

In this sense, nature can be described as a symbol in some spatial situations in Pouso dos Paula. A gate assures the entrance to nature and a window frames the nature (Figure 4). Laurance and Newsome [109] suggest that people are attracted to gates because they direct the gaze to something of interest. The gates, as a past sign fragment [26], are desired and sought-after artifacts because they connote the penetration into sacred space. Thus, they are religious symbols (such as oratories and tabernacles) that represent rites of passage from what is “outside” to what is “inside.” Gates could

be watched because only elected individuals could pass through them. Just as the gate at Pouso dos Paula announces nature, a window (with a different shape and size) frames the iconic nature of the Serra dos Três Picos.



**Figure 4.** Entrance gate and a window at Pouso dos Paula. Image sources, from left to right: authors' collection; <https://www.facebook.com/pousadadospaula/photos/rpp.859102630832053/1498594693549507/?type=3&theater>; [www.terfri.com.br\(barra\)pousada-dos-paula](http://www.terfri.com.br(barra)pousada-dos-paula).

In addition, close to nature, a campsite and hammocks were built near the pousada.

The past sign fragment [26] may refer to the ideal of camping as a process of infantile and juvenile education since 1860, used for boy scouts by Baden-Powell. Scouting was based on “open air” camping, capable of promoting teamwork, honor, altruism, fraternity, loyalty, respect, and responsibility, due to its collective nature [110].

At the same time, research drawing on Adorno's idea of social psychology, applied to the landless movement (MST) in Brazil, demonstrated encampments provided a reflective experience (*Erfahrung*) of the “administered” world, which could be, on the other hand, without “tutelage” and, therefore, collectively done and shared in actions aimed at social welfare [111]. The spatial arrangement of Pouso dos Paula campsite (Figure 5) is characterized by flexibility, which leads to arrangements and rearrangements of “political territories” and common interests. It is observed that the interior of tents allows a collective closeness, given the capacity to house several guests simultaneously. Like the campsite, the hammocks (Figure 6), located in the outer area of the pousada, can promote collective gatherings.



**Figure 5.** Campsite. Pouso dos Paula. Stills from the video Pousada dos Paula—Salinas, Nova Friburgo—RJ. Left image: 1:06. Right image: 0:58. Lombardi, F. (2016). *Pousada dos Paula—Salinas, Nova Friburgo—RJ* [Filme-vídeo]. F. Lombardi, Prod., F. Lombardi, dir. Nova Friburgo: Aventura em Vídeo. 1 DVD, 22 min. Color. Son.

The set of hammocks suggest the collective space of the Brazilian indigenous oca (a dwelling with several hammocks for sleeping), as an exercise of a past sign fragment [26]. The collectivization, due to the set of hammocks, is justified by the practice of polygamous sex among Indians living in the same oca [112]. Hammocks were associated to the Indians' naked body, sex, and laziness, as we read in the accounts of Pero Vaz de Caminha, André Thevet, Jean de Lery, Hans Staden, Jean Nieuhof, and Karl von den Steinen. It was in the nineteenth century that a drawing by Debret represented, for the first time, a white man next to a hammock [113]. The hammock for sleeping became a Brazilian cultural identity object, as Câmara Cascudo emphasized [114]. Hammocks can be moved, in new arrangements that enable the proximity of individuals with common interests.



**Figure 6.** Hammocks at Pouso dos Paula. Source: <https://www.facebook.com/pousadadospaula/photos/rpp.859102630832053/1054925537916427/?type=3&theater>.

## 5. Discussion of the Results

A summary table (Table 1) with the main findings and results is presented, based on the literature when possible.

It can then be inferred that space contributes to collaboration, in line with the works of Cornwall [11,12] that showed that space is a condition for collaborative social community arrangements, and the work of Soriano [17] that concluded that spatial relationships can influence the construction of interpersonal affectivity, which is a key motivation for collaborative arrangements.

