

# The effects of safeguarding on ways to organize, produce and reproduce intangible cultural heritage

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**Abstract:** This article aims to examine the ways in which the efforts to protect intangible cultural heritage interfere in the organizational practices associated with their production and reproduction over time. We assume that efforts to protect intangible cultural heritage imply the privatization of culture and tradition and its consequent association with factors of income generation. Having it in mind we investigate a process of safeguarding of an intangible asset which recently has been designated intangible heritage of the Brazilian culture: the traditional confectionery of Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul state. Through documentary research on the efforts to preserve heritage and empirical data collected in ethnographic research, both related to the context of the preservation of intangible heritage in Brazil, we came to findings that expose problems involving the transformation of the organizational practices related to the intangible cultural heritage as an alternative to the preservation of local cultural traditions.

**Keywords:** Intangible cultural heritage; Organizational practices; Brazilian culture; Traditional organizations; Confectionery; Ethnography.

## Los efectos de la salvaguardia en las formas de organizar, producir y reproducir el patrimonio cultural inmaterial

**Resumen** Este artículo tiene como objetivo examinar las formas en que los esfuerzos para proteger el patrimonio cultural inmaterial interfieren en las prácticas organizacionales asociados a su producción y reproducción en el tiempo. Suponemos que los esfuerzos para proteger el patrimonio cultural inmaterial implican la privatización de la cultura y la tradición y su consecuente asociación con factores de generación de ingresos. Teniendo esto en cuenta, investigamos un proceso de salvaguardia de un activo intangible que ha sido recientemente designada patrimonio inmaterial de la cultura brasileña: la confitería tradicional de Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul. A través de la investigación documental sobre los esfuerzos para preservar el patrimonio y los datos empíricos recogidos en la investigación etnográfica, ambos relacionados con el contexto de la preservación del patrimonio intangible en Brasil, hemos llegado a conclusiones que exponen problemas relacionados a la transformación de las prácticas organizacionales relacionadas tomadas como patrimonio cultural inmaterial como una alternativa a la preservación de las tradiciones culturales locales.

**Palabras Clave:** Patrimonio cultural inmaterial; Prácticas de organización; Cultura brasileña; Organizaciones tradicionales; Confitería; Etnografía.

## 1. Introduction

The issue of the intangible heritage brought up the idea that preservation is a process of cultural and symbolic interpretation that intends to make tangible certain assets that have no physical dimensions. Although this view has the purpose of perpetuating traditional knowledge related to the cultural identities

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of groups and territories, and ensuring the dignity of people living in the context of traditional practices, it can be noticed that the break with the strictly preservationist perspective in relation to the activity can lead to tensions between the culture's customs and peculiarities and the need to adapt the local craftsman's production to the taste of *the market*. This tension can ultimately empty the indigenous significance of these practices, as well as the ways of life attached to them.

Taking this point of view, the present article intends to investigate the traditional candy store in the city of Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul, as an intangible asset of the Brazilian culture, focusing on the consequences of its safeguarding process for the preservation of this activity. The research question that guides this study is: how policies of safeguarding intangible heritage interferes with the action of individuals that are able to produce and reproduce cultural assets, how it changes the ways of consuming them and how it interferes in the organizations that are structured around them. Our goal, then, is to understand and to discuss how the process of safeguarding interferes in organizational practices of production, marketing and consumption of a cultural asset by limiting it to the protection of the preservation instruments. Applying the method of desk research, combined to ethnography, we found that on one hand the process of safeguarding generates visibility and increases demand for handmade confectionery – which directly contributes to the perpetuation of this practice in the contemporary context – but on the other hand, it can incite mass production and also mischaracterization of the ways of doing rooted in the people and hence in the culture of the organizations that are formed around them. It may also cause the emptying of meaning of the cultural asset in relation to the contexts of production and consumption.

