

**A Critical Examination of the Social Processes Underpinning
Agricultural Change: A Case Study of the Viticulture Sector,
Languedoc, Mediterranean France.**

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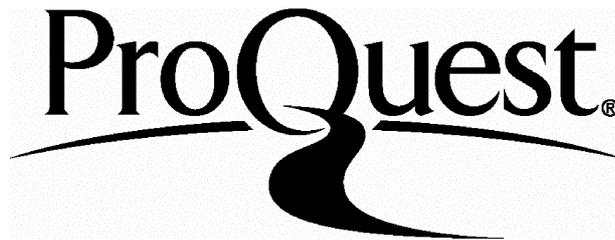
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Abstract

The thesis addresses a series of questions surrounding the social processes underpinning contemporary agricultural change in Western Europe. An actor-centred approach is employed to collect field evidence as a means of investigating the local social processes involved in the negotiation of change and to capture its contested nature. A case study approach is adopted, examining recent change in the viticulture sector of the Languedoc, Mediterranean France. The investigation centres on a viticultural cooperative, *Les Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune*, and its territorial and production partners up to the regional level. It explores how the actors of this local network are negotiating the shift from the production of table wine to wine of a higher quality, and from a productivist to a multifunctional agricultural regime. The thesis privileges the voices of local actors but seeks to use the empirical material collected to contribute to broader academic debates about agricultural change. Conceptualisations of change in the recent literature focus on a particular organising heuristic, namely the post-productivist transition, which has been developed in, and applied to, the industrialised farming regions of Northern Europe. It is suggested that a hybridisation can be achieved between local interpretations of change and this meta-narrative leading to a more nuanced understanding of the processes of change which, in turn, serves to imbue the notion of the post-productivist transition with enhanced explanatory power.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AE	Agri-Environment
AOC	Appellation d'origine contrôlée
BNF	Bibliothèque nationale de France
BPA	Baccalauréat professionnel agricole
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CAV	Comité d'action viticole
CDJA	Comité de défense des jeunes agriculteurs
CDOA	Commission départementale d'orientation agricole
CEPRO	Viticulture Producer Group, precursor to VPE
CGV	Confédération générale des vignerons
CGVM	Confédération générale des vignerons du Midi
CIVL	Comité interprofessionnel des vins du Languedoc
CMO	Common Market Organisation
CRS	Compagnie républicaine de sécurité
CTE	Contrat territorial d'exploitation
CUMA	Coopérative d'utilisation de matériel agricole
DDAF	Direction départementale de l'agriculture et des forêts
DESS	Diplôme d'études supérieures
DGVI	Directorate General for Agriculture
DIREN	Direction régionale de l'environnement
DRAF	Direction régionale de l'agriculture et de la forêt
EC	European Community
ECE	East Central Europe
EEC	European Economic Community
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Areas
EU	European Union

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

FARRE	Forum de l'agriculture raisonnée respectueuse de l'environnement
FDCCH	Fédération des caves coopératives de l'Hérault
FGER	Fonds de gestion de l'espace rural
FNSEA	Fédération nationale des syndicats d'exploitants agricoles
FRCA	Fédération régionale de la coopération agricole
Ha	Hectare = 2.47 acres
hl	Hectolitre = 100 litres
HLM	Habitation à loyer modéré
INAO	Institut national d'appellation d'origine
INRA	Institut national de la recherche agricole
JAC	Jeunesse agricole catholique
LOA	Loi d'orientation agricole
MAE	Mesures agri-environnementales
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (re-named DEFRA)
MIVOC	Mouvement d'intervention des vignerons occitans
PAD	Prime d'arrachage définitif
PDO	Protected Designation of Origin
PDR	Plan de développement rural
PGI	Protected Geographic Indication
PLAC	Programme local d'aménagement concerté
PPT	Post-Productivist Transition
RDP	Rural Development Plan
RDR	Rural Development Regulation
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SAFER	Société d'aménagement foncier et d'établissement rural
SPA	Special Protection Area
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VPE	Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Introduction

“Economic life even in the open countryside ... is now caught up in the constant revolution which is the hallmark of the capitalist mode of production ... The revolutionizing of agriculture is setting in train a remorseless chase. Its participants are whipped on and on until they collapse exhausted – aside from a small number of aggressive and thrusting types who manage to clamber over the bodies of the fallen and join the ranks of the chief whippers, the big capitalists.”

(Karl Kautsky, The Agrarian Question, quoted in Goodman and Watts (Eds.), Globalising Food. Agrarian Questions and Global Restructuring, 1997; v).

“In order to promote its overall harmonious development, the Community shall develop and pursue its actions leading to the strengthening of its economic and social cohesion. In particular, the Community shall aim at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least-favoured regions, including rural areas.”

(Article 130a. Treaty of Rome, 25 March 1957).

“We are now forced into reconstructing an agenda built on new principles. They are based on what we may term a ‘new political social economy’ of rural space ... which gets to grips with the causes and expressions of the uneven development of rural space, understanding the new social and economic pressures bringing about change ... This requires a more integrative and comparative research approach, in the expectation that in-depth and wide-ranging analyses of rural change in particular places can be undertaken while also setting these within a wider 3.17 context.”

(Marsden, 1999; 503 – 504, emphasis added).

In recent history, the rural spaces of Western Europe have experienced profound change and their restructuring continues apace. Its rural areas are being variously reconfigured as a result of their engagement with multiple social, political and economic processes nested at different spatial scales. Some of these processes do

not impact on the rural sphere exclusively. Localities in general are subject to, and in turn mediate, broad processes of economic and political restructuring, but certain processes of change do exert direct effects on the rural sphere. In Western Europe these include agricultural modernization (Bowler, 1985), the restructuring of the agro-food sector and the growing dominance of trans-national corporations (Goodman *et al.*, 1987; Goodman & Watts, 1997), the integration of agriculture with the rural environment (Lowe & Baldock, 2000) and ongoing CAP reform which emphasizes the non-production roles of agriculture coupled with the liberalization of agricultural policy (Robinson, 1997; Potter & Goodwin, 1998; Wilson *et al.*, 2000; Potter & Burney, 2002). In turn, these processes are contributing to the uneven retreat of a productivist agriculture (Ward, 1993; Marsden, 1998a), the promotion of alternative non-agrarian activities (Halfacree, 1997; 1999) and the emergence of competing sets of consumption demands associated with 'new' rural populations (Flynn & Marsden, 1995; Goodwin, 1998; Marsden, 1998a; 1999). The critical point is that this ensemble of processes contains contradictory forces with the effect that their expressions and consequences are different in different localities. They both exacerbate and / or undermine the existing heterogeneity of rural spaces and it is towards the general project of understanding change and difference in the rural spaces of Western Europe that this thesis is addressed¹.

¹ My circumscription of those countries constituting 'Western Europe' is a political one. They are defined as the 15 countries which, at present, comprise the European Union. In general terms, the countries of Western Europe are both sufficiently homogeneous, through a project of political and economic integration, and different from the countries of East Central Europe (ECE), to represent a distinct category. In a post-socialist world there is no obvious rationale for making geopolitical distinctions between blocks of capitalist and communist countries. However there is a practical justification for this cleavage on account of differences in past development trajectories which have been shaped by allegiances to profoundly differing political ideologies until quite recently. Furthermore, in the last 50 years the countries of Western Europe have been increasingly bound together through a project of economic harmonization and political, diplomatic and military integration instituted in the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and the formation of the European Economic Community, followed by the European Monetary System in the 1970s, the Single European Act of 1985, the Maastricht Treaty of 1991, the formation of the European Union in 1993 (Morris, 1994) and most recently the introduction of a common currency, the EURO, in 2002. The operation of frameworks of regulation, such as the CAP and the functioning of DGVI (the Directorate General for Agriculture) has been significant. Indeed Slee (1994) argues that the agricultural modernisation project embodied in the CAP has been a principal determinant of rural development patterns at the local level. In the future, the accession of ECE countries into the European Union will lead to a

Substantive change in the rural sphere has inspired a scholarly project which has sought to explore the processes of change, their expression in particular places, the capacity of localities to mediate and negotiate these changes, and the causes of difference through space (see chapter one). In the main, this work has focused on particular rural areas because, as Drummond *et al.*, (2000; 113) have argued “the question of how macro-scale shifts are mediated through national and local conditions and the ways in which *specific forms of restructuring* emerge ... is one of considerable theoretical [and empirical] interest”, although notable exceptions to this focus on particular places include the works of Bowler, (1985), Hoggart *et al.*, (1995) and Buller & Hoggart (eds), (2001). Whilst acknowledging the expediency and value of in-depth, local studies, this focus on the particular and the absence of a more comparative or integrated endeavour may be regarded as a shortcoming, at least within the context of a wider project founded on normative concerns about regional inequalities and differences between areas. In recognition of the importance of this wider project, Marsden (1998; 107) has called for “a stronger commitment from the research community to develop more robust comparative analyses of rural change” and has identified the need to develop “a more effective and attuned comparative rural sociology within Europe” (Marsden, 1999; 502). It may be helpful to conceive of this call as representative of a collective project, rather than interpreting ‘comparative’ in its more formal sense. This collective project derives from the recognition that we need to start building a wider framework which holds together research on the particular. Having interrogated processes of rural change in particular places, it is important to understand the differences between places, to situate local studies within an integrated and normative research agenda².

changed map of socio-economic inequality within an enlarged European Union. The scope of the scholarly project will have to be broadened to examine rural change within this wider geographical area and to an extent this is already being addressed (see, for example, Kichorowska-Kebalo, 2000; Lenormand, 2001; Mokrushina, 2001).

² This scholarly endeavour reflects the preoccupations of a political project that has a longer history. One of the principles underpinning the Treaty of Rome (1957) was a commitment to reducing the

This thesis aligns itself with those who advance the collective project, and suggests that the requisite characteristics of such a project demand further consideration. For example, does it require subscription to the notion of a 'single European model of agriculture' as an analytical category rather than a political construct (see Buller, 2001a)? Or can a comparative rural sociology be realised in the context of the multiplicity of modernisation trajectories and diversity of ruralities within Europe, from which much may be learnt through the exchange of information and ideas? Does the engagement in a collective project demand a common approach to investigating rural restructuring and difference, such as the dominant political economy approach of the 1980s (Cloke, 1989; Marsden *et al.*, 1996), or can it be advanced through a variety of approaches to investigating change such as actor-centred, behaviourally and culturally sensitive approaches (Cloke, 1997; Phillips, 1998), so prevalent in contemporary studies of rural restructuring? Moreover, while the notion of a collective project recognizes the importance of studies in particular places - whether they be local or non-local - it also assumes that a study of the particular can sit alongside the work of others, and constitute the means to tease out the spatial patterns of difference and change *across Europe*. This raises perhaps the most pertinent question of all. Can different types of knowledge contribute to a common understanding of change and, in turn, how would this relate to local knowledges and the contingencies of regional experiences? (See Cloke, 1994; Murdoch & Clark, 1996).

There is a large body of work conducted within the frame of a political economy

material inequalities between regions (Cole & Cole, 1997). This principle has been translated into deliberate policies embodied in the Structural Funds of the European Union devised to provide financial assistance both to lagging regions, for example Corsica, and sectors, such as the agricultural sector in parts of Spain and Portugal. However, the rural spaces of Western Europe represent an economically, politically, socially and culturally heterogeneous zone whose quintessential feature is diversity. There exist long-term differences between rural regions in terms of their natural resource base, the availability of capital, their economic structure and activity, rates of industrialization, their demographic and social conditions, education levels and skills of the population, and the degree of centrality or peripherality of their location within the European Union, with the risk that political integration will reinforce these existing differences and their material consequences.

approach in which the role of structural forces, and particularly the State and the market, is emphasized in shaping contemporary scenarios of restructuring (see reviews by Marsden *et al.*, 1996; Marsden, 1998b; Morris & Evans, 1999). Over time, attention has been afforded to processes of change at the level of the farm business (Ward & Munton, 1992) and the political economy approach has been modified to capture the nuances of social relations and cultural practices in particular places in processes of restructuring. It has had to respond to the criticism that it is overtly deterministic and subordinates human agents as passive recipients of top-down structural forces with limited control, or capacity for negotiation and resistance (Marsden *et al.*, 1993). Furthermore, it is argued that in spite of the convergent trends of political and economic integration, rural restructuring has different resonances in particular places and these differences cannot be explained by an analysis of structural forces alone. Rather, the causes of this differentiation may be accounted for by differences in local institutional structures (Amin & Thrift, 1994), cultural capacities (Ray, 1998; 1999a; 1999b), and natural and social capital (Putnam *et al.*, 1993). There has, in response, been a return to a position which suggests that change is the negotiated outcome of human actions, decisions, strategies, struggles and calculations, in concert with the wish to avoid polarized understandings of contemporary change. As such, it is the interaction or the interplay of local capacities and structural forces which needs to be the focus of enquiry.

In this thesis an actor-centred approach is employed to investigate the ways in which actors shape processes of rural change. In keeping with this approach, it is suggested that actors acting individually, or as part of a collective, are variously able to negotiate and mediate change and that these agents may be actors and institutions operating both locally and 'at-a-distance' (Murdoch & Marsden, 1995). To do this it employs four key vehicles to explore the social processes underpinning agricultural restructuring and specifically the diversity of positions held by different actors. These include the perception of threats and opportunities, which will be differentially "represented, interpreted and utilized by participants within

situations" (Murdoch & Marsden, 1995: 371). It is argued that actors attempt to harness opportunities and deflect threats based on an assessment of potential benefits and of risk summation, and on a calculation of self-interest and / or of the material needs of the group. The third vehicle is the motivations that lie behind an actor's actions and the fourth, the strategies deployed in order to pursue a chosen trajectory.

An actor-centred approach carries certain methodological implications. In particular, qualitative methods are required to uncover the meanings held by local actors as they make sense of change, founded on the observation that these meanings are likely to be the product of actors' values, beliefs and local knowledge systems. Qualitative methodologies afford the elucidation of the complex processes through which these meanings are formed and constructed within specific social and material spaces (Morris & Andrews, 1997). In addition, the thesis aims to give 'voice' to local actors, for it is suggested that if actors are conceived as active, reflexive agents, their interpretations and subjective experiences of change are critically important to our attempts to understand the nature of change. As such, the narratives of change in the empirical chapters are essentially those of the case study actors. This type of approach, often characterised as a bottom-up approach, and the epistemology that underpins it (see White, 1991; Gandy, 1996; Murdoch & Clark, 1996), is not an inevitable corollary of either an actor-centred approach or a study of processes of rural change at the micro-level. However, it is argued that it is important because it permits an exploration of the relationship between general theorisations of change and their local expressions and, furthermore, facilitates an interrogation of the *two-way dynamic inherent in this relationship*. In other words, on the one hand, it allows us to examine the ways in which local narratives both add to and undermine theoretical understandings of agricultural and rural change, while on the other, allowing us to offer different and locally-derived interpretations of change. It also offers us an opportunity to ask whether these theoretical frameworks of rural change 'mean' anything to communities in real places, and

how general theorisations of change relate to local knowledges and situated understandings.

The aim of this thesis, therefore, is to conduct a critical examination of the micro-level social processes underpinning agricultural change in a particular local rural context. Its empirical focus is recent change in the viticulture sector of the Languedoc, Mediterranean France, dating from the 1970s to the present day. The selection of the Languedoc as a region of study and its viticulture sector as an analytical vehicle is not founded on a positivist argument that the social processes underpinning sectoral adjustment in this region are generalizable to other European contexts³. Instead, it is argued that an investigation of this 'particular' - the viticulture sector of the Languedoc - can sit alongside the work of others in order to contribute to our collective understanding of rural change across Western Europe. By situating the empirical research, and therefore the particularities of a regional experience, within a broader conceptual frame, the findings will be used to throw light on arguments about the restructuring of the rural spaces in Western Europe. This raises the question as to why a focus on agriculture has been used as a vehicle to examine processes of rural change, despite its retreating economic and cultural importance in the countryside of Western Europe and in the wake of growing social and economic plurality within increasingly differentiated and contested rural spheres (Philo, 1992; Marsden *et al.*, 1993). Without seeking to afford agriculture a 'natural' place as the primary driver of change, many writers

³ I do not argue that France is an informative example based on arguments of generalizability, although France's prominent role in European integration should be highlighted. French governments and Presidents have been influential in shaping the policy agenda and institutional style of the European Community (EC). France was one of the six founding members of the EEC (1957) and Jean Monnet, a Frenchman and key European visionary, espoused the practical politics of economic interdependence as well as supra-nationalist ideals. The EC's economic importance to France is significant but for France the European project extends beyond membership of a common market, it aspires to the 'ideal' of economic and political integration. This may be perceived as surprising for a country that has traditionally upheld a protectionist policy to trade and an 'obsessive' commitment to national sovereignty (Morris, 1994). One interpretation is that France's attitude towards Europe is based on a calculated pursuit of national interests. The European Union (EU) has

still regard agriculture as pivotal to rural development because it is the primary occupier of land and thus largely responsible for many of the production and consumption benefits derived from the land base (see, for example, Knickell & Renting, 2000; Van der Ploeg & Renting, 2000; Van der Ploeg *et al.*, 2000). Furthermore, in the context of France these arguments are particularly pertinent on account of the dominance of the agrarian tradition and the relative absence of alternative conceptions of rurality to that founded on production (Buller & Brive, 2000). All these conditions apply in the specific context of an intensive system of viticultural production in the Languedoc, complicated and reinforced by the cooperative sector and its links with a rich assemblage of civic bodies and other local and regional actors.

Following on from these general position statements, the broad objectives of the empirical research are two-fold. They are;

- To explore the understandings and interpretations of actors of a local viticulture network in the *département* of l'Hérault as they experience the shift from the production of table wine to wine of a higher quality, and from productivism to multifunctionality, from the mid-1970s.
- To examine critically the social processes deployed by these actors as they negotiate, mediate or resist these shifts and through which they construct meanings, understandings and knowledges of them.

These broad aims have been developed into a set of key questions to be addressed.

1. Is there a commonality of experience or a common understanding of these broad shifts amongst actors of the network?

provided considerable opportunities for progress and development, both of industrial expansion and as a tool in the modernization and sustenance of French agriculture (Stevens, 1996).

2. If there is not a common experience, what are the differences in experience and understanding of these broad shifts?
3. To what extent can either common or different understandings be accounted for by actors' perception, interpretation and utilization of the shifts to quality and multifunctionality as either opportunities or threats?
4. To what extent do commonalities or differences in understandings reflect actors' motivations and the nature of the strategies employed behind their actions?
5. To what extent are these differences in position, these contested positions a function of whether actors are winners or losers?

Synopsis of Thesis

Chapter one commences with a discussion of socio-economic changes in the rural spaces of Western Europe over the last fifty years, along with shifts in agricultural and rural policy. A period of rural monofunctionality and stability is identified, followed by one of multifunctionality and increased complexity. Two broad theoretical approaches have been utilised by scholars to investigate the processes underpinning agricultural change and their spatially and temporally uneven expressions; a political economy and actor-centred approach. A modified political economy approach is discussed, with its attention to the contingent nature of restructuring processes on the specificities of particular places, and one which also incorporates human agency into structural analyses of change. It is argued, however, that although a modified political economy approach shares affinities with some of the work of proponents of an actor-centred approach, it continues to be dominated by a structuralist perspective in which the capacity to act of individuals and collectivities is ultimately subordinate. In order, therefore, to investigate the social processes through which agricultural change is negotiated at the local level, and to capture the nuances of these contested processes, this thesis adopts an actor-centred approach and the vehicles employed to access actors' differential experiences of change are introduced. With these theoretical debates in mind, the chapter concludes with an examination of conceptualisations of change in the recent literature which focus on a particular organising heuristic, namely the post-productivist transition along with an examination of the empirical bases of post-productivism, largely derived from a UK context.

The focus of chapter two is the social and cultural specificities of the case study region, namely the Languedoc, the context in which the action of individuals is embedded and their experiences of change are shaped. The chapter provides a chronological account of the table wine sector of the Languedoc, examining the

evolution, from the end of the nineteenth century, of a capitalist system of production based around vine monoculture. The account is divided into four phases (following Touzard, 1995; Jones & Clark, 2000) characterised as viticultural specialisation, viticultural establishment, followed by a period of maturation, and the sector's recent fracture. The period of fracture, dating from the mid-1970s, is characterised by an uneven transition from the production of large volumes of table wine to the production of wine of a higher quality, and the recent emergence of a multifunctional agricultural regime. This final phase corresponds to the time-span covered by the empirical investigation, and therefore serves as grounding for the narratives of the case study actors. Embedded in this historical account are two key dynamics as embodied in the sets of relations between the region's viticulture sector and the extra-local, and in the reconfiguring of local sectoral social relations, as epitomised by the cooperative system, and expressed in the tension between collectivism and individualism.

Chapter three introduces the epistemological position adopted in the thesis which privileges 'local knowledges', such that the narratives of change provided in the empirical chapters are essentially those of the case study actors. A case study approach is employed to examine the recent restructuring of the viticulture sector of the Languedoc as an exemplar of broader social processes underpinning agricultural change. The focus of the empirical investigation is a local actor-network, cohering around a viticulture cooperative, *Les Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune*, in the *département* of l'Hérault, but also includes their production and territorial partners up to the regional scale. In keeping with a bottom-up approach, the research is ethnographic in nature, comprising an extended stay in the case study community. A range of qualitative methodologies are utilised including in-depth interviews, along with researcher participation in cooperative and farming activities. Furthermore, a 'follow-the-actor' approach is drawn upon as a means of tracing the links between actors *in situ*, the types of relations in which they are engaged and the ways in which local meanings and understandings of change are

constructed. The chapter, therefore, provides an account of the qualitative methodologies employed, the tracing of the network, the recording of the material, the data analysis process and the narrative voice adopted in reporting the empirical material.

Chapters four, five and six document the narratives of the case study actors in terms of the ways in which they have experienced, interpreted and understood recent change. These narratives cover the period of fracture of the table wine regime, from the 1970s to the present day, with actors' visions of how they anticipate they will negotiate the future. For clarity, the actors' stories have been arranged within the frame of the two shifts which characterise this period of fracture - the shift from quantity to quality and from productivism to multifunctionality - but aside from this basic structure, the content of the stories, what they identify as important and the meanings with which they imbue events, are their own. Chapter four is a descriptive narrative of local understandings of change; no explanations are provided for the nature or extent of the changes, nor the ways in which actors experience them. What emerges from these narratives, however, is that the negotiation of these transitions is a contested process, and one which is experienced differently by members of the network. Chapter five builds on the material presented in chapter four by providing an implicit explanation for the contested nature of the change process through an exploration of the ways in which actors have perceived these changes as either threats or opportunities, and why these changes represent threats to some and opportunities to others. Chapter six elaborates upon these explanations of the contested nature of change through an exploration of the ways in which opportunities have been utilised and threats negotiated, and how these have been translated into the motivations and strategies that lie behind actors' actions.

Chapter seven commences with a discussion of some of the issues raised by employing a bottom-up approach. It seeks to resolve an apparent contradiction

that underlies the thesis, namely its attempt to negotiate the gap between a collection of situated, subjective and experiential accounts and general conceptualisations of change. It does this through advancing a position that contends that 'partial' forms of knowledge can be shown to be complementary, and through the practice of hybridisation, a translation between the local and the general may be achieved. Thus, by hybridising local and general understandings of change, it is argued that socially specific aspects of change may be incorporated into broader levels of comparative analysis in order to permit the tracing of divergent and common contours of change unfurling in other contemporary rural spaces of Western Europe.

In the second section of this chapter, the narratives of the case study actors are interpreted within the frame of the two key dynamics identified in chapter two. As members of this viticultural network negotiate broader forces of economic and political change, and in particular the increasing globalisation of the wine sector, actors have variously experienced the upwards rescaling of the 'local'. In turn, these shifts in relations with extra-local forces are exerting an effect on local social relations. As a result of the restructuring of both the local vineyard and collective wine production through local cooperatives, so the traditional collective ethos begins to fracture. Some actors, for example, are participating in a 'new collective' which is emerging around territorial activities and characterised by the creation of partnerships and coalitions between a range of rural, civic and political actors.

In the final section of the chapter the findings of the case study are drawn upon to illuminate the range of views held by actors, the different positions they occupy on a 'spectrum from productivism to post-productivism' and the variability of change through time and across space. Ideas for future research are identified and as a final word, other case studies conducted across Western Europe are considered in an attempt to identify common characteristics and trajectories of change.

1

Conceptualising European Rural Change

In the first section of this chapter a brief historical context is provided of recent material changes in the rural spaces of Western Europe. Two periods can be identified and may be characterised as a period of rural monofunctionality and stability (1950s – mid 1980s), followed by one of multifunctionality and increased complexity (1990s to the present day). The purpose of this periodisation is simply to provide an organising frame within which to review broad socio-economic and policy changes; the intention is not to imply that the development of Western European rural spaces has been uniform. Indeed, change has been a contested process leading to patterns of development that are spatially and temporally uneven. The investigation of these differentiated patterns is the subject of discussion in the second section of this chapter.

A comprehensive agricultural policy, the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP), was included in the founding treaty of the EEC (1957). One of its principal objectives was to increase agricultural productivity and, in turn, food output. As such, the agricultural sector was tied explicitly to a post-war food policy driven by aspirations of quantity in order to counter a recent history of food shortages. A second objective was underpinned by a welfarist aim which sought to achieve social equity for farmers in modern societies and to preserve rural society through income support to farmers (Symes, 1992). Family farmers were ascribed a central role in ensuring the socio-economic sustainability of rural areas (Bowler, 1985). Moreover, as Gray (2000) has argued, in the original

formulation of the CAP the rural was represented as a distinct type of space and one in which agriculture and the rural were largely synonymous. He notes that in European Community statements from this period, agriculture was the encompassing concern defining the nature and values of rural spaces. This view afforded little possibility for alternative conceptions of rurality.

In order to achieve the contradictory objectives of economic efficiency and social equity in farming, price support mechanisms were introduced and measures put in place to facilitate agricultural modernisation and the expansion of output. Technical progress was promoted to ensure the rational development of agriculture and optimum utilization of the factors of production. A common market was established based upon intervention, common prices and protection against cheaper, non-European imports (Cole & Cole, 1997). These measures served to transform certain European agricultural sectors into an efficient, rationalized and competitive industry (Goodman *et al.*, 1987) and resulted in the development of a Fordist regime of mass food production (Marsden, 1998b). In turn, agricultural production was intensified with the concentration of farm businesses (Symes, 1992), along with amplified patterns of mono-production and regional specialisation (Bowler, 1985; see also Walford, 1999). Agricultural productivity rose by 1 – 2% per annum and by the 1970s there was more than sufficient food to satisfy an increasingly standardised market (Marsden, 1998b).

This period was one of rapid farming change but relative policy stability, attributable to an adherence to a single policy consensus formed around increased productivity and food output along with a conception of agriculture's role as a monofunctional provider of agricultural commodities. This consensus came under increasing pressure from the 1970s onwards, eventually precipitating a crisis in the agriculture sectors of European countries in the 1980s and 1990s. Two key economic pressures facing farm businesses, and arising as a direct consequence of the technology/policy model of the Fordist regime of accumulation, account for the crisis. Accumulation became concentrated in those sectors of the food system upstream and downstream of the farm,

weakening farmers' economic positions. This weakness was aggravated by rising levels of indebtedness due to investments in land and machinery (Ward, 1993). Coupled with the prospective withdrawal of the economic security provided by guaranteed prices, many farmers faced extreme uncertainty (see Cox *et al.*, 1989; Marsden *et al.*, 1993; Drummond *et al.*, 2000, for discussions on the crisis in UK agriculture). In place of this consensus emerged a pluralistic conception of agriculture's roles and functions within an increasingly differentiated and contested space (Marsden *et al.*, 1993; Marsden, 1998a).

This reorientation of debates about the future of European agriculture was initially driven by financial concerns associated with the need to address spiralling CAP expenditure and the demands it placed on the EU budget as a whole. Increasingly, however, the focus of concern shifted to the inimical environmental effects of an intensive agriculture (see, for example, Shoard, 1980; Harvey, 1998) and the emergence of a new environmental morality around farm pollution (Lowe, *et al.*, 1997). Anxiety was also expressed over food quality and alimentary security following a series of food scares including that surrounding Salmonella in eggs and the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) crisis. This led some consumers to ascribe increased importance to the 'natural' status of food, its geographic origin and to more extensive production systems (Ilbery & Kneafsey, 1998; Nygard & Storstad, 1998). These consumers challenged the advance of a homogenisation of food preferences across Europe through the unifying forces of 'convenience' and concerns about health (see Miele, 2001). Enabled by abundance, and with cheap food a declining priority for some consumers, there is evidence of a growing segmentation of preferences and consumption behaviour, otherwise characterised as a 'remoralisation' of food framed by 'aesthetic concerns in contemporary culture' (Chaney, 1996: 123).

Concern over the environmental effects of agriculture and shifts in the patterns of food consumption have been linked to more general processes of social modernization unrelated to rural concerns (Hoggart *et al.*, 1995; Buller, 2001a). We may understand these in terms of the rise in 'consumption' as a social force

or systemic dimension of society (Baudrillard, 1998) and changing governance relations between the public and the private, and the state and civil society (for example, Hanf & Jansen, 1998). These processes have been played out in the rural sphere as part of demographic restructuring, leading to revised social representations of the rural emanating from non-rural actors (Cloke & Goodwin, 1992; Halfacree, 1993). For example, in some rural areas there has been a growing trend of service class in-migration, with these 'new' rural groups vesting the countryside with recreation and landscape amenity roles, and privileging the preservation of traditional cultures and values over and above food production (Halfacree, 1997). This has led some commentators to describe rural spaces as sites of consumption as much as production, with the emergence of competing sets of consumption discourses surrounding positional goods and services (Flynn & Marsden, 1995; Goodwin, 1998; Marsden, 1998a; 1999). These increasingly differentiated representations of the rural, along with a more diverse rural polity and a greater degree of social and civic participation in decision-making, have occurred in association with processes of market deregulation and the concomitant re-regulation of agriculture by non-market forces (Goodwin, 1998). Wider consumption demands and gradual shifts in representation have provided a direct challenge to the agricultural mono-functionality of rural spaces.

Concurrent with, and to a degree reflecting these social and political shifts, has been a reorientation of the CAP. This began with the imposition of production quotas in 1984, the introduction of voluntary and compulsory set-aside schemes of arable land in 1988 and 1992, respectively, and extensification measures (Ilbery & Bowler, 1998). In combination, these policy mechanisms signalled the first phase of adjustment in the CAP as a largely productivist policy. Furthermore, formal environmental policy mechanisms were introduced into the CAP (Lowe & Baldock, 2000) and these can be dated to Regulation 797/85, the legal force to Article 19 or Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) schemes (Clark & Jones, 1998), but most notably to the 1992 CAP reforms and the Agri-Environment Regulation (2078/92) which formalised the notion of paying

farmers for the production and maintenance of environmental goods¹ (see also the edited works of Whitby, 1996; Buller *et al.*, 2000 for an extended discussion on the implementation and delivery of Agri-Environment (AE) policy in Member States, and the work of Potter, 1998 and Jones & Clark, 2001).

The 1992 CAP reforms were taken forward under the Cork Declaration (1996) and Agenda 2000. The latter includes the Rural Development Regulation (1257/99), the central component of the 'second pillar' of the reformed CAP. By proposing an integrated strategy for rural development, and the incorporation of all components of the rural, including agriculture, under an inclusive framework, the Rural Development Regulation (RDR) encourages a move away from a rural mono-functionalism and a focus on the farming particular, towards sectoral re-integration and a "multifunctional countryside" (Hall, 1997; Lowe & Ward, 1998). Furthermore, the central tenet of the RDR is that farmers have a key role to play in maintaining and in protecting a 'multifunctional' European rural environment, largely the result of past agricultural endeavours, and that they should receive payments for playing that role (Wilson *et al.*, 2000).

Much debate surrounds the notion of multifunctionality. The concept implies that agriculture produces benefits and services in addition to food commodities, such as the generation and management of cultural landscapes and ecological features, as well as performing a social role in supporting populations in peripheral areas (Lowe *et al.*, 2002). In this sense, there is continuity with one of the core original objectives of the CAP which is the central role family farmers are expected to occupy. Buller (2001a) suggests that the notion of a distinct model of European agriculture whose defining feature is held to be its 'multifunctionality' can be conceived as a political construct, or a 'potent icon' in the global debate over farming subsidies. In the context of the growing

¹ Although see Clark *et al.*, (1997) for a discussion on whether agri-environment initiatives presaged a 'real' change in the agricultural policymaking process, or instead were an extensification measure, formalized by elites, to be supportive of the core principles of the CAP, and the prevailing productivist ethos. Research conducted at the level of the individual farm business suggests a similar interpretation (see Winter & Gaskell, 1998a).

liberalisation of agriculture, along with World Trade Organisation (WTO) demands to reduce and ultimately do away with EU farm subsidies, the RDR presents a frame within which alternative forms of agricultural support might be justified. Criticisms of the CAP as unfair and anti-liberalist may be countered with the introduction of 'direct' payments to farmers, contingent on their meeting environmental requirements, and therefore decoupled from production (Potter & Goodwin, 1998; Potter & Burney, 2002). Described as a 'third way', neither a completely liberalised scenario in which support mechanisms are dismantled through degressivity, nor one in which guaranteed payments continue to be coupled to production, it promotes a farming industry supported to maintain Europe's social and cultural rural tissue (Buller, 2001a).

One of the intended outcomes of Agenda 2000 is the eventual transformation of the CAP from a sectoral policy of farm commodity support to an integrated policy for rural development and environmental enhancement (Lowe *et al.*, 2002). Whilst this outcome undermines agriculture's hegemonic position in the countryside as originally codified in the CAP, it also seeks to re-embed it in the rural (see the Curry report, 2002; Pretty, 2002). This theme of reconnection is reflected in a growing academic interest and conceptualisation of the repositioning of agriculture in the rural economy as one of the elements of a sustainable form of rural development (see edition of *Sociologia Ruralis*, 2000, volume 40(4) and specifically Marsden *et al.*, 2000; Roest & Menghi, 2000).

Before we can return to the empirical manifestations of recent rural change it is necessary to review evolving conceptualisations of rural change within the rural studies literature. These shifting conceptualisations have been the subject of considerable contestation within the field. They centrally concern the shift from structuralist and modified political economy perspectives to ones that are actor-centred with a focus on local and contingent conditions. The basic argument is that actor-centred analyses are to be preferred because they add a dimension that cannot be obtained from even modified political economy positions, although a complete emphasis upon local conditions and actors is insufficient

without some appreciation of the contextual conditions that may constrain the perceptions, experiences and daily practices of local actors.

Investigating Rural Change: From Political Economy to an Actor-Centred Approach

Following a period during which rural geography was dominated by community studies², an approach characterised by a general absence of theoretical underpinning, rural researchers in the 1980s (in some cases albeit reluctantly, see Cloke & Moseley, 1990), sought to underpin rural research with a conceptual framework developed through an increasing engagement with critical social theory. Political economy provided a framework for macrostructural analyses of agricultural relations and a means of investigating and explaining political and economic changes in the countryside. As Morris & Evans (1999) observed, political economy emerged as the dominant discourse in theories of agricultural and rural change in the last two decades. In its earliest applications within the field of rural geography, the chief guiding theoretical influence of political economy approaches was structural Marxism, as embodied in the ideas of Louis Althusser, which attributed importance to structural political and economic forces in shaping socio-spatial phenomena. As the main drivers of change, structural forces were conceived as inherently deterministic in nature (Peet & Thrift, 1989). Thus, the Marxian political economy approach revisited in rural geography in the early 1980s forwarded a set of top-down, structuralist assumptions about changes in agriculture and the rural sphere, proposing a causal relationship between economic processes and rural change (Marsden *et al.*, 1993).

Political economy provided an overarching conceptual tool to investigate the processes of the penetration of outside capital into agricultural production, agrarian class structures, the processes of the centralisation and accumulation of capital in agriculture, the attendant transformation of the family labour farm in a capitalist context, and the changing relations between agriculture and the State

² See Liepins (2000) for a review of the community-oriented tradition in rural studies. She offers a reappraisal of 'community' and argues that it holds further analytical potential as a key concept in analysing discursive constructions of social space.

(see Marsden *et al.*, 1986; 1996 for reviews). A key observation to emerge from the research on processes of agricultural restructuring was the uneven nature of capital relocation, restructuring and recomposition (Cloke, 1989). Marsden *et al.*, (1986) draw attention to the considerable differentiation in agricultural production relations through time and over space. The inherent unevenness of capital penetration, coupled with the refraction of these processes in the context of particular tenure systems, systems of ownership and systems of capital accumulation associated with a land-based production system, served to further increase differentiation (Marsden *et al.*, 1986). Contemporary expressions of the unevenness of capital penetration and the development of a spatialised division of capital are manifest, for example, in the increased specialisation and concentration of agricultural production in some regions of Europe (Bowler, 1985). In turn, it was argued that processes of capital penetration and accumulation exaggerated local differences, acting in contradictory ways by unevenly drawing agriculture into wider circuits of capital on a locally differentiated and socially changing backdrop. For example, capital accumulation in the food industry led to the integration of some agricultural regions (and sectors) into global food complexes. In contrast, those farming businesses marginalized by this process suffered falling incomes and became dependent on alternative markets or business strategies (Marsden, *et al.*, 1996). As such, as capital flows through localities, connections and disconnections are generated, at once reinforcing or undermining local features (Amin & Thrift, 1995) and engendering 'winners' and 'losers' (Marsden, 1996).

The political economy approach, with its overt emphasis on exogenous, structural forces, was the subject of increasing criticism in the late 1980s. These critiques arose from the fact that the apparent uniformity of restructuring processes, as implied by the determinism inherent in political economy accounts, disintegrates when processes of restructuring and their effects are the subject of empirical investigation in particular places. A key challenge to the inherent determinism of structural macroanalyses was provided through research conducted on the penetration of capital into agricultural production

relations. For example, a series of empirical studies were conducted on the transformation of the agricultural labour process through an examination of the process of subsumption. Subsumption, as defined by Whatmore *et al.* (1987a; 1996) and Marsden *et al.*, (1987), is the process by which relations of production become commoditised and reconfigured. They argued that the subsumption of the family labour farm takes place in a 'formal' sense in agriculture, through the expropriation of surplus value from the labour process by capital, but without directly revolutionizing the labour process on the farm. This meant that the legal ownership of the business and the land often remained with the farm family but increasingly the management of production became dependent on technical and economic factors controlled by external capitals. Their research (Whatmore *et al.*, 1987b) on three diverse agricultural production systems in southern England revealed the unevenness of the subsumption process leading to a variety of farm business forms. This variety is manifest through different 'compromises' with capital, including diversifying the farm business and redirecting family income through non-agricultural work by family members. These lead, in turn, to the pursuit of different accumulation strategies. These authors attribute these differences in the nature of subsumption processes to the variability of family relations within farm businesses, affording farm families a degree of flexibility and an element of choice in their own restructuring³.

The example described here of the processes of subsumption is drawn upon to highlight the diversity and adaptability of farm accumulation strategies and practices as revealed through empirical investigations. These serve to expose the significant weaknesses of structuralist political economy approaches and, in particular, the reliance on categorical accounts of social relations and unilinear

³ Attention drawn to the variability in farm relations as a factor in conferring a degree of choice in the pursuit of alternative accumulation strategies, such as farm-based diversification, precipitated research on the specific characteristics of farming families including the role of women in the reproduction of the farm business (Whatmore, 1991). Inherent in this research is a concern with the distribution of power in the farm household. Saugeres (2002) also discusses the 'masculinisation' of agriculture in a farming community in southern France, and the concomitant marginalisation of women in decision-making about the farm business, and Evans & Ilbery (1996) examine the effects of managing farm-based accommodation schemes on farming women's degree of power in the farm business and household.

explanations of change as determined by a particular logic of accumulation. They thereby fail to account for the spatial and temporal unevenness inherent in the restructuring of agricultural relations (Marsden *et al.*, 1987). These criticisms have led to a series of revised interpretations of the meaning and practice of the political economy approach⁴. At the heart of modified political economy approaches is the centrality afforded to diversity of form and unevenness of process, and to the fact that these processes are conceived as being socially contested, rather than logically pre-determined. The consequences of these revised conceptualisations have been two-fold, and they are intimately related. On the one hand, they encourage a more critical examination of the constitution of 'structural' processes through their articulation at the local level, and on the other, they afford more careful consideration of the role of human agency (Marsden, *et al.*, 1996).

