

***TEMPO GIUSTO***

**SLOW CITIES AND THE REVITALIZATION OF  
LOCALITY  
IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION**



**MASTER THESIS**

**BY**

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**Italian 'Slow Cities':**

**Abbiategrosso**  
**Acqualagna**  
**Amelia**  
**Anghiari**  
**Barga**  
**Borgo Val di Taro**  
**Bra**  
**Brisighella**  
**Bucine**  
**Caiazzo**  
**Casalbeltrame**  
**Castel San Pietro Terme**  
**Castelnovo né Monti**  
**Castelnuovo Berardenga**  
**Castiglione del Lago**  
**Cernusco sul Naviglio**  
**Chiavenna**  
**Chiaverano**  
**Città della Pieve**  
**Civitella in Val di Chiana**  
**Cutigliano**  
**Fiumicino**  
**Fontanellato**  
**Francavilla al Mare**  
**Giffoni Valle Piana**  
**Greve in Chianti**  
**Guardiagrele**  
**Levanto**  
**Massa Marittima**  
**Montefalco**  
**Orvieto**  
**Pellegrino Parmense**  
**Penne**  
**Pollica**  
**Positano**  
**Pratovecchio**  
**San Daniele del Friuli**  
**San Gemini**  
**San Miniato**  
**San Vincenzo**  
**Santa Sofia**  
**Suvereto**  
**Teglio**  
**Todi**  
**Torgiano**  
**Trani**  
**Trevi**  
**Zibello**





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## Abstract

The thesis concerns the relationship between globalization and revitalization of locality, and explores the impact of globalization on Orvieto, in Umbria, Italy, and the inhabitants' and municipality's responses to this. Among its profound effects on contemporary societies, I argue that globalization has stimulated strong reactions and movements focusing on re-defining personal and cultural identity and locality. The thesis examines the Italian-born municipal movement, Cittàslow (slow cities), which has grown into a European network promoting localities globally. Cittàslow is a reaction against the perceived negative consequences of globalization processes, in particular against cultural homogenization.

By examining continuity and change within key areas of Italian society; food, the family, public rituals such as festivals and time, I identify how globalization creates structural contradictions, leading to a discrepancy in ideology and practice between the Italian notion of *la dolce vita* (the sweet life) and contemporary career and lifestyle choices. The thesis examines the construction and revitalization of locality in Orvieto, highlighting how products, places and events become potent symbols in recreating continuity and a connection between locality, traditions and 'quality of life'. However, the very methods deployed in Cittàslow's and the town's revitalization attempts tend to abstract and commoditize these symbols, distancing them from my informants' lives, as the locally unique is promoted through the global market.

The thesis suggests that Cittàslow takes on particular expressions in each member-locality, it is therefore necessary to examine the movement accordingly. In Orvieto, Cittàslow is situated in an anti-authoritarian and anti-institutional climate, which leads to tensions between the movement and certain sections of its population, leading to accusations of Cittàslow as elitist and 'top-down'. Paradoxically, it is this climate which formed the movement, shaping the way Orvieto municipality relates to macro forces. In studying the specific contexts of the slow cities, one can further see the particular type of localism that takes shape. In Umbria, the cultural history of *campanilismo* (local patriotism), *civiltà* (an ideology of town-living) and *civic-ness* (active participation in political and social life) form Orvietan and Cittàslow's locality production. However, as the movement expands into a European and potentially global movement, the contents of locality are modified; reducing connotations of parochialism and ethnocentricity, changing the movement into a 'global localism'.





## Foreword

The title of this thesis, *tempo giusto*, is a term in musicology meaning ‘right tempo’; namely applying the right pace to the right section of a music piece. This concept, perhaps better describes the philosophy of the two Italian ‘Slow-movements’, Cittàslow and Slow Food than their own titles. For despite the impression the movements’ names and logos create, their intention is not to adopt a snail’s pace, but to permit sensitivity to each situation, recognizing that different tempos are required in different situations. The movements do not see it as beneficial to slow down the speed of trains or to stop using contemporary technology, but suggest that doing certain things slowly can generate better quality, better living and sometimes even produce faster results. The Slow-movements are not about returning to a more ‘primitive’ state of society, nor are they about ‘dropping out’ of society. Traditions and technological inventions, the local and global, and ‘fast’ and ‘slow’ time do not necessarily exclude one another. In the modern world the fast, the abstracted and the quantitative has a tendency to devour the slow, the embedded and the qualitative. The Slow movements aim to provide a mind-set and practical solution to finding a balance between these forces, allowing for diversity, quality of life and organic rhythms of temporality to flourish.

My interest in time can be traced back to my childhood resistance to the structured, measured time of the adult world, something I felt suppressed my organic sense of play, enjoyment and engagement with the living world. For this reason, I was resistant to learning the clock at primary school. At this stage my resistance was grounded in an emotion that only later in life I could put into words. Although I understood how to use the clock, I did not *want* to learn it because I did not want to give up my own sense of time and rhythm. The people who know me well recognise that I have always been fond of doing things for their own sake, slowly or at their own required pace, unobstructed by other activities; in other words similar to *tempo giusto* or Cittàslow’s principle of ‘slow time’. It involves taking pleasure in the uniqueness and details of life, such as studying

butterflies in the meadows, doing craftwork or just eating a meal. These slow, engaged activities evoke 'quality of life' for me, as they provide a sense of wonder in the world and an inner peace that also enables one to cope with faster activities or difficult situations. For me, *tempo giusto* is one of the most rare and precious skills in contemporary society. While most adults forget living in the present by constantly escaping to future goals, hopes and past memories, in a child's absorbed play, as in meditation, the whole universe revolves around the present moment. I recognize that everyone has their own sense of time and rhythm and that 'slow time' is not the only 'right time', but I believe that in today's increasingly fast and frantic societies, there is a lesson to be learned from revitalizing the art of 'slow'.

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# Chapter 1: Theoretical Overview and Methodology

*“Being Slow means that you control the rhythms of your own life. You decide how fast you have to go in any given context... What we are fighting for is the right to determine our own tempos” (Carlo Petrini, the founder of Slow Food, Honore, 2004)*

## Background

I conducted my fieldwork in Orvieto, Italy, between February and June 2004, where I studied the interrelationship between the global and the local, focusing on the Cittàslow movement. I chose Orvieto since Cittàslow’s headquarters lie there<sup>1</sup>.

Cittàslow questions the contemporary Western mindset, where time is seen in quantitative terms and where efficiency and speed are equated with progress. Cittàslow turns this mindset on its head and values *quality* over *quantity*. In other words, time should not be seen as a measurable unit and finite resource; but an organic medium intimately bound up with our localities, activities and identities. Cittàslow grew out of another Italian movement, ‘Slow Food’, which was formed in Bra in Northern Italy in 1986, and today has over 83,000 members in over 100 countries. Slow Food was developed to battle the ‘fast food’ culture, symbolized by McDonalds’ penetration into Italian society<sup>2</sup>. These forces, speeded up and strengthened by globalization<sup>3</sup>, were believed to threaten Italian culture, which places a great emphasis and pride on local food traditions.

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<sup>1</sup> In June 2004 a local election took place in Orvieto. Stefano Cimicchi, leader of Cittàslow and Orvieto’s Mayor for 12 years, could not be re-elected. Since Cittàslow’s leader must be a mayor, a new leader, Roberto Angelucci, from the ‘slow city’ Francavilla al Mare, took over the position. Orvieto’s new mayor, Stefano Mocio, became Cittàslow’s vice president, and Orvieto’s central position in Cittàslow continues through one of its main regional projects, *Palazzo del Gusto*, a foundation promoting and educating in the Italian culinary tradition.

<sup>2</sup> Slow Food was formed in the light of a large-scale anti-globalization protest against the opening of a McDonald’s branch by the Spanish Steps in Rome.

<sup>3</sup> Globalization is a difficult term to define due to the variety of manifestations. I use the term to apply to the increasing interpenetration and homogenization of cultural, economic, political and ideological forms throughout the world, consequent with an increase in ‘time-space compression’ (Harvey, 1989).

Cittàslow was developed in harmony with Slow Food in 1999 by the Mayors of the four towns; Bra, Greve in Chianti, Orvieto and Positano, and has since spread to 48 Italian towns. The last few years it has grown into a European network located in Italy, Germany, England and Norway, with membership limited to towns up to 50,000 inhabitants. Other nations worldwide have expressed interest in obtaining membership, indicating that the movement may soon develop into a global phenomenon.

Cittàslow builds on Slow Food's principles, furthering them to encompass more areas of society. The movement has developed 55 criteria that a town should work towards in order to become part of the slow city coalition (see appendix). Its aims include making the population conscious of the local cultural history and traditions, promoting hospitality, local artefacts, products and cuisines, aiming for sustainability of the human and natural environment, developing environmentally friendly energy usage, bringing the control of resources back to the local level and blocking traffic out of the city centres.

Cittàslow attempts to combat the perceived negative influences of cultural globalization and the effect that neo-liberal capitalism has on local economies. Its aim to bring authority and influence back to local economies, industries and crafts is thus a means to boost the uniqueness of local cultures and their identities. Cittàslow reflects a growing trend of cultural revitalization both within Italian society and the world at large.

Cittàslow is run by a Mayor and projects mainly take place at the local municipal level, but mobilization, networking, cooperation and information sharing operates at a transnational level through the Internet and Cittàslow events. In Italy, Cittàslow representatives, like in Slow Food, are usually middle-class, educated and politically left-wing.

## **Introduction**

The aim of this thesis is to explore the connections between the revitalization of locality and the perceived threat of globalization to cultural diversity. I will utilize two perspectives; that of time and space, the former concerning continuity and change in social structure, practices and cultural perceptions, the latter concerning global and local interconnections. This distinction is merely conceptual; in the thesis I will discuss these as interrelated processes.

I will explore the effects of globalization on Orvieto, a town in Umbria, Italy, and the responses of Orvieto's inhabitants and municipality to these effects. The Cittàslow movement will be my main case study, in arguing that experiences of cultural homogenization and standardization, fostered by globalization, can produce resistance in which locality and cultural identity become subjects for revitalization. In Italy, this has led to the creation of Cittàslow, a 'slow time' movement to challenge the 'fast time' increasingly experienced in the global world. I will examine the relationships between Cittàslow and the Orvietan population to assess whether the movement's ideology and practice are supported and reflected by its citizens. I will argue that globalization has widened a discrepancy between local ideology and practice; although global capitalism changes practices and experiences, certain features, such as the cultural importance of food and family, are strongly embedded in Orvietan society and thus continue to persist in the cultural consciousness.

I will examine key areas of Orvietan society where revitalization of locality takes place; in particular food and public rituals such as festivals, and will argue that these experiences, objects and events are given new meaning, making them into potent symbols to convey localism. I will illustrate how contemporary locality production is increasingly commoditized and how this process means that symbols produced are often disconnected from Orvietans' everyday realities and practices.

Particularly since the 1990's, anthropology has placed an increased focus on cultural homogenization as a result of globalization<sup>4</sup>. However, the discipline has simultaneously explored how local expressions are formed despite the impact of macro forces. I will argue that homogenization and heterogenization in the global era are part of the same process; although the impacts of globalization are largely shared and have produced similar experiences worldwide, particular expressions and understandings are developed in local contexts in response to these forces.

Cittàslow is not a movement that can be understood in isolation, but needs to be seen in the light of contemporary globalization processes. Bauman (2001) argues that societal fragmentation, uprooted identities and alienation, subsequent with the homogenization of cultural expressions, characterizes the age of globalization. The combination of alienation and loss of cultural sovereignty have, in turn, led to a need to recreate community, locality and individual identity. It is in this perspective that Cittàslow is best understood. Cittàslow can be seen in connection with both anti-globalization and cultural revitalization movements that have sprung up in recent decades. With its focus on locality and reviving cultural traditions, it is tempting to regard it as a cultural revitalization movement. However, anthropological studies of revitalization movements are usually concerned with non-western cultures, and are seen as a resistance to Western dominance. Cittàslow differs from most revitalization movements, as it is a reaction within the Western world, comes from a country that is culturally and economically part of 'the centre'<sup>5</sup>, and is a modern phenomena linked to the global era<sup>6</sup>.

Like the anti-globalization movements, Cittàslow is a critique of the perceived negative effects of cultural and economic globalization, but, to a larger extent than the former, it poses a practical solution to these effects, namely *localization*. However, it is important to stress that the movement is not opposed to globalization per se, but aims to develop

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<sup>4</sup> This tendency is also seen in media-and communication studies, sociology, and is widely discussed in the media and popular culture.

<sup>5</sup> See discussion in theoretical overview.

<sup>6</sup> For the purpose of this thesis, I shall define the global era as roughly 1950s to the present, with a marked intensification since the 1980s.



‘virtuous globalization’<sup>7</sup>, by creating a balance between global structures and local knowledge and traditions. Cittàslow aims to protect cultural and biological diversity and sustainable development based on local practices, its ideology is aligned to a recent strand in anti-globalization activism, which promotes small-scale viable alternatives, characterized by the phrases ‘protect the local globally’ and ‘think global, act local’ (Hines, 2000).

I will argue that as well as perceiving Cittàslow as constituting resistance to global homogenization, one also needs to study Italy’s specific cultural framework with its long history of *campanilismo* (local patriotism), *civiltà* (an ideology of town living) and civic-ness (see Chapter Three), and where political centralization has strengthened anti-state feelings rather than uniting this culturally diverse nation. I would therefore suggest that Cittàslow’s focus on localism reflects established Italian cultural features, and the Slow movements are reactions to national as well as global forces; globalization is thus perceived as an additional threat to the existing Italian political and cultural climate. This particular context helps explain why the movement grew out of Italy and has expanded rapidly within the nation. I will suggest that the Italian context, on the one hand, contributes towards shaping the movement’s focus, and on the other, due to already established localism, allows each slow city to develop its own expression in response to globalization.

Cittàslow differs from other anti-globalization movements as it is not a typical grass-root movement, but was started by politicians in Italian municipalities. Whereas Slow Food’s membership is individual and voluntary, each of Cittàslow’s members comprises a whole town; all its citizens are automatically members. It is therefore important, particularly when considering Italy’s anti-authoritarian traditions, strongest in northern and central Italy, to assess what effects the municipality’s decision to choose an overriding ideology for the whole town has on its population. The movement has one foot in global capitalism

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<sup>7</sup> A term introduced by Carlo Petrini, founder of Slow Food.

and one in local traditions, combining commercial, economic and political interests with a somewhat utopian vision. In assessing Cittàslow, it is thus necessary to examine the local population's attitudes towards the movement, and to what degree Cittàslow's ideology reflects cultural tendencies in Orvietan society, as expressed by informants and through other events such as festivals. I will argue that Umbria's long history of anti-authoritarianism leads to an Orvietan discourse on whether the municipal initiative is itself elitist and authoritarian; the way in which my informants resolve this dilemma might enable us to understand the movement's potential success.

### **Outline of the Thesis**

In Chapter Two I will focus on social change and continuities within the family. Since traditionally, family is a pillar of Italian identity, changes in family structure can reflect the degree of change in Italian society. In Chapter Three, I will argue that although Cittàslow is a response to globalization, particular cultural factors, such as localism and anti-governmental attitudes, indicate why the movement arose in Italy, and how these factors have shaped the movement's ideological expression. In Chapter Four, I will examine how local identity is created through shared symbols, and how Italian culture and Cittàslow draw on culinary traditions to create a relationship between 'quality of life' and slow pace of life. Chapter Five focuses on how globalization of the neo-liberal market economy furthers a quantitative, reductive model of time and intensifies the perception that time moves faster in modern society. This process has significant consequences for our experiences and practices, increasing stress and lessening quality of life. Chapter Six focuses on the symbolic function of the medieval epoch. Examining three Orvietan festivals, *Corteo Storico*, *Paleo dell' Oca* and *Festa della Palombella*, I will illustrate how the mediaeval period is employed in the revitalization and re-invention of local identity.

## **Theoretical Overview**

### **Globalization**

Globalization, a much used, but often undefined term, refers to cultural, economic, political and ideological interconnectedness in the world. Globalization describes an *awareness* of the world as a interconnected whole (Robertson, 1992, Friedman, 1994) and encompasses a *process*, namely an increased interdependence and compression of the world into a ‘global village’, a metaphor used by the media theorist McLuhan already in 1964 to identify the merging of space and time due to the interconnectedness of the information and communication network across the globe. Harvey (1989) similarly describes ‘space-time compression’ as one of the main markers of the post-modern period. However, this process is not new, interconnections in the world, through trade and exchange of ideas, are found as far back as there are historical records. Nevertheless, the scale, depth and speed at which globalization accelerates, has only been made possible via mechanized transport and electronic communications technology. As Hannerz argues, the contemporary world can no longer be perceived as ‘a cultural mosaic’, comprising of “separate pieces with hard, well-defined edges” (Hannerz, 1992:218).

In the 1980-90s, globalization texts in the social sciences offered a critical perspective, proposing that the West is engaged upon a process of cultural, economic, political and ideological imperialism, in particular the USA. Globalization was primarily seen as an asymmetrical, one-way flow, which had considerable cultural consequences. These critiques focussed on the homogenizing and standardizing effects that globalization might have on Non-Western and small-scale cultures. A deterioration of cultural variety was predicted.

Globalization theories’ focus on the interrelationship between the micro-and macro-levels is inspired by political economy and in particular by Wallerstein’s (1974) discussion of the asymmetric power balance between ‘centres’ (the West) and ‘peripheries’ (the Third

World). Many globalization theories likewise see ‘centres’ as “places where culture is invented and from which it is diffused” (Hannerz, 1992:218), and recognize that cultural flow and influence is distributed unevenly across the world. Globalization theories are criticized for providing a mono-causal explanation of globalization that is only concerned with economic relations and neo-liberal capitalism (Nustad, 2003, O’Riordan, 2001). Although fruitful in bringing attention to large-scale power structures apparent in the global era, the flows between the macro and micro should not be seen as one-way or only in an economic perspective, but need to be studied in relation to the specific mediums of exchange. In other words, we may talk of globalization in the plural (Tsing, 2002). Appadurai (1996) holds a similar position and introduces the terms ethnoscape, financescape, ideoscape and mediascape, to describe the diverse mediums of exchange. The ambivalence of seeing global flows through the lens of centres and peripheries, is highlighted by showing that a centre in one context can constitute a periphery in another, and visa versa. In relation to my fieldwork site, Italy is part of the Western world and one of the largest economies in Europe, with a rich cultural history and a large domestic market, and is thus closer to centre than periphery in terms of global influence. However, flow from the USA, which culturally, politically, ideologically and economically is very powerful, places Italy further from the centre, as a recipient of American influence. It could thus be argued that in this context Italy constitutes a mid-way position, a semi-centre. Centres and peripheries also exist simultaneously within regions and nations. For example, Orvieto is a periphery of the surrounding centres of Rome and Florence, but a centre of the near-lying rural settlements. This is especially important when attempting to understand the motivations behind Cittàslow. Many ‘slow cities’ are geographically near to cultural, political and economical centres within nation-states<sup>8</sup>, and cannot offer the same opportunities and attractions as a large city. Many Italian towns suffer from depopulation due to limited work opportunities for the young, but experience some repopulation of the elderly and families with children. Is Cittàslow’s promotion of local

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<sup>8</sup> This is also true of the Norwegian ‘slow cities’, Levanger and Sokndal, which respectively lie near the urban centres Trondheim and Stavanger, and the English Cittàslow, Ludlow, which is near Birmingham.

uniqueness and 'quality of life' thus a strategy for attracting citizens back to the smaller towns, to develop the towns economically and to shift some of the power back to the 'peripheries'? Cittàslow is a movement born in the Italian 'peripheries', which has spread to 'peripheries' throughout Europe.

International symbols springing from 'centres' to 'peripheries', such as McDonald's and Coca Cola, have become in Italy markers of 'fast food', 'junk food' and fast living; symbols of cultural imperialism and homogeneity. The active interpretation of these symbols, and the Slow movement's production and dissemination of local symbols to other peripheries, exemplifies that cultural flows in the global world are not necessarily hierarchical; hierarchies can be inverted or relationships can also be horizontal. Although the movement critiques the very mechanisms of globalization, which are argued to result in standardization and homogenization, the movement simultaneously relies on global mechanisms for its expansion. It could be argued that the threat to local autonomy, also substantial at the height of nationalism and with the introduction of industrialization, is potentially greater in the global era. However, it also presents new openings for localities to mobilize across national borders. With the growth of information, communication networks, and higher learning, transnational movements are made possible.

To gain a fuller perspective on globalization it is hence necessary to explore cultural production and reproduction in both a local and global framework.

### **Localization**

Robertson (1992) argues that localizing strategies, such as indigenous, ethnic and nationalist movements, are global products and must be understood in a global context. Friedman (1994) finds a link between the experience of alienation and disenchantment in contemporary society and the occurrence of social movements. The search for personal and societal identity can be seen as symptoms of deterritorialization, rootlessness, fragmentation, boundlessness and loss of identity experienced in the global era. Cittàslow is a social movement which was developed to counteract these tendencies. Revitalization

of locality and traditions intends to reverse individual alienation and cultural homogenization. Appadurai (1996) delineates the active, emotional and experiential aspects of locality production, arguing that locality is a fragile concept which is created and sustained by active maintenance, through symbols, ceremonies and practices. However, the fragility of locality has increased in the global world, as it is both a “structure of feeling” and “property of social life”, which becomes increasingly difficult to define in a “deterritorialized, diasporic, and transnational world” (1996:188-9). Bauman (2001) holds a similar position, and argues that these processes have renewed interest in recreating social identities. Increased fragmentation means that shared identities are not necessarily related to geographically-contained areas, but rely more on active agency and creation which may be based on criteria such as special interests and beliefs. However, as Cittàslow illustrates, contemporary identity construction can be both grounded in geographically-contained localities and concern cross-cultural interests such as environmentalism and opposition to cultural homogenization. The production of locality is a two-pronged process; locality is spatially constructed through rituals, while subjects are localized by embodying local space. Cittàslow’s focus on the interdependency of physical space and local traditions grounds the citizens’ experiences in the space they dwell; consequently meaningful places and local attachment are created.

In reaction to globalization theories that analyse the asymmetric relationship between centre and periphery and the consequent cultural homogenization, several studies focusing on resistance and revitalization movements have appeared, placing the peripheries in a more active role in the creation of cultural meaning. These studies criticize homogenization theories for assuming that cultural flows from centre to periphery necessarily produce cultural homogenization. Instead they suggest that we must look at the recipients of ‘the centres’ cultural forms and their responses to them. Only then can we draw any conclusions about cultural homogenization and the effects of globalization. This has brought a renewed focus on localities and the micro level, which have been the traditional focus of anthropology. However, this new body of research

recognizes that cultures, whatever scale, cannot be seen as isolated units, but must be perceived in connection with the global world. They show how cultures at the micro level recreate and reinterpret global cultural forms in a local context to fit their own cultural framework. People operate within local meaning systems; and cultural flows are thus not passively received, but actively reinterpreted in a local context. There are many terms developed in the social sciences to describe these processes. Hannerz (1992) employs the terms ‘creolization’ and ‘hybridization’ to describe how external cultural symbols are integrated and reinterpreted into local meaning systems. External cultural forms, he argues, go through a process from being ‘compartmentalized’ to ‘hybridized’, meaning that when symbols are first adopted in a new context they are still easily recognizable in their original form, but are over time reinterpreted into the native systems of meaning until they take a different form than when they were first adopted. There is much ethnographic evidence (Friedman, 1994) which strengthens the view that local identity and meaning systems are not consumed by a single, global force. One may argue that the threat and power of globalization, has in fact stimulated a growth in ethnic and cultural resistance movements at the micro level. At the same time, however, the tendency to emphasize *resistance* through practices such as consumerism and re-appropriation of external, often Western symbols, underplays the power of neo-liberal capitalism and globalization in shaping our lives.

### **Global and Local Interconnectedness**

O’Riordan (2001) asserts that the spatial differentiation of globality and locality has disappeared. Our locality is carried with us globally, and although our daily lives are mostly conducted at the local level, an awareness and experience of globalization inform our actions and perceptions. Robertson (1992) criticizes theories perceiving globalization as an external force beyond the local sphere, and introduces the term ‘glocalization’, to describe the interconnectedness of the global-local experience.

Nustad (2003) similarly criticizes the duality of the concepts and argues that they are better understood as different theoretical *perspectives* explaining the same phenomena. Anthropology is especially prone to accept the dualism, he states, as the discipline has had a tendency to study cultures as bounded units, seeing social change in relationship to larger units such as the nation-state. Although it might be fruitful to perceive the global and local as theoretical perspectives, I would argue that the concepts are also understood and experienced outside the social sciences, are utilized in daily speech, popular culture and the media, and are furthermore *emic* categories used by my informants within Cittàslow and Orvietan society at large. However, the categories are not separate phenomenon, and it is important to emphasise that globalization is not an external, abstract process, but rather describes local transformations where “global events, products and frameworks [are fitted] into the local” (Friedman, 1999). In other words, the local is not de-localized, but its contents are changed and reinterpreted.

## **Methodology**

### **Introduction**

Qualitative research-and data gathering with its use of ‘participant observation’ and fieldwork, is what marks social anthropology from other social sciences. However, choices of methodology are largely decided by social structures and restrictions in the field. Indeed, it might be argued that anthropology’s methodology of participant observation is as much a product of the systems of hospitality found in the small-scale non-Western societies that formed its traditional study. As the discipline extends its scope, thematically and geographically, this has methodological consequences. Fieldwork in complex societies<sup>9</sup> often requires different methodology than one would employ in traditional fieldwork. Participant observation might not alone be sufficient to gain the kind of information one seeks, and other methodology such as formal interviews,

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<sup>9</sup> Hannerz (1992) defines complex societies as cultures with a high degree of work division. This division leads to complexity and heterogeneity in human interactions and communications.



questionnaires and written sources, for example from the media or Internet, are frequently applied (Eriksen, 2003). Although my fieldwork was situated in a fairly small town, the Western context of more formal and commercial relationships decidedly affected my choice of methodology, making my study more reliant on interviews and questionnaires. In order to support my observation in the field, contextualize Orvietan localism and explain the conditions behind Cittàslow's formation, I was required to employ more formal methodology. These factors, and given the limited length of the thesis, necessarily limit the space and therefore richness of informant descriptions. Given the limited period allotted to fieldwork, one cannot *observe* social change over such a short time-span, thus interviews with different generations became essential methodology, mapping the population's attitudes and reflections about globalization, localization and social change. My study is thus as much concerned with my informants' opinions and reflections upon their culture, as it is with their every-day practices.

