

## Geographical Delimitation of a Mediterranean Territory with Cultural and Heritage Interest

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The territorial delimitation entails the creation of homogeneous areas under a specific criterion. The use of the geographic criterion allows divisions more holistic, to consider various aspects of the material and intangible, present and historical reality. You can facilitate a better knowledge of the territory, as well as improve the management of the same. There are territories with significant fragility and diversity in the Mediterranean, one of those is the Valle de Ricote in the southeast of Spain.

It was taken as a territory of work, on which carry out a geographical delimitation, the Ricote Valley. During the development of the methodology, to achieve the target set in the first place, was a compilation of information on the various historical organizations formalized and others that you could deduct a certain organizational structure the territory of study. A draft proposal of delimitation of the study area was made after analysis and concise assessment of the information obtained. The sources used were districts proposal documents, as well as historical facts collected in various publications.

Then collected geographic information: hydrogeography, biogeography, organization of the territory, human settlements, climatology, etc., without, therefore rejecting the one obtained previously. Information collected is represented on various maps (mapping modeling), for then, by means of topological overlay, pick up points from the attributes associated with the different geographical facts present in the Valley, giving place a delimitation of textual and graphic (map). They were considered natural characters (biotic and abiotic) as well as anthropogenic. Information about geographical facts, which show certain homogeneity, give rise to thresholds-delimited geographic systems was used.

Also included a survey to residents and non-residents. Using the same asked respondents if they consider that the places suggested, previously selected on the basis of documents and visits to the territory, readings are part of the Valley,



answering yes or no to the question. It should be noted that, for the case of the surveyed residents, were taken into account those registered in the populations of the first order: Abarán, Blanca, Cieza, eyes, Ricote, Ulea and Villanueva del Río Segura. All of them are municipal, and are among the most populated area of study. Cieza were excluded and Archena initially to be located outside of the results Valle.

As most notable appearance highlighted that in the year 1243, to the territory of study, you can call him as Valle de Ricote. You can not say emphatically the existence of a formalized territorial structure and even less which could be included in the same territories. Although this is an interesting point of departure for the delimitation of the Valley. From 1285, under the territorial organization, within the framework of the religious orders, appears the "Encomienda del Valle de Ricote" directed by the order of Santiago. But with a better definition, are not cited the territories included in the parcel. After several visits to place and read documents related to the delimitation of the Valley, will decides to go in a broad context, which includes the entirety of the towns of Abarán, Archena, Blanca, Cieza, eyes, Ricote, Ulea and Villanueva del rio Segura.

Then an approximation to the area of study from different points of view takes place: geographic, biogeographical, historical, etc. Stands out the existence of a River Valley in the Centre of the study area, formed by the river Segura, flanked by significant mountain reliefs. Determining the territorial organization and influencing the socio-economic activity. The geomorphological limits are determined by the narrowing of Bolvax - upstream - and the Los Baños - downstream-, as well as the surrounding reliefs. Together they define a central area and another external to it.

From the biogeographical realm, it is acceptable as Valley, from the perspective of the potential vegetation and bioclimatic flats, the territories of Abarán, Blanca, Ulea, Ricote and eyes. The historical-population area, located past and present human settlements around the river Segura in the vast majority. Since the administrative organization of the territory, in early years: 1243, 1281 and 1285; the existence of an entity known as "Val de Ricote or Valle de Ricote", although not being mentioned territories or villas that make up is already cited. Based on the historical document of 1301, in the context of the Encomienda, will be referred to villas and some of the territories as belonging to the same. The implementation of the "legal parties" from the 1834 will mark a turning point, generating a new structuring of the Valley. The judicial party of Cieza will draw together all the municipalities of study except Archena, being included in the judicial party of Mula.

Advancing the 20th century will be the various proposals for the Organization of the regional territory, in the so-called regions. The municipalities of the study area appear together except in the 1984 proposal. The Statute of autonomy of the Region of Murcia provides for the establishment of regions, issue not currently applied. However



each of the different departments (ministries) have defined regions for the development of their competencies, with own criteria and without any coordination with the rest; these could be called "sectoral regions".

Administrative organisations, taking place from 1331 until today, establish an organizational pattern of the Valley. The towns or municipalities, currently, Ricote, eyes, Ulea and Villanueva, always held in the same unit. Other clustering most repeats is one that includes the aforementioned locations, more Abarán and Blanca. This is followed by long distance those that Archena is included. And lastly which includes Cieza. When they are considered the latter the administrative organization is never known as "Valle de Ricote". Having said that the geographical delimitation of the Ricote Valley proposal, starts from a central core, consisting of the municipalities of eyes, Ricote, Ulea and Villanueva, already referred to as components of the homonymous region. Having to add Abarán and Blanca. From the perspective of the landscapes, the Ricote Valley unit, along with the units: Sierras de Ricote and gold, Plains de Retamar, and Plains of Campotéjar; surrounding delimiting the territory of the Valley.

We must mention, besides the surveys-interviews carried out the population. Those made to non-residents, reduced study area marking the limits in Bolvax and Archena Spa, include all municipal territories located in the right bank River, between the aforementioned points upstream and down. To the left include the mountainous reliefs, and the plains located between the Hoya del Campo, white station, and station of Ulea. On the other hand non-residents exclude Plains cited as part of the Valley.

As a result of the combination of the information derived from the aspects of biogeográficos, hidrogrogeográficos, agriculture, population, surveys, etc., and taking into account the thresholds of border, is proposed as the Ricote Valley, those territories defined by the fluvio-Valley of the Segura River and surrounding reliefs, according to slopes that pour their waters into the River, and the visibility of the same from the runway.

In conclusion it can be said that establishment of a territorial delimitation from a geographic, turned out conception right, to being the issues taken into account for the delimitation from a holistic view. Forcing at the same time the question of study multidisciplinary treatment. In the course of the investigation it was found that through the analysis and assessment of elements and/or processes is achieved to detect homogeneous patterns. For the case study, we can say that the Ricote Valley is characterized by the fluvio-Valley of the river Segura, acting this as fundamental axis from which organized the territory, backed by natural and anthropic aspects.

For future territorial delimitations, it is of interest using the thresholds as material and immaterial change places, constitute a border between different systems, deepening



about those magnitudes which allow objectify such limits. This information can be represented in maps, which allows to obtain a map derived from the fact that different thresholds being superimpose the information contained therein. In addition, it is appropriate to reinforce the work of delimitation with the completion of surveys-interviews.