In the following sections we shall first describe how the politics of cultural heritage works in Brazil, with special emphasis on the protection of intangible or immaterial assets. Then we shall present the empirical data of this research showing the methods and the research procedures clarifying the historic path from the beginning of the candy store tradition, and the original forms of transmitting the know-how that characterizes this confectionery production, until its definition in the form of an inventory that is a fundamental part of the safeguarding process. We therefore discuss how the initiatives for promoting the safeguarding of the asset under study have transformed organizational practices around it, showing how the application of safeguarding mechanisms may cause a reverse effect accelerating the process of distortion and the loss of this asset. In the concluding section we shall indicate the contributions made by this study and present possibilities for further discussions about the theme.

## 2. Theory

### 2.1 About the politics of cultural heritage in Brazil

The possibility of a common identity, one that could make the people gather in the Brazilian territory to become Brazil (Damatta, 1986), makes us thinking about the objective categories that contribute to the epistemological elaboration of the idea of "nation", among which stands, for purposes of this article, the issue of cultural heritage. The enhancement of the cultural heritage and the need to rehabilitate and protect the assets that represent the identity of a people are the basic premises of the discussions of the sustainable development of the artisanal activity in Brazil and also around the world (Graham, 2002; Funari and Pelegrini, 2006). Much has been said about the possibilities of safeguarding of tangible and intangible assets to enhance value to local cultures and to preserve traditional ways of life, however the public interest around this issue is just slightly mentioned (Gerstenblith, 2001). Therefore the purpose of this section is to explore what is cultural heritage and also understand what the public interests about safeguarding assets are.

The concept of heritage that we have today emerged in seventeenth-century Europe, when the religious and monarchical states were replaced by modern nation states. In France, from the 1789's Revolution on, the idea of recognizing the collective importance of certain assets developed from the need of creating *republicans citizens* and providing the means for them to share values and cultural habits, so that they could communicate with each other and have a solo and a supposedly common origin (Endensor, 2002). Thus, the issues related to heritage founded the material basis for the formation of national states, arising from the invention of symbols to ensemble together and name a group of citizens who should congregate the same culture, as this culture would be related to a narrative of a common genealogical origin, or the occupation of the same territory and the use of the same language.

The first provisions concerning heritage related to tangible assets, such as monuments and buildings, as well as works of art, historical relics and objects endowed with high material and symbolic value to the nation (Gerstenblith, 2001). According to this understanding, the assets tally to what was exceptional,

beautiful and original in a culture, and necessarily implied value judgments on the definition of the goods that deserved or not to be preserved in the name of national memory. Since the beginning of thinking on heritage until the end of World War II, the interpretation about assets that should be protected as related to architectonic and aesthetic particularities of material assets and also to the meanings that they achieved according to the taste of the ruling classes (Brown, 2005).

From 1945 on, the year of the creation of the United Nations (UN) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), policies for heritage issue started to be reviewed. The end of the war and the defeat of fascist nationalism in Germany, Italy and Japan revealed the bankruptcy of nationalist models that emphasized a homogeneous heritage, and opened possibilities for the expression of diverse groups and social movements within different countries. In the 1950's many national governments started to orient recognition and support policies to those traditions that embodied its national cultural patrimony. The formal effort to safeguard intangible cultural heritage through UNESCO began in 1972 with the acceptance of the Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the initiation of the World Heritage List – a program oriented towards the international recognition and national support for the restoration, conservation, and preservation of tangible monuments, sites, and landscapes (Kurin, 2004). In the following decades, definition, terminology and objectives were the fundamental elements to be resolved before developing an international normative instrument in 2003, year of creation of the International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage that finally filled the gap in the normative instruments related to immaterial heritage (Aikawa, 2004).

Specifically in the Brazilian case thinking about national heritage begins to be forged during the modernist movement in the 1920s, but it only resulted in an effective set of policies from 1937, shortly after the coup that came to establish the New State with the creation of the Office of National Historical and Artistic Heritage – SPHAN (Gonçalves, 1996). Over the first five decades of the history of this institution the modern Brazilian national identity was visually represented by assets of a material nature, safeguarded through the process of heritage listing, which assured the physical totality of a building, of a work of art or of a relic (Fonseca, 2003). However the emphasis on a heritage that could be represented and fixed as a material thing implied that a wide range of immaterial assets that were meaningful to the Brazilian society as a whole, and for specific social groups, could not be protected by the official policies of safeguarding. In practical terms, this meant that many of them could disappear without a trace, whether material or in the memory of the nation, because they were not considered representative according to the criteria given by the official mechanisms that, in a certain way, were on the side of the dominant culture.

