Crystallisation of Collective Action in the Emergence of a Geographical Indication System

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Abstract- **Collective action cannot develop without the commitment of partners to a common project. Building a new Geographical Indication (GI) implies crucial strategic decisions regarding the norms of the production process, the limits of the geographical area and the choice of the protected GI name. Who is going to make these decisions? What is the best path to kick-off with success the initiative? Two approaches have recently been tested in practice: the cluster approach and the working group approach. This paper presents the scientific background of these two approaches. A state of the art is proposed on the concept of cluster, developed in Industrial Economics. The translation theory, developed in Economic Sociology, is mobilised to analyse the "translation cycles" followed by most working groups. Based on case studies, this paper highlights and explains the benefits and risks of both approaches. It proposes an approach that combines face to face negotiations between the facilitator and potential partners, large information campaigns, and a representative working group in order to guarantee access to information to all and avoid further oppositions.**

Keywords: **collective action, geographical indications, clusters, translation cycles**

I. INTRODUCTION

E. Ostrom [1, p.29] defines collective action as how a group of principals who are in an interdependent situation can organise and govern themselves to obtain continuous joint benefits when all face temptations to free-ride, shirk, or otherwise act opportunistically. However, she does not explain how collective action gets off the ground. In most studied case studies, the collective initiatives are already settled and it is not possible to analyse the steps of the construction process, which nowadays belongs to legend.

Geographical indications (GIs) are legally defined by the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) Agreement as being "indications that identify a good as originating in the territory of a Member, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin". Collective action and organisation have been identified as a key factor of success for these agro-food origin-based products [2, 3]. If a performing collective organisation exists prior to the GI registration, the members start out in the registration process with extensive technical, financial, commercial and relational resources. This makes the transfer to a GI collective organisation easier [see the case study L'Etivaz cheese PDO, 4]. However, in most cases, operators involved in the manufacture of a potential GI product have very weak interpersonal links and have no experience of making common decisions about technical, marketing or legal issues. It is then necessary to build a collective organisation from scratch [5, 6].

We state that there is no "invisible hand" of collective action and spontaneous creation and that "crystallisation" of collective action requires a lot of energy and care. The questions are: what is the best path to create a complete new collective organisation? How to obtain commitment from members who were not involved during the very starting times? Is it possible to stimulate and accelerate the process, and limit failures linked to a trial and error procedure? This paper explores the very early crucial stages of initiatives that market agro-food products based on the origin. The paper compares emergent GI case studies, where researchers had the opportunity to observe directly the process of organisational innovation.

Section II explores the state of the art about collective action with a focus on GIs. Sections III and IV present two approaches that have been implemented recently to start out a GI collective organisation: the "cluster" approach and the "translation cycle" approach and illustrate each approach with relevant case studies worldwide. Section V highlights learnt lessons and discusses the results, in order to identify the best strategy for a smart take-off.

II. COLLECTIVE ACTION & GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS

As Narrod et al. [7, p.9] mentioned, there are several definitions of collective action in the literature but which uniformly imply the objective of meeting a commonly shared goal. Ostrom [8], who was rewarded in 2009 with the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, stresses that "collective action occurs when more than one individual is required to contribute to an effort in order to achieve an outcome". Macombe et al. [9] put the emphasis on the collective intention: "a collective action is characterised by the intentional search of a collective "surplus" that distinguishes collective action from simple addition of individualistic actions".

One specific case of collective action is cooperation between competing firms, which are named differently by authors. They are called "coalitions" [10, p.34], "strategic alliances" [11], "network alliances" [12] or "relational networks" [13]. But all authors agree about their main characteristics: at least two firms cooperate for mutual benefit on a set of agreed upon common goals, and agree to share decision making power on these specific issues; but they remain independent companies.

Many authors have explored the motivations of owner-managers of firms to join collective action due to occurrences that may potentially destabilise their business. Individual and collective benefits have been identified. New resources and information access, economies of scale and scope, and reduced transaction and coordination costs are some of the potential benefits for operators [12, 14-16]. Pressures to dislocation come from the risks of mutual dependence, remaining competition and the difficulty to identify the distribution of the benefits of collective action between members [for a review, see 17].

GIs systems are a specific type of collective agri-food initiatives. A GI system was defined in the SINER-GI[1] project as: "the set of actors who are effectively engaged in creating value and improving the strategic marketing position of the GI product by spontaneous individual or organised collective action and those who are engaged in the activation and reproduction of those local resources (natural resources, knowledge, social capital) which make the GI product specific". GI systems link farmers and processing enterprises, whose common goal is to register a GI product and to monitor a common code of practices.

Collective organisation is not a TRIPS condition and in some countries the national law even authorises a single company to apply for the registration of a GI. In the EU, collective organisation used to be an implicit condition, recently reinforced by the European PDO-PGI[2] regulation[3] that considers GIs to be collective property. In many countries worldwide, the national law states similar requirement. In order to register, actors must set up a representative organisation and adopt a common code of practices.

Besides legal aspects, from an economic point of view, collective organisation has also shown to be a powerful tool to create and distribute value within the supply chain. Different reasons may explain why farmers and processors initiate and join alliances to market origin-labelled, high quality products. These reasons are mainly economic. They come from the imperfections of conventional markets. Some producers realise that they are in a very weak position on conventional markets, where it is necessary to provide standardised quality and low-cost products in order to be efficient and to survive. These producers generally produce a "special" quality, at high production costs. As these food products generally follow an extensive production process (often in marginal regions with a low agronomic potential), they are apparently not competitive, even though they provide a valuable claim based on taste and typicality. When they join a GI collective organisation, the agents look mainly for higher sales prices compared with conventional markets. This "premium" is paid by consumers who acknowledge the superior quality of the product offered by the alliance. Indeed, the origin-based labels help adjust the asymmetry of information on quality and the corresponding risks of getting non-guaranteed products.

