

The illusion of authenticity: women, traditional food and small alpine villages

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**When food becomes the symbol of
identity and an occasion of
emancipation, valorization and
territorial development**

THE VALORIZATION OF THE TERRITORY MUST BE ENHANCED, KNOWN AND PUT INTO RELATIONSHIP:

- Environmental Heritage
- Landscape Heritage
- Anthropic Heritage
- Archetip Heritage

THE TYPICAL PRODUCT IS THE CULTURAL SYMBOL OF A TERRITORY

To sell a typical product (especially food) means to sell the dream of a world that no longer exists

THE QUEST FOR A SENSE

- Italy is a recently urbanized nation
- The nostalgic feeling for the land
- The idea of cleanness (moral, before environmental)
- The landscape is tidy and decodable
- Genuinity

THE CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Two thirds of the global artistic-cultural heritage are found in Italy
- Most of Europe's highly valued environmental areas are concentrated in Italy
- Italy produces high quality products!
- In Italy you can taste the best cuisine!
- The majority of this heritage is hidden in the mountains or in not renominated rural areas

THE MAJORITY OF TOURISM HIDES CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS RELATIONAL NEEDS

- In Italy, the majority of relations and relationships are built and happen around the table

HOW TO MAKE THE VALUES OF A TERRITORY EMERGE :

- Conduct an accurate research on the cultural identity: to look for the spirit of the place
- Conduct a research on the architectural heritage: what could be visited and attract attention
- Have residents participate to all the phases of the process: to promote capacity building
- To entrust the work to professional

CAN A TYPICAL PRODUCT PROMOTE A TERRITORY?

Only if the 3 phases of production take place in the local area:

- **Primary** (cultivation/harvest)
- **Secondary** (processing)
- **Tertiary** (commercialization)

THE TYPICAL PRODUCT IS A CULTURAL PRODUCT

To build authenticity is a highly
sophisticated operation

HOWEVER, IN MANY RURAL COMMUNITIES, IDENTITY IS WEAK

- The dominant cultural models are urban
- Weak consciousness of its own artistic, historical, cultural heritage (and therefore of the typical product)
- Waste of resources and degradation of the territory depauperamento

**THE ONE WHO CHOOSES A
TYPICAL PRODUCT ASKS
FOR:**

AUTHENTICITY

HOSPITALITY

HUMAN WARMTH

**But these are difficult things,
because they require a high level of
sophistication and professionalism**

ONE THING IS FOR SURE:

**The majority of typical food are produced
and sold by**

WOMEN

**...who, on the contrary of men, have
also other things to do during the day!**

“BIG BUSINESS” STILL REMAINS IN MALE HANDS

**But women are increasingly
distinguishing themselves through
innovative activities, especially
production of “typical”,
“biological” and high quality food**

WOMEN ARE AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF INNOVATIVE ACTIVITIES

The identity-type economy

Quality products

Sustainable tourism

Communication

**PEASANT WOMEN IN
ITALY :
ENTREPRENEURSHIP ON
THE INCREASE**

1931: 19% of farming labour

1951: 24%

1971: 29%

1991: 36%

And these figures are still rising...!!!

PEASANT WOMEN: ENTREPRENEURSHIP ON THE INCREASE

FARMING BUSINESSES RUN BY WOMEN IN ITALY

1970: 18.9%

1990: 25.9%

*And the increase is focused on those holdings of
between 10 and 20 hectares*

IN ORDER TO BUILD AUTHENTICITY ONE NEEDS TO:

- Develop regional characteristics
- Not necessarily target tourism
- Produce high quality foods and goods
- Process, package and seal them in loco
- Organize high quality training in loco
- Participatory project management

PARTICIPATORY TRAINING

- It takes the community inside a higher level of development: it can open a country to the world
- Satisfying working opportunities emerge for its younger population
- Stimulates entrepreneurship that exploits the characteristics of the locality
- It stimulates the finding of the existential meaning through the cultural and identity reappropriation

WHAT IS NEEDED TO MARKET AUTHENTICITY :

- Create quality certification
- Identify an easy recognizable trademark
- Define the target of clients
- Promote the territory
- **IN SHORT: GET ORGANIZED !!!**

SOCIAL FRAGMENTATION MEANS:

- Exacerbated community pride
- Difficulty in getting together to solve a problem
- Difficulty in accepting help and external advice
- Isolation

WOMEN ARE IN NEED OF MONEY

- **Banks very rarely give credit to a woman**
- **In Italy women earn approximately 47% of the male wage**
- **In Italy women represent only 17% of the politicians at all levels**
- **Any support for female entrepreneurship only finances large projects**

TO PROMOTE A TERRITORY IT IS NECESSARY TO ACCESS TO FUNDS

- Develop project management skills
- Overcome social fragmentation
- Accept differences
- Work in the long term
- Choose the right partners
- Operate in a network
- Apply to European Union Calls

GUIDELINES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- Economic efficiency
- Social Equity
- Environmental Integrity
- Cultural Identity



EUROPEAN UNION REQUIREMENTS:

- *bottom up* Approach
- Participatory Project Management
- Equal opportunities
- Involvement of *end users* (final beneficiaries)
- Monitoring and development indicators

METHODOLOGY APPLIED:

How to promote a territory ?

Through

**RESEARCH-
ACTION**

TRADITIONAL RESEARCH

Fundamental research (not focused on reaching a usable and practical result)

It's finalized towards reaching a practical and usable result

Not focused on changing a situation, but pursues knowledge of what exists

It's focused not only on changing the status quo,, but it also monitors it

Does not focus on possible practical applications of results

**Produces knowledge and change at the same time,
And it's applicable**

Only professional researchers

**gli operatori sono
i professionisti ma anche la base,
cioè la comunità in cui si svolge il lavoro**

i referenti sono costituiti dall'"ambiente scientifico", che è autoreferente e autolegittimante

**i referenti sono forniti dal contesto sociale in cui si svolge la ricerca,
che la giustifica attraverso i suoi effetti, e in questo modo la legittima**

- Form the research-action group
- Identify and analyze the problem
- Participatory project management
- Building of the action
- Evaluation of dell'intervento
- Sedimentazione and dissemination of results

**PROMOTION OF A
TERRITORY,
AS THE MARKET FOR
TYPICAL PRODUCTS**

is impossible without tourism

TOURISM FEEDS WITH CULTURE

**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
NON E' SVILUPPO A BUON MERCATO**

It's the only way

***If we want to foresee a future for our rural
and mountainous areas***