### **Methods, Arenas and Categories for Data Collection**

As discussed above, conducting fieldwork in a complex society and applying theory concerning the interrelationship between the local and the global, required me to adopt a variety of methodological approaches, such as observation, formal and informal interviews, conversations, questionnaires, media and Internet research. As access to people's private lives was difficult (see below), most of my data was collected in the public sphere; in a school and people's work places, in cafes, Cittàslow conferences and at public events. Only three interviews were conducted in private homes.

Demographically the categories for informants can be divided into four; teenagers, young adults, adults and the elderly. Most of my informants were from Orvieto or near-lying villages, a few informants had migrated from Rome and Sicily, and one was an American immigrant. The categories for interviews can further be divided into people working in the public and private sectors; the former includes the Cittàslow administration, Orvieto

municipality, school and archaeological museum, and the latter includes artisans, a private language school, shops and the self-employed.

### **Observation and Interview Data**

Belmonte's (1989) study of poor people in Naples exemplifies how initial difficulties on fieldwork can be turned into methodological advantages. As he did not speak Italian at arrival and had trouble finding informants due to the size of the city, Belmonte found it difficult to "dig and hunt for data, in structured, methodical ways", but was forced to "watch and wait" for the data (1989:xi). By mainly being founded on observation and sensory experiences, Belmonte's account is different from most anthropological accounts, which make use of hard facts, oral reports and interviews to appear scientific. Belmonte's writing is very much influenced by his 'feel' of the culture, inspired by his first experiences, before he spoke the language and had established a network of informants. Even though I learned enough Italian for day-to-day communication, there is no doubt that observation and sensory experiences helped to form my impressions of Orvietan culture. This, in turn, provided a framework that shaped the questions I asked in informal conversations, interviews and questionnaires. Through observing public interactions and practices, the symbolic value of food to signify *la dolce vita* was revealed; indeed, *la dolce vita* is primarily enacted through culinary enjoyment and a social performance of 'formalized informality', while in other areas of Orvietans' lives, stress and time shortages are predominant. This discrepancy was clarified in interviews; observation alone might have led one to view the enactment of *la dolce vita* as the whole truth (see Chapters Four and Five).

Mintz (1979) emphasises that observation data is a useful supplement to interview data as it informs us how people interact with one another. It can also reveal discrepancies between what people say and their actions. Although a useful tool, I see certain limitations connected with the use of observation in anthropology. As Wikan (1991)

points out, an anthropologist can observe informants practices, how they present themselves to others, their interaction with others, and how they seem to ‘master’ their life situations outwardly. However, the anthropologist cannot observe their experiences *directly*, and should be careful to draw hasty conclusions about the informants inner-lives based on observed actions. In other words, people’s feelings, motivations, and objectives for action cannot be observed and our data can only be drawn from what people say and do.

### **The Relevance and Validity of Fieldwork Data**

In selecting informants I attempted to provide as representative a sample as possible, acquiring informants from different age groups and in a variety of social arenas (see above). However, the limited time allowed for fieldwork means that my informants only represent a section of Orvietan society. In my fieldwork, language difficulties presented a problem in the selection of informants. Apart from using an interpreter in three interviews and carrying out two interviews entirely in Italian, interviews were largely limited to those who speak some English. In order not to limit my data to those who speak English, and due to my difficulties in penetrating into the private sphere of Italian society (see below), I created three types of questionnaires (see appendix) which I had translated into Italian. This gave me a larger and more diverse informant group and allowed me access to data otherwise unobtainable, such as information about Orvietans’ spare-time and family life. I handed out 105 questionnaires to two school-classes in *liceo*<sup>10</sup>, employees in the public sector, shop-workers, artisans, language school employees, the self-employed and elderly, of which 83 were completed. Upon completion, I clarified ambiguous answers with the respondents, and often carried out informal interviews based on their answers.

Although I would argue that using questionnaires was a clear advantage to gain a fuller picture of Orvietan society, the reductive form of questionnaires is potentially

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<sup>10</sup> High school (American equivalent), Sixth form (British equivalent), 16-19 years.

problematic. The formulation and order of questions and responses in questionnaires are informed by the researcher's perception and research aims; this framework, in turn, influences the answers one gets. When constructing a questionnaire it is especially important to avoid biases inherent in its formulation. Although the researcher's aims and perceptions also influence questions asked in interviews, questionnaire data are especially problematic since the results are mainly based on "closed, fixed-choice questions" (Schuman, 1996). Since questionnaires may not have sufficient responses and there is little room for elaboration or modification, it may leave respondents frustrated or unwilling to answer the questions.

My research attempts to map Orvietans' attitudes and opinions concerning locality, globalization and social change, something which is difficult to measure quantitatively. Questions involving reflections on social change are problematic since they rely on memory and vague estimations. Due to the difficulty in measuring opinions and social change, I decided to mainly use questionnaire data qualitatively, in order to support data gained from interviews, conversations and observation. This decision was further important since the relatively small number of respondents makes generalizations difficult. Although the respondents are few, the questionnaires contain a large number of variables, and I would thus argue that they constitute valuable information in addition to interviews.

Despite the problems I have discussed in interpreting questionnaire data, there are also certain advantages in using questionnaires in fieldwork. In face-to-face interviews many factors that influence what kinds of answers you get, such as the nature, trust and closeness of your relationship, or the degree of formality of interview situations. In a situation where the questions deal with attitudes and beliefs, the neutrality of the interviewer is essential. In face-to-face interviews, the interviewee might feel expectations and want to impress the interviewer. By using questionnaires, the informant might feel freer to answer honestly. In interviews and informal conversations, I noticed

that many informants presented a picture of Italian culture with the awareness of me as a foreigner and with the intention of showing Italy from its best sides. However, a clear danger of using questionnaires is that the informant might not read or understand the questions properly. The formality of the forms, and the respondents occasional worry about what the questionnaires will be used for, can create a distance, and thus a lack of engagement in answers. Additionally, face-to-face interviews are more effective in clearing up possible misunderstandings over questions and answers, and answers are often more detailed. When interacting with the interviewee, it is easier to follow his or her reasoning and to spot conflicting thoughts. This is why I chose a combination of methodology and followed up many of the questionnaires with informal interviews.

### **Fieldwork Arenas**

Wikan (1991) stresses that in order to “get under the informants’ skin”, it is essential to follow them in different arenas if we are to understand their “lived experience”:

*“We have to attend to people’s multiple, simultaneous, compelling concerns and to follow them, as they move, bridging scenes and encounters, if we are to grasp what is at stake and how they, people in various positions, feel-think and act” (Wikan, 1991:291).*

Wikan’s methodology attempts to move away from the compartmentalization of people’s lives into separate domains, such as public and private. She argues that a person’s life-world constitutes a living whole, and can thus not be separated into segregated spheres. Conducting fieldwork in a European culture, where the fieldworker’s interaction with informants is seen as a professional relationship, and where generally one is not invited into people’s homes until strong friendship bonds are developed, made Wikan’s aims difficult to realize. Although the public and private are not strictly separate domains, they are *emic* entities that informed my informants’ relationship with me as a fieldworker, making it difficult to observe their interactions and practices in multiple arenas. My

research thus relies more on informant statements instead of ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) of my informants lives. Although these factors made my fieldwork more into a study of public culture, it did not necessarily inhibit uncovering my informants’ attitudes, perceptions and practices. I would argue that while European culture formalizes public from private, openness is now encouraged and practiced in professional relationships such as interviews. Public interactions constitute a key area where culture is contested, created and recreated. In Italy, eating together generally happens in public places. If one is invited to share a meal, it is rarely to people’s homes, but to the *trattoria*, as this is seen as less formal and stifling. Since food symbolism constitutes a key arena in which Italian identity is created, public places are ideal for studying such discourses.

### **Ethical Dilemmas**

One advantage of studying Western culture in a public context and focussing on people’s attitudes more than actions, is that ethical implications are fewer. Firstly, interviews were only conducted in agreement with informants, and the informants could choose whether to remain anonymous or not. In order to protect the identity of particular informants, certain informants’ names are fictive. Secondly, my informants had a larger degree of control over what they wished to say and reveal of themselves due to the formality of the interviews and their public context. In traditional fieldwork, where the anthropologist lives with his/her informants, it is more difficult for informants to remain alert and control the information the anthropologist receives. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, the relative equality of mine and my informants’ cultural background as white, Western and generally middle-class, made our relationship as fieldworker and informant less hierarchical, giving my informants an equal voice in reflecting, discussing and controlling our interactions.

## **Regional Ethnography**

The Malinowskian tradition of carrying out fieldwork in one location, over a long period of time, subsequent with a perception of the field as spatially bounded and culturally homogenous, has become somewhat of a dogma in anthropological methodology. Interestingly, this traditional perception of the field is similar to Citta's own definition of locality. However, increasing de-territorialization, cultural interpenetration and fluidity of cultural boundaries in the global era calls for a re-evaluation of 'the field' itself (Gupta, 1997). Anthropological theories on globalization often recognize these changes; however, the discipline's methodology focuses on long-term fieldwork confined to one local community. Gupta argues that anthropological knowledge is often determined by the region's key themes and debates, something which might be problematic for the discipline in the global era. In other words, anthropology's persistence on 'the field' influences what kind of knowledge we obtain or not (Gupta, 1997). Although productive in understanding face-to-face relations in small-scale communities, it might be counter-productive in identifying macro influences and relationships. The anthropological 'field' needs to encompass not only regional specialization, but historical relations, macro influences and transnational interactions which might not be easily observed in the localized field, applying traditional methods of participant observation. Given the limited time to conduct fieldwork, my study is restricted to one locality. However, this study opens up the possibility of comparative, cross-cultural research to examine how responses to globalization simultaneously are globally shared within the movement, yet form different expressions in different localities.

In its longstanding emphasis on fieldwork, anthropology has first and foremost studied localities in small-scale communities. Prior to the 1970s, cultures were mostly perceived as clearly defined, separate units and were thought to possess internal cohesion. Social change in small-scale communities was primarily explained as a result of external modernizing forces to which people either adapted or resisted (Goddard, 1996). Goddard

criticises this perspective for perceiving small-scale societies as internally 'static', and for seeing its subjects as passive receivers of external cultural flows.

Most anthropological writing on Italy concerns ethnography and theory that is regionally based and thematically little relevant to my research, such as studies on poverty and the 'problem' of southern Italy, and 'honour and shame' among pastoralists and the mafia in Sicily. Most ethnographies study southern Italy and Sicily, regions that are culturally and historically different from northern and central Italy. Since the 1950's several sociological studies have focussed on industrial development in northern Italy (Silverman, 1975). Most studies on Italy in the social sciences have emphasised the contrast between the underdeveloped, 'backward' south and the developed, 'progressive' north, yet few studies have focussed on central Italy, a region that does not fall into the simple dichotomy. Central Italy is a diverse region, consisting of the richer and touristy Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna, on the one hand, and Umbria and the Marches, areas that until recently have been perceived as underdeveloped 'backwaters'. However, there are anthropological studies of Umbria, the most important to my study being Silverman's (1975) study of *civiltà*, a form of localism, in Montecastello, which I also discovered in Orvieto. Although written 30 years ago, Silverman's ethnography illustrates that despite considerable social change there is some continuity in Italian localism.

Although most anthropological literature is taken from southern Italy and Sicily, the family unit is still important in northern and central Italy, although perhaps to a lesser degree. As my thesis is an evaluation of social change in the global era, an assessment of how globalization has affected the family structure is important in understanding the effects it might have on locality and cultural identity.

My fieldwork, although based in a fairly culturally homogenous and spatially limited area, deals with themes that could apply to many different localities in the world. It explores social change in a small society in the light of globalization, and a similar study could thus be carried out in many small-scale societies around the world. My research



uses Cittàslow to exemplify what I argue is a growing response to globalization's increasing penetration into local societies. The movement has over the last few years grown into a European network and I could thus have picked any of the other slow cities to study the same themes. Both a theoretical and a regional framework are therefore relevant for my thesis, since my research is based on one particular locality's reaction to global forces, and is a movement that reproduces specifically Italian notions of locality. There is much evidence that Italians feel a stronger cultural and personal bond to their locality than their nation-state and the population is on the whole critical and distrustful of the state (Levy, 1996). A historical perspective on this stronghold of localism can help to understand the particular conditions in Italy that inform the formation of Cittàslow and Italy's pronounced resistance to globalization. Putnam (1993) argues that strong *civic-ness* in contemporary Italy occurs in those regions marked by medieval city-states, in other words northern and central Italy. Strong *civic-ness* continues to inform institutional performance in different regions. It could be argued that this extant resistant to macro forces, which in Italy traditionally took the form of anti nation-state attitudes, is strengthened and modified in the meeting with globalization leading to initiatives that attempt to protect locality globally.



## Chapter 2: Continuities and Change- Persisting Traditions and Global Influences

### Entering the Field

Orvieto, a medieval hill-top town of 5000 inhabitants, is located in the geographical heart of Italy, at the western side of Umbria. It is the administrative centre of Orvieto municipality, a borough of 21,000 inhabitants, divided into *Centro Storico*; the historical centre; the *Scalo*; the town's modern overflow and transit point at the bottom of the hill, and the surrounding sections, Ciconia, Sferacuallo and several villages and hamlets. Situated by Italy's arterial railway and motor-way, the town lies an hours' reach of Rome and Florence.

The medieval town, growing out of the porous tufa-rock, appears as a secluded sky-island to the surrounding green valley and olive groves. Following the winding roads to the historic centre, the feeling of entering a different time strikes me. In the centre, things move according to their own pace; the cathedral's restoration work, already a year overdue, shows no sign of completion; in the town's oldest quarter Christmas lights and a crib depicting the nativity scene are left until April, and the town clock in the main *piazza* has stopped and is only repaired towards the end of my stay. At the same time, Orvieto has adopted a modern life-style, and cars regularly speed through the narrow one-way streets. Orvieto leaves one with a mixed feeling of life and decay; some houses lie damp and derelict, others are abandoned half-built in the surrounding countryside, revealing an area marked by depopulation. But like the nativity scene in the town's oldest church, new life is simultaneously dawning, as restoration work is initiated on a large scale. In the light of depopulation and waning cultural identity, Orvieto is on a quest to restore continuity with its cultural past. Due to its historical importance and global promotion, Orvieto is an increasingly popular destination for domestic and international tourism; renowned for its 13<sup>th</sup> century cathedral (*Il Duomo*), being an important settlement in the Etruscan period and an autonomous city-state in the middle ages.

## **Introduction**

In this chapter I will look at continuities and change in Italian cultural traditions to assess what extent globalization is having an impact on Orvietan society. The family unit is often seen as one of the main pillars of Italian society (Caldwell, 1991), and changes in the family structure can thus help to illustrate how globalization contributes towards transformations in social relationships, practices and structures of Italian society. Despite substantial social change, such as decreased birth rates and increased rates of divorce, I would argue that the family unit is still important to Italian identity, leaving a disparity between the mental conceptions and the actual constitution and practices of Italian families. Perhaps because of this disparity, a greater emphasis may be placed on particular traditions and structures, while certain practices are paradoxically reinforced by social change.

## **The End of Community?**

Orvieto is a town torn between global influences and strong traditions at the local and familial levels. Centralization of work and the economy has led to fewer job opportunities for the young, unless they take over their family's trade or business, or work in the public sector, and has consequently led to depopulation due to emigration<sup>11</sup>. One of the first things that struck me when arriving in Orvieto, was the lack of people in their twenties and thirties, this impression was confirmed in interviews with students in *liceo*, more or less all of whom were planning to move to near-lying large cities, such as Perugia, Florence and Rome, after completing their studies. Most students did not picture themselves living in Orvieto due to few possibilities for work and further education. However, many could see themselves returning to their hometown when establishing their own families or retiring. Though *Cittàslow* does not work directly to establish new

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<sup>11</sup> In the period of 1991 to 2001 the number of children dropped from 2630 to 2232, and the number of adults from 14,193 to 5337. The remaining 13,115 inhabitants constitute the elderly. The declining number is partly due to falling birth-rates, but largely due to emigration. Unless specified, all statistics on Orvieto and Umbria are provided by *Cittàslow* official, Massimo Borri.

work possibilities, the movement tries to change the attitudes towards small communities, emphasising the positive qualities that mark towns and villages from cities, such as tranquillity, security, strong community ties and closeness to the countryside. So are these perceptions reflective of the population, and what is the state of the local community according to my informants?

One of my informants, Chiara, grew up in Ficulle, a village near Orvieto of 1700 people. Living abroad for several years after completing *liceo*, she moved back attempting to revitalize local life. She is now employed in a new Orvietan organization, working to protect Bagnoreggio, a near-by hill-top village, from further geological erosion:

*“People want to move away because they think there are few opportunities here, but after living abroad I recognized the good qualities of villages. It is pretty here, everybody knows each other and there is a sense of community. It is important that people stay so we can bring life back to the villages”.*

Chiara admits she found Ficulle’s small size constricting as a teenager, but thinks that the personal relationships found in villages are positive to counteract the alienation increasingly experienced in modern society. Although she thinks globalization makes few apparent changes in her birth-place, she paints a critical picture of the underlying fragmentation of Italian communities:

*“People increasingly have difficulties with social interaction and feel disillusioned about the world around them. People watch too much TV...it is always on in Italian homes. In my family TV has an equal place on the dinner table; it’s like a family member. If I talk about anything other than what we are watching, my family will tell me to be quiet. My brother watches TV about 8 hours a day, and otherwise he plays ‘play station’. Many people work long hours so parents think it is convenient to place their children in front of TV or computer games...it has become a substitute for human contact”.*

Assessing the veracity of my informants' statements is neither practicable nor essential to my investigation; what is more important is that they express people's feelings and experience, out of which they construct meaning and consequently act upon. Similar tendencies were pointed out by another informant, indicating that this perception is shared by several Orvietans:

“Children grow up not knowing the world around them. They don't go for walks or play, but stay in playing computer games. Adults work too much and the lifestyle is too fast...I don't think people are happy; less people smile and speak with each other today, that is a sign of the kind of world we live in now” (Carlo, 47).

Carlo trained as a veterinary, but was unable to find related employment in Orvieto. Instead he took over his fathers business, a stationary shop where he works 50 hours a week. Contemporary work situations and pace of life, he argues, have negative consequences on family life, leaving little time for relaxation and spare-time with one's family. He thinks that both Orvietans and Italians in general work longer hours than before, and claims this has changed particularly in the last ten years.

Elena, a Jungian psychologist, reflects on her experiences as a psychotherapist, and argues that the feeling of isolation and alienation is increasing, and Orvietans do not feel they are part of “a vital body of relationships”. This, she claims, is a process that has only recently affected small-scale Italian towns, making society increasingly based on commercial instead of collective relationships. Elena argues that the desire to consume and possess an urban lifestyle, promoted through the global media, makes young people feel like ‘alienated metropolitans’ in their own towns; they belong nowhere, neither in their towns or villages nor in a metropolis, as there is little sense of community left where they live and they do not have the amenities a larger city can offer.

Umbria, which is part of ‘the political red belt’, had since the 1970s a certain degree of political self-rule. However, with the last decade’s right-wing neo-liberal politics, promoted by *Forza Italia*, Italy has reinforced centralization, which has led to local erosion, as post offices, schools, shops and public transport are closed down. These factors, I would argue, are driving forces towards isolation and alienation, experienced in the global era.

Elena moved from Rome to Orvieto 10 years ago to get away from the stress of metropolitan life:

“Coming from a big city, I see exactly the same dynamics repeating themselves here. When I came here I was happy that this was not a big city, but now I see that they are suffering from the same problems here. For people who have grown up here and are approaching their sixties, the city has changed dramatically. It was really like a village here before”.

Elena argues that Orvieto today has a much faster pace of life than it had 10-15 years ago; more patients come to her with stress-related problems, panic attacks and frustrations over modern technology. She argues that although the Orvietan life-style appears to be slow, the under-lying dynamics and organization of the city are influenced by large cities, thus creating a fast pace of life.

Another informant, Micaela, reflects on her position as a public servant in Orvieto municipality. Having lived in larger cities and seen an increase in alienation and cultural homogenization, she is conscious of the need for protecting the local qualities of Orvieto. When starting out as a public servant over a decade ago, she found that many Orvietan politicians possessed a paradoxical ‘provincial attitude’, where they thought their city, due to its beauty and cultural identity, was invulnerable, and therefore thought they could adopt a big-city life-style.

A decade later, the impact of social change is perhaps catching up with the population, and many of the same politicians that earlier embraced 'metropolitan modernity' are now striving to protect the local through Cittàslow.

## **Family Structure and Social Change**

Italians are fond of emphasising the centrality of the family unit to Italian culture. Banfield's (1958) term 'amoral familialism' which describes how family loyalty is placed above other considerations, is mainly relevant to southern Italy and Sicily. However, Banfield's emphasis on the importance of the close-knit family structure also has some relevance to northern and central Italy.

Taking a brief look at contemporary Italian family composition, much has changed since Banfield's study. Over the last few decades, the once extended Italian family has shrunk to an average of one child per family. Divorce<sup>12</sup> or separation is increasingly common despite the disapproval of the Catholic church, and both men and women are increasingly in full-or part-time work. The average Umbrian family today consists of 2,5 members per family. National birth rates have further decreased, Italy now has one of the lowest birth-rates in Europe. Where as the average birth rate within the EU is 1,5 per woman, Italian birth rate is 1,3 (Paulli, 2000). Umbria, alongside Liguria, is further the Italian region with the highest elderly population and the lowest birth rates, which illustratively have dropped from 0,8 in 1991 to 0,5 in 2001.

Discrepancy between practices and cultural values are made apparent when examining the attitudes and practices of different generations. The cultural framework, especially of the elderly, is still largely centred on Catholicism and family values. This conflicts with the practices of the younger generations, marked by increased divorce rates and less time

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<sup>12</sup> The divorce rate in Orvieto municipality is 2,5%. Between 1991 and 2001 the number of divorced families increased from 294 to 500. This is a general trend in Italy, but the increase is somewhat slower in Umbria. Rates of separation are not recorded, but observation and informant data suggest separation is a now common phenomena.



spent with their families. However, despite changes in practice, social change is not always publicly discussed or accepted. Alessandra, an English teacher at *liceo*, claims that despite growing divorce rates, divorce is not fully accepted publicly, especially not by the elderly. For example, an elderly Orvietan woman, whose daughter got divorced a few years back, had family pictures on the wall in which she had cut out the face of her son-in-law from all the photographs. However, Alessandra points out that these changes are difficult for all generations, arguing that children and teenagers do not like to speak about their family situations as they are embarrassed by coming from divorced homes. She thinks the strong-hold of the Catholic moral system continues to inform cultural values. This view is contradicted by Elena who argues that people address these issues openly and there is presently little embarrassment concerning divorce as the numbers of divorced families grow.

Despite the difficulty in assessing the acceptance for divorce, I would argue that the idea of the woman as the binding unit of family and community is still important to Italian identity. Walking through the streets of Orvieto, shrines and sculptures of the Virgin Mary adorn churches and old buildings. However, even new and recently restored houses in the historic centre are also decorated with icons of Mary, and flowers and candles are lit in tribute to the self-sacrificial mother figure in Catholicism. Throughout my fieldwork, I noticed the comparative marginality of Jesus in Catholic worship. I can not resist seeing middle-aged Catholic women's prayer to Mary as the long-suffering mother, as a reflection of their own passive suffering and devoted energies on their sons living with them into adulthood.

Although the structure of Italian families is changing considerably, the symbolic value of the family still seems central to the Italian consciousness. This was confirmed by many of my young informants, who argued that their families are "the main point of reference to their identity", and was revealed in questionnaires, where 82% expressed that family was important or the most important in defining their identities. Based on the ethnographic data, I would argue that traditional values concerning the family are also reproduced by

the younger generations. When asked about the role of families in Italian culture, one teenager said: “When I am older, I want to create a family with my sons. A family is the mother and her sons<sup>13</sup>.” It must be mentioned that this girl’s attitudes were more traditional than most of my other young informants, but the importance of families to identity was expressed by most informants, unrelated to the size of their family or whether they came from broken homes. Further, the mother’s is still felt to be central to the family even as women work increasingly outside the home. This is supported by Cladwell (1991) who argues that the symbolic power of the mother Italy is such that women and their children are seen to constitute the family.

Globalization does not only create structural changes, it promotes new value systems that may conflict with established values. The potential conflict between collective values and family expectations, on the one hand, and individualist self-realization, on the other, is increasingly experienced by young Orvietans. Elena thinks that this dilemma has grown stronger in contemporary society, and is especially seen in a traditionally family oriented society like Italy. She argues that when young Italians move away from their families, a feeling of guilt is produced as if they are betraying their family. She asserts that Italian families are still enmeshed and closed units and changes in value systems have brought about frustration and confusion:

“Many people are today going through a crisis, a discrepancy of values. When people want to fulfil their own values, they often have to take a distance from the collective values”.

However, Elena claims that although the Orvietan family structure is undergoing similar changes as in big cities, the extended family is more visibly present in small-scale communities. It is still common in small towns like Orvieto that young couples live near their parents and other close relatives. When my elderly informants were young, it was

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<sup>13</sup> In Italian the word for children, *figli*, literally means sons. I believe the informant referred to children rather than sons, however, the importance of the family and the woman’s expected role in bringing up children still stands.

common for women to move into their husband's home upon marriage. Today married couples tend to have their own flat, but it is not unusual that this is a flat within a house where other family members live, or that their flat is located in the same street or *frazione* (section) of the town. Elena argues that in small-scale Italy "there is still a protection around the family or perhaps suffocation, depending on how one views it".