Expected benefits are mainly economic as mentioned above but also social, such as maintaining a specific traditional processing knowledge and

[1] Strengthening International Research on Geographical Indications: from research foundation to consistent policy. 18. Sylvander, B. and G. Allaire.(2007), Conceptual Synthesis - WP3 Report, Strengthening International Research on Geographical Indications: from research foundation to consistent policy - SINER-GI, 66 p.

2 PDO. Protected Designation of Origin, PGI: Protected Geographical Indication

3 Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 of 20 March 2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs

lifestyle, overcoming local business isolation, and getting pride in belonging to the GI prestigious world group [17, 19].

Recent research has explored the issue of facilitation and leadership in emergent GIs. It showed that creating a new collective GI organisation needs time and energy. A common vision proposed by charismatic leaders was identified as a key factor of success. The decisive role of a facilitator appointed to link operators and help them make crucial decisions has been highlighted, as well as the limits of the facilitation process [20]. Three main activities were stressed: facilitators help structure the group, catalyse the group process and help mobilise external resources. Facilitators foster the inclusion of less powerful actors [21], advocate participative methodologies that generate ownership of decisions and actions, and create an infrastructure through which all members can participate in spite of differences in skill levels [22]. Facilitators devote effort both to attracting the partners that are necessary and to supporting those who want to be partners [22]. Nevertheless, as Vangen and Huxham [22] stress, overcoming a reluctance to participate can be a time-consuming activity, as those who are desired by those already involved do not always see the value of active involvement.

Additionally, along with these activities traditionally identified in the literature, facilitators who work in developing and transition countries might have to build capacity at the national level and promote a more favourable institutional context. Facilitation is a demanding activity, and though facilitators are not leaders in its traditional meaning, facilitators might lean towards a directive leadership style to cope with the potential inertia of the group as well as to live up to backers' expectations with regard to achieved results. Indeed, donors who support the building of GIs' initiatives, generally expect effective outputs in a limited timeframe. Therefore facilitators have to negotiate with donors about results to be achieved (e.g. elaboration of a code of practices, setting-up of a collective organisation) and the best strategy to be implemented to promote collective action.

This paper discusses what is the best path to identify the relevant partners and convince them to join the GI collective organisation. Two approaches have been identified and tested in practice: the "cluster" approach and the "translation cycle" approach. The first one starts with a large informative phase to actors located in the region. After meetings opened to the public, interested people are invited to join a discussion group, moderated by an external facilitator. The second approach starts with a very small working group, with one or two strong leaders, who propose to potential partners, in a second stage, already quite elaborated strategic decisions regarding the marketing positioning and the technical strategy.

In both cases, two issues are crucial: the identification of potential partners and the enrolment of partners so that the initiative reaches its critical size in terms of volumes. The identification of partners is clearly linked to the boundaries of the geographical area of the GI (who is in, who is out?) and to the producers' ability to comply with the rules of the code of practices. Enrolment is a difficult process because members have to leave their previous commercial system, to build a new one, involving risks, as all changes do. To initiate such a change, all agents must group with competitors, align the practices and inform consumers about the "special" high quality of the product. To be successful, it requires from both farmers and processors the technical knowledge and the willingness to produce together a high quality product. But it is not sufficient. Getting value requires the involvement of the producers themselves in a complete marketing strategy to obtain this higher recognition from the consumers. They must accept the rules of a collective action.

Clusters and translation cycles belong to two very different theoretical fields. The first one comes from Industrial economics, the second one from Economic Sociology. We will present now their theoretical backgrounds and identified limits, and show how the two approaches have been implemented in practice.

III. THE "CLUSTER APPROACH"

A. Theoretical and empirical background

Cluster may be defined as non-random geographical agglomerations of firms with similar or closely complementary capabilities [Richardson 1972, Ellison and Glaeser 1994, quoted by 23]. Porter [24] defines clusters as being "geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field". Porter stressed that clusters may include suppliers of specialised inputs and may also extend downstream to channels and customers and laterally to manufacturers of complementary products and to companies in industries related by skills, technologies, or common inputs. Additionally, Porter

highlighted that many clusters include governmental and other institutions (e.g. standards-setting agencies, trade association) that provide specialised training, education, information, research and technical support [24].

The cluster notion stems from the notion of "industrial district" developed by Marshall [25]. The general term of "industrial district" was then deepened in economic sociology, industrial economics, regional economics, and economic geography with different focuses and under different concepts [23, 26, 27]:

- Industrial districts with the analysis of the "Third Italy" [28], and a focus in economic specialisation, economies of scales, local coordination mechanisms and local spillovers [29],
- Clusters with a focus on competitiveness [24],
- Innovative milieux with a focus on the role of innovation, coordination of actors within networks and regional development [30-32],
- Learning regions with a focus on evolutionary aspects of collective learning [33, 34],
- Local industrial systems and local productive systems with a focus on know-how and modalities of organisation [35, 36], and trajectories [37]. The notion of localised system of production was then extended in 1996 to agro-food issues with agro-food localised systems [38, 39].

Schmitz [26] states that "in spite of manifold differences in terminology, focus, coverage and realities studied, the general point which comes out of this European debate is that the competitiveness of the analysed firms cannot be grasped by analysing them individually. Their strength comes from incidental external economies and deliberate joint action, both of which are facilitated by clustering".