As such, there was a growing recognition that patterns of uneven development in agriculture are not solely the outcome of economic processes, but are produced through the complex interplay of social, economic and political processes with diverse sets of places. This serves to establish a strong conceptual link between political economic forces and concrete historical places and to highlight the geographic specificity of capital's penetration in the farm sector (Page, 1996). This argument imbues structuralist accounts with contingency, incorporating historical and local specificity within broader analytical frameworks (Peet & Thrift, 1989) which parallel the locality debates in

⁴ Buttel (2001) in his review of the foci of current agrarian political economy research, drawn largely from the American literature, has identified two key areas, namely the research on global agri-food commodity chains (Bonanno *et al.*, 1994) and food regimes which employs a structuralist, neo-Marxist political economy approach. The work on international food regimes draws attention to the globalisation of accumulation in the agro-food sector, through the superseding of the nation state as the locus of agricultural regulation by international trading agreements and the activities of transnational corporations. This work has been challenged because such explanations of change undermine human agency, social contestation and the contingency of place (Marsden *et al.*, 1996). (See Moran *et al.*, 1996 who argue that the literature on food regimes affords insufficient attention to the national and regional variability in the expression of food regimes. They suggest that attention should be afforded to the role of social and political (agricultural) movements which facilitate the influence by farmers on the form of agro-commodity chains and regulation governing the agricultural sector. They are thus signalling the importance of social action in shaping structural outcomes, in turn contributing to the uneven development and expression of food regimes through time and across space).

human geography (Massey, 1984; 1993). A consequence of this was to establish the local as an important arena for empirical enquiry. In rural, and other areas of human geography, researchers have argued that the local represents a setting of action of considerable significance (Munton, 1995; Marsden & Arce, 1995; Flynn & Marsden, 1995) and that the situated practices of local actors play a central role in changing landscapes (Marsden *et al.*, 1993). This prompted Marsden (1996) to issue a call centred on the need to explore and describe local processes of patterning, social orchestration, ordering and resistance and to signal the importance of local case studies. He argues that

“This is not to ignore the significance of global productive forces, but to place them in some kind of symmetry with the development of local and regional ruralities ... [and that] ‘localistic’ case studies [are rendered] the very building blocks towards an effective comparative rural sociology that goes beyond surfing the very geometry of globalisation.” (Marsden, 1999; 517).

As well as establishing the local as a setting of action of considerable significance, revised political economy approaches sought to incorporate human agency and social relations into these analytical frameworks in order to explore the role of actors in shaping rural change trajectories. In the study of ‘unevenness’, the actions and capacities of individual actors or groups of actors are accorded weight. As Symes (1992) suggests

“By focusing attention on global trends and the role of the state, it is easy to forget that external forces are mediated at the level of the household and that structural change in agriculture is also conditioned by the attitudes and behaviours of farmers as individuals.” (Symes, 1992; 206).

Indeed, the presumption that structural forces are inflected and that they have different resonances and distinct effects in different localities presupposes a degree of human agency (Massey, 1993). It is argued that these distinct effects are, in part, explained by the contestation and moulding of these forces by local actors who variously engage in processes of deflection and appropriation of these forces of change. This leads Marsden (1996) to conceive of rural change as a socially and politically shaped process, one resulting from the actions of actors operating in different actor-spaces embedded at different spatial scales

(Murdoch and Marsden, 1995), in which external forces become 'mixed up' with the social and institutional at the local level to shape new outcomes (Marsden, 1996; Jones & Clark, 2000). Thus it is argued that the study of social formations and social relations, not exclusively at the local level, must form a focus of investigation, because of their centrality in shaping the course of rural change (Marsden, 1996).

It follows that an integrated approach is required that can hold together the local and the non-local, and one which integrates social action at the centre of analysis. Actors in local situations are bound together by sets of social processes and are drawn into relations with actors situated elsewhere in the pursuit of common resources and competitive goals. What is needed is a framework which embeds local action within the dynamic complexity of the extra-local (Ray, 1999a) and which is sensitive to the 'vital, reflexive connections between the global and the local' (Lowe *et al.*, 1995: 93). It is this reflexivity which is crucial, for while it can be agreed that the situated practices of local actor networks play a central role in changing rural landscapes (Marsden, *et al.*, 1993), it is also recognised that local actions can have larger consequences that reverberate at other spatial scales. As Routledge (1997) illustrates, local action can have considerable reach, and thus we must avoid over-privileging the local or divorcing it from what comes from 'above'⁵. A more sophisticated conceptualisation needs to be developed, which undermines the emphasis on

⁵ In reaction to structuralist accounts of change, an endogenous approach to rural development has been propounded (Van Dijk & Van der Ploeg, 1995; Ray, 1999a; 1999b). It proposes that the role of localities is more than just the expression of structural processes, forces that invariably emanate from outside the region (Day, 1998). A central proposition of an endogenous approach is that a locality has specific resources, conceptualised as ecological, social and cultural 'capital' (see Ray, 1998; Kneafsey *et al.*, 2001). These resources accumulate over time and so are historically embedded in the region's fabric. Local actors operationalise these resources and this is what underpins the potential for local action, the region's local development potential (Lowe *et al.*, 1995; Ray, 1999a). There is a bottom-up or local control over the development process, and as such, trajectories of rural change are explained by the local resource base and the degree and scope of local control in the mobilisation of these resources. However, with an overt focus on local control over the processes of change, this approach suffers from the same criticisms of partiality and polarisation that have been levied at structuralist accounts. Indeed, as Murdoch (1997; 322) has argued, "dualistic thinking is problematic in social theory because it tends to cleave theoretical perspectives into two distinct and incommensurable parts, thereby polarizing whole fields of concepts."

either exogenous or endogenous forces of change, and which takes account of the nature of the links between the local and non-local, how they are sustained and in what arenas.

Networks have been forwarded as a concept to hold together the local and the non-local (Lowe *et al.*, 1995). A network approach affords the conceptualisation of interconnections between places, of the relations that stretch beyond geographical boundaries and thus they serve to overcome the dualism inherent in explanations of change which focus either on the exogenous or endogenous forces of change (Sayer, 1991; Murdoch, 1997). By focusing on social relations, networks also shift the frame of reference from a spatial to a social one, and thus provide a means of incorporating social action into explanations of change. In the light of these conceptual developments, networks have been employed as a theoretical and methodological tool in recent empirical enquiries in the field of rural geography (see Murdoch, 2000). Some researchers have adopted Actor Network Theory, developed in the field of the sociology of science (see Callon, 1986; Law, 1986) in the analysis of contemporary agro-food systems. Specifically, this work has focused on the constitution, distribution, reach and exercise of power in food commodity chains (see Marsden & Arce, 1995; Whatmore & Thorne, 1997) along with the role (and agency) of nature in these systems (see Marsden, 1999; Murdoch *et al.*, 2000).

In conclusion, therefore, it is argued that underpinning an actor-centred approach is the conviction that, although certain important structural changes in agriculture in particular places result from the impact of outside forces, including the State, the market and the CAP, for example, it is unsatisfactory to base an analysis of the processes of change solely on an external determination. As this discussion has highlighted, modified political economy frameworks have incorporated an actor-oriented approach into their analyses in an attempt to emphasise the role of human action in particular actor-spaces in shaping changes in the rural sphere. Furthermore, these frameworks have sought to stress the reflexive interplay of the local and the extra-local. It has been argued

that an advantage of an approach that emphasises human action, an actor-centred approach, begins with an interest in explaining apparently differential responses to similar structural circumstances. It is assumed that the differential patterns that arise in trajectories of change are, in part, the creation of actors themselves. The precise patterns of change cannot be imposed from outside, nor can they be explained in terms of a deterministic or causal structural logic. Thus, there is an explicit recognition that actors are not passive recipients of externally imposed processes and actors, operating individually and as members of networks, are variously able to negotiate change, exploit opportunities, eschew threats on account of their access to a range of resources, local knowledges and skills (Long, 1992; Shucksmith & Chapman, 1998).

In order to apply these arguments to investigations of agricultural change and to explore the differentiated responses of actors in specific places to extra-local forces of change, the main task of analysis would seem to be to identify and characterise the different rationales and strategies of actors under particular circumstances and their effectiveness in negotiating change. It is suggested that an analysis of actors' rationales and strategies could be operationalised in the frame of an empirical investigation through the employment of four vehicles. These vehicles are the perception of threats and opportunities and the motivations and strategies that lie behind actors' actions. As Marsden (1996; 249) argues, "gaps open and close around new opportunities" in contemporary rural spaces and moreover, these opportunities do not confer universal benefits and instead will be "differentially represented, interpreted and utilised by participants within situations" (Murdoch & Marsden, 1995: 371).

It is suggested that actors attempt to harness opportunities and deflect threats based on a calculation of self-interest and / or of the material needs of the group. Social formations will coalesce around a similar calculation of goals and material interests and in the process, some actors will be marginalised or excluded. The process of opportunity perception and harnessing is a shifting and creative one; it will depend on the alignment of a dynamic of change with

the agendas or material interests of actors, their capacity to mobilise resources in the pursuit of a chosen trajectory and to overcome barriers, be they regulatory, institutional, economic, technological, or normative. All of these manoeuvrings amongst actors, and the strategies they deploy, will be beset by contradictions, tensions and conflicts as different interests compete for preferential access to dynamics of change and the advantages they bestow.

With these theoretical debates in mind, the thesis returns to how we might conceptualise our understanding of the broad processes of rural change in the West European sphere. How, for example, can we make sense of the declining primacy of agricultural interests within the emergent social, economic and political contexts of the rural? How can we interpret the shift within agriculture itself from a singular concern with food production to a multi-functional role, providing recreational, aesthetic and conservation benefits as well as food for an increasingly segmented market place? As the following section will suggest, these debates have focused around a particular organising heuristic and how it might be examined, namely the productivist / post-productivist transition. In the course of examining these debates, we shall constantly return to what an actor-centred approach might offer to any such empirical enquiry.

Conceptualising Change in the Rural Spaces of Europe: The Post-Productivist Transition

The post-productivist transition (PPT) has gained widespread credence amongst researchers in a range of disciplines as a means of exploring contemporary agricultural restructuring and spatial patterns of uneven rural development. By embodying the notion of a transition, this literature seeks to convey a fundamental change in agrarian priorities along the lines described earlier in the chapter. The characteristics of a productivist and post-productivist agriculture are explored in detail elsewhere and will not form the focus of this discussion (see Bowler (1985) for an extended discussion of the three key elements of productivist agriculture: concentration, intensification and specialisation. Ilbery & Bowler (1998), Wilson (2001) and Argent (2002) outline the characteristics of both a productivist and a post-productivist agriculture). Furthermore, it is argued that a focus on productivism and post-productivism unwisely reinforces the conceptual separation of these two dualistic categories and their presumed directionality from each other.

Following its initial establishment as a heuristic to describe change and then as a meso-level concept to investigate change, there has been a search to identify and define the characteristics and empirical expressions of the PPT. However, the PPT has been the subject of recent critical attention. Evans *et al.*, (2002), for example, argue that post-productivism creates a distraction from broader attempts to develop theoretically-informed perspectives of agriculture and that it has little utility in explaining the processes underpinning agricultural change. They justify this position by drawing on the same kind of critique of Fordism and post-Fordism advanced by Cloke and Goodwin (1992). In substituting the terms productivism and post-productivism for Fordism and post-Fordism, respectively, it leads them to conclude that there is a

'need to theorize the complexity of empirical change in a more satisfactory manner than that allowed by the rather abstract and over-arching notions of Fordism [productivism] and post-Fordism [post-productivism.]' (Evans *et al.*, 2002; 325).

This would seem to suggest that these authors are interpreting the PPT as an abstract descriptor of conditions into which the theoretical positions of political economy and actor-centred approaches cannot be incorporated, and thus, it cannot be attributed explanatory value in the study of change. Evans *et al.*, (2002) advance a second criticism. They analyse what they regard as the empirical basis of post-productivism and conclude that much of it fails to substantiate the existence of a shift to post-productivism. Moreover, they conclude that such attempts to measure the existence of a transition are stultifying current research into agricultural change. They argue instead for the application of other theoretical perspectives, proposing ecological modernisation as a possible candidate.

Wilson (2001) is less trenchant in his critique and instead argues for a critical refinement of the PPT. He argues that discussions of the shift to post-productivism have been dominated by structuralist and political economy approaches and that the injection of actor-centred and behaviourally-grounded perspectives will have the effect of broadening our understanding of the complex social processes underpinning change. He therefore reaches a different conclusion from Evans *et al.*, (2002) and implies that if appropriately handled, the PPT may be ascribed explanatory power. These contrasting positions raise two key issues which encapsulate the tensions inherent in the conceptualisation and application of the PPT. In the first instance they serve to highlight that the PPT has been employed as a meta-level narrative - a heuristic - to describe the changing agricultural policy context, the role of the State in agriculture and changing agrarian priorities. Others have then sought to translate this meta-level argument into a meso-level concept to examine and explain the empirical manifestations of the shift, often in particular places. This translation between the meta-level and the particular is problematic and embodies the generic tension of negotiating between general explanations and the study of particular places at particular times. Furthermore, it follows that some of the criticisms levied at the PPT are a consequence of the conflation of the objectives of a heuristic and seeking to use it to examine the expressions of post-productivism

in particular places. Criticisms centring on its inability to interrogate the processes underpinning agricultural restructuring would be undermined if its identification as a heuristic, on the one hand, and as a conceptual tool with explanatory power, on the other, were rendered explicit and distinct.

The second issue raised by these critiques concerns whether it is possible to develop this heuristic into a conceptual tool through the integration of political economy and actor-centred approaches. Moreover, and with respect to the latter, will the injection of actor-centred approaches to its study add nuance to conceptualisations of the PPT or will they only serve to undermine its meta-level value by their revelation of the spatially and temporally differentiated nature of change? The analyses of Wilson (2001) and Evans *et al.*, (2002) effectively support these respective positions. In his review, Wilson (2001) draws on a wide range of studies conducted within actor-centred and behaviourally-grounded approaches and concludes that a spectrum of productivist and post-productivist positions exist concurrently in the 'mental landscapes', norms and ideologies of individual actors in different actor-spaces. Moreover, in his view, through the deployment of theorizations of human agency, these studies reveal the processes which underpin the formation of choices and the enactment of strategies that dictate the point an individual occupies along the PPT spectrum, and can therefore be pursued with expectation of success in revealing its empirical and conceptual worth.

In order to address these two issues the following discussion is divided into three sections. In the first, the emergence of the notion of post-productivism and the PPT is analysed. It is argued that in its original formulation it was presented as a meta-level narrative, to capture a discourse change in agricultural policy. The second section explores how researchers sought to identify the empirical expressions of this meta-level narrative. The PPT has been conceptualised as three bi-polar dimensions of change (Ilbery & Bowler, 1998) and these authors identify what they regard as the empirical indicators of post-productivism. These indicators have been elaborated upon by other authors

(Halfacree, 1997; 1999; Tovey, 1997; Morris & Evans, 1999; Wilson, 2001) and four related characteristics of post-productivism are briefly described. In the final section it is observed that conceptualisations of the PPT are dominated largely by structuralist accounts, only offering a partial account of change and thus it seeks to interrogate what additional explanatory power might be conferred with the injection of actor-centred approaches.

As previously described, it is widely acknowledged that by the mid-1980s, a secular shift was beginning to occur in the orientation of agricultural policy and the established consensus on which it was based was being undermined. A descriptive device was proposed to characterise the elements of a productivist agriculture along with those of its successor (see Bowler, 1985). In the first instance, therefore, the post-productivist transition as conceived by Lowe *et al.*, (1993), was paradigmatic or iconical, rather than immediately empirical. It provided a framing device for discussions about countryside change, rather than an explicit theorisation of the processes underpinning agricultural change and continues to be deployed in this way. (For example, see Halfacree (1997; 1999) for discussions on counter-urbanisation in the 'post-productivist countryside' and Wilson & Wilson (1997) who examine the amenity and nature conservation value of traditional low intensity grazing systems on common land in the 'post-productivist phase').

In order to imbue this concept with explanatory power, and to investigate the processes through which such a shift occurs, Ilbery & Bowler (1998) have conceptualised the post-productivist transition as three bi-polar dimensions of change. They characterise the PPT in terms of a progressive reversal of the trends that dominated the preceding productivist phase in EU agriculture. These dimensions are termed the shift from intensification to extensification in production; from specialisation to diversification in farm businesses and farming systems; and from concentration to dispersion, representing the reversal of the trend towards increased polarisation in agriculture, in which output is confined to fewer and larger farm businesses and regions. They

argued that it was necessary to provide empirical substantiation for the existence of a shift and to examine critically these shifts within particular geographical contexts. They proposed that these dimensions of change would find their material manifestation in different pathways of farm business development of which they identify six. These are the continuation of traditional, profitable farming for food production (pathways one and two); the diversification of the farm income base through pluriactivity (three and four); and the extensification of production through a reduction in the levels of farm inputs (pathways five and six).

Ilbery & Bowler (1998) emphasize that 'productivist' farm systems have not been superseded by 'post-productivist' systems, rather that these two divergent pathways coexist. This is a position held by other commentators and resonates with Ward's (1993) discussion of a 'two-track countryside' as characteristic of the British post-productivist countryside, with the further intensification of a high technology model of agricultural development in some areas and on some farms coexisting alongside areas subject to additional environmental regulation and farmed according to the post-productivist model. This leads him to suggest that 'productivist values and actions may persist on some farms, whilst new strategies are sought on others' (Ward, 1993; 360). Marsden (1998b) also discusses what he sees as the uneven retreat from a productivist agriculture, and notes that in spite of the reorientation of agricultural policy, many farmers remain committed to productivist goals, practices and norms resulting in the continued existence of 'productivist enclaves of rationalized production' within a period of post-productivism (Marsden, 1998b; 269). This argument is further elaborated by Wilson (2001) when he suggests that aspects of productivism and post-productivism will often coexist in the behaviour and actions of individual farmers. These authors are effectively imbuing the PPT meta-narrative with dimensions of contingency and scale. They are interpreting the PPT as one which is negotiated within the context of local specificities and in association with local priorities and contingencies. This point serves to highlight that the heuristic, which describes change in all-encompassing terms, should not be

conflated with specific empirical expressions.

That said, several writers have sought to identify what they see as the empirical manifestations of post-productivism. There is a general consensus in the literature that post-productivism may be identified through four key and related indicators⁶, namely the incidence of pluriactivity as an indicator of diversification, set-aside as an indicator of extensification (Ilbery & Bowler (1998), the rise of consumption concerns in the countryside (Symes, 1992; Marsden et al., 1993; Marsden, 1999; Halfacree, 1997; 1999) and the increasing environmental regulation of agriculture (Ward, 1993; Tovey, 1997; 2001).

Ilbery & Bowler (1998) argue that the incidence of pluriactivity as a farm business adaptation strategy is increasing under the PPT. Levels of pluriactivity are rising across the European Union, and indeed the work of Kinsella *et al.*, (2000), for example, indicates that between 1972 and 1998, the percentage of Irish farm households engaged in off-farm activities rose from 30% to 44%. However, the use of increased pluriactivity, with its inherent quantitative directionality, as a diagnostic component *per se* of post-productivism must be tempered with caution when applied to particular regions. Indeed, as Campagne *et al.*, (1990) have suggested following an investigation of pluriactivity in three regions of France, patterns of pluriactivity are largely

⁶ Some authors have also suggested that a quality system of agricultural production is a fifth indicator of post-productivism (Evans *et al.*, 2002), drawing on arguments that the production of quality foods is frequently located in those areas that have remained marginal to industrial agriculture (Ilbery & Kneafsey, 1998). Quality food production is not included in this discussion on post-productivism because it is argued that the relationship between the two is tenuous. Quality is often linked with an identification of the product's geographic source and the French AOC system is cited frequently as an example. In an AOC delimitation for the production of wine, the volume of grapes produced per hectare is controlled (Perriet-Cornet *et al.*, 2001) and is considerably lower than the volumes produced per hectare in the 'mass' production of table wine. This, however, does not render the production of AOC wines 'non'-productivist, indeed grape production is labour intensive, with high inputs of pesticides and chemical sprays. A second example is provided by the role of retail corporations in the food sector. Food retailers are extending their control over agriculture through 'contract farming', with production often regulated by standardised systems of quality control, leading some commentators to suggest that farmers are being locked into a 'quality treadmill' (Marsden *et al.*, 1996). In these cases, therefore, quality is being commodified around the notion of standardised and sanitised foods (Murdoch *et al.*, 2000), with little shift from a productivist form of production.

contingent on the interaction of a range of factors internal to the farm business with those of the external socio-economic environment. In the case of the viticulture sector of the Languedoc, the sector has been characterised by high levels of pluriactivity throughout the twentieth century (Chiffolleau, 1999). Opportunities for the practice of pluriactivity were afforded, in the past, through a mutually supportive and close relationship between owner-cultivators/agricultural wage labourers and large viticultural estates (Pech, 1975), and today pluriactivity is sustained through the social organisation of farmers into cooperatives (see chapter 2). The prevalence of pluriactivity in this context does not equate with a post-productivist transition, rendering an increased incidence of pluriactivity inappropriate as an absolute indicator of a shift in farming systems across Western Europe.

Similar anomalies appear when the degree and nature of extensification of agricultural production, a second diagnostic component of post-productivism, is examined in particular places. The premise for extensification was first established in policy terms through the institution of Regulation 1760/87, which included measures for voluntary arable set-aside schemes along with reduced stocking measures. Compulsory set-aside schemes were also incorporated in the 1992 CAP reforms (Potter, 1998) and this suite of policies, in their commonality of purpose, affords a means of precipitating a reversal of high-input, intensive agricultural production. Indeed, by 1994, 5.9 million hectares had been removed from arable production across Europe, and Walford (1999), in his examination of the changes in the nature and structure of agricultural production in England and Wales post World War II, concludes that whilst specialisation in farm businesses and concentration in output remain in evidence in contemporary farming systems, there does appear to be an extensification of production activity. As with the incidence of pluriactivity, when analysed at a Europe-wide scale, there has been an extensification of activity with significant areas of agricultural land removed from production. However, detailed research reveals that this paradigm shift in policy terms is often contested and translated into contradictory actions at the level of the farm

household. Winter & Gaskell (1998b) have suggested that the receipt of extensification payments does not automatically engender a significant reduction in stocking levels, a conclusion drawn from an investigation of stocking level densities in the English beef sector. Similarly, Potter (1998) discusses the potential for a 'slippage effect' in set-aside schemes. This describes a fall in production which is lower, proportionally, than the amount of land set-aside, and is attributed to the fact that some farmers may retire their least productive land first whilst intensifying production on their remaining land.

A third characteristic of post-productivism is the emergence of revised representations of rurality, in part as a result of a reconfiguring of the social composition of rural areas. Halfacree (1997; 1999) explores ways in which new opportunities are created for diverse social groups, from the service classes to environmental and road protestors, to imbue the countryside with new meanings, following a decline in agriculture's territorial, economic and cultural significance. These meanings are often in direct opposition to the entrenched organisational logic of agriculture (see Lowe *et al.*, 1997) but are themselves contested and contradictory, as demonstrated through the example of the planning and rural land development process in the UK (Marsden & Flynn, 1993; Murdoch & Marsden, 1994). Many of these contrasting roles for the countryside, and the new consumption concerns they often represent (Symes, 1992; Marsden *et al.*, 1993; Marsden, 1999), reflect the rise in environmentalism as an ethic and political force along with the search for positional goods within the rural domain.

In political terms, this rise in environmentalism is reflected in the 'greening' of agricultural policy and the amplified environmental regulation to which agriculture and other aspects of productivism, including mineral extraction, are now exposed (see Munton, 1995; Ward *et al.*, 1995). An increase in the environmental regulation of agriculture is the fourth characteristic of post-productivism and is frequently advanced as its central component (Tovey, 1997;

2001)⁷. A substantial body of research, carried out within the frame of behaviourally-informed approaches, has been conducted into the impact of agri-environmental policies and schemes on the behaviour and actions of farmers to assess the effectiveness of these regulations. The focus of this research has been varied. Some studies centre on the socio-economic factors which influence farmer participation in ESA schemes. These factors, both external and internal to the farm business, include farmer age, successional status, farm size, payments offered by the scheme and the amount and quality of information provided (Wilson, 1997). Other studies have explored the role of farmers' attitudes and the motivational aspects of participation (Morris & Potter, 1995; Battershill & Gilg, 1996; 1997), the processes through which actors construct meanings about nature and the environment (Morris & Andrews, 1997), and the effect of scheme participation on farmers' attitudes to measure the degree of subsequent attitudinal change (Wilson & Hart, 2001). In combination, these studies reveal the diversity of farmers' attitudes towards the environment and conservation and, in turn, reflect their position on a spectrum ranging from active non-adopters to active engagers in relation to AE schemes (Morris & Potter, 1995). Once again this evidence suggests that productivism and post-productivism co-exist in the mental landscapes of farmers with no clear identification, in time or space terms, of productivism or post-productivism as discrete entities.

This evidence notwithstanding, discussions on post-productivism have been framed largely by a political economy approach, with attention focused on the role of State intervention in agriculture and, in particular, the 1992 reforms of the CAP. Other researchers have argued for hybrid approaches as manifest in the incorporation of local specificity and human agency into revised political economy approaches (Marsden *et al.*, 1986; 1996; Ward & Munton, 1992). Ward

⁷ In 1999, 4% of the CAP budget was spent on agri-environmental schemes (Wilson & Hart, 2001), the remainder of which was designated for production support, maintaining farm incomes and rural development. Thus, in economic terms, at least, the commitment to environmentally-sustainable agricultural production in Europe is marginal, compared to that afforded to a productivist ethos.

(1993), however, argues explicitly for the injection of an actor-centred approach into conceptualisations of post-productivism. He emphasises

“the need to recognize the central role of farmers’ actions in constructing and reorganizing farming practice. Differences in farming practice result from differences in farmer strategy, rationality and access to internal and external resources ... important determinants of farmers’ style are farmers’ goals or ‘logics’ of production ... Applying these models to questions of uneven agro-environmental relations provides a way forward in making sense of post-productivist heterogeneity.” (Ward, 1993; 360, 361).

Research conducted into farmers’ perceptions of the environment and their motivation for participating in agri-environment schemes reveals the way in which the theoretical perspectives of actor-centred approaches can be incorporated into the PPT. These studies draw attention to the differentiated nature of the actions, practices and values of actors directly involved in the processes of rural change. These differences lead Wilson (2001) to suggest that actors are situated at different points along a productivist - post-productivist spectrum. The corollary of this is that change is conceptualised in transitional terms, rather than productivism and post-productivism being constructed as discrete conceptual entities and defined according to a set of absolute indicators. Such an elaboration of the conceptual tool is particularly important if the applicability of the PPT is to be explored in geographical settings outside of the UK context in which it has been largely developed and applied.

In the light of these differences and the chaotic nature of the concept of the PPT, it is suggested that it may be appropriate to elaborate our conceptualisation of the PPT still further. It is argued that an additional benefit of injecting actor-centred approaches into the study of the PPT is that they may contribute to explanations of the *complex processes* of agricultural change, which otherwise remain obscured by the repeated and inconsistent use of the term. A processual approach has the potential to examine the processes through which an individual moves from one point on the spectrum to another. It also affords the examination of those processes which underpin the construction of meanings, for example, and how these meanings change under specific circumstances.

Specifically, these meanings surround farmers' identities, their sense of freedom (Carr & Tait, 1990), their attitudes to productivism as an engrained practice, set of norms and way of life (Shucksmith, 1993), and their relations with the environment and nature (Morris & Andrews, 1997). An understanding of the processes underpinning the social construction of meanings would help to explain why an individual occupies a particular position on the spectrum.

This study of social processes underpinning recent change in the viticulture sector of the Languedoc is an attempt to contribute to, and extend, this literature. Significantly, there is virtually no such actor-centred research conducted in the rural milieu of the Languedoc-Roussillon, Mediterranean France (with the exception of the work of Jones & Clark, 2000). Contemporary research on viticulture, the dominant activity in terms of rural land-use in this region, has been undertaken, for the most part, by domestic researchers and many studies have followed in the regionalism tradition characteristic of French rural geography (Sautter & Kayser, 1990) and have provided detailed analyses of the restructuring of the vineyard (see, for example, Galtier, 1960; Laurent, 1978; Cholvy, 1978; 1980; Ben Amor, 1993). More recent work has adopted a neo-regulationist approach to the study of the restructuring of the regulatory practices of local systems of production (see Allaire & Boyer, 1995; Touzard, 1995a; 1995b). Although this work incorporates an element of collective social action and an analysis of the rules, norms and conventions that underpin systems of negotiation, it is primarily concerned with broad questions of political economy and the mode of regulation of capitalist social forms. Thus, through the adoption of an actor-centred approach to investigate change in the context of the Languedoc, this research represents an important test of the wider applicability of the PPT, a notion developed in, and applied to, the more industrialised farming regions of northern Europe (Shucksmith, 1993; Ward, 1993; Ilbery & Bowler, 1998, although see Argent, 2002 for a discussion on the PPT and its application to the Australian context).

2

Regional and Sectoral Specificities: The Viticulture Sector, Languedoc

Introduction

General theorisations of the dynamics of change in the rural spaces of Western Europe are filtered through specific spatio-social contexts. Hence, if we are to elucidate the relationship between these general dynamics and their local expressions, it has been argued in chapter one that attention must be afforded to the social, cultural and historical specificities of the study region, namely the *département* of l'Hérault and its viticulture sector (figure 2.1).

As well as outlining the context against which theorizations of rural change can be said to resonate, this chapter provides a chronological account of the evolution of the table wine sector in l'Hérault as a grounding for the narratives and experiences of actors in the case study. The review will examine the evolution, from the end of the nineteenth century, of a capitalist system of production based around vine monoculture. This historical backdrop allows us to explore the persistence of certain traditions, norms, institutions and structures which together shape the course of contemporary events and future trajectories. The importance accorded to history by geographers studying viticulture is widely acknowledged. In Schirmer's (2000) analysis of the approach of French geographers to studies of vine and viticulture, and in particular that employed in the seminal work of Dion (1959), he identifies the importance of history as being one of the defining features of viticultural geography.

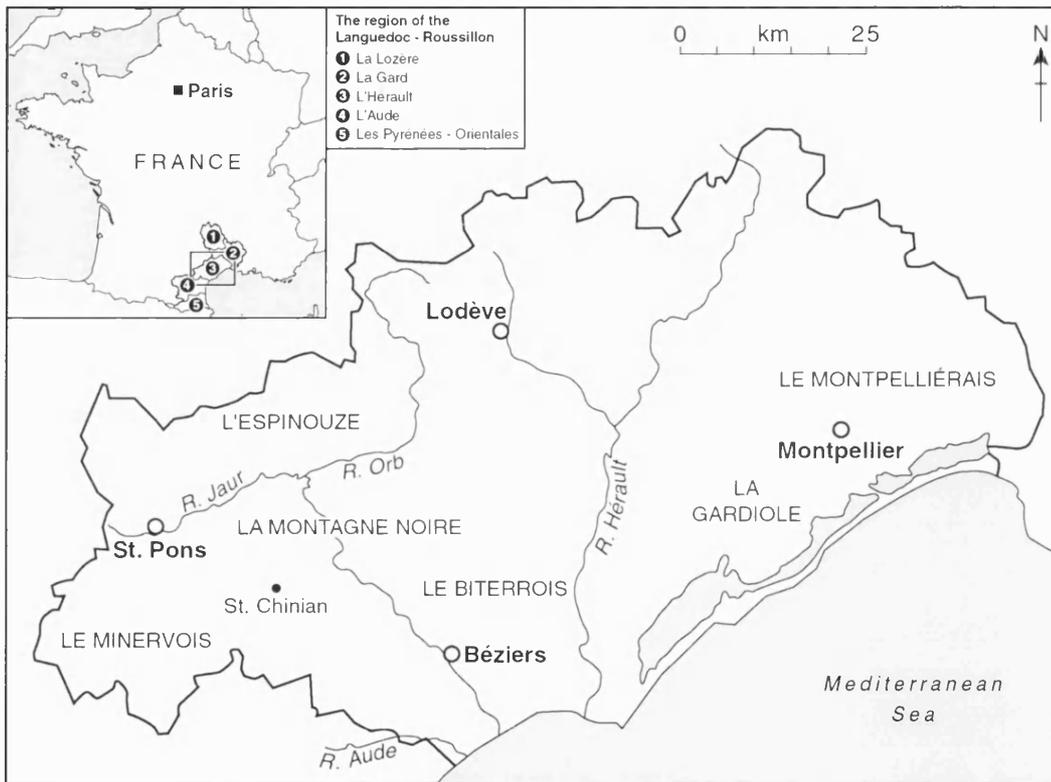


Figure 2.1. Map to show the *département* of l'Hérault in the region of the Languedoc-Roussillon, France¹.

¹ L'Hérault is one of five *départements* that make up the administrative region of the Languedoc-Roussillon, Mediterranean France, along with l'Aude, la Lozère, la Gard and les Pyrénées-Orientales. In terms of wine regions, however, the Languedoc is different from the Roussillon (Johnson, 1994) and thus, for the purposes of this account, the wine sector of the Languedoc will be treated separately. A wine region has a specific spatial delimitation on account of the role of place in the differentiation of the product (Lewis *et al.*, 2001) and the economic organisation of producers, grouped into producer groups or *syndicats de cru* which are linked to the zone of production.

“L’approche des géographes est ... irrémédiablement inscrite dans une évolution, celle de l’histoire ... sans aucun doute ... une attention particulière est accordée à l’histoire. Elle est un élément presque constitutif de toute étude sur les vignobles. C’est pourquoi une réflexion sur le temps ne peut être évitée.” (Schirmer, 2000: 346).

“The approach of geographers is irreparably tied to an evolution, that of history ... without any doubt, special attention is accorded to history. It is practically a constitutive element in every study of vineyards. This is why a reflection on the temporal dimension cannot be avoided.”

Within the specific context of the Languedoc’s viticulture sector, Jones & Clark (2000), in their work on sectoral adjustment and institutional thickness, argue for the importance of socio-cultural norms and values, developed and sustained over time, in conditioning the economic choices both of farmers and viticultural elites in response to external regulatory pressures. As such, they align themselves with a certain tradition of scholarship in which the historical nature of human action is accentuated, and it is due to the importance of the relationship between past and present that, in the following account, this historical perspective is afforded significance.

The chronological account is divided into four evolutionary phases after Touzard and latterly Jones & Clark (Touzard, 1995a; Jones & Clark, 2000). In order to describe the emergence and development of the table wine sector in the Languedoc, they identify a series of phases: ‘viticultural specialisation’ (1850 – 1900), ‘viticultural establishment’ (1900 – 1949), followed by a period of ‘maturation and consolidation’ (1950 – 1970s) and the sector’s recent ‘fracture’ (1970s – to the present day). They argue that following specialisation, the ‘establishment’ and ‘maturation’ phases were characterised by a relative stability arising from an adherence to a common mission, the production of *vin de masse* or low quality table wine, and the coalescence and subsequent sedimentation of a set of institutions, norms, rules and routines around that common mission (Jones & Clark, 2000). Substantial overproduction, coupled with a drop in the demand for table wine, resulted in a fracture in the consensus surrounding the production of table wine and since the

mid-1970s producers in the Languedoc have differentially embarked upon a new trajectory, the production of quality wines, in particular under the *Vins de Pays* label. This division of the sector's evolution into distinct time phases is useful for the purposes of this chapter in that it serves to provide an overview of the main developments of the sector. The conceptualisation of rural restructuring in terms of time periods, or transitional shifts however, as a 'top-down' categorisation of change, cannot be accepted uncritically and receives interrogation in chapter seven through recourse to the case study actors' subjective experiences of change.

Before focusing specifically on the Languedoc's viticulture sector, this historical account is situated within a broader context, that of the production of wine in France as a whole. A hierarchy of wine-regions has developed through time that is socially and culturally constructed by actors with a vested interest in its maintenance. An understanding of the way in which these relationships have been constructed is important in order to understand the system in which the Languedoc's viticulture sector operates, and the Languedoc's subaltern position within this hierarchy. These relationships will be of particular significance when the sector embarks upon a trajectory of the production of quality wines, battling against this hierarchy and the ideological discourse upon which it is founded.

The listing of France's best vineyards has a long history (Perriet-Cornet *et al.*, 2001). In 1908 and 1912, decrees were passed in order to regulate the areas from which Champagne, Cognac, Armagnac, Banyuls and wines from Bordeaux could be produced. In 1919, a law was enacted which allowed legal proceedings to be initiated against those making false claims for the geographic origin of their product. In 1927, the cultivars or grape varieties from which appellation wines could be produced were stipulated. These regulations culminated in the creation of the *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée* (AOC) law in 1935. The *Institut National d'Appellation d'Origine*, (INAO), was established in 1947 and assigned the task of demarcating French vineyards and regulating the production of AOC wines

(Unwin, 1996). In an AOC delimitation, in addition to the identification of geographic source, three main aspects of production are controlled - the varieties of grapes grown, vineyard practices, and the volume of grapes produced per hectare (Perriet-Cornet *et al.*, 2001). Throughout the history of the delimitation of wine areas, several conditions and principles emerge which underpin a wine appellation. Appellation growers wish to protect themselves against fraud by guaranteeing the authenticity of their wine, both in terms of a non-adulterated product and in the legitimate use of reputable names or geographic origins. The key principle upon which the system rests is that these wines have a territorial anchorage and that quality can be guaranteed through reference to where the wine is grown (Unwin, 1996).

In order to understand the relationship between geographic origin and quality, consideration must be given to explanations advanced for the high quality of certain French wines. These centre on the nature-culture dualism - the relative importance of environmental factors compared to the role of producers. Dion (1959) recognised the importance of people; that quality is the result of the application of producer knowledges, experience and importing innovations from elsewhere. It is the exploitation and adaptation of environments by producers over time that results in a quality product, rather than the environment being incontrovertibly superior for the production of wine in certain places. In contrast, geographers such as Enjalbert (1975) and Pijassou (1980), both of whom worked in the archives of the *Château-Latour* estate in the Bordelais region (Clout, 2002), ascribe maximum importance to environmental factors. Pijassou (1980; 232), for example, states that "regional morphological conditions, without question, help us to understand the historical hierarchy of viticultural *terroirs* and the qualitative hierarchy of production. Without engaging in too strict a determinism, this is the indisputable key to the designation of the *grands crus*". INAO have been keen to appropriate, without criticism, these conventional explanations of the influence of natural environmental attributes on the quality of the wine (Moran, 1993). As such,

environmental determinism has become a dominant discourse in the delimitation of wine regions, legitimating the established relationship between place and quality with recourse to 'scientific' or objective explanations.

The discourse linking the quality of wine to specific environmental attributes of a defined territory, thereby conferring weight to a 'naturalised' hierarchy of wine-producing regions, has been challenged on several counts. Dion (1959), in his historical account of the history of viticulture and wine through the twentieth century, demonstrated that over time the location of the prestigious winemaking areas of France changed considerably. For example, in the past, vineyards close to Paris were considered to be of greater note than those of Chablis, and the wine of Montbazillac was more esteemed than that of Sauterne. He notes that the patronage of Dukes of Burgundy was extremely important in establishing the reputation of wine from the area and insuring that this wine was well known among influential buyers. Anomalies appear to exist in the process by which areas were designated. In 1908, a decree was passed to regulate the area in which Champagne could be produced. As Unwin recounts, none of the vineyards of the *département* of the Aube were included in the Champagne designation, even though producers from Aube claimed that Troyes had traditionally been the capital of the province of Champagne (Unwin, 1996). The causality of the relationship between quality and environmental characters has also been questioned. Moran (1993) cites a series of studies which assess the relationships between yields, vineyard practices and quality, criteria which are at the heart of the principles of the appellation legislation. When other factors are manipulated, these relationships break down, challenging the generality of their foundation and undermining the claims of vested interests determined to perpetuate the privileges the existing system creates.

