

# Geographical Indications and “Origin” Products in Brazil – The Interplay of Institutions and Networks

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**Summary.** — In this article, we analyze the institutional and organizational factors which have influenced the development of policies and mobilizations around “origin” agricultural products in Brazil focusing particularly on the role of networks. We identify the different instances involved in the defense and promotion of origin products situated within the broader politico-institutional context. We then show how these interact through the analysis of an iconic origin product, artisan cheese in Brazil. Two types of networks are identified and their different objectives and implications for the promotion of origin products analyzed. Finally, we relate GIs to the broader trends in Brazilian agriculture.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this article, we analyze the institutional and organizational factors which have influenced the development of policies and mobilizations around “origin” agricultural products in Brazil. We argue that the specific characteristics of initiatives in Brazil on origin products need to be understood in the light of this country’s federative structure. This has allowed for the emergence of autonomous State-level initiatives which subsequently involve complementary and/or conflicting relations with the Federal institutional and regulatory framework. The latter represented a direct response to international commitments, with competences and responsibilities for Geographical Indications (GI) being determined by pre-existing politico-administrative spheres of influence. By contrast, at the State level, formal policies and legislation emerged in response to the development of international academic research and social movement networks in favor of origin products, specifically promoting the French, and to a lesser extent Italian, *appellation d’origine* tradition.

More recently, vigorous national networks have developed in defense of artisan farm products mobilizing new movements, public sectors, and actors – Slow Food, Brazil’s National Historical and Artistic Heritage Institute (IPHAN), the Symposium of Artisan Cheeses of Brazil, together with nationally and internationally famous Brazilian chefs. In the Brazilian context, therefore, GIs are a complex heterogeneous phenomenon and a component of wider movements supporting and promoting artisan food products.

Our analysis of the institutional, organizational, network and social movement underpinning of origin products relies broadly on insights into network theory and economic sociology where networks can lay the basis for institutions and organizations (Granovetter, 1985) or for markets (White, 2001) and where the frontiers between organizations, markets, and social movements can be fluid (Fligstein, 2001). There is a vast literature on networks, understood as the basic unit of social action (Brass, Galaskiewicz, Greve, & Tsai, 2004; Diani & McAdam, 2003). In this article we identify the way networks

have been decisive for the promotion of GIs in Brazil and distinguish two different types of networks which we denominate respectively “expert system” and “mobilization” networks. The former has played a decisive role in mediating between different organizations and institutions responsible for GIs which otherwise may have prevented the emergence of common priorities. The latter has enabled a successful challenge to the existing regulatory framework drawing on key actors outside the existing organizations and institutions responsible for GIs.

In the first part of this article we identify the different components involved in the defense and promotion of origin products situated within the broader politico-institutional context. In the second section, we show how these interact through the analysis of an iconic origin product, artisan cheese in Brazil, distinguishing three predominant traditions of production. In the third part we develop a distinction between two types of networks which contribute to the development of GIs and origin products in Brazil and identify their different objectives and implications for the development of origin products. In our conclusion, we relate the specific issue of GIs and origin products to the broader trends in Brazilian agriculture, particularly in the family farming sector.

## 2. THE BROAD INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT. KEY ACTORS AND THE INSTITUTIONAL DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Brazilian GI legislation was initially promulgated as a direct consequence of Brazil’s adjustment to membership of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement in 1996. The former included agriculture in the regulation of world trade and the latter required, as one of its conditions, the adoption

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of intellectual protection in the case of geographical indications. It adopted two categories of GIs – IPs or indications of provenance and DOs, denominations of origin. The latter, in addition to evidence of reputation associated with the name of the place of production, requires that a percentage of the production in question be carried out in situ. This distinction offers considerable flexibility for GI strategies, and Brazilian legislation also recognizes GIs in the service and manufacturing sectors.

Considerable optimism has been generated in Brazil with regard to the potential for using GI strategies to strengthen the appeal of, and protect, productive activities which have achieved some degree of notoriety. Important public institutions, such as EMBRAPA (the national agriculture research system) and SEBRAE, a non-profit private national organization with government funding and control whose mission is to promote small and medium undertakings, have provided decisive support. The Coordination for Geographical Indications (CIG) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MAPA), has promoted nation-wide training courses to build up competences for implementing GIs. Academic networks involving international cooperation have been formed to promote GIs, producing a steady flow of dissertations, theses and publications. The National Institute for the Protection of Industrial Property (INPI), responsible for evaluating requests for GI protection, established a specific unit for dealing with requests and progressively adopted a more pro-active role to facilitate the processing of claims.

Although Brazil had no federal tradition of GI-style protection of reputation, its continental dimension and regional diversity, together with its strong European tradition, provide fertile ground for such strategies. Important migratory movements which have accompanied agricultural modernization and urbanization have also encouraged the diffusion of locally valued agricultural and forestry products and culinary reputations. As of 2013 some 46 GIs had been registered, 38 national, and of these 30 IPs and eight DOs. There were eight international registers, all DOs. Of the national registers 24 related to agriculture and food with two specifically involving artisan cheese production (Table 1).

What is immediately striking about these GIs is their heterogeneity – as regards products, types of actors, strategies, and the support networks which made registration possible. In most cases, it is still too early to identify impacts, although research is now being developed to enable a continuous evaluation of GIs as they evolve.

Since our concern in this article is with the institutional and political positioning of GIs in Brazil it is necessary to understand the broader institutional context related to agriculture. A peculiarity of Brazil's agriculture policy is its assumption of a structural duality between family farming and large-scale commercial farming. This recognition of a separate family farming category was itself the fruit of a long mobilization by social movements and academia and included the acceptance of the need to promote agrarian reform.<sup>1</sup> By the end of the '90s, separate institutions existed for agrarian reform and for family farming (Ministry for Agrarian Development, MDA). Teeth were given to this latter in the form of responsibility for the execution of the National Program for the Strengthening of the Family Farm (PRONAF). Subsequently, with the priority given to food security, the Ministry for Social Development (MDS) also became directly involved in programs affecting the family farm sector. Commercial agriculture, or agribusiness, for its part is under the responsibility of the Ministry for Agriculture and Agricultural Planning (MAPA).