### **The Italian 'mammone'**

Although the family structure has undergone drastic changes, certain practices are strongly embedded in the cultural matrix, and some are paradoxically reinforced by social change. The well-known stereotype, portraying Italian men as having strong bonds with their mothers and living at home well into their adulthood, is epitomized in the term *mammone*. Since Italians generally do not move out until they marry, many live with their parents even longer today as marriages occur later as a result of longer education, increased focus on careers and the difficulty of getting jobs. In Umbria it is not unusual for men to live with their mothers into their 30's and occasionally even their 40's. Many of my female informants expressed great frustration over Italian men's lack of independence and their incapability to break the 'umbilical cord' to their mothers. Even though their attitudes were usually expressed with a touch of humour, they revealed their frustration about how Italian men were spoilt and coddled by their mothers, and articulated the bad effects this has on women and their relationships. Ilona, 28, working in marketing, had to move to her boyfriend's village as he practically refused to leave his village and family home. The compromise was to rent a flat a few hundred meters away from his mother, and as a result his mother continued to do his laundry and cook most of his meals in his childhood home. When I came to visit, the flat remained more or less without furniture even after half a year of rental, as he spent most of the time at his mother's house instead, and it was clear that he had not come to terms with moving out. Towards the end of my fieldwork, Ilona split up with her boyfriend and argued that his

reliance on his mother and the inability to break away from his childhood home had been too suffocating in their relationship.

Men living at home into their adulthood or having difficulty in establishing a life outside their childhood home is not unusual in Italy; most of my female informants had male relatives or boyfriends who still lived at home well into their adulthood. Lucianna, a 33 year old student assistant in a private language school, complained that her boyfriend 'will not grow up', since he is unwilling to share a flat and wants to postpone their marriage, though they have a long-term, serious relationship. Despite his age of forty, he chooses to live with his mother. Marta, a teenager in *liceo*, has an uncle in his 40's who has never moved out from his mother's and she is certain he never will unless he marries. '*Italian boys are like babies!*', she claims. Marta thinks that Italian parents, especially the mothers, are overprotective of their sons. She thinks Italian girls are more independent, and tend to move out earlier. They usually move out to study or work in a big city, but still visit their families twice a month on average. If they don't continue studying, they are more likely to stay at home and get a job in their hometown, until they have enough money to move out. Marta claims that girls sometimes share an apartment with friends, though she admits this is a recent change which is not yet common in smaller cities, and is generally considered a little daring. Although it is becoming more acceptable for young people of the same gender to share a flat, girls generally do not live with their boyfriends until married: 'Italian parents, especially the fathers, won't let their daughter move in with her boyfriend!' (Erica, 17).

Traditionally Italian men live with their parents longer than women, as women usually marry younger. As the Italian family structure is changing, one would expect this tendency might change accordingly; instead, both men and women, increasingly live with their parents for longer. National statistics show that between 1990 and 2000, the proportion of people aged 30-34 living at home, increased from 14 to 27 per cent (Menniti, 2000). Menniti, a researcher at the Institute for Population Research and Social Politics (IRPPS), expects this trend to continue and asserts that late marriages, the

difficulty in finding housing, jobs, and the wish to maintain the same standard of living as their parents will increase the number of people living at home for longer. However, men still predominate in the statistics. While a quarter of Italians live at home into their thirties, by gender this is 36,5 percent of males and 18.1 percent of females (Menniti, 2000).

When asked why this phenomenon is on the increase, most of my informants explained it in economic terms. Most asserted that neo-liberal capitalism, embraced by the right-wing government, subsequent with the introduction of the Euro which has often doubled the prices of food and consumer items, has led to a discrepancy between people's wages and the cost of living. Even more importantly, under Berlusconi, unemployment has increased, and the turn to privatization has meant cuts in social benefits. While economics partly explains the entrenchment of this phenomenon, I would argue that it also needs to be understood as a culturally specific solution to a social change. While flat sharing is increasingly popular in larger Italian cities to overcome financial difficulties experienced by young adults, in smaller towns like Orvieto people generally live with their parents until they marry. In comparison, flat-sharing is generally preferred in Northern European cultures in order to cope with the high costs of living. Flat sharing is common in both Norway and England, although high living costs and an unstable job market means that many people, especially in England, move back to their parents at uncertain stages in their lives, for example if they are unemployed, in between jobs or relationships. Living with one's parents is a short-term solution, and it is generally expected from both parties that they move out again when their life situation is more stable. In Italy, however, Menniti's research reveals that even people with financial independence are reluctant to leave home, in other words, an economic explanation is not sufficient. Many of my informants admitted that consumerism has helped to postpone the time people move away from their parents. Chiara, whose adult brother still lives at home, described it as being too convenient for men to live for free at home, to have

everything done for them and be able to spend their earnings on luxury items rather than rent and bills. This tendency is also described by one of my elderly informants:

“People live at home for longer because they marry later and it is difficult to get jobs. But I think that young people also expect more today. They want everything ready when they move out; they want nice cars, furniture, and they want everything new. They are like cioccolato [chocolate]; they are spoilt, especially the boys” (Franca, 77).

Although the tendency to live at home for longer is strengthened in contemporary Italy, many young informants found the closeness of families claustrophobic and wished to move away to pursue further studies or work in larger cities. Higher education is increasingly encouraged by society and parents are often instrumental in enforcing this. As identified by Elena, the pressure to take higher education combined with a family-oriented framework can create dilemmas:

“In the past few people achieved university degrees here, they’d be craftsmen or have their own business. Now...many leave Orvieto to study, and when they return they stay in a ‘limbo’ because there are still few jobs for people with university degrees. Without having gained too much autonomy before, they go away to study and often come back [without completing the degree] because they find it difficult to face the unprotected environment without having their families nearby”.

In this chapter, I have identified how global capitalism has produced structural contradictions, leading to a discrepancy in ideology and practice between the Italian notion of *la dolce vita* and contemporary career and lifestyle choices. Increasingly, both genders work outside the home, more couples separate and many choose to postpone or reject having children; the disparity between real family structure and the ideological importance of family intensifies. However, social change, for example increased instability in the job market, paradoxically reinforces certain established structures, such

as the *mammone* relationship, in which offspring live at home with their parents into their adulthood.

The family, although altered by global neo-liberal capitalism, is a structure that has some built in resilience to macro forces, through law and to some extent capitalist media, and as we have seen, is paradoxically sometimes even reinforced by these changes. This is not the case, however, with locality. As I will be discussing in the next chapter locality needs active maintenance and is reconstructed in response to globalization.





## **Chapter 3: Localism - Responses to Globalization at the Local Level**

*“Italians define themselves first by their city, then their region, and finally the nation”  
(Luca, 30)*

### **Introduction**

Locality is inscribed in us through symbols, rituals and ceremonies (Appadurai, 1996), and is communicated, strengthened or challenged through practice (Ortner, 1984). Locality is cultivated both in individuals’ every-day experiences and practices and at the communal level through local initiatives, organized events and rituals. In this chapter, I will examine the role of localism and local identity formation in Orvieto. I will argue that Italy’s history of strong localism saturates contemporary Italian society and is relevant to understanding the formation of Cittàslow. This history still informs Italians’ relationship to larger structures and institutions, has manifested as opposition towards the nation-state and more recently towards the EU and globalization. However, the increasingly shared experiences of large-scale forces and their perceived effects on ‘time-space compression’ (Harvey, 1989), loss of local authority and cultural identity in contemporary Western societies, have revived localism globally, altering its contents. I will propose that Cittàslow represents a ‘new localism’; a transnational localism and civil society movement constituting a European, and potentially global, network of localities.

### **The Local in the Global - A New Emphasis**

It is a wide-spread view amongst anthropologists of globalization that traditional conceptions of locality, linked to geographically contained territories, do not hold merit in a global world marked by deterritorialization and displacement (Appadurai, 1996, Gupta, 1997). Although I do not deny that locality requires reevaluation to encompass a wider definition where identities are shaped by many factors, my position is close to

Stacul's (2003), who emphasises that locality is still largely territorially and geographically grounded. I would suggest that theories such as Rapport (1998), implying that identities are not shaped in a locality, but 'on the move', are exaggerated, as they mainly relate to individuals and communities where large-scale population movement is part of people's realities. Despite increased patterns of travel and population movement due to immigration and work, most people live their lives in one or a few localities. Small-scale, central-Italian towns such as Orvieto are still relatively contained cultural units, have experienced little immigration, but are marked by depopulation to larger industrial and commercial Italian cities. Consequently, local identity based on place becomes even more important in small-scale towns. I would suggest that the attempt to revitalize locality is increased with globalization as borders and definitions are increasingly blurred.

The experience of globalization in Italy can thus be seen as an intensification of a tendency already existent, where local communities define themselves against larger external structures; historically the nation-state, and more recently globalization and the EU.

Of my informants, most had grown up in Orvieto or near-lying villages, and many had networks of relatives living in the same town or village dating back several generations. As discussed in Chapter Two, the enlarged family is still relatively apparent in Orvieto, compared to larger Italian cities. It is not unusual that close relatives live a stone's throw away from each other; in the same building, street, *frazione* or town. When enquiring about Orvietans' relationship to locality, it was apparent that the place they grew up, together with their relatives, contributes largely to their sense of belonging and identity, as their everyday experiences and points of reference are created there.

Barth's (1969) analysis of the creation and maintenance of Pathan ethnic identity, which examines how communities mark their boundaries distinctly apart from other localities, is still fruitful in a global perspective as borders become more fluid. Despite contemporary

global interconnections, a locality's boundaries are created and disputed from within and thus have to be studied accordingly.

## **The Local in Italy - Conceptual Clarifications**

*Paese* translates as both village and town. Many places that historically were towns with an urban, administrative centre, are currently more like villages as they no longer possess strategic, political or economic power, and the population has not expanded in rate with other urban centres. *Città* is both town and city; where as in English Orvieto would be categorized as a town, it is a *città* in Italian. Towns are the nucleus of a *contado*, a rural province (Silverman, 1975). The administrative unit of a town and its surrounding areas is a *comune* (municipality). Umbria is a *regione*, one of the 20 regions in Italy. The smallest units are *quartiere*, town sections; such as Orvieto Centro, Orvieto Scalo, Ciconia and Sferracavallo. However, the city quarters within Orvieto Centro are also referred to as *quartiere*. For administrative purposes the rural areas outside the town, but within the same *comune*, are divided into *frazioni*.

## **The Historical Roots of Localism**

*“Fatta l’Italia, dobbiamo fare gli italiani”*; (“Having made Italy, we must now make Italians”) – a slogan used by the Piedemonte monarchists upon the unification of Italy in 1870.

The unification of Italy (*Il Risorgimento*), completed in 1870, met many obstacles as the new nation was far from being a culturally, historically and politically coherent unit. Italy's history of strong city states, dating back to the middle ages, which were politically independent, economically differentiated and culturally diverse (Putnam, 1993), made it difficult to create a coherent Italy. Politically, unification led to internal conflicts, that if anything strengthened and made differences more apparent.

The unification of Italy, built on the Napoleonic French model, meant that economic, administrative and political structures became centralized. Regional governments and local officials were appointed by the national government, and many felt that local communities were deprived of power (Putnam, 1993). It was not until 1970, following persistent lobbying for decentralization, that the national government divided Italy into regions, and appointed regional governments to be elected locally. Although this has brought about some decentralization, the regions, like the nation-state are essentially artificial constructions that bear little relation to the inhabitants' identity. Instead, *civiness* (participation in political and social life), has been particularly strong in Italy since the middle-ages, and still marks Italian town identity today. This was made apparent when conducting fieldwork; it is the smaller, adjacent units such as the town, the village and family that shape my informants' self-identification.

Research shows amongst European nations, Italy has the lowest rates of confidence in national politics' ability to make positive changes; only 12% have confidence in the government (O'Riordan, 2001:10). This is perhaps not so surprising considering that Italy has lived through 55 governments between 1945 and 1996, and only three of these lasted more than two years (Sasson, 1997). Much indicates that anti-state feelings remain strong in Italy. A TV debate program currently titled '*Che tempo fa?*' ('What's the weather like?') was originally named '*Piove, governo ladro*' ('It is raining, the government is a thief'). This proverb originates in agricultural communities, where damage to crops due to heavy rain was blamed on the government. Although the proverb is not as common today, the program was forced to change its title to something with more 'neutral' connotations.

The questionnaires reveal that most informants place their local village or town as very important to their identity. Statistics from the 2002 'European Value Survey' show a similar pattern. Contrary to arguments that globalization and trans-nationalism decrease the importance of geographical location in identity formation, the survey demonstrates that the locality where one lives has become more important to Italians' identity. In the

period of 1990-1993, 39.8% of the Italian participants saw locality as integral to their identity, in 2000 this number had risen to 53.4% (Glasius, 2002).

Some informants looked more favourably upon the EU than the Italian state, since they saw it as opening up possibilities for cross-cultural cooperation, diminishing some powers of the nation-state. Cittàslow, I would argue, can potentially offer identification that transcends traditional localism. Although grounded in the local, it is not a parochial movement placing one's own locality above others, but instead creates a European network of localities as a model for diversity and self-governance. For example, food festivals provide a dialogue between localities by presenting food from each slow city. Since their membership in 2003, the 'slow city', Sokndal in Norway has initiated an annual Italian week, with Italian food, wine and films.

Anthropological studies of Italy often operate on a dichotomy between the modernized, developed north and the traditional, underdeveloped south, usually leaving central Italy aside, or including the region in the north. Implicit in such divisions of centres and peripheries lies the assumption that centres embody modernity whereas peripheries embody tradition. Stacul (2003) argues that this conception is a product of power relations that produce the idea that centers are places of social agency, modernity, and legitimate social and political power and imply that peripheries are culturally backward and dependent on centres.

While on the whole I will include central Italy with the north, what distinguishes central Italy from north and south is that in this region we find small-scale industrialization which resulted in the formation of small-business communities and firms run by local families. This type of development, characterized as "small-scale, but technologically advanced, and highly productive" (Putnam, 1993:160) in many ways defines a 'third Italy', that does not fit into the north/south divide<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Cento Bull (2000) argues that national differences in contemporary localism can be seen as consequences of the shape and degree to which modernization has made an impact in each region.

Putnam (1993) distinguishes between the civic-ness of northern and central Italy, and family networks in southern Italy, and argues that the degree of civic-ness is stronger in regions that historically were marked by the medieval city-states:

“Some regions of Italy...are blessed with vibrant networks and norms of civic engagement, while others are cursed with vertically structured politics, a social life of fragmentation and isolation, and a culture of distrust. These differences in civil life turn out to play a key role in explaining institutional success” (Putnam, 1993:15).

In order to measure civic involvement, Putnam looks at factors such as the strength, longevity and membership in local cooperatives, associations and parties and participation in social life. He compares the degree of civic-ness following the unification of Italy with the degree of civic-ness and civic institutional performance following the regionalist project in 1970, and argues that northern and central Italy are considerably more civic than southern Italy, the cut-off point being south of Lazio, Umbria and la Marche. According to Putnam’s calculations, Umbria comes the second highest in institutional performance, something I would argue is reflected in the active participation and concern about local politics in Orvieto. Before the municipal election, more or less all my informants, whether educated or not, knew and could debate the Mayoral candidates and their political platforms. Throughout election day, heated political debates erupted in the street and the bakery next to my flat.

In relation to Cittàslow, it could be argued that the very social, economic and educational capital of north and central Italy, were elementary factors in making the movement possible to initiate. Yet, Putnam’s methodology of relating civic engagement to historical cultural patterns is interesting when viewing the dispersal of Cittàslow in Italy. Most ‘slow cities’ are located in central and northern Italy, in areas that historically were strongly civic. Only five ‘slow cities’ are found in the south. Northern and central Italy, historically areas of strong medieval city-states, are today areas of strong localism based

on town and village identity. Although Cittàslow potentially could have been formed in most Western nations as it responds to shared experiences of globalization, I would argue that historical tendencies, such as civic-ness, Italian *campanilismo* and *civiltà*, have shaped the focus and form of the movement.

### ***Campanilismo and civiltà***

Localism is a symbolic construction which can be perceived as a tendency to distinguish one locality from another and to favour one locality over others (Stacul, 2003). Localism in Italy, referred to as *municipalism* and *campanilismo*, is historically shaped, usually referring to an allegiance and loyalty to one's own town or village in opposition to the state (Cento Bull, 2000). Several theorists argue that Italian localism can be traced back to the medieval city-states (Cento Bull, 2000, Putnam, 1993).

Cittàslow's aim to revitalize local cultures and traditions is largely a response to the perceived negative consequences of globalization; however, Italians' cultural history of localism, subsequent with the strong resistance to state domination and centralization, can help to explain why the movement started in and has gained popularity in Italy.

Deriving from the word *campanile*, bell-tower, which is the binding symbol of a community, *campanilismo* refers to parochialism and local patriotism (Silverman, 1975). *Campanilismo* today has an anti-state, anti-authoritarian character, expresses opposition to centralization, and supports revitalization of local customs, cuisines and festivals both within Cittàslow and the population at large. It is expressed in attitudes and speech by showing civic pride, and is embodied in social action.

Silverman's (1975) study of Montecastello, an Umbrian *paese* of 350 inhabitants, examines how Italian towns are more than a cluster of functions and settlements, but represent a way of life which is celebrated in the idea of *civiltà*. Her argument holds that the *città* or *paese*, irrespective of size, political, cultural or economical importance, is perceived as the centre of civilization. The administrative model of Italian municipalities shapes political, social and cultural expressions, making town living into 'the civilized

way of life', preferable to living in the countryside. *Civiltà* therefore differs from Putnam's '*civic-ness*'; it is enacted by the inhabitants' mastering of the cultural codes of town living, thus reinforcing local pride. Where as *campanilismo* refers to a patriotic, emotional attachment to the locality one lives, unrelated to the type of place, *civiltà* promotes the values of urbaneness and town-living, and is linked codes of behaviour such as genteelness, courtesy, generosity, hospitality to guests, public discourse, participating skilfully in social and political life by comprehending and living according to social etiquettes (Silverman, 1975). Orvietans' involvement and attendance in local politics, indicates that *civiltà* is central to their identity. *Civiltà* is further instrumental in the type of localism Cittàslow promotes. For example, hospitality to guests (or tourists) is a major strategy to show the 'slow cities' from their best sides. The movement therefore celebrates town living as the ideal way of life and an antidote to alienating globalization.

While conducting fieldwork I noticed certain attitudes that might modify Silverman's argument. Many of my informants from Orvieto Scalo and the rural areas around Orvieto regarded Orvietans as snobbish, and some said that there is a little rivalry between the Centro Storico and Scalo. One informant referred to the inhabitants of the historical centre as 'aristocracy', indicating that the economically strong, more educated inhabitants live there and housing is more expensive. However, I would argue that the real basis of rivalry is not that of economic difference, but is grounded in 'felt history'. The historical importance of Orvieto has informed the inhabitant's sense of feeling 'cultured' and 'civilized'. More or less all of my informants claimed that local history largely informed their identities, but very few actually knew much about this history. Paolo, a 28 year old potter who took over his grandfather's workshop when he died, said he is very interested in Orvieto's Etruscan past. While he is familiar with general Italian history, such as the Roman period, he admits he knows little about Orvieto's Etruscan history, although he claims it informs his identity and connects him to his locality. Paolo uses Etruscan pottery as reference for his ceramics, and like his grandfather, makes perfect copies of the



original pottery. Although he does not know the meaning of the pottery's symbolism, it feels meaningful to him, and creates continuity with his cultural past<sup>15</sup>.

It is difficult to assess whether Silverman's *civiltà* holds merit in Orvieto, since the town is an historically important nexus due to its Etruscan and medieval pasts. The abundance of archaeological remains from these periods and the famous *duomo* (cathedral) mean that Orvieto's importance as a cultural centre has continued, attracting a large number of domestic and international tourists each year.

However, many of my informants living in near-lying *paesi* such as Bagnoreggio and Ficulle, expressed attitudes similar to those Silverman identifies in Montecastello. Civic pride was very strong in these *paesi* despite their smallness and seeming unimportance. Talking about their *paese* while situated in Orvieto, made the task to defend their *paese's* virtues even more apparent. When handing out the questionnaires, many young informants critiqued the fact that most of the questions concerned Orvietan culture, while there was no mention of their own village. This was voiced by school students in *liceo*, who besides living less than half an hour away, going to school in Orvieto and using the cultural amenities there, felt they could not answer questions relating to Orvietan culture. Many referred to their *paese* as a place possessing strong traditions and identity, even though to an outsider this may primarily seem like a nostalgic attachment to a 'cultured' past. As commercial, political, administrative and cultural activities are moved to near-lying larger towns, these places possess only remnants of cultural life, and may seem like unimportant peripheries or 'ghost-towns' to an outsider. Even if most of my informants went to school, worked and used the cultural amenities in Orvieto, they usually emphasised that they were not from Orvieto, and expressed their attachment to their *paese* by emphasising its picturesque scenery and local festivals. These attitudes were expressed as strongly by young Italians, indicating that *campanilismo* and *civiltà* continue in the global era. This attitude is summed up by Elena:

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<sup>15</sup> It could be argued that skilled craftsmen in the past might not either have known the symbolism of their pottery, and perhaps therefore Paolo's felt connection with his pottery is quite traditional.

“People always like to tell you where they come from...even if it is just a place of a few hundred people...There is no national feeling here, but people are always very proud of their villages”.

Despite their awareness of an increasingly interconnected world, the majority of my informants argued that their identities were linked to the place they live as belonging is created in relation with your daily experiences and encounters. My teenage informants, who said they felt alienated from their villages, would also proudly state where they were from, and many individually invited me to watch the saint’s festival in their home village, claiming that ‘their’ festival was the best in the region.

In the past, localism was expressed at different scales, for example between towns, *quartiere* or *frazione*, today rivalry has little foundation in people’s lives, but continues to create a certain tension:

“Where I live, in Torre San Severo, there has always been a historical antagonism with another frazione called Sugano. The frazioni are only divided by the main road that goes from Orvieto to Lake Bolsena [and] you are only speaking about 300 people in each village. We don’t see each other and people have always been a bit angry with people from the other frazioni. It is still so today. Nothing happens, really, but you can feel the tension between each frazione” (Elena, 51).

Although local rivalry is not usually acknowledged as part of contemporary life, 30% of my respondents state that their *frazione* is important to their identity.

## **Identity and Place**

Writing from a phenomenological perspective, Tilley (1994) argues that *space* cannot be perceived as a neutral, physical area as its meaning and content is both socially produced and varies from person to person. There is thus not one space, but many spaces. Space is something we *experience* with our senses, minds and bodies. *Place*, he argues, is the *meaning* that is created in the experiential relationship between humans and space. The

meaning of place differs between individuals, but place is made into collective cultural experiences for example through storytelling, in the act of naming places and through public rituals. The connection of people to a place contributes towards forming attachments and local identities. Tilley argues that this is a reciprocal process, where humans 'tame' spaces into meaningful places, and where the idiosyncrasies of space, in turn, influence the development of local identities and attachments. Ingold's (2000) argument is similar to Tilley's; however, he emphasises the aspect of time in creating meaningful places. Ingold, inspired by Heidegger's phenomenological perspective, introduces the term *dwelling* to describe how humans and spaces are knitted together over time. Experiences and meaning can only be created over time. Tilley's and Ingold's focus on the relationship between place, meaning and identity is relevant to Citta'slow's promotion of locality and identity. As Tilley puts it, "places transform something physical and geographical into something historically and socially experienced" (1994:114). The urban fabric of Italian towns creates social rooms that encourage identification, interaction and slow time. Towns are built around 'shared places', such as the *piazze* (town squares). In opposition to many alienating, newer cities where commercial and social activities are located away from where people live and most activities require car usage, the urban fabric of old Italian towns encourages social interaction in one's locality. As nodes through in which most activities pass, *piazze* help to slow the pace of life down as people spend time there and encounter people they know. The *piazza* is also the heart of the city and usually houses the most important functions of a town, such as administrative and religious institutions, the clock tower, which guides the rhythm of the town, and markets for commercial activities.

Pratt (1986) argues that the metaphor of 'the walled city' is an ideological construction used politically to defend the interests of a contained locality. Although established as a strategic mechanism for defence, the city wall clearly marks off the borders of the Orvietan *Centro Storico*, symbolically separating the town from the surrounding

countryside. As Tilley (1994) argues, shared spaces create shared cultural references, and thus help to form local identity.

### **Communal and Individual Identity**

As identified in Chapter Two, my younger informants revealed a conflict of values between individual self-expression, on the one hand, and communal and family expectations, on the other. Although many were attached to their home town or village, most were frustrated that it offers few possibilities for self-realization through education, work or personal interests. Erica, a teenager in *liceo*, said that Western individualism is becoming the ideal in Italy, but it is difficult to realize yourself in closed communities, consequently many wish to get away because they feel claustrophobic. However, she argues that most young people, whether they choose to remain in their village or move to a larger city find themselves in a state of alienation:

‘Young people don’t feel attached anymore...If somebody finds out who he is, it is difficult to go back into society ...everyone is lost and you find yourself alone’.

Daniele, a goldsmith in his thirties, moved away from his parents when he was sixteen because he felt restricted by communal and family expectations:

‘People in small towns are narrow-minded and you find too little diversity... a real community should be a flowering of individuals, but people worry too much about what their neighbours think’.

Although he finds small communities restrictive in terms of individual freedom, he thinks they offer more security, tranquillity, quality of life and a slower pace of life than larger cities. Two years ago he moved from Rome to Orvieto for these reasons. However, the local community is undergoing social change, and he recognizes that individualism, as promoted in the media and society at large, can contribute towards alienation:

“When my parents were young, they had roots in the place they lived and didn’t look for anything else. Today we have more possibilities and things are less fixed...but few know how to respond to this choice and feel frustrated...they fill the empty space with consumerism. This affects everyone, but I think young people are more vulnerable”.

## **Cittàslow - Localism across Borders**

So far in this chapter, I have examined the Italian context that I argue has informed the focus and type of localism Cittàslow promotes. However, the movement is simultaneously a transnational network responding to globalization. It is thus relevant to ask whether Cittàslow’s emphasis on locality merely reproduces Italian *civic-ness*, *campanilismo* and *civiltà*, or if the contents of localism are changing as it promotes what could be argued as a new type of localism, namely ‘global localism’.