Since the publication of Decree 3.551/2000, policies on national heritage in Brazil changed the emphasis on physical assets only to a new guideline that contemplated a broader scope of assets denominated “cultural assets”. It would include several kinds of objects and activities that were part of the dynamic everyday life bringing the safeguarding issue closer to the ordinary people's lives. As Gonçalves (1996: 27) has pointed, the notion of cultural assets expresses the modern anthropological conception of culture, according to which “the emphasis is on social relationships, or even in symbolic relations, but not on the objects and techniques”. This means that when it comes to intangible or immaterial assets, it is worth to distinguish between those products that have a certain degree of autonomy after its production process, and those events that need to be constantly updated through the mobilization of physical media – body, instruments, costumes and other elements of material character – which depends on the action of individuals that are able to act according to certain codes (Fonseca, 2003).

This thematic opening allows a critique of the notion of artistic and historical heritage that guided the debate about collective memory in Brazil in the decades before. Changes in the way heritage was represented by monuments allowed not only that cultural goods of intangible nature as language, music, cooking, crafts, among practices and techniques were recognized as assets, but it also made possible that buildings, works of art and relics that were once considered less prestigious productions by the dominant culture because of its popular character to become target of safeguarding politics (Funari and Pelegrini, 2006). Thus safeguarding efforts began to ensure the continuity of the processes of the reproduction of the culture, preserving practices and respecting traditional values. The tacit starting point of it, according to Arantes (1991:426), is the idea that “national heritage is a social construction and, therefore, it is necessary to consider it in the context of the social practices that generates it and also gives meaning to it”.

Despite the significant change in the definition of national heritage and the consequences to the public policies that resulted from it, it is worth pointing that the identification of the items to be protected, as well as the implementation of safeguarding procedures result from a complex and often conflicting negotiation

process involving cultural mediators, i.e. agents of public policy (technicians and bureaucrats), professional politics and business agents. Thus this is a specialized activity – and not part of the common culture – which puts the State on the scene, representing the public interests in the processes of constructing the identity of the nation and the identity of the groups that form it (Arantes, 1991).

This means that safeguarding policies not only legitimize the senses attributed to social subjects to the everyday and common practices that constitute certain aspects of the culture, but it also highlights the criteria, the concepts and the values defended by technical experts such as historians, anthropologists, archaeologists, geologists, architects and planners in the service of the State. Besides this fact, we must also point out that the public agents' choices about the assets that should or should not reach the status of either regional or national heritage may contribute, in both cases, to accelerate the mischaracterization of the culture and deterioration of the tangible or the immaterial assets. Differently from what it may seem at first, studies suggest that the promotion of assets under some kind of public protection tends to contribute to the *commodification* of the cultural identities related to them (Graburn, 2004; Peach, 2007). The almost always inextricable connection between tourism and national heritage, for example, associated with the touristic activities potential to create economic opportunities and catalyze local development has remarkable consequences.

On the other hand, the effects of patrimonialization are uncertain and may be positive if we take into account the dynamics of the practices of appropriation and re-appropriations of protected cultural goods. The relationship of stakeholders with cultural goods can lead to creative elaboration of the relationship between culture, heritage and daily practices. Studies that are based on the networks approaches point out that the integration of tourism with other value chains enables the construction of different (or new) cultural dynamics that can include touristic activities (Aas, Ladkin & Fletcher, 2005; Arnaboldi & Spiller, 2011). The relationship between heritage and tourism is frequently characterized by contradictions and conflicts whereby conservationists perceive heritage tourism as compromising conservation goals for profit. However, once cultural practices are now inextricably inserted in the contemporary capitalist context, the strictly preservationist debate may be unsuccessful. In order to minimize the threats of characterization and loss, there is a need for dialogue, cooperation, and collaboration among the various stakeholders involved in the safeguarding process, specially in order to prevent the privatization of the practices warded by the safeguarding mechanisms.