According to Schmitz [26], the term "cluster" refers merely to a sectoral and geographical concentration of firms. Whether specialisation and co-operation develop is thus considered a matter for empirical research and not subsumed in the definition. According to Porter [24], cluster's boundaries are defined by "the linkages and complementaries across industries and institutions that are most important to competition", and he adds that "although clusters often fit within political boundaries, they may cross state or even national borders".

Principal characteristics of the industrial district that emerged from the international debate are [26]:

- Geographical proximity and spatial concentration of the production (medium and small enterprises),
- Sectoral specialisation (product, jobs)
- Predominance of small and medium-sized firms and productive articulation (networks of SMEs),
- Specific organisation of the production and close inter-firm collaboration,
- Inter-firm competition based on innovation,
- Favourable socio-cultural conditions (social construction of the market, shared identity which facilitates trust)
- Active self-help organisations,
- Supportive regional and municipal government.

Porter [24] highlighted that clusters are hybrid organisational forms, in between arm's length markets on the one hand and hierarchies, or vertical integration on the other. Better coordination and trust is fostered by the proximity of companies and institutions in one location and the repeated exchanges among them. Thus clusters mitigate the problems inherent in arm's-length relationships without imposing the inflexibilities of vertical integration or the management challenges of creating and maintaining formal linkages such as networks, alliances, and partnerships. A cluster of independent and informally linked companies and institutions represents a robust organisational form that offers advantages in efficiency, effectiveness, and flexibility [24].

Theoretical models of industrial district – including its related notions of cluster, innovative milieu and localised agro-food system - have been widely used as analytic framework to investigate GIs and their effects in terms of organisational and economic development [40-44]. Devautour and Sautier [45] highlighted the interrelated research topics between GIs and localised agro-food systems and stressed that GIs are not always organised into a localised agro-food system. Investigated in terms of trajectories, Devautour and Sautier [45] stated that a localised agro-food system might evolve into a GI (institutionalisation, certification), and conversely a GI might developed properties of localised agro-food system (development of a basket of products for instance). The statement was recently illustrated in a paper that analyses the lifecycle of a localised agro-food system [46]. The author deals with the development of the localised agro-food system Kintamani Bali coffee (Indonesia), which was endogenously developed, into a GI initiative.

Contrary to the case above quoted, the "cluster" approach has been implemented many times in practice to start-out a GI collective organisation, often at the initiative of external actors such as USAID. We

will now present two case studies of clusters induced by external actors, which were documented by researchers who were associated to the construction process. We will follow a common template for presentation in order to facilitate comparison: initiators, objectives, chosen process, chosen members, decision making process regarding the production norms, encountered difficulties, and present state of the project.

B. *The Coffee Pico Duarte case study (Dominican Republic)*

This case study has been in-depth studied and documented by Belletti, Galtier and Marescotti [47, 48], who were personally involved in the project and have described it precisely step by step.

Initiators: The "Cluster de Café de Jarabacoa" (CCJ) was created in 2005. It was activated and funded by an external actor (USAID). It was formed by the main trader-roaster-exporter of the zone (who manages 60% of the coffee of the municipality of Jarabacoa), eight producers' organisations, and five non-profit making institutions: CODOCAFE (a public institution in charge of the coffee sector), IDIAF (the Dominican research institute on agriculture), UAFAM (university of Jarabacoa), the municipality of Jarabacoa, and PROCARYN (environmental project funded by GTZ). It was assisted by the PROCA 2 project, funded by AFD, the French cooperation agency.

Objectives: The initial general objective was to improve the competitiveness of the Dominican economy. According to the authors, the case of coffee in the Jarabacoa region was chosen due to good links between a coffee producer and USAID. The green coffee of the Dominican Republic was sold on the international market as a commodity. Coffee prices are highly volatile and an oversupply started in 1997 that led to a strong price decrease with its deepest point in 2002/03. The idea was to "decommodify" coffee, by distinguishing origin, in order to get a price premium on the market.

Chosen process: In the framework of the PROCA 2 project, a scientific study was considered as necessary to identify the geographical zones for coffee production with specific quality attributes. This study was realised by IDIAF (the Dominican research institute on agriculture) with the support of CIRAD, a French research institute, during the harvests time 2003-2004 and 2004-2005. It concluded that the most suitable zone for high quality coffee production was the north slope of the Cordillera Central, including Jarabacoa but also the neighbouring zones of Constanza and Juncalito.

However, when the results of the study were published, the cluster was already created. As the study revealed a gap between the potential and the effective level of quality of the coffee from the delimitated zone, the cluster decided to launch a GI project, whose aim was to design the GI code of practices, including the delimitated area, the production norms and the coffee classification grid.

As initiator of the GI process, the cluster was entrusted with the organisation of the collective negotiation. However, the researchers' team proposed to the cluster a list of persons to be invited and an agenda to organise the collective decision-making process.

Geographical limits and group composition: All researchers were in favour of including the zones of Juncalito and Constanza, and not restraining the geographical area to Jarabacoa. Additionally, they thought that the altitude was an important criterion of coffee quality. Anyway, they proposed four options to the directive board of the cluster. The board chose to invite producers but no traders from the neighbouring zones of Juncalito and Constanza to a discussion seminar. However, they were only invited for the debate in the morning, while the final decisions should be taken in the afternoon. Finally very few producers came from Constanza and they left before the debate. No producers came from Juncalito.

