



# ***The formation of the family farmers' class identity: a theoretical articulation between media consumption and participation in the social movement of Solidarity Economy***

**Veneza Mayora Ronsini**

Federal University of Santa Maria- Santa Maria- RS- Brazil  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8669-3148>

**Maurício Rebellato**

Federal University of Santa Maria- Santa Maria- RS- Brazil  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0244-1849>

## **Abstract**

This article discusses, theoretically, the relationship between the participation of family farmers in the Solidarity Economy social movement and the formation of class identity, as well as the role of the media in the (de) legitimation of identities. The theme of mobilization, through collective action in a social movement, allows us to observe the identification process with the social class more clearly from the interactions with traditional means of communication and new technologies. As a theoretical axis, British and Latin American cultural studies are used, and a combination is made between the sociology of reproduction by Pierre Bourdieu and the communicative mediations of culture, by Jesús-Martín-Barbero: the first, for his contributions to the study social class; the second, for treating the media as a matter of culture and social recognition. In the theoretical argument, it is stated that the movement's critical positioning on the modes of work and consumption in capitalist society tends to result in negotiated interpretations of the hegemonic media's representations about family farming. The role of the Solidarity Economy in the maintenance and economic survival of family farming is not sufficient to allow awareness of the subalternity of the class communed with other fractions of the rural working class. The desire for social and media recognition separates family agriculture from recognition with other workers.

**Keywords:** Family farmer. Social Class. Media Consumption. Solidarity Economy.

**A formação da identidade de classe de agricultores familiares: uma articulação teórica entre o consumo de mídia e a participação no movimento social de Economia Solidária**

## **Resumo**

Este artigo discute, teoricamente, as relações entre a participação de agricultores familiares no movimento social de Economia Solidária e a formação da identidade de classe, assim

como o papel da mídia na (des) legitimação das identidades. O tema da mobilização, através de uma ação coletiva em um movimento social, permite observar com mais clareza o processo de identificação com a classe social a partir das interações com os meios tradicionais de comunicação e as novas tecnologias. Como eixo teórico, são usados os estudos culturais britânicos e latino-americanos, e é feita uma combinação entre a sociologia da reprodução de Pierre Bourdieu e as mediações comunicativas da cultura, de Jesús-Martín-Barbero: o primeiro, por suas contribuições ao estudo de classe social; o segundo, por tratar a mídia como questão de cultura e de reconhecimento social. Na argumentação teórica, afirma-se que o posicionamento crítico do movimento acerca dos modos de trabalho e consumo na sociedade capitalista tende a resultar em interpretações negociadas das representações da mídia hegemônica acerca da agricultura familiar. O papel da Economia Solidária na manutenção e sobrevivência econômica da agricultura familiar não é suficiente para permitir a conscientização acerca da subalternidade de classe comungada com outras frações da classe trabalhadora rural. O afã de reconhecimento social e midiático aparta a agricultura familiar do reconhecimento com os demais trabalhadores.

**Palavras-chave:** Agricultura Familiar. Classe Social. Consumo de Mídia. Economia Solidária.

### **La formación de la identidad de clase de los agricultores familiares: una articulación teórica entre el consumo de medios y la participación en el movimiento social de la Economía Solidaria**

#### **Resumen**

Este artículo discute, teóricamente, la relación entre la participación de los agricultores familiares en el movimiento social Economía Solidaria y la formación de la identidad de clase, así como el papel de los medios de comunicación en la (des) legitimación de las identidades. El tema de la movilización, a través de la acción colectiva en un movimiento social, permite observar con mayor claridad el proceso de identificación con la clase social a partir de las interacciones con los medios tradicionales de comunicación y las nuevas tecnologías. Como eje teórico se utilizan los estudios culturales británicos y latinoamericanos, y se combina la sociología de la reproducción de Pierre Bourdieu y las mediaciones comunicativas de la cultura, de Jesús-Martín-Barbero: la primera, por sus aportes al estudio clase social; el segundo, por tratar a los medios de comunicación como una cuestión de cultura y reconocimiento social. En el argumento teórico se afirma que el posicionamiento crítico del movimiento sobre los modos de trabajo y consumo en la sociedad capitalista tiende a derivar en interpretaciones negociadas de las representaciones de los medios hegemónicos sobre la agricultura familiar. El papel de la Economía Solidaria en el mantenimiento y la supervivencia económica de la agricultura familiar no es suficiente para permitir la conciencia de la subalternidad de la clase en comunión con otras fracciones de la clase trabajadora rural. El deseo de reconocimiento social y mediático separa la agricultura familiar del reconocimiento con otros trabajadores.

**Palabras-Clave:** Agricultura familiar. Clase Social. Consumo de medios de comunicación. Economía solidaria.

#### **1 Introduction**

The formation of class identity in collective struggle has a double characteristic: that of linking recognition policies to redistribution policies (FRASER, 1995). Thus, collective action allows to observe more clearly the perception, positive or negative, that the social actor has of his recognition in society and the process of identification and disidentification with the social class. On the other hand, the critical positioning of the social movement about the spheres of work and

consumption facilitates the understanding of interactions with traditional media and new technologies, in a scenario of increasing individualization of consumption in the family.

The engagement of family farmers with the social movement of Solidarity Economy is relevant from consolidated experiences in the Central Region of Rio Grande do Sul and also by the importance of the Movement, which, according to the Atlas of Solidarity Economy in Brazil, had, in 2013, 1,696 solidarity economy enterprises only in Rio Grande do Sul. Therefore, it is seeking to understand how this participation is articulated with the formation of class identity, and also to understand the role of the media in the (dis)legitimation of identities.

Thinking about class identity means talking about common values for a given group. Despite the generational and gender separations existing among farmers, it is assumed that certain values transmitted by tradition can be preserved according to the adopted model of Solidarity Economy and the social recognition extracted from media practices.