Theoretically the Brazilian policies to preserve traditional practices assume that the perpetuation of the particular kind of know-how underneath these practices must balance tacit and explicit knowledge. According to the safeguard methodology, cultural practices must be somehow materialized in an inventory called the National Inventory of Cultural References (NICR). Thereby the safeguarding of any practice is oriented by a broad and systematic collection of data through three processes in sequence: the preliminary survey, which aims to gather information about the universe to be inventoried; the identification, which takes place in the description and classification of relevant cultural references, indicating the basic aspects of their formation processes, production, reproduction, transmission, and documentation; and a final report that shall explain the process of historical formation, production and reproduction of the practice as well as highlights the conditions, problems and challenges to its continuity over time (IPHAN, 2010).

The NICR and the subsequent steps leading to safeguarding as a legal process do not intended to serve as textbooks that would translate the memory of cultural practices and could serve as key tools to ensure their perpetuation, but it is important to point out that this inventory imposes certain fixity to this practices. To stabilize the dynamic of cultural change in order to control adulterations and perversions on the heritage is a prerequisite for the preservation, but it also imposes certain parameters that interrupt the natural course of this practices and their spontaneous organization.

Given the above, we shall present the empirical results that confirm the ideas stated along this theoretical exposition. However before we begin the methodological and contextual aspects of the research we will be clarified in the following section.

### 3. Background, context and method

The reflections developed in this article were based on a qualitative research conducted in conformity with the ethnographic method. As research techniques we implemented documentary research and participant observation. During the phase of documentary research, we raised sources related to the process of safeguarding of the cultural practice under our investigation and we interpreted the information we found in the light of the context of the production of this practice. We started from the

premise that the investigation of fragments of material culture can be important for interpretative analysis approaches in the context of organizational studies (Prior, 2011). The object of the analysis was specifically the document that proposes the safeguarding of the candy store activity by NICR, at the National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (NIHAH). This document is part of an extensive set of descriptive classificatory files that are in accordance with the methodology provided by NIHAH, and it was made based on interviews, audiovisual records and the historical delimitation of the assets to be inventoried. We also investigated how the searched document was related to the cultural changes in the organizational practices of artisanal candy store in Pelotas. The need to carry out an empirical study with this characteristics arises because studies on intangible heritage do not seem to address so clearly how the institutionalization of cultural practices throughout the relatively spontaneous process of social recognition of the of a *habitus* related to a group of practitioners can be strengthened by the ruling force of the safeguarding process that provide a formal infrastructure to a privatization process that was already underway. Nevertheless, some interesting insights on this issue may come from studies grounded in institutional theory. For example, Melin and Nordquist (2007), studying the dynamics of institutionalization of family businesses, noted that specific categories of organizations become institutionalized through a supporting infrastructure, involving a variety of actors, such as researchers, educators, not academic consultants, academic journals, associations and lobby groups dedicated to this particular category of organizations. The authors note that this infrastructure support emerges over time as part of a growing interest, practical and academic, establishing a general discourse around these category of organizations.

Thus, another important step for this study was the participant observation in a traditional confectionery factory in that city. The author of this work spent five months in the research field, between February and July 2011 attending in this organizational environment on a daily four-hour shift in February and March and on a daily eight-hour shift in April, May and June. As we have already mentioned, the *topus* of our research is the city of Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul, famous for its candy shop, whose history dates back to the nineteenth century when the bourgeois families of Portuguese origin began to recreate traditional Lusitanian recipes. Specifically, we assume as a research field one of the most renowned of Pelotas candy factories, established since 2000 by a confectioner whose family has been in business since 1955. To justify the choice, we need to clarify that historically, a restricted community of practitioners sought to ensure the maintenance of candy shop specific practices through time, surrounded by an aura of secrecy. Contemporaneously, the insertion of the candy store of Pelotas in the context of capitalist production has transformed the old confectionery discretion in trade secret. After all, as more and more people were engaging in gastronomic projects of this nature the candy shops in Pelotas gradually became a producer's association, strongly focused on the protection of traditional know-how as a means of competitive advantage. The exclusive character of this practice is directed, then, to create a kind of market reserve for the so-calls traditional confectioners – women who, like the owner of the candy factory that we have studied, have public recognition in Pelotas society for engaging with the history of the traditional candy store and for that reason are socially allowed to develop profitable activities from the knowledge about traditional candy store.