In addition, it can be inferred that, if there is collaboration, there is the possibility of social sustainability, as stated by Termeer and Bruinsma [3]. Manifestations of collaboration are crucial for social sustainability, and Maleki [40], in the same vein, established that the criterion of social collaboration is a basic factor for social sustainability in rural areas, based on the case study in rural Iran.

None of the authors—Cornwall [11,12], Soriano [17], Termeer and Bruinsma [3], and Maleki [40]—conducted their studies in rural accommodations, which may suggest the innovative character of this article.

It was observed that utilitarian collaboration [54–57] manifested itself in three situations in the object of study: dining room with bread making workshops, outside the Pousada and Serra dos Três Picos with the photography workshops and mountaineering. On the other hand, social collaboration [58–62] was present in all the described spaces of the object of study, because the physical space, in this case, is a sign of collectivization.

By assuming collectivization as a condition for collaboration in physical space, collective uses are found in Pouso dos Paula, which originates from common and consensual interest [64,65,67,68], such as bread making and photography training workshops [101], or the collective experience of campers, who have, as a common goal, climbing and mountaineering in the Serra dos Três Picos. Moreover, in situ reading of space revealed the social support to collectivization in the dining room, hammocks, and room spaces.

The architectural spaces of the pousada face and open (gate and window) to the external natural environment and the appropriation of external spaces in a natural environment (hammocks and campsite) denote escapism in nature as a common interest for several people i.e., the collectivist ideal of what is done, is also done simultaneously and in the same space by others, which have the same interests and meanings [64,65,68].

**Table 1.** Relationship between the reading of space and representation of space of the collaborative activity. Authors of reference on collaboration and space and authors of reference on social sustainability and collaboration. Source: the authors.

Space	Collaborative Activity Authors of Reference	Collaboration and Space Authors of Reference	Social Sustainability and Collaboration Authors of Reference
Dining room	<p><b>Collective meals</b>—social collaboration [Ikkala, T.; Lampinen, A. (2014); Molz, J. G. (2014); Bialski, P. (2013); Wittel, A. (2011); Wittel, A. (2001); Lemos, C. (1976); Carneiro, H. (2007); Maffesoli, M. (2002)]</p> <p><b>Bread making workshops</b>—utilitarian and social collaboration [Ikkala, T.; Lampinen, A. (2014); Molz, J. G. (2014); Bialski, P. (2013); Wittel, A. (2011); Wittel, A. (2001); Eckhardt, G. M.; Bardhi, F. (2016); Hamari, J.; Sjöklint, M.; Ukkonen, A. (2015); Belk, R. (2013); Belk, R. (2010); Grimm, I. J.; Sampaio, C. (2011); Maldonado, C. (2005)]</p>	Cornwall (2006, 2002); Soriano (2010)	Termeer and Bruinsma (2016); Maleki (2017)
Collective rooms	<p><b>Collective socialization</b>—social collaboration [Ikkala, T.; Lampinen, A. (2014); Molz, J. G. (2014); Bialski, P. (2013); Wittel, A. (2011); Wittel, A. (2001); Dias, C. M. de M. (2002); Conceição, J. T. da (2008); Rizzini, I.; Rizzini, I. (2004)]</p>		
Spaces around the Pousada and Serra dos Três Picos	<p><b>Collective enjoyment of the landscape</b>—social collaboration [Ikkala, T.; Lampinen, A. (2014); Molz, J. G. (2014); Bialski, P. (2013); Wittel, A. (2011); Wittel, A. (2001); Bauman, Z. (2001); Jellicoe, G.; Jellicoe, S. (1995)]</p> <p><b>Photography workshops</b>—utilitarian and social collaboration [Ikkala, T.; Lampinen, A. (2014); Molz, J. G. (2014); Bialski, P. (2013); Wittel, A. (2011); Wittel, A. (2001); Eckhardt, G. M.; Bardhi, F. (2016); Hamari, J.; Sjöklint, M.; Ukkonen, A. (2015); Belk, R. (2013); Belk, R. (2010); Grimm, I. J.; Sampaio, C. (2011); Maldonado, C. (2005)]</p> <p><b>Mountaineering</b>—utilitarian and social collaboration [Ikkala, T.; Lampinen, A. (2014); Molz, J. G. (2014); Bialski, P. (2013); Wittel, A. (2011); Wittel, A. (2001); Eckhardt, G. M.; Bardhi, F. (2016); Hamari, J.; Sjöklint, M.; Ukkonen, A. (2015); Belk, R. (2013); Belk, R. (2010); Grimm, I. J.; Sampaio, C. (2011); Maldonado, C. (2005)]</p>		
Camping site	<p><b>Collective socialization</b>—social collaboration [Ikkala, T.; Lampinen, A. (2014); Molz, J. G. (2014); Bialski, P. (2013); Wittel, A. (2011); Wittel, A. (2001); Baden-Powell, R. (2012); Figueiredo, G. C.; Rezende, J. M. de (2014)]</p>		
Space with sleeping hammocks	<p><b>Collective socialization</b>—social collaboration [Ikkala, T.; Lampinen, A. (2014); Molz, J. G. (2014); Bialski, P. (2013); Wittel, A. (2011); Wittel, A. (2001); Weimer, G. (2005); Fonseca, R. (2013); Rocha, G. (2006)]</p>		