We will not be concerned here with the broader implication of this institutional dualism but it is central to our analysis to register that Geographical Indications, as a component of agricultural issues involving intellectual property rights, have fallen within the ambit of the MAPA. The same has been the case with organic agriculture. We explore the implications of this institutional division below, but it is interesting to note here that Slow Food, on the other hand, which shares many values associated with GIs signed an agreement with the MDA, and agro-ecology which can be understood as a radicalization of organic agriculture is also supported within the MDA.

### 3. EARLY INITIATIVES ON ORIGIN PRODUCTS AT THE STATE AND REGIONAL LEVELS

Already in the '80s, during the period of the transition from the military dictatorship and well before the WTO and the TRIPS agreements, Brazil looked to Europe and particularly to France for models of agricultural development. Student exchange and cooperation programs were developed at the State level. Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina and Minas Gerais in different ways modeled themselves on the French experience and promoted “proto” GI strategies in their respective States prior to their adoption at the Federal level.

Rio Grande do Sul had a strong tradition of family farm participation in grains, and particularly soy, which was confronting what seemed to be terminal competition from the opening up of the large-scale grains/oils frontier of the “cerrados” region in the center of the country. In fact continued production on a small scale was made possible first by the clandestine import of transgenic soy seeds from Argentina (baptized as “Maradona” seeds) lowering costs of production, and later by the integration of family farm soy producers into the Brazilian national biodiesel program. These options, however, were not at the time in evidence, and the State planning institute recognized the need to shift from basic commodities to value-added strategies if the traditional small and medium farm base of the State's agriculture and development model was to be preserved. In this context, the promotion of a shift from bulk table wine to quality wine became a central plank of State planning, explicitly drawing inspiration from the French *appellation d'origine* model. EMBRAPA's wine expertise was located in this State and became a protagonist in the promotion of a GI strategy (Niederle, 2013; Niederle & Vitrolles, 2010; Tonietto, 2005).

In Santa Catarina, the main inspiration came from the ranks of the public rural extension service (EPAGRI), whose leading figures in the promotion of family farm strategies in the State were formed in student exchange programs with France. As a direct result of this influence an alternative model of pig-rearing based on the association of small farmers to rationalize production and costs, known as “condominiums” was promoted and widely disseminated in the State. This movement was a reaction to the increasing domination of large-scale agro-industries operating on the basis of contract integration. After initial success the condominium movement lost momentum, for which various analyses have been put forward but which are not relevant for our discussion in this article (Wilkinson, 2008; Wilkinson, Dorigon, & Mior, 2011).

Whatever the reason, an important outcome was the promotion of a more generalized alternative to the dominant agro-industrial model, represented by Sadia, Perdigão, Seara, the Cooperative Aurora and other firms in the region.<sup>2</sup> This resulted in a move to consolidate small-scale autonomous

Table 1. Registered national geographical indications up to May 2013

Classification	Products or services	Denomination	Category	State	Year	
Food products	Rice	Litoral Norte Gaucho	DO	Rio Grande do Sul	2010	
	Cookie	Sao Tiago	IP	Minas Gerais	2013	
	Cocoa	Linhares	IP	Espírito Santo	2012	
	Coffee	Regiao do Cerrado Mineiro	IP	Minas Gerais	2005	
		Norte Pioneiro	IP	Parana	2012	
		Regiao da serra da mantiqueira	IP	Minas Gerais	2011	
	Shrimp	Costa negra	DO	Ceara	2011	
	Meat	Pampa Gaucho da Campanha meridional	IP	Rio Grande do Sul	2006	
	Candies	Pelotas	IP	Rio Grande do Sul	2011	
	Red bee propolis	Manguezais de Alagoas	DO	Alagoas	2012	
	Cheese	Canastra	IP	Minas Gerais	2012	
		Serro	IP	Minas Gerais	2011	
	Grapes and mangoes	Vale do Submedio Sao Francisco	IP	Pernambuco/Bahia	2009	
	Wines and spirits	Cachaça	Paraty	IP	Rio de Janeiro	2007
			Salinas	IP	Minas Gerais	2012
Wine		Vales do Vinhedos	IP/DO	Rio Grande do Sul	2002/12	
		Vale da Uva Goethe	IP	Santa Catarina	2012	
		Pinto Bandeira	IP	Rio Grande do Sul	2010	
	Alto Montes	IP	Rio Grande do Sul	2012		
Handicraft	Golden grass (capim dourado)	Jalpao region	IP	Tocantins	2011	
	Opals and jewelries	Pedro II	IP	Piaui	2011	
	Claypot cooker	Goiabeiras	IP	Espírito Santo	2012	
	Tin pieces	Sao Joao del Rei	IP	Minas Gerais	2012	
	Lace	Divina Pastora	IP	Sergipe	2012	
Others products	Colored cotton	Paraiba	IP	Paraiba	2012	
	Leather shoes	Vale dos Sinos	IP	Rio Grande do Sul	2009	
	Stones	Pedra Carijo	DO	Rio de Janeiro	2012	
		Pedra Madeira	DO	Rio de Janeiro	2012	
		Pedra Cinza	DO	Rio de Janeiro	2012	
Service	Digital services	Cachoeira do itapemirim (marble)	IP	Espírito Santo	2012	
		Porto digital	IP	Pernambuco	2012	

Source: INPI website (2013).

agro-industries, family-based or grouping together a number of families (Schmidt & Turnes, 2002). The strength of this movement lay in its organic growth out of pre-existing artisan food-processing activities typical of European immigrants who had colonized large parts of the three Southern States – Rio do Sul, Santa Catarina, and Paraná. “Colonial” dairy and meat products, in addition to being a central part of the rural diet, acquired a broader reputation in the wake of urbanization. Their Achilles heel was the threat posed by food safety laws which had been designed for large-scale agro-industries. A campaign was launched for the recognition of the need for specific sanitary legislation for artisan products (Prezotto, 2002). The movement received support at the Federal level through the National Program for the Strengthening of Family Farming (PRONAF) inaugurated in 1995 which developed a special line of credit for family-farm agroindustry. This encouraged the development of surveys to identify artisan foodstuffs, particularly cheeses and meat products and the elaboration of projects to access credit (Oliveira, Turnes, & Schmidt, 1999).