Indeed, these privileges are significant. Moran (1993), in his analysis of the appellation system in France and California, utilises the concept of territory to argue that appellations are harnessed by elite winegrowers as a means of

appropriating control over a geographical area and capturing certain advantages. In classical rent theory, space is a monopolized resource which establishes the advantages of certain places. Those within the boundary benefit from the advantages, whilst those outside of it are excluded. Secondly, by limiting production, in the sense of controlling the volumes produced and thereby restricting supply, producers within these appellations are able to derive further profit, generating additional capital for reinvestment. As such, Unwin (1996) has argued that the precise delimitation, and the position of a producer in relation to it, is of critical importance as producers compete for the opportunities to gain access to monopoly rents. Indeed, once producers have achieved this competitive advantage, it is in their interest to maintain the appellation and to restrict its extension or the access of others to it.

Although the role of both the physical environment and that of the skills and knowledges of the producer are of undisputed importance in the production of quality wine, these factors alone are not sufficient to explain the geography of quality wine production. To do so, it may be helpful to consider quality as an attribute that is socially constructed. This observation resonates with a position advanced by Ilbery and Kneafsey (2000) in their work on constructions of quality amongst producer members of a regional speciality food group in the South West of England. They contend that quality is a complex and contested notion, one that is constructed through the interplay of different actors who seek to represent quality in different ways. This argument raises two further issues. Firstly, consideration must be given to the discourses used in the social construction of quality, and what confers authority on the construction. Moran (1993) presents an argument that actors with a vested interest in an appellation evoke characteristics of the natural environment to justify political and territorial control. Ulin (1996) elaborates further. In his work on wine cooperatives in south-west France, he contends that Bordeaux's ascendancy to its current position in the hierarchy of wine-growing regions, rather than being attributable to some latent environmental determinism,

follows from a historical process of invention that transforms socially constructed criteria of authenticity and quality into ones that appear natural, leading to a winegrowing hierarchy that is regarded as authoritative. This is successful exactly because of the hegemony of the environmental determinist explanation in discourses about wine quality. The second issue is that once elites have appropriated control over an area, and evoked naturalised arguments to legitimate the privileges it entails, there must be some means by which these constructions are sustained and through which they can be instituted in law. These constructions of quality were perpetuated as Perriet-Cornet *et al.* (2001) have observed, because winegrowers were omnipotent in influential spaces, often acting co-jointly as Parliamentary *députés* and owners of vineyards. This is further supported by Lachiver (1988) who notes how, early in the seventeenth century, powerful members of the *Parlement de Dijon* were also owners of the most prestigious Burgundy vineyards and, likewise, members of the *Parlement de Bordeaux* owned vineyards in the Médoc. Not only did these elites have a vested interest in maintaining this hierarchy, but also they had the means to do so, by virtue of their participation in arenas of power.

Viticultural Specialisation, 1850 – 1900

During the nineteenth century, the agrarian sector of Mediterranean France was based on a polycultural system, of which the primary products were cereals, vegetables, olives and nuts, along with the widespread practice of transhumance of sheep (Agnew, 1946; Carrère & Dugrand, 1967). The vine had been introduced into the region during the Roman Empire, but until the end of the nineteenth century, viticulture continued to be a marginal sector with vines cultivated in peripheral agricultural areas and not on the low-lying, alluvial plains which were reserved exclusively for grain production. Arable farming, and in particular the production of wheat, was important in the Midi, such that during this period the Mediterranean was one of six major wheat-growing areas in France (Clout, 1980). Subsistence farming, based on small-scale production for localised demand, was the dominant agrarian mode of production in France at the time. It was not until the end of the nineteenth century, following the creation in 1865 of the single market, that France's agricultural sector shifted gradually from a 'traditional' to a 'modern' form (Price, 1993).

By the end of the nineteenth century the region had embarked upon a path of viticultural specialisation and the production of low quality table wine, an increasingly manufactured product (Cholvy, 1978). In the next section the reasons for, and drivers behind, this restructuring are explored, along with a discussion of the reasons for the pursuit of the particular trajectory of table wine. It is important to be aware of the prevailing social and economic climate in which this shift was affected. Until the mid-nineteenth century, widespread poverty and extreme subsistence crises were experienced amongst the French peasantry due, in part, to fluctuations in production and difficulties in the distribution of foodstuffs (Clout, 1980). In this adverse context, subsistence polyculture offered a degree of protection against the risks inherent in the production of single crops. Several

explanations have been advanced to account for this structural change in the agricultural economy of the Languedoc, and in combination many factors played their part. However, as Price has argued, these factors must be interpreted as permissive rather than causal. In his work on the relationship between communications and agricultural market structures in nineteenth century France, he discusses how innovations in the waterways, railways and road transport permitted structural changes in regional agricultural economies whilst also pointing to the importance of the social, cultural and institutional context in shaping a region's response to changing market opportunities. This in turn led to local variations in the development of communications and their effects on agricultural markets (Price, 1983).

There was increased polarisation in the types of wine produced during the nineteenth century; producers in different parts of France began to specialise in wines satisfying the needs of several markets. On the one hand, high quality, luxury wine was produced for the bourgeoisie and in contrast, low quality, cheap wines were manufactured for the mass market (Unwin, 1996). Central to this development was the resurgence of demographic growth during this period and, in particular, expansion in the urban population associated with industrialisation. Between 1851 and 1901, the urban population in France increased from 9.1 million to 15.9 million, and in terms of the percentage of the total population, from 25% to 41% (Price, 1983: 292). The acceleration in urban growth over this period resulted in a substantial increase in the demand for low quality wine, providing one option for wine producers with ready access to this particular market. For others, with sufficient capital to invest, the production of high quality wine provided an alternative.

Concomitant with the urban proletariat's increasing demand for low quality wine, a revolution in communication systems facilitated a more cohesive integration of supply and demand. For example, not only did they afford the vinegrowers of the

Languedoc the means to export their product to extra-regional urban centres, but also, because they guaranteed a consistency of supply of other products to the region, the expediency of subsistence polyculture was reduced. The period of 1870 – 1914 marked the extension of the railway networks, and in 1856 the railway between Paris, Béziers and Montpellier was opened (Clout, 1980). Overseas markets, such as Algeria and other North African territories, could also be accessed from the port of Sète (Ferras *et al.*, 1979). The increased market integration afforded by these improvements facilitated a move away from a regional agricultural economy to one in which the wine producers of the Languedoc participated in circuits of exchange at the national and international levels (Lem, 1988).

Price (1983) observes that extended transport networks, coupled with the removal of protection tariffs (Montaigne, 1997), had the effect of increasing competition between regions, enhancing the strategic position of some areas whilst diminishing that of others. This was to lead to a functional reorganisation of space and to exert a significant effect on the geography of wine production. One consequence was that the previously dominant wheat sector of the French Mediterranean could no longer withstand competition from other wheat-producing regions, such as northern France, Russia and America, and wheat production was increasingly replaced by viticulture (Brustein, 1988). The region's viticulture sector prospered, favoured by emergent competitive advantages. Vinegrowers enjoyed the advantages conferred by favourable agronomic conditions, including alluvial soils and a sunny climate, ideal growing conditions which contributed to the success of high-yielding grape varieties such as the Gamay. Vineyards on the climatic margins of production in northern France had formerly flourished on account of their relative proximity to the Parisian market. Once wine could be transported cheaply from the Midi, however, the vineyards of the Ile-de-France declined rapidly (Cholvy, 1980).

During the phase of viticulture specialisation, there was an enlargement of the area planted with vines in the Languedoc and, coupled with the planting of high-

yielding grape varieties, the volume of wine produced in the region increased significantly (see table 2.1). In this table, figures for the three main grape-producing *départements* of the Languedoc - l'Hérault, la Gard and l'Aude - have been aggregated (source: Lachiver, 1988). Increases in the surface area planted with vines were greatest in l'Hérault, with a decrease in la Gard, although within this period, the Languedoc's vineyards were hit by phylloxera, resulting in the savage destruction of the region's vines, and this crisis is discussed below. However, by the turn of the twentieth century, the region's viticulture sector had recovered, its vineyards were largely replanted, and the volume of wine produced had increased. A consequence of this specialisation in viticulture, with high demands and buoyant prices, was that the region experienced a period of great prosperity, particularly between 1853 and 1874 (Cholvy, 1980). Cholvy describes how the area surrounding Béziers experienced an '*enrichissement prodigieux*', with the crowning of Béziers as the region's wine capital (Cholvy, 1978: 416). The capital generated, and the potential for investment, was to affect a final transformation of the region's agricultural sector, reinforcing the trajectory of a market-centred, capitalist system of table wine production (Maurin, 1986; Touzard, 1993).

Table 2.1. Changes in the surface area (ha) of the Languedocien and the national vineyard, along with increases in the volumes of wine (hl) produced during the period 1852 - 1899. (Source: Lachiver, 1988).

	LANGUEDOC 1852	LANGUEDOC 1890 - 1899	FRANCE 1852	FRANCE 1899
Surface area planted under vine (hectares)	247,807	346,649	2,190,000	1,700,000
Production of wine (hectolitres)	5,655,587	13,155,143	38,100,000	48,300,000

The vine aphid, *Phylloxera vastatrix*, imported to the region on rooted American vines, was first identified in l'Hérault in 1867 by the scientist J. E. Planchon (see plate 7, page 175), having first attacked vines in la Gard in 1863 (Garrier, 1989). Over the next two decades it spread through France's vineyards and many of those elsewhere in Europe, attacking the roots of vines and causing them to wither and die. The impact of phylloxera was variable in both time and space; a period of dormancy would be followed by an attack of renewed vigour and some regions were worse hit than others. Some of the theories proposed to explain a vine's vulnerability to attack included soil type, vineyard structure, remoteness, density of viticulture and the vigour of the vine-stock (Stevenson, 1980). From 1885, the situation began to revive. After much experimentation with flooding and chemical treatments (Unwin, 1996), it was discovered that phylloxera could be combated by grafting European vines onto American rootstock which was immune to phylloxera (Loubère, 1990). A period of rapid, extensive but expensive replanting followed, and increasingly vineyards were concentrated on the alluvial plains and coastal areas of the Languedoc to specialise in the production of high yielding, low quality vines (Stevenson, 1981).

The implications of the phylloxera epidemic were multiple, and the social, economic and demographic consequences for vinegrowers were significant. It had a material effect on the regional economy and on the livelihoods of grape producers; land prices initially collapsed, vinegrowers were rendered unemployed and there was an exodus from the countryside (Stevenson, 1980). In l'Hérault, the surface area under vine dropped from a peak of 162,172 hectares in 1862 to 98,940 hectares in 1880-1889 (Lachiver, 1988) and by 1879, the median percentage of destruction for the *département* had risen to 80% (Stevenson, 1980). It also precipitated a shift in the social structure of wine production. While large, capital-intensive enterprises could accommodate the increasing costs of grafting and spraying, small producers found it increasingly difficult to make a living (Badouin, 1997; Montaigne, 1997) and many thousands of small vinegrowers abandoned their

farms (Unwin, 1996). Stevenson recounts how many producers, rather than responding with concern, greeted the arrival of phylloxera with a “complacent and apathetic attitude, and an almost hysterical under-estimation of phylloxera’s destructiveness” (Stevenson, 1980: 60). Among small peasant vinegrowers there was a reluctance to destroy dead vines even after a Prefectural decree in 1872 rendered the burning of infected vines compulsory. Some authors have adopted cultural explanations for these attitudes, citing them as examples of a more general refusal to respect authority, indicative of a ‘peasant fatalism’, a strong attachment to their vines and a fundamental belief in viticultural traditions (Ferras, *et al.*, 1979; Cholvy, 1980). Alternatively, this unwillingness to act could reflect small vinegrowers’ lack of access to capital and, as a consequence, phylloxera was to reinforce inequalities between classes of growers. In the period of vineyard reconstitution following the phylloxera epidemic, the growing emergence of capitalist viticultural enterprises and the dominance of urban industrial capital is observed (Dugrand, 1963).

Following the onset of the crisis, grape production increased dramatically in areas affected relatively late by phylloxera. This was the case in the Languedoc; the eastern part of the region and the *département* of la Gard was infested first and consequently experienced the worst effects (Cholvy, 1980). The region around Béziers was uninfected until 1876, and in 1873 there was a bumper harvest as those in the uninfected areas benefited from the misfortune of their neighbours, enjoying huge profits as prices soared (Cholvy, 1978). The pest spread through the western part of Languedoc between 1878 and 1881. The east of the region did not recover fully and thereafter, agricultural production in the Gard followed a more diversified route. These patterns continue to be in evidence today. Along with viticulture, fruit and vegetables are produced in the east (Gavignaud, 1978), whereas in the west of the region, around Béziers and Narbonne, viticulture predominates.

Viticultural Establishment, 1900 – 1949

The establishment of the table wine regime in the Languedoc is marked by three key developments. The sector vacillated between periods of dramatic crisis and prosperity, fluctuating from cyclical overproduction and price slumps to moments in the early 1920s when production was low and prices high, contributing to vineyard speculation and expansion. Two dates stand out as being important, dates which are etched deeply in the region's collective consciousness. These are 1907, a year of collective resistance, and 1935 during which the *Statut Viticole* was instituted. Partly in response to the crises of the early 1900s, viticultural unions and the cooperative system emerge.

In the early 1900s, following vineyard replanting with high-yielding grape varieties such as Aramon, there followed a series of prolific harvests. Prices for wine produced in the Midi dropped from between ten – fifteen Fr/hl in 1900 to six Fr/hl in 1904 – 1905. During five years out of seven, up to 1907, vinegrowers had no option but to sell their wine at cost price or below. This led to a rapid decline in the value of vineyard properties. For example, in 1909, a tribunal in Narbonne sold a property on the viticultural plain at Coursan for 3500 francs that had been purchased for 100,000 francs in 1904. From 1900 to 1906, loans made annually by the local branch of the *Crédit Agricole* at Narbonne rose from 542,000 francs to 9,137,000 francs (Warner, 1960: 21). In 1907, demonstrators gathered in many of the large towns of the Languedoc including Béziers, Perpignan, Carcassonne, Nîmes and Montpellier with a united call for government measures to ameliorate their situation (Martin, 1996). Protestors resorted to direct action, blocking railways, refusing to pay taxes and the prefecture at Perpignan was burnt down (Ferras, *et al.*, 1979). The government under Clemenceau reacted by sending an army corps to the Midi to restore civil order (Warner, 1960). The protests of 1907 were conducted under the banner of '*Mouvement des Gueux*', translated literally as 'Beggars'

Movement', referring to the financial ruin of producers and the growing necessity to 'beg' for hand-outs from the State (Cholvy, 1980: 74; Maurin, 1986). The protests were led by Marcellin Albert who proclaimed;

"Nous sommes ceux qui ont du vin à vendre et qui ne trouvent pas toujours à le donner... Nous sommes ceux qui sont endettés, les uns jusqu'au cou, les autres jusqu'à la tête ... Nous sommes des miséreux..." (Maurin, 1986: 539).

"We are [producers] with wine to sell which we can't always give away... We're up to our eyes in debt... We're miserable wretches..."

Commentators have identified two defining characteristics of these protests. The first was the abnegation of responsibility on the part of producers for the overproduction crisis and the blaming of an opponent external to the region. In 1907, producers decried the fraudulent practices of vinegrowers from other regions for sugaring their wine or producing wine from dried grapes (Martin, 1996). Adding sugar to wine, *la chaptalisation*, increases the alcoholic content such that larger volumes are produced. Stevenson (1976) notes that in each of the crises accompanying a disastrous collapse of prices in 1907, 1930, 1953 and in the 1960s, vinegrowers refused to accept the relationship between overproduction in their region and recurrent price crises and attributed the situation to 'unfair' outside competition. The second feature is that these protests were mass, regional protests and vinegrowers were able to mobilise the support of workers outside the viticulture sector (Touzard, 1995a). This may be explained by the fact that small vinegrowers and the urban working class shared strong socialist convictions (Loubère, 1974), engendering social cohesion, and because viticulture, a market-oriented activity, encouraged resilient urban-rural links.

The crisis of 1907 also represented a turning point in the relationship between the State and the table wine sector of the Languedoc. The State, which had adopted a non-interventionist stance up until this point, was to become more and more involved in the viticulture sector, which in turn was subjected to increasing

regulation. This amplified relationship was problematic. On the one hand, vinegrowers relied more and more on the State, but, at the same time, the government was vilified for not behaving in an equitable manner. Vinegrowers cried out against excess political centralization in Paris and the perceived privileging of agricultural interests in the North, especially the large cereal growers (Loubère, 1990). A feeling of injustice was recurrent in the rhetoric of southern vinegrowers, leading to hostility towards the French State and latterly the European Commission (Touzard, 1993).

Throughout the 1930s, the Languedoc's table wine sector experienced extreme crisis, a consequence of the increasing imbalance between levels of production and consumption and saturated table wine markets (Loubère, 1990). Much of the pressure came from Algerian table wines (Galtier, 1960), which, from 1906, had penetrated the French market. In part, this was on account of the close relationship between France and her territory (Nasr, 1999). The concomitant lack of trade restrictions and customs duties at once served the interests of the French mercantile and agricultural classes who settled in Algeria whilst at the same time constituted a direct threat to the vinegrowers of the Languedoc (Brustein, 1988). Small farmers were the primary casualties, leading to a substantial multiplication of cooperatives during the 1930s. In l'Hérault, for example, the number of wine cooperatives increased from around 25 to 120 between 1930 and 1940 (Carrière, 1979).

Increased competition and the gravity of the crisis engendered a strong reaction from vinegrowers in the Languedoc who declared '*la guerre aux vins d'Algérie*' (Cholvy, 1980: 75). Instead of the crisis degenerating into violent protest as in 1907, vinegrowers and their representatives followed a parliamentary path, acting as a sophisticated pressure group lobbying ministers. Edouard Barthe, *député* of l'Hérault, ardent defender of small growers and family enterprises, and president of a powerful wine pressure group, lobbied the government to devise legislation to

protect small vinegrowers (Martin, 1996)². The *Statut Viticole* was passed on 30 July 1935, and comprised a series of codes incorporating measures to regulate the table wine market in an attempt to bring production and consumption into alignment. The *Statut Viticole* had three objectives: to avoid surplus production by cutting back the size of the national table wine vineyard, to stabilize the market by controlling supply, and to provide growers with a *prix social*. To deliver these objectives, the law provided subsidies for voluntary uprooting, the planting of further vines was forbidden, excess wine was distilled and taxes were placed on producers whose yields exceeded 100 hectolitres / hectare (Loubère, 1990).

The law of 1884, which had authorized the creation of *syndicats* or unions, presaged the emergence of numerous viticultural unions in the Languedoc. Over time, four key groups emerged. The main vinegrowers' organisation, the *Confédération Générale des Vignerons*, the CGV, was established following the events of 1907 and it was to change its name to *Confédération Générale des Vignerons du Midi* (CGVM) after the First World War. It brought together vinegrowers of all sizes, in the belief that they had converging interests (Martin, 1996). Between the two World Wars, viticulture cooperatives federalised at a departmental level, so in l'Hérault, for example, the *Fédération des Caves Coopératives de l'Hérault* (FDCCH) was created.

² There are several reasons why the interests of small-scale vinegrowers were accommodated by the French State. Indeed the position of privilege is indicative of a more general relationship between farmers and the State which can be explained both by the economic and cultural importance of agriculture and the way in which the political system operates (Naylor, 1994). At the turn of the twentieth century, France retained a large population in the countryside, indeed 59% of the French nation continued to live in rural areas (Clout, 1980). Over time, the preservation of family farming, the rural way of life and the French countryside has been an acceptable goal for large sections of the population who, although largely urban residents, maintain their roots in rural areas and an attachment to a particular '*pays*'. Due to the widespread popular support for the agricultural vote, agrarian interests have constituted a significant factor in French political life and governments have found it politically expedient to respond to farmers' protests and demands. Successive French presidents have appeased the family farmer and the most recent manifestation of this is the way in which France has interpreted and implemented the Rural Development Regulation (Lowe, *et al.*, 2002). The system of political representation in France has done much to encourage Government ministers to respond to farmers' demands as they are often also mayors of provincial towns and cities, and this combination of posts (*cumul des mandats*) means that national politicians need to retain a provincial power base and are particularly sensitive to public feeling and sectoral interests.

Federations of cooperatives defended their members, (individual cooperatives), helped to preserve family holdings, facilitated access to technical progress and represented members' interests in decision-making arenas (Moyano-Estrada *et al.*, 2001). The social base comprised mainly small and medium-sized producers, reflecting the membership of the cooperatives. A further organisation was led by militant communists and was formalised during the crises of the 1950s as '*La Ligue des Petits et Moyens Viticulteurs*', seeking to bring together agricultural labourers and small and medium-sized farmers in defence of their interests. The final group were activist organisations, such as the *Comité d'Action Viticole* (CAV). Their role was limited to the organisation of action, rather than negotiation, and they were largely provisional structures evolving at a specific moment in time to fight a single issue, often in defence of the price of wine. The relations between these different groups were at times contentious (Warner, 1960) but the principal point is that these unions were independent of agricultural unions acting at a national level, such as the *Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles* (FNSEA), created in 1946 to represent the interests of farmers as a whole. Viticulture unions of the Languedoc had a strictly regional and sectoral base and their conflicts, traditions, claims and ideologies were regionally and sectorally specific (Martin, 1996). These organisations were able to mobilise seemingly disparate social groups to support the region's viticulture sector and, through recourse to a regional rhetoric, united the sector rather than their members remaining divided along local or class lines (Martin, 1997). In order to understand the reasons behind the protests, the specificities of agrarian social relations in the Mediterranean and the system of land tenure prevalent at the time will be examined.

Unlike the tenant farmer of the North-East of France, or the sharecropper of Western France, the typical Mediterranean family farmer was the owner of a small-holding. As early as the eleventh century, the institutions derived from Roman law facilitated peasant ownership by explicitly permitting the transfer or selling of land. Moreover, the intensive cultivation of commercial crops, such as vines, enabled

peasant families to derive a reasonable income from small holdings (Brustein, 1988). Supported by the existence of networks of cooperation and reciprocal exchange, the viability of this system of petty commodity production was ensured (Lem 1988; 1994). However, the large majority of these small owner-cultivators were obliged to supplement their income by working on large estates³ (Loubère, 1990). As such, a particular type of pluriactivity developed in the Languedoc, classified by Campagne *et al.*, (1990; 419) as 'family farming with external incomes' with the objective of maintaining the family farming activity⁴. As such, we can interpret these pluriactives as small-scale owner cultivators who owned small parcels of land for familial production and supplemented their income to maintain the family farm with work on large viticulture estates⁵. Pech has argued that this dual structure of owner cultivators/wage labourers alongside capitalist enterprises was mutually supportive and one that proved to be stable. Small-scale owner cultivators needed the additional income to maintain the family business, and at the same time the large estates were reliant on this skilled labour force (Pech, 1975). Furthermore, on

³ Rémy Pech has established a hierarchy of prewar Mediterranean vineyards, organized by size. He classifies small producers as those owning less than 1 hectare of vineyard; micro-plots assuring supplementary income for worker-owners and those with 1 – 5 hectares; small owners who need another source of income. Large estates were those of sizes 20 – 50 hectares and over 50 hectares which were run like a factory (Loubère, 1990). To afford some idea of the relative numerical weight of each category, in 1950, 30% of farms in l'Hérault were estates of over 100 hectares (Brustein, 1988) and small owner-cultivators, who relied on agricultural wage labour, was the majority form of land tenure in the Languedoc during this period (Loubère, 1990).

⁴ Historical analyses show that pluriactivity and the pursuit of diverse income sources have always existed in the wine-growing region of the Languedoc (Lem, 1994). Today, 50% of farmers are pluriactives, and this has been explained by the fact that since the 1930s, with the flowering of the cooperative movement, the trajectory of '*ouvrier-paysans*' was favoured, with pluriactivity passed on from generation to generation (Chiffolleau, 1999). Labour relations have changed through time, however, with the gradual elimination of the smallest of farmers and the growing 'professionalisation' of full-time vinegrowers in the Languedoc.

⁵ This social class of owner-cultivators/agricultural wage labourers represents a particular form of continental agrarian capitalism. Thus, as Marsden has argued, the existence of units of petty commodity production was not something whose 'persistence' needed to be explained away, rather, within the specificities of this context, they were a component of the overall dynamic of capital accumulation (Marsden, 1990). The peasants were increasingly 'proletarianised', not in the sense of their dispossession from the means of production, or the disappearance of units along non-capitalist lines, but instead by the selling of labour (Newby, 1987).

account of the large numbers of small farmers, large viticultural estates benefited from their support. It was more propitious for them to associate as a single group and to speak with a unanimous voice when demanding help from the State.

One issue that was contentious, however, surrounded agricultural wages, the unions' primary concern in their early days. Indeed, between 1890 and 1938, three quarters of agricultural strikes in the Languedoc were motivated by salary and wage issues (Laurent, 1978). During the early 1900s, during the severe slumps in the value of table wine, the owners of large estates searched for ways to reduce expenses and in so doing attempted to cut wages (Pech, 1975). This rendered owner-cultivators particularly vulnerable. Not only were they hit by price slumps in terms of a dramatic reduction in the value of their own grapes, but also the drop in wages meant that they had little means of maintaining their family production. In 1903 – 1904, a wave of strikes took place, during which protestors decried the instability of agricultural salaries. Another series of strikes hit the Languedoc in 1926 and again in 1928 during which workers demanded increases in wages so that they were aligned with rising living costs (Loubère, 1990). The vulnerability of workers rendered solidarity critical to their survival, such that owners ran up against the resistance of a well-organized and combative proletariat. On each occasion, the protests were to prove successful, with owners of large estates partially conceding to the unions' demands (Pech, 1975).

As well as the rise of the union movement, this phase in the history of the Languedoc's viticulture sector was characterised by the emergence of the cooperative system. In assessing the reasons for the founding of wine cooperatives, political motivations, or those informed by pragmatism, have been advanced to explain this form of associationism. Particularly in the Languedoc, the wine cooperative's early history was of a radical nature, and its political character is suggested in the names of some of the first cooperatives which reflect their socialist convictions (Carrière, 1979). The first wine cooperative appeared in Mudaison in

l'Hérault in 1901, followed by the founding of the cooperative of Maraussan, '*Les Vignerons Libres*', in December of that year (Cholvy, 1980). (See plate 4, page 174. Maraussan is the site of the headquarters of the *Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune*). The force behind '*Les Vignerons Libres*' was Elie Cathala, an active left-wing organizer. Inspired by the early cooperative movements in Europe in the mid-nineteenth century, he believed that the socialist principles of self-management, collectivisation of individually-owned property and cooperation amongst workers represented a means of improving the working and living conditions of small vinegrowers and salaried workers, thereby avoiding the worst features of capitalism (Loubère, 1990). He encouraged the producers of Maraussan to pool their vineyards and equipment, and to share equally the net proceeds. It was a successful venture as these vinegrowers survived the 1907 crisis, but after several years, whilst retaining collective ownership of the cellar and winemaking equipment, there was a return to the individual ownership of vineyards (Ulin, 1996). These socialist beginnings have, to a certain extent, been eclipsed by the ideologies prevalent in modern-day cooperatives. The traditional discourse of mutual help, solidarity and democratic management has been usurped somewhat by an 'entrepreneurial' discourse, of cooperatives as profit-making companies (Moyana-Estrada *et al.*, 2001), but despite this shift, the wine cooperatives of the Languedoc remain infused by socialist principles.

The interpretation that socialist politics were an explicit motivating factor for the establishment of wine cooperatives has been challenged however. Underpinning this challenge are claims about the relative importance of individualism and collectivism as intrinsic components of peasant farmers' attitudes and in examining this debate, attention is afforded to research that is not specific to the viticulture sector of the Languedoc. In his work on the historical geography of fraternal associations amongst the peasantry in the *département* of Loir-et-Cher in the nineteenth century, Baker (1999) commences with a discussion of contemporary representations of the peasantry in paintings and novels. He argues that these

media constituted an integral part of the political discourse about the peasantry, at once reflecting contemporary attitudes and reflexively contributing to their production and reproduction. In these portraits, peasants are presented principally as individuals, or as members of a family, rather than being part of an integrated rural community. Rural society itself is depicted as being founded upon competition rather than co-operation among individuals. If, as portrayed in these representations, the highly individualistic character of the peasantry is a universal feature, political motivations for voluntary associationism are unlikely, as associationism runs counter to the preoccupations and competitiveness of self-interested individuals.

This highly individualistic character of the peasantry as a universal feature is open to challenge. Baker (1999) himself contests the pervasive 'myth' of the peasant as 'sturdy individualist', and he concludes that individualism and collectivism, socialism and capitalism together made up the tapestry of nineteenth century rural France. In Annie Moulin's analysis of the peasantry and society in France since 1789, she recounts the weakening of bonds between members of the rural community and the rise of agrarian individualism from 1815 to 1870. Between 1870 and 1914 she describes how, in the face of economic difficulties, a new collectivist spirit developed, expressed in part by mutual-insurance societies in the Beauce and the establishment of syndicates for the purchase of agricultural supplies. Moulin claims that most of the initiatives for such associations came from outside the peasantry itself, from suppliers, machinery producers and insurance companies (Moulin, 1991), and thus she views the attitude of peasants towards collectivism as one founded on ambivalence. Rather than rejecting collectivism outright as an organisational form amongst the peasantry, she offers a more nuanced recognition of the relative roles of individualism and collectivism. Likewise, more recently, Gröger, in her study of peasant cooperation in mixed small farmers in the Aveyron in the 1970s, seeks to challenge the notion that cooperation did not exist among agricultural producers in the wake of technical progress and mechanisation.

Instead, her work reveals extensive cooperation around mechanized activities. She argues that the informal co-owning, borrowing and lending of machines represents one strategy for farmers to counter the instability caused by the burden of investment in expensive capital machinery, showing a flexibility and constituting a mechanism for survival as they become more and more integrated into a market economy (Gröger, 1981). The research of these authors, although somewhat different in emphasis, can be taken together to refute the view that forms of collectivism do not exist in past agrarian societies in France; but they suggest that cooperation, and the degree of collectivism, is something that varies depending on the spatial, social and cultural context. There is much evidence to suggest that the founding of cooperatives and worker associations was motivated by pragmatic imperatives, rather than explicit political motives, even if this is not the case for the earliest cooperatives in the Languedoc.

The series of crises experienced by the table wine sector of the Languedoc between 1900 and 1930 have been discussed earlier. Small farmers, although locked into a stable relationship with large producers through established forms of pluriactivity which provided for their short-term survival, found it increasingly difficult to compete with larger, more efficient vine-growing farms. They were unable to enjoy economies of scale, had limited access to capital and were confronted with the growing costs of technology (Price, 1993). Advances in oenology, which demanded sophisticated technical equipment such as devices to measure acidity, to control the alcoholic content of the wine and to pasteurise the wine, excluded small farmers requiring them to sell their grapes directly to professional winemakers, often wine merchants. As independent, fragmented and unorganised vinegrowers, they had no control over the prices they attained and little power of negotiation. Much anger was directed at the merchant who earned significant profits. Loubère (1990; 347) notes that at the turn of the twentieth century, wine for which a producer received 10 francs per hectolitre, sold for 50 francs wholesale, and 60 francs or more retail. Growers concluded that through the collective ownership of a cellar and

vinicultural equipment, allowing them to sell their wine directly to consumers, they would enjoy a larger share of profits (Carrière, 1979). As such, producers were encouraged to form cooperative associations based on calculations of expediency and pragmatism to alleviate the precariousness of their situation.

The 'Agricultural Union Act' of 1910, which included the Wine Cooperative Legislation, allowed for the formal creation of agricultural cooperatives (Ulin, 1996). It offered tax incentives to producers investing in cooperatives, coupled with substantial subsidies to encourage their establishment. Such support for cooperation amongst the governing petty bourgeois Radicals did not reflect an espousal of cooperation *per se*; rather it may be explained by the fact that cooperatives served the interests of small owner cultivators, an important section of the vote (Loubère, 1990). The wine cooperative legislation contained a series of measures to limit the volume of wine produced, and more generally inculcated an agenda of modernisation through the provision of long-term, low-interest loans by the *Crédit Agricole* (Maurin, 1986). Wine cooperatives are civil societies, of which only wine producers can be members, and their actions are governed by statute (Ulin, 1996). Often they serve a very local area and in the early days there was a cooperative in practically every viticultural commune of l'Hérault. One of their founding principles, along with that of mutual solidarity, was democratic equality, expressed through the norm 'one man, one vote', irrespective of size of holding and contribution of capital. The cooperative is managed and represented by the Administrative Council, *Conseil d'Administration*, and the cooperative President, who are elected by direct suffrage. Universal participation in the affairs of the cooperative is facilitated in the form of a bi-annual General Assembly to which each member is invited (Carrière, 1979).

Cooperatives performed a variety of roles and functions that were both economic and social in nature. The primary role was the production of a collective product, while private ownership was retained over the vineyards. In the early days,

vinegrowers were not obliged to bring all their grapes to the cooperative and for some this provided an opportunity for dissension and encouraged self-interested behaviour. Rotten or mediocre grapes were brought to the cooperative whilst a vinegrower's best grapes were retained for personal consumption or the direct sale to merchants. Indeed *l'apport total*, requiring that all grapes be brought to the cooperative, was not instituted in many cooperatives until the 1970s (Carrière, 1979). The cooperative was responsible for the crushing, pressing and fermenting of members' grapes, transforming them into wine. Most of the wine produced in cooperatives in the Languedoc, on account of table wine being a generic and industrialised product, was produced in bulk and often sent out of the region to be blended with other wine and bottled elsewhere (Robinson, 1994). Thus, there was no identification of the provenance of the product. Profits were then distributed to members, calculated solely on the volume of grapes produced by each member and there was no differentiation on the basis of quality. Hence it was most remunerative to produce large volumes of grapes per hectare.

In the context of modernisation, cooperative membership conferred three key advantages. Firstly, through collective ownership of viticultural equipment, aided by the provision of State subsidies, vinegrowers were relieved of the cost of technical equipment and they were able to engage in technological progress. Secondly, it increased access to economies of scale. Cooperatives had greater vinification capabilities than most farmers in their cellars and the collective production of wine meant that as a group they were able to negotiate a fairer price in supplying wine brokers (Martin, 1996). Thirdly, cooperatives conferred social advantages. Cooperation and reciprocal exchange created additional spaces for knowledge dissemination, while the engagement in a common mission and shared experience, linked to the accompanying condition of geographical immobility, engendered a strong sense of community (Lem, 1994). These advantages to members far out-weighed the disadvantages, although disadvantages did exist. The wine cooperative legislation presaged an agenda of agricultural modernisation

resulting in the marginalisation of those who refused to modernise, and their eventual elimination. In the long term, it also encouraged an increasing specialisation and division of labour, resulting in a decline in the skills and knowledge base of growers. Traditionally a vinegrower's duties had included pruning, propagating the vine and the vinification of grapes into wine, and growers were known as "agricultural artisans" because they did a "technical job far superior to that of the cereal grower" (Brennan, 1997: 18). Future generations of growers were to abdicate knowledge of vinification and marketing to experts hired by the cooperatives (Ulin, 1996).

Viticultural Maturation, 1950 – 1970s

These three decades are characterised by the maturation of the table wine regime in the Languedoc and the entrenchment of many of the practices and patterns discussed previously. Two key developments are of note and they include the modernisation of the viticulture sector, part of a more general dynamic experienced by France's agricultural sector as a whole. Secondly, in part through the institution of the Common Agricultural Policy and the dismantling of national protectionism, the vinegrowers of the Languedoc became increasingly integrated into international markets and regulated by supra-national institutions. This development would eventually lead, as Jones and Clark have described, to a discordance between the locally-brokered consensus surrounding the hegemony of table wine and demands imposed from supra-national regulatory bodies (Jones & Clark, 2000).

After the Second World War, there followed a period marked by the rapid modernisation of agricultural techniques and practices in France. Increased efficiency and productivity of the agricultural sector was promoted by three figureheads: Michel Debré, the Prime Minister and Gaullist moderniser, Edgard Pisani, the Agriculture Minister, and Michel Debatisse, a milk producer from the Puy-de-Dôme *département* (Rémy, 2000)⁶. Several obstacles stood in the way of modernisation. It was recognised that in order to modernise, an investment of capital in technical progress was required, accompanied by the restructuring of agricultural systems and landholdings. This presaged a suite of State initiatives which served as agents of change, including legislation for the establishment of machinery cooperatives, the consolidation of landholdings and the formation of producer groups or *groupements de producteurs*. The incarnation of this modernising project was the *Loi d'Orientation Agricole* (LOA) or National Agricultural Act of

⁶ The key role played by the JAC (*Jeunesse agricole catholique*) must also be acknowledged as they embraced modernisation (Moulin, 1991).

1960, which, although it retained a focus on the family farm, embodied the notion of a productivist, specialised and efficient agricultural sector (Rémy, 2000). Large increases in agricultural production were a direct consequence of investment, change in labour inputs and modernisation. Between 1960 and 1967, total agricultural production in France increased by more than two-thirds, whilst the agricultural area fell by 10% and the active agricultural population by one third. There were spectacular gains in productivity, which rose by 6.8% per year between 1950 and 1980, a rate higher than that of industry (Moulin, 1991; 170). One aim of this production drive was to increase France's export capacity and to make her one of the principal agricultural exporting nations of the world (Boisson & Buller, 1996).

Accompanying these shifts within national policy and the concrete technical and material advances were a series of social changes, variously captured in expressions such as "the end of the peasant" (Moulin, 1991: 165, quoting Henri Mendras) and "Peasants into Frenchmen"⁷ (Weber, 1979). Although this dichotomy of traditional peasant versus modernist farmer is arguably a too simplistic analysis of the social consequences of agricultural modernisation, which instead has served to create a more heterogeneous social group, that the social, cultural and economic implications for the peasantry were substantial is beyond question. Modernisation demanded an increase in technical skill and a command of complex practices and measures. It also contributed to the bureaucratisation of agriculture, exemplified in the record-keeping stipulated by the formalised associations of machinery cooperatives (Gröger, 1981). To keep pace with these changes and to remain competitive farmers were forced to borrow more, and thus were increasingly involved both in circuits of credit and integrated into the national economy. Finally, with growing urbanisation and the changing composition of rural society, farmers were progressively exposed to a wider spectrum of rural society with

⁷ Although Weber (1979) wrote about the period from 1870 – 1900, the transformation of the peasantry was a slow and uneven process and his observations are pertinent half a century later.

differing material and consumption expectations. Modernisation was advanced as a means of delivering an improvement in working conditions and social status, even parity with those of the urban middle classes (Rémy, 2000). But with modernisation came the partial undermining of established social hierarchies, which for a long time had been founded on the control of land, and the emergence of new opportunities for some farmers. Moulin (1991) observes how differences between farmers increasingly reflected the ability to adapt to rapid technical shifts, the age of the farmer and the presence or absence of a potential successor. She also argues that these differentiating factors were not universal indicators of success and attention must be afforded to the specificities of the regional context in terms of different production systems and forms of social organisation⁸.

