Changes in the designation of origin territory: 
A comparison of the municipal data of the general censuses of Italian agriculture

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In 2009 the working paper n. 44 of the American Association of Wine Economists "The Value of Designations of Origin in Emilia-Romagna" presented the characteristics of the territory with designation of origin of the Strada dei Vini e dei Sapori “Città Castelli Ciliegi” (“Cities Castles Cherries” Wine and Flavor Route) between the Italian provinces of Modena and Bologna.

The data used were those of the general population census (years 1991 and 2001) and of the general census of agriculture (years 1982, 1990 and 2000).

Analyzing the data of the census of population for the year 2001, the designation of origin “Città Castelli Ciliegi” territory appeared to be an area with a fast-growing population, a higher presence – compared to regional average values – of the population aged 0 to 14 years, and fewer people over 65. The working age population was higher than the average provincial and regional values. As for education, it appeared not to be a particularly noteworthy territory, but very significant progress was registered as compared to 1991. Higher incidence of activity and lower unemployment rates than the provincial and regional average values – the latter lower than in 1991 – indicated a territory characterized by a growing economy and positive trends even in municipalities that previously registered difficulties. The territory’s employment structure appeared to be midway between those of the two provinces of Modena and Bologna. In both 2001 and 1991, this territory had a higher percentage of foreign resident population than the average provincial and regional values.

As for agriculture, analyzing the data of the Census of Agriculture for the year 2000, farms had an average utilized agricultural area (UAA) lower than the average UAA in provinces, with farmers older than average and a high intensity of work. There was a specialization in fruit orchards, mainly in the territory in the province of Modena, which, on the average, were small in size, and a specialization in vineyards, mainly in the territory in the province of Bologna, with a larger average size of vineyard area for Controlled Designation of Origin (DOC) wine per farm. Cattle breeding – especially dairy cows – characterized the mountain area of the “Città Castelli Ciliegi” territory lying in the province of Modena. Pig breeding was characteristic of the foothill part of the territory, also in the province of Modena.

From the agricultural standpoint, there was a strong and apparent link between designations of origin and the territorial features. Fruit specialization was especially connected with the production of Ciliegia di Vignola [since October 2012 a Protected Geographical Indication (IGP)] and related fruit production. Vine cultivation was connected with the production of DOC wines Lambrusco Grasparossa di Castelvetro DOC and Colli Bolognesi DOC and musts for the Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale di Modena Protected Designations of Origin (DOP). The intensity of cattle and dairy cow breeding in the mountain area of the territory in the Modena province was closely linked to the production of Parmigiano Reggiano DOP cheese. Even though the breeding territory was much larger, pig breeding in “Città Castelli Ciliegi” territory was the traditional production basis for obtaining the Prosciutto di Modena DOP as well as other IGP cold cuts.
The municipal data of the general census of agriculture in 2010 are now available and it is possible to compare the features that the designation of origin “Città Castelli Ciliegi” territory presented in previous decades with those of today.

At national level the general census of agriculture in 2010 highlighted the following trends. The number of agricultural and livestock farms has fallen by about a third, and there has been an increase in the average size of farms. Italian agriculture continues to be based on individual or family farms, but the number of companies is growing. The system of management is still strongly based on the direct management of the conductor. The use of renting and of flexible forms of land tenure is increasing. The number of working days has decreased compared to 2000, and a significant presence of foreigners is involved in agriculture. The conductors are younger than in 2000.

At regional level the average size of farms and of herds increases. The level of education of the conductors increases and the use of land of the plain brakes. On the other hand the number of farms is in sharp decline, especially in the mountains and hills. Young entrepreneurs and specialized tree crops decrease. For agricultural woody crops the reduction of the surface is the result of a smaller drop of vineyards (-7%) and a drastic reduction suffered by fruit orchards (-22%). The area under vines, about 56 000 hectares in 2010, has declined compared to 2000 for table wines, but increased by approximately 6 000 hectares for quality wines (DOC and DOCG).

Farms with DOP/IGP production are in 2010 the 21% of the total. DOP/IGP productions commit the 3.5% of the UAA of Emilia-Romagna and the 55% of cattle and the 83% of pig breeding in the region.

Fifty years after the first law on designations of origin for wines in Italy, in a national and Emilia-Romagna context where in the last ten years the number of recognized designations of origin and geographical indications has increased significantly the paper intends to present, through the comparison of the municipal data of the last general census of agriculture in 2010 with the data from the censuses of agriculture of the last thirty years, the persistence and the changes that affected the territory with designation of origin “Città Castelli Ciliegi”. The elements that characterize the territory with designation of origin will be presented in comparison to regional and national context.

An initial verification of the existence of a specific model of evolution (that seems to slow the structural change) connected to designations of origin developed in the territory will be proposed.

References


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