At the turn of the century the Brazilian National Research Council (CNPq) launched a national call for projects for the family farming sector, with a specific emphasis on small-scale agro-industries (Albuquerque, Lima, & Wilkinson, 2002). In Santa Catarina itself these developments were accompanied by a vigorous movement to establish State legislation legalizing artisan food production and defining a framework for the recognition of *appellation d'origine* products, along French

lines. The State legislation in 2002 ratified a range of designations: PGI, PDO, but also, Certificate of Product Conformity (CCO), organics (ORG) and family farming (FAM). These designations are still incipient, but in the case of origin products, their status became unclear when the criteria for registering GIs with the federal body, INPI, were regulated in 2000.

In Minas Gerais, it was the State Government which took the initiative of establishing an agreement with the French Ministry of Cooperation. The cooperation program was particularly ambitious in two senses. It was designed to promote the adoption in Minas Gerais of the French *filière* approach, which focuses on the interdependence of all the different stages in food production, into organizing the relations between agriculture and upstream/downstream industry sectors. This was an approach which explicitly recognized the interdependence of the different actors composing the *filière* and that the “value-added” of the final product was the collective result of these different actors. In addition, the cooperation program, which began at the beginning of the 1990s and was regularly renewed, covered a wide range of products and issues. One sub-program involved the establishment of standards to regulate the quality of horticulture products. This was developed with the Minas State food distribution center – CEASA – and subsequently adopted by other units of this national network. The *filière* model was adopted to reorganize pork production in the State. Projects were developed to promote the horticulture sector, equipping producers with on-line access to prices and improving logistics.

From the point of view of GIs, however, the most important initiative was the attempt to create *appellation d'origine* status for the traditional cheese production in the mountain ranges of Minas – Canastra, Salitre, and Serro. Such cheese production, modeled on the Portuguese “Estrela” cheese, involved some 15–20,000 hill-side farmers and had acquired a strong reputation in the State of Minas where it was sold at open-air markets, including in the State capital, Belo Horizonte (Netto, 2012). Its main outlet, however, was in the neighboring State of São Paulo. This cheese was produced from untreated milk and could only legally be consumed after 60 days of curing. In the days of mule transport hard cheeses were the norm. The more recent pressures for rapid marketing and the wide acceptance of these cheeses as soft cheeses eaten within a week to 10 days has brought this production into conflict with Federal legislation. Transport of such cheeses across State lines was prohibited and its marketing was essentially clandestine.

French cooperation involved reciprocal visits by Minas farmers to cheese-producing regions in France and cheese-makers from the famous Comté region. In addition, a French NGO FERT financed by the *Filière Céréalière*, together with University support from Viçosa, implemented the French procedures for acquiring *appellation d'origine* status, including demarcation, upstream investments to ensure the health of the cows, reforms of the cheese-making installations and the adoption of good production practices. In 2001, Minas State legislation provided an amnesty for these mountain cheeses made from untreated milk for a period of 30 months, placing the Government in conflict with Federal legislation. These activities received support from the PRONAF agroindustry credit line and the CNPq national competition for research projects relevant to family farming mentioned earlier. Subsequently, the request for IP recognition was accepted by the INPI for Serro in 2011 and Canastra in 2012 (da Cruz, 2012).

#### 4. ORIGIN PRODUCTS AND THE BROADER INTERNATIONAL PROMOTION OF NON-TRADITIONAL PRODUCTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The initiatives in each of these States were developed prior to the Federal legislation on GIs and evolved in independence of subsequent Federal institutionalization. During the '90s and around the turn of the century some of these initiatives benefitted from the above-mentioned Federal sources of funding. In each of these three States, the promotion of artisan production and “origin” products was part of a broader policy, having its roots also in the organizations of the UN system, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank. The fundamental idea was that small-scale farming had no future in basic commodity production, since commodity prices were unrewarding and production increasingly demanded a scale beyond the reach of family farming. These trends coincided with a basic shift in diet in “northern” countries and the middle classes of developing countries away from basic commodities (calories), toward higher value products – fresh produce, sea-foods, white meats, and flowers. Social movements responding to the same crisis facing the world's small farming sector bet rather on the possibility of creating niches within the commodity sector through the promotion of intangible qualities – organics, fair trade, bird-friendly, sustainable, and origin. The rapid rise of modern retail, accelerated through the transnationalization of the world's leading supermarkets reinforced this tendency to focus on high-value

“non-traditional” products as key strategies for the family farming sector. The combined effects of these drivers was to redirect the small farming sector to higher value, land, and labor-intensive product niches.

#### 5. THE SHIFT BACK TO COMMODITIES, FOOD SECURITY, AND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT POLICIES

As these policies became diffused, however, world trade and global actors suffered a sea change. By the turn of the century, China's two decades of sustained high-level growth was beginning to transform trade flows, inverting the historical decline of agricultural commodity prices and shifting the direction of many developing country exports, including Brazil, from North to South. The Millennium goals and China's much vaunted example of having lifted 300 million above the absolute poverty line placed food security at the center of the global political agenda (Wilkinson & Wesz, 2013).

In Brazil, this changed political conjuncture coincided with the electoral victory of the Workers' Party and the beginning of the Lula Presidency in 2004. The dual institutional framework for agriculture was maintained, and both ministries were reinforced. Roberto Rodrigues, a leading figure in Brazilian agribusiness, became the Minister for Agriculture, while the Ministry for Agrarian Development and its various subdivisions were shared out among allied parties, social movements, and trade unions. A further Ministry, that of Social Development and the Struggle against Hunger (MDS), was created to deal with this central policy of Lula's first Presidential term (Rocha, Burlandy, & Maluf, 2012). Later a special Secretariat (SENAES) would be created within the Ministry of Labor and headed by the renowned academic Paulo Singer to promote the Solidary Economy (Economia Solidária), a movement which in Brazil has a strong overlap with Fair Trade both in terms of its leading cadre and best organized producer groups, particularly in the rural context. A survey carried out in 2007 and published on the SENAES site identified 21,859 initiatives involving 1.7 million people and producing sales to the value of R\$8 billion.

