What’s in a Place Name?  
When the Rise of Protection Coincides with the Fall of Tradition

Katia L. Sidali  
Free University of Bozen-Bolzano

Maurizio Canavari  
Alma Mater Studiorum-University of Bologna

The triple bottom-line of GIs

• Economics: producers exercise a collective monopoly due to the investments done to produce a product of high quality
• Geographical: the reputation of a product derives from the totality of pedological and climate-related attributes of the territory
• Cultural: the techniques that producers have developed during years/generations belong to the ancestral knowledge of that community

Q1: In which way can cultural claims be beneficial to producers, consumers and other stakeholders (e.g. tourist operators) of a GI-community?

Case study 1 will show how the Allgovian cheese producers have successfully protected their cheese from competing commodities by certifying some aspects of their cheese-making culture

Q2: In which way are cultural claims instrumentalized within a community and even become detrimental to other groups of the GI-community?

Case study 2 will show how within a community the dominant group is successful in reshaping and reinventing the local cultures in relation to other pre-existing cultural groups

Methodology

• The study design is based on qualitative interviews carried out in two timeframes 2011-2013 and 2016-present with representatives of different interest groups (tourism policy officers, regional civil servants, dairy farmers, cheese producers, members of special interest groups such as confraternities and Slow Food Movement).
Case 1: Allgovian Emmentaler (AE)

- Protected as PDO from 1997
- Stimming originally from Switzerland, the AE spread gradually in the Allgäu region in Germany of raw milk of cows fed with grass and hay
- The PDO was claimed to protect the AE from the increasing success of the industrial Emmentaler, which is mainly produced with pasteurized milk (Jeanneau et al., 2011)
- Nowadays, thanks to a good coordination among the stakeholders of the territory, small dairies sell the AE cheese for a premium price to culinary alpine tourists that are locked in by AE tourist routes and AE-related events.

First proposition

In a terroir-community, cultural claims related to a GI-product are mostly accepted as long as they contribute to eliminate competition from the external market (outside the terroir).

The AE economics of the Allgovian region

Case 2

- Protected as PDO from 2010
- It is a cured hard cheese from cooked cheese dough. It is available in three varieties all of which are protected by PDO.
- The cooperative selling this cheese stems from the idea of a priest who had visited Scandinavian cooperatives and wanted to import this coop model. At present there is still only a cooperative which produces this cheese and which turned into a consortium in 2010.

The cultural meaning of the PDO label of the AE cheese

- The majority of cheese producers stated that they ignore the meaning of the PDO cheese.
- Surprisingly, one Algovian cheese producer even displayed the "wrong" label (PGI- protected geographical indication instead of the PDO scheme) on the premises of his farm.

Subordination of some community groups...

Regional ethnographic museum:

Mission: to showcase the traditional agrarian life of the region in an historical perspective.
The director is critical in the recognition of the cheese as a traditional product since the history gives evidence that a real iconic product of the region is the artisanal butter.
Subordination of some community groups...

Traditional Confraternita:
Founded in 1996, it is financed by the members of the confraternita.
Mission: the traditional promotion of the regional cheeses regardless their variations.
It has an internal, traditional dress code and an internal vocabulary (director=Gran Maestro).

... and creation of new ones

New Confraternita:
Founded in 2010, it is 100% financed by the cheese-consortium, whose director is a "member ad honorem" of the new confraternita.
Mission: the promotion of the cheese with special focus on the most expensive variations (6 months and 1-year cured cheeses). It aims at being recognised as "legitimated partner for the promotion of the

Second proposition

In a terroir-community, cultural claims related to a GI-product are only accepted as long as they do not compete with the economic purposes of the dominant group (most of the time the GIs-producers).

Conclusions

- Successful GI-governance means to establish a community-based approach.
- Since the community is not monolithic (Saarinen, 2006) policy-makers should seek a permanent dialogue with the different groups within the community benefiting of the GI protection.
- Surveillance mechanisms are important to enable the setting by consensus of the limits to the cultural practices of the different stakeholders.

Thank you!

Katia Laura Sidali: ksidali@unibz.it
Maurizio Canavari: maurizio.canavari@unibo.it

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!
ksidali@unibz.it
maurizio.canavari@unibo.it