Although the case is strong for globalization’s negative effects on locality, it could be argued that globalization concurrently opens up possibilities for transnational mobilization and networks that potentially disrupt the hierarchical macro-micro relationships that were typical within nation-states, though the relationship to a large extent continues with international powers such as the EU and multinational corporations. Glasius (2002) argues that International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO’s), also referred to as civil society movements, have proliferated particularly since the 1990’s<sup>16</sup>. These movements vary a great deal in form and contents, ranging from large-scale charities, Internet-based networks with no organizational locations, single-issue pressure-groups to grass-roots movements, such as the anti-globalization movement. This explosion reflects several factors; firstly that international matters can have considerable consequences in one’s locality, secondly, that an increased awareness of international issues has created ‘solidarity movements’, such as the peace- and human-rights movements, and thirdly, the development, growth and reduced costs of international

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<sup>16</sup> The number of recorded INGO’s have increased from approximately 13,000 in 1981 to over 47,000 in 2001.

communication, such as travel, the Internet and e-mail, make it possible for movements to operate at a global level and to share information. The latter factor means that international movements are usually found in societies with a relatively high degree of educational and economical capital and where communication technologies are accessible, in other words, the West (Glasius, 2002). Glasius argues that a substantial number of civil society movements are organizations that are nationally organized, but deal with international concerns, but there is also a growing body of new movements which are not easily categorized within the existing INGO's. I would argue that Cittàslow represents a relatively new body of movements, which could be classified as 'global localism'. Like the anti-globalization movement, Cittàslow deals with international concerns such as environmentalism and the negative effects of globalization, yet it is organized at the municipal level and enacted locally. Cittàslow is further not a typical grass-roots movement as it is initiated and run by municipal politicians, meaning it has potentially larger decision-making powers, and can therefore build networks with larger political structures in order to speak for localities. Although Cittàslow primarily works within municipalities, the movement has had some contact with the 'Convention on the Future of Europe', the EU organ which led to the proposed constitution. In an interview preceding the Italian referendum for a EU constitution, Stefano Cimicchi, mayor of Orvieto and leader of Cittàslow said:

"We want [Cittàslow] to become a player at European level to make sure that the Constitution currently being drawn up takes into account the reality of small towns and cities... The model for the ideal city is the late-medieval and Renaissance one, with the piazza functioning as a centre of social aggregation. Europe has to remember its roots and acknowledge the historical role its cities have played in the construction of its identity...it's important to remember the socio-cultural role of towns and cities and the enormous contribution that they can potentially give to a new model of good living." (www.cittaslow.net)

Based on the evidence presented above, I would argue that Cittàslow constitutes a new form of localism; a 'global localism', one in which regions worldwide attempt to define and protect their uniqueness in collaboration with a global network of localities.

Although currently European in membership, cities worldwide are expressing interest in membership. It could thus be argued that such global localism has uprooted itself from connotations of parochialism and patriotism, and that it constitutes a new global identity based on local diversity. The phrase 'think global, act local' is illustrative of both Cittàslow and a growing world-wide tendency.

In the following chapter I will illustrate how the symbolism of food and wine are utilised as active cultural strategies of self-construction and locality production. I will examine the consequences of fast time on the culinary tradition, and will argue that although the globalization of time is taking its toll in Italian food practices, many of the culture's food traditions are strong enough to resist many of the impacts.







1. Street view



2. Overlooking *Il Duomo*



3. *Torre del Moro*



4. Street view



5. *Corpus Domini* procession



6. *Corteo Storico* procession, on *Corpus Domini*



7. *Corteo Storico* procession



8. *Corteo Storico* procession



9. View from *Torre del Moro*



10. View from *Torre del Moro*, overlooking *Piazza del Repubblica*



11. Socialising in the *piazza*. The Mediterranean cliché reveals some truth.



12. Clock-tower in *Piazza del Duomo*



13. Eating cake at the 1000 year jubilee for Orvieto's oldest church, *Chiesa di San Giovenale*



14. *Chiesa di San Giovenale* and Orvietan hills to the south-west

## **Chapter 4: The Culinary Tradition-Food as Culture, Lifestyle and Symbol**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I will look at how food in Italy is a potent cultural symbol that is actively applied in discourses of locality, cultural expression and tradition. I will focus on the connection Orvietans make between food and locality and its importance to their identities. Patterns of food consumption and production can reveal a society's relationship to time and pace; and in Italy where food is central to pleasure and enjoyment, it might give indication to the quality of life in the same society. I will argue that recent changes in Orvietan food habits reflect a society in flux where spare-time is scarcer, where both genders work longer hours and often far from their homes, where families have fewer children and have them later, instead prioritizing their careers. This phenomenon is not only characteristic of Italy, but is symptomatic of Western capitalism (Sennet, 1998). However, these changes are especially apparent in Italy, where the family, traditionally a pillar of society, is undergoing radical change. The traditional extended Italian family is being fragmented into small family units where fewer meals are shared and little time is spent together. Yet food traditions are still entrenched in Italy's cultural matrix and are meaningful to people's existences, therefore food becomes one of the main mediums in attempting to revitalize and restore cultural traditions and meaning. This, I would argue, is crucial in understanding the development of Cittàslow and Slow Food. In this context, I will analyze how the movements and the Orvietan population employ food as a symbolic, cultural, political and ideological device to counteract alienation, homogenization and standardization of cultural expression experienced by many in the global era.

### **The Anthropology of Food**

Food is interesting to anthropology because it transcends the nature-culture dichotomy often employed in academic reasoning. It is necessary for survival and a product of

nature, but is also embedded in the cultural practices of daily life. Food is made cultural by preparation, distribution and consumption, and takes part in a complex web of reciprocal relationships involving sharing, giving, receiving and exchanging (Appadurai, 1986). Food can be used to mark personal or communal identity, to distinguish ‘us’ from ‘them’. It can have symbolic functions in ceremonies and rituals (Lien, 2004), and can help us to understand and order the world around us by placing it into classification systems (Douglas, 1966). Food is thus intrinsically linked to the creation of meaning in a culture. Since food is a necessity for survival it further takes on a political character, as controlling food can be used as a way of maintaining or creating hierarchical relationships of power, to gain status, to control and subordinate certain people or groups (Lien, 2004).

### **Food, Taste and Social Behaviour- Living up to or Challenging Stereotypes**

Food and wine in Italy are strong cultural symbols. Promoted nationally and internationally, especially through the culture industry, Italian ‘*la dolce vita*’ (the sweet life) establishes a connection between food consumption, quality of life and slow living. Although this notion is partially internalized and embodied through socialization, it also requires active reproduction by groups and individuals. A restaurant meal with my husband and two of my informants, Luca and Ilona (introduced in Chapter Two), exemplifies how the link between eating, ‘being cultured’ and possessing quality of life is manifested, reinforced and occasionally challenged in Italy. Luca, is what Italians call a *buona forchetta*, (‘a good fork’), meaning someone who takes great pleasure in the sensation of food. For him a shared meal is a pleasurable, sensual experience, but also an opportunity to articulate a fluency in the symbolic vocabulary of food. These aspects are emphasised when sharing a meal with foreigners; by placing prominence on national stereotypes a perceived connection between culinary enjoyment and ‘quality of life’ is reinforced. Luca takes pride in describing the different types of wine and food on the

menu, wishing to 'educate' us into the Italian culinary tradition. Luca orders four courses; *antipasto* (starter), *primo piatto* (usually pasta), *secondo piatto* (usually meat or fish) and *dolce* (dessert), which is more than he is capable of eating. Yet he wants to show his love for food, and struggles his way through all the courses. I would argue this performance is part of the expectations required of Italian men. In restaurants, men are usually served first as they, in particular, are supposed to be food and wine lovers and are expected to show this by excess eating. Amongst my informants, men were usually more concerned with talking about the pleasures of food. Social behaviour linked to food is often gendered; for example if one orders two cups of coffee in a bar and asks for milk in one, the coffee with milk is automatically given to the woman. If one orders two coffees, one with *grappa* (liquor) and one without, the coffee with alcohol is assumed to be for the man.

As the above examples illustrate, food consumption take place within value systems that are culturally reproduced and often remain unquestioned. Bourdieu's (1979) term 'habitus' describes how social and cultural knowledge is embodied in what we do and say. Habitus is part of what Bourdieu refers to as 'cultural capital', which is learned, and accumulated, and encompasses knowledge of manners, social and symbolic codes. Habitus is that which conditions and generates practice, and is naturalized by repeated practice. This does not, however, mean that people are unconscious of these processes or that they remain unchallenged. Luca consciously plays up to the stereotype of the 'food loving', pleasure-seeking Italian, and carefully controls what and how he talks about food, in order to distinguish 'good taste' from 'bad taste', and the 'cultured' from the 'uncultured'. In a similar fashion to Bourdieu, Strauss and Quinn (1994) argue that culture is reproduced by individuals through 'shared prototypes', which are learnt through experiences and influence our practices in future. However, Strauss and Quinn place a greater emphasis on how individuals' experiences and motivations shape how we relate to the dominant prototypes. Ilona has studied and lived abroad for most of her adult life, and wants to distance herself from stereotypical expectations of Italians as gourmets. Ilona is from Tuscany and feels an alien in Umbria, stuck in a 'provincial backwater', as

she puts it. She is further irritated by her boyfriend's claim to possessing superior 'cultural capital', as he has never left his home-village, and assumes that the local cuisine is superior to any other. Ilona's annoyance is further grounded in an ongoing conflict in which Luca refuses to move from his home-village, and consequently they have to share a flat right near his childhood home (see Chapter Two). Since food is so strongly linked to locality and identity, Ilona can use the vocabulary of food and wine to indirectly criticize the nature of their relationship. By picking at the food with her fork, displaying uninterest in her boyfriend's 'lecture' on Italian food traditions, and criticizing the simplicity of Umbrian cuisine, she simultaneously distances herself from Italian stereotypes and her boyfriend's attitudes.

This example illustrates that whether cultural stereotypes concerning the Italian culinary tradition are reproduced or challenged such arguments still take place within the symbolic language of food and wine. However, a group interview with teenagers in *liceo*, revealed that the connection between the Italian culinary tradition, *la dolce vita* and slow time is not always accepted. From watching American films and TV series portraying an 'American way of life' where young adults are never seen to work, live in large apartments, eat in expensive restaurants and are surrounded by expensive commodities, these teenagers were under the impression that Americans possess more time and quality of life than Italians, and did not consider an Italian lifestyle as *la dolce vita*. Further, these teenagers are increasingly distanced from the source and means of production of the food they eat. It is thus important to examine the globalization of food to assess changes in the connection between food and quality of life.

## **The Globalization of Food**

Transnational transportation of food is nothing new, however, the last decades have witnessed an unprecedented intensification in global networks of food production, transportation and consumption. This has cultural implications, as local food traditions are challenged by international, standardized food. Food varieties have increasingly



become dislocated from their original habitats; for example kiwi, a fruit native to New Zealand, is today primarily grown in Italy. The expansion of monoculture means that most crops are grown for exportation to a global market. Whereas populations traditionally were self-reliant through subsistence farming, they are now reliant on a global market for importing their staple food. It has been argued (Hines, 2000) that the dislocation of food from native soil uproots the link between the consumption and production of food. This has economic, political and cultural ramifications. Industrialisation, dislocation and standardisation of food production further have extensive impact on our experience and perception of time and place. The availability of the same food stuffs all year around, such as strawberries in winter, diminishes the seasonality of time, making all times the same. The pace of life is increased with the introduction of large-scale food production; cultural traditions and collective memory of a place and community are altered as production and consumption patterns change.

Food can have a political, as well as cultural, dimension. Earlier anthropological studies focusing on food production, distribution and consumption recognized the relationships of power involved in controlling who has access to food and how food is distributed. This was mainly seen in relation to the power structure between the First and the Third world, or was studied at a micro level in household studies, often seen in relationship to gender. In a structural-functionalist perspective, food was seen as a building block for maintaining the social structure (Seymour-Smith, 1986). Lien argues that the global interconnectedness of food systems has increased the politicisation of food since “the potential impacts of local events on distant affairs have become even more significant” (2004:4). Since the 1990’s, the globalization of food production meant that local or national food crises and diseases such as BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) can have international ramifications. This has led to debates in most Western countries that not only concern health and safety issues of food consumption and production, but has also commenced debates about ethics and shared responsibility in a world that is globally interconnected (Lien, 2004). Likewise, the EU’s decision to limit and delay the

introduction of GMO (genetically modified organisms) has created a rift between the USA and Europe. Within the EU, member-states are further in disagreement over whether EU food and health legislation should override national laws and customs. These concerns were expressed by several of my informants. Chiara (see Chapter Two) repeatedly emphasised how Italian heritage was being damaged by American influence, and how the EU nations were too different culturally to be a functioning unit. In other words, the politics of food is far from limited to a power relationship between the West and non-West, but is to an increasing degree also a first-hand experience within Western societies. It is in this context that we see the appearance of counter movements such as Cittàslow and Slow Food, which use the symbolism of ‘natural’ (i.e. organic) and local food as political and ideological tools to counter-act what is seen as unhealthy, ‘unnatural’ food. To these and the anti-globalization movements, ‘McDonald’s’ has become a shared symbol that represents ‘fast food’, ‘junk food’, mass production and homogenization. Like the anti-globalization movements, the Slow movements<sup>17</sup> utilize these symbols in their fight for global heterogeneity by creating an anti-thesis to ‘fast-food’, namely ‘slow food’.

### **Slow Food and the Commoditization of Culture**

The Slow movements focus on locality and cultural heterogeneity is particularly manifested through their attention to culinary traditions. Taking their inspiration from environmentalism, the movements have developed ‘*Slow Food’s Ark of Taste*’, a list of ‘endangered foods’ from each region of Italy that are considered important to the cultural heritage and the biological diversity of the region. These are food stuffs thought to be on the verge of ‘extinction’ or at the very least threatened by encroaching external foods and changing food habits. The Ark of Taste also categorizes foods from 26 nations across the globe, and lists 198 foods in Italy alone, including cheese, fish, meats, vegetables, fruits, honey, breads, cereals, pulses, herbs and aromas, cakes and confectionary, oven-baked

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<sup>17</sup> Since this chapter relates as much to Slow Food as Cittàslow, I will refer to them as ‘the Slow movements’.

products, wine and alcoholic beverages. To help conserve these foods and their ‘artisan producers’, Slow Food has created the ‘*Presidia*’, a working unit that promotes endangered foods, establishing quality and authenticity standards, besides projects such as building a slaughterhouse or reconstructing decaying farmhouse walls ([www.slowfood.com](http://www.slowfood.com)).

In Umbria three food types are listed as endangered; the Cannara onion and Lake Trasimeno bean of the Perugia province, and Trevi black celery of the Terni province. These vegetables have not been grown for a long time; Trasimeno beans, for example, were only common until the 1950’s. At the end of 2003, Cittàslow began work to protect a local pear variety, *Pera Monteleone d’Orvieto*. Conversations with my informants gave me no indication that the listed foods were still eaten or played any part in the local cuisine. As far as I am aware, the foods are not found in supermarkets, in speciality shops or on restaurant menus. It seems that Slow Food’s listing presently has minimal influence on Umbrian eating or farming habits. Cittàslow in Orvieto has had some contact with agricultural trade unions and individual producers, and in 2003, a local food ‘artisan’ produced the first harvest for a new product curiously called “new ancient antipasto all’Orvietana”.

Umbria may not have as strongly-pronounced food traditions as certain other regions of Italy, but food is still regarded as a symbolic vessel of cultural traditions and variety. Slow Food’s initiative therefore fits well with the existing mentality, and might over time provide a strong voice in the struggle to protect local variety.

In instances where a food has been central to local culture and cuisine, Slow Food’s assistance has had some effect on the continuing consumption and production of the product. The popular dish ‘*Lardo di Colonnata*’ (cured pork fat) of Tuscany has been revitalized and become a key-symbol in the ‘battle’ to assert local cultural identity and distinction. However, as the following case study demonstrates (Leitch, 2003), Slow Food’s interference and control over the production of *lardo*, despite its good intentions, have led to a repackaging of the product as ‘exotic’ gourmet food which is removed from the traditions and control of the Colonnata inhabitants.

*Lardo* has been a staple food of Colonnata, in particular for the marble-quarry workers, has been celebrated in an annual *lardo* food festival for over twenty years and is served in restaurants locally. In 1996, adhering to EU regulations on health and food safety, the police confiscated and the local health authorities quarantined large amounts of *lardo* as it did not conform to EU hygiene legislation<sup>18</sup>. This act led to national media coverage and debates, advocated by Slow Food, questioning the authority of EU regulations to control Italian food production and override local food traditions. At the local level, concern was primarily focussed on the future of the *lardo* festival, and the right of the individual producers and restaurateurs to continue their livelihood. Slow Food's intervention and endorsement of *lardo* helped secure its continuing production and consumption. However, the promotion has also led to an explosion of *Lardo di Colonnata* copies produced by butcheries nationwide, packaged as gourmet products using the Colonnata label. Losing control over the product and the claim to their own traditions, the original *lardo* producers went the legal way to secure the rights to use the name. They lost the battle, but created their own association securing copyright of the name. Today only a selected group are entitled to use the name. Once part of the everyday food of the quarry-workers, *lardo* has now been recreated as an exotic gourmet dish, which has led to 'gourmet tourism'. As Leitch argues, the commoditization of *lardo* has changed it from being "a product associated with a distinct social history and corporeal memory" to a product "privately patented by a group of people who may be entitled to sell the recipe" (2003:448). Jacobsen (2004) argues that the cultural aspects of food are exploited economically by brand building. Branded products parasitize identities, disconnecting the product from its origin and social reference. Harvey (2001) argues that contemporary cultures are commoditized by global capitalism. Modern systems of transport and communications have led to greater availability of products and artefacts and therefore increased competition. Consequently, marketing becomes increasingly sophisticated; artefacts are sold as niche products, inherently unique or

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<sup>18</sup> EU hygiene legislation states that porous materials should not be used in food production. *Lardo* production requires marble, which is porous.

evoking unique localities. This ‘singularization’ process (Kopitoff, 1986), the process of making particular commodities unique and personal, is also found within Cittàslow. Its emphasis on Italian culinary experiences as a lifestyle choice strengthens the ideology of *la dolce vita*, which in turn attracts tourists and boosts the local economy. However, combining commercial and economic interests with cultural and ideological programmes potentially creates conflicts and compromises between Cittàslow and the local population.

### **Food and Locality**

Whatever the outcome of the Slow movements’ interventions to protect endangered foods, these initiatives show a concern over the effects that standardization and globalization of food can have on culture and traditions. The globalization of food has created an area of conflict and tension, where profitability, efficiency and quantity on the one hand, is thought of as incompatible with cultural variety, uniqueness and quality, on the other. Debates about cultural standardisation and homogenization are not particular to Italy alone, but are found in most parts of the Western hemisphere. The Slow movements initiatives show that the promotion of local, typical products (*prodotti tipici*) can preserve them and their associated traditions, but simultaneously cannot help to abstract and commoditize the products.

Food is not just nutriment for survival, but is embedded in a cultural framework that aligns food to tradition, memory, sense of belonging and identity to a place and a people. Lien (2004) argues that although consumption, transportation and production of food have become increasingly globalized, the meaning we apply to food is always locally embedded. We make use of a local framework in which food issues are debated, understood and constructed. In this perspective, the penetration of ‘fast food’ in Italy takes place in a wider European debate about ‘Americanization’, or as the *lardo* example shows; ‘Europeanization’ of society. It is also a symbol of an already existing battle against the nation-state and centralization, particularly in Italy. One of Cittàslow’s main

projects in Orvieto, provides healthy, organically and locally grown traditional food to canteens in primary and secondary schools. This project reveals both a concern about the penetration of global 'fast food' and a battle against national centralization.

Conversations between municipal employees, teachers, pupils and their parents were initiated in order to develop a local menu taking individual pupils needs into account. Implicit in the school-canteen project is a wish to counteract the negative trend towards food 'illiteracy', educating children before their food habits are 'corrupted' by external influences. However, there is an irony in the school-canteen project; counteracting global 'fast food' is a by-product of its main aim, which is rather an attempt to reverse damages already done by the nation-state. Only ten years ago, Orvieto's schools were located in villages across the municipality, and the school-canteens' food was provided by local farmers. As a result of national centralization, the municipality's schools are now situated in Orvieto Centro and Scalo, and the canteens' food is provided from other areas of the country. In order to supply the new schools with locally grown food, Cittàslow signed a six-year contract with a national food provision company, CAMST from Bologna, which sources from the very farmers that once supplied the municipality's village schools.

Although constituting a reaction to cultural standardization and homogenization, the Slow movements develop different expressions in different cultures. In Italy food contains a more potent symbolism than in Norway, and is thus central to the Italian Slow movements. Nils Jacobsen, a Cittàslow official in Sokndal, argues that if the movement had grown out of Norway there would probably have been more focus on children and teenagers than is the case within the Italian slow cities. However, he argues that the 55 Cittàslow rules are more like guidelines and we thus see variation in focus between the localities. Whereas Italian slow cities' school projects focus on food, Norway has developed the first 'slow school', focusing on pedagogic teaching methods, working to bring back enjoyment in learning, limit bullying and the pressures of exams and marks. This goes hand in hand with Norwegian egalitarianism and Norway's well established interest in pedagogic teaching methods, and is far from the Italian hierarchical teaching

style, which most of my informants complained makes pupils passive, indifferent and frustrated that their opinions are not listened to. Food, however, is relatively unrepresented in the Norwegian 'slow school'.

### **The Symbolism of Food**

In Italy, food and wine connote a rich cultural tradition, local uniqueness and cultural depth, and furthermore symbolize quality of life. Italian food and wine are further symbols that have been promoted internationally, through the media, tourism and product marketing, so that Italy, to many Western countries, is equated with '*la dolce vita*'. It is exactly these symbols and connotations that the Slow movements appropriate, and much of the movements' success, both ideologically and economically, rests on the widespread familiarity of these symbols both abroad and within Italy. The focus on 'slow food' as an opposition to the penetration of 'fast food' in Italian society, is part of an international debate which sees the food we eat as an indicator of the society we live in. However, the discourse varies in different cultures. Whereas Northern European nations focus more on fast food's health and social hazards, Italy's main concern is on lifestyle and the loss in quality of life and tradition following the industrialization of food production.

Jacobsen (2004) argues that a society's perceptions of food as nature, commodity or culture are used deliberately by people in power to either strengthen or dispute existing food metaphors and symbolism. This, in turn, influences the same society's patterns of food production and consumption. In this perspective food constitutes a powerful ideological tool. For example, prior to the 1994 Norwegian EU referendum, anti-EU campaigners used food production within the EU to scare voters into opposing EU membership. They argued that EU slaughter of chickens was unhygienic; that they were bathed in sewer water after they were killed. Implicit in this message was that Norwegian food production was better, healthier and consequently that EU membership would jeopardize Norwegian citizens' food consumption.

In contemporary Western societies, the media constitutes one of the main arenas where cultural meaning is created, maintained and challenged (Hannerz, 1992). In Italy, watching TV is one of the main spare-time activities; this is supported by informants' statements. TV therefore commands a powerful position in establishing and communicating meanings about the relationship between food, traditions and culture. During fieldwork, I noticed how TV adverts manipulated the associations between food and traditions, both revealing social change and at the same time reinforcing the existing symbolism. For example, Parmalat dairy products are usually advertised with an Italian family eating together in calm and happy circumstances. However, the adverts portray small families, usually with one or two children, reflecting contemporary Italian family structure drastically different from that of two decades ago (see Chapter Two). While recognizing that family structure has changed, the adverts intentionally transfer the existing symbolism to the contemporary Italian family, by reinforcing the associations between food, families and traditions. An advert for Barilla pesto shows a group of young, attractive and affluent people eating pasta with pesto, overlooking a beautiful, lush valley in Northern Italy. Pesto is one of the staple condiments of Northern Italy, particularly in the Genoa province, and connotes a long cultural tradition. The advert attempts to repackage the product for the young as stylish and easily prepared, while appealing to existing traditions, drawing a parallel between pesto and pure, untouched nature to imply a healthy, 'natural' food-product continuity with tradition.

While recognizing the strategic usage of food and wine as symbols to connote tradition and 'good living', I am not arguing that the Slow movements cynically exploit the symbolism of food entirely for business gains. There is no doubt that the strength of the symbols, re-invigorated by these movements, in the long run helps Italian wine and food production economically. Yet it cannot be denied that the connection between food, traditions and 'good living' is central to Italian culture. That the Catholic church has designated a saint for the pasta-makers, St. Stefano, makes the link between Italy's food and cultural traditions clear. However, Italian food traditions have not remained



unchallenged from within. In the 1930's, the 'futurists' launched an attack on Italian traditionalism by initiating an anti-pasta campaign. In 1932, the futurist founder Marinetti issued the manifesto and cookbook '*La cucina futurica*' ('the futurist cuisine'), in which he claimed that pasta made Italians lazy, nostalgic and pessimistic! Marinetti attacked pasta as an unhealthy gastronomic religion, and preached instead a self-consciously absurd cuisine based on a technological metaphor. In Genoa, an 'international association against pasta' was formed, but Marinetti's anti-pasta campaign was met by strong hostility across the country ([www.cabinetmagazine.org](http://www.cabinetmagazine.org)). Marinetti's manifesto was read as a wider battle between modernity and tradition, where food, on both sides, became a key symbol and argument to describe, defend or contest Italian culture. This illustrates how seriously Italians regard food in their cultural heritage.