Food security became the organizing priority of policies directed to the family farming sector and public procurement (PAA) and school meals supplies (PNAE), based on the traditional products of the family farm sector now provided the main stimulus for production. Purchases are undertaken by the National Company for Food Supplies (CONAB), but the program is coordinated by five Ministries which gives a clear indication of its importance (Schmitt, 2005). By law 30% of food for public school meals should come from the family farm sector. Some 45.6 million school children are attended by this program which has extended its reach to include secondary schooling and other public canteens. From 2003 to 2007 some 3 million tons of food had been bought through the PAA to the value of R\$3.5 billion. Each farmer is allowed a limit of R\$8,000 sales per year. The program also includes a basic food hamper for families in extreme need which has attended 446,000 families involving some 1.9 million tons of food. The PRONAF is the principal source of financing for family farm production and its range of activities and levels of overall support have been continually increasing. Over 1.4 million contracts were signed in 2010. In the harvest of 2013 some 777,142 farmers received credit to the value of R\$8.44 billion.

The food price crisis of 2008–09 led to Brazil's national food security and family farm programs being projected as models for developing countries, and with the election of Graziano da

Silva, one of the key mentors of the Zero Hunger program, to the head of the UN Food and Agriculture Agency (FAO), they became transformed into global programs, with a particular focus on Africa (da Silva, Del Grossi, & de França, 2010).

At the same time, Brazil's agribusiness sector was riding on a triple commodity wave. China's decision to depend on imports for its animal protein feed led to an explosion in Brazilian soy production and exports from the recently opened savanna frontier in the Center-West of the country, and by the end of the first decade of the millennium some 60% of Brazil's soy exports, almost entirely grain, were absorbed by China. Brazilian sugarcane, located in the southeast, particularly in the State of São Paulo, similarly experienced a huge expansion as sugarcane ethanol was welcomed as a strategy to lower global carbon emissions and seen also as a key development strategy for Latina America and African countries. At the same time cattle production and exports, located primarily in the North of the country, took advantage of the varied crises in traditional cattle-producing regions (mad cow disease in the US, drought in Australia, and the soy takeover of the Argentine pampas) to become the world's leading exporters and develop the world's leading meat transnationals (Wilkinson & Herrera, 2008).

This brief overview of developments in the first decade of the millennium is sufficient to demonstrate the profound shift in the direction and the content of global food markets, which was characterized above all by a revitalization of commodity production and traditional foodstuffs, reflecting the rise in importance of the large emerging economies and the centrality of food security concerns.

## 6. THE INITIAL PLACING OF GIS IN THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The above tendencies did not obliterate the earlier shift to high-value, non-traditional food and agricultural markets, although these became subdued in the wake of the financial crisis as from 2008. Geographical Indications, for their part, were an important issue of contention in trade negotiations with Europe pushing for recognition of its list of protected names. At the same time, Europe and particularly France have interest in the global promotion of the GI model since these products constitute its export competitiveness in contrast to its subsidized commodity export products, under fierce critique from developing countries. To the extent that these latter countries adopted GI strategies they would be less inclined to disrespect protected denominations. An important EU-financed international research network involving European and developing country institutions (SINERGI) was particularly active, with strong Brazilian participation. SINERGI was to have a major influence on the development of what we call the "expert system" network in Brazil to promote GIs and which is discussed in detail below.

In Brazil, as we have seen, public policy in relation to the family farming sector shifted decisively to the promotion of traditional food products with public sector procurement substituting insertion into new markets. Responsibility for GIs (IPs and DOs in the Brazilian terminology) lay with the Department of Intellectual Property and Agricultural Technology-DEPTA in the MAPA and with the INPI, an organ of the Ministry for Industry and Commerce (MDIC). Not only were GIs not adopted in the form of public policies for the family farming sector, their association with intellectual property rights was particularly inimical to social movements which had cut their teeth on the struggle against

transgenics and Monsanto. A large part of the energy of the traditional social movements in support of family farming was now harnessed to food security issues and to the promotion and consolidation of agrarian reform settlements.

Nevertheless, a range of factors favored the progressive strengthening of institutional support for GIs in Brazil. In the wine-producing regions of Brazil's Southern States quality and reputation associated with origin were adopted as survival strategies convergent with the global transformations occurring in this market. A similar focus on origin was also beginning to segment the coffee market in response to the explosion of the coffee-house culture. Important producer sectors, therefore, looked to GI-style strategies for market competitiveness and GI initiatives within these two sectors were promoted by medium- and large-scale business interests rather than the small farmer components.

Two institutions, each with a national coverage, adopted GI strategies for agriculture and were key both to the dissemination of values based on origin and to the provision of technical assistance for preparing requests for GI status – EMBRAPA and SEBRAE, which we have already referred to earlier. conducted a national survey identifying some hundred products with potential GI status. While there are competence barriers to participation in public policies such as PRONAF, these are as nothing compared to the arduous work needed to prepare a successful request for GI status. After 20 years of sustained international cooperation only a handful of the cheese-makers from the mountains of the State of Minas are registered GI producers. Without sustained assistance from the two above-mentioned organizations a significant percentage of current IPs and DOs in Brazil would probably not have been registered. An exception here was the coffee cooperative CACCER, which, composed of medium and large producers with their own human and material resources, insisted without outside support in pursuing a GI strategy, only serves to confirm the rule.

A further difficulty in the institutional promotion of GIs in Brazil has been the division of responsibility between the Ministry of Agriculture (MAPA) and the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MDIC). In the former, responsibility lies centrally with the Coordination for Promoting GIs for agricultural products (CIG). This body, however, is subordinated to the Department of Intellectual Property and Agricultural Technology (DEPTA) which is itself, part of the Secretary for Agricultural Development and Cooperativism (SDC). Locally, support for GIs falls within the Division of Policies for Agricultural Production and Development (DPDAG), of the Superintendency of MAPA in each State.

The intellectual property institute, INPI, is formally part of the MDIC but is a federal autarchy which means that it has greater autonomy. Given that GI legislation was a consequence of the recognition of the TRIPS in 1996 the administration of GIs is quite recent within the INPI. There is now a General Coordination for Geographical Indications and Registers (CGIR) which is a subsector of the Directorate of Contracts, Geographical Indications and Registers (DICIG), one of five Directorates within the INPI.