Referring to the theme social class, Jacks (2017) highlights that it is important to point out the rarity of research that addresses not only the class, but this added to another category(s). Thus, it is believed that the originality and relevance of the theme is maintained through this theoretical proposal, by relating the perspective of media consumption and the category of social class by the analysis of a specific group that participates in a social movement and has a way of life in contradiction with the capitalist logic of the market.

This discussion is justified from a previous survey conducted in theses and dissertations published in the last three decades, which shows the absence of specific studies with families of family farmers and the relationship established with the media, based on the social class and the solidarity economy model. Absence of studies also supported by other authors in the last decade (RONSINI 2012; JACKS 2017, ESCOSTEGUY 2019). Regarding studies on the rural environment in the area of communication, Escosteguy (2019, p. 11) says that there is an "inattention of researchers" about the rural area in the area of Communication, especially when it comes to a research on the presence and multiple uses of information and communication technologies for the adoption of an understanding of mutual relations between technology, culture and society from the Barberian perspective.

This discussion is articulated from empirical studies developed in recent decades by authors who tried to evaluate and observe the degree of participation of working class individuals in an organized movement and how this individual makes the readings of the media (BARBIERO, 2018; LINS DA SILVA, 1985).

The theoretical axis for the study of the relations between experience and media combines the sociology of reproduction by Pierre Bourdieu and the communicative mediations of Martín-Barbero's culture: the first, for his contributions to the study of social class; the second, for treating the media as a matter of culture and social recognition.

To talk about the social movement of Solidarity Economy is to highlight the growing social and economic inequalities that have hit farmers since the 1980s and that cause them to articulate their practices and their work from this model, as an alternative to capitalist values, the food, economic and environmental crisis. Based on the dissatisfactions with the way of production, the creation of cooperatives was

linked to the class struggle led by the unions, which gave this struggle a much greater radicality (SINGER, 2002). The historical origin of the Solidarity Economy is related to what can be called revolutionary cooperativism, and the connection of Solidarity Economy with the workers' and socialist critiques of capitalism has become evident.

In Brazil, according to the Brazilian Forum of Solidarity Economy, experiences that have existed since the time of the colony can be considered as Solidarity Economy, such as "quilombos, religious movements such as Canudos or the creation of associative experiences at the beginning of the 20th century." (FBES, 2008, p.11). In the current model, Solidarity Economy enterprises gain strength and reappear in 1981 and strengthen at the end of the decade. This period is considered, for the Brazilian Solidarity Economy Forum, as the end of the military dictatorship years, the beginning of a process of redemocratization from the political point of view and also a period of exclusion from the economic and social point of view. Therefore, "the solidarity economy appears as an important strategy of socioeconomic inclusion created by workers in opposition to the strategies, always inventive of capitalism to overcome its own crises from the intensification of the process of exploitation of workers" (FBES, 2008, p.12).

Such difficulties are still evident in Brazil. Among many studies and reports released each year, the most recent survey of the United Nations Development Program, released in December 2020, has an important reflection. According to this survey, Brazil fell five positions in the human development index ranking and is the 84th of the 189 countries followed in indexes such as income, education and life expectancy at birth. Thus, one cannot ignore the fact that the dynamics of belonging to the classes are related to the ways inequalities are (re)produced. In rural areas, social and economic inequalities seem to be accentuated in relation to the urban environment, even after the institutionalization of Programs and Policies aimed at family farmers mainly between 2003 and 2011. For Grisa and Schneider (2014, s/p), small farmers, as they were called in the 1980s, were always on the margins of the actions of the Brazilian State, often increasing their fragility in the face of the development options pursued in the country.

Inequality in rural areas is marked by interests and disputes, struggles and claims involving various social movements (FROEHLICH AND MARIN, 2019), among them, the actions of rural workers in projects based on the Solidarity Economy. According to Fernandes (1996), economic exploitation, cultural exclusion and political domination generate conflicts and the most diverse forms of resistance. Gaiger and Asseburg (2007, p. 500) consider that, like other initiatives of the 1980s, in Brazil, the Solidarity Economy produced a social movement, acting through the voluntary association of workers through the sharing of resources.

Gohn (2011, p. 335) defines that social movements consist of collective actions of a sociopolitical and cultural character that enable different forms of the population organizing and expressing their demands. These movements act as a form of resistance to social exclusion and seek inclusion, create subjects for networking, identities for groups that were previously dispersed and disorganized and, when performing such actions, project feelings of social belonging in their participants. Gohn (2008; 2011) highlights the movement of popular cooperatives through the diversity of heterogeneous enterprises that unite around survival

strategies (work and income generation), articulated by NGOs with proposals that are founded in the Solidarity Economy, popular and organized in solidarity and self-managed networks.

In the capitalist context, the most common is social demobilization through structural reproduction (BOURDIEU, 1990) by the legitimation of a habitus that promotes the acceptance of the fundamental conditions of existence, since it involves a non-conscious reproduction – about what is possible, impossible and probable for individuals in their locations in the stratified social order –, and adjusting agents' expectations to their objective opportunities. But the author considers that some situations can give rise to change. In contexts of fast transformation of the structure of opportunities, these fail to correspond to the expectations arising from primary socialization, and then the potential for social crises arises when the dominated classes break their acceptance of the dominant values: "everything suggests that an abrupt drop in the objective in relation to subjective aspirations will probably produce a break in the tacit acceptance that the dominated classes (...) previously granted the dominant objectives and thus make it possible to invent or impose the objectives of genuine collective action" (BOURDIEU, 1984, p. 168).

The field of class conflict is produced in social practices in which the actors involved are not predefined (in the idea of a class itself), but constitute themselves as a class through their collective action in the Solidarity Economy model as opposed to the system and social reproductions, which mediates the relationship of the family farmer with the media and the formation of his class identity.