The relevance of food to Italian culture is further revealed in the language. Food metaphors are used frequently in Italian to describe a range of personal characteristics. For example, people can be described as '*come il pomodoro*' (like a tomato) or '*come il prezzemolo*' (like parsley), which means that they are gregarious, seen everywhere, like the abundance of tomato or parsley in Italian meals. When using the former term to Ilona, she shuddered and said it was a silly Umbrian expression, and the correct comparison, which they use in Tuscany, should be parsley. This suggests that metaphors and similes, and thus perceptions, arise from our near-lying experiences and localities, and further that food metaphors are influential in expressing regional or local identities in Italy. Many languages use food metaphors to describe people or their characteristics; in English 'making a meal of it' means to overcomplicate something. Such English food metaphors often have slightly negative connotations, making a meal is here seen as a bother, necessary only for special occasions, and the emphasis lies on efficiency. In Italian, on the other hand, the frequent food references usually have positive connotations and are profoundly interconnected to social life. The comparison of outgoing Italians to tomatoes or parsley, though a slightly teasing remark, reveals how sociability is a central characteristic of Italian culture.

Changes in language usage can also reflect social change. In Italian, food is used to describe people's relationships. If a person is asked how well they know another it is common to reply; *'non ho mai pranzato insieme'* ('I have never eaten lunch with him/her') if the relationship is distant. In other words, eating lunch together is a common practice amongst close friends and family, and so becomes a marker of closeness or affinity. The word *'compagno'* (close friend), derives from the Latin *Cum Panis* (with bread). A *compagno* is thus a person who eats bread with you. In traditional society, eating lunch together meant that you were invited into someone's home, which explains why the act of sharing a meal together is used as a marker of close friendship. In contemporary society, while it is more common for Italian families and friends to eat lunch in local *trattorias*, particularly on Sundays, dining out together is also used to measure the closeness of a relationship. However, Enrico, a local anthropologist, argues that the proverb is used more rarely today and has consequently lost some of its meaning since it is increasingly common to use restaurants as informal arenas to discuss business matters with colleagues at lunch time. As people work longer hours and often away from home, fewer meals are consumed with ones families and friends. As restaurants are used for a wider range of social encounters, the proverb subsequently loses its charge.

### **Fast-Food and Slow-Food - Social Change in the Global Era**

*"Fast food will not replace our food, but will exist side by side only as an alternative to Italian food, because our food traditions are so strong and so good that it would be very difficult to change them"* (Luca, 30).

In the previous section I demonstrated how food symbolism is present in Italian culture expressed through the media and language, and how changes in food terminology reflect changes in food practices in Italian society. However, new food symbolism is constantly created, and more recent concepts such as 'fast-food' and 'slow-food' reveal a society

that is caught up in a global process, yet attempts to create an alternative to what many see as a unhealthy development.

The Slow movements work to evoke images of healthy, biologically and locally grown food founded on centuries of tradition to counter-act the penetration of unhealthy, fast-food into the Italian market. Slow food and fast food are used as the main markers to distinguish the quality of a product or dish and the way in which the food is eaten. This distinction seems to reflect the tendencies in Italian society in general. It is common amongst *alimentari* (grocer shops) and delicatessens in Orvieto, selling cheese, vegetables, meats, oil and wine, to have signboards reading *prodotti tipici* (typical products) outside the shops. According to Micaela (introduced in Chapter Two), this is a fairly recent way of ‘packaging’ and selling the products, also used by Cittàslow, which is mainly aimed at tourists. Over the last ten years Orvieto has experienced an explosion in tourism, which has transformed the historical centre. Most of its shops are now expensive and aimed at tourists, while shops and services (doctors, dentists, hospital) for the local population have moved down to the commercial centre at the bottom of the hill. A large supermarket has opened there to serve the population of the near-lying villages. Although centralization of commercial activities has left many small communities like ‘ghost-villages’ with little cultural or commercial life, the tradition for growing and buying local products still remains strong.

Many parts of Italy and the Mediterranean have in the twentieth century experienced “modernization without development”, a term developed by Schneider (cited in Counihan, 1999) to describe the stagnation of local production subsequent with the intensification of Western industrial consumption patterns. Industrialization and agricultural mechanization, while economically beneficial to the north, have also led to an increase in unemployment, a stagnation of local production and mass-migration from villages to larger industrial cities, generally from the poor south to the prosperous, industrial north (Counihan, 1999). The decline in agricultural activity is clear; in 1950, 48% of the population worked in the countryside compared to 7,2% in 2000 (Campetti, 2000). The figures are mirrored in Umbria; in 2001 only 6% of the population was

involved in agricultural production. However, in contrast to Sardinia, where production was abandoned in many unfertile, dry and hilly areas as the yield was relatively low (Couniham, 1999), Umbria has fertile lands and a comparatively high rainfall that make growing conditions for wine, olives and vegetables good. Local produce is therefore abundant in Orvieto's food markets, restaurants and shops, and is also found in the commercial supermarkets. It is further relatively common to utilize back-gardens for growing vegetables. Italians distinguish between *giardino* (garden with flowers) and *orto* (areas for growing vegetables, fruit trees, olive trees). One of my neighbours, a man in his late 80s with a bad back and waning health, still enthusiastically tended his *orto* and olive grove daily.

Interviews with my informants reveal that fast-food is generally not favoured, and most people prefer to buy local, rather than imported foods. This is more predominant amongst adults and the elderly; some of the teenagers I interviewed admitted they like to buy foreign and especially American fast food, because it connotes 'the American lifestyle' which they consider exciting. Other teenagers claimed that in theory they would prefer to buy local products and support local businesses, but did not consider the origin of the products when buying them. However, most Orvietans generally prefer and are extremely proud of the local cuisine, and possess a shared understanding of what constitutes fast and slow-food. Fast-food, according to my informants, does not occur in Italian cuisine. This seems contrary to what I observed during fieldwork. Pizza, for example, is not perceived as fast food, even though most Italian cities are full of pizza takeaways, where pizza is served and eaten in the same way as other fast-food. There are also several *tavolo caldo* ('warm tables'), which are cafeterias, serving Italian food eaten in a similar manner as fast food. When asking my informants why pizza is not considered fast-food, I was often met with offended and puzzled looks. Even though there are similarities to fast-food in the way that pizza is consumed in takeaways, it is not perceived as such as the term is usually connoted with unhealthy foreign 'junk food'. This reveals that when classifying food, Italians do not just consider the speed and way it is consumed, but also how it

is prepared and produced, the nutritional values of the product, the origin of ingredients and whether it is local or foreign. Pizza is further eaten in many different places; in *pizzerias, trattorias, ristoranti* as well as take-aways; this makes the product ambivalent. What is fast-food in one context can thus be slow-food in another. The following conversation with three teenagers, Luana, Ilaria and Tatiana, illustrates these complexities:

Luana said that before the effects of ‘Americanisation’ and globalisation there was no fast- food in Italy. When asking how they defined fast-food, they said the following:

*Ilaria: ‘McDonald’s is fast-food. People eat fast-food in the big cities’.*

*- ‘But what about pizza, isn’t that fast-food’?*

*Ilaria: ‘No! Pizza is not fast-food’!*

*- ‘Why’?*

*Ilaria: ‘Because it’s traditional’.*

*Tatiana: ‘Fast-food is characteristic of America’.*

*Luana: ‘We eat pizza in a restaurant, fast-food places are more like bars’.*

*- ‘But don’t you also buy pizza and eat it on the street, quickly’?*

They all agreed they did, in fact, as they have no lunch break at school and do not get back until 3 pm, most students snack on pizza slices in the meanwhile. However, they didn’t see this as fast-food, because pizza was ‘traditional’, even though they consumed it in the same way as American fast food.

*Luana: ‘Fast food in Italy is slow – ‘slow fast-food’!’*

When asking them to explain further why Italian traditional snack food, such as pizza, was different to American fast-food, they argued that the pizzerias and bars made the food themselves, on the premises. They all thought the locality and quality of the food was very important.

*Ilaria: ‘Italian food is better quality than American fast-food. American fast-food is often fried, and is therefore unhealthy’.*

The characteristics of slow-food do not only delineate that the product is local, healthy, and eaten in a certain way, but evoke associations with a relaxed and pleasure-seeking lifestyle as opposed to the rushed and stressful lifestyles of many in the modern world. I would argue that this distinction is partly illusionary; the realities of Italian life everyday, as demonstrated by the three teenagers, are compartmentalized, thus 'justifying' the consumption of fast-food and slow-food at different times of the day.

In her study of the consumption of frozen pizza in Norway, Lien (1999) asserts that pizza has come to connote fast food, weakening morals and degenerative health. From symbolizing youth culture, modern living and exotic lifestyle choice in the 1970's, to the prime family dish for the Saturday evening treat in the 1980's, pizza is now identified with gluttony, immorality and destruction of family traditions. The protestant moral tradition, rewarding ascetic behaviour with the promise of salvation, and condemning overindulgence with perdition, has influenced the way we perceive the intake of food today. Today the reward for resisting intemperance is not of a spiritual character, but is typically associated with the promise of good health, the hope of a long life and control over one's life. Just as gluttony was one of the seven deadly sins, overindulgence in food today carries similar connotations of personal and social dissolution. It is in this way that the growth of frozen pizza is seen to challenge Norwegian cuisine, dining traditions and social structure; its 'fast' and easy preparation and consumption contests home cooking and the family institution, as dinner need no longer be a meeting point between family members. Food is here used as a mirror for describing the state and development of Norwegian society, where today we find more divorced families and single people, and thus changing food traditions. This is perhaps why pizza, in the same way as hamburgers and hotdogs, is often portrayed in the news as a threat to existing cultural traditions. The development of the Slow movements has been portrayed in the media as a revolt against McDonald's, since the fast food chain is an easily-accessible international symbol to represent homogenization and 'Americanization' of culture. The symbol is frequently used by the anti-globalization movements, in national and international debates on health

and deteriorating social and moral standards. Lien's case study illustrates how fast food is localized and given particular meanings in particular contexts, and how these meanings change over time. Similarly, I would argue that the food discourse differs in Italy and Northern-Europe. Whereas there is more focus on the health risk of fast food in Norway, in Italy the focus lies more on the threat to existing cultural traditions, values and pleasures of eating. Since Lien wrote in 1999, I would argue that pizza has partially altered its symbolic meaning in Norway. Since the millennium I notice two trends in pizza advertising. Products such as 'Pizza Grandiosa', give connotations of fast food and easy preparation for the young, the single and the busy. However, a range of 'quality Italian style pizzas', such as 'Casa di Mama', which have more 'exotic' ingredients like pesto and Italian cheese, are promoted as part of the 'fetishisation' of Italy as the home of *la dolce vita*. This kind of promotion has affected the older types of frozen pizza in the Norwegian market, and 'Grandiosa' is increasingly advertised on its reassuring familiarity, a point of security for its lonely, busy consumers.

Despite social changes in food habits due to pressures of time, Menniti's (2000) research shows that the main house-rule that persists in Italian homes is that family members share their meals together and make sure they are on time for the meals. However, this is difficult to realize in many Italian homes, and perhaps reveals more about the culture's ideals than the actuality of Italian homes. Italian history since Industrialization is generally marked by centralization and large-scale migration to urban centres. Over recent decades, especially during Berlusconi's premiership, centralization of commerce, workplaces and schools has increased drastically. High costs of living in the city centres mean that many Italians are forced to live in villages outside the towns in which they work, consequently many commute long distances to work or school. This has profound effects on family life and thus eating habits; meaning that people often eat separately. When interviewing two school classes at *liceo*, the majority complained about not having lunch breaks in their school day. Most of the pupils live in villages, often more than half an hour's drive away from Orvieto, and have to set off early to get to school. At school they are only given 10-15 minute breaks and have to snack on pizza slices until they eat a

large meal at home after three o'clock. Marta (see Chapter Two), lives in Viterbo, a medium-sized town 30 minutes south of Orvieto. Her parents are separated, and she lives with her mother who works 10 hours a day. Due to cuts in public transport under the Berlusconi government, buses only go once or twice a day and do not correspond to school times, most of the teenagers rely on their parents to drive them to and from school. Marta gets up at six and is taken to school early, so her mother will be in time for work. She thus has no time to eat breakfast, waits in Orvieto for some time before school starts, and only eats snack meals, such as pizza, until she gets back. After school she usually goes to her grandmother's and eats her lunch there, from where her mother fetches her in the evening. She rarely eats with her mother, only occasionally the traditional large evening meal at nine. Most of the teenagers I interviewed have small families and feel they see their parents too little as they work long hours and often far from their homes. Many have parents who come home between seven and eight; one girl's mother only comes back just before going to bed at twelve. My fieldwork data suggests that, rather than combating the trend to ever-faster lifestyles, Italians have compartmentalized their lives to cope. Slow-food constitutes an important part of people's spare times, in festivities and in the collective cultural consciousness, but does not change the fast pace of people's everyday lives.

## **Food and Identity**

As previously argued, modern methods of food production, distribution and consumption dislocate food from their specific cultural contexts. Contemporary Western cultures have increasingly become commoditised, and 'dying' food traditions no longer part of people's staple diet are revived to become key symbols in an often nostalgic search for an embedded past (Bauman, 2001) (see also Chapter Six). During the C20th, industrial production created a pasta-based 'national cuisine', in which restaurant menus across the country were standardized. But since the late eighties the reinvention of 'traditional peasant cuisine' has intensified with local or regional recipes gaining enormous



popularity. The Slow movements express this shift, and localizing the menus in restaurants and canteens were some of the first issues they tackled, so that food became the crucial link between culture, tradition and spatial identity.

That this is widespread was especially made apparent when attending the social gatherings of elderly women at the '*Universita della terza eta*' ('University of Third Age'), a regionally-sponsored social and educational centre for people over 35, providing language, educational, sport and physical courses. Orvieto's two centres, one in *Centro Storico* and one in *Scalo*, are mostly attended by the elderly, and serve as informal meeting-places where the elderly come to talk, play games, learn and discuss topics of their interest. I attended a seminar group on 'medicinal herbs' in the *Scalo*, attended by 11 women, most in their late 60s to 70s, except an American woman of 49, Shirli, who has married an Italian and lived in Orvieto for 23 years. She went to the centre regularly with her mother-in-law. The group was led by a local anthropologist, who structured the conversation to some degree, but let the women discuss topics and conversations close to their hearts. Before long the conversations revolved around memories connecting place, food and social change. The informal structure of the seminar suggests that these conversations grew out of genuine interests and perceptions that are representative of the strong affiliation between food and place amongst the elderly population in Orvieto. In Italy food is often used as a starting point for conversations, not only because it is a topic people feel so strongly about, but also because it is a symbolic marker where cultural categories of identity and belonging are reproduced by delineating 'us' from 'them' and 'right' from 'wrong' in cultural practices. The women discussed how taste is culturally constructed, what we see as appropriate to eat and not, and the importance of how food and drink are consumed. *Cappuccino*, for example, is only drunk for breakfast, any other time of the day *espresso* is drunk and cappuccino is seen as inappropriate. Tea is mainly drunk when you are ill, and not for pleasure. At the end of the session one of the woman made espresso and asked me if I wanted some. She expressed great delight when I accepted the offer, and teased Shirli about drinking tea and therefore having strange

tastes. “She has lived here for 23 years and still doesn’t drink coffee, she will never be an Italian”, she laughed.

By talking about their relationship to the countryside and the medicinal and social uses of food when they were young, the elderly women utilized food to evoke memories and to strengthen their alignments with the land and an embedded cultural past. Most of the elderly women had lived in the villages surrounding Orvieto their whole lives and showed an extensive knowledge of the land around them. One woman talked about how it was common to apply the bark of an oak tree to rashes and allergic reactions when she was young, but as it stained the skin she has changed to using more convenient chemically-produced medicines. Another woman talked about how her family used acorns from their garden’s oak tree for coffee during WW2, and how her family had had an easier time throughout the war than people in the big cities because they grew their own vegetables on the family farm and there was food to be found in the forests.

Although the elderly women today buy most of their food in the local *alimentari* and the supermarkets and do not farm the land, their relationship to the place they live remains very strong. One woman told how a large oak tree had been the focal point of her village for over one hundred years that not only marked out its geographical identity, but also aligned her cultural identity to the place. Although the villages today have roads with names and consequently natural markers such as trees or rocks become less important to describe a place, the village oak tree still remains a characteristic marker of continuity and place. As stories continue to be told of how its acorns fed their pigs and how it gave them coffee during the war, the tree stands as a symbol of continuation and cultural reproduction from generation to generation.

Based on my interviews, I would argue that food is also very important to young Orvietans’ identity. Experiences with other cultures can reinforce food’s role in drawing boundaries between cultural identities. Two of my informants in their teens, Marta and Erica, said they felt Italian, not because they love Italy, but because they realized they associate more with Italian traditions after experiencing differing cultural habits in other

countries. They both mentioned food as the main marker of distinction; how cappuccino and pasta was eaten abroad upset, yet strengthened their notions of gastronomic ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, and of their ‘cultural self’. However, one of the main differences that struck me between elderly and young Orvietans was their relationship to place. Many of the teenagers felt alienated in their home villages and claimed that their parents and grandparents were more connected to the physical and social environment around them:

“In the past people had their own piece of land, their own small workshop, and big families nearby. The community or village was like a ‘big family’” (Marta, 17)

“Young people don’t feel attached anymore, but older people still feel very strong connections to the land, their ancestors have been there for hundreds of years” (Erica, 17)

Erica says that ‘their’ ancestors have lived in the villages ‘for hundred of years’. Although many of the teenagers I interviewed have grown up and live in the same villages as their parents and grandparents, they say that alienation from community has only arrived with their generation.

### **Food Festivals- Communal Events or Niche Interest?**

*The smell of seafood is channelled along the stone arches of the old restaurant and evokes associations of a small fishing village reflected in a glittering turquoise ocean. Low piano jazz accompanies the ripple of conversations and fills the room with expectation. White-clad waiters scurry around serving wine and food. The guests, mostly in their forties to sixties, are busy conversing in groups and couples. Only a handful of children are present, running between the tables. After pouring a glass of white wine, the waiter serves me the starter, an antipasto consisting of green peas and squid, followed by a plate of snails with tomato and garlic sauce. The atmosphere of expectation breaks as the food is consumed passionately and the local jazz band takes the stage. The next dish, primo piatto, comprising of pasta and crayfish, is consumed with more white wine. As the*

*red wine is poured, the guests know it is time for the secondo piatto, a course usually comprising of different kinds of meats. This time pasta with lamb is followed by a plate of mixed meats and potatoes. The six course meal is completed by custard filled pastries, and I am amazed that people's appetites persist until the end. In between the courses, the two chefs and the mayor take the stage and talk about the evening's dishes. They are given flowers and a big applause. After hours of eating, the evening comes to an end and is rounded off by cigar smoking on the heated veranda, overlooking the medieval city and the surrounding countryside that has come to life for a new year of growth and harvest.*

This scene describes the annual *Cittàslow Dinner Music*, one of the main events organized by Cittàslow. The food described is local to Francavilla al Mare, a fishing town on the Adriatic coast, and Guardiagrele, a little further inland in Abruzzo. These are two of the 32 Italian slow cities, 11 of which take part in the Dinner Music. The 'dinner music', a local event initiated by the restaurant *Al San Francesco* five years ago, was spotted by Cittàslow and turned into a gourmet food and music festival, where each mayor and selected chefs from the same slow city take turn to host an evening each filled with food and wine from the local cuisine of their town. The events take place in two restaurants, *Al San Francesco* in Orvieto and *Ristorante La Dolce Vita* in Baschi, a village outside Orvieto. The ideas of the restaurants are in line with Cittàslow's philosophy. Every time you eat in *Al San Francesco* is a surprise; the menu changes regularly since the recipes are created from what ingredients are in season and grown locally. This philosophy is further practiced by other restaurants in Orvieto. Stefano, who runs the Orvietan *trattoria, Pane e Cipolla*, argues that Cittàslow benefits Orvieto's restaurants, by bringing more attention to local, traditional recipes. However, he mainly sees Cittàslow as influential in strengthening the local economy and attracting tourists, and thinks it has little effect on local identity. His restaurant has been in contact with Cittàslow since 2003, and participates in the annual food festival, *Orvieto con Gusto*. However, like many Orvietans he is critical to larger institutions' involvement in people's lives, even though it takes place on the level of the municipality. He claims that most

Orvietan restaurants, even before the birth of Cittàslow, cooked food that stems from traditional peasant recipes. Umbrian cuisine is generally simple and uses few ingredients. His restaurant has specialized in food based on *ricette di nonna* (grandmother's recipes), traditional foods from the local area. He thus thinks that Cittàslow picked up on a trend already present in the culture, and sought to reinforce it. Barbara, the chef of *Pane e Cipolla*, says this is the first time she has appreciated a municipal initiative. Barbara argues that Cittaslow has helped the *trattoria* economically and has increased customer interest in the traditional cuisine they serve. Stefano and Barbara's reflections highlight mixed feelings about Cittàslow, which were apparent in many of my informants.

Although most were positive towards Cittàslow's effects on the economy, tourism and on bringing focus and pride to Orvietan traditions, few indicated that the movement had any 'real effects' on local life, indicating that Orvietan traditions, while a source of pride and enjoyment, were felt to be detached from their 'real lives'.

According to Massimo Borri, information officer for Cittàslow in Orvieto, the movement does not have to endorse local restaurants with the snail logo, since 'slow food' is an ideal and practice already present in Orvieto. While my fieldwork suggests that such ideals are present, Borri's assertions perhaps suggest nervousness of imposing an ideology on a volatile electorate. However, they could equally well be a manifestation of Italian indolence; I often found a discrepancy between the movement's intentions and its actual achievements. When I asked what projects Cittàslow has accomplished in Orvieto, Borri emphasised the establishment of an underground car-park with connecting escalator and lift to Orvieto Centro as its main environmental project. Although mayor Cimmichi instituted this project, I discovered that it began at the start of the 1990s, long before Cittàslow was born. Concrete results of Cittàslow's own environmental projects are hard to find, though it took me some time to decode this, amongst Borri's grandiose talk of plans and meetings. The case was somewhat better in Cittàslow's food promotion.

Food festivals, referred to as *sagre* or *feste* (feast days), are popular all over Italy, and serve as events where the bonds between food and local identity are strengthened.

Tracing back at least to medieval times, they embody a continuity of community, history and culture. In the past, these festivals served a function similar to carnivals in temporarily reversing the hardships and inequalities of everyday life by consuming food and drink to excess. The *fiesta* was further a day where social and economic differences within a community were suspended (Counihan, 1999). Since most Italians no longer rely on food production within their households and have availability and choice in buying food through shops and markets, food festivals today are generally more contained, marginal events where gastronomic interests can be indulged. Rather than taking part in communal festival, food events today are usually separate niche occurrences, and are more educational in structure, taking the forms of cookery courses, wine and food tasting. *Palazzo del Gusto* ('the House of Taste'), the regional food centre organized by Cittàslow, represents this new trend. *Palazzo del Gusto* holds wine tasting and cookery courses and events aimed to educate the local population and tourists in the culinary tradition. These courses and events mainly attract gourmet tourists and middle-class locals as one has to pay for each event. These specialist food festivals are different from the communal events, such as the *lardo* festival described earlier, which are important instruments in shaping the identity of a place, and are tied in with the local history, collective memory and everyday lives of the population. The Slow movements are sometimes attacked for being 'gourmet elitism' (Leitch, 2003), which only concerns a small social segment, mainly middle and upper-class, educated, affluent people and tourists. The main events organized by Cittàslow are the *Cittàslow Dinner Music* and *Orvieto con Gusto* ('Orvieto with Taste') in October, an international food festival representing the cuisines of the Cittàslow members worldwide. Slow Food also holds an international food festival in Turin annually. Leitch (2000) argues that the growth of food festivals is linked to the development of domestic tourism from the 1950's, as affordable cars and motorbikes became available in Italy. In more recent times, food festivals have become part of an international culinary tourism and are promoted by tourist boards, as they are economically beneficial to the local communities and serve to bring attention to local food traditions. Enrico, a local anthropologist who has observed changes in Italian

festivals, argues that the older, more 'traditional' festivals take place "in connection with the season or with the liturgical calendar. Festivals like...Slow Food are, instead, festivals born for the logic of cultural tourism".

Likewise, some of my informants argue that the new food festivals are mainly for tourists and people with money. In other words, instead of alleviating social tensions during the festival period like the old *feste*, it may be argued that social differences are strengthened in modern food festivals.

However, the connection between food and good taste is also reproduced by Orvietans who do not participate in Cittàslow or Slow Food's events or have any particular interest in food. Gastone, 74, runs an *alimentari*, a family business since 1920. He has not been in contact with Cittàslow, but thinks the movement indirectly contributes towards his business by raising awareness and "placing value on Orvieto as a town with traditions of good taste". Despite running an *alimentari*, food and wine is not central to his happiness. Quality of life to him is mainly found in realization through work, although he admits he is not happy with his life and thinks that longer working hours and a fast pace of life is causing dissatisfaction in the population. He himself works 60 hours a week. Despite his personal lack of interest in food, Gastone still emphasises the importance of taste to local traditions. Although many informants were critical of Cittàslow's ability to create positive changes in Orvietan society, I would argue that the movement's discourse of the relationship between food, 'good taste' and being 'cultured' are largely representative of the population.

Despite the disputed effects of food events, the tendency to emphasis local cuisines and products, whether in food festivals, in restaurants or in the home is becoming increasingly important in Italian culture as a way of redefining a locality's identity as food evokes cultural and personal memories. For over a century, the food business has refined the commoditization of food symbolism; and now locality has taken these techniques to challenge the industrial trend, using food symbolism to delineate the

culturally unique in a community. The revitalization of traditional food is partly an ‘invention of tradition’ (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1984) where food traditions are taken out of their original context, romanticized and redeployed. Peasant staple food is thus transformed from being a simple necessity to gourmet food, for the urban middle-classes. Italian food is a potent symbol, both within and outside the country, giving connotations of picturesque, rustic countryside steeped in traditions, strong communal and family bonds and a slow quality life style. The production of these symbols and images, promoted actively by the tourist industry, the media, and also the Italian Slow movements, represents today “key fantasy spaces for modern urban alienation” (Leitch, 2000:105). If the Slow movements are to become more than this, they must become more closely bound with the life of the locality.

Alessandro, 32, a social worker in Orvieto municipality, is positive to Cittàslow’s ideology, but like many of my informants is critical of its ‘top-down’ structure:

“It is important that Cittàslow involves more local people, otherwise it has no life-span. It would be best if it wasn’t politically involved or controlled, but as long as they involve more people, and make it close to their lives, they can make positive changes”.