In 1947, legislation was enacted for the establishment of *Coopératives d'Utilisation de Matériel Agricole* (CUMAs) or machinery cooperatives, and tax relief along with low interest loans from the *Crédit Agricole* were made available to encourage the collective purchase of machinery (Cholvy, 1980). From the 1950s onwards the straddle tractor, spraying devices and the mechanical grape harvester (1970s) began to appear in the vineyards of the Languedoc (Loubère, 1990), at once reducing the need for intensive labour and precipitating a change in cultural practices such as the training of vines and the spacing between rows. Small landholdings had characterised agricultural production in France as a result of the land reforms of the French Revolution and subsequent Napoleonic inheritance laws which encouraged the division of holdings amongst siblings (Clout, 1980). This pattern of landholding was particularly pronounced in the Languedoc due to the added possibility of deriving sufficient income from small holdings because of favourable agronomic

⁸ She cites an example of the polycultural-pastoral farming system in Brittany characterised by a powerful cooperative and food-processing sector. The cooperatives enabled their members, often small farmers, to participate in the modernising project by reducing the financial risks to which they were inevitably exposed. In turn, agriculture was revolutionized in this region and these small farmers were the principal beneficiaries, undermining the importance of size of land-holdings in established hierarchies (Moulin, 1991).

conditions. Such fragmented holdings served as constraints on the expansion and use of machinery, as it was difficult to transfer tractors and mechanical harvesters between dispersed plots. In the 1960s the *Sociétés d'Aménagement Foncier et d'Établissement Rural*, les SAFERs, were established, charged with the purchasing of large estates, dividing them up and selling the resultant plots to small growers in an attempt to encourage the consolidation and concentration of holdings. As Loubère has observed, this could have precipitated a revolution in the structure of land ownership, but in fact the budget of les SAFERs was insufficient and land purchases were limited in number. In the Languedoc, the basic structure of the vineyard remained relatively unchanged, although between 1950 – 1970 there was a growth in properties of 5 – 10 and 10 – 20 hectares coupled with a decline in micro-holdings (Loubère, 1990). (See footnote 3, page 73 for the pre-war hierarchy of landholdings).

The *Groupement de Producteurs* or Producer Group Legislation of 1962 provided for the merger of cooperatives, the principal aim of which was to extend the activities and roles of cooperatives so that they could enjoy greater control over production (Fabbri, 1999). Not all cooperatives engaged in this programme of restructuring and change was slow; it was not until the 1990s that the majority of cooperative mergers took place in l'Hérault. In 1996, there were 108 cooperatives in l'Hérault and four out of five of these were part of producer groups⁹ (Touzard & Laporte, 1999). Touzard has conducted a retrospective analysis of cooperative mergers and has devised a typology comprising 'defensive' and 'offensive' mergers. He describes 'defensive' mergers as those which have resulted from the absorption of a failing cooperative by its neighbour, occurring largely in those areas worst hit by

⁹ In 1995, the volume of wine produced in cooperatives accounted for 70% of the total production of the *département* of l'Hérault. The other 30% was produced largely by *caves particulières*, or private caves. Recently, however, a new economic grouping has emerged - private wineries - often financed by foreign capital (Touzard, 1999). Enterprises such as the Skalli company, *Fortant de France* in Sète and Hardys of Australia at the *Domaine de la Baume* near Béziers, contract vinegrowers over a wide area and buy their grapes directly. In turn the producer has no stake in the winery and does not participate in the transformation of grapes into wine (Robinson, 1994).

the grubbing up and vineyard removal policies of the 1980s (Touzard, 1999). One of the primary drivers for this type of merger was the consolidation of resources, reduced costs and greater economic efficiency (Raynaud, 1989). 'Offensive' mergers occurred between dynamic cooperatives engaged more fully in the modernisation process. Their aim was to broaden activities and functions by associating with other cooperatives along with bottling and marketing structures (Touzard, 1999), enabling them to be more fully integrated into the agro-food processing chain¹⁰ (Temple *et al.*, 1996). Coupled with this extension of roles were changes to the internal rules of cooperatives. Schemes such as *la vente en commun* and *l'apport total* were instituted which meant that members were obliged to bring all of their grapes to the cooperative rather than retaining the best for other purposes (Carrière, 1979). This afforded the cooperative greater control over the volume and quality of wine produced each year and ensured an absolute loyalty to the cooperative. Differential payment schemes were introduced whereby members were not paid solely for the quantity of grapes produced but rather for the quality of their product (Carrière, 1979).

Modernisation resulted in substantial rises in productivity across France's agricultural sector as a whole. In the Languedoc, the use of new techniques, the consolidation of properties and the gradual emergence of viticultural producer groups led to increases in productivity (see table 2.2). In spite of a decrease in the surface area of vines and a drop in the number of vinegrowers, the volume of wine produced rose. However, in wine production, an increase in productivity is, to a certain extent, anomalous on account of the proposed inverse relationship between high yields and quality. Although Moran (1993) has challenged this relationship

¹⁰ In the early days of cooperatives, their primary function had been the vinification of members' grapes and the storage of the wine (Carrière, 1979). This wine was sold in bulk directly to merchants for bottling or blending with no direct association with the zone of production. By merging 'offensively', increasingly cooperatives became responsible for the maturation, conditioning, bottling and marketing of their own wine, thereby circumventing intermediaries - the wine-brokers and distributors - and allowing members to benefit from the value added to their grapes (Delbos & Furestier, 1970).

with the application of modern-day viticultural and vinification techniques, it does hold true under non-manipulated conditions. So, although modernisation of the viticulture sector of the Languedoc resulted in modest rises in productivity, it was also manifested in an improvement in vineyard practices and the protection of the vines against disease (Loubère, 1990).

Table 2.2. Changes in the volume of wine produced, the surface area of the Languedocien vineyard and the number of vinegrowers during the period 1940 – 1969. (Source: Lachiver, 1988).

	LANGUEDOC 1940 - 1949	LANGUEDOC 1960 - 1969
Surface area planted under vine (hectares)	177,551	167,727
Production of wine (hectolitres)	7,543,371	10,605,018
Number of <i>déclarants</i>	72,754	63,587

The new governance arrangements heralded in the Treaty of Rome of 1957, France's membership of the European Economic Community (EEC), and the instigation of the CAP in 1960 were to exert profound effects on the agricultural sector of France. For cereal growers in the North, and larger farmers in general, these effects were positive. By modernising and increasing productivity, they were the principal beneficiaries of guaranteed commodity prices and access to an expanded market (Buller & Brives, 2000). The table wine sector of the Languedoc however was affected adversely. To achieve the CAP's objectives of increased agricultural productivity, the stabilisation of markets, a fair standard of living for farmers and consistency in the availability of supplies, a Common Market was established, based on the principles of a Single Market, intervention and external protection

against cheaper imports (Cole & Cole, 1997). Effectively, this ended all national pricing and markets for agricultural production. After lengthy negotiations, the Common Market Organisation (CMO) for wine, or the European Wine legislation, was instituted in 1970 and transferred much of the decision-making from Paris to Brussels, disrupting the carefully negotiated relationship between vinegrowers and viticultural elites of the Languedoc and the French State (Montaigne, 1997).

The CMO for wine consisted of two regulations: (816/70) legislated for table wine and (817/70) for quality wines, reinforcing the distinction between the two systems of production (Ferras, *et al.*, 1979). The organisation of the market for table wine was guided by two principles. No control was exerted over the production potential of the vineyard such as the imposition of planting restrictions. Instead, in order to maintain the market price close to the guide price, storage and distillation measures were deployed to keep excess wine off the market and to align supply with demand (Senuik & Strohl, 1996). It was not until the grubbing up policies of the 1980s and the reform, in 1994, of the CMO for wine that the production potential of the European table wine vineyard was controlled, with restrictions on vineyard surface area, limits on yields and alterations to vinification practices (Unwin, 1996). The consequences of this Regulation were significant. Rather than curbing production in line with a dramatic fall in the consumption of table wine over this period, there was an increase in the volume of wine produced, in part prompted by the possibility of distillation at remunerative prices which made it attractive to raise yields. Indeed the surface area of the German and Italian table wine vineyard expanded. Over the six years from 1970 to 1976, the area planted under vine increased by 8% and 35% in Germany and Italy respectively (Montaigne, 1998). Furthermore, facilitated by the liberalization of trade between Member States, southern Italian wines flooded the French market in significant quantities. In the 1960s, Italian wine exports were about 2-3 million hectolitres. In the two years following the introduction of the CMO for wine, exports rose to over

10 million hectolitres, of which most was exported to France¹¹ (Spahni, 1995). A seven-year 'Wine War', from 1970 to 1976, broke out between table wine producers of the Languedoc and Italy, in which respective Agricultural Ministers became embroiled. It was a period of sustained confrontation and violent protest. Over time, it was realised, not only at the level of the State but also amongst regional viticultural representatives, that with falls in the demand for table wine¹², the production of low quality wine was not sustainable in the long term.

Viticulture unions mobilised large numbers of producers to protest against the threat posed by foreign wines in displays of ferocious animosity. Algerian wines were no longer the enemy by virtue of vineyard reconversion to the production of cereal crops following the granting of Algerian Independence in 1962. Anger was directed solely against Italian imports (Cholvy, 1980). The protests climaxed in a region-wide 'Day of Action' on the 31 July 1975 organized by the CGVM. Railway lines were disrupted, buildings painted with slogans and the confrontations held with riot squads were interpreted by vinegrowers as a suppression of their rights by the authorities of Paris. On the 9 September, a meeting of the EEC Ministers of Agriculture was convened in Brussels to discuss the crisis and the French proposed a series of stringent demands. M. Jacques Chirac imposed a 12% tax on Italian imported wine and the Italians retaliated by enforcing a tariff on French beef (Stevenson, 1976). Both import tariffs were later retracted as a result of pressure from the EEC as they constituted a contravention of the free trade rules of the CAP.

¹¹ The increase in Italian table wine exports to 10 million hectolitres over a two year period, an average of 5 million hectolitres per year, represents a huge amount when compared to the total volume of wine produced at the time in the Languedoc. Lachiver (1988) provides the figures per *département* for the period of 1970 – 1979, annual figures are not available. If these are aggregated for the three main wine-producing *départements* of the Languedoc, total production was 26,226,492 hl over ten years.

¹² Between 1982 and 1996, the consumption of table wine in France dropped from 31,755 to 19,656 × 1000hl (Rosell & Viladomiu, 2000).

Viticulture unions and cooperative groups joined activist organisations on the 5 February 1976. This was labelled 'Dead Region Day' and wine growers demanded the right to 'live and work on home ground' (Maffre-Baugé, 1976). Producers claimed that European Agricultural Ministers misunderstood their predicament, and that the government's uprooting policy was a conspiracy, an attempt to rid the region of its vines and associated people. They considered the violence of their actions to be legitimised in view of the economic violence they had suffered. Once again, through recourse to a regional rhetoric, the protestors were able to mobilise the support of social groups extraneous to viticulture, signalling the strength of regional consciousness and the continued importance of the vine and viticulture to the region's identity. These protests culminated in two key events. In March 1976, huge protests took place around the village of Montredon in the Corbières area. Roads and railways were blocked and following shooting between police and protestors, two people were killed, a farmer and a CRS officer, and many more injured (Cholvy, 1980). Several months later in August, supporters of the CAV, under the direction of Jean Huillet, boarded an Italian tanker, the *Ampelos*, entering the port of Sète with imports of Italian table wine and off-loaded 30,000 hectolitres of wine into the sea (Juge, 1999). The shock surrounding the violence of these protests constituted a turning point for the vinegrowers' union movement of the Languedoc. The influence of the CGVM and the CAV receded, somewhat discredited by these events. Violent protest was no longer considered to be the best strategy (Martin, 1996) and the FNSEA, the national agricultural union, claimed increased support¹³ at the expense of some of the very institutions that had buttressed and sustained the traditional table wine regime.

¹³ Indeed in the elections for the departmental Chambers of Agriculture in 1995, the FNSEA won against the *Confédération Paysanne* in l'Hérault, denoting the increased support enjoyed by the FNSEA in what had traditionally been a regionally-inclusive *département* (Le Guen, 1997).

Fracture of the Table Wine Regime, 1970s – Present Day

The crisis stimulated the French Government to propose a suite of policies to reduce the production potential of the region's vineyard and to encourage the transition to the production of wines of a higher quality (Touzard, 1995a). These measures initiated in the 'Chirac Plan' of 1973 were to exert a destabilising effect on the established table wine regime of the Languedoc, challenging the sovereignty of *vin de masse* (Jones & Clark, 2000). In consequence, Touzard describes this period as one of fracturing, characterised by the splintering of the single viticultural network and the emergence of varied economic and social coalitions around the production of wines of differing character (Touzard, 1995a).

The critical point is that in the current landscape of change and fracture, actors of the region's viticulture sector have not responded as a homogeneous group (Bartoli, 1986) and, instead, the local response has been a differentiated one. Improving quality has been resisted by some, who maintain a steadfast commitment to the production of table wine (Cholvy, 1980) and exhibit a dogged adherence to traditional norms, values and cultural practices (Delbos & Furestier, 1970). Others, including farmers, cooperative administrators and agricultural professionals, have embraced the opportunities afforded by the increased globalisation of the viticulture sector and changing consumption patterns, pursuing innovative production methods and planting new grape varieties (Temple *et al.*, 1996). The fracturing of the table wine regime and its reorientation towards the production of high quality wines also has to be set against a backdrop of decline in the economic and territorial importance of viticulture in the Languedoc. There has, for example, been a fall in the number of viticultural properties from 83,741 in 1979 to 41,437 in 1997 (Autran & Galas, 2000), coupled with the development of other economic activities such as tourism along the Mediterranean coast, and a general socio-economic diversification of the rural domain (Touzard, 1995b). In turn, this has

resulted in a more differentiated value framework including a focus on the positional functions of the countryside.

The first manifestation of these shifts was the diminution of the vineyard surface area through the introduction of 'grubbing up' or vineyard removal policies, *l'arrachage*. Between 1976 and 1992, 39% of the surface area of L'Hérault's vineyard was uprooted (Ben Amor, 1993). This policy had two phases, the first of which spanned the period 1970 – 1979. During this first phase, grubbing up rates were high in the *l'arrière-pays*, characterised by marginal viticultural activity, and they did not exert a significant effect on viticultural production on the viticultural plain where production was most intensive (Mathieu, 1992). The second phase dated from 1980 – 1984 and grubbing up subsidies were entitled '*Primes d'Arrachage Définitif*' (PAD), which meant that planting rights to grubbed up areas were permanently withdrawn (Senuik & Strohl, 1996). Touzard has examined the demographic characteristics of those farmers who have grubbed up their vines and for the large part they have been old vinegrowers without a successor or those with small plots of vines. In L'Hérault, 80% of applications related to plots measuring less than 2 hectares which, in turn, has contributed to changes in the land-holding structure. The 1988 census indicates a considerable increase in holdings of 20 hectares and more, coupled with a decline in micro-holdings (Touzard, 1993). Some of the land taken out of viticultural production has been abandoned whilst some has been used for building and agricultural reconversion (Bartoli, 1986). Nonetheless, the vine continues to be a defining component in the land use, economy and social and cultural representation of Languedoc's rural spaces. In those areas where planting rights have not been permanently revoked, the vineyard has been replanted and so diversification has followed differing qualities of wine production as much as rural development or agri-environment schemes (Jones & Clark, 2000).

Subsidies have also been offered by the French Government to encourage vineyard renovation and replanting with aromatic and lower-yielding grape varieties. Table 2.3 outlines some of the main grape varieties planted in the region. There are two key differences between traditional and aromatic varieties, the first of which relates to yields and vineyard practices. Whereas the Gamay and Carignan are high-yielding varieties, limits on yields have been applied to improved grape varieties which also demand a change in techniques such as the pruning and the training of the vines. In many cases, these changes, along with oenological advances, have resulted in a 'real' improvement in quality. The second difference is one of geographical association. High-yielding grape varieties have traditionally been linked to the Languedoc, whereas aromatic varieties such as Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon have been used in the production of Bordeaux vintages, and Pinot Noir and Chardonnay in those from Burgundy (Montaigne, 1997). Increasingly, however, these varieties are being grown in all of the major wine-producing countries of the world and are therefore more neutral in geographical terms (Bailly, 2000).

Table 2.3. Vine cultivars traditionally grown in the Languedoc (*cépages traditionnels*) along with replanted varieties (*cépages aromatiques*) (Pomerol, C., 1989; Johnson, 1994; ONIVINS, 2001)¹⁴.

	CEPAGES TRADITIONNELS	CEPAGES AROMATIQUES / AMELIORATEURS
Red	Alicante	Cabernet Sauvignon
	Aramon	Marselan
	Carignan	Merlot
	Cinsault	Pinot Noir
	Gamay	Syrah
	Grenache	
	Mourvedre	
White	Clairette	Chardonnay
	Muscat	Piquepoul Blanc
	Marsanne	Sauvignon Blanc
		Viognier

The restructuring of the Languedoc's vineyard has been an uneven and slow process (see table 2.4). In part, the slow pace can be ascribed to the perennial nature of the crop, to structural obstacles and to socio-cultural factors such as an aging population, the dominance of pluri-activity and, amongst some vinegrowers, an attachment to previously established norms and values (Cholvy, 1980). In 1990, the table wine sector continued to account for 60% of the total volume of wine produced in the Languedoc and a significant area of the vineyard remained under traditional grape varieties; by 1995, certain cooperatives had renovated 70% of their vineyards, whereas others only 30% (Montaigne, 1997).

¹⁴ In their narratives, farmers refer extensively to *cépages traditionnels* and *cépages améliorateurs*. From this point in the text these will be referred to 'traditional' and 'improved' varieties respectively and correspond to those detailed in this table. Loubère notes the existence of a hierarchy of grape varieties. During the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period the lay nobles came to equate the wine of the Pinot with their own exalted station in society and so the Pinot acquired noble status. At the bottom of the pyramid fell varieties such as the Aramon, typical of the Languedoc (Loubère, 1978).

Table 2.4 Evolution of replanting in the Languedocien vineyard (number of cultivars), 1968 – 1994. (Source: Laporte & Touzard, 1998).

	1968	1979	1988	1994
Traditional Cultivars	290882	253430	209928	146452
Aromatic cultivars	0	4440	18267	37073

Two divergent trajectories have been followed in the Languedoc within the frame of quality wine production: the production of *Vins de Cépages* - varietal or single grape wines and *Vins de Pays* (Senuik & Strohl, 1996). The production of AOC wines continues to be a marginal strategy, representing 10% of the total volume of wine produced in the region in 1996 – 1997 (Laporte & Touzard, 1998), most of which falls under the '*Côteaux de Languedoc*' appellation (Montaigne, 1997). It has appeared to be an active choice for some not to pursue the AOC strategy, as much of the wine produced within demarcated AOC zones in the Languedoc is not sold under an AOC label. This may be explained in part by the fact that AOC producers have encountered difficulties in achieving a competitive price for their wine because of the region's general reputation, still widely associated with the production of *la bibine* or 'plonk', a poor quality product¹⁵ (Montaigne, 1997).

In recent years, varietal wines have grown in popularity, reflecting changing fashions in the consumption of wine, a homogenisation of tastes and a demand for wines which are easily recognisable and which deliver a guaranteed standard of quality. As such, counter to the principle upon which the AOC system rests, which emphasises the relationship between origin of product and quality (Lewis *et al.*,

¹⁵ The production of high quality wine is best illustrated by the *Vins de Pays* of *Mas de Daumas Gassac*, an estate to the north-west of Montpellier (Bailly, 2000). The grapes are grown on a particular *terroir* - deep and well-draining beds of volcanic debris, and according to strict vineyard controls. Its wines are famed for their quality, they are the subject of reviews and are sold at prices to challenge many AOC Bordeaux wines and yet are able to avoid AOC production regulations (personal visit to *Mas de Daumas Gassac*, 14 October, 2000).

2001), varietalism emphasises the role of aromas and tastes of specific grape varieties as factors which constitute the character and quality of a wine. Significant areas of the Languedoc's vineyard have been planted with grape varieties such as Merlot and Chardonnay specifically to produce varietal wines, and of all the wine regions in France, the relative merits of grape variety and *terroir* have been most actively debated in the Languedoc (Johnson, 1994). However, New World wine-producing countries have also invested heavily in the production of varietal wines and it is these areas in which grape growing has developed rapidly¹⁶. This means that European producers of varietal wines face increasing competition, not least because they are unable to access the same economies of scale but also because they do not enjoy competitive advantages (Castillo Valero & Gil Jimenez, 1995). Wine produced outside of Europe is not exposed to the same regulatory pressures and the use of certain oenological practices, such as the addition of wood chips to maturing wine, are not forbidden (Montaigne, 1998).

The alternative strategy to developing varietal wines has been the production of *Vins de Pays* and since the inception of the *Vins de Pays* Regulation in 1973 this has represented an important trajectory in the Languedoc. Indeed by 1996, the Languedoc was producing 76% of the national production of *Vins de Pays* (Laporte & Touzard, 1998), most of which falls under the regional appellation '*Vin de Pays d'Occ*' (Robinson, 1994). The *Vins de Pays* Regulation is founded on many of the same principles as that of the AOC Regulation, guaranteeing the origin of the product and ascribing a territorial anchorage, although the production controls are less stringent. The area of production is larger, volume per hectare ceilings are higher with a maximum of 70 – 90 hl / ha and the grape varieties used may come from other regions (Montaigne, 1997). Primarily, *Vins de Pays* rest on the notion of typicity, and this focus means that it is not only the link between quality and the

¹⁶ There has been a dramatic rise in the value of exports for three of the major wine-producing countries of the New World – Australia, Chile and the United States – from 26,000 (US \$000) in 1970 to 430,000 (US \$000) in 1992 (Spahni, 1995).

natural attributes of the environment that is emphasized, but that weight is also ascribed to the cultural attributes of the zone of production. The production of these wines has therefore been most successful in those regions with a strong cultural identity and has been advanced as a tool, not only to deliver an improvement in quality, but also to maintain traditional cultural or 'artisanal' landscapes (Pitte, 2000).

In the final section of this chapter attention will focus upon Agri-Environmental Policy in France. EU Agri-Environment policies are executed according to the principle of subsidiarity. This determines that decisions should be taken at the most appropriate level of government and establishes a presumption that this level will be the lowest one in scalar terms (Golub, 1996). Subsidiarity, coupled with the decentralization laws in France in the 1980s (Verlaque, 1987), has resulted in shifts towards regional policy-inputs both in the fields of agriculture and the environment (Boisson & Buller, 1996). Indeed the *Directions Régionales de l'Agriculture et de la Forêt* (DRAF), the regional bureau of the State Agricultural Ministry, are playing an increasingly important role alongside regional and local councils in the coordination and implementation of agri-environment and rural development measures¹⁷ (Guyvarc'h & Lorvellec, 1998). One consequence of subsidiarity is that the interpretation of European policy will have a peculiarly national inflection and, in this case, one that is framed by France's agrarian culture and conceptions of the rural and natural environment.

The French Agri-Environment agenda is part of a much wider debate about the future direction of French farming and the role of the agricultural profession in

¹⁷ Aside from the 'regionalisation' of agri-environment and agriculture policy formulation and delivery, the administrative and policy-making structures charged with implementing these policies continue, almost exclusively, to be those of agriculture (Buller, 1997). Due to the cultural importance of agriculture, it is not surprising that it is a tight-knit agricultural policy community (Epstein, 1997), supported by the political representatives of rural France who largely come from this agricultural community, that has been charged with the mediation of a process which seeks to effect a move away from a model of agriculture dominated by sector to one which is more territorial.

contemporary society (Lowe *et al.*, 2002). In their chapter which explores the relationship between the systems of farm production and Agri-Environmental policy in France, Buller and Brives (2000) provide an analysis of the socio-cultural backdrop which frames the way in which Agri-Environmental schemes have been conceived and the issues they seek to address. They identify three broad characteristics which they describe as the territorial importance of agriculture, the demographic and economic heritage of the French farming profession, and the relative absence of an alternative conception of French rurality to that founded on production. In France, agriculture is important in territorial terms, and this stems from a particular relationship between the natural environment and primary production. Beuret (1997), in his article on society's changing demands for agriculture and the new functions for farmers, prefaces his discussion with the observation that rural spaces continue to be defined as those parts of the natural environment managed by agricultural production. As such, the occupation and exploitation of the countryside by agriculture remains the critical defining component of rural space. France was essentially a rural nation until the 1950s and the dominant conception of rurality was tied intimately to production, rather than to amenity or nature conservation functions. The nature conservation movement has not achieved the same importance as that in the UK (Lowe & Buller, 1990) and rural preservationism is not as prevalent in France as in other northern European countries. Throughout the 1990s, farmers in the UK were indicted increasingly of environmental crimes (Lowe *et al.*, 1997), although as Jones and Clark have observed, during this period MAFF attempted to recast the UK farmer from 'agrarian trustee' to 'environmental steward' (Jones & Clark, 1998). In contrast, farming in France was not associated with notions of environmental decline, partly in light of the belief that agriculture internalised the consequences of its activities on the environment (Berlan-Darqu e & Kalaora, 1992). Thus the French farming population has been able to retain, virtually unchallenged, its historic status as natural guardian of the rural environment.

This long-standing agrarian tradition, along with the ideology that underpins it, has been a powerful force in defining the role of farmers and in shaping attitudes to both agriculture and the rural environment (Boisson & Buller, 1996). The importance of this agrarian culture has meant that the farming population occupies a key place in French society and is influential in political arenas (Naylor, 1994), further reinforcing the link between agricultural exploitation and the roles and function of the rural environment. The dominant model of French farming has been one characterised by a large peasant population, family farms, small landholdings and the production of agricultural goods that retain a 'local' identity. Successive politicians and figureheads such as José Bové have defended this model, advancing it as an alternative to one dominated by agribusiness and characterized by the processes of 'appropriationism' and 'substitutionism' inherent in industrialized agro-food systems, most notably in the United States (Goodman *et al.*, 1987; Bové & Dufour, 2001). In the context of rapid economic growth in Europe in the 1950s and 1960s and the emergence of a 'mass society' defined by a growing uniformity of culture and values (Miele, 2001), the standardization of patterns of food consumption (and therefore production) has not been so pronounced in France. Running counter to this general trend, French consumers have differentiated between agricultural products on the basis of quality, have sought products that are 'healthy' and 'natural' (Gilg & Battershill, 1998), along with expressing concerns about protecting traditional farming systems and local forms of production. Indeed in 1999, of the European Union's 535 PDO (protected designation of origin) and PGI (protected geographic indication) schemes, 111 are in France (Morris *et al.*, 2001), reflecting this demand for food with a particular regional identity.

These three broad characteristics that define the role of agriculture in the rural space led to the construction of an implicit link between an active agricultural population and a 'healthy' countryside and, as a result, the agri-environment debate in France has focused primarily on the sustainability of French agricultural

activity (Buller & Brives, 2000). Measures have been taken to combat agricultural retreat and the environmental and social 'hazards' associated with land abandonment (Boisson & Buller, 1996). Equally it has been interpreted as an unfavourable zones policy (Guyvarc'h & Lorvellec, 1998) and one which is deployed as a tool to support agricultural activities in fragile or marginal zones (Fruit, 1998). In addressing these concerns, agri-environment measures have served as a tool to deliver the reintegration of agriculture into the local community and in the construction and re-definition of rural territories, founded on the centrality of the small-scale, family farmer (Buller, 1997). Thus Buller and Brives (2000) conclude that the central 'environmental' preoccupation within France remains intrinsically agricultural and territorial; the production and maintenance not only of farmers and their revenues but also of local production systems and the agricultural landscapes and environments that they sustain. As such, the French experience of agri-environment policy has been to conceive the environment as 'territory', and the product of agricultural activity, rather than as 'nature', or something that is external to that activity.

This is the backdrop to the most recent *Loi d'Orientation Agricole* (99/574) (LOA) of July 1999, which, in stark contrast to that of 1960 with its explicit productivist ethos, rests upon the notion of multifunctionality and reorients agricultural policy towards a broader rural agenda. The LOA represents an attempt by the then Socialist government to address two concerns. The first is to establish a new basis of support for French agriculture in the face of both WTO pressures and changing societal demands. It is recognised that increasingly the priorities of French citizens relate to rural development, on-farm environmental management and the protection of rural landscapes, along with concerns about food quality and alimentary security (Rémy, 2000). This represents a direct challenge to agricultural corporatism and demands the reinsertion of agriculture in the local economy and territory (Degregori, 1998). The second concern is for the policy to be redistributive in nature, with modulation providing a means by which support could be directed

away from large farms, the primary beneficiaries of CAP guaranteed prices, to small and medium-sized farms, the traditional clientele of French agrarian policy (Lowe *et al.*, 2002).

In order to do this there is an expectation that agriculture must meet tripartite goals - economic, environmental and social - and this expectation is encapsulated in Article one of the LOA which states that;

“La politique agricole prend en compte les fonctions économique, environnementale et sociale de l’agriculture et participe à l’aménagement du territoire, en vue d’un développement durable.” (Rémy, 2000; 25. Quoted from *Journal Officiel du 10 juillet 1999*).

“Agricultural policy recognizes the economic, environmental and social functions of agriculture and plays a role in the management of the territory within the frame of sustainable development.”

The mechanism for delivering these goals is a voluntary, whole-farm land management contract or *Contrat Territorial d’Exploitation* (CTE). These contracts are a central component both of the LOA and France’s *Plan de Développement Rural* (PDR), prepared for the EC in November 1999 to demonstrate how the Rural Development Regulation would be implemented. France’s PDR highlights six national priorities, the first of which is the promotion of a sustainable, multifunctional agriculture. The main instrument to deliver this is the CTE, to which 22% of the total Rural Development Plan budget will be allocated (Sandre, 2000). A CTE is divided into two overarching objectives, one of which is linked to the environment and territory while the other is socio-economic which includes measures such as product labelling and certification schemes, supporting the installation of young farmers, employment creation and local capacity-building (Hervieu, 1999). This means that whilst the CTEs build on the previous agri-environment experience, their remit is broader.

The CTEs are administered at the level of the *département*. It has fallen largely to the DDAF and the DIREN (the departmental and regional representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment respectively), along with the *Commission Départementale d'Orientation Agricole* (CDOA) and the agricultural professionals to devise a series of contract menus detailing measures for different landscape types and systems of production found within the *département* (Léger, 2000). Although the final contract is signed between an individual farmer and the State for a five-year period, all CTEs are collective and territorial projects. As such they are essentially zonal programmes and their objectives relate to a concrete spatial context so that the positive effects on the natural and social environment can be maximised¹⁸. A variety of structures, or *porteurs du projet*, may be responsible for coordinating a collective CTE and these include economic groupings such as cooperatives, producer groups or *syndicats de cru*; professional agricultural organisations such as the departmental Chambers of Agriculture and civic actors such as the *collectivités territoriales* and *associations*¹⁹ (Léger, 2000). The project coordinator mobilises a group of interested local actors, who, along with farmers, often include political and civic actors, to form a *comité de pilotage*, or pilot committee, responsible for devising the specific objectives for a circumscribed territory. As such, much like the LEADER projects in France (Buller, 2001b), each

¹⁸ By April 2001, 15 CTEs existed in l'Hérault. Not all of these had been approved by the CDOA and the Prefect, but their intention had been declared. It is anticipated that in total there will be twenty projects, which will cover practically all of l'Hérault's rural area and this is considered to be a particularly fragmented and complex division of the territory of the *département* (Massebiau, 2001). Although in theory a CTE's boundaries relate to a coherent zone of production or similarity of landscape type, in reality they are determined by the identity of the project coordinator. For example, if the coordinating structure is an economic grouping, as is the case with the CTE d'Ensérune, the zone of the CTE will be the same area as that served by the producer group.

¹⁹ '*Les collectivités territoriales*' are the structures of local government. They constitute the municipal council - an elected council headed by a Mayor with executive authority over a commune; the '*Conseil Général*' - elected members headed by a president and with a departmental remit and the '*Conseil Régional*' or regional council (Oberdorff, 2000). The 1901 law on associations provided the necessary legal and administrative framework through which any association, club or society could exist before the law. Associations are part of a public, rather than private life and their activities constitute a special sector of the life of society as a whole. Associations often look to the authorities to provide them with financial support and in return, associations provide desirable public activities such as actions on the environment or the promotion of cultural activities (Stevens, 1996).

collective CTE is debated and formulated in accordance with a bottom-up approach, which serves in turn to encourage the formation of partnerships and associations that stretch beyond the farming sector.

This account of the history of the viticulture sector of the Languedoc ends at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The sector has had a varied history, with phases of prosperity and flourishing followed by those of severe hardship and decline. For some viticultural actors the future is uncertain, whereas for others there are new opportunities to be exploited through the production of wine of a higher quality and the recent emergence of a multifunctional agricultural regime. The story of this period of fracture (1970s – present day) is revisited in chapters four, five and six with one crucial difference, which is that space is provided for the personal narratives of local actors, incorporating their subjective experiences, understandings and interpretations of change. Embedded in this historical account are two key dynamics which are important in aiding understanding of these local and contemporary narratives. The dynamics are embodied in the sets of relations between the region's viticulture sector and the extra-local, and in the nature of local social relations, as epitomised by the cooperative system and expressed in the tension between collectivism and individualism. Before re-engaging with this story, however, chapter three describes the range of methodologies that have been employed to arrive at these local accounts of viticultural and social change.

3

Methodological Approaches, The Research Experience and Analysis Process

As discussed in chapter one, the thesis employs an actor-centred approach to investigate the social processes underpinning agricultural change in the context of the viticulture sector of the Languedoc. Networks have been forwarded as a concept which incorporates social action at the centre of analysis whilst at the same time taking account of the relations between actors acting both locally and 'at-a-distance' (Murdoch & Marsden, 1995). As well as a concept formulated to take account of social action across space, networks may also be used as a methodological tool to start to trace the links between actors, to examine how actors relate to each other and the types of relations in which they are engaged (see Pennington & Rydin, 2000; Few, 2002). As a methodological tool, therefore, networks can act as a sorting device which allows one to make some provisional assumptions about the nature of social relations through the kinds of links between actors. It is a flatter, non-hierarchical way of approaching a community, so that the nature of social relations emerges through the process of tracing these relations *in situ* rather than making *a priori* assumptions of the roles and positions of different actor-groups.

In addition to the employment of a network as a methodological tool, the thesis adopts a particular epistemological position which recognises the existence of plural forms of knowledge and different views of the world (Murdoch & Clark, 1996; Murdoch 1997). It seeks to privilege the voices of the case study actors

and thus local knowledges¹, experiences and interpretations of change. Underpinning this position is the assumption that with greater sensitivity to social and spatial difference, to the existence of competing discourses of rurality and to the multiple experiences of change, the material generated from this bottom-up approach may provide different or alternative insights of change from those afforded by meta-narratives. This leads to the employment of a bottom-up approach to elucidate local experiences and subjective accounts of change. Therefore, the narratives of change presented in the empirical chapters represent a straight reporting of the stories of local actors, with limited interpretation by the researcher.

These two key methodological positions adopted in the thesis, the use of networks and a bottom-up approach, lead to the employment of a particular set of qualitative methodologies and approaches to the analysis and interpretation of the material.

¹ If we accept that plural forms of knowledge exist, a definition must be provided of 'local knowledges'. Local knowledges (following Kloppenburg, 1991; Jones, 1995), in this case are derived from people's personal experiences of change and their everyday interpretations and constructions of the rural. They are thus subjective, there is no 'single' knowledge and they are embedded in, and constituted through, the material and social context in which they are generated.

An In-Depth Case Study Approach

Case studies can be viewed as exemplars of ideas, rather than providing an exhaustive analysis of a particular set of circumstances. As such, a case study approach allows a specific sequence of events to be explored in greater depth (Kitchen & Tate, 2000). In keeping with an actor-centred approach which seeks to follow the actors, to examine their rationales, decisions and strategies, the case study is seen as the most appropriate method because it provides an opportunity to “highlight and analyse the processes by which social actors actually manage their everyday social worlds and attempt to resolve certain problematic situations” (Long, 1989; 248). Thus, this in-depth case study, conducted over an extended period of time, serves as an illustrative insight into a set of social processes underpinning agricultural change in a particular location and allows a detailed examination of the subtleties of relations at the local level. However, it is recognised that the significance of individual cases can only be properly ascertained when the material generated is placed in a wider context in order to contribute to our understandings of the broader processes of change. More practically, the study has adopted an ethnographic approach which included formal and informal interviews, as well as participation in the daily tasks and routines of the actors, to uncover and interpret their narrative accounts of agricultural change.

The ‘*Vignerons du Pays d’Enserune*’, a viticultural producer group (see box 3.1, page 117) are the primary actors of the case study along with their production and territorial partners, as identified by themselves, who occupy positions up to the scale of the region². Thus members of the network include farmers, local

² Partnerships were traced to the regional level and not beyond due to the constraints of time and the wish to conduct a detailed study of the processes of change at the local level. It is acknowledged, however, that certain individuals interviewed are members of networks operating at the national and supra-national scale and thus their perspectives and positions will be influenced by supra-regional debates which, to a degree, are then built in locally. Linkages between the actors in the case study and others in the same broader viticulture network will span many spatial scales; they will be connected through different actor-spaces (Murdoch & Marsden, 1995).

civic and economic actors, along with regional officials, engaged in the production of table wine and 'Vin de Pays' and involved in rural development initiatives. The study does not, therefore, focus on one actor-group, such as farmers or viticultural elites, for example. It takes a more holistic view because it is argued that as individual actors form shifting coalitions in the harnessing of threats and opportunities, new interrelationships develop at different levels between farming actors, other rural actors and society at large (see Knickel & Renting, 2000). The key to understanding these shifting relationships, therefore, is not to be found in the individuals themselves, but in broader processes and social structures. Therefore, it is necessary to make connections between the testimonies of individuals and different groups of actors and to analyse the material in its aggregate form. Moreover, the study does not assume *a priori* that the behaviour of a group of actors, such as farmers for example, is uniform, and thus it seeks to avoid conceptions of an aggregated agriculture in a homogeneous rural and marketised world. Indeed, much of the work on the adoption of agri-environment schemes by farmers and their motivation to participate (see Morris & Potter, 1995; Wilson, 1997; Battershill & Gilg, 1996; 1997) highlights the complexity and temporal and spatial diversity of the farm adjustment process. This research, therefore, serves to emphasise the fact that farmers do not behave as a homogeneous group.

The case study group, the 'Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune', was identified during the preliminary field-trip through interviews conducted with regional officials and a reading of the grey literature held at the archive of the Chamber of Agriculture of l'Hérault on viticultural producer groups (see also *Le Monde*, 25 February 1998). It was selected on account of its innovative approach to environmental and territorial initiatives and therefore serves as an informative example in the analysis of rural change at the local-level and the negotiation, by local actors, of the shift from a singular concern with the production of grapes to a multifunctional role and the provision of aesthetic and conservation countryside goods. Deliberatively, the VPE are somewhat exceptional in terms of their early engagement in agri-environment schemes and rural development

projects and indeed as Long (1989) suggests, the selection of case studies should be informed by research themes. In the first instance letters were sent to the President of the VPE, M. Bataille, and to M. Gazels, responsible for the VPE's environmental activities and rural development projects. Initially, therefore, access to the group was negotiated through the top.

An Ethnographic Approach

An ethnographic approach to the fieldwork was adopted. It affords the observation of actors and actions in specific contexts over time, a revelation of the meanings and processes which underpin social action, and the exploration of the lived experiences of local actors in all their complexity (May, 1997; Herbert, 2000). In keeping with this type of approach, the fieldwork involved three trips to the research community. The first trip, conducted in September 1999, was a preliminary visit. Its objectives were to identify the case study, to gain a better understanding of the range of organisations associated with agriculture and viticulture in the Languedoc region, the divisions of responsibility and competencies at the local and sub-national level, to establish contacts in the academic community and to identify current research in the area. The second trip, dating from May to early November 2000, constituted the main body of the field-work and involved an extended stay in the village of Nissan-lez-Ensérune (hereafter referred to as Nissan), one of the communes served by the VPE. A large amount of time was invested in this local community, typical of an ethnographic approach. This was important for the research project which necessitated the building of trust-bonds, learning about the culture, the internal vocabulary of the local actors and the organisation of the community in terms of a set of social relations. The final field-trip was in February and March, 2001, and was based largely in Montpellier in order to conduct interviews with regional officials and policy makers.