Initial frictions between these two bodies improved as each adjusted from a basically bureaucratic to a pro-active and promotional orientation, very much influenced, as we will argue below, by the initiatives of the "expert system" network. The CIG, in collaboration with this network, has been responsible for organizing a national training program for GIs which is now in its third edition. MAPA's contribution at the State level has also been notable, as in the case of the Paraty GI for "cachaça" in Rio de Janeiro. The CGIR/INPI technicians

have also adopted a pro-active role visiting and advising would be GI producer groups.

## 7. NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND SUPPORT FOR ARTISAN FOOD PRODUCTION

The bulk of activists and social movements associated with the family farming sector have been integrated into the various policy and institutional (especially in the construction of municipal, State, and national Councils) initiatives on food security and public procurement markets related to basic food crops. Nevertheless an important network of researchers, public sector technicians, and consultant has been consolidated around the promotion of GI strategies in Brazil. This is evidenced in the number of national/international conferences on this theme, together with dissertations, theses, and publications.

At least four convergent developments have also reinforced movements in support of origin products. The first of these is the Slow Food movement which in addition to signing an agreement with the MDA has built up a network of activist groups, known as “convivia” in Brazil. Of particular importance here has been the Ark of Taste initiative which has stimulated the identification of endangered plants, and some 25 Brazilian products are now included. The Slow Food movement is specifically directed to small farmers and indigenous communities. It is currently playing a central role in the mobilizations for the defense of artisan cheeses from raw milk in Brazil and is the hub of the “mobilization” network, the second of the two networks which we analyze below.

Slow Food’s actions are very much aligned with those of Brazil’s National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN) which is dedicated to the preservation and dissemination of popular culture and traditions. With this goal it collects information and creates Registers, two of which are of particular relevance. The Register of Knowledges is dedicated to the collection of local knowledge and daily practices and the Register of Places focuses on collective cultural practices, particularly markets and festivals (Belas, 2012).

Both, in their turn, receive decisive support from the gastronomic movement, whereby renowned chefs are exploring traditional and indigenous Brazilian agricultural products and culinary practices and integrating these into modern cuisine. Restaurants are establishing direct contact with producers in a variation of the community-supported agriculture (CSA) movements in Northern countries which were based on consumer groups.

And finally, Brazilian and transnational firms are playing an important role in the promotion of traditional oils, tinctures, and medicinal plants. While the “Rio 92” hopes for benefit sharing from bio-prospection conducted under free, prior and informed consent with local communities have proved over optimistic, the concern for natural ingredients has opened up important opportunities and challenges for traditional communities.

## 8. COLONIAL PRODUCTS AS ORIGIN PRODUCTS ASSOCIATED MORE WITH SOCIAL CATEGORY THAN TERRITORY

In our discussion of the origins of GIs we drew attention to the initiatives at the State level in Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, and Minas Gerais. Rio Grande do Sul had a specific focus on wine, and given this product’s role in the global his-

tory of GIs it is not surprising that the dominant model for reorganizing the Rio Grande wine sector was the French *appellation d’origine*. In Santa Catarina we have also seen the strong influence of the French GI tradition which is evidenced in its State legislation on this issue. However, as we have discussed in an earlier publication (Wilkinson & Cerdan, 2011), and as has been explored by a number of collaborators, a Brazilian version of origin products has a looser relation to a specific territory and is more identified with the generic artisan practices of a specific social group, which has historically been characterized by considerable migration. These products are identified as “colonial”, derived from the colonies into which the recently arrived immigrants from Europe were organized. Dairy and meat products are their most important components, although they also extend to honey and a range of conserves.

There is a rich tradition of initiatives to defend this artisan production from norms and regulations implanted on the basis of large-scale industrial criteria. Municipal legislation and the promotion of local markets have played an important role but the development of wider markets has had to confront legislative barriers on inter-municipal and inter-State circulation of artisan products. National family farm fairs organized by the MDA have been used to promote these products and a campaign developed to modify Federal legislation to make it compatible with artisan methods of production (Dorigon, 2008). As in Europe, cheese has been the most sensitive of these artisan products and it is around the support for artisan cheese that a vigorous movement in defense of origin and GI products has developed in Brazil.

## 9. ARTISAN CHEESE IN BRAZIL – VARIED INSTITUTIONS, MOVEMENTS, NETWORKS, AND STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ORIGIN PRODUCTS

As a tropical country, Brazil is not immediately associated with artisan cheeses. Nevertheless, as we have indicated above, cheese production has a long history in Brazil and is present in most regions of the country. The island of Marajo in the Amazon produces a well-known cheese from buffalo milk. Three regions, however, have been the focus of the different mobilizations mentioned above – Minas Gerais, the two southern states – Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina – and the Northeast. Each of these three regions has a distinct dominant type of artisan cheese. Cheese has been the principal “cash-crop” of the mountain farmer, a category officially recognized and provided with special treatment in Europe but often forced to operate in clandestinity in Brazil. This type of artisan cheese production predominates in the State of Minas, but is also present on the Rio Grande do Sul/Santa Catarina border and other areas can certainly be identified. In the South, the immigration of European farming families as from the first half of the 19th century took the form of settlements known as “colonies”, characterized by self-sufficient, diversified farms divided out on an egalitarian basis. Pig rearing dominated the production systems with “colonial” cheese being produced for domestic consumption primarily by women as an extension of the kitchen. “Coalho” cheese is the most typical type of artisan cheese in the Northeast. Its principal characteristic in this region which has no winter is its resistance to heat and is often eaten in cooked forms. The principal references for cheese-making in Brazil have been the “Estrela” cheese from Portugal or cheese from the Açores.

Half of Brazil’s cheese production comes from the State of Minas Gerais where farming for the domestic market created

by gold mining developed as early as the 18th century. Cheese as a non-perishable and mobile source of protein was highly valued and provided the main source of income for hill-side farmers. In recent times, cheese has become even more central as food safety legislation has all but excluded the small farmer from the fresh milk market. At the beginning of the new Millennium the Public Prosecutor's ban on the marketing of artisan cheese in Minas Gerais was the spark which led to the consolidation of a movement for a classical GI strategy. It also provoked the successful campaign to have artisan cheese registered as a national heritage by IPHAN, flying in the face of its condemnation by the Public Prosecutor. A broad-based network linking artisan cheese producers to local governments, international cooperation with French GIs via the NGO FERT, university research at the Viçosa Federal University funded by the National Research Council (CNPq), and the Minas State extension services (IMA) led to a 30-month amnesty being conceded by the State legislative assembly for the marketing of artisan cheese on the understanding that GI standards would be implanted in this period (da Cruz, 2012; Vitrolles, 2011).