The participants of the Solidarity Economy model maintain characteristics of traditional social movements linked, for example, to religion, structural and economic issues, but strongly bring part of the agendas of the new social movements (Eder, 2002), such as the defense of the environment through sustainable production, the struggle for human rights so that everyone has access to public policies, the struggle for peace, moral order and the maintenance of values through the family.

According to the Brazilian Solidarity Economy Forum (2007), the collective action of the Solidarity Economy model works when some aspects are followed. For example, in relation to production, which represents the core generating wealth through the transformation of raw materials into products, "for the Solidarity Economy, unlike the Taylorist-Fordist conception one cannot look in a compartmentalized way. There is a need to realize the productive flow in which it is inserted, and to know the entire production chain and what consequences it has for society, for health and for the environment" (FBES, 2007 p.20). In relation to the organization of production, the principles of Solidarity Economy are based on commercialization through the local market and/or at most in the region in which it is inserted, because it seeks to avoid selling to small and medium-sized middle traders who resell to large wholesalers. Thus, local or regional fairs assume a meaning for the identity of farmers, they are spaces for exchanges, exchanges and articulations between producers and consumers. And one last aspect is in relation to consumption, which must be responsible and supportive. According to the Forum, "when talking about solidarity consumption, we cannot fail to reflect the

importance of fixed marketing spaces where our products can be found. Only then will we be able to really guarantee a consumer audience." (FBES, 2007, p. 22).

The proposal for the Solidarity Economy to be effective is in the egalitarian organization through those who associate themselves in this way to produce, market, consume or save. Singer (2002, p. 07) states that "in this formation all have the same share of the capital and, consequently, the same right to vote in all decisions. And there is no competition between the partners: if the cooperative progresses, accumulate capital, everyone wins equally." The Solidarity Economy appears as an "important strategy of socioeconomic inclusion created by workers as opposed to the strategies, always inventive of capitalism, to overcome their own crises from the intensification of the process of exploitation of workers" (FBES, 2008, p.12).

So far, it has been shown that family farmers organize themselves in a collective action and are motivated by a social movement. Throughout the text, it is theoretically pointed out how the links with the Solidarity Economy can model the construction of the identity of individuals in their relationship with the media.

This article is structured in five sections, counting on this introduction. The second reflects on the construction of the social identity of family farmers as part of the processes of identification and desidentification with class belonging. In the third one, the discussion presents the conceptualization of what family farming is and the Solidarity Economy model. In part four, the look turns to the relationships between media and identity building. The objective is to discuss theoretically how family farmers read the representation of the rural and also what the role of the media in the formation of class identity through the relationship between the media, society and culture. Finally, the final considerations and contributions of other authors that inspire the deepening of the discussion on the construction of class identity are followed.

## 2 The construction of class identity

In the examination of identity processes between collective or individual actors of family farming, it is theoretically inferred that the meaning attributed to class belonging varies according to generational, gender, ethnic, etc. cleavages. But the focus is to deepen the issue of class belonging according to the available economic, cultural, social and symbolic capitals. Even though the identities are multiple because they are due to different sources (CASTELLS, 1999), we insist on communal resistance as a promoter of economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital.

The understanding of the reproduction of power in capitalist society requires thinking about the relations between the social classes in terms of the cultural disputes between the hegemonic culture of the elites and the popular culture in the unequal establishment of the divisions of the available capitals and in the contestation of their distribution. The legitimacy of a class, therefore, depends on the construction of an identity as a process of classification of groups into socially constructed categories from cultural elements (BAUMAN, 2005) valued or socially devalued.

According to Bourdieu (1984), the acquisition of different capitals is related to the struggle for the maintenance and recognition of a certain position, or else, to the conquest of new spaces in relation to other groups. As a source for the acquisition of cultural capital, the media context can lead, according to Setton (2005, p.88), to increase the reflexive capacity, "because it offers a multiplicity of knowledge, constituting a new perceptual and cognitive reality of contemporary formations for the individual", that is, through the dissemination of information made by the media, one can expand the scope of cultural knowledge. As already observed by Ronsini (2016), in a research on media consumption and the reception of soap operas with women of the popular class, the incorporation of a media cultural capital forms a class femininity in which the classifications built are powerful mechanisms of reproduction of social and gender injustice as much as the production of symbolic capital that legitimizes values contrary to the ways of being and living of elites. Thus, "audiovisual culture – television and the internet, mostly – composes a cultural capital that competes with that transmitted by the family and the school or can reinforce them" (RONSINI, 2016, p. 48).

In relation to identity formation, Skeggs (1997) uses the terms identification and disidentification to discuss recognition or non-recognition processes with the class. For the author, the concept of class identity indicates a sense of social differences within hierarchies that seeks, in cultural differences, ways of expressing themselves. For example, belonging to the working class has a more positive sense among men, unlike women (SKEGGS 1997), which explains why there is a greater tendency for women to disidentify with this class. In Brazil, Salata's (2014) study with the middle class brings important contributions on how individuals see themselves in relation to class belonging. The author states that even if people deny belonging to a class, they are participating in classification disputes, ways in which those people avoid the moral judgments present in the idea of belonging to different social classes. "If, on the one hand, identifying itself as the Middle Class could be understood as a sign of 'snobs', on the other hand the identification as 'lower class', or 'working class' could be understood as the acceptance of a lower social status" (SALATA, 2014, p.72).