The factory outlined as study *locus* is one of sixteen factories of Pelotas sweets gathered in the Association of Pelotas Sweets Producers and one among the five ones that have its production certified by the Seal of Origin Indication that guarantees the legitimate origin of Pelotas sweet and the reliability of its making in relation to the original recipes. The Association's mission is to protect the legacy of traditional sweet recipes (Associação, 2014). The obtainment of the Seal by some associated factories ensures exclusivity on the confectionery know-how, as the technical regulation of production of traditional sweets is made by the members of the Association themselves (Association, 2014). The five certified factories, including the researched factory, are locally recognized as traditional mainly because of its establishment time and the life story of its founders.

The organizational practices of the candy store in Pelotas are conditioned to the context and it follows the changes that the time and the living habits of the society have conferred on this activity. Since the beginning of the tradition this practice has undergone spontaneous transformations but the movement for the preservation of this type of craft is recent. Its origin is connected to the colonial heritage of Portuguese cuisine practiced by the women of the wealthiest families in the city of Pelotas in the mid-nineteenth century. First, the organizational practices of the candy store constituted itself as an instrument for female socialization. By that time women suffered certain restriction to the public sphere, and it meant that such an activity as confectionery would only be developed to the domestic consumption. So, in the beginning, the organization of the candy store was, as a matter of fact, the

organization of the family kitchen and the activity slowly became a source of income for a “well-bred” women that were compelled to work in order to complement the family budget with her own work. From the first decades of the twentieth century a first generation of women began to professionally use the knowledge hitherto applied to the kitchens of the richer houses to improve the domestic economy (Ferreira *et al*, 2009). This movement follows the beginning of the process of professionalization of the confectionery activity.

At this point, the social and cultural transformations that changed the role of women in the public sphere during the twentieth century meant that the tradition of confectionery, previously restricted to the privacy of certain families should change its original meaning. It would cease to be a knowledge valued and worshiped as a family secret to become accessible to any kind of woman who wanted to learn a profession. That’s because the daughters of the most traditional families in the city have been released from housekeeping activities and some of them even went to hold careers in activities that were once restricted to men. Even among those who remained tied exclusively to domestic activities, the cooking of certain traditional recipes became too elaborate and complex for the space and the temporality of contemporary kitchens. After all those recipes obeyed the rhythm of the life that was lived in the late nineteenth century so their cooking used to take time, demanded patience and sometimes resembled a real ritual that had to be followed strictly. The drawing up of certain pastry was banned from the kitchens of many homes already in the early decades of the twentieth century, and from the 1950’s and 1960’s, it is possible to identify an interruption in the inter-generational transmission of know-how of the traditional confectionery from Pelotas.

Recipes that have long been restricted to consumption in the halls of the richest houses became widely known throughout the city and took the broader meaning of Pelotas’ Confectionery (Ferreira *et al*, 2009). So the tradition that was usually associated with genealogical heritage and that was transmitted among aristocratic women, became part of a public and disembodied enterprise. Facing the need to increase home production the old practitioners taught new practitioners the art of the candy store. These newcomers were often women belonging to disadvantaged sections of Pelotas’ society who were employed at domestic work in the homes of the richer families. The learning process of this group was more formal and less affective looking for the fast “familiarization” of these strangers to the intimacy of the home environment.