Alessandro argues that it will take time before Cittàslow becomes part of Orvietans’ lives, but he has already seen increased enthusiasm amongst young Orvietans. More people think there might be a future in local wine production, whereas only a few years ago most young people would never conceive of this:

“Cittàslow can help us understand our roots and bring vitality back to the culture...by selling our wine and olive oil abroad, we can get back some of our autonomy...In some ways globalization forces us to reevaluate Orvieto and see it with new eyes, but we have to make sure we don’t lower the quality by making things mass-produced and commercialized”.



## Chapter 5: ‘Slow Time’ in Slow Cities?

*‘Man measures time and time measures man’ (Italian proverb)*

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I will discuss how temporal experiences are relative and localized, by examining the Orvietan experiences of time and time-management as revealed through interviews, questionnaires and observation. Although experiences of time are embedded in locality, global processes, such as the spread of the Information society and neo-liberal capitalism, have extended and standardized a mechanical, measurable and economic model of time (Honore, 2004). These processes alter our temporal experiences and perceptions by giving the impression that time moves faster and faster (Sennet, 1998). Time is given a transactional value and is seen as a scarcer resource today that needs careful management (Adam, 1995), giving rise to the expression ‘time is money’. By changing the contents of time, and subsequently space and locality, this affects cultural practises and social interactions. My fieldwork suggests that the cultural effects of ‘fast time’ are today found even in small-scale Italian societies such as Orvieto. Cittàslow’s focus on ‘slow time’ is a clear reaction against these processes, and the movement’s growth into an international network indicates that these forces are increasingly experienced world-wide. Time is closely bound to culture, locality and collective memories, as time generates continuity and establishes relationships between events and experiences. Fast time, as argued by Cittàslow, alienates people and diminishes ‘quality of life’, by standardizing and homogenizing experiences of time and place.

Since it is difficult to observe others’ experience of time, I will concentrate on people’s temporal experiences as revealed in interviews and questionnaires. However, I will relate this information to my observations of Orvietan behaviour and interaction in work and social settings. I will further examine whether Cittàslow has made any real changes to the way people live, or, as several informants expressed, though the movement’s intentions

are good, they are in practice little more than ‘window-dressing’. In this context I will examine the ‘quality of life’ concept promoted by Cittàslow, questioning who benefits from it and how quality is defined.

The global spread of neo-liberal capitalism promotes a mind-set where quantity is favoured over quality, which intensifies standardization, homogenization and efficiency of production and consumption. People world-wide, especially in the Western hemisphere, increasingly complain about pressures on their time, and increasing expectations in both their working life and their spare time. These experiences were confirmed by most of my informants, indicating that globalization is having its impact even in small-scale, seemingly slow and idyllic towns. It is not without reason that stress, burnout and time-pressures have formed the foundations of more and more debates in the media and in politics since the 1990s, depicting an increasingly shared phenomenon in Western societies. However, these changes have even more radical implications; ‘fast time’ alters the very perception and experience of time, compressing and fragmenting experience, leaving little room for organic continuity, quality and reflection. The experience of fast time, in turn, influences our bodily and mental interaction with the world around us.

To create a counterweight and practical alternative to the negative consequences of fast time, Cittàslow introduced the concept of ‘slow time’. Slow time, it is argued, creates an opportunity to reflect, experience, enjoy and partake fully in the variety of life, both in a cultural and existential sense. Slow time is thus intrinsically linked to quality, and Cittàslow’s main focus is to improve the ‘quality of life’ in the slow cities. What exactly ‘quality of life’ constitutes, is of course individually and culturally grounded, and Cittàslow’s attempt to define and promote their definition has made the movement vulnerable to critiques of being a ‘top-down’ movement. I would argue that its promotion of slow time is mainly an aspiration to protect Italian notions of cultural integrity, a concern that their pleasure-seeking and aesthetic orientation is in the process of being

destroyed. Cittàslow in Italy is primarily concerned with protecting cultural traditions and variety in food, wine and cultural artefacts. The movement does not, for example, concentrate on introducing slow time into institutions such as work and school.

### **The Dominance of ‘Fast Time’**

Time forms such a central part of our lives and is woven into every action, process and experience that it becomes a translucent thread, often unseen and unconsidered. How we relate to, experience and perceive time is largely informed by our culture, and is internalized and habituated through practice and through our interactions with social institutions and structures (Adam, 1995). Our experience of time is further shaped by the standardization of clock and calendar time. This standardization and mechanization is of course not a recent phenomenon; calendars were used by most ancient civilizations, such as the Sumerians, Egyptians, Chinese and Mayans. The mechanical clock was introduced in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Greenwich Mean Time in 1675, and the division of time zones finally standardized in 1884. However, the global spread of the ‘Information society’ after the cold war, with the development of information technology such as computers, Internet, fax and e-mail, further controls, regularises and mechanizes our day to day experiences of time, intensifying the perception of time as a fast-moving, quantifiable commodity. This is not to say that temporality is experienced the same across the globe, but there is no doubt that the invariance and context-independence of clock and calendar time, which is further subdivided, speeded-up and measured by new technology, radically influences our interactions, practices and perceptions of time and space. However, as Adam argues:

“The existence of clock time, no matter how dominant, does not obliterate the rich sources of local, idiosyncratic and context-dependent time awareness which are rooted in the social and organic rhythms of everyday life” (1995:21)

Adam indicates that time is *multiple*. For analysis sake, I will argue that there are two main types of time; *measured* time, which is constant, quantifiable and context-

independent, and *experiential* time, which is variable, qualitative and context-dependent. Given the limits of the thesis, this analysis will primarily focus on the social dimension of experiential time; the time embedded in cultural and social practises, interactions, organization and processes.

As Eriksen (2001) suggests, much recent technological innovation, devised as time-or labour-saving, has ironically given us the feeling of possessing less time. Likewise, overload of information creates a scarcity of freedom from information. Information is theoretically infinite, a receiver's attention finite and therefore a diminishing resource. New, inventive and faster ways are therefore created in order to grab people's attention, thus exacerbating the problem, speeding up and fragmenting time experiences into shorter moments rather than continuous, organic wholes, creating as Eriksen puts it, a 'tyranny of the moment'. Receivers of information, on the other hand, have to create filters admitting what seems important to their lives (Eriksen, 2001). This also goes for our life choices; we are overloaded by choices at all times and have to select and structure our lives accordingly. Measuring time may give us some control over our lives, but "the tables turn [and] we become slaves to the schedule. Schedules give us deadlines, and deadlines by their very nature, gives us reason to rush" (Honore, 2004).

Almost all my informants agree that time and pace in Orvieto have speeded up over the last few decades. My informants saw time as a scarce resource and constraint, associated with pressure, organization, prioritization and careful planning. I do not think this perception in itself is a recent change, but the degree to which time pressures are a burden in people's lives has, according to my informants, increased. They felt more frustration, stress and inability to fulfil their tasks.

### **'Slow Time'**

The logos of Slow Food and Cittàslow depict a snail, the former a purple snail and the latter an orange snail with a town on its shell, like an Italian town on its hill. The choice

of symbolism is inspired by a 17<sup>th</sup> century Italian book by Francesco Angelita, in which he outlines what humans can learn from the mollusc. Apart from the obvious slow pace of the snail, it also carries its 'house' wherever it goes which means that "wherever the snail is...is home" ([www.slowfood.com](http://www.slowfood.com)). The snail's 'lesson' is useful; as well as bringing our cultural baggage (i.e. the 'house') with us wherever we go, a slow pace lets us qualitatively appreciate the environment around us.

As argued above, experiential time is created in relationship and interaction with the *space* we dwell in. This includes everything from the physical features of our locality (i.e. landscape, buildings, clock towers, *piazze*) and the structure of our society (i.e. time structured around events such as agrarian cycles of growth and harvest, festivals, rituals, work, daily routines and schedules). By focusing on locality and public events (such as the medieval festivals or food and crafts festivals), Cittàslow simultaneously tackles the speeding up of experiential time by grounding our experiences in locality and limiting the impact of abstracted, context-independent and quantifiable time. As Ingold (2000) argues, the mergence of people and spaces over time creates meaningful places, which according to Cittàslow, are the foundations for quality of life.

### **Time in Work**

Slow time, as promoted by Cittàslow, mainly focuses on the enjoyment of food, wine and aesthetic experiences, most of which take place in people's spare-time. This makes me question whether the movement effects any real changes in Italian society, as it ignores the largest portion of most people's lives, work. Fieldwork revealed a very stratified society, where working hours vary considerably. Although the majority of my informants work between 30-50 hours a week, some Orvietans work part-time and others have an average working week up to 85 hours. Although flexible work has blurred the borders of work and spare-time (Sennet, 1998, Eriksen, 2001) I would argue that Italians compartmentalize their experience and behaviour into work or public time, and spare- or private time, where the former is marked by a larger degree of fast time and the latter by

a larger degree of slow time. If slow time is only realized in people's spare times, little societal change will occur.

### **The *siesta***

Though time experiences have been altered by globalization and the information society, the *siesta*<sup>19</sup> potentially provides an anchor for slow time, breaking the course of the day into manageable periods of work, rest and recreation, allowing for qualitative familial and societal interactions throughout the day. This management creates different experiences of time from for example Norway, where the average lunch-break is 30 minutes.

However, also in Italian society, time experiences vary as the *siesta* is not standardized. The *siesta* is usually practiced in commercial enterprises such as shops, and although the closing time is individually decided in each shop, the period usually stretches between one and five o'clock. In the public sector, there is usually a lunch-break of one hour and in the private sector a two hour break. In schools, the lunch break also varies; in *liceo*, the longest break is 15 minutes, where as in primary and secondary school there is usually a break of one hour.

Questionnaires reveal that about two thirds of respondents employed in full-time or part-time work still eat lunch at home, often with their families. However, it is difficult to say for certain whether this is representative of the Orvietan population as a whole.

Interestingly, though, the questionnaires suggest that eating lunch at home is unrelated to working-hours, perhaps because people who work long hours often have two or more part-time jobs with the opportunity of *siesta* in between. What seems to be more determining is whether or not the respondent is employed in a profession that offers a long *siesta*. It is also fairly common to eat lunch in *trattorias* with one's co-workers or family, especially when the lunch break is one or two hours. Many informants argued that

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<sup>19</sup> *Siesta* is a Spanish term and is not used amongst Italians. I spent a lot of effort attempting to find an Italian term for the same institution, but there is no shared term for this central, daily rest period. The closest I got to a descriptive term is *tempo libero dopo pranzo* (free-time after lunch) and *pausa pranzo* (lunch break), but neither terms include the whole period, nor are they used in daily speech to refer to the same institution as the *siesta*. It seemed ironic to me that such a central institution of Italian society does not have a name, but perhaps that in itself is a sign of its power. In lack of an Italian term, I will use *siesta* to describe the lunch break and rest-period when shops and many work places close.

the chance to spend some quality time with their families or co-workers throughout the day improves relations at home and at work. Informants with short lunch-breaks, especially in *liceo*, complained that this diminishes their quality of life and increases stress and frustration. However, not all my informants agreed that the *siesta* nourishes quality or slow time. Micaela maintained that as the siesta is not organized to coincide in all official institutions and commercial enterprises a lot of confusion and frustration is created. People rush around to do their errands before closing-time, thus fostering fast time. However, she stressed that it is not the institution of the *siesta* itself that creates fast time, but its disorganisation. Despite the varied opinions on the *siesta*, it is clear that social change is affecting this ancient Mediterranean institution. In Spain, hectic schedules and long distances to work mean that presently only 7% take a nap during *siesta*. Adapting the *siesta* to modern lifestyles, public ‘rest-rooms’ where workers can take a *siesta* nap have been introduced (Honore, 2004). A similar pattern can be read from the questionnaires; only 13 of 83 respondents said they quite often or always sleep in the siesta, watching TV is the main *siesta* pass-time.

### **Continuity and Change**

Factors furthered by globalization, such as instability, uncertainty, high unemployment rates and job shortages worried my informants even more than overwork, and were major sources of stress and frustration, in particular for people starting their careers. Enrico argues that Italian politics’ focus on cutting unemployment overshadows any initiative to reduce time-pressures in work. This can help to understand the lack of initiatives within Cittàslow to tackle stress and time-pressures in work. Many young Orvietans argued that conservative attitudes predominate in the work place; young people are not taken seriously, meaning that professionals find it difficult to get a good job until well into their thirties. This, apparently, is nothing new. However, job shortages have strengthened the stratified and hierarchical aspects of Italian society, making it extremely difficult to make one’s way into the job market without contacts. This was particularly argued by two

informants, Ilona, who has several years of work experience from England and Spain and Shirli, an American immigrant. Both emphasised that hierarchy and paternalism were noticeably stronger in Italy and have increased considerably the last decade. Instabilities have further made it more common to work for free in exchange for work experience; this is common in many professions, for example amongst lawyers and in the private sector. Although this trend seems to be manifested stronger in Italy, it is reflective of a general trend in Western society, for example many European NGO's offer work experience without pay. This, of course, means that many Italians starting out are dependent on their parents for longer, thus reinforcing *mammone* tendencies (see Chapter Two). Contrary to what one would expect, globalization thus ironically strengthens many traditional aspects of Italian society.

While being particularly tough for people starting out in work, job insecurity affect people of all ages. Many of my informants were employed on short-term contracts or had two or three part-time jobs, and thus altogether worked longer hours than they would in a full-time job. In the public sector, one can officially only be employed in one job, but can additionally be hired on private contracts at the same work place. Holding many part-time contracts, whether in one or more work environments, furthered the feeling of instability for many of my informants.

As discussed in Chapter Two, overwork due to job-insecurity and 'fast time' due to quantitative production measures affect the family structure, thus transforming one of the main pillars of Italian society and identity. This was especially experienced by my female informants, who felt pressures to fulfil expectations of both work and family life; either ending up as 'double-workers', or choosing not to have or to postpone having children. The questionnaires support this finding; of the people above 20 years who were asked what effect work and career choices have on having children, 72% argue that Italians today choose to have children later, 18% believe that people choose not to have children, and only 10% that work has no impact on having children. Many informants criticized the inflexibility of the job-market, which makes it hard for women to have children and work simultaneously. Although there are no economic incentives that allow flexibility in



combining work and children, my female informants argue that the main impediment is not finances, but conservative attitudes; most Italians do not like the idea of working mothers. This argument is supported by Counihan (1999), who argues that this contemporary conflict, also found in larger cities like Florence, is reproduced by women as well as men. Although Florentine women want gender equality, gender roles are so embedded that many claimed they did not feel like 'proper women' unless they cooked, laundered and did the shopping for their husbands and children. Likewise, my female informants found themselves torn between the traditionalism of the family and the contemporary, increasingly global model of Western individualism and tried to fulfil both roles.

In 2003, prime-minister Berlusconi proposed to increase the retirement age by 5 years to cover the costs of the growing number of pensioners. The proposal met huge resistance from the population, including a demonstration with 1 million participants. This illustrates a tension between Italian ideals of quality of life and the increasing penetration of neo-liberal capitalism, promoted by Berlusconi's right-wing, *Forza Italia*.

The 'demographic time bomb', as it is frequently described in the media, of falling birth rates and rising life expectancy is a growing problem in Europe, and in particular Italy and Germany are under growing pressure to meet EU budget deficit regulations. In 2002, there were more deaths than births in the two nations, and Italy, Germany and Spain have some of the lowest birth rates in the world. Italy, Greece and Japan further have some of the oldest populations in the world, and it is estimated that 25% of the Italian population will be over 60 by the end of this decade ([www.guardian.com](http://www.guardian.com)). Italy now has more pensioners than workers; 22 million pensioners to 21 million workers, so there is no doubt that something must be done to cover the costs of an ageing population. However, Berlusconi's drastic measures, which will be introduced by 2008, require 40 years labour participation and a suggested retirement age of 60 for women and 65 for men. Italy currently provides a flexible retirement age between 57-65, requiring 35 years of labour contribution. This option means that more choose early retirement; the number of

workers aged above 55 decreased 20% in the period of 1980-1997 (Paulli, 2000). I would argue that early retirement reflects the allure of *la dolce vita*, and indicates that the benefits of slow time are still valued and realized in Italian society. However, these ideals are also in increased conflict with the government's alignment to liberalization and market economics.

### **Pace, Productivity and Compartmentalization**

Interviews and questionnaires reveal that most informants feel considerably more stress and time-pressure now than they did 10-15 years ago. They regularly argued that this is linked to globalization and the growth of market economics in Italy and Umbria. As Adam (1995) argues, "the market economy depends on a standardized, decontextualized, commoditized time", as a result the quantity of production is prioritized over quality, and fast time is fostered over slow time in working environments. According to Massimo Borri, information officer for Cittàslow in Orvieto, statistics show that Orvietans average working hours have declined, from 40 hours a week in 1991 to 36 in 2001. However, it is difficult to clarify whether this reflects people's conscious decision to reduce their workload, or indicates that unemployment and part-time contracts have increased. My informants' experiences of time-pressure contradict that things are improving; most said that stress and time-pressures in work had a negative effect on their spare-time, undermining their quality of life.

Doing certain things slowly and finding a balance in tempo may actually have positive effects on productivity and efficiency. In Norway, LO (the biggest workers organization) and certain political parties (the Socialist Left Party, the Labour Party and the Green Party) are fighting for a 6 hour working day. Some of the main arguments are that shorter working hours make it possible for more employees to work full time and over more years (something which would be beneficial as the future number of workers will fall below the number of pensioners in most European countries). There is much evidence that productivity, efficiency, mental and physical health improve with shorter working hours; which is further cost-effective for the national economy (Honore, 2004). Numbers

of employees receiving some form of sickness-benefits in Norway have increased considerably between 1994 and 2001, and might indicate that the relationship between health and time-pressure is close-knit<sup>20</sup>. This trend is also mirrored in much of the Western world; The National Safety Council in America calculates that job stress costs the economy over \$150 billion annually by the millions of workers who fail to attend work every day, and in Britain stress is now the major cause of absence from work (Honore, 2004). This has ramifications beyond economics; as discussed in Chapters Two and Five, individual contentment, familial and social relationships and the very structure of our societies are at stake. It seems surprising therefore that Cittàslow fails to focus on work-related stress and time-pressures. The movement, associated with the political left, moves away from the ‘traditional’ left’s focus on workers rights, instead emphasising individual identity and lifestyle choice. It could thus be argued that this depoliticises the movement, though it could also be argued the movement’s focus spare-time activities inhibits social change in other areas of life, such as work. I would argue that if the movement had started in Norway, a focus on slow time in working life might have been more apparent. However, Cittàslow’s focus is also indicative of a global value-change emphasising “individual opportunities and responsibilities over state involvement and control” (Glasius, 2002). In other words, individuals are expected to take control over their own lives and time. This trend is reflected in other ‘slow movements’, such as the Norwegian ‘07-06-05-Time for Change’, and the American ‘Simple Living’, which has recently gained popularity in Scandinavia, both of which focus on individual choices to ‘take your time back’. Micaela (introduced in Chapter Two) criticizes Cittàslow for being an elitist, gourmet movement, because the concept is mainly realizable for people with the economic capacity to choose slow living:

“They [Cittàslow] pretend they can spread...quality of life in the city, but I don’t think they really believe in it. Life is only better for a few people who can afford spending a lot of money on wine

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<sup>20</sup> The number of people receiving illness-related benefits increased from 386923 people to 638696 people in this period (source: Aetat, Rikstrygdeverket).

and food. Whereas local people who have their own piece of land and grow their own wine don't have the competence about it [culinary tastes], another group of higher social level know about wine and food and spend a lot of money on slow living, so it's quite divided".

## **Time and Place**

As discussed in Chapter Three, the structural fabric of old Italian towns can contribute towards encouraging slow time. *Piazzas*, connecting the thoroughfares and passageways, encourage people to meet and gather, and these unplanned social interactions slow the tempo down considerably, compared to cities where car usage is predominant. In old Italian towns public spaces are actively used; benches are occupied especially by the elderly, and shop-keepers stand outside their premises, mingling with the inhabitants and watching the town's life. These factors also help to slow the pace of life. Another marker of slow time is the *passeggiata* (evening promenade), which is an established daily ritual in most Italian towns. When the shops reopen after the *siesta* and until the early evening, people meet in the centre with their friends or family and walk up and down the main shopping streets and *piazzas* with no other purpose than watching, chatting, enjoying an ice-cream or chance encounters. Throughout the weekdays, locals mainly participate in the evening promenade, at the weekends people from surrounding villages also partake. Although the *passeggiata* is conducted at a stroll, the colloquial term for this activity is interestingly *vasca* (swimming pool lane). Connotations of turbulent, crowded swimming pool lanes seem to conflict with the idea of slow time. Yet, the crowdedness of the *passeggiata* does not in itself mean that the pace is fast.

Many informants argued that the narrow streets of medieval cities ensure slow pace, and thus slow lifestyles. However, this conflicts with my observations of car usage; although it takes fifteen minutes to walk across the centre and a funicular railway connects *Orvieto Storico* and *Scalo*, it is common to drive at a high speed within and between the two centres. Cittàslow claims to have made the urban centre free of cars by blocking certain streets from traffic and providing a parking house at the bottom of the hill with

connecting escalators to the centre. However, questionnaires and interviews indicate that car usage has increased considerably the last 10-20 years, and many informants who claimed the urban fabric creates slower pace, would in other situations complain about growing car usage, lack of parking spaces, and comment about how Italians prefer to drive whenever possible. While my informants were almost united in their condemnation of growing car use, only some practiced what they preached; others drove when they could have walked. For example, when going to the flat I rented from the other side of town, my estate agent always drove his car through the network of one-way streets, rather than walking up the main-street, which would have been quicker. The question of car usage revealed one of the most striking disparities between Orvietans' idealized notion of their society and their actual observable practices.

### **Informality and Slow Time**

Throughout my stay in Italy, I witnessed how much effort and care Italians expended on appearing laid-back and informal; an irony which in itself might make me suspect that sensual 'slow living', even without outside pressures, is not without difficulties.

When attending Cittàslow conferences, the audience and even lecturers often chatted or spoke on mobile phones while lectures were being given, although it was clear that this behaviour irritated and disturbed many. However, this enactment of informality, found even in settings where it would be deemed rude and inappropriate in Northern Europe and the USA, is never criticized, and reveals the crucial importance of conversation to Italian culture. While observing church attendance, I noticed that this self-conscious informality is also found amongst elderly women who talk throughout the sermon, but later cross themselves and kiss the priest's ring with all due piety. On TV, news presenters regularly speak to persons off-screen in order to appear laid-back. Such behaviour suggests an Italian 'habitus'; the embodiment of culture that is made implicit and 'natural' to Italians; however the performance is highly formal and partly conscious. Such 'formalized informality' creates a gap between people's embodied presentation and their lives as discussed in interviews, in which a large proportion complained about time

pressures and stress. The performance seen was undoubtedly crucial to many informant's identity, but seemed in itself a source of stress.

Further, the correlation between slow time and laid-back attitudes is not a given. Italians often do many things simultaneously, and sometimes quickly, but such activities are worked into the smooth performance of relaxed informality. For example, during interviews, interviewees would interrupt its flow to answer a phone call or chat to someone who had wandered into their office. This tendency, referred to by Eriksen (2001) as 'piling', might be considered an example of 'multi-tasking', describing how the information flow in the contemporary world influences our way of thinking; moving from the linear, slow and cumulative logic, to flighty, fast, associative and momentary logic (Eriksen, 2001). However, I would argue that although modern technology heightens the tempo, this enactment is a specifically Italian form of informality; an accommodating behaviour typical of the cultural climate, simultaneously fast, relaxed and informal.

Before an interview with a local archaeologist, we went to a café together with two of the heads of the local study centre. Although relaxed and informal, the café visit lasted just five minutes, a shot of *espresso* drunk standing at the bar. I suggested sitting down, but was met by confused, uncomfortable looks, as if sitting down was an uncomfortably formal or perhaps too familiar act. This example shows that each social situation has its own tempo; whereas lunch and dinner are expected to be consumed slowly, a café visit should be a short affair.

Ilona said that although Italian society appears laid-back, certain aspects are extremely formal and hierarchical, for example the unwritten codes of conduct that inform modes of address between the young and their elders and superiors. Although she had been with her boyfriend for nearly two years and knew his family well, her boyfriend's (divorced) father expected her to use the formal *lei*-form instead of the informal *tu* in addressing him. It is up to the older person to decide when it is acceptable for the younger party to use the informal and less respectful *tu* form.

## **Defining ‘*la dolce vita*’**

In promoting ‘quality of life’, Cittàslow’s initiatives mainly focus on gastronomic and aesthetic experiences, while ‘quality of life’ is rarely conceptualized. Constituting a focus in public policy and community programmes in Europe since WW2, ‘quality of life’ has until recently focused on *living standards* measured in material wealth, health, housing, employment, working conditions, education and security, and has often been economic and quantitative in outlook (Marshall, 1998). Although mirroring contemporary Western individualism, Cittàslow’s usage of the concept relating quality of life to personal happiness, pleasure, and fulfilment, is qualitative in nature, which is controversial because it is relative and immeasurable. Who defines ‘quality of life’ and whose quality Cittàslow represents are problems that arise from interviews and conversations with the Orvietan population. As discussed in Chapter Four, Micaela saw the movement as limited to privileged and educated people. Likewise, Daniele (introduced in Chapter Two), is positive towards the idea of Cittàslow, but is critical of its attempt to fix and define quality of life:

“Cittàslow may introduce the aspirations to a quality of life, but in reality it is mainly a slogan. It can inspire people to reflect on what they really need in life, but people are very passive and Cittàslow can make people more passive so they think that if they buy two bottles of good wine then they are happy. Nothing changes...and it doesn’t stick very deep”.

Daniele’s critique highlights my argument above, that quality of life realized entirely in spare-time compartmentalizes time and does little to reduce the overall effects of stress and time-pressure. Despite his criticism, Daniele moved to Orvieto with a notion that the quality of life was higher there. In Rome, he argues, people are right in complaining about having little time as commuting to work takes up several hour a day, but he was surprised that people in Orvieto complained as much about pressures on their time. He thinks that globalization has produced and spread this idea, even though people in small places do not have significantly less time today:

“It’s a fixed idea that gets into people’s minds. Time is a priority...when people watch TV six hours a day and always want to buy more things, you get little time left. All generations embrace this today...people do the same things and think the same things everywhere, then little time is left for individual creativity and diversity”.