The field-work was characterised by a steep learning curve. The subjects covered ranged from the technical aspects of viticulture and vinification through to a deeper understanding of village social relations. The issue of learning contributed, in part, to the chronology of interviews conducted with different groups of actors. Specifically it meant that I interviewed the farmers, the key case study actors, first and the regional officials last. Regional actors were interviewed at the end of the study for two reasons. During my extended stay in the local community, I attended meetings held by the VPE to which regional

actors were invited. This meant that over time, my presence was a familiar one, and I was able to draw on my own contacts to gain access to, and arrange interviews with regional officials. Perhaps more critically, however, by conducting these interviews at the end of the study I was able to interview regional officials with a level of understanding and experience gained through an extended stay in the research community that afforded me a legitimacy I would not have had at the start of the study. This was particularly important considering my positionality as a researcher; a young female interviewing predominantly male civil servants. These arguments resonate with the experiences of McDowell (1998) when she interviewed merchant bankers in the City of London as part of her research on the small-scale, local interactions that make up the culture of an organisation. She describes how she emphasised her connections with the University of Cambridge, drawing on a 'elitist' conception of Cambridge in order to legitimate her role as interviewer in this male-dominated and 'high-status' environment. Specifically she argues that it is important to recognise the power relations that exist between interviewer and interviewee which may be more pronounced when interviewing people in positions of authority. Schoenberger (1991) elaborates and notes the importance of being well-informed in a corporate interview setting.

Methodological Approaches

Three methodological approaches were employed and these consisted of taped semi-structured interviews, untaped open-ended interviews or informal conversations, and participant observation. Each approach is described in turn, along with the types of data produced and the range of functions these different forms of data serve.

In terms of the taped semi-structured interviews, the commitment to privileging local actors' understandings of change created a tension between the need to impose a structure on respondents' answers through questioning to pursue the research questions, whilst at the same time adhering to the principles of a bottom-up approach³. In terms of the taped interviews, this tension was resolved through a mix of open-ended and semi-structured questions. A question check-list was designed comprising pre-determined, qualitative, in-depth questions, which were a mix of open-ended and semi-structured questions (see appendix 1). A context sheet was devised to accompany both the formal and informal interviews (see appendix 2) to record information on the physical setting of the interview, the social circumstances, the frequency of interaction between the researcher and the respondent, the process of recruitment and impressions of the relationship between the researcher and the 'researched' (see Law, 1994 for the importance of recording these contextual indices in conducting ethnographic research).

A structure was imposed on the opening section of the taped interviews with farmers. This served a number of purposes. Firstly, these questions sought to

³ Whilst subscribing to a bottom-up approach which privileges the voices of the case study actors and which seeks to recount their experiences of change in their own terms, a completely extracted researcher role has not been followed in this piece of research. See Seur (1992) for a description of an approach in which interviews are unstructured, with much of the interview time spent reacting to the accounts of respondents, rather than encouraging them to react to the questions prepared. In this piece of research, the questions and the themes around which the local narratives are structured have, to a certain extent, been defined by the researcher according to a pre-determined set of research interests.

put respondents at ease, rather than immediately beginning the interview with an investigation of their thoughts, opinions and experiences, which in turn often meant that they talked more freely in the conversational parts of the interview. These early questions addressed issues such as farm size, the proportion of their farm planted with improved grape varieties, the training they had received and brief family histories. This information was collected, not to categorise the farmers, but rather to derive short biographies of these individuals to contextualise their stories. Similarly, the opening sections of interviews with off-farm actors, included questions which addressed issues such as employment history, their role in the institution and what positions they had previously held. Again this served to relax the interviewee but also afforded the interviewer some idea of what issues to probe in the later stages of the interview. The remainder of the interview, for both farmers and off-farm actors, was conducted under a semi-structured and open-ended format.

Following this initial section the early questions in the taped interviews were of an open-ended character and allowed respondents to talk about themselves and their personal experiences of change. This allowed the respondent to apply his or her own understandings of the broad themes introduced by the researcher and also allowed for an engagement in dialogue, providing opportunities for elaboration, clarification and the exploration of new themes. This open-ended approach to questioning confers flexibility and allows an examination of complexity and contradiction, whilst at same time bestowing some structure for comparison (May, 1997). Particularly in the early stages of the research, the exact nature of the questions evolved as my understanding of the issues increased.

General themes addressed in the question check-list were framed by a close reading of the literature on the Languedoc's viticulture sector, on CAP reform and the French agri-environmental agenda. This led me to identify the main dynamics of change experienced by the viticulture sector during the period of fracture dating from the 1970s as being the shift from the production of table

wine to wine of a higher quality, along with the emergence of a multifunctional agricultural regime (see chapter 2). In particular, agri-environment initiatives and the CTE represented the key vehicles for exploring the transition to a multifunctional agriculture. These vehicles provided a prompt tool for the interviewer and a means through which to explore local experiences of change. They were not, however, used prescriptively. The questions towards the end of an interview typically were more structured and specifically explored the interviewee's perceptions of threats and opportunities and the motivations behind their actions. The notions of threats and opportunities are quite abstract, and to explore an individual's perceptions of threats and opportunities some respondents had to be prompted using more concrete questions. They were asked how they perceived the reorientation towards improved grape varieties or enrolment in the CTE, for example, and if these initiatives were regarded as an opportunity, for whom. These prompts were understood to be important events as a result of what I learned in the field, through talking informally to people and reading newsletters on current initiatives and future orientations sent by the VPE's President to cooperative members over the last five years. However, whilst this material was drawn upon as a prompt, critically it was a matter of identifying what was important to the interviewee.

The interviews were designed to examine personal experiences of changes in the viticulture sector, and in real-time terms the questions served to incorporate change from the mid-1970s⁴. As reported in chapter two, commentators have identified this period as one of fracture and intense restructuring. However, whilst imposing a time-frame on the discussions, the nature of change, its

⁴ The time-scale covered in terms of respondents' experiences of change varied according to the age of the interviewee. They were not asked to go further back in time than their lived memory. However, many of the younger farmers were from viticultural families and were eager to talk about their parent's farm, their involvement in it as they grew up and distinguishing their management of the farm business from that of their parents. Thus most respondents were able to discuss their experiences of change over this period. In addition to the issue of memory-span, personality or personal circumstance may also influence the time-frame over which respondents are inclined to talk. On this account, some respondents exhibited a greater propensity to dwell on the past or on a particular decade. This emphasis, therefore, is not necessarily indicative of a period of relatively greater change.

experience in relational terms or in periods and an identification of the key events were left to emerge from the actors' narratives.

Prior to starting the farmer interviews, the interview schedule was distributed to the President of the VPE, the President of Nissan cooperative and a farmer who sits on the Administrative Council of the VPE. This was so that they could check the comprehensiveness of the preliminary contextual questions, to ensure that none of the questions were politically sensitive and to confer a degree of transparency on the research project. An employee of the cooperative of Capestang read the questions to check that their formulation was not ambiguous from a linguistic point of view, an especially important matter when trying to capture subjective meanings of change and learning the 'internal' vocabulary of the respondents (see Berg & Mansvelt, 2000, for a discussion on the need for sensitivity to linguistic precision when using analytical categories referred to in the academic literature but which may have little meaning or relevance in the field).

Farmer interviews for the most part were conducted in their homes or in the cooperative and many lasted for up to two hours⁵. The interviews with regional officials were shorter, lasting up to an hour, and were conducted in their offices or place of work. Interviews were recorded on tape and transcripts produced in French of these interviews.

It is important to signal the distinction between taped and untaped interviews. When a formal request for an interview was made, the majority of respondents were willing to be taped and thus the use of a tape recorder did not seem to undermine my attempt to play an active and engaged role in the community. However, especially at the beginning of the study when local people were unsure of the nature of my work, I was wary of using a tape-recorder too

⁵ In return for the fact that farmers shared their stories with me, after the interview I often spent another hour with them answering their questions about my life, London, agriculture in the UK and showed them photographs of archetypical English countryside scenes, including pictures of village pubs, Post Offices, churches and Friesian cows.

liberally, particularly if the conversation was opportunistic, or when other people were around. Three farmers requested that they were not taped, and so these untaped interviews were structured according to the same question checklist as used for the taped farmer interviews. For the most part, the informal interviews served a different purpose from taped interviews and were used to gain contextual information and thus the questions were largely unstructured and open-ended in nature.

Participant observation is regarded as the principal methodology of an ethnographic approach and involves the researcher spending considerable time observing and interacting with a social group. This engagement in the group, in turn, affords a means of exploring the knowledge and meaning structures that underpin social action (Cook, 1997; Herbert, 2000). Participant observation represented the final strand of my methodology and I deliberately immersed myself in the everyday rhythms and routines of farmers in this local community. My participation in farming activities involved attending cooperative meetings and activities including the bird count of the *pie grièche*, the '*fête du vin et de la vigne*', hikes organised by the cooperative, various cooperative meals and theatrical events (see appendix 3). Participation in these activities served to afford access to the village community⁶ and to engender an empathy with, and personal commitment to, the local community. It also helped in the project of learning the internal vocabulary, not least how respondents understood concepts employed by academics such as the State and multi-functionality. Meeting people in informal, social contexts increased my level of interaction with the local community. This level of interaction helped me to better understand who the key actors were, their relationships with others, the processes that bind actors together, and provided an insight into

⁶ Village Mayors and cooperative Presidents were my first points of access in the villages in which the empirical work was largely conducted. However, during the first two months of my stay I attended many village events, some of which were unrelated to viticulture, including village fetes and recycling meetings. I took time to introduce myself and my work to a range of villagers in order to make the research as transparent as possible, and to develop my own network of contacts to circumvent, to a certain extent, the influence of gatekeepers.

locally-held views and value systems. I explored the relationship between the cooperative and the village, and how the case study may be perceived to be embedded in its wider social and civil society context.

Table 3.1. Table to show the number of taped and untaped interviews conducted and the participation events attended during the three fieldwork periods.

	FIELD TRIP 1	2	3	TOTAL FIELD DATA SOURCES
Semi-structured, taped interviews	4	36	17	57
Untaped interviews	7	45	4	56
Participation events	9	36	2	47
				160

Appendix 3 provides a comprehensive list of all of these data sources⁷, arranged chronologically within each data type, with details of date, actor, meeting number, institution and position occupied.

⁷ In total, 113 taped and untaped interviews were conducted. This equates to 89 individuals as some were interviewed more than once. The 57 taped interviews relate to 58 individuals; one individual was interviewed twice and on two occasions two people were interviewed together. On seven other occasions, wives were present but did not participate directly in the interview although in each case they played a substantial role in the running of the farm. In addition to the 58 individuals with whom interviews were taped, untaped interviews were conducted with a further 31 individuals. To account for the other 24 interview events, 9 individuals were interviewed twice, 2 were interviewed three times, 2 were interviewed four times and one respondent was interviewed on 6 occasions. Those interviewed on multiple occasions included the Presidents of Lespignan, Nissan and Capestang cooperatives, the President of the VPE, 1 employee of the VPE, the environmental representative of the VPE, 3 cooperative members, 2 of whom sit on the Administrative Council of the VPE, 3 regional officials and 2 academics. As Rabinow (1977) has observed from his ethnographic research in Morocco, there are some co-participants in ethnographic enquiry that are of particular value to the research(er) in that they have the unusual capacity for self-reflection or criticism with respect to their own life circumstances and the customs and social relations of their respective societies. This position resonates with my own experience and is drawn on as an explanation for why some individuals were interviewed more than once and why in the empirical chapters certain individuals are quoted more frequently than others. A further point to note is that in the empirical chapters, 45 individuals are directly quoted and taped interviews were conducted with 57 individuals. The material quoted is largely representative of the aggregate data set and thus no key alternative points of view have been excluded.

Interview Respondents

The *Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune* is a viticultural producer group formed of seven village cooperatives (see box 3.1, for a description of the case study group). Farmers were recruited from only two of these village cooperatives, those of Nissan and Lespignan, because the investment of time required developing relations and gaining access to farmers precluded the possibility of conducting interviews with farmers from all seven cooperatives. In order to select two cooperatives, local advice was sought, from both the President of the VPE and Presidents of the seven village cooperatives. For each village cooperative, the number of members, the profile of cooperative members in terms of age distribution and size of farms, the profile of the Administrative Council, the type of wine produced, the geography of the communes and the level of engagement in territorial initiatives were discussed. The purpose of these discussions was to seek local knowledge in order to reveal any cooperatives that were peculiarly different from the others.

Box 3.1. *Les Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune*: the case study group.

The *Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune* is a viticulture cooperative situated to the west of Béziers in the *département* of l'Hérault. In 1976, seven wine cooperatives serving the villages of Cazerdarnes, Maraussan, Montady, Lespignan, Nissan-lez-Ensérune, Cazouls and Capestang merged to form a producer group, CEPRO, under the '*groupement de producteur*' legislation of 1962. These communes are not contiguous. Maraussan, Cazouls and Cazerdarnes are in the north, separated from the others by the two communes of Puisserguier and Maureilhan (see figure 3.1). CEPRO changed its name to the VPE in 1995, in an attempt to denote a territorial anchorage, associated with the Roman oppidum of Ensérune located in the zone of production. Vinification was consolidated at the sites of Nissan, Capestang and Cazouls and the headquarters are at Maraussan. The VPE has 1870 members who manage a vineyard of 5300 hectares (ha). Of these 1870 members, only 200 are full-time farmers, owning farms of 15ha and over. The other 1670 members manage the remaining 2300 ha, representing an average holding of 1.6 ha (Fauré, 2000, pers. comm.). The harvest in 1999 was 700,000 hl, of which 470,000 hl was table wine, 218,000hl varietal wine and *Vin de Pays* and 12,000 hl AOC (Anon, VPE, 2000). Currently 35% of the VPE's vineyard has been replanted with 'improved' grape varieties

(CEVILAR, 1999). 700,000 hl represents 8% of the total volume of wine produced by cooperatives in l'Hérault for 1999 (*Ibid*, 1999). At the time of the empirical investigation, arrangements were being made for increased association with a larger viticultural producer group, 'Foncalieu', which has facilities both for bottling wine and its marketing. As such, this provides a means by which the product may be identified with the zone of production and marketed in the national and international market place. Currently 5% of the total wine produced by the VPE is bottled, the remainder is sold in bulk, and by 2005 it is anticipated that this proportion will reach 20% (Lopez, 2000, pers. comm.).

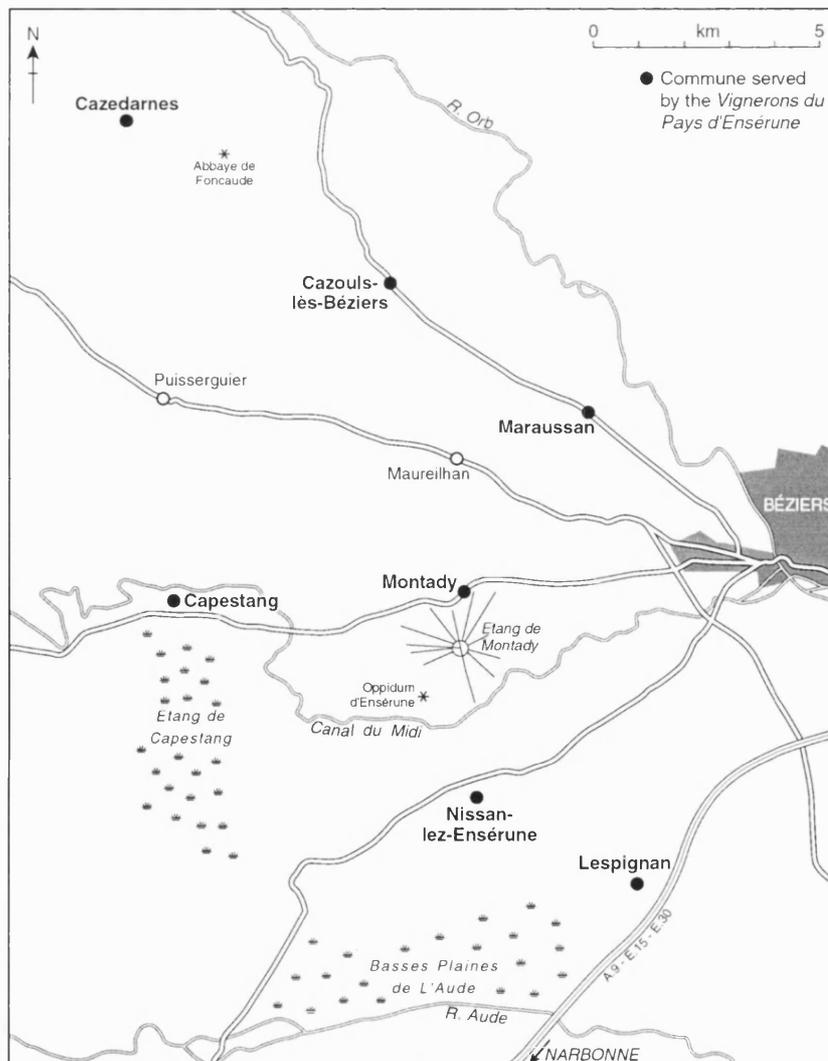
The VPE is presided over by a President, a director, a financial director, a representative of territorial initiatives, an Administrative Council and four committees responsible for communication, investment and finance, strategy and land ownership, and development. Each village cooperative or '*section géographique*' is also managed by a President and an Administrative Council who are elected each year by members in accordance with the 'one man, one vote' principle. Three members of the Administrative Council of each village cooperative, including the President, sit on the Administrative Council of the VPE.

The VPE cover a zone of 400 sq. kilometres, which is varied both in terms of its soils, microclimates and natural environment. The southern communes of the VPE fall on the littoral plain with thick alluvial soils. Along with winter temperatures that are mild enough to protect the resting stage of vines, the heat of the summer which prolongs and intensifies the growing cycle, and the proximity of the sea which provides a level of atmospheric humidity necessary for the ripening of the grape, these represent ideal agronomic conditions for the production of large volumes of grapes per hectare (Pomerol, 1989). The only risk is that some of these areas, particularly on the banks of the river Aude, are susceptible to flooding. The northern communes incorporate the foothills of the *Montagne Noire*, with vines grown on slopes in stony, calcareous soils. Although planted with the same grape varieties, these environmental factors mean that yields are lower. Some of these vineyards carry an AOC appellation, those of *Saint-Chinian* and *Faugères*, which fall under the '*Coteaux du Languedoc*' appellation, demarcated in 1985.

Within this zone there are multiple land-uses, including the urban agglomerations of Béziers and Narbonne along with agriculture and tourism, which predominates along the littoral. Viticulture is the main agricultural activity, with 84% of the area under agriculture planted with vines, compared with the departmental average for l'Hérault of 60% (Couderc, 1986). A number of features of cultural and historical import fall within the zone of the VPE including the UNESCO designated *Canal du Midi*, *l'Oppidum d'Ensérune* (a Roman fortress), *l'Etang de Montady* (a thirteenth-century Roman irrigation system) and the sixteenth-century *Abbaye de Foncaude*.

Since the 1990s, the VPE have been involved in a number of environmental and territorial initiatives, which extend beyond a purely production remit. These have included a local Agri-Environment scheme, providing for the planting of trees and restoration of rivers; a *Programme Local d'Aménagement Concerté* (PLAC), a local rural development project which centred on the *Basses Plaines de l'Aude*, a riverine habitat of conservation importance; a *Projet du Pays d'Ensérune*; they were the first group to sign a collective CTE Viti-Vinicole (*Contrat Territorial d'Exploitation*) in l'Hérault; they have established ornithological walks and a '*chemin des garrigues*', as well as hosting numerous festivities such as plays to celebrate the centennial anniversary of cooperation. All of these initiatives are elaborated in the text of the empirical chapters as they appear in the narratives of the case study actors.

Figure 3.1. Map of the communes of the VPE and the cultural features and characteristics of the natural environment in the zone of production.



The two village cooperatives of Nissan and Lespignan are neighbouring communes located on the littoral plain and in the southern reaches of the VPE and thus the physical environment and the wine produced are quite similar. Nissan is one of three sites where vinification has been consolidated and produces the largest volume of wine *per annum* of all seven cooperatives. In contrast, the cooperative of Lespignan has encouraged a diversification in activities, instigating environmental initiatives, the PLAC, bird trails and the commune of Lespignan is the site of a local agri-environment programme. Thus, without seeking to achieve a representative sample of cooperatives, this difference in focus provides an insight into differing restructuring trajectories. Finally, Nissan was chosen for pragmatic reasons; this is where I lived, I had a strong relationship with the President and local farmers, and I enjoyed many contacts important in the recruitment of farmers.

In terms of the individual farmers there was no attempt to interview a statistically representative sample and instead, I sought to talk to a reasonably diverse group in order to access a range of informative positions and views. The VPE has 1870 members but the greatest proportion of these are pluri-actives owning small plots of land. Only 200 members of the VPE are full-time farmers and it was a sample of these full-time farmers who were selected for interview, although a small number of retired and part-time farmers were interviewed to gain an historical or contrasting perspective. The reason for the concentration on full-time farmers is because the thesis focuses upon the contemporary restructuring of the viticulture sector, and this is the group of farmers most concerned to negotiate the shift to the future. A sense of the composition of the farmer sample may be derived from the actors' biographies which accompany an individual's narrative in the empirical chapters. Two methods of recruitment of interviewees were employed, using gatekeepers and by 'snowballing' from multiple initial contact points (Valentine, 1997). All of the gatekeepers for the farmer interviews occupied leadership positions in the cooperative⁸. For the

⁸ In Nissan, four gatekeepers aided with the recruitment of farmers. They included the President of Nissan cooperative, a former President of Nissan cooperative, the cooperative manager and a

farmer interviews, I devised a set of sampling criteria to afford the gatekeepers some idea of whom I was seeking to interview. I asked the gatekeepers to identify a range of individuals differentiated according to the characteristics of age, size of farm, full-time farmers / pluri-actives, participation or not in AE initiatives or the CTE, and those with administrative responsibilities in the cooperative. The use of gatekeepers, however, must be tempered with caution as they can manipulate access according to a hidden agenda (May, 1997). It is possible that they directed me to their friends and supporters and conversely it may have been perceived by some farmers that I was linked to the 'authoritative' or 'leadership' structures of the cooperative. Such biases were counteracted to a certain extent by also recruiting farmers based upon my own contacts made as a result of participating in village life.

The first stage in identifying the partners of the primary case study actors - the farmers and cooperative administrators of the VPE - was to gain an understanding of the institutional structure surrounding viticulture and agriculture more generally, and to comprehend the roles, functions and responsibilities of these institutions. The second stage involved tracing the union, administrative, political, economic and civic networks in which the VPE are inserted. I investigated these notional networks using a variety of sources of information, including informal interviews with practitioners and academics and documentary sources. The latter included an edition of *Pôle Sud (La "grande transformation" du Midi Rouge, 1998)* dedicated to a description and analysis of local actor networks associated with the restructuring of the Languedoc's viticulture sector and dissertations produced on the *Diplôme d'études supérieures (DESS)* course, '*Aménagement rural et développement rural; vers une nouvelle organisation de l'espace collectif*', run at Paul Valéry University, Montpellier, in which students assume placements in key regional agricultural institutions.

member of the Administrative Council of the VPE. In Lespignan, the cooperative President was the only gatekeeper. These gatekeepers operated within slightly different networks, but it is difficult to evaluate what effect this had on the sample of farmers to whom they directed me.

After I had gained an understanding of the notional network, the case study actors were themselves encouraged to identify their partners in their own terms. This was to avoid a top-down interpretation of which institutions and individuals are important in the network. Thus their partners were identified during the course of the interviews and my extended stay in the case study community. Actors were asked whom they perceived as being important or influential, whom they worked or interacted with and whose advice was sought in the context of negotiating change or in the adoption of new initiatives. The VPE's partners are depicted in figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2. Network diagram to show the 'sectoral' and 'territorial' partners of the case study actors as identified by themselves.

PARTNERS SCALE	SECTORAL	TERRITORIAL	
SUPRA-NATIONAL	Bibendum	European Commission	
NATIONAL	Ministry of Agriculture	L'INRA Ministry of Environment	
REGION	L'ONIVINS Le CIVL Foncalieu Syndicat de défense du 'Vins de Pays'	Regional Council La DRAF Regional Chamber of Agriculture	La DIREN La CRAE La SIME
DEPARTMENT	La FDSEA Carrefour supermarket L'INRA La Confédération Paysanne Le CNJA L'ADASEA	La FDCCH Departmental Council The Prefecture La CDOA La DDAF Departmental Chamber of Agriculture	La DDE Le Cru de Minervois L'ADAPM GEYSER Le GRIVE Le Conservatoire des Espaces Naturels
LOCAL	Mutual Credit Societies Australian Oenologues Private Proprietors Le Crédit Agricole La SAFER CUMA GAEC	Les Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune Finance Director President Environmental Representative 1800 members	Cereal and Livestock Producers La Pégase 'Architecture et Territoire' Commune Mayors L'ASA Le Foyer Rural Schools La Communauté des Communes

Interview Respondents

This diagram serves to depict the partners of the VPE as identified by the case study actors and is to be read in conjunction with Appendix 4 in which the acronyms are translated and the functions of each institution are outlined. The first point to note is that this diagram depicts the partnerships of the VPE as identified by the case study actors and therefore is not a comprehensive list of all the agricultural institutions operating at the local and regional scales. It seeks to portray those institutions seen as important by the actors. The partners have been divided into production and territorial partners, which is not necessarily a distinction made by the actors, but imposed by myself. What is apparent, however, is that many of the partner institutions perform both roles and are represented as those crossing the middle line of the diagram. I have also tried to portray a sense of spatial scale in the diagram and as explained earlier, for pragmatic reasons I have restricted the scale of analysis to the regional level. The depiction of relationships stretching across spatial scales will serve to reinforce the point that connections between individuals and organisations extend across space despite the local 'weight' of the network. The decision to situate an institution at a particular scale, such as local, departmental, regional, national or supra-national, depends on the scale at which the VPE's partner is operating⁹.

⁹ This is why, for example, *Carrefour*, a national supermarket chain has been positioned at the regional scale and the *Crédit Agricole*, a national bank, at the local scale.

Table 3.2. Table to show the total number of taped and untaped interviews conducted with different actor groups¹⁰.

ACTOR CATEGORIES	TAPED (N = 57)	UNTAPED (N = 56)
Vinegrowers (VPE members)	25	16 ¹¹
VPE Administrators and Employees	3	7
Production Partners (including FDCCCH, Foncalieu, private caves)	7	7
Territorial Partners (including non-viticultural producers associating with VPE in CTE, environmental representatives, commune mayors and president of 'Communauté des Communes')	8	6
Regional Officials (Agricultural administration and professionals, including those responsible for both production elements of viticulture and its multifunctional roles e.g. CTE, AE schemes)	13	7
Research / Academic Community	1	13

A greater proportion of those partners interviewed are territorial rather than production partners (see figure 3.2 and table 3.2). However, if one takes account of the multiple roles played by individual actors this imbalance is redressed to a certain extent. For the most part, farmers and cooperative officials who occupy

¹⁰Although it has been argued that a network approach provides a means by which the material may be analysed in its aggregate form, making connections between the testimonies of individual actors and thereby destabilizing *a priori* assumptions about homogeneous behaviour within actor categories, the assignment of respondents to actor categories as shown above makes sense at this stage in terms of the functionality of members of the network. This however does not necessarily equate to a similarity in position amongst members of the same group. The question of how individuals have been assigned to categories if they occupy multiple roles in the network needs to be addressed. I have used my in-depth knowledge of an individual's life-history gained from an extended stay in the community to judge which is their major role and have assigned them to the appropriate category. If the allocation was ambiguous, they have been assigned to the category relating to the role they occupied within the context of the interview.

¹¹Just to reiterate that the 41 interviews conducted with VPE members (25 + 16 taped and untaped interviews) do not equate to 41 individuals (refer to foot-note 7, page 116 for clarification).

multiple roles are involved in institutions with production functions or ones that support directly the production element of viticulture, (for example the *Crédit Agricole*, *la Safer*, mutual credit societies, bottling and distribution structures). As such, their narratives will be suffused with discourses deriving from their involvement in these institutions, and these discourses are incorporated into the narratives as a whole data-set, without my having interviewed representatives of these institutions directly. That said there is a 'real' imbalance which can be explained as follows. This producer group was chosen as the case study on account of its active involvement in environmental activities and rural development initiatives, and so although the initial choice of the case study was framed by the preoccupations of the researcher, the actors themselves frequently interacted and formed alliances with non-production partners exactly because of the prevailing culture of the cooperative. Thus this bias as much reflects the strategies of the actors as the proclivities of the researcher and therefore does not undermine an adherence to a bottom-up approach.

Recording of Data

The taped interviews were transcribed in French and a context sheet produced to accompany each interview so that the analysis of the data was carried out in conjunction with a set of contextual indices. Notes were made either during the course of informal interviews or immediately afterwards and the same context sheet was used. Field notes in English were made of the material content of the participant observation events. A research diary was kept providing a chronological account of the fieldwork, including ideas, impressions and an evaluation of the research process and experience. Each day I looked through the *'Midi Libre'*, a local newspaper, for articles about viticulture and I subscribed to the monthly viticultural journal *'Paysan du Midi'* which contains articles about the technical aspects of viticulture, the sales of wine and the nature of the wine market.

A variety of forms of data is generated from this multi-stranded methodological approach, each serving a different purpose. Four broad functions can be identified. The first function can be characterised as directly addressing the research questions. The second is a methodological function, in the sense of gaining the trust of the interview respondents and enhancing researcher empathy, negotiating access to the community, tracing the networks in which the case study actors are embedded and the identification of 'key' actors. The third is a contextual function, to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of social relations, the functioning of the network, material on the wider political, cultural, institutional and economic context, knowledge of the geography of the zone, the cooperative's organisation and governance, and material specifically concerning the viticulture sector and the customs, labour cycles and daily existences of farmers. The final function may be identified as a facilitation of the learning process inherent in the fieldwork in terms of gaining expertise, the evolution of interview questions, challenging any previously-held assumptions and querying what has been said in the course of the interviews.

It is important to evaluate the relative importance of these different data sources. In general terms, the material generated from the taped interviews directly addresses the research questions. The untaped interviews provide contextual material and aid in the facilitation of the learning process, while the participant observation work serves a broader methodological objective. The transcripts have been privileged as the most important data source but some material collected in the untaped interviews and more informal conversations has also informed the narrative of change presented in the empirical chapters. Moreover, although the transcripts of the taped interviews have been privileged, this material is embedded in a rich, contextual frame derived from the other data sources which have informed my understanding of personal histories and relationships and the meanings with which actors imbue events. In turn, this deeper understanding has served to inform the interpretations of the narratives of change of the case study actors (see chapter 7).

Research Experience

A critical aspect of the methodology is that I chose to live in the community in which the research was conducted. Considerable effort was made to integrate myself in the village, but more specifically in the cooperative milieu. I attempted to be very visible from the start and I invested time in developing relationships with the case study actors. Whilst this strategy confers benefits, in that I could draw on people for help and that I had my own contacts through which to recruit people for interview, it also engenders other issues that need to be rendered explicit on account of the impact of this level of researcher engagement on the nature of the material produced. These issues include the relationship between the researcher and the researched, my positionality as a researcher and the effect of my presence on the behaviour or views of the respondents.

Pertinently, in terms of a network approach, attention must be paid to the power relations inherent in the research process itself. In circulating among different members of the network, discussing individuals' opinions and positions, I was inevitably perceived by some interviewees as a vehicle for exerting leverage on others, or as someone to be recruited (albeit indirectly) in the confirmation of their position. I was made aware of this when the VPE's President observed to me that I was serving as a publicity tool for the CTE by virtue of my presence in the villages and by discussing the CTE with respondents. Therefore, it was important to emphasise my independence as well as the confidentiality of individual responses, through the promise of anonymity¹². This was an explicit attempt to emphasise that I was not implicitly

¹² Pseudonyms taken from a French telephone directory have been given to farmers in order to disguise their identity, whereas the names of cooperative administrators and regional officials are their own. There are several reasons for this. The farmers interviewed were promised anonymity and, in part, this may explain people's willingness to be taped. Furthermore, the nature of the relationship developed between the researcher and the researched in an ethnographic enquiry often engenders an openness and revelation of intimacies during discussions which should not be circulated in the public realm. The use of pseudonyms, therefore, means that only people with an intimate knowledge of individuals in the villages could guess at the identity of respondents. However, for cooperative administrators and regional officials, the role of an individual is a key

supporting the President's position as someone trying to enrol farmers into the CTE project. It became clear that a continuous and reflexive consideration of these and other power relations in terms of the researcher and the 'researched' is particularly important when doing a piece of research of this nature. (See Few, 2002, for a discussion of the importance of these issues in ethnographic work).

McDowell (1992) refers to a sizeable feminist literature which highlights the significance of gender relations and the differential power involved in research contexts (see also Staeheli & Lawson, 1994). I was aware of these gender relations during the course of the field-work, which in turn relate to my positionality as a researcher. Specifically, I was female, circulating in the male-dominated environment of viticultural production and, moreover, I was British. I gained the impression that being female and British conferred on me a certain novelty value which helped me to gain access to certain extremely busy farmers. It also contributed to the fact that generally I was not perceived of as a threat. But being female in this male-dominated environment did raise a tension between the need for researcher involvement in the community on the one hand and researcher detachment on the other. It was necessary for me to integrate myself in the village community, in other words to 'go local' to achieve the necessary richness of empirical material critical to the project. However I could not 'go local' in the sense of conforming to a traditional female role in rural, Mediterranean France, a society in which gender differences, and indeed gender segregation, continue to be pronounced. So in order to follow the farmers in their daily activities, to talk to them at the cooperative, I had to enter male 'spaces' not traditionally the domain of women, and on this account it was important to remain 'different'.

pointer to their identity and a change of name would not be an adequate disguise. As such, they were not promised anonymity. In many cases, the nature of the interview was different, it was more formal. I had less of a personal relationship with the respondent and, although encouraged not to, I felt that the individual was presenting an institutional line and therefore a position which was much more in the 'public realm'. The narratives of regional officials are either accompanied with no biography or one which is less detailed than those of farmers because interviews with these actors were shorter and less time was spent discussing an individual's biographical details.

Data Analysis

ATLAS /tsi was used as a tool in the management of my interview transcript material on account of the large size of the data set¹³. At its most basic application this software can be regarded as an instrument to order and to reduce the data into thematic categories, based on its 'code and retrieve' function. The analysis of the material, therefore, was conducted by myself and to do this I devised a coding framework, making a distinction between *a priori* and emergent codes - those used by the informants themselves (see appendix 5). *A priori* codes are derived deductively from the interview material because they have been pre-defined by the researcher in accordance with the interests and priorities of the research. As such, these *a priori* codes reflect the themes addressed in the semi-structured questions, which in turn relate to the original questions of the research. In contrast, the employment of an open-ended approach to questioning provided 'space' for informants to discuss issues and themes important to them and the codes that have been derived from the text largely reflect these emergent themes. As a result of this analysis process, quotations in French¹⁴ were extracted to address the issues central to the research including local experiences of viticultural and socio-political change; the perception of these changes as either opportunities or threats, and the motivations and strategies that underlie individual and collective action.

In adherence to the epistemological position that underpins this research, the voices of the case study actors have been privileged in empirical chapters four to six. To reinforce this, it has been a deliberate strategy to limit the researcher's

¹³ The transcripts from the 57 taped interviews equate to approximately 500,000 words of text.

¹⁴ Smith (1996) discusses a range of issues surrounding conducting research in a foreign language and in particular the 'politics of translation'. She highlights the problems of analysing the translations of interview texts rather than the 'original' and illustrates how the nuances of language can be lost in translation. In an attempt to address this problem, the analysis was conducted on the interview transcripts in French. Quotations were only translated at the point they were selected for inclusion in the narratives of change presented in the empirical chapters. Furthermore I attempted to translate as closely as possible the 'local' meanings of the French text rather than seeking to produce a polished translation in English. See appendix 6 for the original French text of the quotations used in the empirical chapters.

authorial voice and as such, I have avoided providing my own synthesis of the key points of their experiences of change. Rather, in these chapters I have woven together the accounts and explanations of the case study actors to construct a collective meta-story of viticultural change, a story to which all members of the network have contributed, even though the experiences of some members of the network are diametrically opposed. In constructing this meta-story of changes in the viticulture sector and in local social and political relations, it has been my aim to be as inclusive as possible, to provide space in which the majority of informants have been quoted. When several informants have articulated the same point, the individual with the greatest capacity for critical insight and fluency of expression has been selected to speak for the others, and this is why certain individuals appear more frequently in the following chapters.

There are three empirical chapters and each one builds on the preceding chapter. Chapter four provides a description of the actors' experiences of the nature and extent of past and future changes and is organised into two distinct periods in accordance with local understandings of sectoral restructuring; the transition from quantity to quality wine production and the emergence of a multifunctional agricultural regime. Chapters five and six serve to explain the contested nature of these two transitions by revisiting them and exploring how they have been differentially perceived and acted upon. A dialogue has been established between those individuals for whom opportunities have arisen as a result of these shifts, and those who have perceived them to be threatening. The objective of organising this part of the story as a dialogue is to exemplify that in the reconfiguring of local social and political relations inherent in the process of viticultural restructuring, winners and losers have emerged.

4

Local Experiences of Change: “How Things Have Changed” and Future Visions

Introduction

Commentators on the viticulture sector of the Languedoc have identified the period from the 1970s as one of wide-ranging change, characterised by two principal dynamics: the reorientation in production from table wine to wine of a higher quality, and the more recent emergence of a ‘multifunctional agricultural regime’. This chapter documents the narratives of actors in a local network, as defined in chapter three, in terms of the ways in which these actors have experienced, interpreted and understood these changes. For clarity, their stories have been arranged within the frame of these two dynamics, but aside from this basic structure, the content of their stories, what they identify as important and the meanings with which they imbue events are their own. The chapter therefore is a descriptive narrative; no explanations are provided for the nature or extent of the changes, or the ways in which actors experience them. To a certain extent, these explanations are furnished in chapters five and six through actors’ accounts of the ways in which they have perceived these changes as threats and opportunities and the motivations and strategies that have lain behind their actions.

The chapter covers the period from the 1970s to the present day, with actors’ visions of how they anticipate the ways in which they may negotiate future change

built into the narrative. In the first section of the chapter, the reorientation from 'quantity to quality', actors discuss the modernisation and professionalisation of viticulture which has supported the move towards quality wine production. This shift has also been accompanied by the restructuring of the village cooperatives in the case study area, with these cooperatives merging 'offensively' (Touzard, 1999) in order to extend their role and function in an effort to attain greater control over their sector of the agro-food chain. Finally, this shift is manifest in the renovation of the vineyard, characterised by the replanting with 'improved' vine cultivars along with changes in vineyard practices and techniques. In the second section, the emergence of a multi-functional agricultural regime is discussed, as actors describe their engagement in agri-environment initiatives and non-production activities.

From Quantity to Quality

When farmers were asked to discuss the changes they had experienced on their farms over the last twenty-five years, many noted that the size of the average holding has increased. They describe how their fathers or grandfathers, as full-time vinegrowers, were able to make a living owning a farm of five hectares. In today's world, a minimum of twelve hectares¹ is viewed as necessary to support a family, while some farmers in the study operated holdings of forty and fifty hectares.

Lionel Blanchet²: "At that time, well, a guy with 5 hectares, like my grandfather, lived very well. But then it was necessary to increase the size of the holding to survive. Therefore, from the start I increased the size by whatever means, waiting till my holding was sufficiently large to leave my other job and just be a vinegrower. It was during my generation that the holding size increased in order to be financially viable and thus, it's true that with 5 hectares of vines my grandfather lived very well.