Three groups were built-up: producers, traders, and institutions. The producers' group was in favour of strict production norms, exclusion of the farms below 700-800m, and inclusion within the geographical area of Juncalito and Constanza. The Institutions' group gave the same opinion. The trader group chose at first best to restrict the area to the high part of Jarabacoa and to adopt restrictive production norms. The decision was taken in the afternoon without formal vote. The director of the largest coffee firm of the Jarabacoa region summed up the discussion by the proposal to include neither the neighbouring zones of Junaclito and Constanza nor the farms of the Jarabacoa below 700 m, and to adopt restrictive norms. Nobody opposed.

Decision making process regarding the production norms: A second seminar was organised. Seventeen producers of all types of the Jarabacoa region, the director of the largest firm of the Jarabacoa region and many public institutions attended the meeting. The

researchers' team was in favour of high level norms and presented a survey of producers who stated that they were already complying with the required norms. During the meeting, nobody dared to contest the results of the survey. The main result of the round was to adopt more restrictive norms than those proposed by the team. But a more in-depth analysis of few case studies (where the declared practices were verified) showed that none of the six producers complied with the control points.

Effective output: According to the authors, the result is a very classical and generic code of practices.

Difficulties: the authors highlight that:

- Concerning the definition of the production area (exclusion of the neighbouring zones): the results were undermined by the largest traders in order to exclude competitors and get the exclusivity of the GI. The existence of the cluster, prior to the GI, and geographically limited to the municipality of Jarabacoa, also played a determining role.
- Concerning the norms: the intervention of a scientific team from abroad led to a biased evaluation of real practices that producers did not dare to contest. It was difficult for the producers to defend less restrictive norms and to admit that they were not able for the time being to comply with the requested norms.

C. The Kajmak from Kraljevo case study (Serbia)

This case study has been in-depth studied and documented by Paus and Estève [49].

Initiators: The Serbian Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry financially supported the protection of the kajmak from Kraljevo in the framework of its two-year programme "Traditional Agricultural Products of Western Serbia and Geographical Indications' protection" (2006-2008) that had the global objectives to create new economic dynamics in unfavourable rural areas of Western Serbia. A local NGO, the Ibar Development Association (IDA), was awarded by the Ministry for the realisation of this project. Nevertheless, IDA had to launch the project on the foundation of a previous attempt of collective action. Worldwide Strategies Inc. (WSI), an American consulting agency, launched in 2004 a two-year project "Serbia Employment Promotion" under the financing support of the World Bank and the Serbian Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The cluster development axe of the program was aiming at strengthening the community economic development. In this purpose, several meetings were organised in Kraljevo in early 2005 during which a WSI consultant pointed out the basic elements essential for a cluster to start up. The representatives of several institutions and organisations were contacted during this phase. The process slowed down due the difficulties to identify people truly interested in participation and further cluster development. An agro-cluster was chosen to be established according to the good agricultural resources [50].

During a meeting of the dairy cluster, a veterinarian inspector made the proposal to brand the kajmak and cheese of Kraljevo.

Objectives: The first objectives of the veterinarian inspector were to improve the production in terms of hygiene and to protect the reputation of the kraljevacki kajmak. The director of the local NGO IDA supported the initiative to protect the kraljevacki kajmak for rural development purposes.

Chosen process: Informative meetings were organised by WSI, then by the NGO IDA. Between 2005 and May 2006, four meetings were organised with the executive board of the agro-cluster, additionally to some larger meetings and workshops about cluster development (in total, around fifteen meetings were organised). In 2007, IDA organised in several villages five informative meetings about kajmak protection, as well as a meeting with regional institutions. A working group was then formed with motivated producers and between 2007 and 2008, they gathered five times to deal with the key elements of the code of practices.

Geographical limits and group composition: Members of the dairy cluster are household producers of kajmak, large milk producers, the owner of a dairy, and traders. Moreover the WSI local coordinator invited several institutions to take part in the agro-cluster building: the municipality of Kraljevo had a representative, as well as the secondary school of agriculture in Kraljevo, the veterinarian institute, and the veterinarian station. Around twenty producers of kajmak attended one or several meetings of WSI.

On the list provided by the veterinarian inspector, there were seventy-four kajmak producers from fifteen villages, all located in the northern part of the Kraljevo municipality (lowlands). There were no producers from the mountainous area of the municipality (Golija mountains), nor producers from villages outside of the municipality.

After the end of the WSI project, the group composition changed. The prior objective of IDA was to protect the kajmak from Kraljevo in order to reach rural development outcomes. The traders and large

producers felt they were not enough listened, the small producers becoming the focus. Many participants withdrew from the initiative and stopped attending the meetings. Traders and large producers, who shared different views from household producers, quitted the initiative. Several household producers were also discouraged. Finally, when IDA organised a meeting in Kraljevo in May 2007, sixty-three participants attended the meeting, all being small household producers. Consequently, the group strongly homogenised. Twenty-three villages were represented, but only two were in common with those from the list provided by the veterinarian inspector one year earlier. IDA also organised informative meetings in the mountainous area. In 2008, the agro-cluster association counted around ten active members, two of which are also members of the GI working group, which gathers nineteen members.

Decision making process regarding the production norms: The working group established by IDA democratically discussed the rules to be written in the code of practices. However, several strategic groups were missing in the working group (small-scale dairies and large milk producers), as well as producers from outside the municipality of Kraljevo.

Effective output: At the end of the mandate of WSI, in November 2006, the cluster was registered as association, following the willingness of the producers to seal their involvement in a recognised institution. Until 2010, there was no effective output of the GI working group. No application for the protection of the kajmak from Kraljevo was registered at the Serbian Intellectual Property Office.