But what is the importance of all this for building the family farmer's class identity? The power relationship that the media also assumes in rural areas can be explained through Bourdieu, by suggesting that some concentrations of symbolic power are so great that they dominate the entire social landscape; that seem so natural, that they are difficult to be perceived by people. Thus, symbolic power acts as the power to build social reality. The field of power is the space above and beyond the specific fields where the forces that dispute the influence on the interrelations between the fields operate: the State is the main point of reference. The way one experiences life in society derives from structures that govern and guide human behavior. In this sense, the school, the family, the media, religion, etc., play an important role in the development of structures. The construction of the identity of the individual depends on the constitution of a habitus and the various available capitals, which will determine specific positions and places within society.

These conditions are defined through properties that belong to the position in the system of conditions which is, for Bourdieu (2007, p. 164), "a system of differences, of differential positions, that is, by everything that distinguishes it from

everything or that it is not, in particular, of everything or that is opposite to it: social identity is defined and affirmed in difference". Class identities are considered parts of the process by which social positions are interpreted and disputed. And so, to the dominated, it remains to maintain what Bourdieu calls "fidelity to himself and to the group" as an idea of collective resumption of social identity with regard to assimilating the dominant ideal.

This dispute, as Norbert Elias (2000) states, takes place between social positions, when the group that believes in a higher position departs the value of the other, conferring on itself virtues that the other does not possess. The idea of belonging to different classes – as empirically verified through research with self-declared families belonging to the "Brazilian middle class" (SALATA, 2014) – would be related to the perception of an unequal distribution of social recognition. Class identities can be interpreted as claims of belonging and recognition to socially significant groups (BOURDIEU, 1984). Thus, identification does not concern a simple choice about who to identify with, but rather "a tacit process of negotiation that would actively participate in the definition of the contours (practical and imagined) that part – hierarchically – 'we' and 'they', and thus engender consequences for the very reproduction of social inequalities" (SALATA, 2014, p.73).

Class identification is a process that involves disputes and negotiations that imply real consequences for individuals and for the formation of collectivities. As the philosopher Axel Honneth (2003) states, the search for social recognition can arouse resentment and grudges, subjectively felt by individuals belonging to the same social group that contains moral assumptions formed by claims of recognition, mobilized, not by chance, in popular complaints.

In the case of family farmers, despite the national importance of the work that is carried out, since they produce 50% of the food of the Brazilian basic basket (Agricultural Census 2006), presenting an annual turnover that went from R\$ 36 billion in 2006 to R\$ 66 billion in 2018, the proud self-designation "family farmer" (CHALITA, 2006) does not mean recognition through public policies consistent with increasing the economic conditions of families. Although the management model of the family production unit and the execution of the productive process by family members are sufficient for the social reversal of the negative qualifier attributed to manual work and to the subjects who perform it (PICOLOTTO 2008, p. 262), this does not become an economic appreciation by governments.

Therefore, it is concluded that identities are not abstractions: on the one hand, they relate to the acquisition, maintenance or increase of unequally distributed economic capital; on the other hand, they depend on collective action to convert cultural values into concrete economic valorization of subordinate groups.

### 3 Family farming

In the formation of the concept of family farming in Brazil, the term itself can be considered a political negotiation that usually generates controversies and questions among several authors. Nomenclature, in this case, is important mainly due to identity and belonging factors. Family farming is, in the definition of Abramoway (1997, p.3), that in which "management, property and most of the work come from individuals who maintain blood or marriage ties". But the author himself

recognizes that this definition is not unanimous, because the different social sectors and their representations build "scientific categories that will serve certain practical purposes: the definition of family farming, for the purpose of credit assignment, may not be exactly the same as that established for statistical quantification purposes in an academic study" (ABRAMOVAY, 1997, p. 3).

Using the term "family farming" can be considered by some authors as an "imposing production of social amnesia that erases the presence of peasants and conceals or minimizes the social movements of Brazilian peasants, consecrating – with invented tradition – the notion of the ropeand peaceful character of the man of the field" (GODOI, MENEZES, MARIN 2009. p. 12). That's why it's so important, in this case, to think about class identity.

The term family farming was widely used from the 1990s onto the implementation of Pronaf, the National Program for Strengthening Family Agriculture, "when the reduced interest credit policy favored in an unprecedented way a range of farmers with fewer economic resources, disuniting them from the large producers who had benefited, since the conservative modernization promoted by the military regime subsidized interest rates" (GODOI, MENEZES and MARIN, 2009, p. 215). However, the creation of PRONAF was marked by funding and investment standards with high rates, conditions accepted at first, because it marked its political creation. In a second moment, negotiations came, through social movements, articulations carried out mainly by small farmers from Rio Grande do Sul in 1997, when there was then the creation of Pronafinho, aimed at the poorest farmers in the Brazilian rural environment.

In this case, it is assumed that the term family farming cannot be linked only to public policy, granted through the State, but was an important milestone for many farmers as a promotion to credit. If only this is the case, "we will be faced with the same error and the trap of not only perceiving social agents when they are appointed by the State. (...) Why accept that only the exercise of state power would end up with a set of individuals and economic agents of legitimate existence?" (GODOI, MENEZES and MARIN, 2009, p. 215).

The term family farming summarizes the mode of class belonging, and the recognition of the movement's own participants as family farmers gives them pride in producing, marketing and trying to make another world possible, opposing the values of capitalism through solidarity economy and family farming.

When they perceive social inequality, family farmers tend not to identify with fractions of the rural working class, wishing not to be tied to the subaltern groups of the rural, such as those belonging to the peasantry and the settlers of the agrarian reform. These are issues related to the representations and construction of the identity of the individual that permeate the social groups to which they belong and those with whom they do not want to be identified. Disidentification Deidentification that occurs, in part, by the readings made from the media by farmers, which tends to criminalize these rural workers. In the case of the Landless Movement, for example, the mainstream media has traditionally produced an image of disqualification and criminalization about this group (OLIVEIRA, 2011). Thus, the image of the Movement is usually associated with negative aspects, causing family farmers to prefer to maintain a distance from these groups.