The extent of this mobilization reflects the importance of artisan cheese consumption in Minas Gerais, extending also to the neighboring States of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Espírito Santo. It is calculated that at this time there were some 30,000 small farms producing 44,000 tons of on-farm cheese per year in the mountain regions of Minas, present in 519 of the State's 823 municipalities. This is equivalent to 20% of all cheese production in Minas which in its turn produces half of the country's cheese. As in the case of the European Union, the defense of artisan cheese production translates into a key development strategy for maintaining farm production in hilly regions (Ferreira & Ferreira, 2011).

Movements in defense of artisan products have transformed the criteria for judging food safety controls. In the '50s, Brazil adopted US legislation which demanded that cheese made from raw milk could only be marketed after 60 days of curing.<sup>3</sup> Food safety issues were controlled at the point of consumption and products banned depending on levels of contamination. Based very much on the authority of the European experience, the pro-artisan cheese movement in Minas defended the view that adequate sanitary controls could be implemented at the point of production. The Minas GI strategy has, therefore, involved proposals for controlling animal health and for the redesigning of cheese-making installations and utensils. The principles guiding these reforms were those of lowest costs compatible with good cheese-making practices, and lines of official credit were made available. One of the coordinators, Lillian Nogueira Haas, calculated that production levels of as little as five cheeses per day would be able to allow for repayment of the loan. A more important challenge was control over animal health which requires absolute rigor with regard to sick animals and the implantation of a traceability system.

The region of Canastra, comprising seven municipalities, one of the two to receive a GI, has 1,500 farmers and produces some 6,000 tons of cheese per year. Farmers who have been registered to use the GI are authorized to sell their cheese in any State of the domestic market but cannot export. According to the President of the Canastra Cheese Producers' Association farm-gate prices have tripled and retail prices can fetch double farm-gate prices. On the other hand, by 2014, more than a decade later, only some 30 farmers had managed to get their farms registered.

In the south, the Serrano cheese located in the Campos de Altitude region that straddles Santa Catarina and Rio Grande

do Sul is similarly a typical mountain cheese present in a sparsely populated region of over 31,500 km<sup>2</sup>. The cheese uses raw milk destined for newly calved cows which are raised for meat and graze on native pastures. Historically a specific breed of cow brought by the Jesuit missions in the 16th century was used (Menezes, 2009; Vitrolles, 2011). As in Minas, Serrano cheese, which was on the mule trading route, was the principal means of exchange which enabled these farmers to survive the isolation and the harsh winters. A network similar to that developed in Minas is preparing Serrano cheese for GI registration.

The principal artisan cheese in the South, however, is "colonial cheese" with a dynamic quite different from that of mountain cheese. In the first place, this cheese is less identified with a specific territory and more with a social and cultural category – German and Italian immigrant families farming on equally distributed allotments and organized in colonies. Initially located close to the Rio Grande capital, these colonies migrated up through the State into Santa Catarina and Parana and from there have advanced to the central regions of Brazil, heading most recently toward the Amazon region. Corn and pork dominated the production cycle in the South, with the later adoption of poultry, and also typically included an orchard, bean production, and dairy activities.

Cheese production for domestic consumption was a widely diffused tradition and predominantly carried out by women as an extension of the kitchen. Production for sale, while involving fewer farms, accounted for the major part of production by volume by the '90s. The 1996 agricultural census identified 60,000 on-farm cheese producers in the State of Santa Catarina out of a total of some 200,000 farmers. Total on-farm cheese production in the same year amounted to 13,838 tons, of which some 4,099 tons were produced by 38,000 farms for domestic consumption. 21,045 farms produced for sale with some 6,000 tons being bought by local traders and 3,000 tons sold directly to customers.

The role of this farming tradition in the development of agricultural and rural organizations, social movements, and broader policies in defense of family farming can hardly be over-estimated and has been widely studied and documented. As mentioned above, the strength of this farming system gave rise to a large-scale agro-industrial white meats complex in the Western region of Santa Catarina based on contract farming for the production of pigs and poultry under the rigid control of industry. A seminal study in the '90s (Testa *et al.*) mapped the crisis of this model as agroindustry increasingly restricted contracts to large-scale suppliers and began investment in the new grains frontier in Central Brazil. There were three major responses to this crisis in the region. In the first place, following on the earlier tradition of promoting farming associations – condominiums – sectors of the State's rural extension, NGOs, and producer organizations adopted strategies for the promotion of small-scale agro-industries. Secondly, dairy production which had traditionally been marginal became the principal cash crop alternative to the crisis in white meat production. And thirdly, the range of State and local organizations, social movements, and NGOs pushed for legislation and policies at State and Federal levels for the promotion of the family farming model, small-scale agro-industries, and the development of appropriate sanitary legislation (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2011).

Differently from the mountain dairy farmers, closer integration between towns and countryside and the greater density of dairy production made milk rather than cheese the prime marketing strategy. The western region of Santa Catarina became transformed into a major dairy basin at a time when the Federal Government was imposing new quality norms (on-farm

refrigeration) for fresh milk production in response to the harmonization measures accompanying the regional integration of the Mercosul. Medium-sized dairies emerged in the region marketing both milk and cheese and pasteurization became the norm. Colonial cheese was also stimulated in this context and small-scale multi-family cheese agro-industries occupied market niches. A census of small-scale agro-industries carried out in the State in the '90s identified 363 dairies (Oliveira et al., 1999). In this same decade, some 4,000 farmers received formal training in cheese production and a further 4,000 followed a course in dairy production administered by the State extension services.

Both small- and medium-sized dairies use the term “colonial” as a marketing strategy but pasteurization has become broadly accepted by small-scale agro-industries as the price to be paid for formal recognition and has been encouraged by leading NGOs in the region, such as APACO, and by the State extension services. “Colonial” has always been an ambiguous designation and in spite of efforts to affirm its association with artisan/craft values pejorative undertones have persisted and, unhappy with informality, many adopt pasteurization as a means to escape clandestinity and access public resources. It may also be that pasteurization is seen as less of a problem by the cheese producers themselves given their market niche and the consumer acceptance of pasteurized “colonial” cheese.