Difficulties: The local coordinators tried to obtain the support of the municipality but political instability slowed response from the local authorities and support has remained only verbal. One and half year of investment from producers and other members of the cluster were poorly rewarded and many members disengaged from the cluster initiative. No leader emerged from the GI working group established to protect the kajmak from Kraljevo.

D. Synthesis

These two case studies present interesting commonalities.

Modifications in the composition of the group: A GI is defined by four key elements: a name (the GI itself) with a good reputation among consumers; a recognised typicity / uniqueness compared with competitors, and linked to the territory (terroir); a delimited geographical area for production of raw material and/or processing; specific production methods (written in a code of practices or not).

A cluster initiated by external actors often starts without any previous consideration to these topics. As Martin and Sunley [51] emphasised, there is a lack of clear boundaries, both industrial and geographical, in cluster definition. The invitations to participate in cluster meetings are generally large and do not necessary target the best suitable participants for the building of a GI initiative. The project to establish a GI initiative comes later in the agenda of the cluster, which gathers diverse actors whose motivations are different. Nevertheless, in a GI project, it is necessary at one point to precisely identify the geographical limits and the partners that are really ready to join and to act. This means that the cluster members and the GI group members are often partly different. Some members will enter the project and some will exit. Some might be willing to stay in the initiative though not being determining for it, others who are needed for the GI initiative might be reluctant to enter. This switch is very difficult to make, as the composition of the cluster's group might influence the composition of the GI's group.

A top down approach: In both cases, clusters were developed by foreign development agencies in order to improve the competitiveness and/or increase the local economic development. According to WSI that implements clusters in Serbia, "clusters are one of the world's best economic tools for creation of new jobs through the development of stringer competitiveness".

However, the question about whether clusters can be initiated by public policies or external agencies is debated in the literature. The theory, which was developed from empirical research, indicates that a cluster emerges spontaneously and is linked to the notions of autonomy and endogenous development [52]. In the practice, some government or aid agencies top-down establish clusters. Schmitz [26] indicates that the case studies from both European industrial districts and developing countries suggest that clustering has not been the outcome of a planned intervention by the state or local or regional strategy, but has emerged from within. He states that this lends credence to the view that collective efficiency (i.e. competitive advantage derived from local external economies and joint action) based on the economic and social activities of a community is difficult to create from above, and develops best as an

endogenous process. He does not underestimate the facilitative role played by public and private sector institutions, but highlights that the clusters were not created by these institutions. Schmitz states governments or government-sponsored institutions cannot create an industrial organisation which competes on the basis of collective efficiency. However, the emergence of clusters as a government-induced process in the framework of an economic development policy is still under debate [51, 53].

As the coffee Pico Duarte case has shown, belonging feelings and collective takeover by local producers are necessary to avoid that collective norms are decided by external actors. The risk is to obtain as a result a code of practices far from the production realities. GIs building strongly relies on producers' motivations, and the collective efficiency of the cluster might be undermined by a lack of willingness to collectively act. Moreover, the very notion of cluster and the values it promotes were completely unfamiliar to producers prior to the project implementation. In Kraljevo, the project was accepted with certain doubts by both municipal authorities and cluster members.

These discrepancies resulted from the "artificial" creation of the cluster. Indeed, within the cluster, no common concrete objectives were defined and shared, and a high heterogeneity in the motivations and expectations of the participants was observed. As Schmitz [26] highlighted, more collective actors does not necessary mean more collective efficiency.

In both cases, the project to protect the main product with a GI put new life into the cluster and helped to define common objective, as well as to launch discussions about the composition of the group and the geographical boundaries.

Three main weaknesses of this approach were identified. First, if the information campaign does not lead in a short time to a consistent proposal or if the most concerned people do not join the discussion group, the initiative aborts. Second, the changes in the composition of the group are delicate to handle, in particular due to power relations that are already set. Third, the facilitator appointed for the establishment of the cluster may lean towards an authoritarian leadership in order to meet the agenda of donors.

IV. THE "TRANSLATION CYCLE" APPROACH

a. Theoretical and empirical background

The "translation cycle" approach roots in the actor-network theory [54-56], which has been mobilised to analyse the stories of emerging initiatives in the agro-food sector [57-60]. Extending Callon's approach [55], these authors argue that the most successful initiatives that market products with a claim of sustainability must follow a *diachronic* "translation cycle", whose four stages were identified by Callon and Latour.

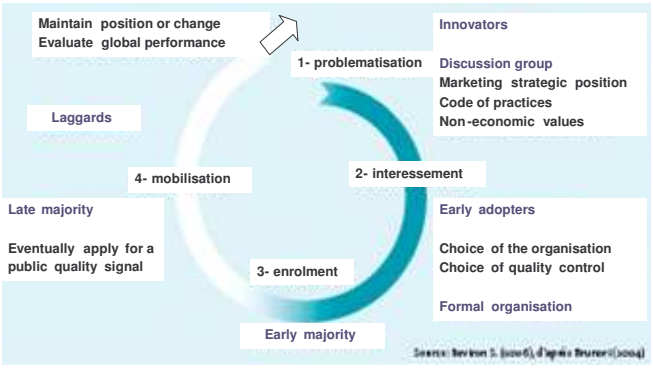
i. *Problematisation:* This stage starts when initiators identify a problem and start thinking about a solution. Informal discussions lead to a first design of collective organisation.

ii. *Interessement:* To involve other actors within the alliance, initiators need to formulate with them a common definition of the problem. Communication helps the involved actors to position themselves around the problem, add new information, involve new entities or discard others.

iii. *Enrolment***:** Once the set of actors interested in the alliance is defined, the group must agree on the actions to take (and when) and those to avoid, as well as with who they should interact, etc... Roles are assigned to each member of the network.

iv. *Mobilisation***:** Once the initiative has proved that it works, some more adverse to risks partners might decide to join the alliance and consequently increase the production volume of the initiative**.** This can be a testing time in terms of the internal cohesion of the alliance, because newcomers may not adopt the initiators' vision and values.