This conclusion is also supported by Skegss (1997), stating that individuals can identify with the conditions of subalternity, in a critical way, or else, refuse identification with the class (disidentification) to the extent that the cultural values of the working classes are not recognized by the dominant symbolic economy. For the author, the processes of distinction and differentiation that occur between social classes or between class fractions are attitudes of political order and opposition to arbitrariness of social categories. These processes of valorization or devaluation are ways in which the forms of culture become fixed of a particular person or social group.

It is important to consider, within this scenario of struggles and resistances in which the gaucho family farmers are inserted, that "the processes of transformation of the forms of occupation of the workforce, currently underway in the rural environment, are bringing a complexity of social, cultural and identity changes that go far beyond the noticeable changes in the performance of labor markets" (SCHNEIDER, 2003, p. 228). And it is these changes that have contributed to the strengthening of family farming as a whole – both in the sociopolitical and economic issues. These changes imply changes in the ways of functioning of family units, making new individual and collective strategies appear that aim to ensure the reproduction of the group as a family. In this context, "the rural environment becomes a space consisting of several agricultural and non-agricultural activities, conferring dynamism and assuming new functions, such as tourism, leisure, housing and nature preservation" (FROELICH And MARIN 2019, s/p).

Paul Singer (2002), a Brazilian economist and professor, says that capitalism leads to competition and inequality between "winners and losers" and

While the first accumulate capital, getting positions and advance in careers, the latter accumulate debts for which they must pay increasing interest, are fired or become unemployed until they become unemployable, which means that the defeats have marked them so much that no one else wants to employ them. Advantages and disadvantages are bequeathed from parents to children and grandchildren. The descendants of those who have accumulated professional, artistic, artistic capital or prestige, etc., enter economic competition with a clear advantage over the descendants of those who have ruined themselves, impoverished and been socially excluded. This ends up producing deeply unequal societies (SINGER, 2002, p. 07).

It is possible to conclude theoretically that family farmers can establish various strategies to ensure their social, economic and cultural reproduction, which do not necessarily involve the technical-productive modernization of their agricultural systems and rural establishments, which Schneider (2003) calls "Pluriactivity in Family Agriculture". These strategies can be understood from Bourdieu's perspective, through the articulation of a practical sense and habitus, in which individuals do not construct strategies as they wish, but as daily conditions of survival, whether sociocultural, economic or political. Thus, they act as central elements for understanding the transformations in the dynamics of family farming, in which farmers have achieved permanence in the field. Schneider (2003) corroborates the discussion by stating that the mechanisms and strategies have enabled and stimulated family forms in the field.

#### 4 The media and communicative mediations of culture in the construction of the identity of family farmers

Through cultural studies, it is recognized that communicative processes involve subjects, institutions, political, economic and cultural forces, and thus the media need to be understood as integral parts of everyday life and the systems through which it is organized. Considering that the construction of class identity can be formed and transformed according to the representations made in cultural systems, it is necessary to understand that identity is constructed through subjective issues, but mainly from external images that circulate in mediaatized society in all possible industrial forms, as Sodr  (1990) states. In fact, there are a multitude of representations and constructions of the rural in the media universe, but to what extent do these representations portray the contexts that lead to an identification, a belonging to what is presented to them? Kellner (2001) discusses the power of the media in modeling individuals and how the various forms of culture conveyed by the various media influence people to identify with the dominant ideologies, positions, social representations and policies. For him, "media culture also provides the material with which many individuals build their sense of class, ethnicity, and race" (KELLNER, 2001, p. 9).

The relationship between the readings of media representations and the construction of identities is a concern in the trajectory of reception studies for several decades. In the case of Brazil, the pioneering work of Lins da Silva (1985) showed how two communities of workers made the appropriations from the assistance of the news "Jornal Nacional" of the Rede Globo. For the author, popular culture and community organizations are able to critically absorb what they consume on television and that television news helps to reinforce coherent views and previously acquired by people.

Recently, Barbiero (2018) sought to understand how sociopolitical mediations conform the uses and senses in the reception of a telenovela. The study was done with women who participate in an Association based on the Solidarity Economy model. The author showed that participation in the association expands the social capital of the participants, which leads to the knowledge of problems common to other women and also reinforces principles of solidarity and cooperation. The women surveyed also demonstrated a critical reading of the telenovela, daily life habits based on the principles of Solidarity Economy and a break in the reproduction of inherited family habits in relation to the divisions of work with the husband, the raising of children and issues of valuing women.

It is notorious how the media, both traditional and new technologies, take place in the construction of class identities. Therefore, other similar studies are also presented that show empirical data relevant to this article. Mar o (2020) seeks to understand the peasant ruralities of young maranhenses from the representations of the rural in the media. According to the author, relationships were found between the representations of the mass media and the interpretation of young people about the rural. The reading made by the young people makes them

disidentify with what they consume in the mainstream media, mainly because of the representations of the rural as "old and outdated".

Escosteguy's (2019) research, although it does not specifically evidence the construction of class identity, addresses the formation of new ruralities and the relationship with the media, bringing important empirical data on media consumption by farmers in the Central Region of Rio Grande do Sul. It is understood that communication technologies "can be understood as well as traditional media that encompasses, among other media, newspapers and printed magazines, radio and television, such as new media, mobile phone, computer, tablets and the internet itself" (ESCOSTEGUY, 2019, p. 17). The author shows that TV and radio are the favorite media among the families surveyed, "even though they are losing space for the computer and mobile phone - whenever possible, connected to the internet - among the younger members. Also, they are the means of longer appropriation and incorporation in the daily lives of families, according to the reports collected" (ESCOSTEGUY, 2019, p. 135).