Consumerism, fuelled by desire, creates a gap between what we wish to obtain and what we realistically can obtain, enforcing the idea that there is never enough time.

Such attitudes critical to Cittàslow were often related to a concern over whether the movement is ‘top-down’. This has to be seen in relation to the strong anti-governmental, anti-institutional attitudes found in Italy (see Chapter Three). This concern was apparent even within the Cittàslow administration. In interviews, officials frequently stressed that the movement was not forcing a direction; the impetus came from the population. Although generally shared in Orvietan society, Cittàslow’s equation between slow time and quality of life is not a given. Some of my informants, especially teenagers, viewed fast time as appealing. They saw Cittàslow as too traditional and a little culturally conservative, and wanted the thrill of fast life.



## **Chapter 6: Medieval Festivals and the Creation of Historical Identity**

*“History...is very much a mythical construction, in the sense that it is a representation of the past linked to the establishment of an identity in the present” (Friedman, 1992:195)*

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how public rituals, such as festivals, are important in constructing and reinforcing locality, and have been revitalized in response to globalization. Contrary to many theorists (Silverman, 1975) who argue that communal rituals have been on the decline in the post WW2 period due to increased secularization and mechanization in society, Boissevain (1992) contends that European rituals have experienced revitalization since the 1970s, after an initial decline in the 1950-60s. Boissevain outlines the emergence of two new trends; the revitalization of old festivals and the creation of new festivals. Based on his fieldwork in Spain, Cruces (in Boissevain, 1992) asserts that small religious festivals are disappearing, while there is a renewed interest in and a revitalization of patronal feasts associated with local identity and tradition. Further, several new festivals promoting local products have been invented, often representing regional or local political interests. When conducting fieldwork in Italy I observed similar developments. Since the 1970's and especially over the last 10-15 years, traditional, medieval festivals have grown in size and popularity and been adapted to modern-day needs and political and cultural interests. The religious aspect of the festivals has declined while the festivals have become important instruments in strengthening local and regional identities. As discussed in Chapter Four, we also see the emergence of new food and wine festivals promoting *prodotti tipici* (typical products) from different localities. Cittàslow and Slow Food are particularly active in this process. The festivals, whether old or new, are adapted to fit with contemporary society's needs and structure. Although Silverman's (1975) argument that localism has lost its

importance in Montecastellese rituals might not be accurate today, he correctly identifies that people to a larger degree participate in festivals as individuals rather than as members of a community. This is perhaps even more accurate today as festivals shift from participation to spectacle, the public changing from celebrants to audience. However, despite the structural changes to Italian festivals, I would argue that their growth in popularity is an attempt to re-create a shared cultural identity. In this chapter, I will explore some of the contemporary forces revitalizing Italian rituals. By examining case studies of three Orvietan festivals, I will demonstrate how history is utilized in creating contemporary identities and that public rituals receive renewed focus as rallying points for local identity. In recent decades, many Italian towns and villages that historically either did not have any significant festivals or whose festivals had declined centuries ago, have invented or resurrected their own medieval festivals. When WWII ended, Italian identity was in turmoil and many attempts were made to re-define a shared national identity that did not evoke fascism or imperialism. Italy looked to its past; avoiding the Roman period with its fascist connotations, it found a model for contemporary identity in the middle ages, when Italy's city-states were at their height of political and cultural vigour.

### **The Past in the Present- *Corteo Storico***

*Corpus Domini*, a major Catholic festival celebrating the Eucharist, is in Orvieto a commemoration of the miracle of Bolsena in 1263. As part of the general folklorist revival in the 1950's, *Corteo Storico*, a small parade in medieval costume was added to the religious festival. The 13<sup>th</sup> century festival was itself a parade of nobles and townsmen, so ironically, the recreated festival is truer to its origins than the purely religious procession. The non-religious part of the festival has continued to expand, today there are over 400 participants in costume, and is now the festival's main attraction. The all-male participants dress as the nobles, burghers and soldiers who would have engaged in the original procession. Enrico (see Chapter Four) argues that since the 1950's the medieval epoch has already changed its meaning in such festivals. While national identity was the

primary purpose of the 1950's *Corteo Storico*, the parade today celebrates localism. *Corteo Storico* thus exemplifies how rituals are adapted for contemporary needs. Alessandro (see Chapter Four), himself a Christian, thinks that *Corpus Domini* is taken seriously as an important religious festival, but argues that the addition of *Corteo Storico* was essential to continue its lifespan: "Making it modern is a good way of influencing more groups of people, and gives us a chance to express our identity through the arts. It's also a way of making the beauty of Orvieto more known in the world". When discussing the parade with my informants, most emphasised the aesthetic component of the festival, and indicated that this was threatened by global homogenization.

Another example of how the festival responds to changes in society is the addition of the women's parade, *Corteo delle Dame*. As Catholic conviction does not allow women to participate in *Corteo Storico*, Orvietan women started their own parade ten years ago. The parade takes place the day before the main festival, is concluded with a mass and its own celebration. Nicoletta, founder of the women's parade and co-ordinator of *Corteo Storico*, argues that even though women were not allowed in the parade in medieval times, they would have been involved in the celebrations held the night before *Corteo Storico*. Wanting to adapt the ritual for contemporary society while maintaining some authenticity, she thought *Corteo delle Dame* was a good compromise. The women sew the medieval costumes themselves, which represent noble women's dress. Over the last few years there has been an increase in men, women and children dressed in medieval peasant costumes, carrying fruits and bread and playing instruments. Despite their gender, they are frequently present in the daytime fairs and markets that surround the rituals. Although barred from parading as noblewomen, as peasants, women are permitted to join the tail-end of *Corteo Storico* procession. Whether this arrangement will allow the development of a mixed gender festival remains to be seen.

Based on her fieldwork on a Greek island, Kenna (1992) argues that secularization has changed modern rituals from being fully participatory to being performed for an audience. In a similar fashion to *Corteo Storico*, the liturgical aspect of the island's

patron festival has declined whereas the dancing accompanying it has increased. This is partly due to growing international tourism on the island, which further shifts the focus towards entertainment. These changes are also evident in *Corteo Storico*. Although the religious procession remains large, the medieval parade precedes it, creating the main focus for the large audience of locals and domestic and international tourists. This shift to spectacle also reflects the Italian aesthetics, which locals feel is threatened by cultural homogenization. The audience clapped and cheered at the sight of the most elaborate, beautiful costumes; there was considerably less interest in the religious procession.

Nicoletta reflects:

“Our dreams and fairytales are based on the medieval period, it is very much part of our identities. We are fascinated by transforming ourselves for a day. Vanity is the main interest for taking part, and beauty is the main reason for watching”.

However, she also identifies why the parade’s popularity might be growing in contemporary society:

“Globalization has destroyed a lot, especially the appreciation of variety in cultures. That is why we have to go back to the roots to appreciate our culture. *Corteo Storico* offers us an experience of Orvieto as a living culture and a historical jewel”.

Mario, a participant in the *Corteo Storico* for 29 years, says that although the medieval festivals do not have any direct influence on his identity, the parade is a temporary transformation that links his life to an exiting, embedded past:

“At the end of the day when you put the costume away in the cupboard, you put a bit of your spirit away with it...the spirit that has taken part that day. For that day I transform into someone else and after that day the spirit is hung up with the costume”.

Mario saw it as a great honour when he was first asked to take part in what he considers a meaningful celebration of Orvietan life. He thinks the *Corteo Storico* helps create a continuity between his family and the community. All his male relatives take part in the parade and have done for most of their lives, and he is content that his sons continue the tradition. It is common for extended families to take part together, so that while audiences may be increasingly passive, for celebrants, festivals are still communal and transformative events.

### **The Symbolism of the Medieval Period**

During the Medieval period, Italy's city states were at the height of political and cultural power and autonomy. This cultural flowering still forms the very fabric of towns like Orvieto. Locality and history are therefore unified in the performance of these festivals.

The layout of streets and *piazze* informs the festivals' progress and symbols of Orvietan heritage such as *Il Doumo* and *Palazzo del Popolo*, mark its key stages.

Italy's long resistance to political and cultural centralization makes its medieval period an ideal symbol of autonomous societies possessing strong cultural identities. The symbolic value of this period is further intensified in the global era as a way of defining and strengthening locality. In other words, old festivals are revived for new reasons (Salomonsson, 1984) as means to create a coherent, distinct identity in increasingly alienating, homogenizing societies.

Giuseppe, the director of *Museo Claudio Faina*, one of the two archaeological museums in Orvieto, reflects upon the usage of history in Italian identity construction:

“People look to their history to construct a present identity. In the global society there is a major attention towards local and regional history. This doesn't happen just in Orvieto, but is found all over Italy. We see that Italy is holding more strongly on to its local history...it is getting more important today, to the point that they form political parties based on regional interests. In Umbria

we don't have a party like Lega Nord,<sup>21</sup>, but in the local election the political parties make use of history to promote their party and get votes. The nostalgia towards a past is used in many areas of society, the past is glorified and made emotional...These are reactions against globalization to not lose our culture and identity”.

### **The Invention of Tradition- *Palio dell' Oca***

*Palio dell' Oca* is a horse race between two teams, representing the two halves of *Centro Storico*, *la Cava* and *la Pistrella*. *La Cava* represents two *quartieri*, *Serancia* and *Olmo*, and *La Pistrella* the *Stella* and *Corsica quartieri*.

Though it is believed Orvieto had a similar horse race in the Middle Ages, the present-day festival dates back to 1990. Historical records are unclear as to whether it took the form of a race in medieval times, or if horsemen merely featured in the town's carnival, representing Orvieto's nobility. The race borrows heavily from other Italian *palios*, such as the famous Siena palio, which has carried on unchanged since the 17<sup>th</sup>.

The festival takes place in May, on the evening before *Festa del Palombella*. Two opposing riders race across *Piazza del Popolo* and grab a suspended pennant which they smash onto a post at the other side of the *piazza*. The first to do so wins the round. The two teams race each other for ten rounds, choosing a different rider each time. The winning team is the one to win most rounds. *Palio dell' Oca* exemplifies how festivals are adapted to contemporary ethics, in this case animal welfare. In its modern incarnation, a pennant is used in the race, however it is believed that a living goose was used in the medieval race, and the purpose was to break its neck when slamming it against the post. Hence the name of the festival; *Palio dell' Oca* or 'goose palio'.

One informant claimed that the population in the historical centre, apart from the competitors families, generally avoid attending *Palio dell' Oca*, because it is an

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<sup>21</sup> *Lega Nord* campaigns for the secession of wealthy northern Italy

‘invented’ and therefore ‘inauthentic’ festival. The population in near-lying rural areas, on the other hand, flock to Orvieto on the day of the festival. I, however, recognized many Orvietans attending, so either her claim is exaggerated or attitudes are changing as the festival becomes more established. Perhaps similar attitudes were expressed when *Corteo Storico* was introduced in the 1950s. More informants considered *Corteo Storico* ‘authentic’; perhaps traditions require only a few generations to achieve ‘authenticity’. In Sienna, no one disputes that the *palio* is extremely popular with the local population, playing a large part in the identification with their city quarter. The *palio* reflects the ancient rivalry between the *contrade* (*quartieri*) of the city, which still erupts as minor fights at the festival. In Orvieto, on the other hand, there is little rivalry within the historic centre.

Even though the festival is sometimes criticized for being inauthentic, it continues to expand, and increasingly features more medieval elements, attracting people in costume, many of whom attend all Orvietan festivals. Though the race takes place on Saturday, its festival spreads from Thursday to Sunday, and includes conferences, meetings, discussions, a benediction of riders and horses, a medieval market, an archery competition between *la Cava* and *la Pistrella* and an exhibition displaying photographs and *palio* banners and from previous races.

### ***Festa della Palombella* (Festival of the dove)**

*Festa della Palombella*, is an agricultural fertility ritual dating back to C15th, which coincides with the Catholic celebration of ascension day. A white dove, symbolizing the Holy Spirit, is projected down a wire strung between *Chiesa di San Francesco* and *Il Duomo*. Traditionally, the dove’s progress down the wire and its state upon arrival were used to predict the success of the harvest . The dove’s speed would predict the time and abundance of the harvest; if the dove came down alive it would be a good year for agriculture and human fertility. Additionally, the dove’s departure predicted fertility in human reproduction. The year’s first married couple are given the dove, thus continuing

the festival's important role in safeguarding fertility. It is their responsibility to tend for and keep the dove alive until the next festival. Boissevain (1992) argues that many cyclical festivals do not have the same meaning in an industrial or post-industrial society. With increasing mechanisation of agriculture and importation of food at the end of the C19<sup>th</sup>, the dove's role as agricultural oracle declined. *Festa della Palombella's* rise and fall in popularity further illustrates that new meanings can arise in new contexts. Throughout the first half of the C20<sup>th</sup> the festival declined as it lost its agricultural function. In the 1950s, it was resurrected as part of the general folkloric revival, featuring more medieval costume and pageantry. However, the festival declined again, until a few years ago, when international animal rights protestors criticized the treatment of the dove in the festival. This brought nationwide attention to the festival, restoring local interest and pride and ironically giving it a new lease of life. When discussing the festival with my informants, most admitted that the festival had been revitalized after the conflict with the demonstrators. Trying to justify external criticism while preserving the festival, the bishop suggested replacing the dove with a wooden carving. Although this would fit nicely with Orvietan wood-carving traditions, a large proportion of the local population saw this as inauthentic, and the live dove was kept. Instead, external pressure from animal rights activists has improved the treatment of the dove. Instead of being tied to a metal ring, the dove has for the last three years been placed within a glass tube inside the ring. Also, a vet now checks the dove's condition before and after its somewhat fierce passage between the churches. Last year, a scientist from the University of Perugia took blood samples from the dove before and after the ritual to check its adrenalin levels; these records are kept with the police. Like *Palio dell' Oca*, *Festa del' Palombella* has adapted to comply with modern-day standards of animal welfare, while retaining the dove's symbolic role in protecting fertility. However, it remains to be seen if local interest in the festival will endure without external attention.

Boissevain (1992) identifies that the revitalization of local rituals is strongest in Mediterranean and Catholic regions. In the 1980s many carnivals in Northern Europe were resurrected, however many of these have already died off. The Italian qualities of



*civiltà* and *campanilismo* may be contributing factors to why local rituals flourish in Italy. Additionally, Catholicism and Italian society have tendencies towards spectacle and aestheticism.

Although traditional festivals may not be revitalized to the same degree in Northern Europe, several new ones, often demonstrating ‘typical products’ such as local foods and handicrafts, are found all across Europe. Cittàslow could be seen as a bridge between these two tendencies; an attempt to revitalize the old through the methods and language of the new.



## Chapter 7: Conclusion

The aim of the thesis has been to explore the connections between globalization and the revitalization of locality, and I have argued that locality, both expressed by Cittàslow and the Orvietan population, is given new emphasis due to an increasingly common experience of alienation, societal fragmentation and homogenization of cultural expressions. My informants' concerns about the erosion of their local community may at times be exaggerated or not shared by all, yet frequency and communication of such opinions forms a reality which people act upon. Consequently, I would argue that the need to revitalize locality, reflected by Cittàslow, is also expressed in diverse areas of Orvietan society; through the consumption and production of local food and wine, in civic pride conveyed in conversations and through practices such as local festivals. What unifies these processes is an emphasis on symbols which are often de-contextualized in my informants' realities. Contemporary locality production is inevitably commoditized; the connections with local traditions have to be re-created and locality is actively constructed in relation to a global world, (Appadurai, 1996) often through the usage of commodities or events. We have seen this in the use of medieval costumes in festivals, and in the Slow movements' 'Ark of Taste', which attempts to rejuvenate products or dishes that sometimes have little connection to people's lives. Cittàslow's 'singularization' attempts (Kopytoff, 2001); the process of making products unique and personal, ironically relies on tourism and the exportation of *prodotti tipici* to a global market. However, this does not mean such attempts are inconsequential or that they do not have effects on experienced locality; in revitalizing artefacts, products or traditions, different significance is given and objects or events are transformed into meaningful symbols (Salomonsson, 1984). The act of eating a meal or participating in Orvietan festivals takes on a symbolic significance, reproducing locality and quality of life.

Cittàslow, necessarily takes on a particular expression in each locality, and the local context, in turn, helps us understand the particular responses to macro forces. However,

the contents of locality are altered and commoditized by Cittàslow; its promotion of ‘global localism’, uproots the connotations of parochialism and ethnocentricity which are usually associated with Italian *campanilismo* and *civiltà*, and bridges the theoretical global-local dichotomy. The thesis exemplifies that contemporary fieldwork, especially in complex societies, requires an outlook and methodology which take into account social change, historical dimensions and the intertwined relationship of the micro and the macro.

### **Does Cittàslow Make a Difference?**

On the whole, my informants were positive towards Cittàslow’s contribution to the local economy, especially to local businesses, and as a way of attracting tourism. However, there was little evidence that Orvietans thought the movement made any positive changes to cultural life. Of the questionnaires’ respondents, 60% had heard about Cittàslow; unfamiliarity with the movement was higher amongst people below 30 and above 65 years. Of those who were familiar with Cittàslow, 22% thought the movement makes a large positive difference to local life and identity. This makes me question what role Cittàslow really has in Orvieto, if its intentions are mainly ‘window-dressing’, where commercial aims are masked as an idealistic quest? Micaela is critical of how Cittàslow promotes itself as improving the quality of life in Orvieto and explains how many people involved, such as the Orvietan Mayor who commercially produces wine, benefit economically from Cittàslow’s promotion of local production:

“Apart from the appearance... it’s a commercial business issue, which doesn’t mean it’s a bad thing, but one would rather prefer that it would come out as exactly what it is and not be used...as if we were doing something to make life better”

Harvey’s (2001) critical study of cultural commoditization in the globalized world identifies how market competition has led to brand-marketing of the locally ‘unique’, where distinctiveness is used to attract ‘niche consumers’. Cittàslow is part of this

process, and Italian culinary tradition and products are globally marketed as a lifestyle choice embodying *la dolce vita*. Although constituting a reaction against the fast pace of Western societies, Cittàslow's marketing ironically flourishes due to the very symptoms of society they want to reverse, such as stress, time-pressures and urban alienation. For in a world marked by alienation and societal fragmentation, food, wine and attractive holiday destinations like Orvieto are given symbolic value as material solutions for achieving 'quality of life'. Cittàslow is a Janus-like project; one face in the global world of commercial and political interests, the other watching over local temporality and traditions. As I have illustrated throughout the thesis, this tension was experienced by many of my informants, who although positive towards the 'Slow ideology', voiced a distrust of Cittàslow's political and commercial intentions.

### **Who is Cittàslow for?**

Whereas Slow Food is a network of individual members, Cittàslow is better perceived as a societal project in which a whole town adopts the ideology of 'slow living'. But does the movement really represent most Orvietans?

Although to most Italians food and wine are important markers of locality which symbolise 'quality of life' and sensual pleasure, adopting the particular type of 'slow lifestyle' promoted by Cittàslow requires not only cultural and economic assets, but importantly time. Cittàslow's focus on 'slow' consumption and preparation of food and wine, and the usage of local, organic ingredients is mainly realizable for people who are affluent, 'culturally educated' and, importantly, have the time for a 'slow lifestyle'. Bourdieu's (1979) analysis of taste and symbolic power is helpful in understanding how 'cultural capital' is used to mark off distinction and taste; this is reflected in certain aspects of the Slow movements, especially in their culinary focus. As discussed in Chapter Four, consumption of food works on a symbolic level, in which people read and decode the symbols encoded in food. People who possess the 'cultural competence' to actively use and read these signs in order to *distinguish* themselves from others are thus placed in a position of power and can utilise these symbols to discriminate against

disadvantaged people (Bourdieu, 1979). I do not suggest that Cittàslow uses ‘symbolic violence’ (Bourdieu, 1979) to differentiate the culturally unique in a world marked by commoditization and standardization, yet there is a clear link to how many informants associate the Slow movements as comprising of ‘elite gourmets’ (Leitch, 2003). This is a label Cittàslow is struggling to detach itself from, as it wants to present itself as a grass-roots movement. It must be stressed that this connotation is especially associated with Slow Food; however, it was clear that most Orvietans confuse the two movements, or are mainly aware of Cittàslow’s initiatives within local food promotion. These connotations are aggravated by Italy’s cultural and historical climate, in which accusations of elitism and authority are contested in an anti-state and anti-institutional atmosphere. In interviews with Cittàslow officials this fear was apparent; many individually stressed that the movement is not a top-down elitist project and they are “not forcing people to participate”. However, as voiced by several informants, Orvieto comune’s decision to choose an ‘overarching’ ideology for the town creates tensions between the municipality and parts of its population.

Bourdieu’s analysis of how cultural capital is embodied in practices, related to taste and used to show distinction is relevant to my analysis; however, I would argue that Cittàslow introduces a fourth form of capital, namely time, which in the West relies upon cultural and economic capital. As time becomes a scarce resource, distinction is no longer expressed through economic, social or cultural capital alone, but the privilege of possessing time for ‘slow living’ can be seen as a new way to express distinction. This is strengthened by Bourdieu’s argument that all capital is marked by scarcity, and thus become instrumental in marking distinction. As discussed in Chapter Five, Cittàslow does little to promote ‘slow time’ in work, and their promotion of slow living is entirely located in people’s spare-time. Given the large variation in Orvietan’s working hours, slow living is not realizable for all. Is Cittàslow thus a phenomenon related to a new elite, an elite with the economic, cultural and temporal privilege to engage in ‘slow living’?

Rather than contributing towards positive changes on behalf of the whole society, does Cittàslow instead contribute towards further stratification of Orvietan society?

Although Cittàslow's initiatives might involve certain groups more than others, I would argue that its emphasis on the symbolic importance of food, wine and local products, and their role in locality production, are largely reflected in the population.

From observation and interviews of different generations of Orvietans, I see a large degree of continuity in embodied practices, values and the importance of locality, despite drastic social change. Although many young Orvietans felt detached and alienated, locality itself is becoming a privileged arena for reattachment. It is exactly through embodied practices that locality is mediated, and, supported by a revitalized structure of rituals, many of the symbolic codes persist.

### **Cittàslow - the Universalization of Locality**

While exploring the particular expressions of Cittàslow in Orvieto, we must not forget that the growth of Cittàslow into a European, and potentially global network suggests that certain features of the global experience are shared and have produced similar reactions in diverse localities. Gudmund Holmen, the mayor of Sokndal, argues that cultural homogenization, depopulation and unemployment in small communities have in the last decades led to alienation and loss of cultural identity. These processes have spurred similar strong reactions and movements across the globe:

“In the last part of the nineties we experienced a local crisis since the corner-stone business cut its workforce. This had strong effects on people's mental condition so that many moved away. When I became mayor in 1999, we tried to come up with ideas for positive development, and tried to define the strengths of Sokndal and the local values we should build on. After this process we learned about Cittàslow and realized we had found a kindred spirit, which was working for societal improvements by focussing on the local and natural environment” (Holmen, my translation)

Recognizing the important link between locality and culture, which is often ignored by larger political and economic structures, Cittàslow is a concrete method of protecting and re-embedding local cultural manifestations, at the same time as boosting local economies globally (through tourism, local skills and products). Cittàslow can potentially take the anti-globalization movement in a new direction, combining grass-roots activism at the local level and political lobbying at European or global levels. This could intensify once members from cultures with a more disciplined history of organization and political lobbying, such as Norway and England, become more prominent in the movement. Reflecting upon what Cittàslow might have looked like if the movement had grown out of Norway, Holmen argues that there would have been greater focus on regulatory compliance. Having discussed this with other Cittàslow officials, he concludes that this would also have happened if the movement had arisen in England. A year ago, the English slow cities proposed introducing a set of rules which Italian Cittàslow officials saw as being too restrictive. Such differences in outlook between member-towns can potentially be a hindrance to transnational cooperation, but could equally help develop a wider set of initiatives beyond food protection. Holmen says that Norwegian ‘slow cities’ have a lot to learn from Italy’s *la dolce vita*; if Cittàslow had begun in Norway it would have been concerned only with people’s welfare and material standards. However, Norway’s culture of practicality and voluntary communal work could be beneficial to Italians. Nils Jacobsen, Cittàslow official for Sokndal, argues that the cultural differences between the member towns are not likely to be an obstacle to international co-operation:

“There is a large degree of freedom in initiating what each ‘slow city’ wants to work on. The 55 Cittàslow rules...allow for individual interpretation to fit with one’s own priorities. The most important goal is that each municipality prioritize what they themselves consider the pressing concerns” (My translation)



Although Cittàslow may conflict with larger institutions, it can provide an alternative or complement to overarching structures, such as the EU, allowing its constituent parts to self-organize through networks of local producers. It can provide a global voice in order to protect local grower's livelihood and localities food traditions. As Cittàslow expands into an international network of localities, its non-Italian members may well shift its focus, so that connotations of 'gourmet elitism', especially associated with Slow Food, may lessen. However, as Alessandro expressed in Chapter Four, although most Orvietans relate to the issues addressed by Cittàslow, the movement's influence and life-span depends on the extent to which the population are involved. Although founded on certain shared experiences, it is important that the movement realizes the historical and cultural climate of each locality. The thesis thus opens up the possibility for a comparative study of 'slow cities' cross-culturally, to examine the universality of Cittàslow's initiatives, the degree of transferability of the movement's tenets and principles, and the ways in which local particularities contribute to shaping the movement's practices, effects, internal debates and ultimately, its political potency.