The pousada's collective spaces provide for the union of different people (visitors, guests, and tourists) comprising alterities with common interests for the region where the lodging is located, for the activities, services, and spatial conditions it offers. In this sense, Bauman [107] points out that a local community establishes itself when "compared" with alterities because, by putting in common different cultures and identities, a communicative action [43] takes place as a situation for collaborative combinations [115].

The spatial reading of the pousada suggested that its prevailing user is a tourist guest (with community and collectivist motivations, consistent with the studies of Grimm and Sampaio [50] on rural tourism in Brazil). Thus, one can discern that, according to Santos [116], the notion of community goes beyond a local group of people. The community establishes bonds of solidarity and belonging that go past the immediate place of its insertion. Therefore, it is possible to have community when any individual gives value to the place of the community, being resident or not of this community place. As Emmanuel Levinas proposes in welcoming realities "outside the self" that are open to knowledge as a sign of collaboration for social reasons [57,63].

To put it another way, new socio-spatial conditions can be demonstrated for collaboration practices, not yet theoretically grounded, where a Brazilian rural accommodation is a facilitator for collaborative arrangements. In this sense, it can be verified that collaboration in the physical space of an accommodation establishment [1,2] is conditioned by a time that elapsed in establishing collectivization and consensus [64,65,67,68], which is often greater than in the public space of cities, due to immersion in collectives. This is the basis for communicative actions [67]. Thus, collaborative experiences in accommodation establishments will be "unforgettable" [117] (p. 68), building, and extending community culture. "Back home, he was happy about signs of benevolence he had received; and the memory was perpetuated in the family (...)" [118] (p. 133).

To demonstrate new spaces for collaborative arrangements [119], organized by participatory collectivist content, is critical in the Brazilian political context (lacking democratic manifestations and alternatives to the predominance of representative democracy) [120], and because the Brazilian representative democracy is often guided by techno-bureaucracy and by the Constitution of a state with decision-making power imposed on society [121].

## 6. Conclusions

It is understood that the objective of this study was achieved because the research object (Pouso dos Paula) was described as a generalization (inherent to qualitative and descriptive research) for spaces of rural accommodation in Brazil as a denotation of space for collaboration and, thus, contributing to social sustainability. Two distinct phenomena—rural accommodation in Brazil and collaboration—were investigated together, which may contribute to new sociological studies on space occupation, as well as studies on Hospitality (mainly within Rural Tourism), and studies about rural Brazil.