TC: As a full-time farmer?

LB: Yes, he lived very well. Well actually it was a bit different then because there was not all this credit, you couldn't borrow from the bank as you can today, but it's true that with 5 hectares ..."³

In order to finance this increase in land area Blanchet notes how farmers have become increasingly inserted into credit circuits. Jaurès, the president of Lespignan cooperative, expresses his concern that it is young farmers in particular who are heavily in debt, having taken out large bank loans to finance investments in land

¹ This figure was presented to me by many farmers as an average. It is specific to viticultural land in the Languedoc and will depend on the quality of the land, whether the farm is planted with traditional or improved grape varieties, the number of dependents and the degree of mechanisation.

² Lionel Blanchet is in his mid thirties. He is from a viticultural family; his great-grandfather owned a private *cave* and his grandfather was one of the founding members of Nissan cooperative in the 1930s. Lionel started work as a fireman and in 1988 inherited his grandfather's farm of 5 hectares. He continued to work as a pluri-active, buying land until he had sufficient vines to sustain him as a full-time vinegrower. He now owns 40 hectares and three quarters of this is planted with improved grape varieties. He serves on the Administrative Council of both Nissan cooperative and the VPE and is an administrator at the local branch of the *Crédit Agricole*.

³ See appendix 6 for the original quotations in French.

and ever more sophisticated machinery. For the most part, the farmers I spoke to who are not approaching retirement age are increasing the size of their holdings. They do not want to exceed 25 hectares, however, because to do so would alter the nature of the farm business, and it would cease being a family holding. These farmers often own between 15 and 25 hectares of vineyard and are helped on the farm by family members with the laborious winter tasks of training and pruning the vines. In addition, they have access to grape harvesters, shared with neighbours and friends and, in combination, these factors allow farmers to manage their farms without employing a labourer. These issues are articulated by Lacroix; he does not want to increase the size of his farm because this would render it like a factory and would require hired labour. The following quote exemplifies the importance for him of family ties in the labour cycle and how he wishes to avoid employing people outside of the family group.

TC: "Are you increasing the size of your farm?"

Bernard Lacroix⁴: I've practically finished increasing the size, I'm going to reach 20, between 20 and 25 hectares and then I'll stop.

TC: Why will you stop at this point?

BL: It's sufficient, largely sufficient.

TC: Do you employ anyone to help you on your farm at its current size?

BL: No, no I don't employ any labourers.

TC: Do family members help you?

BL: Yes, my brother, my father comes and helps me, my nephews, it's very family-oriented. Lots of family help. You see that's why I don't want to increase the size of my farm, because if I do it'll become more like a factory, an industry, I'd need to employ a labourer and that would change the dynamic, the nature of the farm."

⁴ Bernard Lacroix is 46 and from Vendres, a village neighbouring Lespignan, where his family have lived for four generations. He is a full-time vinegrower and owns a holding of 18 hectares, 40% of which is planted with improved grape varieties. Up until 1988 he made his own wine, owning 2 small private *caves* which he inherited from his grandfather, a full-time vinegrower. His grandfather owned 12 hectares of vines and at that time a private *cave* was viable with a vineyard of this size due to the profitability of the production of table wine in large quantities. By the 1980s, however, with the orientation towards quality wine, Lacroix did not have sufficient capital to invest in the necessary vinification machinery and his only option was to become a cooperative member. If he had a choice, he would prefer to work alone. He is a member of the VPE, has served as vice-president of Lespignan's Administrative Council and has sat on several VPE committees. He withdrew from these posts in 1994 because he disagreed with some of the decisions being taken regarding the future direction of the VPE.

The increase in the size of farms has been coupled with the concentration of property and a move away from fragmented plots. Farmers explain that this process aimed to facilitate the use of machinery and reduce labour inputs. It has been a common experience, facilitated by the availability of viticultural land in the early 1980s and by the consolidation of holdings policy managed by *les SAFERs*. When farmers were asked what factors influenced their choice in the purchase of land, they replied that it was important for it to be adjacent to their existing fields for ease of mechanisation. In turn this has led to increased farming efficiency.

André Laroche⁵: "I know that when I took over my grandparent's 9 hectares, the biggest field must have been, I don't know, 0.5 hectares. Now the smallest on my farm is one and a half hectares.

TC: So fields have been consolidated?

AL: Exactly, there has been a consolidation of fields and a change in grape varieties. But it is, it has been extremely slow. On the one hand, because it was necessary to change people's attitudes and on the other hand, because it cost an enormous amount. And it was a lot of work and there's still a lot of work to do, because we've not yet finished."

In combination, increases in farm size, the rationalization of fields and investment in machinery have been part of a wider dynamic of viticulture modernisation and professionalisation. Desaille anchors his description of modernisation in relation to the experiences of his father, actively making a distinction between the current generation and its predecessor. He notes that those farmers unwilling or unable to engage in the modernisation dynamic will find it difficult to survive as there is little opportunity for active dissent or the pursuit of an alternative trajectory. For those who do, he sees it as a case of arrested marginalisation, leading to eventual demise.

⁵ André Laroche is 26. He inherited his grandparents' farm of 8.5 hectares at the age of 17 after completing a course in viticulture and oenology at a local agricultural college. He is a full-time vinegrower and his farm is now 26 hectares, a third of which is replanted with improved grape varieties. He is a member of the VPE and sits on the administrative council of both Nissan cooperative and the VPE. His other roles include secretary of the local branch of the *Crédit Agricole*, he is a member of the administrative council of *Groupama*, an agricultural insurance group, of a local mutual credit society and of the local branch of *la SAFER*. Furthermore he is an elected member of the municipal council team of Nissan, responsible for agricultural affairs in the commune.

Louis Desaille⁶: "Well my father didn't use machinery, this transition, how things have modernised, he doesn't understand it too much. It's another, a different vine culture and he, well, he's not too up-to-date with it, whereas me, I see things a bit differently, because I really understand that I have to mechanise, because if you don't you can't survive."

The necessity to modernise, however, has engendered new pressures, experienced most palpably by younger farmers, whether with small or large farms. Laroche, for example, talks about the debts he has incurred in order to invest in machinery and additional land. His farm business cannot sustain any further pressures.

André Laroche (p137)⁷: "At the moment I have 26 hectares, I work like a mule, I have to work hours and hours and hours ... Financially-speaking I get by each year but it's close, it's like walking a tight-rope. But that's not unusual, I'm a young farmer, I had to invest, I had to pay [for these investments], but that's normal. What I want to say is that I'm not complaining, it's not that. But if tomorrow they were to impose even more constraints, and that meant I had to spend more time and more money, at that point it would be extremely dangerous, you could put your farm in danger."

Desaille, a smaller farmer, echoes these themes. He talks about the pressures he experiences as a farmer resulting from advances in technology, and the subsequent effects for the cooperative of these advances on the farm. Unlike Laroche, however, who accepts hard work and debts as inevitable, he observes that it is exactly these pressures and the lack of support from the cooperative for small farmers that mean that he is considering leaving viticulture altogether.

TC: "How do you think the changes you have described in the viticulture sector will affect your farm and the cooperative in the future?"

⁶ Louis Desaille is 25. He was born in Nissan and has lived there all his life, as have his parents, grand-parents and great-grandparents. His father and grand-father were pluri-actives; his grandfather owned a hectare of vines and his father three and a half, alongside his job as a post man. Desaille used to work for Michelin and helped his father on the holding, during which time he attended an agricultural college in Béziers. Since 1997 he has been a full-time vinegrower and member of the VPE. He manages ten hectares of vines, seven of which belong to him and he is a tenant farmer of the remaining three, those of his father. 20% of these vines are improved grape varieties.

⁷ The page number refers to the page on which the respondent's biography appears.

Louis Desaille (p138): Well there's always this pressure to modernise, and quality wines, yes, to favour quality. But that also brings about pressures because you must invest in changing the vats, the equipment and all that, which, which costs a lot of money. Yes, for me, well I know that I must buy more modern materials, it's the cost, it's the cost of that, it's a big pressure, and for the cooperative it's the same you know. It must modernise to cope with an ever-faster delivery of grapes. Mechanisation allows us to work more quickly, to work more rapidly, so the cooperative must be able to support the delivery of grapes and therefore it must modernise to do so."

Teyssier, an older farmer, explains these changes in terms of differing expectations over standards of living which can only be sustained by bigger farms with a higher turnover and greater disposable incomes. This interpretation resonates with the position of Jaurès who suggests that the rural way of life has been changed fundamentally by aspirations of parity and the conflation of rural – urban values. Rural identity and society have been subsumed along with the ties that bonded it. A 'rural idyll', which he associates with the past, exerts a strong emotional hold for him.

Pierre Jaurès⁸: "The last 25 years correspond to the beginnings of mechanisation. We passed from the era of the horse to the era of ... we've embraced a modern agriculture. And so, well we adapted to this change and now we're at another crossroads. At that time we were at a crossroads, but we were on the verge of a better period than the one today. Because then we were at a crossroads but there was still continuity [with what went before], in terms of improving the quality of life of the farmer. Whereas what's being proposed today, it's not to improve the quality of life of the farmer, it's to pressurise and stress him. 25 years ago you worked, you earned money but life was good. And now, people, who live 10 kilometres

⁸ Pierre Jaurès was born in Lespignan in 1947. He worked as a mechanic in the French air force before retiring when he was 36 to take over his father's farm of 4 hectares. He comes from a viticultural family; his paternal grandfather emigrated from Italy to work as a wage-labourer on a viticulture estate. His father worked on the same estate, over time acquiring vines, and, supported by the cooperative, was able to make the transition from labourer to proprietor. Jaurès learnt all he knows about viticulture from his father. At its largest, his farm was 10 hectares and now he owns 6.5 hectares, half of which is planted with improved grape varieties. He was elected president of Lespignan cooperative in 1994, he sits on the Administrative Council of the VPE, is a member of the local branch of *Groupama*, a mutual credit society, treasurer of Lespignan's lottery society, 'twinning' society and secretary of the local socialist club.

from the sea, even six, they want a swimming pool outside their front door. What's the point, it's gross stupidity! In the past [such stupidity] didn't exist. For example, in the past there were fewer people from towns who lived in our villages. There was a rural ambience, it was the rural world, we were peasants. But it was a good thing, because we lived in our village and we were happy there. But people in the towns, who lived in HLM⁹, little by little they dreamt of the joys of the countryside, so they came to live in our village and they profoundly changed the way people lived. Villagers sought to copy them, and they lost a part of themselves in copying others. And now we've noticed that there is no longer the strong sense of village, this strong link that existed between people."

The modernisation dynamic has not represented a universal experience as some farmers did not survive the resultant changes. Laroche describes how in the 1970s, many left viticulture, agricultural wage-labourers along with full-time vinegrowers.

André Laroche (p137): "They were enormous, enormous. The changes in viticulture, especially in the Languedoc, well it was a real revolution! In the last twenty years, we have moved from a very family-based viticultural activity, because there were many, many small holdings, which represented I would say 95% of the regional economy in terms of viticulture, with a mode of production of wine of a very low quality and with excessively high yields, because there was the demand. And following on from that, during the 1970s, the crisis in the table wine sector began. A lot of vinegrowers left, they stopped their activity, or if you like, there was no-one to take up the succession."

Of those farmers leaving viticulture today, many are reaching retirement and do not have a successor. Jaurès reflects their position in stating that because he does not have a successor he is gradually selling his vines and is not replanting with improved grape varieties.

Pierre Jaurès (p139): "I'm slowing down.

TC: And does the fact that you don't have a successor influence the way you manage your farm?

PJ: What I've got to say to you is, well, in any case I wouldn't have sold, I wouldn't have sold any of my vines if I had had a successor, I wouldn't have sold anything. And so well, it's true that it influences ... people who have an heir, who have children to take up the succession, even if they don't in the end, they work, they think about the future, they want to leave them something ..."

⁹ *Habitation à loyer modéré*, (HLM). State-funded accommodation for low-income families.

A minority of farmers have expansionist goals. They have made large investments in land, owning holdings of up to 50 hectares and managing them with the help of hired labour. As a result, the cooperative's vineyard and production is being concentrated on a minority of holdings and a dual farming economy is developing. Garcia, for example, started off in viticulture without an inheritance, and now owns the biggest farm of those interviewed. He began life as a mechanic, but saw the opportunity to make money in viticulture, rehearsing an entrepreneurial and meritocratic discourse that with hard work you can succeed. In the following quotes he explains why he sought to increase the size of his holding and how this has altered his relationship with the cooperative.

Gabriel Garcia¹⁰: "The reason why I work [hard], because I work on the fourteenth of July, on a Sunday, if I didn't work perhaps I'd have less. You see economic factors drive me and what interests me is my farm. I've two children who are in higher education, I need capital to reinvest and enough money to feed my family. People have bigger and bigger farms in order to survive. Today 50 hectares, for me that's nothing. Today 50 hectares is like having 5 hectares in the past. It's nothing, it represents nothing. We're obliged to have huge farm businesses."

Our discussion continues with him describing his relationship with the cooperative. As a small farmer he was obliged to join the cooperative as it provided him with the means by which he could set out in viticulture, but now he has a large holding he is considering leaving. He has modernised his farm but is struggling with the modernisation of the cooperative and what he sees as its transmutation from a truly

¹⁰ Gabriel Garcia is 43, of Spanish origin and moved to Nissan as a child. His father came to the region as a grape harvester and then found work as a labourer on a viticultural estate. Gabriel was a mechanic, gradually renting and buying vines. He is now a full-time vinegrower, managing a farm of 50 hectares, 30 of which belong to him and 20 of which he rents. All his vines are improved grape varieties and his plots are grouped together in large parcels. He employs one full-time and 2 part-time workers and his wife helps him on the farm. He served as Vice President of Nissan cooperative from 1985 - 1994, but withdrew from this post on the creation of the VPE. He is currently Vice-President of the local branch of the *Crédit Agricole*.

democratic unit. He bemoans the fact that the cooperative's members no longer take decisions with regard to cooperative affairs. He concludes that if members have lost this power it is preferable to be in a system in which vinegrowers are contracted by wineries and thus have complete autonomy over production on their farms.

Gabriel Garcia (p141): "I joined the cooperative because when I started out I had nothing. At the beginning I had nothing. I started out as a tenant and afterwards I bought [land]. So I couldn't create a business like a private *cave*. So I joined the cooperative because it was the easy option. At the beginning it was the village's cooperative and Administrative Council, it was run differently. It was us the vinegrowers who decided, gave our opinions, whereas today that's no longer the case. They [Administrators] manage the structure themselves without acknowledging that we're the bosses. Because the bosses are the vinegrowers. And that's wrong, it shouldn't be like that. In Germany for example, the Germans produce their grapes and then they sell them. They take their grapes to a winery, the winery tells them their grapes are worth so much and the vinegrower is paid. And afterwards the winery markets the product and retains the profit.

TC: But isn't it an advantage of the cooperative system that you retain the added value when the grapes are transformed into wine because you own the vinification materials collectively. Is this an advantage in your opinion?

GG: I don't know. At least with the winery, the vinegrower has control over his side of things. Whereas as cooperative members we deliver our grapes, they do what they do, they market and sell the wine without asking our opinion. There's no connection with the members and a shortage of information, and on a farm the size of mine, that's bad.

TC: Managing a farm of 50 hectares, would you be in a position to work alone and to leave the cooperative?

GG: I am considering it."

Traditionally, the cooperative is an institution that serves the interests of small-scale farmers. Two other farmers who own relatively small farms are also pursuing an expansionist agenda so that they can leave the cooperative to gain control over their farm management decisions in order to pursue a quality strategy.

TC: How do your expectations about the management of your farm differ from those of your grandfather?

Patrick Perret¹¹: He invested in the cooperative. My aim is to invest in my vines over the next ten years to make a viable property and then to leave the cooperative and to produce my own wine. I don't intend to stay.

TC: What do you see as the advantage in leaving for your farm?

PP: You see today, we are the employees and before we were the bosses, we made the decisions. Whereas today they decide for us. It can't work like that, one day there'll be no one left.

TC: By leaving the cooperative you perceive that you will have more autonomy over the decisions you make on your farm?

PP: You see when we grouped together I thought that, at the end of the day, the aim was to produce a quality product, to put in place structures to make a quality product. And it's true that we no longer make the same wine as we did before, I'm sure of that. But I see small private *caves* managing to make good wine, better than that of the cooperative. So I don't understand why little *caves* succeed, and us, a group of 1800 people don't. So for me, to produce a quality product, in the future I will produce my own wine, on my own."

Sabassier prefaces the following quote by saying that he wants to increase the size of his holding so that he may leave the cooperative. He elaborates the argument advanced by Perret and they question whether the cooperative, by virtue of its embodiment of a particular form of social organisation, can deliver the move to quality. He engages with this debate by saying that as a cooperative member he is locked into the role of grape producer, alluding to the division of labour inherent within the cooperative system. He believes that it is only with direct control over the vinification of his grapes that he can guarantee their transformation into a quality product.

¹¹ Patrick Perret is 29 and was born in Nissan. He is a full-time vinegrower managing a farm of 18 hectares before which he spent two years at an agricultural college in Béziers studying viticulture and oenology. Three hectares belong to him, and he rents the remaining 15 from his paternal grandfather. His own land is planted with traditional vines and those he rents are all planted with improved varieties. He comes from a viticultural family; one of his grandfathers owned 10 hectares of vines alongside a job outside of viticulture and his other grandfather was a full-time vinegrower, owning 12 hectares which Perret will inherit in the future. Both grandfathers were members of Nissan cooperative where his mother works as a secretary. He is a member of the VPE and has not served on the Administrative Council of Nissan, dismissing it as worthless.

Christophe Sabassier¹²: "I'm frustrated because I don't have any information, apart from a few words I occasionally exchange with one vinegrower or another. But I don't ever know the reason [behind management decisions], and how we've realised them. I don't make the choices, there you have it. And it's true that it's frustrating in terms of choices, but also in terms of being up-to-date with the evolution of the markets, of wines, of wine sales and the products themselves. At the end of the day, as a cooperative member, I'm a grape producer, I'm not a *viticulteur*."

TC: What do you understand to be the difference between the two?

CS: Er well, a grape producer that means that I produce grapes.

TC: And a *viticulteur* is someone ...

CS: Who vinifies them, who knows what his grapes have produced – if they're good, if they've produced a good product and a *viticulteur* is also someone who sells his product. And for me, as a cooperative member, there's only one scale, I've only one rung to my job, the first rung and so I want to leave, but to do that my farm has to be bigger."

Wine production is being restructured to support the shift from quantity to quality. In 1976, seven village cooperatives merged to form a single producer group, *le CEPRO* and in 1994, the name was changed to the *Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune*¹³. The VPE are currently in negotiations to forge closer links with a larger producer group, *Foncalieu*, with bottling plants and marketing and distribution facilities. Foncalieu's members, which comprise viticultural producer groups, are located throughout the Languedoc. The VPE's commercial director charts the history of the vertical restructuring of the sector and outlines the group's strategies for the future.

¹² Christophe Sabassier is 33, was born in Lespignan and supports his wife and three children. He is a pluri-active, working as a trumpet teacher alongside managing his farm and he notes that his farm has never been profitable. In 1989 he started in viticulture as a tenant farmer, working 25 hectares before gradually buying his own land. He now manages a farm of 20 hectares, 12 of which belong to him and he rents the remaining 8 hectares of fallow land from the VPE. 80% of his 12 hectares are planted with improved grape varieties, some of which are classified in the highest quality tier. He is helped on his farm by family members including his father, brother and nephews. His father was also a pluri-active and owned 6 hectares which he replanted with Chardonnay and Merlot vines over 10 years ago. Sabassier is a member of the VPE and served on the Administrative Council of Lespignan cooperative in the early 1990s before withdrawing due to family commitments and because he felt there was a destructive rift between the older and incoming generation.

¹³ The VPE's logo (plate 3, p. 173) is a representation of the rivers l'Aude and l'Orb, the *Canal du Midi* which run through the VPE's territory, along with the vines, the soils, the *Oppidum d'Ensérune*, the *Etang de Montady*, the *Abbaye de Foncaude* and is accompanied by the slogan '*une mosaïque de saveurs*', referring to the diversity of producers and the varied natural environment which in turn is reflected in the character of the wines.

He talks about the creation of *CEPRO* and the instigation of '*l'apport total*', an internal rule which obliges each member to bring all of their grapes to the cooperative so that it has greater control over the volumes and quality of wine being produced, allowing supply to be more closely aligned with demand. With improvements in the quality of their wines, it is his vision that their products will be identified with the producers and the zone of production. In the past, the majority of their wine was sold in bulk for blending and so there was no link to the place of production.

Jean-Luc Lopez¹⁴: "The history of the development of the VPE's marketing activity can be divided into 3 periods. Between 1973 and 1985 the producer group was created and during this period we put in place '*l'apport total*'. Between 1985 and 1990 we first set up a system which organised and structured supply in relation to demand, which led to a different organisational form. That's to say from 1993 the VPE was created, which involved the absorption of the member cooperatives to make a single enterprise and we continued to work on the organisation and structuring of the production part of the chain. We did some marketing but we were concerned with the profitability of the product. In 1995 we felt that the product was a lot better and had reached a stage which allowed us to move more quickly in terms of marketing and to be able to go to the consumer and say "the product that you buy has its origins here. It was produced according to these criteria." Therefore we had to go from a stage of economic organisation to one of marketing organisation, in which we were more than sellers of a primary product and in which we were also able to integrate the stage of packaging and distribution in order to take the product towards the consumer. So we could be identified by the consumer which was not the case before. The solution reached by the management to allow us to be identified by the consumer was to associate with a cooperative group which had the tools and sales capability to access the market, to get heavily involved in this group and this group was Foncalieu. At the moment we're in the process of putting in place the principal strategy for the next ten years – Ensérune will be identified in the final instance by the consumer. At the end of the day, our final aim is for all of our wine to be sold in bottles and for the final product to be identified with Ensérune."

¹⁴ Jean-Luc Lopez is in his late 40s. In 1985, he was recruited by *CEPRO* to perform the role of marketing director at the time when some viticulture producer groups began to assume marketing functions. Currently he is marketing director of the VPE leading a team of four and assistant marketing director at Foncalieu. He works closely with agricultural economists at INRA, Montpellier and with international wine distributors, in particular Bibendum. He is committed to working for the VPE and outlined his restructuring and marketing strategy for the next 20 years.

Farmers' engagement in debates surrounding restructuring typically focus on whether they were for or against the merger of their village cooperatives, and underlying the following quotes are a range of arguments being mobilised in terms of the relative merits of collectivism and individualism. Teyssier articulates a sceptical view held by many farmers. He evokes a rational justification for the merger and recognises that investment was necessary in the vinification process and machinery in order to improve quality, but at the same time he talks about the greater costs to cooperative members that have ensued.

G rard Teyssier¹⁵: "When it was the time to vote for the merger, well there were those who were for, and those who were against. It's true that there was some reluctance, quite a lot of reluctance, but in the end, well, they understood that perhaps ... but it mustn't go too far, it mustn't go too far. So today, once again people are sceptical about the union with Foncalieu. They're sceptical because it's going to cost us a lot of money and the vinification costs are increasing. Because the aim of the merger, it should have been to lower the vinification costs, well except for the fact that we've planted a lot of improved grape varieties and it was necessary to buy pneumatic presses, the investment is phenomenal, and so that means that we're talking about figures of hundreds of thousands, I really don't know."

Serge Deschamps recognises the advantages of restructuring in rational terms, that larger structures are better equipped to deal with the contemporary marketplace, but for him this confers insufficient benefits to counteract the rising costs. He is unhappy about paying higher vinification costs¹⁶ which he believes have resulted

¹⁵ G rard Teyssier is 54. When he was 20 he inherited 8 hectares of vines from his father who had worked as a labourer on a viticulture estate. Teyssier is a full-time vinegrower, owning 20 hectares, all of which are planted with improved grape varieties. He may be described as an innovator; he was one of the first farmers in Nissan to experiment with improved grape varieties in the early 1980s and currently he employs new techniques on his farm such as '*les vendanges en vert*' and practices '*la lutte raisonn e*' (see foot-note 62, p. 211). Since the 1970s he has served on the Administrative Council of Nissan cooperative and latterly the VPE as well as being a member of the VPE's '*Commission du Terroir*' and the Administrative Council of a local mutual credit society. His son trained as a teacher but has decided to take over the farm which pleases him and his wife greatly.

¹⁶ Apart from one-off payments made by farmers to the cooperative for structural investments, '*les frais de vinification*' are the cooperative's main source of income and cover the cost of the running of the cooperative, paying salaries and the vinification, marketing and distribution of the wine. In 2000, they were 100F / hl and therefore are proportional to the volume of grapes produced. Immediately prior to the creation of the VPE they were 40F / hl.

from the formation of the VPE and so he is against a further extension of the group. This is a concern echoed by many other farmers and is particularly pressing in the current economic environment in which farmers have to contend with falling incomes, large debts and an uncertain future.

The tension between collective and individual working has a longer history. From the cooperative's inception its members have held contrasting views over the merits of greater associationism within the group. Frédéric Bonnet, who witnessed the formation of Nissan cooperative in the 1930s and the subsequent changes in its organisation and general governance, explores this theme. He describes how in the cooperative's early years some larger farmers resisted the collective sale of wine – *la vente en commun* – which was introduced to afford cooperative members greater power of negotiation in their exchanges with wine-brokers. These farmers were committed to a more individualistic way of working because they had the capital and facilities to stock their wine and could wait for optimal selling conditions. In contrast, it was the smaller farmers who supported the cooperative as they had most to gain from collective organisation.

Frédéric Bonnet¹⁷: "You see it was the small farmers who wanted to group together to protect themselves, whereas the large proprietors, they only looked out for themselves. They didn't think about their neighbours, not all of them, I'm generalising, but well, those who had the biggest properties, it put their noses out of joint to be in the same structure as the others. They wanted to keep their autonomy, they wanted to be free to do as they wished. But you get the same thing everywhere, at Millau for example, people like my wife, they made gloves. Well all that's disappeared now, because the production is mechanized, but at Millau, they grouped together, they grouped together otherwise they would have gone under."

¹⁷ Frédéric Bonnet is 74 and a retired vinegrower, although he continues to take an active interest in the management of his son's farm, the current president of Nissan cooperative. He began working as a labourer on a viticulture estate, inherited 3 hectares from his father and acquired a further 3 hectares which was sufficient to support him and his family. All his vines were Carignan and planted in the alluvial soils of the viticultural plain, ideal agronomic conditions for the production of large volumes of grapes per hectare. He sat on the Administrative Council of Nissan cooperative in the 1950s.

Many farmers continue to support collectivist working. This couple believe that with greater investment and engagement in the group by the younger generation they will succeed in producing quality wines.

Vincent Jarrige¹⁸: "And in the end it's up to us, the younger generation, and when the older ones retire ...

Amélie Jarrige: The advantage is that the young ones have other ideas, and I think that we'll succeed ...

VJ: Perhaps we won't succeed ...

AJ: We're at the stage where there is a generation who are more interested in the cooperative, in what's happening and why. We ask more questions I think, and even when I was training I saw that we were more involved. And we sought to know and to understand and to discuss things and to say things even if it didn't get us anywhere, but to say it anyway, even if we had a small proposal to make which is only a drop of water, but to contribute this drop of water, like. I think things are moving in this direction."

Simon also favours collective working, but advances an economic argument for collectivism over a social one. He believes that an extension of the group is not something to be fearful of, nor does it represent the betrayal of a local institution. Rather his enthusiasm derives from the fact that he regards professionalism, an important survival characteristic in the modern world, to be a consequence of collective working.

¹⁸ Vincent and Amélie Jarrige are in their late thirties and have four children. She trained as bookkeeper, he worked as a mechanic in a garage and neither come from viticultural families. A year ago she took a BPA (*Baccalauréat professionnel agricole*) in viticulture. At present they own one and a half hectares of vines and 5 hectares of melons. They are in the process of becoming full-time vinegrowers as '*jeunes agriculteurs*' which means that they will be eligible for government-subsidised loans and are hoping to manage a further 8.5 hectares as tenants. Many of the garage's customers were vinegrowers and Vincent often helped them, pruning their vines which he enjoyed. They then became tenants of a small plot and decided to become vinegrowers. They have been members of the VPE for 3 years.

Raymond Simon¹⁹: "There were people against the merger, yes. There were people who wanted to remain cloistered in their village. They were afraid of being eaten up by a multi-national, as they saw it, by a big structure. But I think that ... when I was an artisan we set up producer groups, it was the same thing. We set up an association, we were electrical supplies wholesalers. I've always been for working collectively. We have CUMAs, I'm president of a CUMA as well. We own the machinery collectively and in the end this is so we are powerful, so we are able to have some kind of impact. And so well it's important to group together. Being industrial, being totally professional means that you are a force to be reckoned with."

Renée Bonnet evokes an argument of economies of scale in order to justify his support of collective working. He notes that with the growing dominance of supermarket chains in the wine sector, a producer group has negotiating power not enjoyed by an individual farmer. As such, he advances a different position from those farmers who are considering leaving the cooperative.

Renée Bonnet²⁰: "In the late 70s you have the start of the system of mergers, like the '*Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérund*' that used to be *CEPRO*. So we started to stock our wine together to try to sell it more easily to the wine merchants. Because by stocking our wine together, the range of wines was greater and the volumes larger. And this allowed us to be quite powerful on the market, because well, a vinegrower on his own would have had five hectolitres of Merlot, and he would be able to do nothing with these 5 hectolitres ... Whereas we can put volumes of 10,000 or 20,000 hectolitres on the market and can take on the big supermarkets. So it's important to produce large quantities of wine because the supermarkets don't buy 5

¹⁹ Raymond Simon is 48. He was brought up in the Cévennes and moved to Lespignan to marry. He started work as an electrician and bought his first vines in 1985. Each subsequent year he bought another hectare until 1995, the point at which he owned a farm of 11 hectares which was sufficient to support him and his family. He was attracted to viticulture, not based on an economic calculation but because he wanted to work on the land, and because viticulture confers a high quality of life. His two grandfathers were agricultural labourers, working on viticulture properties. 95% of his vines are improved grape varieties and he will replant the remainder but does not intend to buy any further land because he does not have a successor. He is a member of the VPE and has sat on the Administrative Council of Lespignan cooperative and the VPE since 1994. For the past two years he has been the VPE's treasurer and he is vice-president of *l'ASA*.

²⁰ Renée Bonnet is in his early 40s and was brought up in Nissan. He is a full-time vinegrower, managing a farm of 25 hectares, 19 of which belong to him and the remainder he rents from his sister. 60% of his farm is planted with improved grape varieties and he intends to continue replanting each year. His father, Frédéric Bonnet, was a fulltime vinegrower and his grandfather, a founding member of Nissan cooperative, owned vines alongside his job as secretary to the Mayor of Nissan. He has been president of Nissan cooperative for the last 5 years, serves on the Administrative Council of the VPE, sits on the local branch of a mutual credit society and *la SAFER*, and is a representative on the regional branch of *la CEVILAR* and *la FDCCH*.

hectolitres and so as a group, we can provide them with these large volumes of wine.”

Buisson expands on this theme and perceives that as the world changes, with a reduction in local links, it is expedient for an individual farmer to be part of a larger structure. As such he displays a positive position towards the formation of *CEPRO* and latterly the VPE. He cites the main advantage as being the size, organisation and volumes of wine produced by this structure which means that it is better able to negotiate with wine buyers and secure higher prices for its members.

François Buisson²¹: “Also cooperatives began to modify their vinification tools a bit because the products were changing and it was necessary to have specific vinification equipment in order to produce quality products. And on the other hand, there were economic changes occurring at the regional level. Because you have to realise that increasingly in France, there were fewer and fewer wine merchants as we used to know them, your neighbour who was a wine merchant because he bought your wine, he knew you, and in turn buyers became more and more centralised through the intermediary of the big supermarkets.”

Jaurès talks about the globalisation of the viticulture sector, drawing comparisons with the past when competition between wines for respective markets was largely internal to France. He looks to the cooperative for support and guidance, relying on the economic expertise of administrators to anticipate the future direction of the market.

Pierre Jaurès (p139): “In the cooperative system, for us the role of these people [administrators] is to try and anticipate the state of tomorrow’s market. To be able to, to be able to provide our members with sound information, to allow them to move in the right direction and to get there, if not first, at least amongst the first.

²¹ François Buisson is 52 and lives in Lespignan. He is a full-time vinegrower and owns a farm of 15 hectares which he manages without help. His father was in the army and so Buisson started out without an inheritance, which was not difficult in the late 1960s when there was a lot of cheap land available. 70% of his holding is planted with improved grape varieties and some of his vines are classified in the highest qualitative tier. He does not have an heir, which means that he is not seeking to increase the size of the farm but will continue to replant, because when he sells his land this will enable him to attain a higher price. He is a member of the Lespignan cooperative, and was elected president in the late 1980s, serving for 6 years. His other roles include president of the local branch of the *Crédit Agricole*, deputy Mayor of the commune and president of Lespignan’s blood-donor association.

That means, we say the market is going to position itself there, we anticipate these changes which means that the day we get there, the market really is as we anticipated, and we have the products to supply it. But it's not easy, because in the world of wine, today with globalisation, it's crazy. Because the wine sector has become a sector like any other, whereas up to now it has been a bit different, because in spite of everything wine is a bit particular. We were in a competitive world [before], competing with wine from Bordeaux, Beaujolais, but it was at a national level. And now we see in the broker's world it's all become international companies. There are French stakes, English stakes and this is where we are at."

Sabassier also describes the displacement of the local, but for him this represents a loss. His experience of the merger has been to alter the scale of his world-view, which he has found confusing, in part due to the speed of change. In the following quote he articulates his experience of globalisation, through the changing focus of cooperative meetings.

Christophe Sabassier (p144): "So in the past there were cooperatives and each one managed their own problems. And then after that, well, things moved very quickly. In a period of ten years, we moved from meetings which dealt with the affairs of the cooperative, and then [their focus was] the producer group and now it's European, global, like. So for me I've lost my way a bit ..."

Rather than perceiving restructuring in terms of horizontal mergers between neighbouring village cooperatives, the VPE's director views it in a vertical sense, in terms of the cooperative's integration into an agro-food processing chain. This is to link primary producers with marketing and distribution tools so that they retain some of the value added to the product at the point grapes are transformed into wine. At the end of the quote he observes that the VPE must find a means by which their products may be differentiated from those of their competitors.

Jean-Luc Fauré²²: "Today we are at the dawn of a serious world-wide crisis of overproduction. Vines have been planted with a vengeance and in the next 5 years supply will exceed demand. In the wine sector there are the producers, then the intermediaries who are responsible for transforming the primary product, and the market. All the added value from grapes is produced at the point of transformation and especially from marketing. If we have [no control over marketing] we run the risk of seeing the prices of the primary product erode. So after a certain point, we could no longer guarantee a sufficient revenue for our producers to carry on producing, but perhaps more importantly, to develop, to adapt our production to the new economic demands, to the new patterns of consumption. That's to say that we will no longer have the capacity to invest in the vineyard and in vinification equipment to be able to adapt our products to the rapidly evolving demands of consumers. Therefore when everyone is able to produce a high quality Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot or Chardonnay, it will be necessary to integrate marketing tools at the heart of production so that the producer will receive some of the added value and to do that we must find a mechanism to differentiate our product from the competition and to adopt this in our commercial strategy."

Accompanying the restructuring of the sector have been changes in the vineyard in the transition to the production of quality wine. The farmers spoken to, along with regional officials and cooperative administrators, agreed that the most substantial change to have occurred has been the renovation of the vineyard and its replanting with improved grape varieties, along with the adoption of new vineyard techniques. They are changes that are universally recognised, although differentially engaged in and perceived. These two quotes capture the importance for farmers of the transition from quantity to quality.

TC: "In your experience what have the principal changes been in viticulture during the last 25 years?"

François Buisson (p150): Most significantly a change in attitude because in the past we produced high yields, we had a lot of the Carignan, Aramon, Cinsault grape varieties which were high-yielding varieties and we had to change our tactics and move towards quality, to grow more noble grape varieties, new varieties."

²² Jean-Luc Fauré is in his early 50s. He is from Lespignan, the son of a full-time vinegrower. He was director of Nissan cooperative before being appointed director of the VPE in 1994. He is also one of the directors of Foncalieu and travels extensively searching for buyers, prospecting new markets and representing the VPE's products in the international marketplace.

Louis Desaille (p138): "Well farmers are moving to a different culture, to a different culture, we are moving more and more towards quality, and it's true that we live differently, at the time of my father it wasn't, they favoured quantity a bit more, whereas today our objective has completely changed."

Farmers explain how in the past, high-yielding grape varieties sold well. Indeed the profitability of the production of grapes for table wine reverberates through the narratives of many farmers.

Charles Valadour²³: "The vinegrowers at the beginning of the twentieth century, they were all rich. Moreover, you only have to look at the houses in the village, all those big houses with two storeys, they were the houses of vinegrowers. They were rich, now we're less so!"

When the market in table wine collapsed, however, there was no longer the demand for these traditional varieties. This precipitated the cooperative to change its policy and to encourage the planting of its members' vineyards with improved varieties. Blanchet refers to the speed of this transition, requiring farmers to adapt quickly and invest heavily, and how the rapidity of this evolution meant that the older generation largely did not participate in it.

Lionel Blanchet (p135): "But in the past, it's true that we, well we realised that we were having more and more difficulty selling the traditional varieties and so we felt that ... The cooperative policy was, at a certain moment, we said to ourselves, right, this is the future, knowing that there were some who were already 10 years ahead of us. And it's true that the older generation weren't, weren't bothered by this problem. They didn't think about the future. Because in the past things evolved a lot more slowly than in the last 10, 15 years. There has been such a rapid evolution that well, you have to adapt quickly. Whereas in the past, one or two generations ago or three, guys produced large volumes, they sold their wine and they sold it very well."

²³ Charles Valadour is 55 and has always lived in Nissan. Following his military service he returned to Nissan to inherit 1 hectare of vines from his father. Valadour was a pluri-active, he worked as a lorry driver and over time increased the size of his holding to 10 hectares. He is now retired and has retained his vines, of which three quarters are planted with traditional grape varieties. He does not have an heir as his three daughters have left the village, although he continues to replant with improved grape varieties in order to increase the value of his land. He is a member of Nissan cooperative and the VPE and has not held any administrative posts within the cooperative.

Renée Bonnet recognises that at the end of the 1980s, the market was such that the trajectory of the production of low quality wine was no longer economically sustainable.

Renée Bonnet (p149): "The end of the 1980s was an important moment. We were forced to protest, to empty the lorries, to off-load our despair. The market in table wine was collapsing, we had problems with surpluses and we needed a change in direction. From that point, 'plonk' had to be a thing of the past."

In a similar manner to Blanchet, Jarrige has embraced quality and in so doing differentiates herself from an older generation. However she questions whether the diversity of positions and lack of adherence to a common position surrounding the move to quality amongst cooperative members will undermine the success of the group as a whole.

Amélie Jarrige (p148): "I think that those who will succeed today have exactly the same mind-set as us. That means that they are committed to the production of quality wines. I don't think that's true of the older generation, we don't live in the same age, even in daily life we don't live the same way. The older generation doesn't have the same type of mind-set and as a result perhaps as a group we won't succeed."

Freyssinet has uprooted his traditional vines and replanted his entire farm with improved grape varieties.

Joseph Freyssinet²⁴: "We've grubbed up all the vines my father gave us and we've replanted everything. My father had Carignans, Aramons and we grubbed up the lot. Also he planted his vines 1.5 metres apart, you know, a small vine with the

²⁴ Joseph Freyssinet is in his early 40s and was born in Nissan. He is a full-time vinegrower, managing a farm of 20 hectares of which 12 hectares belong to him. He is helped on his farm by his wife and two daughters which allows him to work his farm without hiring a labourer. He comes from a viticultural family; his paternal grandparents emigrated from Spain, seeking work on a viticulture estate. His father was a full-time vinegrower and left his farm of 10 hectares to Freyssinet and his brother. All of Freyssinet's own vines are improved grape varieties and he is not seeking to increase the size of his farm because he is anxious about the debts he has already incurred. He is a member of the VPE, although he does take some of his grapes to be vinified in a neighbour's private cave, and sits on the local branch of the *Crédit Agricole*.