The story we have briefly told points out that the process of disembodiment of the traditional confectionery know-how from its putative heiresses is very old and is related to this practice own dynamics. In this sense the preservation of an embodied know-how that was inseparable from the figure of those who produced this confectionery in the past comes in the wake of the increase of the visibility and the public interest in this activity. Based on these facts we wonder if the recent movements toward the safeguarding of the candy store activity and its products may have reverse consequences. At a first glance we identify two imminent risks caused or enhanced by the safeguarding process and the interests that are behind it. They are: (1) the risks of expanding the consumption beyond the limits of the city of Pelotas – as the “Pelotas’ Confectionery” became a commercial label associated with the touristic industry –, what could de-territorialize the consumption as well as part of the productive chain related to the production of it; (2) the risk of the exclusion of the people of Pelotas from the process of production of the confectioneries that are part of their culture, as just a small and *élitized* group within it is recognized as ‘the right people to do it’.

#### 4. The consequences of safeguarding on the candy store activity

As the professionalization of the candy store of Pelotas turned the activity into a profitable enterprise, the work of the confectioners whose family background was associated with the origins of this tradition began to be celebrated in public events and became the target of widespread political interest in the regional scenario. Of course this political interest is important to encourage the celebration of local traditions, to the protection of the know-how that is inherent to the culture of the city and it is also important to the permanence of handmade candy store in a context that is strongly characterized by mechanization of production processes. However when viewed from the perspective of the changes that have transformed an “amateur” activity, since the beginning of the professionalization of Pelotas candy store, it is noticeable that the knowledge originally linked to the group of women who developed and worshiped it throughout the time becomes an allegory to legitimize this production and to make it more profitable not only for those who directly practice the activity but also for the entire production chain that is structured around

it. The inclusion of the traditional candy store on the agenda of discussions on economic development in the city of Pelotas may ultimately represent a complete mischaracterization of this activity since the production in industrial scale tend to modify the specific context of this form of craft.

In the empirical field, we could notice how the production scale expansion has transformed traditional candy shop practices. In the researched factory, which produces an average of 4,000 to 6,000 candy units per day, some processes that were previously performed manually had already been mechanized. As examples, we can mention: the use of industrial column mixers, which are now required to mix the dough, now that recipes are produced in large quantities; and the adoption of redy-made ingredients replacing some original components, such as condensed milk and frozen grated coconut. Similarly, we also observed the abandonment of certain traditional ingredients due to food safety criteria that now have to be followed once the company is formally established as a gastronomic enterprise. In this sense, we can mention that the current need to use pasteurized egg yolks as the manual separation of eggs could be a source of contamination exerted enormous impact on the making of some candies, since a small – and not quantifiable – part of egg white are necessary to some recipes. To prevent contamination and also reduce the risk of work-related accidents, some traditional cooking equipment and utensils were eliminated from the industrial kitchen, such as the wood-burning stove, copper pots and wooden spoons.

The initiatives that aim to protect the candy store tradition also work to advertise it. However, as the confectioneries start to be appreciated beyond the borders of the city, the processes of production that originated them become increasingly less known by the consumer. Along with the notoriety gained by the result of the work of traditional confectioners the organizational practices that originate these confectioneries become increasingly distant from consumers and, in this process, the visibility that the traditional candy store achieved in the public sphere becomes again obscured by marketing and consumer relations. It follows that the dissemination of the culture of Pelotas' confectionery and the enterprisation of this activity contribute to disembodify the know-how of its practice and to break the bond that existed between the product and the person who produced it. The direct consequence of the increasing in visibility of the Pelotas' candy store, whose apex is the process of safeguarding, is that "Pelotas Confectionery" became more a label or a trademark to identify the fine delicacies cooked the Portuguese way than an origin mark for the confectionery production of the city.