For Escosteguy (2019, p. 51), "acquisition, possession, presence in the home, forms of uses and relationship with its contents interfere in the formation of space and, therefore, in the material and symbolic relationships constituted by the subjects in this same space" (ESCOSTEGUY, 2019, p. 51). It is therefore important to "understand a variety of ways where new and old ones adapt to each other and coexist symbiotically and also how we live with them as part of our personal and domestic 'sets of means' (MORLEY, 2008, p. 123). It is possible to identify that the media consumption of rural families takes place in different ways according to the individual surveyed and also with greater or lesser engagement according to age and family position. Escosteguy (2019) states that a means of communication, however widespread and known, in rural areas may not be incorporated. This consumption is also varied in relation to the type of content that is sought, which can be fiction, entertainment and/or news.

The uses of the media relate to the social practices that shape individuals, through the relationship they establish with institutions such as family, school and economic, political, religious and leisure institutions. Such socializations are permeated by class, gender, generational and ethnic issues. All relations arise from the expression of the world views of family farmers from both the constitution of all levels of socialization and the social conditions of reproduction and social representations that provide elements to analyze the continuous process of negotiation between the dominant and subaltern classes.

From the insights of this article and the categories of mediation – sociality, rituality – of the Map of Communicative Mediations of Culture, it is proposed the continuity of investigations of the relations between media and class identity. It is believed that this map allows to operationalize the analysis of any social phenomenon that has relation to the instances of communication, culture and politics in which mediation should be understood as the structuring process that configures the logic of uses. The idea is that this theoretical discussion can serve as a basis for future studies related to the construction of class identity in social movements and the ways in which articulations with the media are made.

## 5 Final considerations

To think about the social class of individuals is to understand the organizing principle of capitalist society (RONSINI, 2007), which determines inequalities and professional differences, income, education, access to cultural goods and centers of power. In this sense, resistance, struggle, denial or symbolic reproduction (BOURDIEU, 2008) occur through the formation of class identity (SKEGGS, 1997).

Farmers have an intuitive notion of the symbolic identification of the place where they are inserted and this identity manifests itself in an individual and collective way, defining the individual from characteristics that integrate it into the whole, with the collectivity. In this environment, the reproduction of the way of life may be linked to the strategies adopted by them. As Schneider (2003) approaches, these strategies, as alternatives of survival or resistance, are present in the rural environment and, in the case of the solidarity economy model, it is still possible to see that they happen in an organized way, through self-managed groups.

Returning to the discussions of Martín-Barbero (2003), from the perspective of mediations, it is in the social class of individuals that one has the structure that articulates the identity elements that expose the forms of domination, which determine the construction of people's daily lives and, thus, structure the aspects of life of recent capitalism. In Brazil, given the social inequalities that are presented, the identity elements in relation to the class can undergo constant transformations in its construction according to the context in which the individual is inserted.

Thus, identity elements assume different contours and perspectives according to the public policy changes adopted in the country. It can be said that, until the year 2016, before the economic crisis, there was a period of economic growth for the farmer, and, in terms of income, this rural population improved somewhat the living conditions in parallel to socioeconomic improvements. But in this new scenario, where public policies for this public are scarce, how are class identity issues modeled for family farmers as recognition and belonging in this economic moment?

In view of the authors studied on in this article and the perspectives that show that the relations established with the media act in the construction of class identity, it is considered that the media has been a strong factor of influence in this period, due to the discussion established around agribusiness, for example, throughout the country. If, in relation to the representations of the rural made by the hegemonic media, through the main channels of communication, in the case of television, for example, the man of the field is usually represented as a caricature figure, romanticized, on the other hand, in advertising and television news, technology, production, development are usually linked to the large producer and agribusiness. Their circulation impacts the ways in which social groups define themselves and define the other, but they can be better understood when analyzed from the perspective of class identity.

The debate about the power of the media in modeling individuals and how the various forms of culture conveyed by the media lead people to identifications or disidentifications needs to be deepened to understand these representations of the rural and the construction of class identity from the participation in the Solidarity Economy model. Even though there are studies related to the construction of class identity, these are still scarce in the field of communication. But it can be stated,

theoretically, that the media has an important relationship with the establishment of differences in the negotiated readings made by family farmers. These differences are reinforced by the hegemonic media in that it highlights agriculture, through its positive points of economic development, usually linked to agribusiness, and a criminalization of the working and peasant fraction of the rural. It is these differences that lead family farmers to disidentify themselves with other fractions of the rural working class, for example, landless and settled agrarian reform.

Thus, it is assumed that the participants of the Solidarity Economy model make a negotiated interpretation of the rural readings in the media, since participation in the social movement does not mean engagement in political struggle of mobilization and confrontation with agrarian elites. For Ronsini (2012), the negotiated interpretation is between the dominant and the opposite interpretation. The analysis model proposed by Hall (2003) is useful to systematize the interpretative positions of the audience. The dominant position occurs when the audience directly and fully appropriates the content presented and decodes the message according to the referential code in which it was encoded, that is, the audience operates within the dominant code. The negotiated interpretation is the one that combines elements of adaptation and opposition to the dominant codification. Finally, the opposed, manifests itself when the audience decodes the message in a contrary way, because it contests the messages received by the preferential code.

From the proposed models and the theoretical axes articulated in this work, it can be affirmed that there is no full class consciousness among family farmers, but an identification or disidentification with the social class. The projection of identity, especially in the rural elite, is not necessarily a desire to belong to another rural group, but the desire to conquer the appreciation and respect that are attributed socially to other rural fractions. The deidentification is shown here as a manifestation of the historical processes that lead to the construction of class identity through the affirmation of not becoming visible through the media, in a dispute for space with other rural groups.