More recently, particularly through contacts with the Slow Food Movement and participation in associated networks and international forums some producers of colonial cheese are beginning to question the adoption of pasteurization. In tastings by renowned chefs colonial cheese has been highly rated. It is possible, therefore, that with the consolidation of formal status for small-scale agro-industry there may now be a movement to differentiation in favor of raw milk colonial cheeses.

#### 10. THE ROLE OF NETWORKS IN THE PROMOTION OF GI AND ORIGIN PRODUCTS IN BRAZIL

The relation between networks, institutions, and markets is a key theme in economic sociology, with networks understood as giving rise in different contexts both to institutions (Granovetter, 1985) and markets. Networks have played a decisive role in the development of GIs and origin products in Brazil. Focusing on developments since the beginning of the Millennium we distinguish and discuss two such networks while recognizing that other mappings may provide complementary (or even conflicting) insights. Each of these networks has proved capable of mobilizing the principal actors and organizations involved in the promotion of GIs and origin products in Brazil. In addition these two networks have had considerable overlap. The first of these we will designate as an “expert system” network and the second as a “mobilization” network. The former has played a central role in providing contexts which have facilitated dialogue among the various components of a fragmented institutional structure subject to the frictions of administrative and political hierarchies. The second is focusing on a campaign for legislation specifically designed to enable artisan cheese production from raw milk and is also engaged in promoting its consumption and cultural recognition.

The expert system network evolved around a core of Brazilian and French researchers and institutions. We have already seen how this bi-national cooperation had its origins in the '80s and has been active in each of the regions under discus-

sion. In the more recent period, a bi-national research project under the aegis of the Brazilian Ministry of Education and the French Ministry of Cooperation provided a stable basis for the consolidation of a research team which had reached a common understanding of GIs through joint participation in the European SINERGI research project whose focus was GIs in the developing country context and included case studies carried out in Brazil (Sylvander & Allaire, 2006).

The principal initiative of this network has been the promotion of International Conferences on GIs in Brazil which have occurred very 2 years since 2006. The first two were held in Florianopolis the capital city of Santa Catarina, the third in João Pessoa, Paraíba and the fourth in Fortaleza, Ceará, both of these in the Northeast of the country. These conferences have allowed for a “nationalization” of debates on GIs which had often been focused on specific regional and State-level initiatives. Organizations with a proprietary and often competitive interest in the promotion of GIs have been encouraged to situate their concerns within a broader perspective. These discussions have similarly allowed for the emergence of a common understanding of the central issues involved in the promotion of GIs and the key actors have been placed in a common dialogue independently of their institutional affiliations. In addition, these Seminars have consolidated a critical mass of academics and researchers across a challenging range of disciplinary expertise – social science, law, agronomic sciences, and geography.

Consistency and continuity was given to the network through the creation of an e-mail discussion group which involves some 50 institutions and 200 participants. Key themes under discussion have included the different methods for establishing the technical norms of GI production and the limitations of these norms; the bases on which territories should be demarcated; and the roles of different actors in promoting the value of GI products. A key function of this discussion group has been the provision of a neutral space where ideas can be freely exchanged, thereby easing eventual institutional tensions. Most of the participants in this discussion group are directly involved in the construction of GIs or in the production of historical inventories for the IPHAN register.

A further socialization of GI competences at the national level was achieved through the promotion by MAPA in collaboration with the University of Santa Catarina of an internet course on “Intellectual Property and Innovation in Agriculture”. One of the specialization modules of this course, with a duration of 120 h, was on Geographical Indications and was elaborated by members of this network. The course has been provided three times – in 2009 for 300 students, in 2010 there were 600 participants and more recently in 2013 with 500 participants.

This expert system network has had an important role in forming, if not explicit policy, at least common references without which different institutions have an inbuilt tendency to develop their own agendas. As important, perhaps, is the role it has played in promoting a pool of competences which could be employed in the practical tasks of preparing producer groups for GI registration. In this sense it can be understood as functioning like an expert system providing a common approach to the creation of GIs giving priority to the demands of the registration process and the organizations directly associated in this activity – INPI, MAPA, EMBRAPA – and to the subsequent challenges of market recognition.

Alongside and overlapping this network, other organizations have emerged with parallel and not necessarily conflicting agendas. IPHAN, which we have mentioned earlier, has developed two Registers of national heritage for cultural



places and knowledges. The GI for Serro cheese is on the Register of knowledges. This Register does not provide any protection for cultural practices but inclusion in the Register enhances reputation and, additionally, the work of IPHAN also contributes to the knowledge of Brazilian artisan practices. The Society, Population and Nature Institute (ISPN) a social and environmental NGO (which initially specialized on the development of projects in the Cerrado, Brazil's central region overwhelmingly dominated by large-scale grains production but now works more generally in Brazil), has become an important articulator for the promotion of artisan food products. Slow Food works in a similar way in its identification of species and products in danger of extinction. Its promotion of the Terra Madre twice in Brazil has also been a powerful stimulus for the valuation and socialization of knowledge. The role of chefs, often in partnership with Slow Food, has had a powerful influence in the same direction to the extent that it has raised the status of traditional products in the Brazilian cuisine – manioc, beans, artisan cheeses, regional fruits, and Amazon products. Carlos Doria, director of the NGO Sertão Bras and a gastronomy critic, is an outspoken defender of artisan cheese.

These organizations, led by Slow Food, converged around the creation of a Working Group on Artisan Cheeses in 2011. Slow Food International has a long-standing campaign in defense of artisan cheeses from raw milk based on the Manifesto which it has produced on this issue in 2001. To promote this campaign it has organized an international conference, "Cheese", every 2 years since the beginning of the Millennium. The Working Group was created in response to the invitation to participate in the 1st National Symposium on Artisan Cheeses held in Fortaleza in 2011. Slow Food was responsible for mobilizing representatives of Brazil's principal artisan cheese-producing regions in addition to IPHAN and participants from the world of gastronomy. The day before the meeting in Fortaleza the Working Group held its first meeting. The more than 300 participants at the Symposium agreed to the launching of an open letter with the following demands: establish adequate, sanitary, environmental, and fiscal legislation for the production of artisan cheese from raw milk; allow the free circulation of artisan cheese inspected either by the local municipality or States in all Brazil's territory; provide access to credit, extension services training, and marketing for artisan cheese production; promote research geared to artisan cheese production; and promote access to markets both in Brazil and abroad for artisan cheese products.