Since ancient times, the expertise related to Pelotas' confectionery has been kept secret by women whose ancestry goes back to the Brazilian patriarchal family, as described by Freyre (1975). The dispositions of the *habitus* engendered in this practice remotely relate to the lifestyle of a rural and slavery-based aristocracy. The seal of secrecy that was maintained concerning the confectionery expertise over the decades is evidence of this relationship of concentration of capital (Bourdieu, 1984). But as the candy store was transformed into a public enterprise, this private knowledge could also be converted into economic capital. The consequences of it revolve around the fact that the confectionery know-how is product of a specific *habitus* – what highlights its embodied character. Once the traditional master in confectionery are now leaving their kitchens – or rather their shop-floor – to engage only with the administrative aspects of the candy shop, the confectionery know-how is becoming *disembodied*. Most of the traditional Pelotas' candy factories are named after their owners, which are traditional candy makers. But just a few of them still ahead of the production on the shop-floor. The factory where we conducted our participant observation is one of the last ones where the owner is also the master in confectionery, but we could notice that this woman was already preparing her way to retirement and that her daughter – who was the first in the line of succession of the family enterprise – was not interested in literally *adopting a hands-on doughty attitude*, specially because she did not embodied the confectionery know-how the same way her mother did. For the near future, we could expect that the embodied cultural assets of this practice would be lost for ever.

Considering this issue, the Association of Confectionery Producers of Pelotas, together with the regional unity of the *Brazilian Service of Support for Micro and Small Enterprises* (SEBRAE / RS) have proposed in 2006 the creation of a stamp to indicate the origin of the confectionery products, as well as to establish quality standards and guarantees of authenticity to the local production. In 2011, fifteen typical recipes, five of them already included in the National Inventory of Cultural References, received the Certificate of Indication of Origin, issued by the General Coordination of Geographical Indications and Records, of the National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI). The certification, which aims to regulate the use of the geographical name "Pelotas Confectionery" also includes records of the description of the certified products along with this office and proposes the use of labels and packaging that are figurative of the local indication to ensure the differentiation of these products in the market. As part of the efforts for preserving and safeguarding the handmade candy store in that town

the certification brings up positives aspects that ensure the legitimacy of local production. However, the obtainment of the Certificate of Indication of Origin demands the confectioners to formalize their activity so that they can legally respond to the authenticity of the production they develop. In addition to this, the Certification requires the existence of a structure of control over the producers that are entitled to the exclusive use of Geographical Indication of products. The Association of Confectionery Producers of Pelotas is the body locally responsible for the certification, which means that henceforth only the confectioneries that are linked to this association have the right to produce the “original confectioneries”, according to the certification criteria.

In the candy factory taken as our empirical field, confectionery practices customarily associated with the genealogical inheritance of a particular social group (white and aristocratic women) became part of a larger domain and thus lost the direct link to their putative heirs. The historical contextualization and the observation of everyday routines in the candy factory indicate that the confectionery practice is involved in interests that go in the direction of their privatization by certain people – which, in the research field, was the owner of the factory, the master in confectionery. Initially, our investigation revolved around the issue of the training of skilled labor to work in the candy factory since this factor was configured as a problem in the scenario where artisanal confectionery linked to a specific *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1984) became a commercial venture independent of the original conditions of transmission of the expertise that characterizes it. We understand that this *habitus* reflects the unequal distribution of power in society and is a bodily and embodied index for the inclusion of certain practitioners and the exclusion of others in the context of the community of practice of Pelotas’ confectionery.

To exemplify this theoretical analysis with field data, we can mention our observations and interpretations about the transmission of confectionery know-how in the researched candy factory. After trying without success to learn the whole production process of some candies, we realized that no employee of the candy factory was able to tell everything about the receipts they executed routinely. Even though we interpreted that the desire to keep exclusiveness over this know-how was not something conscientious for the master in confectionery that owned the researched candy factory, the interest in preserving such secrecy hindering the process of confectionery expertise transference among most candy factory employees seemed obvious to us. After all, it was not the secret itself that mattered but the maintenance of power relations that were inscribed on it. As a consequence, most employees ignored the confectionery expertise because they were not allowed to learn the entire production process of sweet-making. Furthermore, their work activities were limited to the mechanical repetition of simple tasks and we could observe that they did not acquire expertise on the confectionery practice. Putting in other words, they did not know enough to develop the confectionery activity on their own, so they could not try to undertake new business using confectionery know-how.