'*tuteurs*' and now we plant 2.5 metres apart, we train with iron wires and so there you are, we grubbed up the lot.

TC: And in your experience, this move towards a quality mode of production with replanting, training the vine differently, they were the most important changes?

JF: Well yes, yes. That was 12 years ago and in 12 years we grubbed up everything, we replanted everything. I don't know how many, we did 24, 25 hectares, perhaps more, between 25 and 30 hectares. Which isn't bad but it required a lot of work and money, an enormous investment."

In the following section of his narrative, however, he reveals that he has not embraced this transition uncritically, not is it without problems, and this position of ambivalence is typical of many farmers. He remembers the past system as simpler, one in which farmers were paid according to the volume of grapes produced, rather than a tiered system, in which payment is differentiated according to the quality of the grapes.

Joseph Freyssinet (p154): "Let's say there weren't as many responsibilities then compared to now. Before people harvested their grapes, everything went in together, there weren't the same problems with the market that there are today with the new grape varieties. Before, everything was paid the same, you brought your grapes in, you had so many kilos of grapes, that made a certain amount of wine and the same was paid for everything. Whereas today they pay more for certain things than others, so it's more complex, it's more complicated, it's more ... it's not a good system.

TC: Why do you think it isn't a good system? You have replanted all your vines, aren't the new grape varieties more profitable?

JF: I don't know. In principle, but it doesn't really work like that. In the past it was less complicated, more transparent."

Uncertainty about the future is a theme that emerges in the narratives of other farmers; there is little distinction between large or small farmers, traditionalists or modernisers, it is a common experience. Deschamps does not express dissension towards the transition to quality; however, his uncertainty about the future stems from his shortage of information regarding the future direction of the global market. I asked him how he thought the practice of viticulture in the region would evolve in years to come.

Serge Deschamps²⁵: "We don't know too much. Although we know what they're planting in Australia, the small picture. But in terms of what is going to happen, we don't really know what will ... if other countries, are they going to plant more, are they going to grub up their vines, we don't know what the economy will be like, we just don't know. It's so difficult that, well, although we have a small idea ...

TC: And how do you envisage the future?

SD: Well what is certain, it's quality wine production, but we don't know which grape varieties will sell, we can't guess that. That all depends on the global market."

In the following quote Jarrige reiterates this sense of a shortage of information, particularly with regard to the evolution of the market and a farmer's relationship with the State, two pivotal institutions in her frame of reference. In turn, this is engendering a feeling of anxiety.

Amélie Jarrige (p148): "Well there is one certainty in life, there'll always be wine. But there's uncertainty about how the market will develop, about what we will have to do.

TC: And do you think this uncertainty is shared by all vinegrowers in the group?

AJ: Yes I think so, we perceive it just like that ... also there's uncertainty at all levels, as much uncertainty in terms of the market as in terms of the State. There are lots of questions which, to which we don't have an answer and we're uncertain ..."

The previous two farmers have articulated a feeling of uncertainty, and in the following quote Martin turns to the cooperative, in a position of dependency, relying on guidance from the cooperative leadership to help her negotiate an unpredictable future.

²⁵ Serge Deschamps is in his late 40s. He worked in the telecommunications sector alongside managing his father's 5 hectares of vines. In 1991, he became a full-time vinegrower but still had to work in a bakery throughout the night in order to generate sufficient capital to invest in land and machinery. His farm is now 17 hectares, 20% of which is planted with improved grape varieties and he intends to continue his programme of replanting. He sat on the Administrative Council of Lespignan cooperative for 7 years and is a member of *l'ASA*. He took part in the agri-environment programme but is not interested in signing a CTE.

TC: "In what ways will viticulture in this region develop in the years to come and how will this affect the management of your farm?"

Florence Martin²⁶: I can't really reply to that. You must ask the cooperative's directors because they guide us with management plans and directives that can change each year. Therefore I can't answer that question."

Farmers like Blanchet and Jarrige have embraced quality, along with others such as Freyssinet who, albeit reluctantly, have participated in this transition because they perceive there to be little future in the production of table wines. In contrast, Masson, for example, articulates a greater personal struggle to adapt to these changes. He explores this transition through a discussion on the volume of grapes produced per hectare; high yields, in the past, being intimately associated with viticultural production in the Languedoc. Although his farm is largely replanted with improved grape varieties he continues to produce large volumes of grapes per hectare which he justifies by virtue of the agronomic potential of his land and the region's climatic conditions which, in the past, afforded producers an added advantage in the production of high yields. As such, he is still adhering, in part, to what he perceives to be the opportunities inherent in the old system.

Henri Masson²⁷: "Yields. Yields have also changed. In the hills, around Saint Chinian, they don't have this problem with yields, they have always produced small

²⁶ Florence Martin is 32. She was born in Lespignan and her family have lived there for many generations. Her father and paternal grandparents were full-time vinegrowers and owned a private *cave*. Her father did not have sufficient capital to invest in it and sold it in the 1970s, thereafter joining the cooperative of Lespignan. Florence trained as a beautician, however in 1999, she spent a year in the Champagne region in order to study for a diploma in viticulture before taking over her father's farm. She now owns 20 hectares, half of which is planted with improved grape varieties, is a member of the VPE and sits on the VPE's '*Terroir*' Committee.

²⁷ Henri Masson is 40 and has always lived in Lespignan. He is a full-time vinegrower, owning 25 hectares and is helped on his farm by a full-time labourer. Half of the 25 hectares are planted with improved grape varieties and he intends to keep replanting. His father was a vinegrower and Henri learnt everything he knows about viticulture from him, working on his farm from the age of fourteen. He inherited 10 hectares from his father when he was 20. He took part in the agri-environment initiative and expressed interest in the CTE, but withdrew, considering the measures to be too prescriptive. He is a member of Lespignan cooperative and served on its Administrative Council before resigning at the time of the formation of *CEPRO*. He is also a member of *l'ASA*, enjoys hunting and plays rugby for Lespignan.

volumes. But in the past, we were very successful through producing large volumes, moreover we're still producing them. As yet we're still not too focused on quality because we tell ourselves that quantity pays a little more than quality. Even though it's not true! But we tell ourselves that it's true. It comes from the land, at the end of the day we have rich soil, our soil makes it difficult for us to produce quality grapes, because our soil is good for grapes."

In the following quote, Chastaing describes the disjuncture between the cooperative and its members in terms of their respective positions towards the production of low yields. He explains that vinegrowers understand the need to produce a quality product, but instead high productivity continues to be a priority, in part because of the pleasure of seeing vines laden with grapes. This sense of satisfaction is more important to him than being compensated for producing less. His personal negotiation of these changes is interesting; although he has resisted adopting different agricultural practices in his vineyard and perceives *les vendanges en vert* as anathema, interestingly he has engaged with another contemporaneous transition by participating in the agri-environment initiative.

TC: "Are the VPE in the process of responding to this demand?

Michel Chastaing²⁸: Er yes, yes. They want to go along with it. It's us vinegrowers who aren't too keen. Us vinegrowers want to make a good product when it's sold at a high price, but we don't do what's required to make a good product.

TC: And how do you explain that?

MC: Because, as I said to you we don't prune like we should, we're still too focused on high yields. When we're in the vineyard and we prune the vines with a long trim²⁹ we can't claim that we want to produce a quality product. But once we take

²⁸ Michel Chastaing is in his 50s and is from Lespignan. He is a full-time vinegrower, managing a farm of 16 hectares, half of which belongs to him and the rest he rents from his sister and brother. He comes from a viticultural family, and both on his paternal and maternal side, his forebears have worked in viticulture for generations. His father helps him on his farm and he intends to increase the size of his holding, but not so that it is sufficiently large to necessitate employing a labourer. Of the 16 hectares, half the vines are improved grape varieties. He is a member of the VPE and has not held any administrative posts at the cooperative, choosing instead to invest his time in an environmental activist group, *la PEGASE*.

²⁹ A long trim increases the productivity of the vines.

the grapes to the cooperative as I've said to you I wash my hands of them. Oh yes, yes, I'm a bit like that, I set out to produce a quality but after ...

TC: So you subscribe in theory?

MC: Because when I'm in the vines, I like to see a lot of grapes, because I'm 15 years behind the times. When you're in the vines and you don't see any grapes, well you think "the job hasn't been done properly." When you see the grapes, well it's pretty. Well this year we've started to remove some of the grapes before the harvest, *les vendanges en vert*. And perhaps I shall have to do this, but this year I didn't take part, I didn't want to. Because you work all year in the vines and then to remove the grapes before, before the harvest? Even though they give you a subsidy. Can you imagine it, it's not right."

Underlying many of these quotes is the issue of which form of production is more profitable. As Frédéric Bonnet describes, in the past everyone's grapes were mixed together to produce a single wine, with little motivation for a farmer to invest in the quality of his or her grapes or the health of the vines.

Frédéric Bonnet (p147): "Everyone made a single wine, which was mixed, if you brought good or bad grapes there was no difference, we put everything together, we made a single wine. Whereas today if you bring a Merlot or a Cabernet, they pay you for a Merlot or a Cabernet, and for me these tiered payments have been one of the biggest changes."

Following the institution of *l'apport total*, the VPE introduced a further initiative to provide an incentive for farmers to produce grapes of a higher quality³⁰. At the time, however, farmers in general made more money from producing large volumes which did not assist the transition to quality and Chastaing was not the only farmer to express pride in producing a large number of grapes. In this quote, Valadour announces that in the past he produced the highest volumes per hectare in the cooperative and how, for him, this was more profitable than producing smaller volumes of Merlot and Chardonnay.

³⁰ In 1995, the VPE introduced a tiered payment system for the grapes of cooperative members to encourage the continued renovation of the vineyard. Under this system vines are classified according to four categories, based on a series of 'quality indicators', including grape variety, yield, sugar content and the health of the vine. The initiative was instigated by the Administrative Council of the VPE, although increasingly it is supported by the FDCCH, the Chamber of Agriculture, and has also been introduced by other cooperatives (see Chiffolleau, 1998).

Charles Valadour (p153): "Before it was quantity. I was one of the people who harvested the greatest volume per hectare at the cooperative. I used to produce 165hl / hectare.

TC: So producing large volumes was the priority?

CV: Exactly, it was the yield. It wasn't quality. It was to produce a wine at 8, 10 degrees if you like and to produce a lot of it. The more you made, the better you were paid. Now you can't produce a lot per hectare. But I made more money then compared with now, now that I produce quality grapes."

Paillard, the president of Capestang cooperative, talks about the move to quality and explains why not all farmers have been mobilised behind this strategy. He sees it in terms of a fatalistic attitude on the part of some farmers and a lack of confidence in their ability and the potential of their *terroir* to produce wine of a high quality. This attitude also reflects a past image held by the outside of wine production in the Languedoc.

TC: "So why is there a different rate of uptake amongst farmers in terms of planting with improved grape varieties? Why are some more advanced than others?

Antoine Paillard³¹: I think it's something to do with the attitude of the vinegrowers from here, it's, it's a kind of fatalism. Here we still have an image, an image that the outside world has of us, the vinegrowers of the Languedoc, an image associated with 'plonk'. But it's not only from the outside, this image is still anchored in our minds, and it's true that the vinegrowers from here don't have confidence in themselves, in their *terroir*, they don't have confidence in their know-how. And I think that it's a general attitude, a fatalistic one, we can't produce a quality product, it's not possible here. I've been told that by a lot of cooperative members."

The attitude Paillard describes is further articulated by Masson as he draws a distinction between being a grape grower and a wine producer. He identifies

³¹ Antoine Paillard is in his mid 30s, married with 2 children. He comes from a viticultural family; both his father and grandfather were full-time vinegrowers and members of Capestang cooperative. After completing a BPA in viticulture he started to work alongside his father and on his retirement inherited 10 hectares. He now owns 20 hectares and manages a further 10 hectares for his sister. Half of his vines are improved grape varieties and he was one of the first two farmers to sign an individual viticulture CTE in l'Hérault in 1999 under the collective CTE d'Ensérune. He has been president of Capestang cooperative for four years and is a member of the administrative council of the VPE as well as sitting on the local branch of the *Crédit Agricole*.

himself as a grape grower thereby abnegating responsibility for the quality of the final product.

Henri Masson (p157): "The problem is that we're not wine producers. We grow grapes. And that's the big difference. We bring the grapes to the cooperatives and then afterwards we do that (two claps of the hand).

TC: And then they are no longer your responsibility?

HM: You see I share a grape harvester with a friend who owns a private *cave*. He harvests his grapes, he makes his own wine and then he sells it. So he produces quality wine in order to sell a quality product. But we produce grapes for money, there's no comparison."

Farmers in particular were eager to talk about the behaviour of others³², in particular in terms of the lack of loyalty shown to the collective as an indicator of a decline in moral or collective sanction. Amélie and Vincent Jarrige echo the concerns of many farmers and cooperative administrators that some members only care about their grapes; their transformation and the quality of the wine produced is of no consequence to them. They are frustrated by the lack of commitment and disengagement of these people, which they feel is undermining the cooperative and collective working.

Vincent Jarrige (p148): "They bring their grapes to the cooperative and then they're off. They don't give a damn, about the cooperative, how it works, about the collective ...

AJ: The majority are like that, they don't go to things, they're concerned about their vines, their time, first and foremost their grapes, the sugar content, and then they look at their accounts.

³² Although these analyses of the behaviour of others are unverifiable, they are a key element of the story in terms of the ways in which individuals position themselves within the group and with whom they implicitly identify. This intimate knowledge of the behaviour of others is a function of the social organisation of farmers within a cooperative system; the cooperative was described as a fraternity by some and as claustrophobic by others. Cooperatives are characterised by high levels of exchange and interaction both socially and professionally; machinery is shared and neighbours help each other at the time of the harvest. Furthermore, the system of property rights in the Languedoc coupled with French inheritance laws mean that many of these vinegrowers are both small-scale owner-cultivators and tenant farmers. Alongside their own holding, they work the vines of others, often belonging to relatives rather than socially or physically-distanced landlords. This contributes inevitably to an awareness and knowledge of the management choices, practices and strategies of others.

VJ: And that's it, they're not interested in anything else.

AJ: It's like an employee, he [*sic*] looks at his wages, he doesn't scrutinise the business to see if it's functioning or not, if there's a market, if there are buyers or not. At the end of the day they say it's the cooperative's responsibility."

Erguy elaborates this theme of lack of responsibility. He regards a cooperative as an institution which encourages a degree of dependency, which is damaging in terms of the degree of empowerment of its members.

M. Erguy³³: "A *viticulteur* with his own private *cave* doesn't think the same way. The owner of a private cave, he thinks about selling his wine, he thinks about marketing, he thinks about his vines, producing the best grapes, producing a good wine. A cooperative member, he's practically a civil servant ... he doesn't have any customers, he doesn't have to sell his wine. He brings in his grapes, as soon as his *benne* (container for transporting the grapes) is empty, even if his grapes are all rotten, it's no longer his problem. There's someone else who manages it. So it's not the same mind-set."

The debate currently being rehearsed in the viticulture sector of the Languedoc in terms of the orientation towards the production of quality wines surrounds the production of varietal wines and *Vins de Pays*. In this quote a teacher at a local agricultural college summarises the restructuring and renovation of the region's vineyard and talks about the different strategies being pursued.

Mme Dance³⁴: "What I would say is that the evolution of the viticultural sector in the Midi has been a slow one and can be characterised on the one hand by an evolution in production terms – the restructuring of the vineyard. You have another evolution in terms of replanting with quality varieties and also in the reduction in volumes, and increasingly a move towards 'global' grape varieties, which are no

³³ M. Erguy works in the viticulture service at the regional Chamber of Agriculture.

³⁴ Mme Dance is the head of '*Domaine de Piquet*', a teaching institution on the outskirts of Montpellier linked to the *lycée Agropolis*. She is in her 50s and has been teaching vinegrowers since the 1970s. Her role is to train young vinegrowers in vineyard management techniques and in principles of oenology. The development of environmentally sound practices is a particular interest of hers, and she tries to promote this in her teaching. She also gives presentations at conferences and runs workshops for professionals.

longer those varieties typical of the region. Perhaps more recently we've also started to consider vineyard practices which are more respectful of the environment and adapted to *terroirs*."

The VPE have increasingly oriented towards the production of *Vins de Pays*, and elements of this strategy were rendered apparent in both Fauré's and Lopez's comments about their vision for their products ultimately to be associated with the zone of production. In order to differentiate the group's products from others, they identify a need to associate the wine more closely with the specific territory in which it is produced and its historical, cultural and natural capital. This is in alignment with a more general strategy for the viticulture sector of the Languedoc and Devic identifies the potential of the region's historical capital which could be harnessed in order to effect this strategy.

Bernard Devic³⁵: "In the next 10 or 20 years, we will succeed in linking even more closely, through the CTEs or other openings, viticultural production, the viticulture sector with its territory and developing to the full a policy of brands, like the VPE have done, for example. I'm talking about Carcassonne or the *Cathar* sites - the region's historical resource. And of course that requires a lot of financial investment to develop the advertising. And also the wine merchants, because we've talked about the production side, the merchants, that's to say the people who sell, the wholesalers, the distributors, must move in the same direction.

TC: And associating the viticulture sector more closely to its territory, does this represent a new strategy?

BD: Completely, because we are beginning to realise that a varietal wine, a classical varietal wine like a Chardonnay or a Merlot, if we don't imbue it with the weight, the power of a territory, the competition will be so strong that ... and on the other hand it seems that consumers everywhere are increasingly looking for products that originate from a territory and from a culture within that territory."

When discussing the shift to quality, most farmers focus on reducing yields, replanting with improved grape varieties or improving vinification techniques.

³⁵ Bernard Devic is the Finance Director of CIVL (*Conseil Interprofessionnel des Vins d'Appellation du Languedoc*). CIVL was set up in September 1994 and represents the interests of two complementary economic actor-groups; the producers - the '*syndicats de cru*' and the merchants. Its mission is to analyse the market, to develop the identity of the Languedoc, to promote the individuality of its 11 wine appellations, and to establish a forum for consultation between producers and those in the commercial field.

Some, however, are engaging with the varietal / *Vins de Pays* debate articulated by regional officials. Paillard notes that two strategies are available within the shift to quality; the production of standardised grape varieties, such as Merlot or Chardonnay to suit international tastes, or to develop wines with a regional identity. Within this latter strategy he has adopted a modern position, experimenting with new, regionally-specific varieties. The infrastructure now exists within the cooperative to vinify these grapes separately and they contribute to the production of a *cuvée super-prestige*. In 2000, this particular vintage was being produced by a team of Australian oenologues³⁶ and the wine was matured in French oak barrels, sixty of which had been purchased recently by the cooperative.

TC: We've talked about replanting with improved grape varieties. What influences your choice of the varieties you plant?

Paillard (p160): It's true that even improved grape varieties aren't uniform in terms of profitability, in terms of quality (interruption) ... there are grape varieties that are uniformly remunerative, of a standardised quality, which are homogeneous from year to year in terms of the quality of the product. That's the case with Cabernet, with Sauvignon. But there are others, such as crossed varieties, which are less well known. These don't have a future as varietal wines, but they do have a future in terms of a *Vins de Pays* strategy. And that's the case with Marselan and I'm planting Marselan³⁷, and moreover it's one of the objectives of my CTE."

A straightforward dichotomy between quantity and quality, the traditional and modern does not exist. Martin, for example, also expresses the desire to produce a

³⁶ For the 2000 vintage, two batches of wine were being vinified, one by the cooperative manager for a domestic market and the other by a team of Australian oenologues, destined specifically for the British market. The presence of these 'flying wine-makers' caused tensions, with some farmers suspicious of this non-French speaking team producing wine for the British, whereas others welcomed the opportunity to expand their markets. Traditionally, French oak barrels are used by private estates for the production of high quality wine and are not used in the maturation of table wine.

³⁷ Experiments are being conducted by INRA, Montpellier to develop new varieties specifically for the production of commercial crops of good quality in the Midi. One of these varieties is Marselan, which is a cross between Cabernet Sauvignon and Grenache. Grenache is a sweet grape making strong wine and one of the high-yielding grape varieties closely associated with the Languedoc. Cabernet Sauvignon gives tannin, body and aroma to the red wines of Bordeaux (Johnson, 1994).

product with a regional identity, and as such is engaging tentatively with debates surrounding what constitutes typicity in *Vins de Pays*. Rather than experimenting with new varieties, however, she advocates the retention of Carignan vines, a traditional high-yielding variety typically associated with the Languedoc. This is interesting because at the beginning of the quote she differentiates her management strategies from the way her father ran the farm, articulating a desire to put into practice what she has learnt during her training. Furthermore, the infrastructure does not exist in the cooperative to vinify Carignan grapes separately from other traditional varieties, in spite of their being grown in such a way so as to reduce the volume of grapes per hectare. This must therefore be a preservationist argument rather than a commercial strategy³⁸, but it does exemplify that she is actively making a choice to opt out of the dominant trajectory, characterised by the uprooting of these traditional vines.

Florence Martin (p157): "My aim is to improve the holding as it is now. I want to bring to the farm what I've learnt, because my father had a more traditional way of working. I want to focus on grape varieties but I'm against getting rid of the traditional varieties, like Carignan. Instead I'd rather conserve these varieties and make a wine typical of the region. Because Carignan really is a local variety, whilst varieties such as Merlot have been brought in from the Bordeaux region. And I think we can do something with all of our established vines and we shouldn't grub them all up and instead should keep a sensible proportion of the traditional varieties. However that's only my personal opinion, not many people share my views."

³⁸ The production of wine from traditional grape varieties is however being deployed as a marginal or niche market commercial strategy. One of the wines from the Languedoc sold at 'Vinopolis', London, is produced by a private *cave* and sold as '*Vins Rares du Pays d'Oc*' (vintage 2000), a blend of 3 traditional grape varieties – Grenache, Syrah and Mourvedre. It is priced at six pounds per bottle, and thus is being sold as wine of relative quality, appealing to a sense of history and the rarity value of these grape varieties. These are the same cultivars that the vine-growers of the Languedoc have uprooted over the last 20 years, but the vines will have been grown with the application of specific vineyard practices to reduce volumes per hectare to produce a quality wine.

The Emergence of a 'Multifunctional Agricultural Regime'

Cooperative administrators conceive of multifunctionality in terms of a paradigmatic shift in the roles and functions of agriculture. In their eyes this has equated to a reorientation of activity, away from an exclusive focus on the production of grapes, to the VPE's engagement in AE schemes, rural development projects, tree-planting initiatives run in conjunction with local schools and the promotion of production practices which are in harmony with the local natural environment. Gazels perceives that the emergence of a 'multifunctionality' discourse in national and regional agricultural policy, as embodied in the recent LOA (see chapter two), has been driven by societal concerns surrounding alimentary security along with demands for an aesthetic and well-maintained countryside. He notes, however, that the reaction of farmers has been varied. Some farmers are reluctant to adapt their activities accordingly, whereas others have always farmed according to an extensive model of production and one which is sympathetic to the natural environment.

Didier Gazels³⁹: "Multifunctionality started as a discourse, it came from the rest of society and was directed towards the farmer. There are some farmers who have understood it, who've always understood it, who said to themselves we're not moving in the right direction. They are the ones who have looked after the land, maintained the ditches. The others have just responded to social pressures. For them it's the weight of social pressure. So at the moment society as a whole is engaging in this discourse, demanding things and saying that they want the countryside maintained in a certain way, well they have a certain vision of the countryside which perhaps resembles a garden. And there is this pressure from society which says that there are certain production practices which perhaps encourage natural disasters, flooding, things like that and they don't want to eat certain foods, they don't want to take risks with what they eat. So there are these pressures from society which [farmers] are gradually taking on board. They're starting to hear this point of view all the time, they are taking it on board, they understand it.

³⁹ Didier Gazels coordinates the VPE's environmental and territorial initiatives. He has a PhD in Biology and worked in the environment sector before joining the VPE in 1994.

TC: And do you think that farmers are going to take this on board in the future and change their practices?

DG: Certainly, because I think that farmers have indeed realised that they have done things that they shouldn't have done, when they produced to make as much money as possible, but we mustn't now destroy everything. But it's not an easy situation and we must help them to change their practices."

Regional actors share a common understanding of a 'multifunctional' agriculture as representing an extension and concomitant reorientation of farmers' roles and activities. Ruffray elaborates, identifying a further dimension of multifunctionality. He notes that farmers are no longer perceived as the sole actors in the rural sphere with exclusive claims to the rural as a site of production. Instead he suggests that the stake of other actors in the territory is being recognised. These different stakeholders exhibit alternative representations of rurality which, in turn, lead to a variety of claims for non-positional countryside goods.

TC: "What do you understand by multifunctionality?

Xavier Ruffray⁴⁰: The 'multifunctionality' of agriculture. That's to say, as well as production, which is agriculture's main function, it is responsible for the upkeep of the countryside.

Claudie Houssard: Yes. There are lots of measures aimed at the upkeep of hedges, upkeep of ditches, upkeep of paths. So it's true that this can redefine farmers as countryside managers.

XR: It's true that it is being driven by the CTE, that's to say, when the CTE was created its vision was a territorial project like that of the VPE. Therefore it was necessary to identify who had a stake in the territory and to try to respond to these claims."

As Mme Villa and M. Cabane, who work in the environmental service of La DRAF and La DDAF respectively, each explains, the notion of multifunctionality as embodied in the LOA has been operationalised into a suite of regional policies and initiatives. These include local agri-environmental programmes which were introduced in the Languedoc in the mid-1990s, collective CTE projects (see chapter

⁴⁰ Claudie Houssard works for the '*Le Conservatoire des Espaces Naturels*' and Xavier Ruffray for '*Le GRIVE*', an ornithological group. Both studied applied ecology and they were invited to join the pilot committee of the CTE d'Ensérune.

two, page 101, foot-note 18) and rural development initiatives such as the *projet du pays*⁴¹. The objective of these initiatives is to deliver one of the key goals of the LOA, namely an agricultural sector that is sustainable in social, economic and ecological terms. These regional actors support this reorientation in policy and, as regional and departmental representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, they have invested a large amount of time and resources in the elaboration, implementation and delivery of these policies in the region.

Although a majority of regional actors express commitment to these initiatives, some representatives of the viticulture sector counter their enthusiasm with a note of caution. Richards, for example, articulates resistance to a comprehensive reorientation of the agricultural agenda. Instead, he rehearses a traditional view, firmly embedded in a sectoral rather than a territorial form of organisation. He believes that the future of the region's viticulture sector will be guaranteed through an improvement in the quality of wine produced, rather than through its adoption of new roles or its reintegration in the rural territory. In talking about shared values he is alluding to the difficulty in reconciling the different and, at times, conflicting values surrounding nature, the countryside and agriculture's role in the rural sphere held by a range of actors.

TC: "We've talked about a change in discourse at the level of national policy, the emergence of the notion of a multifunctional agriculture and observed that the CTE is one of the instruments employed to realise this transition. What are your views on the CTE?"

⁴¹ The French policy of *Contrat de Pays*, introduced in 1975, encouraged local communities to join together to set up small-scale, rural development agencies in order to seek state co-funding for development projects. Along with other initiatives, such as the LEADER project, this represents one component of rural administrative and territorial recomposition, whose central principle has been the creation of viable territorial, demographic and economic structures for endogenous, collective rural development, important in building up local actors' capacities to define and address their own development needs (Leurquin, 1998; Buller, 2001b). At the time of the fieldwork, the VPE were setting up a '*Projet Pays d'Ensérune: Un Projet Pour Un Territoire*'. A working group had been assembled and meetings had been held but it was in a period of discussion and elaboration and no actions had been implemented. What is interesting to note is that it was being organised and managed by the VPE themselves.

M. Richards⁴²: There are some people who think that the CTE is going to solve all our problems, that it will maintain the countryside, the territory, [it] will sustain the economic activity and the social fabric of the rural space. But people like me knew from the outset that it couldn't work. I'm against, well at least I have reservations about the CTE because those who developed it are dreamers, who have, how shall I describe it, reductionist and simplistic visions of agriculture.

TC: And what do you mean that this?

M. Richards: The spirit behind the CTE – maintaining employment, pluriactives – these are the ideas of people who do not understand the problems of the viticulture world. If you like, they are the ideas of those who wish to defend out-moded structures because they talk about a shared agriculture, shared values but they're mistaken. Because we don't share our values and we only share money if we actually make some. And this is why I talk about reductionist analyses of agriculture. And in my opinion we should not reject a sectoral policy, we shouldn't forget that it is wine that supports people, rather than the '*pie grièche*'⁴³, rather than the territory and we must not forget that. And so in my view we must focus on organising our production methods, controlling volumes produced per hectare and we should remain organised as a sector."

Crepin elaborates upon the point made by Ruffray concerning the plural claims advanced by multiple stakeholders on rural spaces. He describes the development of a collective CTE project which involves the establishment of a pilot committee, comprising the majority of actors within the circumscribed territory, representatives of economic, political and civic interests. Collectively they define a vision for the development of the territory, the key objectives of the project and a range of measures to deliver these objectives. This partnership style of working is important to engender a mutual understanding of the diverse views held by different actors

⁴² M. Richards is in his late 50s. He trained as an agricultural engineer and worked for many years at the DDAF on l'Hérault's table wine sector. He now occupies a post at la DRAF, the regional antennae of the Ministry of Agriculture. He may be described as a financial gatekeeper, responsible for the distribution of subsidies to the viticulture sector.

⁴³ The '*pie grièche à poitrine rose*' or Lesser Grey Shrike (*Lanius minor*) is a passerine, mainly insectivorous and lives in trees and hedges in open cultivated countryside. It nests high in trees often in loosely scattered colonies (Peterson *et al.*, 1954). The total population size in France is fifty breeding couples, consisting of two populations, one at Ensérune and the other also in l'Hérault (GRIVE, 2001, pers. comm.). It is the focus of local agri-environment initiatives undertaken by the VPE. Participating farmers manage the species habitat by maintaining its heterogeneity and planting and pruning trees. There are bi-annual expeditions to survey the nests involving farmers and local ornithological groups and a bird trail has been established to encourage people to visit the vineyards.

and to effect attitudinal change. He believes that a collective CTE project is founded on a principle of inclusivity. Indeed, Augé and Gazels, referring specifically to the *CTE d'Ensérune*⁴⁴, subscribe to this view, adding that its objectives were elaborated in accordance with a 'participatory democracy' in which each view was ascribed equal weight.

Daniel Crepin⁴⁵: "You've seen how it works ... We define the objectives within a circumscribed area, we identify the people concerned, and we frame the project. But to get there, well we worked with a countryside manager who defined the project. So the aims were not founded on purely agricultural concerns. We discussed what sort of countryside we wanted, the commune was involved. And so it's an initiative founded on our heritage. The participants are not exclusively vinegrowers."

There is a general consensus among regional actors and cooperative administrators on the direction in which agriculture is moving, and specifically on the extended roles the region's viticulture sector will have to adopt to respond to the new demands that are being placed on it. Greater diversity is manifest in the positions held by farmers. Relatively few farmers participated in the local AE scheme set up by the VPE in the commune of Lespignan to protect the habitat of the *pie grièche à poitrine rose*. Moreover, at the time of the fieldwork, only two farmers had signed a CTE, although a further fifty had expressed interest. The majority of farmers articulated a complete lack of interest in these schemes because they felt that they

⁴⁴ The 'CTE "Pays d'Ensérune". Un projet pour un Territoire' was initiated in June 1998 by Bataille, Gazels (VPE) and Augé (FDCCH) and an initial document outlining its aims, 5 key territorial objectives and a list of measures was first published in November 1999 following the deliberations of the pilot committee. This project is in its infancy but 2 individual CTEs have been signed in the presence of the then Agricultural Minister, M. Louis Le Pensec. At the time of the empirical investigation (2000), farmers had received three newsletters from M. Bataille, the President of the VPE, informing them of the CTE's aims and objectives and there had been an information meeting held at each village cooperative with variable rates of attendance. Technicians from the Chamber of Agriculture of l'Hérault were visiting the VPE to provide training for farmers in completing the contract documentation and to explain the legal implications of entering into a contract.

⁴⁵ Daniel Crepin is a civil servant and works for la DIREN, the regional antennae of the Ministry of the Environment. In recent years he has worked extensively on the region's Agri-Environment programme and the CTEs, sitting on the CTE working group of the CDOA representing environmental interests. He has collaborated closely with the VPE, providing advice for many of their environmental initiatives.

represent a diversification in activity away from the production of grapes which is their primary concern. Others felt that they had not received sufficient information on these initiatives and thus were unable to express a view. Positions were equally varied concerning the objectives of the schemes and their potential benefits, both to the individual farm business and in more general terms. There is, however, a broad acknowledgement that there has been a rise in environmentalism as an ethic, which, in turn, has impacted on society's perceptions of agriculture and the functions it expects farmers to perform. Desaille captures the environmental dimension of the shift to multifunctionality in the following way.

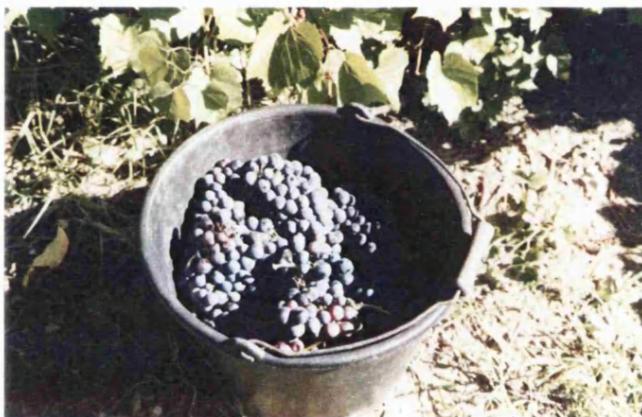
Louis Desaille (p138): "It's my impression that, I think that perhaps somewhere there is a change in direction in viticulture, it seems to me that we are moving more and more towards this or something, towards respect for the environment."

Jaurès expands on this observation and notes the emergence of agricultural subsidies which are linked to the provision by farmers of environmental services. He regards this as part of a wider dynamic of re-embedding agriculture in the rural territory and re-connecting farmers with urban actors. In turn, he believes that a healthy countryside is an important resource in the creation of a strong regional identity and in the enhancement of the region's image. He believes that farmers have a significant role in maintaining this resource, thereby implicitly imbuing them with the status of key players in the rural sphere.

Pierre Jaurès (p139): "Well there is something that we didn't do before. But indeed, at the national level we realise that some things have been put in place, so that things are moving in the same direction. We see it at the level of ... farmers are becoming environmental managers. Subsidies are being given for managing the environment. Well that didn't happen before. So things have been put in place to try, because people from towns require the countryside to be pleasant and all that. And so this binds us in a relationship with them because they come to see if we're delivering. It's so that everyone will be more sensitive and do more to enhance the image of his region. Everyone must move in the same direction to promote the region. And so we try to, well, through the environment, there's a national will to move in this direction."

Other farmers perceive a CTE as a means of responding to society's concerns surrounding alimentary security, through the adoption of measures that stipulate a reduction in farm-inputs, such as chemical treatments, and the development of customised products for niche markets. Although farmers recognise these shifts in consumer food preferences, many express ambivalence towards making the necessary adjustments to their production practices. Laroche challenges the rationale of an extensive reorientation towards organic products, for example. He regards this as an idealistic vision of agricultural production and one which is not economically sustainable. He emphasises the primacy of agriculture's role in the food commodity chain and thus as a provider of affordable food-products.

André Laroche (p137): "We had to be able to set up a system which facilitated the transition to the production of quality. We said, yes, we used to do things like that but now it would be better to do things like this. And it's true that increasingly we are seeing new types of production – organic and things like that. And the CTEs have been one of the ways of doing this. Moreover, subsidies, linked to productivity, all this sort of thing has disappeared. Now once again we've invested in the CTEs to try and bring about change. Now I'm not totally convinced. I hope that this is the future. I hope that this is the future, that tomorrow the only food we'll eat will be good food, cows that have eaten grass, lambs that have eaten grass, free-range hens and all that. I hope that's how it will be. But unfortunately there are economic imperatives that mean that we have to continue to be able to feed everyone. And to be able to produce a free-range, corn-fed chicken takes twice as long and costs twice as much. And this difference in price, either we raise salaries or we say we'll carry on as before, producing rubbish and being able to feed people. There aren't 36 solutions!"



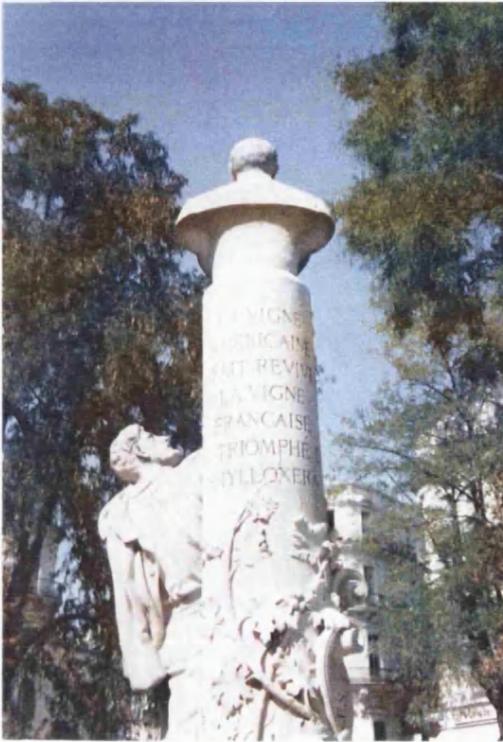
Plates 1 – 3 (from top to bottom)

1. Nissan Cooperative, grape harvest, 2000. Source: Author, 13 September, 2000.
2. Grapes of the cultivar Carignan, *Vitis vinifera*. Source: Author, 13 September, 2000.
3. *Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune* logo. Source: Author, 30 May, 2000.



Plates 4 – 6 (from top to bottom)

4. The '*Vignerons Libres*' of Maraussan. The inscription reads "Everything for everyone. Everyone for everything." Source: Author, 17 September, 1999.
5. Vinegrowers protest, Montpellier. Source: Author, 11 August, 2000.
6. "Wine, our life-blood". Source: Author, 18 July, 2000.



Plates 7 – 9 (left, right, bottom)

7. Square Planchon, Montpellier. Source: Author, 27 August, 1999.

8. 'Les Vendanges à l'Ancienne', Domaine de Piquet, Montpellier. Source: Author, 18 September, 1999.

9. 'Fête du Vin et de la Vigne', 3 June, 2000. Source: Mairie de Nissan.



Plates 10 – 12 (top, bottom, right).
Courtesy of 'Bibliothèque Nationale de France'.

10. *Taille de la vigne en mars (vers 1510)*. Training of the vine in March, circa 1510.

11. *Déchaussage à la houe en mars (1480)*. Hoeing, March, 1480.

12. *Vendanges en octobre (1430)*. Grape harvest, October (1430).

5

Opportunities and Threats

Introduction

In chapter four, the case study actors described their experiences of change and the ways in which they have negotiated the two shifts from quantity to quality and from productivism towards multifunctionality. The message to emerge from their narratives is that these shifts mean different things to different people, leading to a diversity of positions. This chapter builds on that material by providing an implicit 'explanation' for the differential negotiation of these changes through an examination of an individual's perceptions of the shifts as either opportunities or threats. The purpose is to begin to tease out the patterns of winners and losers but to do so through the stories of the local actors.