Based on the literature, it is also concluded that the valorization of family agriculture through public policies takes place only in a symbolic and cultural way. There is no distributive justice in relation to family agriculture and the solidarity economy, either due to the lack of government investments, increasingly reduced in this area, by the media lack of interest in this sector or by the lack of social recognition. Solidarity Economy Enterprises fight an unequal struggle between the micro and macro context in the struggle for recognition and redistribution. The recognition of the economic and cultural value of family agriculture, through social movements, partially corrects distributive and symbolic injustice: it promotes increased income and a decent way of authorrepresentation of workers. The correction does not occur in its entirety, because adequate public investments and a media and social representation are lacking in the work and culture of this segment of the peasant content.

## REFERENCES

ABRAMOVAY, Ricardo. Paradigmas do Capitalismo Agrário em questão. São Paulo. Anpocs, Unicamp, Hucitec, 1992. **“Uma nova extensão para a agricultura familiar”**. In: Seminário Nacional De Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural. Brasília: Anais, p. 29. 1997.

ASSEBURG, Hans Benno; GAIGER, Luiz Inácio. **A Economia Solidária diante das Desigualdades**. Revista de Ciências Sociais, v. 50, n. 3, 2007, p. 499-533. Disponível em: <<https://www.scielo.br/pdf/dados/v50n3/03.pdf>> Acesso em 23/08/2020.

BARBIERO, Hellen Paniz. **Recepção de Telenovelas, Mediações Sociopolíticas e Gênero**. Dissertação de Mestrado. Programa de Pós-Graduação em Comunicação. Universidade Federal de Santa Maria. Santa Maria, 2018.

BAUMAN, Z. **Identidade: entrevista a Benedetto Vecchi**. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2005.  
BOURDIEU, Pierre. **Distincion**. Londres: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984.

BOURDIEU, Pierre. **Coisas ditas**. São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense, 1990.

BOURDIEU, Pierre. **A distinção: crítica social do julgamento**. São Paulo: Edusp; Porto Alegre: Zouk; 2007.

CASTELLS, Manuel. **O poder da identidade**. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 2000.

CHALITA, Marie Anne Najm. **Agricultura familiar e seus novos vínculos com a prática econômica**. Agric. São Paulo, v. 53, n. 2, p. 125-139. São Paulo, 2006  
EDER, Klaus. **A nova política de classes**. Bauru – SP: Edusc, 2002.

ELIAS, Norbert. **Os estabelecidos e os outsiders**. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2000.  
ESCOSTEGUY, Ana Carolina. **Cartografias dos estudos culturais – uma versão latino-americana**. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica 2010.

ESCOSTEGUY, A. C. D.; SIFUENTES, L.; BIANCHINI, A. **Mulheres rurais e seus usos mediados das TICs: tensionamentos e permanências nas relações de gênero**. Intercom, v. 40, n. 1, p. 195-211, jan./abr. São Paulo: 2017.

ESCOSTEGUY, Ana Carolina. **As tecnologias de comunicação no cotidiano de famílias rurais: (re)configuração de uma ruralidade**. Santa Cruz do Sul: Edunisc, 2019.

FÓRUM BRASILEIRO DE ECONOMIA SOLIDÁRIA. **Caderno de aprofundamento aos debates**. 2007.

FÓRUM BRASILEIRO DE ECONOMIA SOLIDÁRIA. **Ousar a solidariedade: partilha de práticas de economia social e solidária no Brasil e no Quebec**. Chantier De L'économie sociale. Fundação L'Hermitage, 2008.

FRASER, Nancy. **From redistribution to recognition? Dilemmas of justice in 'post-socialist age'**. New left Review, n. 212, p.68-94. 1995.

FROELICH, José Marcos; MARIN, Joel. **Juventudes rurais e desenvolvimento territorial**. Santa Maria: UFSM, 2019.

GOHN, Maria da Glória. **Movimentos sociais na contemporaneidade**. Revista Brasileira de Educação, v. 16, n. 47, p. 333-361, maio-ago. 2011. Disponível em: <<http://www.scielo.br/pdf/rbedu/v16n47/v16n47a05.pdf>>. Acesso em 27/08/20.

GRISA, Catia; SCHNEIDER, Sérgio. **Três gerações de políticas públicas para a agricultura familiar e formas de interação entre sociedade e estado no Brasil**. Revista de Economia e Sociologia Rural, vol. 52. supl.1. Brasília: 2014.

HALL, Stuart. **Da Diáspora: Identidades e Mediações Culturais**. Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG; Brasília: Representação da UNESCO no Brasil, 2003.

HONNETH, AXEL. **Luta por reconhecimento: a gramática moral dos conflitos sociais**. Trad. Luiz Repa. Ed. 34. São Paulo: 2003.

KELLNER, Douglas. **A cultura da mídia: Identidade e política entre o moderno e o pós-moderno**. Tradução de Ivone Castilho Benedetti. Bauru, SP: EDUSC, 2001.  
MOORE, Carlos. **Racismo & Sociedade: Novas bases epistemológicas para entender o racismo**. Belo Horizonte: Mazza Edições, 2007.

JACKS, Nilda (Coord.). **Meios e Audiências III: reconfigurações dos estudos de recepção e consumo midiático no Brasil**. Porto Alegre: Sulina, 2017.  
LINS DA SILVA, Carlos Eduardo. **Muito Além do Jardim Botânico: Um estudo sobre a audiência do Jornal Nacional da Globo entre trabalhadores**. São Paulo: Summus Editorial, 1985.

MARÃO, Marco. **Juventude camponesa e consumo de mídia na era digital**. Dissertação de Mestrado. Programa de Pós-Graduação em Comunicação. Universidade Federal de Santa Maria. Santa Maria, 2020.

MARTÍN-BARBERO, Jesús. **Dos meios às mediações: comunicação, cultura e hegemonia**. Tradução de Ronald Polito e Sérgio Alcides. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. UFRJ, 1987.

MARTÍN-BARBERO, Jesús. **Comunicação e Mediações culturais**. Revista Brasileira de Ciências da Comunicação. 2000.