Figure 1 presents these four stages, with main milestones. The agenda is clearly fixed. The idea is that it is not possible to go to next step if the decisions are not made concerning the present step.



*Source:*Réviron S. and D. Barjolle [61] from Brunori G. and H. Wiskerke [58]

Figure 1: Translation cycle

This approach was implemented to revive a GI rye bread in the Valais region (Switzerland) and to register as GI the raspberries from Arijle (Serbia). We will see in the next section what were the benefits and the limits of the approach.

b. The PDO Valais rye bread case study (Switzerland)

This case study has been in-depth studied and documented by Réviron [62] in the framework of the European research project SUS-CHAIN[4].

Initiators: The Valais Rye Bread initiative was initiated by the regional authorities. It is part of a larger integrated regional strategy to develop sustainable and multifunctional agri-food supply chains as a means of fostering rural development. The initiative was launched in 1997 by a very small group that included the Director of the Chamber of Agriculture, a high ranking official from the regional Ministry of Agriculture, the two regional mills and two representatives of the Valais Bakers' Association. Initially, there were no farmers involved.

Objectives: The actors involved in the beginning of the project initially had quite different, yet compatible, agendas. The regional authorities intended to develop a basket of typical food products that could be registered as PDOs, in order to improve the attractiveness and image of the region. The regional authorities were also keen to support the survival of regional enterprises and were worried about the rapid decrease in the production of rye in the region, as well as the possible risk of losing traditional methods of rye bread production. The two mills, which produce different types of flour for the national market, thought that a diversification including a special rye flour would improve their competitive position towards their main competitors. The village bakers were looking for a way to differentiate themselves from the bakery departments of the main retailers, which continuously increase their market share, threatening the viability of local bakeries.

Chosen process: The discussion group started working on a clear and unique selling proposition based on the quality, typicity, and origin of the product. The second step was to codify the baking and production practices involved with Valais Rye Bread. The working group used its own skills and experience to develop the production criteria (without any external assistance). The bakers and mills compared their know-how, which placed them in a strong position for guiding the project. Farmers were not involved in these discussions. The third stage was to enrol primary producers and expand interest among bakers.

At this point a formal organisation, the Valais Rye Bread Association, was created. This is an inter-professional association with members from different levels of the supply chain: producers, mills, and bakers. This organisational form is commonly used for co-ordinating the production and sales of PDO products. It has no direct commercial activities (i.e. it does not sell or buy goods) but concerns itself with issues linked to the code of practices, quality control and traceability, marketing issues and promotion. A part time (one day a week) facilitator was hired. She plays an important role, listening to and linking operators and encouraging them to reach collective decisions that are in line with the regional strategy based on the production of quality food.

Geographical limits and group composition: There was no discussion about the GI geographical limits, which are those of the canton (region) of Valais. However, there were important changes in the group composition when the GI organisation was officially created. The Chamber of Agriculture and the Valais Ministry of Agriculture left the space for the operators to develop the project themselves. These initiators are not members of the association, which only includes private operators with direct, commercial links. Nevertheless, regional authorities still provide much-welcomed financial and non–financial support.

Decision making process regarding the production norms: Decisions regarding the code of practices were made very early by the working group and were slightly adjusted later.

Effective output: The PDO registration was accepted in 2004. There was strong opposition to the application. The major opposition came from a large retailer, which was selling a similar round-shaped rye bread that was industrially produced, and claimed that the designation 'Valais Rye Bread' was generic. The Federal Ministry of Agriculture (OFAG) defended the GI initiative and its support helped to obtain a positive legal decision.

Since 2001, the project has been successful in enrolling producers and village bakers. This process was further boosted by the PDO registration. At the present time, the association includes forty producers,

[4] Marketing sustainable agriculture : an analysis of the potential role of new food supply chains in sustainable rural development

two mills, and forty-eight bakers. Around 800 tons of rye is annually grown for the production of Valais Rye Bread. The potential of the regional market has almost been fully reached.

Difficulties: Not to invite producers directly involved in rye production led to a lack of commitment on their part. They sometimes display opportunistic behaviour. For example, in 2004, producers individually felt that the price premium (10 Swiss francs / 100kg) offered by the mills was not sufficient and the regional rye production decreased by 14%. The association decided to increase the price premium to 12.5 CHF and the following year, the volume jumped 50%. This lack of co-ordination does not benefit to a long term strategy and shows that the representation of the producers in the association is not satisfying. It is a weakness of the initiative that could have been avoided during the construction of the discussion group.

c. The raspberries from Arijle case study (Serbia)

The investigation of this case study was undertaken by Paus in the framework of a PhD thesis [20].