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**Photographs:**

Front cover photograph by Robert Loades

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Photographs 5 and 6 by Celine Loades

Cittàslow logo and list of 'Slow Cities', [www.cittaslow.net](http://www.cittaslow.net)



## Appendix I

### Interviews:

Occupation:	Gender:	Age:
Anthropologist	male	46
Cittàslow information official	male	55
The Major of Orvieto	male	48
Cittàslow official, Palazzo del Gusto	male	48
Archaeologist	male	47
Head of archaeology museum, <i>Museo Claudio Faina</i>	male	47
Psychologist	female	not given
School teacher, <i>Scuola superiore</i>	female	40
Artisan (goldsmith and painter)	male	not given
Artisan (potter)	male	28
Actor, Medieval Recreation plays	male	not given
Pensioner	female	75
Pensioner	female	77
Pensioner	male	81
Pensioner	female	77
Pensioner	male	83
Shop, private enterprise	male	47
Social worker, Orvieto municipality	male	not given
English teacher	female	47

Restoration project worker	female	not given
Marketing officer	female	27
Public servant	female	not given
Leader of <i>Ristorazione CAMST</i> , co-operator of Cittàslow Dinner Music	male	48
Participant in <i>Corteo Storico</i>	male	47
Seamstress for <i>Corteo Storico</i>	female	not given
Co-ordinator of <i>Corteo Storico</i> , Orvieto municipality	female	55
Group interviews with 16 pupils in <i>Scuola Superiore</i>	1 male, 15 female	17-19

**E-mail/telephone interviews/contact:**

Gudmund Holmen, the Mayor of Sokndal, Norway  
Nils Jacobsen, Cittàslow official, Sokndal, Norway  
Menneti, ISTAT-researcher on ‘stay at home children’

## Appendix II

### Instructions to Questionnaires

I designed three questionnaires: a general questionnaire, which is also the foundation of the other two, a school questionnaire for *liceo*, and a business questionnaire. The 'Life and Society Questionnaire' below constitutes the general questionnaire. In the school questionnaire, respondents were not given questions from sections: '*III. Working Hours*', '*IV. Social Change*', and '*V. Quality and Rhythm of Life*', but were given one additional section, '*XV. Your Future*', otherwise the questions are the same. The business questionnaire has two added sections, '*XVII. Your Businesses*' and '*XVIII. Additional Cittàslow Questions for Businesses*', it is otherwise the same.

### Life & Society Questionnaire

*Please write clearly and in capital letters. All instructions are in italics.*

*Tick small boxes , and write numbers or letters as instructed in large boxes*

#### I. Personal data:

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Gender: M  F     3. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Social status: 1) Single  2) Partner  3) Cohabiting  4) Married  5) Divorced

6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Place of residence: \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Comune: \_\_\_\_\_

8. How many members of your family do you live with?  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. What relation are those that you live with to you (mother, husband, brother, children, etc)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Your usage of time:

1. Do you eat breakfast before going to work/school? Yes  No

2. Have your eating habits changed over the last few years? Yes  No

3. If you answered 'Yes' on question 2, how have your eating habits changed:

---

4. Do you eat dinner with your family? *Tick one:* a) Never  b) Sometimes  c) Usually  d) Always

5. What time do you usually go to bed? \_\_\_\_\_ 6. On average how many hours do you sleep at night?

---

7. Where do you usually eat lunch? *Tick one:*

a) At home  b) In restaurant, café, bar etc.  c) At school/work

8. How do you spend your time in the 'spare time after lunch' (the siesta)? *Rate from 1-5 for each: 1 = not at all 2 = occasionally 3 = quite often 4 = often 5 = all the time*

a) Sleep  b) Sports  c) Private recreation (TV, radio, computer games, reading etc.)

d) I don't have a 'spare time after lunch' (siesta)

e) Other:

---

### III. Working hours:

1. How many hours a week do you work? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you feel there is more pressure on your time now than there used to be? *Tick one:*

Yes  No  Don't know

3. Do you feel you have too little time to do what you want in life? Yes  No

4. If you answered 'Yes' on question 3, what do you think the cause of this? *Tick all that apply:*

a) Your own organization of time  b) School/work  c) Family activities and responsibilities

d) Pressures of globalization  e) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you think people in your local community in general work *longer* now than 10-20 years ago?

Yes  No

6. Do you think people in your local community in general work *harder* now than 10-20 years ago?

Yes  No

7. Do you think people in Italy in general work *longer* now than 10-20 years ago? Yes  No

8. Do you think people in Italy in general work *harder* now than 10-20 years ago? Yes  No

9. If you answered 'Yes' on questions 5-8, how recently do you think this has changed? In the last  years

10. Do you think that people's work situations today have some negative effect on any of the following?

*Tick all that apply:* a) Family life and relationship  b) Local community  c) Italian culture

d) It has little effect  e) It has no effect  f) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Do you have children? Yes  No

12. If you answered 'Yes' on question 11, how many children do you have?

13. If you answered 'Yes' on question 11, what age were you when you had: a) Your first child  b) Your last child

14. Are you planning to have more children? Yes  No  Don't know

15. What impact do you think work and career choices in Italy have had on when people have children?

Tick one: a) No impact  b) People have children later  c) People have children earlier  d) People choose not to have children e) Other:

---

16. What impact do you think work and career choices in Italy have had on how many children people have?

a) No impact  b) People have fewer children  d) People have more children

e) Other:

---

#### IV. Social change

1. Do you feel that your local community has got faster? Yes  No

2. Do you feel that the Italian society has got faster? Yes  No

3. If you answered *yes* to questions 1 or 2, do how recently do you think this has happened? a) The last few years  b) The last 5-10 years  c) The last 10-20 years  d) The last 20-30 years

e) Other:

---

4. What do you think are some of the causes for this change? *Tick all that apply:*

a) Longer working hours  b) Pressures to consume  c) Increased car usage

d) Increase in and introduction of new technologies (such as mobile phones, the Internet, computer, TV etc.)

e) Pressures from the nation state/political change  f) EU regulations  g) Global economical forces

h) USA ideology  i) Expectations of career choices by family

l) Expectation of career choices by society  m) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## V. Quality and rhythm of life:

1. Do you feel more pressure on time today than you did 10 years ago? Yes  No
2. Do you think people around you (family, friends, neighbours and your near community) feel more pressure of time today than they did 10 years ago? Yes  No
3. If you answered 'Yes' on questions 1 or 2, what do you think are causing this change? *Tick all that apply*:
  - a) Longer working hours
  - b) Pressures to consume
  - c) Increased car usage
  - d) Increase in and introduction of new technologies (such as mobile phones, the Internet, computer, TV etc.)
  - e) Pressures from the nation state/political change
  - f) EU regulations
  - g) Global economical forces
  - h) USA ideology
  - i) Expectations of career choices by family
  - l) Expectation of career choices by society
  - m) Other: \_\_\_\_\_
4. How recently have you seen these changes? In the last  years
5. Are you generally happy with your life? Yes  No
6. Do you think people you know are generally happy with their lives? Yes  No
7. If you answered 'No' on questions 5 or 6, do you think that a fast lifestyle is a cause of discontentment in society? Yes  No
8. If you answered 'No' on questions 5 or 6, do you think that time pressure is a cause of discontentment in society? Yes  No
9. What factors do you think help to create quality of life in a society? *Tick all that apply*:
  - a) Strong family ties
  - b) A close-knit community
  - c) Fulfilment in work
  - d) Cultural amenities
  - e) Good food and drink
  - f) Countryside and green spaces
  - g) Urban architecture
  - h) Piazzas
  - i) Space
  - l) Tranquillity
  - m) Car free city centres and pedestrian streets
  - n) Freedom from responsibilities/general freedom
  - o) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## VI. Feeling of community:

1. Do you know the neighbours who live near/next to you? Yes  No
2. If you answered 'Yes' on question 1, how well do you know them? *Tick one*:
  - a) Hardly at all
  - b) Quite well
  - c) Very well
3. Do you engage in social activities with the people who live near you/ your neighbours? Yes  No
4. If you answered 'Yes' on question 3, what kinds of activities do you engage in?  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. If you answered 'Yes' on question 3, how often do you see the people who live near you/ your neighbours? *Tick all that apply:*

- a) Once a week or more  b) Once a month or more  c) Once every few months to half a year   
d) Once a year or less  e) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Has this changed? Yes  No

7. If you answered 'Yes' to question 6, how recently? *Tick one:*

- a) The last year  b) The last few years  c) The last 5-10 years  d) More than the last 10 years

8. Do you participate in events in your local community (such as festivals etc.)? Yes  No

## VII. Family life:

1. Who do you think of as your 'close family'? *Tick all that apply:*

- a) Parents, sisters, brothers and children  b) Grandparents  c) Uncles/aunts   
d) Cousins  e) Nephews and nieces  f) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Which of the following activities do you do with your family? *Tick all that apply:*

- a) General family talking  b) Eat out  c) Go on journeys/day trips together   
d) Watch TV, cinema and other leisure activities  e) Cooking   
f) Help with practical work in the home (cleaning, carpentry, garden work etc.)   
g) Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. How often do you spend time with the following: *Rate by the following scale: a) less than once a year b) once every half a year to a year c) once every few months d) once a month or more e) once a week or more f) every day:*

- 1) The family members you live with  2) Other family members (those who do not live in your house)

## VIII. Local Life:

1. Which of the following town activities do you take part in/attend? *Tick all that apply:*

- a) La Festa di Giuseppe  b) Pasqua (Mass, concert in Duomo, Via Crucis etc)  c) Festa di Palombella   
d) Festa di Corpus Christi  e) Christmas celebrations  f) Sunday mass  g) Open air cinema   
h) Theatre performances  i) Concerts  l) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. How do you rate the following aspects and services of life in Orvieto (Rate from 1-5 for quality and availability: 1=bad, 5=good):

- a) Music events – pop, rock, classical, jazz, etc.  b) Sports facilities   
c) Fashion and lifestyle  d) Nightclubs, bars, restaurants and cafes  e) Library  f) Cinema   
g) Theatre  h) Parks and other green areas

### IX. Hobbies and activities:

1. Which of the following activities do you do in your spare time? Tick all that apply:

- a) Arts/crafts  b) Dance  c) Sport  d) Photography  e) Go for walks in the countryside/forests   
f) Meet friends  g) Spend time with family  h) Cinema  i) Go to cafes/bars/nightclubs/restaurants   
l) Music events/concerts/theatre  m) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. How often do you do the following? Rate by the following scale: 1= less than once a year 2= once or twice a year 3= once every few months 4= once a month or more 5= once a week or more 6= every day:

- a) Travel  b) Visit friends  c) Visit family  d) Go for walks in the countryside   
e) Go for walks in the town centre  f) Visit other towns  g) Visit museums/art galleries

### X. Society and identity:

1. Which of the following do you think of 'Orvieto' as? Tick one: a) Just Orvieto Storico

b) Orvieto Storico + Orvieto Scalo  c) The whole of Orvieto comune

2. How do the following places define your identity? Rate in order of importance to your identity: 1=least important 10= most important. Please use each number, from 1 to 10, only once.

- a) Local frazione (suburb-section)  b) Quartiere (town section)  c) Local town  d) Nation   
e) Region (i.e. Umbria)  f) Europe  g) The USA  h) Family  i) Friends  l) Peer group

3. How do you think of yourself? Rate in order of importance to your identity from 1-5: 1=least important to 5=most important:

- a) Orvietan  b) Italian  c) Umbrian  d) European  e) Other: \_\_\_\_\_



4. Which of the following do you identify yourself with? Rate in order of importance to your identity from 1-5: 1=not important, 5= very important

- a) People of your own age  b) People with similar social background   
c) People with similar family background  d) People with similar income   
e) People with similar political views  f) People who live in big cities   
g) People who live in medium cities  h) People who live in towns  i) People who live in villages   
l) People with similar interests

## XI. Globalization:

1. How do you think that cultural and economic globalization affect you? Tick all that apply:

- a) Changes your day to day life  b) Changes your local culture  c) Changes Italian culture   
d) Changes the range and availability of products  e) Strengthens the power of the local community   
f) Weakens the power of the local community  g) It doesn't change any of these things  h) Don't know   
i) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. How do you feel about globalization in general? Tick one:

- a) Positive  b) Negative  c) Neutral  d) Don't know

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Which of the following do you feel a stronger attachment to? Tick one: a) Europe  b) America

4. Why did you choose this place? Tick all that apply: a) The social system (i.e. healthcare, schools etc.)

- b) Foreign politics  c) International laws  d) History  e) Culture  f) Cultural products (music, film, fashion etc)  g) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Politics and Economy:

5. What do you think is the political and economic effect of the EU on local life? Rate from 1-5: 1= negative, 5= positive

6. What do you think is the political and economic effect of the USA on local life? Rate from 1-5: 1= negative 5= positive

Culture:

7. What do you think is the cultural effect of the EU on local life? Rate from 1-5: 1= negative 5= positive

8. What do you think is the cultural effect of the USA on local life? Rate from 1-5: 1= negative 5= positive

**XII. Tourism:**

1. How important do you think tourism is for Orvieto? Rate from 1-5: 1=not important, 5= important

a) For the economy  b) For the culture

2. What effect does tourism have on local life and culture? Tick one: a) Bad effect  b) No effect

c) Good effect  Why: \_\_\_\_\_

**XIII. Consumer habits:**

1. Which of the following products do you own? Tick all that apply:

a) Mobile phone  b) Computer  c) TV  d) Hi-fi  e) Games console (X box, Playstation etc)

f) Video player  g) DVD player  h) Scooter  i) Car  l) Bicycle  m) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. If you own a mobile phone, how do you use it? Tick all that apply: a) To contact local friends and family

b) To contact friends and family abroad or in other cities  c) For business/work

3. Do you have access to the Internet in your home? Yes  No

4. How often do you use the Internet? Tick one:

a) Never  b) Less than once a year  c) Once or twice a year  d) Once every few months

e) Once a month or more  f) Once a week or more

5. If you use the Internet, how do you use it? Tick all that apply: a) To contact local friends and family

b) To contact friends and family abroad or in other cities  c) For business/work  d) Chat-room

e) As a research tool (studies/academic resources, news, holidays, etc)  f) Shopping

6. Do you think frequent usage of the Internet and the mobile phone change any of the following?

Tick all that apply: a) Your life  b) Your community  c) Your culture

d) It doesn't change anything  e)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Have your mobile phone and Internet usage changed your contact with friends and family? Yes  No

8. If you answered 'Yes' on question 7, has your contact: a) Increased  b) Decreased

Identity and consumer goods:

9. How often do you buy the following items? Rate by the following scale: 1) never 2) less than once a year 3) once or twice a year 4) once every few months 5) once a month or more 6) once a week or more

- a) CDs and other music formats  b) DVDs and videos  c) Clothes and fashion items (cosmetics etc)  d) Computer games and game accessories  e) Books  f) Magazines
- g) Hi-fi, computers and technology  h) Mobile phone and accessories
- i) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Where do the consumer goods that you buy mainly come from? Indicate this on the grid below with a tick in the relevant box for each of the product categories. [For example, if the CDs you buy are mainly American, tick the third box in row a)]

	Italian	European	American	Other (please specify)
a) CDs and other music formats				
b) DVDs and videos				
c) Clothes and fashion items (cosmetics, etc)				
d) Computer games and accessories				
e) Books				
f) Magazines				
g) Hi-fi, computers and technology				
h) Mobile phone and accessories				
i) Other:				

11. Does buying, owning and/or using these consumer goods change the way you think about yourself as local/Italian?

- Yes  No  Don't know

**XIV. Transport:**

1. When you go from one side of Orvieto to the other, which do you use most often? Rate from 1-5: 1=never 5= most often

- a) Walk  b) Car  c) Scooter  d) Bicycle  e) Bus

2. How do you usually travel between Orvieto Storico and Orvieto Scalo? Rate from 1-5: 1=never 5= most often

- a) Funicolare  b) Car  c) Scooter  d) Bicycle  e) Bus  f) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Car usage:

3. Do you have a car? Yes  No  4. How many cars are there in your household? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you think the usage of cars the last 10 years has: *Tick one:* a) Remained the same  b) Increased   
c) Increased considerably

6. If you answered b) or c) on question 5, how recently do you think the increase has happened?

In the last  years

### XV. Your ideal life:

1. Which of the following places do you think it would be best to live? *Rate in order of importance, from 1= least favourite, to 11= favourite. Please use each number, from 1 to 11, only once.*

a) Orvieto  b) Florence  c) Rome  d) Perugia  e) London  f) LA

g) New York  h) A small town in America  i) A small town in Britain

l) A small town in Italy  m) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why did you chose the town/city you placed at number 11 (your favourite) in question 1: *Tick all that apply:*

a) Good cultural life  b) Fun and excitement  c) Nature and landscape  d) Family

e) Relaxed atmosphere  f) Slow lifestyle  g) Fast lifestyle  h) Education options

i) Job opportunities  l) Strong traditions  m) Safety and security  n) Strong identity

o) Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which of these does Orvieto offer? *Write the letters that apply, a) to o) here:* \_\_\_\_\_

### XVI. Cittàslow:

1. Have you heard about the Cittàslow movement? Yes  No

2. Which of the following projects/initiatives have you heard about? *Tick all that apply:* a) Cittaslow Dinner

Music  b) Orvieto con Gusto  c) Palazzo del Gusto  d) Electric buses  e) Hydrogen power schemes  f) Provision of local, biological and healthy food in school canteens

3. Which of these projects/initiatives do you think are important to the local community? *Write the numbers that apply, a) to f) here:* \_\_\_\_\_

4. Which of the following describes how you feel about Cittàslow? *Tick one:*

a) Cittàslow makes *no* difference to local life and identity

b) Cittàslow makes *some* positive difference to local life and identity

c) Cittàslow makes *a large* positive difference to local life and identity

d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which of the following do you think that Cittàslow can contribute towards? *Tick all that apply:*

- a) Strengthening local identity  b) Strengthening the local community   
c) Help to protect local businesses  d) Help to promote local artists/artisans   
e) Help to protect local products against imported products  f) Help to improve the urban environment   
g) Help to improve the natural environment  h) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Name 3 positive and 3 negative aspects of Cittàslow:

**Positive:**

**Negative:**

**XIV. Comments to the whole questionnaire:**

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## Additional questions for schools (*liceo*):

### XV. Your future:

1. After completing high school, are you planning to continue with higher education?

Yes  No  Don't know

2. After completing high school, are you planning to stay in the Orvieto area? Yes  No  Don't know

3. If you answered 'No' to question 2, where are you planning to move? \_\_\_\_\_

4. If you answered 'No' to question 2, is it possible you would move back to the Orvieto area again later?

Yes  No

5. If you answered 'Yes' to question 4, when can you see yourself moving back to the Orvieto area? *Tick one:*

a) When you have completed your degree  b) When you establish your own family

c) After you have got some work experience  d) When you retire

e) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. If you intend to complete your education in Orvieto, what will you do after that? *Tick one:*

a) Find work in Orvieto  b) Move to a bigger city  c) Move abroad

d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. If you plan to find work in Orvieto, do you think? *Tick one:*

a) There are many options to find a job that you like  b) Few options to find a job that you like

## Additional questions for respondents in private businesses:

### XVII. Your businesses:

1. Name of business:

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Type of business:

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Your work position:

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Is your business owned by your family? Yes  No

5. If you answered 'yes' on question 4, for how long has the business been in your family?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. How old is your business? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How many business outlets do your business have/run (i.e. shops, restaurants etc): \_\_\_\_\_

8. Where do most of your products come from/are made? *Tick one:* a) The Orvieto region  b) Umbria   
c) Italy  d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Has the main source of your products changed? Yes  No

10. If you answered '*yes*' on question 9, how recent are these changes? *Tick one:*

a) The last year  b) The last few years  c) The last 5 years  d) The last 10 years  e) More than the last 10 years

11. Are your products typically: *Tick one:* a) Orvietan  b) Umbrian  c) Italian   
d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Who buy most of your products? *Tick one:* a) Orvietans  b) Umbrians  c) Italians  d) Tourists:  
*please specify their nationalities:*

13. Have the types of buyers of your products changed? Yes  No

14. If you answered '*yes*' on question 13, how recent is this change? *Tick one:* a) The last year  b) The last few years  c) The last 5-10 years  d) The last 10 years or more

15. What is the main age group of the people who buy your products? *Tick one:*

a) 20-30 years  b) 30-40 years  c) 40-70 years  d) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **XVIII. Additional Cittàslow questions for respondents in businesses:**

6. Has your business been in contact with Cittàslow? Yes  No

7. If you answered '*yes*' on question 6, who made contact? a) Your business  b) Cittàslow   
c) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

8. If you answered '*yes*' on question 6, for how long have you been in contact with Cittàslow?  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. If you answered '*yes*' on question 6, do you feel it has been helpful to your business? Yes  No   
Don't know  Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you think that Cittàslow can help the promotion of your business? Yes  No  Don't know

11. Do you think that Cittàslow can help your business economically (either directly or indirectly)? Yes   
No  Don't know

12. Do you think that Cittàslow can help the promotion of local products? Yes  No  Don't know

13. Comments to questions 10-12:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. After the development of Cittàslow, have you noticed any direct or indirect changes to the following?

*Tick all that apply:* a) An increase in the sales of your products  b) Increased interest in your products by the customers  c) Increased awareness in the products cultural and historical background by your customers  d) I have not noticed any changes  e) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

---



## **Appendix III**

### **Slow Cities**

#### **An International network of cities that work to improve the quality of life and conviviality of their communities**

##### **How to become a Slow City:**

To achieve the status of “Slow City,” a city must agree to accept the guidelines of Slow Food and work to improve conviviality and conserve the local environment. When a city becomes a Slow City, some of the Slow City objectives may already be a part of the heritage of the city. Other changes however can always be introduced and applied – often taking inspiration from the programs implemented in other cities. Some programs already implemented in Slow Cities are recycling projects, Presidia, after-school programs, and information for tourists that helps them have a real “local’s” experience

##### **Characteristics of a Slow City:**

The Slow Cities movement promotes the use of technology oriented to improving the quality of the environment and of the urban fabric, and in addition the safe-guarding of the production of unique foods and wine the contribute to the character of the region. In addition, Slow Cities seek to promote dialog and communication between local producers and consumers. With the overarching ideas of environmental conservation, the promotion of sustainable development, and the improvement of the urban life, Slow Cities provide incentives to food production using natural and environmentally-friendly techniques (one method for this promotion is through the Presidia). The designation “Slow City” will become the mark of quality for smaller communities (only those with less than 50,000 residents may apply). Slow Cities are not state capitals or the seat of regional governments, but are strong communities that have made the choice to improve the quality of life for their inhabitants.

## **The Slow City requirements:**

### **Environmental Legislation**

*The Slow Cities program requests the existence and implementation of the following plans:*

1. A system of air quality control and public advisory of air quality conditions
2. A water-management system handbook with guidelines for distribution and control
3. The application of plans for the promotion and diffusion of new plans and techniques for composting, and for the promotion of in-house composting.
4. Systems to control light pollution and a related intervention plan.
5. Incentives and rewards for the development of alternative energy sources
6. Control of pollution by smog and intervention plan
7. Reduction of graffiti and unwanted poster hanging
8. Application of governing laws EMAS or ISO 9001; ISO 14000; and SA 8000
9. Participation in the Agenda 21 project

### **Political infrastructure**

*The Slow Cities program requires the following characteristics of the city's political infrastructure:*

1. Creation of public green spaces with benches and play areas
2. Presence of open sidewalks without architectural barriers
3. Access and availability of public spaces for the handicapped
4. Existence infrastructure that favors alternative mobility
5. Freely accessible public toilets
6. Existence of places to sit and rest not only in the historical centers, but throughout the city
7. That opening hours for the various City offices should be similar
8. That there be Public Relations Office (P.R.O.)
9. That there be a 'Call Center' for citizens to express concerns relating to the "good quality of life"
10. That there be a schedule of opening and closing hours for the commercial interests of the town that is in keeping with the needs of the citizens.

### **Urban Quality**

*The Slow Cities program suggests the following goals to improve urban quality:*

1. Plans for the restoration of the original conditions of the historical centers and/or of works of cultural or historical value

2. Application of a plan for the elimination of noisy alarm systems, alongside adequate programs for the protection the property against theft
3. Boosting the use of recyclable containers in public structures
4. Establishment of containers for refuse and their removal according to established timetables
5. The promotion and dissemination of programs for greening of private and public spaces with plants that have a nice scent or that better the environment
6. Existence and application of plans to development a city-wide internet-based network for citizens
7. Development in implementation of plans to increase the use of environmentally-friendly building materials
8. Existence of programs to increase the status and accessibility of historical centers

### **Local Products**

*The Slow Cities program suggests the following goals to improve urban quality:*

1. The conduction of an annual census of the typical products
2. Programs to bring value to and to conserve local cultural events
3. Plans to develop markets of the natural and local products in interesting and prestigious locations
4. Scholastic programs for taste education
5. Programs to improve quality through the regulation of the city's restaurants and in school cafeterias
6. Educational programs about organic production
7. The definition of Presidia products
8. The development of organic agriculture and of quality certification for products
9. Programs to increase the value accorded to alimentary and gastronomic traditions
10. Initiatives to encourage the protection of products and the handicrafts of the area

### **Hospitality**

*The Slow Cities program suggests the following goals to improve the hospitality of the city:*

1. Existence of a regulating body that ensures that local businesses are honest in their signage and that there is no false advertising
2. International signage
3. Plans of training guides for tourist information centers
4. Existence of well-marked tourist routes with information and description
5. Existence of brochures to the “slow” guide to the city
6. Application of regulations about tourist-menu prices
7. Presence of guarded car parks in areas near the city center
8. Policy for making the city welcoming and hospitable in order to facilitate visitor access during events and celebrations

9. Existence of plans for the development of initiatives that develop the scope of the Slow City

### **Knowledge**

*The Slow Cities program suggests the following goals to improve citizen's awareness of the city's 'Slow' status:*

1. A publicly available document that lists the services the Slow City
2. Presence of the Slow City logo on official documents of the city (the letterhead etc.)
3. Existence of a program to disseminate information about the activities of the movement
4. Web Site dedicated to the Slow City programs enacted in the city
5. Promotion of programs to facilitate family life, such as: recreational activities, in-house service for the elderly and the chronically ill
6. Existence of economic programs to promote development of the Slow City requirements and plans for their improvement
7. Presence on the community notice board of articles about Slow City initiatives and dissemination of the information also to the national media
8. Programs for the development of initiatives involving local opinion leaders and of local businesses about the application of Slow City requirements