MARTÍN-BARBERO, Jesús. **Dos meios às mediações: comunicação, cultura e hegemonia**. Tradução de Ronald Polito e Sérgio Alcides. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. UFRJ, 2003.

MARTÍN-BARBERO, Jesús. **Dos meios às mediações: comunicação, cultura e hegemonia**. Rio de Janeiro: UFRJ, 2009.

MARTÍN-BARBERO, Jesús. **Dos meios às mediações: 3 introduções**. Trad. Fernanda Castilho e Maria Immacolata Vassalo de Lopes. V.12 - Nº 1 jan./abr. p. 9-31 . São Paulo: 2018.

MORLEY, David. **Medios, modernidad y tecnología. La geografía de lo nuevo**. Barcelona, Espanha: Gedisa, 2008.

O FEIRÃO COLONIAL – 25 ANOS. **Revista comemorativa dos 25 anos do Feirão Colonial**. Editora Palloti. Santa Maria, 2017.

OLIVEIRA, Catarina Tereza Farias de; NUNES, Marcia Vidal; BRAGA, Robson da Silva. **A construção da auto-imagem do MST na sua mídia e suas relações estratégicas de inserção social global**. Revista Fronteiras – estudos midiáticos 13(3): 185-194, setembro/dezembro. Unisinos, 2011. Disponível em <http://revistas.unisinos.br/index.php/fronteiras/article/viewFile/fem.2011.133.05/592>.

PICOLOTTO, Everton Lazzaretti. **As mãos que alimentam a nação: agricultura familiar, sindicalismo e política**. Rio de Janeiro: Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro, 2011.

RONSINI, Veneza Mayora. **Mercadores de Sentido: consumo de mídia e identidades juvenis**. Porto Alegre: Sulina, 2007.

RONSINI, Veneza Mayora. **A crença no mérito e a desigualdade: a recepção da telenovela do horário nobre**. Porto Alegre: Sulina, 2012.

RONSINI, Veneza Mayora. **Telenovelas e a questão da finalidade de classe**. Matrizes. V. 10 - Nº 2 maio/ago. p. 45-60. São Paulo – Brasil: 2016.

SALATA, André Ricardo. **A classe média brasileira: posição social e identidade de classe**. 1. ed. - Rio de Janeiro: Letra Capital, 2016.

SCHNEIDER, S. **A pluriatividade na agricultura familiar**. 2nd ed. Porto Alegre: Editora da UFRGS, 2003.

SECRETÁRIA NACIONAL DE ECONOMIA SOLIDÁRIA. **Atlas da Economia Solidária no Brasil 2005**. - Ministério do Trabalho. Atlas. Brasília: 2006. 60 p.: il. ATLAS DIGITAL ECONOMIA SOLIDÁRIA. Online. Disponível em: <http://sies.ecosol.org.br/atlas>. Acesso em: 02/04/2021.

SETTON, Maria da Graça Jacintho. **Um novo capital cultural: pré-disposições e disposições à cultura informal nos segmentos com baixa escolaridade**. Disponível em <<https://www.scielo.br/pdf/es/v26n90/a04v2690.pdf>> Educ. Soc., Campinas, vol. 26, n. 90, p. 77-105, Jan./Abr. 2005.

SINGER, Paul. **Introdução à Economia Solidária**. 1ª Edição. São Paulo: Fundação Perseu Abramo, 2002.

SKEGGS, Beverley. **Formations of class and gender**. Londres, 1997.

SODRÉ, Muniz. **A máquina de narciso: Televisão, indivíduo e poder no Brasil**. 2. ed. São Paulo: Cortez Editora e Livraria Ltda, 1990.

**Mauricio Rebellato**. Master in Communication from the Graduate Program in Communication of the Federal University of Santa Maria. Member of the Social Media Uses research group (CNPq). [mauricio-rebellato@hotmail.com](mailto:mauricio-rebellato@hotmail.com).

**Veneza Mayora Ronsini**. Main Professor of the Department of Communication Sciences at the Federal University of Santa Maria and Professor of the Graduate Program in Communication. Researcher PQ2 of CNPq. Member of the Information and Technology Project of the Institutional Program of Internationalization UFSM/Capes PrInt. Coordinator of the Social Media Uses Research Group (CNPq) [venezar@gmail.com](mailto:venezar@gmail.com).

Submitted in: 07/09/2020

Accepted in: 26/01/2021

#### CONTRIBUTION OF EACH AUTHOR:

**Conceituação (Conceptualization):** Veneza Mayora Ronsini e Mauricio Rebellato

**Curadoria de Dados (Data curation):** Veneza Mayora Ronsini e Mauricio Rebellato

**Análise Formal (Formal analysis):** Veneza Mayora Ronsini e Mauricio Rebellato

**Obtenção de Financiamento (Funding acquisition):** veneza Mayora Ronsini – Pesquisadora PQ2 CNPq

**Investigação/Pesquisa (Investigation):** Veneza Mayora Ronsini e Mauricio Rebellato

**Metodologia (Methodology):** Veneza Mayora Ronsini e Mauricio Rebellato

**Administração do Projeto (Project administration):** Veneza Mayora Ronsini e Mauricio Rebellato

**Recursos (Resources):**

**Software:**

**Supervisão/orientação (Supervision):** Veneza Mayora Ronsini

**Validação (Validation):** Veneza Mayora Ronsini e Mauricio Rebellato

**Visualização (Visualization):** Veneza Mayora Ronsini e Mauricio Rebellato

**Escrita – Primeira Redação (Writing – original draft):** Veneza Mayora Ronsini e Mauricio Rebellato

**Escrita – Revisão e Edição (Writing – review & editing):** Veneza Mayora Ronsini e Mauricio Rebellato

Funding sources: CNPq