Initiators: The issue to protect Serbian GIs grew in 2006 with both interests from the Ministry of Agriculture and from foreigners who helped make the concept known. The municipality of Arilje was the initiator of the protection of raspberries from Arilje. The raspberries production is an economic pillar of the municipality. Moreover, one of the authority employees is also co-leading a local association, ARINOVA, which provides technical assistance to farmers. This contributed to raise awareness of the PDO or PGI potential of these raspberries. Interests in the protection were expressed by the association of cold storages plants (representing in 2008 around twenty companies over seventy-five cold stores). A working group was established by the municipality, it gathers the director of the "innovation centre" (established in 2007 by the municipality), and two representatives of the Arilje municipality, including a former professor specialised in raspberries production (Cacak fruit and wine growing centre). Physicochemical analyses were carried out by the fruit institute in Cacak. The initiators looked for financial resources and established a partnership with USAID (in the framework of an agribusiness project) with regard to the promotion after the registration process. No producers or processors were directly involved in the working group (nevertheless, all the Arilje inhabitants own a plot of raspberry canes, including the participants in the working group).

Objectives: The objectives of the working group were to promote the raspberries production from Arilje, in order to face an increased competition worldwide with new producer countries such as China, and to protect the name against usurpations. Additionally, expected effects of the registration were the improvement of production methods and quality (with for example GlobalGap implementation), as well as the development of local processing activities (e.g. juice production).

Chosen process: A discussion was undertaken between the working group and the Serbian Intellectual Property Office, which demanded to indicate the varieties in the code of practices. Nevertheless, the cultivated varieties are not local (Williamette and Meeker) and new varieties were recently introduced. The working group, made aware of the fact that some varieties of raspberries grown in Arilje would be deprived of the right to be sold under the name "Ariljeski malina", could argue that the typicity of the raspberries from Arilje stems from the particular conditions of the slopes of the Moravica valley (climate and soil). Beside the variety issue, the production methods were documented by the Cacak fruit and wine growing centre, together with the innovation centre.

Geographical limits and group composition: Raspberries are produced in the municipality of Arilje, but in the neighbouring municipalities as well (Ivanica and Pozega), and the Moravica valley constitutes a coherent unit. The working group, based in Arilje, agreed that producers located in the neighbouring municipalities and delivering the raspberries to companies located in Arilje should be included in the GI geographical area. Neighbouring local authorities were informed about the project; however, no discussions were openly undertaken in the frame of the working group. The concerned producers are not yet informed.

Decision making process regarding the production norms: The initiators saw the registration as a way to increase the quality of the production. Moreover, the ARINOVA association was working together with the GTZ, the German cooperation, on a project aiming at implementing GlobalGap norms. Therefore "good practices" were included in the code of practices with regard to fertilizers, collect, and chemical protection.

Effective output: The code of practices was written and negotiated between 2007 and 2008. It was written by two representatives of the municipality and the director of the centre for innovation. The application for the protection of Ariljeski malina was submitted at the Serbian Intellectual Property Office in December 2008. The registration occurred in February 2009.

Difficulties: No major difficulties were encountered during the work of the group and the registration process. The working group organised several meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, and the Intellectual Property Office while working on the draft of the application. However, shortcomings must be mentioned with regard to the delimitation process as well as the poor empowerment of producers, most of whom not being informed about the legal protection of the Ariljeski malina. Indeed, the working group has not managed to involve producers yet. Moreover, only the association of cold stores, representing one quarter of the processors was consulted.

D. Synthesis

The interest of the "translation cycle" approach lies in its efficiency in making the project to progress at the beginning, due to a small group of motivated and skilled people. There are some elements of the cluster approach that may be observed, such as the common territorial roots, the willingness to economically develop a given region, and the active personal contribution of regional authorities. However, the objective is to build a collective organisation with formal rules and discipline.

Weaknesses come from the difficulty to mobilise professionals at the right stage: if the initiators' group does not manage to convince other partners to join, the initiative slows down. It may survive but at a very small size. The second problem comes from the choice of the very early participants in the working group. It is essential not to exclude key actors because their commitment will be crucial when launching the GI initiative. Both studied cases showed that the working groups reached effective outputs with regard to the registration; nevertheless, the involvement of producers remained problematic. The third problem comes from the initiators' attitude that may become too autocratic, considering that the idea was theirs' and not ready to accept a collective decision-making process.

V. DISCUSSION

In the light of the empirical evidences presented in the previous sections, we can draw some first results to answer the question of what is the best path to build a GI initiative.

First, there are common risks to both approaches to be highlighted. Clusters and working groups may lead to inappropriate decisions with regard to the choice of the name of the GI product. The name of the GI product is the name that is legally protected and it is the promoter of the product's reputation. There might be a discrepancy between the name chosen by the cluster's members or the working group and the name that fits the best with the GI, as cluster and working group do not represent the final composition of the GI group (inclusion/exclusion of members in the case of clusters, enrolment of producers in the case of working groups). In the same way, names identified by producers and names recognised by consumers might not perfectly match as Belletti et al. [48] highlighted in the Café Pico Duarte case: "At the beginning, the name of the Denomination of Origin was obvious for the members of the Cluster: it should be *Café de Jarabacoa*. Indeed, it seems that the choice of the name was based more on local social cohesion among farmers (identification, pride) and on the name of the Cluster than on marketing purposes" [48].

Moreover, the issue of the name is linked to potential exclusion of producers. In both Serbian cases, the names to be protected are names of municipalities (Arilje and Kraljevo). This sets the question of the producers located in the neighbouring municipalities, particularly in the case of rivalry between municipalities (as for example Kraljevo with Cacak).

The cluster cases showed a situation where the cluster approach was promoted by a foreign aid agency prior to a GI project. In these particular cases, power relations established during the cluster building are difficult to change. The building of the GI on the basis of the cluster is linked to financial opportunities offered by external donors, rather than a methodological choice.