In 2011 and again in 2013 MAPA introduced Normative Instructions on artisan cheese from raw milk which have been the object of persistent critical campaigning by the Working Group in a series of articles. These Instructions define conditions under which exemption to the 60-day curing law may apply. Such exemptions are restricted to regions where GIs have been registered or where artisan production has been traditionally recognized. They can however be granted now by local bodies recognized by MAPA and not exclusively by Federal agencies. The Working Group's central argument, however is that the imposition of a 60-day maturation period is an incorrect interpretation of the original 1950 legislation, and that the correct interpretation is for a minimum of 10-day maturation.

The Working Group, while essentially made up of Slow Food members, is capable of mobilizing a range of other influential actors and has effectively pressured MAPA to reconsider its position. At the same time, it promotes the cultural values of artisan production in its work with ISPN and IPHAN, and the consumption of artisan cheeses from raw milk through its

influence in the gastronomic milieu. Slow Food, through its Working Group, is functioning as the hub of a mobilization-style network geared to changing current legislation and to upgrading perceptions of artisan cheese through gastronomy and other forms of cultural promotion.

Both networks have, therefore, played decisive roles in modifying the pre-existing institutional arrangements influencing GIs and artisan products. What we have called the expert system network can be seen to have helped to smooth over tensions created by potentially overlapping institutional competences which threatened to frustrate the active promotion of GIs. In addition, it has played a key role in defining a common agenda for GI policy. And finally it has been decisive in the organization of a critical mass of competences for the practical implementation of GIs. The mobilizing network for its part has been equally effective in forcing a reconsideration of the regulatory framework for artisan cheese production. It has also succeeded in upgrading artisan foods, evidenced in their endorsement by an increasing number of opinion formers in the world of gastronomy. Networks, therefore, can be seen to be key influences in both the institutional and market dynamics of GIs and artisan cheese production in Brazil.

## 11. CONCLUSION

The development of GIs and origin-style policies and strategies in Brazil has had to confront an institutional context in which the Federative structure has allowed for a considerable distancing between State and Federal priorities. While Federal involvement only emerged in the middle and late '90s in direct response to international WTO and TRIPS commitments, international cooperation for the promotion of GIs and origin or artisan products developed in the '80s in different regions of the country. In the absence of Federal action on GIs and origin products, the State of Santa Catarina created its own legislative structure and other States adopted policies for the promotion of GIs. While the State of Minas Gerais promoted GIs along the lines of the French *appellation d'origine* system, Santa Catarina favored the promotion of a specific category of "colonial" products associated with a specific social category, the European immigrant farmers, revealing the importance of a different category of "origin" production in the Brazilian context.

At the Federal level, the institutional structures eventually put in place for GIs provoked complex problems of overlapping spheres of influence. In the first place, responsibility at the ministerial level was divided between the ministries of agriculture (MAPA) and industry and commerce (INPI/MIDIC), creating favorable conditions for territorial disputes. And secondly, through their location within MAPA, policies for GIs became separated from those directed at family farming which was served by a different ministry (MDA). In addition, nationally structured federal bodies with great autonomy, the national agricultural research system, EMBRAPA, and the agency for small and medium enterprises, SEBRAE, also became heavily involved in the promotion of GIs. When not provoking open tensions, this institutional framework worked against the development of coherent policies for GI promotion and is reflected in the profile of GIs registered in Brazil after over a decade, marked by a high degree of heterogeneity both in terms of actors and activities. The complexities of the institutional framework and the different types of policies and strategies elaborated to deal with the specificities of Brazilian GIs and origin products are explored through a more detailed

consideration of the different types of artisan cheese production.

In this context of the dispersion and tensions characterizing the institutional framework, combined with the heterogeneity of GI and origin products, we identify the key role played by two types of networks which were created to promote GIs and origin products in Brazil. The first of these which we have described as an expert system network was based on academic and research cooperation between Brazil and France and worked to provide a series of forums – biannual International Conferences, internet courses on GIs for a national public, and the maintenance of an internet discussion group – which served to regroup actors in different institutional positions, creating the conditions for dialogue and the definition of common agendas. It has also played a decisive role in the consolidation of a critical mass of competences for the technical challenges of promoting GIs which demand a range of

inter-disciplinary and inter-professional skills. The second network, which we have denominated a mobilization network has played an equally decisive role in its focus on the defense of a general category of “origin” production, cheese from raw milk. This network, based largely on civil society organizations coordinated by Slow Food has simultaneously challenged the restrictive Federal legislation and promoted a revaluation of these cultural practices in alliance with the National Heritage Institute (IPHAN), which in spite of its ambiguous legality has declared such production a national heritage. It has also established a powerful alliance with leading Brazilian chefs who are committed to incorporating origin products at the center of Brazilian gastronomy. In different ways, these two networks have played a key role in providing greater coherence to strategies and policies for the promotion of GIs and origin products in Brazil.

## NOTES

1. With the return to democracy in 1985 and the elaboration of a new constitution in 1988 agrarian reform returned to the political agenda. Agriculture in the Southern States (Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina and Paraná) was very much the product of European immigration bringing with it the European small farming model combining crops and livestock. Strongly influenced by the liberation wing of the Catholic Church, rural trade unions and social movements became consolidated in this region as from the '80s and then dominated the national agenda on the family farm. The political status of the family farm was enhanced by a range of academic contributions drawing on international experiences to highlight the role of family farming in development strategies.

2. Since 1960 this region has been home to the largest agro-industrial complex in Brazil and Latin America for white meats, whose firms have become leading national and global players. This region pioneered the contract farming model in Brazil between large-scale agroindustry and family farming and has been the object of considerable theoretical debates since the '80s.

3. The Working Group on Artisan Cheese animated by Slow Food in Brazil has contested this interpretation of the 1950s legislation as we will see in our discussion below.

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