What happens inside the researched candy factory also have repercussions on the broader context of the candy store sector. The certification has consequences that in the long term may jeopardize the traditional production that seeks to protect. That occurs because the confectioners who currently perform the activity on non-professional bases – those who, like the pioneers in the activity, held its production in the kitchen at their own homes, using the domestic structure – are prevented from using the Certificate. In other words, it means that the domain where the handmade candy store originated itself and where it remained preserved over decades can no longer be considered as a legitimate space for contemporary production because the Certificate, enhanced by safeguarding instruments as the inventory, has appropriated the term “Pelotas Confectionery” like a trademark to designate certain types of sweets made by confectioners linked to the Producers Association. While establishing a market reserve for the confectioners that are more formally established, the Certification inhibits the dynamic potential of artisanal candy store as a cultural practice and also discourages or even prevents the transmission of the informal, domestic and amateur know-how. After all, the domestic entrepreneurship that provide custom-made confectioneries in small quantities will tend to become professional and tailor their production to the standards required by the Association of Confectioners, or will play a marginal activity competing with the established certification system

## Final Considerations

Our purpose in this article was to discuss how the process of safeguarding of a particular cultural asset interferes in the organizational practices structured around it. For that we took empirical data regarding the process of safeguarding of the typical candy store in the city of Pelotas realizing that if



on one hand this process generates visibility and increases the demand for handmade confectioneries – which contributes directly to the perpetuation of this goods and the know-how that lies behind it in the contemporary context –, on the other hand it also encourages the mass production, the mischaracterization of the ways to do rooted in the people and, consequently, on the culture of the organizations formed around them, and finally the emptying of sense of the cultural meaning in relation to the original contexts of production and consumption.

According to the rhetoric of the loss that, as Gonçalves (1996) describes, guides the discourse about the Brazilian cultural heritage, the belief in imminent risk to which cultural goods are subjected justifies its remoteness in time and space in relation to everyday experiences. In this sense the assets to be preserved are decontextualized, removed from their regular organizational practices either in the present or in the past, and re-classified according to ideological categories that inform official policies of national heritage. Thus alongside of the enhancement of “tradition” or “culture” there is, simultaneously, the complaint of loss of these same dimensions, both because of the homogenizing process triggered by the cultural industry, or by the harassment of the capital on cultural goods. The cultural practice under our investigation correspond to an embodied know-how, founded on tradition and transmitted between generations in dynamic processes that rely on personal experience and the acquisition of a shared knowledge. The perspective of intangible heritage highlights the importance of the wide range of knowledge and symbolic systems that support this practices, in the sense that such practices are elaborated on many legacies, whose contents and meanings can also be transformed through time and space. Even though we recognize that the safeguarding of a cultural practice such as Pelotas’ confectionery nests its very own dynamics of change and maintenance, our aim in this paper was to underline that institutional mechanisms that also work as private tutelage that enables the commercial uses of the tradition disregarding the its internal logic and original purposes.

Through the analysis of the research data, we found that the preservation of the tacit and embodied knowledge that relies on a cultural practice is not protected or safeguarded without conflicts and impasses. On the one hand attempts to preserve it are valid to prevent that a practice of high symbolic value for the life of a particular group may be extinguished without leaving any traces. On the other hand, however, they do not prevent the fact that the course of social transformation can change the ways of making the assets marked as intangible heritage and may even, as in the case of Pelotas Confectionery, may accelerate the loss of these fragments of collective memory.

Far from adopting a purist vision regarding to conservation practices, what we sought to evidence in this article was that the safeguarding process may not contribute directly to the preservation of the cultural practices and the forms of spontaneous organizations. The challenge, therefore, is to propose ways of practicing and consuming, as well as transmitting knowledge, which contemplates the usage value of this production and ensure its permanence thought its autonomy. In other words, we believe it is important to think that craft production and its particular organizational practices do not need to be re-framed to fit any kind of productive sector in order to ensure that its preservation will be supported by the profitable employment of the tradition. We consider that the preservation of cultural practices, apart from the interests of capital over it, is an end in itself, and that the efforts to protect these practices may consider, in first place, the preservation of the ways of living of the communities that have been spontaneously keeping them over generations.

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