Organising large meetings within a cluster is often seen as the best way to guarantee equality of information to all, to help the initiators to identify

interested people, and to develop democratic decisions. It decreases the general cost of the facilitator (appointed by external agency, ministry of agriculture, etc.) in comparison to face-to-face meetings, as it ensures that the concept can be presented simultaneously to the largest number of potential concerned actors. However, these meetings increase the general cost for the producers, who have to come to the meeting place. Moreover large meetings might hinder some group dynamics linked to the diversity of strategic groups as well as the passive attitude that might be adopted by participants. Third, the link with the individual practices is more difficult to establish. Finally, there is a real risk that producers become de-motivated to attend meetings that do not bring direct outputs. Clusters might enrol too early and lose commitment of producers if they do not reach effective results in a reasonable time-frame. The cluster approach, which is based on brainstorming and informal activation of social links seems not to best suit the specific objectives of a GI construction. Building a cluster and developing a GI initiative with thousand potential GI producers, as it is the case in Kraljevo, is extremely difficult to sustain.

At first sight, the empirical analysis of the case studies leads to the conclusion that working groups are the most effective approach to register and protect GIs. Trust building is a key element in collective action and small working group might increase confidence between members, in a collective learning dynamic.

It seems that working groups are particularly adapted to answer the following situations:

- A decline of the production volume, with an objective to re-launch the product. In this particular case, there are few pressures on the existing farming and processing practices and the negotiation arena regarding norms is quite limited;
- A threat in terms of usurpation or other external threats. In these cases, a quick registration ensures, at a very little cost, both a public communication associated with a potential revival of the product and a legal protection that helps the GI producers to fight against misuses of the product's name.

Nevertheless, several crucial risks are associated to this strategy. First, there is a risk that members of the working groups have too few motivations or opposite ones, leading to the abortion of the working group. Second, there is a risk that the members do not care about the representativeness of the group, enabling leaders to impose their visions to the detriment of other economic actors and/or territorial values. If the working group does not include trusted leaders that may convince later their colleagues, the chances of success will be very limited. Working groups might not develop into larger collective organisation and abort. In the Arilje case, there was no enrolment after the facilitators appointed to draft the code of practices applied for the protection. After the success of the registration, which is often the primary objective of the working group, the dynamic might stop.

The issue of shared information is crucial. Collective learning of the working group members may leave potential partners behind, who are not aware of the key benefits and risks of the project and would discover them too late. People may feel upset to have been excluded and decide to hamper the project. It is essential to launch in parallel with the working group's agenda, an information campaign among professionals and concerned institutions. Large information and awareness campaigns are essential activities at both local and national levels, targeting both institutions and producers. Moreover, as the GIs' protection is awarded by the state, there should not be secret registration. Therefore, collective meetings and awareness sessions are necessary and efficient to make the concept known. Facilitators and working groups should rely on media to increase awareness of the concept and the potential development outcomes. Radio and TV might help to create a general favourable context and target diverse strategic groups.

In Kraljevo, the enacted facilitation strategy consisted in a large informative phase, followed by the formation of a working group. However, as the process spread over several years, producers disengaged. Since a group facilitator's purpose is to help participants to achieve both their individual and common goals, and in order to avoid producers' disengagement, it is recommended that facilitators first focus on a restricted number of potential active participants. As Ostrom [63] mentioned, individual incentives depend on producers' expectations, the viability of the rules established, their beliefs concerning overall net benefits, and the distribution of benefits and costs.

Therefore, the first step in any GI facilitation process should be the systematic examination of individual expectations and goals in order to help to establish priorities and identify common goals. Identification of leaders is also a key objective. Face-to-face meetings are appropriate to reach this objective by identifying the main strategic groups. Moreover,

the costs of the activity are supported by the facilitator instead of the producers (travel expenditures), and the facilitators have the opportunity to visualise the production processes (they may visit the farm/ enterprise), avoiding the establishment of norms in the code of practices that do not fit with the reality on the field.

Moreover, in bilateral meetings, facilitators might understand the vertical and horizontal relations between operators. Indeed, competition among producers is seen as a potential hindering factor to build collective action, as well as tensions between operators with regard to margin and quality, and lack of trust in vertical relations. To know the horizontal and vertical relations helps to take into account diverse concerns in the composition of the group.

Bilateral meetings are demanding in terms of financial resource and time. Therefore, strategies based on clusters are relatively adapted to undertake such activities, when the clusters' building is associated with financial resources provided by external donors or public policies. Generally, there is no backer in the case of setting up a restricted working group, and its members charge their institutions for the time spent in working groups' meetings. Anyway, spending time and energy in bilateral meetings might reduce further problems and time-consuming conflicts.

VI. CONCLUSION

This paper highlights that the first steps in the construction of a GI organisation are tricky. The "crystallisation" of the collective organisation means to make crucial strategic decisions about the limits of the relevant group, the partners' common objectives and agenda, the key technical elements of the GI process, and the decision making rules.

The benefits and the risks of the "cluster approach" and the "working group approach" have been identified, using recent case studies. A mixed approach that would combine bilateral meetings with potential partners, large information campaigns and construction of a representative working group involving recognised leaders is proposed.

Regarding the composition of this working group, we can set the question of whether it is more efficient to start with a relatively homogeneous group or to start with a working group representing the diversity of the strategic groups. In the literature about collective action, there is no consensus about whether it is more efficient to build an heterogeneous group or to look for a relative homogeneity to reach collective outcomes [64].

Further research is needed to tackle this question and better identify key factors of success and good practices during the very early stage of collective action. Participation of researchers in the kick-off of new initiatives is very useful in order to collect and analyse first hand information, so as to build a common knowledge on this issue at the benefit of practitioners.

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