The innovative character in "combining" the two phenomena—with space as the main category of description—required qualitative and exploratory methods since it was a first attempt that should unfold in investigations with other objects of study (while rural accommodation taking place in Brazil). However, it must be concluded that space (as an epistemic category) has reified its contribution to the critical social debate [8,9], especially because, in general, both research on hospitality [4] and on collaboration [13–15] are based on socioeconomic analysis.

Regarding socio-spatial dialectic [8,9], further research on the social condition (as epistemic category) is considered necessary. In this sense, an examination of the demographics of users of rural accommodation in Brazil could demonstrate that visitors or guests are primarily in search of training to increase their income, which establishes collaborative networks, and experiences the countryside culture and atmosphere, rather than looking for leisure and recreation in the context of an accommodation establishment.

Regarding theories of gift exchange [4,80–82], one can understand collaboration as a process of asymmetric symbolic exchanges that build new social relations, based on solidarity and reciprocity. For

Wittel [61], the sharing of tangible goods must be thought out as social collaboration and, in principle, the sharing of intangible goods (knowledge, information, ideas, affections, feelings, memories, emotions, and experiences) will always be social.

Since research has not yet retained about the role of space as an attribute of collaborative exchanges—whether tangible or intangible—which defy the line between the public and private space [122]. Additionally, space may be a prerequisite for collaborative arrangements that intensify and sustain social ties since, according to Molz [59], Bialski [60] and Wittel [61,62], collaboration is more efficient when such ties are established over time, and enjoy the pleasure of each other's company. Authors such as Meroni and Sangiorgi [123] and Murray, Culier-Grice, and Mulgan [124] have emphasized the need of physical space for collaborative arrangements, since, in it, the performativity of the subject exposed collectively becomes possible. This exchange of experiences has been observed in spaces of accommodation establishments, especially in rural accommodation, given the greater contact with cultural values [107].

It is also concluded that the Brazilian rural territory can promote collaborative forms, can produce political conditions for direct democracy, with its own capacity to solve social conflicts, endowed with social sustainability. This denotes the empowerment of rural communities still subjugated by local rural oligarchies and by coronelismo (rule of the coronels) in Brazil [18,125].

That is, the local and rural role of tourism planning and management in Brazil is evoked, since theory has argued for the integration of national, regional, and municipal bodies but, in fact, the rural space is not effectively included, since the rural condition is often shunned by urban tourism at the municipal and even regional levels [126].

In general, the need for further research to demonstrate the transformative socio-spatial role of Tourism is needed and, specifically, the role of Rural Tourism in promoting empowerment and social sustainability. Research questions the Manichean view of Tourism is seen as a negative factor driven by profit. Empirical studies have shown that collaboration is a necessary, albeit not sufficient, condition for cooperation [127]. Hence, the role of space contributes to collaboration.

The lack of literature addressing the relationship between the space of Brazilian rural accommodations and collaboration was a limitation of this research. However, this gap motivated the present study. Future studies on research objects like Pouso dos Paula are suggested. Using different methods to try to validate socio-spatial exploratory descriptions results from theoretical generalization.

Thus, it is worth remembering that the researchers involved in this article are applying the same methods in other Brazilian rural accommodation: Chácara Santa Eulália (Ferreira Martins, RS), Espaço Clarear (Camboriú, SC), Hospedaria Montanha Beija-Flor Dourado (Morretes, PR), and Sítio Matsuo (Mogi das Cruzes, SP). These cases were mentioned in CITURDES (International Congress of Rural Tourism and Sustainable Development), even though, to date, there is no literature on them. The researchers are then expected to study similar cases in other emerging countries, such as China, Mexico, and South Africa, with the objective of comparing collaboration and social sustainability with Brazil's data. All these studies cited above, both in Brazilian cases and in the cases of other emerging countries, are of interest for future research since there is a lack of literature on collaboration and social entrepreneurship in these countries [32].

Additionally, it can be considered that the theory of montage has not been applied to rural accommodation, which is observed in scientific production. This also shows the innovative character of the article.

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