From Quantity to Quality: Opportunities and Threats

When asked to talk about threats and opportunities, farmers did not spend much time reflecting upon the modernisation and professionalisation of viticulture as practised on the farm. They did note some of the pressures associated with modernisation including a level of indebtedness to finance investments in land and machinery, much hard work, the need for new skills and uncertainty about the future. These pressures, however, were not the focus of their discussions. This may be explained by the fact that the farmers I spoke to have survived this dynamic so far, and in most cases have had sufficient access to capital to finance the necessary investments to modernise. In other words, modernisation brought threats that they have been able to accommodate. What they chose to concentrate on instead were two other issues raised in the transition to quality. These are the restructuring of the cooperative and the orientation towards the production of *Vins de Pays* and varietal wines.

Cooperative administrators have supported restructuring and continue to do so, whereas the positions of farmers were polarised; some clearly had been in favour of the merger, others wholly against it. When farmers described their positions, for the large part they mobilised economically rational arguments. Either they understood restructuring as a means of improving the vinification process or in terms of the production of larger volumes of wine, placing the group in a stronger negotiating position in an increasingly globalised sector. Conversely they evoked rising vinification costs to account for their oppositional stance. These economically rational arguments were, however, contained within a broader and more nuanced set of discourses reflecting views about the importance of past traditions, the localness of the cooperative institution and its founding principles.

As farmers reflect upon the restructuring of their village cooperatives, their relationship with the past features prominently in their narratives. For Laroche, a dogged adherence to past traditions and a structure that does not adapt has no future in a world characterised by flux and evolution. He believes that it is important to retain an anchor in place, to celebrate local traditions, but that this link with the past must not constitute an obstacle to change.

André Laroche (p137): "You can describe the VPE as a true success. It was even a necessity. Because in my opinion, individual cooperatives, on their own didn't have a future. If Nissan was alone, tomorrow a wine-buyer might say "that's the price." There would be no means of discussion. Instead through a structure like the VPE we are able to say "we represent x amount of hectolitres, we represent x amounts of hectares. In the region, we are players to be reckoned with." And so the wine buyers are forced to negotiate with us, but, if you like, you wouldn't be able to exert the same pressure if you were on your own. You see, in today's world, a structure which doesn't evolve, which rests on its laurels, for me is a structure without a future, in a short time it'll go under. Knowing the way the world functions today, and the speed at which it evolves and its perpetual movement, we cannot, we can't say, "we have our traditions, we're going to remain that way." With such inflexibility we'd be finished. We would certainly go under. It's necessary to conserve our traditions, because it's part of our image, our history, but we must use this as a tool and not an obstacle."

He develops the theme of the speed of change and suggests that whilst the cooperative's evolution is of critical importance, many farmers have experienced negative repercussions associated with the speed of change in the adoption of new initiatives, coupled with a centralisation of decision-making. The latter has engendered a feeling of abandonment by an institution increasingly disembedded from the local. Effectively, he is suggesting a marginalisation of the average cooperative member. In spite of this, Laroche supports the group expanding even further in its increased association with Foncalieu. He maintains that in the context of global economic relations and increased competition, Foncalieu is better structured (than the VPE) and better equipped in terms of knowledge and resources to produce quality wine. This move is the only way to guarantee a future both for his farm and for the cooperative as a whole. As such, he employs the same line of

argument as M. Lopez, the VPE's finance director, when he summarised the rationale behind the history of the mergers in chapter four. Equally, Laroche does not see this extension and reform of the group as comprising a challenge to the collective principles to which he continues to adhere. He talks extensively about the importance of Foncalieu retaining the democratic principle of cooperative governance - 'one man, one vote' - so as not to undermine core cooperative principles. He also recognises that his position is not commonly held and that the majority of the cooperative's membership will be resistant to this change.

André Laroche (p137): "In my opinion the biggest opportunity of the future is Foncalieu, to integrate with Foncalieu and in fact to become even bigger. In my opinion it's an opportunity because Foncalieu is already structured, they have the know-how, there's a tool. And I think it's the future, to have the capacity to produce grapes, to vinify them, to put them in a structure like Foncalieu, which will prepare them, condition them, market them and they'll go directly onto the market, avoiding a whole range of intermediaries. And it's exactly the same thing that happened with the VPE before they merged. Before there were several cooperatives, each of which had their own identity. It's true that they've lost their identity but we've created another one, and one with a big advantage, which is that we are able to structure ourselves so that we can guarantee a future for our members. If someone said tomorrow you've got to merge with Foncalieu, knowing that at Foncalieu there are people who aren't viticulteurs, that wouldn't bother me at all. If that's going to guarantee me an income and a future, then why not, and we'll create a new identity. It doesn't mean that because you've merged with another structure you're going to forget automatically your history, your past, your identity. All that will stay. But it's simply a blending of cultures, in all countries now there are ethnic mixes, cultural mixes. At the beginning, the assimilation of a new culture is difficult, but there comes a point when it works. But in my opinion the cooperative members aren't yet ready to take that on board. Because people find it difficult to live with that, to manage it, to understand it. In my opinion it's a good thing, but on the other hand, I'm utterly convinced that roughly three quarters of the cooperative members will have difficulty swallowing it [union with Foncalieu], it requires more time.

TC: Why do you think they aren't ready to take this on board?

AL: It's true that at the moment we are finding it difficult to define, to understand, because it is still brand new, it's quite vague. But despite all of that, in my opinion it's an opportunity, a real opportunity."

For others, such as Chatonnier, the incorporation of his village cooperative into the VPE has meant that the cooperative's wine is no longer identified as originating from his village and so he feels he has lost his ownership of it, engendering a sense of anonymity. He sees restructuring as a challenge to his cooperative's formerly 'local' character.

Marcel Chatonnier⁴⁶: "I think we've lost our identity. The wine is no longer bottled at the cooperative at Nissan, it's bottled at Maraussan. [He reads the label]. Bottled by the VPE at Maraussan. Maraussan is by the river [l'Orb], Ensérune is here. I think we've lost our identity and given it to others.

TC: And why does the association with Maraussan represent a loss to you?

MC: It's like saying Cabernet, wine of Bordeaux. They produce Cabernet in Bordeaux and so why don't we put 'wine of Bordeaux' on our bottle, at least we'd benefit from the reputation of Bordeaux. What I'm trying to say is that if the wine is not linked to our village, we've lost our ownership of it. And if we've lost that, we can no longer be proud of it and we lose our identity, we're anonymous producers, we won't be recognised ..."

Like Laroche, Blanchet supports greater association with Foncalieu, even though this may undermine the traditional trust-bond that characterises the relationship between a cooperative member and his or her cooperative. Typically this relationship is founded on an internal loyalty; the cooperative only buys its members' grapes and in turn sells the wines produced from them. As a result, the benefits conferred by the cooperative are exclusive to the group. He observes that the commercial director of Foncalieu, however, is committed to profit and if the member cooperatives do not provide sufficient volumes of wine he will purchase them from other producer groups. As such, Blanchet explores the changing

⁴⁶ Marcel Chatonnier is 60. He is from a viticultural family; his father and grandfather owned vines and produced their wine at home. He started work as a plumber and electrician and cultivated his vines at the weekend. In 1983, he became a full-time vinegrower, with a property of 20 hectares, and received no formal training. By the late 1980s he had begun to replant with varieties such as Alicante and Grenache and to experiment with new techniques in the training of the vine. Recently he has sold some of his vines because he does not have a successor. A sense of antagonism towards the VPE emerges in his narrative and he is critical of recent management choices and the relationship between its leaders and cooperative members.

principles upon which the cooperative is founded and notes the transition from a traditional ideology, one of mutualism, to one centred on the pursuit of profit. He is a pragmatist however. He does not feel threatened, and buys into this profit-making strategy because he accepts that the structure must change in order to operate in a new world.

Paillard favours collective working and his enthusiasm for the VPE stems not so much from an economic argument of survival but from the importance he places on traditional, cooperative social relations. He points to the potential for a greater social exchange between an extended group of farmers, including experts at Foncalieu, and that this will encourage the flow of ideas and the dissemination of information. Perhaps his role as president of Capestang cooperative means that he circulates in those spaces which facilitate this degree of interaction, in contrast to the average cooperative member geographically distanced from the administration of Foncalieu⁴⁷. Indeed, he notes that increased social exchange is not an opportunity likely to be exploited by everyone.

Antoine Paillard (p160): "The success was that it allowed people to meet each other, so for my part, before, I didn't know anyone outside Capestang, and now I know people at Maraussan, at Cazouls, Cazedarnes and Lespignan and even the technicians, the directors at Foncalieu who aren't farmers. So it's true that it has encouraged human contact and that's a good thing otherwise everyone stays in his own patch, you don't know anything and so well it's a good thing.

TC: And why do you see this as a good thing, this increased contact with a wider range of people?

AP: Well it's clear, it's not just a good thing for me – well sure for me, it allows me to be up-to-date with new ideas, initiatives which are important on my farm, but for the group, for the members, it's a good thing too. It allows people to meet up, to share ideas, to learn from each other and if people talk to each other, things evolve more quickly.

TC: And do you think all farmers of Capestang take advantage of this opportunity to meet, to share ideas?

AP: Well certainly some do, but it's always the same ones, it's always the same people who take the initiative, the same faces at meetings of the Administrative Council ..."

⁴⁷ Foncalieu's headquarters are in Arzens in the *département* of l'Aude. Its members are viticultural producer groups located throughout the Languedoc.

Whereas Paillard favours the extension of the group because of the capacity for adaptation conferred by increased social exchange, Teyssier takes an opposing view. He sees an increase in size as threatening social relations and resulting in reduced personal contact between farmers and their cooperative. He comments on the growing distance between members and administrators, that members are not well-informed and are disengaged from the affairs of the cooperative. There has been a loss of collective responsibility.

G rard Teyssier (p146): "But what I do have to say it that this must not go too far, because if it does, we lose control. Because well, the first thing is that I can't pop into the cooperative every day to see what's going on, I don't have the time and because afterwards ...

Mme Teyssier: We feel less close to the cooperative, we feel that there's less contact.

GT: That's it, there's less contact.

Mme T: That's how I see things and people aren't at all up-to-date, in the past when it was just Nissan, even CEPRO, but now we feel there's a barrier ...

GT: There's a barrier between the Administration whose headquarters are at Maraussan ...

Mme T: Yes, a barrier ...

GT: And the average farmer who isn't informed of anything. Whereas us in Nissan's Administrative Council, there was a meeting the other day and we were there to find out information, but afterwards we can't go to every house to tell them how much wine has been sold. If someone asks me, I pass the information on, but I can't go from house to house, I don't have the time. Well we send round information sheets so people have the information but there's a much greater distance, less personal contact compared with in the past. We're becoming administrators, people do their accounts and then they don't give a damn if the wine doesn't sell, the most important thing is that every month, money comes in and their accounts are balanced."

Many farmers share Teyssier's view of fracturing social relations and the betrayal of some of the cooperative's founding principles. As Jaur s notes, at its inception, the cooperative was an institution associated closely with small-scale vinegrowers. It was a social equaliser founded on egalitarian principles, such that each member had an equal voice irrespective of size of holding. Through the collective ownership of the materials for vinification, the cooperative traditionally relieved

small-scale farmers of the task of vinification and of the capital to do this, the key to their survival.

Pierre Jaurès (p139): "Well we mustn't forget that we're in the cooperative system, and the cooperative system isn't made up of people with 50 or 100 hectares - there aren't many of them. It's made up of little holdings, which are just about self-sufficient, but which couldn't exist without the cooperative. Because a guy owns his vineyard and the machinery to farm it, but he doesn't have the money to have a *cave* and to make his own wine. Even if we weren't talking about the sale of the product, even if we relieved him of the sale of the product, he couldn't produce it himself. And that's how the cooperative helps us."

Some farmers are experiencing a growing sense of marginalisation. In the past, farm size was not a discriminating factor in issues of representation, voice and general governance. Many perceive that this is no longer the case and that the gap between large and small farmers is growing, undermining a sense of equality and unity. They argue that with restructuring, and the concomitant centralisation of decision-making, it is those 'dynamic' farmers, often with large farms, who occupy management roles and sit on the VPE's committees. They take decisions for the collective with the 'one man, one vote' system being utilised rarely. For example, Desaille considers that the voice of the average cooperative member is no longer heard, as decision-makers are increasingly dis-embedded from the very local.

Louis Desaille (p138): "I'm not sure about the future of cooperation. Because originally the cooperative was created for small vinegrowers, who grouped together in order to make their living or whatever ... and so I think that now [the cooperative] is something completely different, it's not governed by the same spirit, it's not the same policy and I don't think it's a good policy. I don't think it's a good policy because the small vinegrowers, with three or four hectares who manage some vines alongside their job, which counts for a lot of the traditional farmers, they can't make their living. So, I'm not optimistic and that's why I don't know whether I am going to give up, whether I am going to carry on in viticulture, I don't know anything anymore, we shall see ..."

Freyssinet elaborates, arguing that he is fearful of a bigger structure because of the resultant compromise of the founding ideology of the cooperative.

Joseph Freyssinet (p154): "That's what I am afraid of, being too big, because then it's difficult to manage. Moreover today, uh, the property-owner at the bottom, we contribute nothing, all the decisions are taken, it's no longer those at the bottom who ... we are completely lost, they do what they want. The principle of cooperation is that it's those at the bottom who are in charge, but that's all finished ... well except in the small cooperatives, they still get to know what's going on, but today we no longer know anything. The decisions, they are taken, when you know about them it's already too late."

Whilst Desaille and Freyssinet perceive the loss of representation and decision-making power to be the fate of small farmers, some large farmers, such as Garcia articulated a similar view (see chapter 4). The key difference is that those farmers with the means to substantially increase the size of their farm believe that they have the option of leaving the cooperative. Many small farmers sense that their only choice is to leave viticulture altogether.

The growing gulf farmers experience between themselves and their leaders has led to feelings of being ill informed, an inability to make pertinent management decisions rendering it difficult to adapt to change. Freyssinet does not sit on the Administrative Council and he articulates a view that was shared by many farmers in his position. He says he receives very little advice and it is this exclusion from circuits of information that underpins his feelings of marginalisation. Beauverie, on the other hand, through the position she holds at the Chamber of Agriculture, does have access to information. However she feels that being a member of a large structure means that individual farmers are unaware of new initiatives as little information is passed on to members. Furthermore, increasing the size of the structure undermines its cohesiveness and will contribute to the eventual demise of the collective.

Yvette Beauverie⁴⁸: "That's the eternal problem, the weight of the structure. It's true that with a private *cave*, [the farmer] has a buyer in front of him and he can

⁴⁸ Yvette Beauverie is in her late 50s and she works as a full-time vinegrower with her husband. They took over her mother's farm in 1978 at the height of the table wine crisis, but she was attracted to viticulture because of the outdoor nature of the work and the sense of freedom it confers. Neither of them has received a formal training, learning from family members and the grape harvesters they

say yes or no, he knows what he is doing. I think that it's in this respect that we lose our efficiency and it's always the same, a lack of communication with the members.

TC: And is the weight of the structure one of the biggest threats?

YB: The key thing is that they don't always listen to us. You have an overwhelming impression that we aren't listened to, that when we arrive at a meeting everything is decided already. At the end of the meeting they say that decisions have already been taken and I don't like that. I know that there are some people who would willingly get more involved in the cooperative but when they see how things work they leave demoralised and that's serious. Because it's our work, and I think that even if we're in a cooperative, we can be involved in the vinification, what's been produced. The other evening the president told us that 5000 hectolitres of *Vin du Pays d'Oc* hadn't been sold and the guy sitting next to me said 'that's enormous!' I asked him if he knew how much hadn't been sold the previous year and he didn't know. It's information like that which would convince people to change their practices and I'm sure that there are a lot of people who don't know this sort of thing. But we're too cut off from the rest of the chain and if you add Foncalieu as well, we're going to sink."

As well as the perceived chasm between members and their leaders resulting in a shortage of information, some farmers increasingly feel unable to identify with their President.

Amélie Jarrige (p148): "We see him more as a politician than a, it's true we see him as an intellectual, well he's a farmer but we don't see him as one."

Hervé Guillard⁴⁹: "They're guys who talk, who talk like books, between this guy and the peasant who trains his vines, well they're not on the same wave-length."

employed on the farm. They now own a holding of 20 hectares of vines, 80% of which has been replanted with 'improved' grape varieties, 20 hectares of wheat and 16 hectares of fallow land. Her husband has sat on the Administrative Council of Lespignan cooperative for the last 15 years. During the 1980s and early 1990s she was Deputy Mayor of Lespignan, she serves on the VPE's '*Commission Aménagement Foncier*' as well as being an elected representative of l'Hérault's Chamber of Agriculture.

⁴⁹ Hervé Guillard is in his mid forties with no dependents. He is primarily a cereal farmer, owning a farm of 220 hectares, 150 of which are planted with wheat, 30 with sunflowers and 30 with tomatoes. He inherited his father's viticultural property of 10 hectares and worked as a vinegrower for 15 years, running an agricultural machinery business alongside. At the time there was little viticultural land available around his natal commune which constrained his plans for expansion. In the 1980s, following the uprooting policies, land was cheap on the viticultural plain and so he bought 50 hectares and planted it with wheat. He participated in the pilot committee of the CTE d'Ensérune.

Moreover, Garcia does not think the VPE's President represents the positions of cooperative members, particularly in his pursuit and implementation of the CTE. He would feel more comfortable being represented by a 'farmer', someone who is engaged in the same activity and shares common experiences with him.

Gabriel Garcia (p141): "Well the President, I don't think he's really representative, well he is representative because he's the President. You see, he's an important figure, but he doesn't represent our views in terms of the CTE. He's a bit exceptional – he's the President, he's this, he's that. Someone who would be representative of us, is someone like André, who [works] on the land and would lead from the land."

Underlying these quotes are farmers' struggles to cope with an increasingly differentiated chain of production and a more marked division of labour between the producers, the VPE's administrators, marketing team and President. This division of labour, and the specialisation that has accompanied it, is presented as being in stark contrast to the past when it was easy to start out in viticulture without any formal training as many farmers came from viticultural families and were "born in the vine."

Henri Masson (p157): "My father had been an agricultural labourer and then he bought a couple of vines, then he bought three, then four and afterwards well he launched himself in farming. I think that it was easier to set out then compared with today. With four or five hectares, a horse borrowed from a friend, off they went..."

Jaurès notes that in the past you became a vinegrower in this region if no other option was available to you, whereas today you need training and the production of grapes is becoming more and more specialised. Furthermore, it is exactly those farmers with training that are in an advantageous position in the modern world. He is describing the shift of viticulture from a way of life to a business, and one in which scientific forms of knowledge are more important than practical knowledge.

'Professionalism' is proving to be the key differentiating factor amongst farmers in conferring a capacity for survival in the modern world.

Pierre Jaurès (p139): "In the past people did this job because they didn't have any choice, that's to say they weren't educated, parents couldn't send their little ones to school. And so they went into viticulture like their parents. When you couldn't do anything else, you went into viticulture here.

TC: And how has this changed?

PJ: Well now it's a profession like any other. And it requires training in using phytosanitary products and all that, when the vines need to be treated, why we treat them. And those things are a bit specific and people like me who haven't had training, we pick things up, but we make mistakes which means that we lose money sometimes. Whereas the others, they're more professional and now, if you want to survive in the world as it is today you have to be professional."

Laroche develops the theme of the professionalisation of viticulture and the segmentation of peoples' roles. Earlier in this chapter he argued for expansion of the group but with the retention of core cooperative principles. This would suggest that as the group assumes new functions and adopts new practices to facilitate the shift to quality, he is comfortable in depending on the expertise of others exactly because they are members of the same collective, bound by a common mission.

André Laroche (p137): "Over the years there's been specialisation, over the whole sector things are specialised. Vinegrowers are becoming more and more specialised. We've been encouraged by technicians to learn new techniques, techniques that will help improve the quality of our grapes, that sort of thing. We're specialising for the better. It's true that the way I see it, comparing when I took over the farm with now, vineyard practices have massively evolved and are becoming more and more specialised. So already vinegrowers have specialised, vinification structures are more and more specialised. You only have to see the money invested in the oenology material to deliver the best results. And then when you look at structures like Foncalieu, they're specialised in terms of marketing, in the preparation of the wine, in bottling, in the delivery and distribution of the wine. In all stages of the production process, now everything is specialised, everyone has a precise role."

But some farmers see this increased specialisation in negative terms, engendering a narrowing of a vinegrower's skills and knowledge base. Several farmers note how their fathers, as owners of private *caves*, enjoyed a broader base of skills compared to their own. One of the 'sacrifices' they have made in joining the cooperative is the abdication of knowledge surrounding vinification and marketing to experts hired by the cooperatives. These 'outsiders' have served to disconnect producers from the final product, locking them into the role of grape-producer, which in turn has allowed some to abnegate responsibility for the final product, with deleterious effects on the collective.

For the most part, farmers' narratives focused on perceived threats and opportunities to the individual or individual farm business, although some actors discussed these with reference to the collective. A range of arguments was mobilised, including the opportunities afforded by a collective form of organisation in the negotiation of change. Jean Huillet, the director of the FDCCH, for example, regards a cooperative's organisational form and its capacity to unite its members as an advantage, particularly in responding to the demands of the LOA of 2000, with its focus on the multi-functional roles of farmers and collective / territorial working (see chapter 2).

Jean Huillet⁵⁰: "We've just lived through an enormous cultural revolution in France because all previous LOAs, since their inception in 1962, have had a productivist logic. So the LOA, the latest one, its logic is the territory, and I understand this to mean development being in harmony with its territory. As for us, this suits us well because historically, a cooperative is at the cross-roads between a production logic - we are here to make a product, wine, as well as possible - and at the same time a territorial logic. Because being part of the cooperative movement we know the territory, and why do we know it? Because where there are dynamic cooperatives,

⁵⁰ Jean Huillet is 56. He set out in viticulture, aged 22, with 8 hectares of vines. Over the years he has played an active role in the union movement of the Languedoc. He was involved in the CAV, the CDJA (*Comité de Défense des Jeunes Agriculteurs*), created a union, MIVOC (*Mouvement d'Intervention des Vignerons Occitans*) in 1972, was elected president of Valros cooperative in 1981, president of CEVILAR in 1985, president of the FDDCH and the FRCA (*Fédération Régionale de la Coopération Agricole*) in 1991 (Juge, 1999). In addition he sits on the national *Vins de Pays* committee and a European commission for cooperation.

the territory is organised. The cooperative movement, because of the way it functions, brings people together. I take the example of my village, there are 200 members in the cooperative. Among these 200 members there are large proprietors, people who own more than 30 hectares, there are average-sized holdings, people like me with 15 – 20 hectares, and there are small proprietors who have 1 or 2 hectares and who have another job or who are retired. So if the cooperative didn't exist, none of these people with small properties would have vines and if they didn't have vines, then the land would be abandoned, a considerable area of viticultural land left fallow. And this would have repercussions for the natural environment because today it is very difficult to have an individual response to the environment. So the cooperative, with its 200 members on average in each village, has an influence on the territory. And so today a cooperative is an ideal place to initiate and support an initiative which involves the organisation of the territory and sustainable development."

Bataille, the president of the VPE, shares Huillet's views on a collectivist institution's power of adaptation, its capacity to unite people and generate a common response. He talks about the cooperative movement's prominent role in effecting the transition towards the production of quality wine.

Michel Bataille⁵¹: "The cooperatives were certainly the critical element in this evolution because ...

TC: So you see a cooperative as facilitating this shift in viticulture rather than representing an obstacle?

MB: Exactly. If you like, because they were able to unite everyone and to say, we must do this now. If you like [this evolution] was driven by the cooperatives because they were capable of bringing everyone together. If everyone had been

⁵¹ Michel Bataille is 41 and was born in Lespignan. At the age of 21 he studied for a BPA (*Baccalauréat professionnel agricole*) and took over vines belonging to his mother the following year. He now owns a farm of 30.5 hectares, all of which is planted with improved grape varieties and 2 full-time labourers largely manage his farm. He was president of Lespignan cooperative in the early 1990s, elected president of the VPE on its creation and assumed role of president of Foncalieu in 2000. He seeks to lead by example and thus his farm is a showcase for new initiatives. He practises '*la lutte raisonnée*' and '*les vendanges en vert*', his grapes are vinified separately with the wine matured in oak casks for the production of '*la cuvée super-prestige*' (vintage 2000). In addition to these roles within the cooperative he has been active in the union movement for the last 20 years. He was involved in CAV and the CDJA, has served as Deputy General Secretary of the FDDCH, General Secretary of l'Hérault's Chamber of Agriculture, General Secretary of the Regional Chamber of Agriculture, Deputy General Secretary of '*La Fédération Héraultaise des Vins du Pays*', and President of the '*Commission Environnement CCF*' (Juge, 1999). He is a keen ornithologist, voted for the Green party in the last general election and his partner works at the Chamber of Agriculture, responsible for l'Hérault's AE initiatives.

organised in private *caves*, alone in their patch, people have a tendency to live for themselves and it is very difficult to encourage communication between farmers working alone. So the fact that the majority of farmers are members of a cooperative, we were able to unite everyone and to take the right decisions collectively.”

They both perceive that the social relations which epitomise the cooperative system afford a capacity for adaptation and thus Huillet argues that an erosion of these relations would be a threat to the institution of collectivism and to farmer’s hegemonic occupancy of the territory. A common theme in the preceding narratives has been the perceived clash of ‘traditional’ and ‘modernist’ ideologies characterised by a commitment to the collective and social norms of cooperativism as opposed to those of a profit-making enterprise. Huillet therefore supports the former position and he argues that these norms should not be seen as an obstacle to change, although he does acknowledge the difficulty in uniting people around a common position when they hold plural political and religious beliefs.

Jean Huillet (p189): “We’ve realised that over the past 100 years there has been a decline, a crumbling of the spirit of cooperativism and so we’re in the process of preparing a code of practice to highlight some fundamental principles that must not be infringed. For example, we must not attempt to take members from a neighbouring cooperative. You mustn’t, you mustn’t do that. Today, we’re in a neo-liberal system, with a dominant free-market agenda and some vinegrowers want to see cooperatives in competition with one another, saying if I can’t get what I want from my village cooperative I’ll go elsewhere. We must break this mind-set because cooperativism isn’t a neo-liberal system. It’s a completely different system and we have cooperative obligations that don’t exist in private societies. Because a cooperative has important obligations to its members and that is one of the fundamental things that we need to re-emphasize. There are others, such as the notion of the collective, which shouldn’t be considered as a constraint, on the contrary, it should provide a space in which everyone can express different points of view through the intermediary of a collective project. Because if people do whatever they want and do their job badly I tell them that their neighbours will suffer the consequences. Often I end up saying to *vignerons*, ‘don’t tell me that you’re doing your job badly to annoy the cooperative because you don’t agree with them politically, or religiously.’ I tell them, ‘you’re not annoying me you’re annoying your friends, your neighbours with whom you drink an aperitif on Saturday night.’ Because if you bring bad grapes to the cooperative, it’s the farmer who works hard who will be penalised. People must be aware that every individual act has an immediate consequence on the collective.”

Richards, a civil servant who works for la DRAF, also believes that strong social and personal relations underpin the successful functioning of the cooperative system. The fact that everyone knows each other engenders a degree of collective accountability and he argues that it is this that is important in the production of a quality product. It is for this reason that he views the formation of ever-bigger structures as a threat to these social relations, which, in turn, undermines collective accountability. The VPE's finance director adopts an almost antithetical position. Rather than seeing social relations as being important in binding people together and in uniting them behind a common response, he believes that the cooperative's traditional organisational form renders it an institution under strain because it cannot adapt quickly to new initiatives and market demands.

TC: "What do you perceive to be the difficulties, the weaknesses of cooperation in today's world?"

Jean-Luc Lopez (p145): Today the weaknesses of the VPE specifically are ... That's to say that taking on all these initiatives means that we are taking a lot of risks and the weakness is that, considering the state of the market, engaging in all of these initiatives means that we don't have a lot of time, to react quickly to make advances in the market. And then being large can be a real weakness. It produces a lot of inertia, there are a lot of people to convince. Cooperation is a strength and a weakness at the same time. That's to say, on the one hand, it is a formidable strength because it plays the role of energy catalyst. On the other hand, uh, the number of members to convince is so great that that produces a huge inertia. The problem is that a lot of the members of the VPE are pluriactives. Well that's historical, but it leads to inertia. So one of the weaknesses is this inertia, the number of people to convince and to get them on board so they sign up to projects."

Replanting the vineyard with 'improved' cultivars and the adoption of vineyard practices to produce grapes of a higher quality has been an uneven process, as we saw in the previous chapter. A variety of reasons were evoked by farmers and cooperative administrators to explain farmers' struggles to cope with these changes. The arguments centred around the fact that in the past, when the demand for table wine was higher, farmers made more money by producing large volumes of grapes

of the traditional variety. The agronomic conditions of the viticultural plain favoured the production of large volumes of grapes but now it is those producers who enjoyed a competitive advantage in the past who have been affected most severely by the current crisis in the viticulture sector. Even though the profitability of quality wine is barely disputed, some farmers have found it difficult to turn away from established work practices and they feel that they lack the knowledges and skills required to do so.

André Laroche (p137): "There's also a lot of work to do in terms of replanting. About 40% of the VPE's vineyard is planted with improved grape varieties, a large proportion remains planted with traditional grape varieties.

TC: And how does this proportion compare with the regional average?

AL: Compared with other areas we're perhaps behind. You must have seen when we went to Saint-Chinian on Monday that there were only a few improved grape varieties. Restructuring was different there, because they have a different '*terroir*' potential compared with our own. They have the same grape varieties as us [traditional varieties] and they make very good wine. In my opinion we produce rubbish.

TC: Because there is a difference in terms of *terroir*?

AL: Terroir, yes and the soil. And also in people's attitudes. Which means that they, [in St-Chinian] they have always been used to producing low volumes per hectare, because they do not have the same agronomic potential as us, and therefore they've always made wine which is superior to ours⁵². We have a potential in terms of soil which means that we have been able to produce high yields (200 – 250hl/ha) which produces wine of a very poor quality, but in the past we produced large quantities and we were able to sell our wine. But things have changed and it's true that now it's the vinegrowers on the viticultural plain that have been affected the first, by the full force of the crisis in viticulture. Right from the start, in Saint-Chinian they had an existing qualitative potential, they have experience producing quality wine which means that they are able to produce interesting products. Whereas us, we've had to put in place a new vineyard, to educate our farmers, which means that we're behind in terms of marketing our

⁵² The region of St-Chinian falls under the AOC '*Coteaux du Languedoc*' appellation, designated in 1985 (Pomerol, 1989), although its reputation for the production of quality wine has a much longer history. Unwin has examined the diaries of John Locke made during his visits to France in the 1670s in order to study French viticulture and wine-making. He observes that Locke does not undertake a systematic analysis of the qualities of wines from different regions of France, although he does record observations about the qualities of those wines he encountered on his travels. It was the wines of *St. Chignan de la Corne* (Saint Chinian) that impressed him particularly whilst journeying from Montpellier to Béziers and Castres in February and March 1677 (Unwin, 2000).

product and particularly in terms of our image. On a national and international scale we have a reputation for producing poor quality wine, a bad image and at the moment that is the biggest obstacle [and one] we must address.”

Those farmers with sufficient capital are replanting their vines because it is widely recognised that replanting increases the value of land and does deliver a return on investment⁵³ even if they face an uncertain future. A widely recognised difficulty is the region’s reputation for the production of an industrial, low quality product which fetters the construction of a new image linking Languedoc wines with quality.

Frédéric Bonnet (p147): “Even the Agriculture Minister said that, uh, in the Languedoc we made plonk. He said that we made bad wine.”

Florence Martin (p157): “Our region has suffered greatly on account of its image. In the 1960s, 1970s we produced wine that was of a relatively mediocre quality in inverted commas, we can’t deny it and so we’ve suffered greatly from this image and now we must produce wine of a high quality, recreate the region’s image and publicise it.”

The most widely cited threat not unrelated to the problem of image, and one perceived by farmers, cooperative administrators and regional officials alike, is linked to the globalisation of the wine commodity chain and the expansion of vineyards in New World wine-producing countries, which are increasing competition and saturating markets of varietal wines⁵⁴. The complaint of the

⁵³ In 1990, a hectare of land on l’Hérault’s viticultural plain planted with improved grape varieties was worth 58,000 F/ha and by 1998 its value had risen to 71,000 F/ha. Over this same period, a hectare planted with traditional varieties was 76,000 F/ha in 1990 and its value had dropped to 49,000 F/ha in 1998 (Agreste, 1999).

⁵⁴ The producers of Chilean wines are now considered to be important players in the wine global commodity chain on account of the successful implementation of an export strategy. Enterprises have aimed as a specific export market - at relatively high value niches in world markets - and have concentrated on exports of bottles rather than bulk wine. As Korzeniewicz *et al.* (1995) have noted, enterprises in the semi-peripherality enter into direct competition with core producing countries such as France and Italy, and so specific strategies are needed to capture and sustain competitive positions within the chain. An example of this was observed by the author at the International London Wine Fair (May, 2002) in terms of the distinct strategy deployed in the marketing of Chilean wine. European producers, and in particular the French, evoke the connection between product and place, marketing their product with images of producers, vineyards and the local ‘terroir’. The Chileans

majority of farmers is that the production of grapes in South American countries is not subject to the same degree of regulation as in France, including restrictions on the volumes produced per hectare (see the CMO for wine, chapter 2), France's employment laws and the imposition of the minimum wage. In combination, these factors mean that farmers feel they are unable to compete with their principal competitors. A rhetoric of injustice, the threat of a distanced 'other' suffuses their narratives, with little attention afforded to the improvements that could be made to their own vineyards and products.

Representatives both of the cooperative and viticulture sector also talk about the crisis in the Languedoc stemming from a global over-production of varietal wines. Richards acknowledges that varietal wines produced in the Languedoc have lost a share of the British market and attributes some responsibility to the cooperative system and its members.

M. Richards (p169): "It's the table wine and varietal wine sector that is in crisis and the producers are to blame in part, also it's the cooperative system. I'm hard on the cooperatives but we're aware that some cooperatives do not manage yields and are unable to control quality. And also there has been a series of events both internal and external to the region which means that our viticulture sector is in crisis. In 1999 there was a large harvest and the wine was of poor quality followed by another large harvest in 2000 of a better quality. But at the same time there were losses in the English market because the Australians have progressively produced more, and the combination of all of these factors means that we've had problems exporting our products. But in general terms it's a problem with the quality of the product which has led to a loss of some parts of our market."

Huillet, in contrast, invests confidence in the capacity of a collectivist organisation to deliver change. He believes that one solution to the viticulture sector's problems is the production of wine typical of the region, echoing the positions of Mme Dance

have adopted a contrasting strategy. The stands were 'modernist' in design, their wines were produced from globally recognised, single grape varieties and the final product, rather than being associated with geography or a specific territory, was linked to universal consumption values such as 'friendship', 'love' and 'family'.

and M. Devic in chapter 4. The specificity of the product is derived from the social and cultural context in which the grapes are produced.

TC: "What do you see as the biggest threats to the viticulture sector of the Languedoc today?"

Jean Huillet (p189): There is a crisis of over-production. The whole world has planted Chardonnay, the Australians have planted hectare upon hectare of Chardonnay, which means that the Chardonnay produced by the cooperative of Valros [of which he is president] is drowning in an ocean of Chardonnay. And that means that if we are to survive, either we produce Chardonnay at a very low cost, or we alter our production and marketing strategy and seek out niche markets. So, if we follow the first option that means that we have to, we must organise the production side in terms of yields, new methods of vinification, and if we're not able to do that we must find niche markets. And the niche market is more complex, it's a segmented market ... But, well, the future, for me, I have a lot of faith in the future of cooperativism and its capacity to mobilise people around new initiatives.

TC: And if you are to adopt the second strategy, to seek out niche markets, what sorts of products do you need to be producing, what are their characteristics?

JH: Well they need to be good quality products, but the most important thing is that they are typical of this region. We need to highlight the fact that they have been produced by men, grouped together in cooperatives and in a region that has a long history of producing wine. Well maybe we need to emphasize the cultural and social side of our products."

Indeed some farmers, as we saw in chapter 4, were beginning to replant their vineyards with grape varieties typical of the region, and another argued for the retention of traditional varieties. This is part of a strategy of differentiation, an alternative to the standardisation of single variety wines. In these final quotes, two farmers, in contrast to those who see the region's image as an impediment, view the history of the Languedoc's viticulture sector and its anchorage in the past to be an important attribute.

Pierre Jaurès (p139): "What we see as the future is that when we sell our wine it'll be necessary to sell the locality, an image. We'll need to sell an image at the same time. It's this that'll give us the edge, that will determine whether someone buys one wine over another. It's because of an image.

TC: And this is a means of differentiating ...

PJ: You see what happens in today's world with technology, is that products are produced quickly with computers ta, ta, ta, and we know that they'll be the same. Therefore we need to bring something to the product. And that extra thing will be, we've got an ace to play, which is that we're the old world.

TC: The 'old world'? What do you mean by that?

PJ: We're an old country, a country with a history. Australians don't have a history, Americans don't have a history."

Blanchet adds that although local vinegrowers cannot compete with those in New World wine-producing countries with industrial-sized farms and modern technology, they enjoy the advantage of history and the reputation of France, important in the differentiation and sale of wines. It is their cultural and historical heritage which confers specificity on the wines they produce.

Lionel Blanchet (p135): "The opportunity in the future is first of all the label 'France' and for us to start signing up to *la tracabilité*⁵⁵ or the CTE. You see, you sell a product and at the same time you sell a postcard. There you have it. Well, in addition you emphasize our history, all of that. It's true that the countries we call the New World they don't have any history because they ... well they have holdings on an industrial scale, where they have fields of 500 hectares, where they plant their vineyards and in the middle they build an ultra-modern winery, it's true that they can do things that we can't, in terms of the products they add to modify the aromas. We're forbidden to do that but in the end our advantage is our history, our cultural inheritance."

⁵⁵ Traceable products identify the producer and the place of production. In addition the producer keeps a record of which pesticides have been applied and the dates of the treatments.

A Multifunctional Agricultural Regime: Opportunities and Threats

As we saw in chapter 4, cooperative administrators are promoting the VPE's involvement in non-production activities and engagement in rural development projects. When asked to explain why they perceived 'multifunctionality' as an opportunity the VPE's director and finance director drew upon a neo-productivist position. Primarily, Fauré sees the VPE's environmental activities as an element in their production strategy, to be incorporated into the wine's identity, rendering it distinct from wine of a similar quality in an increasingly competitive market-place. He talks about the importance of a territorial anchor and historical embeddedness as a counter to standardisation.

Jean-Luc Fauré (p152): "One of the opportunities for the VPE is our '*groupe-pays*' initiative (see foot-note 41, page 168), where we worked with other actors and we've attempted to create networks with voluntary groups, with local municipal councils and the *collectivités territoriales* so they get to know the quality of our products over and above our primary profession. It's clear that if we create these, these links effectively it's to improve our reputation. I think that to a certain extent, when we worked on the territorial aspect, when we planted trees, I think that we played a role in the territory, in the management of the territory and it is important that we are recognised for these environmental activities. Because there are the '*Basses Plaines de l'Aude*',⁵⁶ the aquatic zones, there are a number of elements within our territory that allowed us to set these projects in motion naturally.

TC: Do you consider these initiatives to be a central part of your future axes of development?

J-LF: Well yes, yes, because at a certain point you have to ask how can you add value to your products. If you produce a good product and in addition the countryside is not destroyed, if the countryside is beautiful, if at the level of the territory things are well-structured, well maintained ... You see at the moment we are trying to develop this concept with an English agent, a specialist in the launch of brands and this concept is a little bit particular. It combines the quality of the product, because there must be a minimum global quality standard, with other aspects. With producers, with a specific territory, with environmental activities, with the preservation of our cultural heritage. And this mix is seductive because it's

⁵⁶ '*Les Basses Plaines de l'Aude*' is a Natura 2000 site (see figure 3.1, page 119). The EC 'Natura 2000' Series is a network of protected sites, consisting of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) together with the Special Protection Areas (SPAs) of the Birds Directive (Evans, 1997).

a new concept that we've never used before. And so we are in the process of putting to the fore all of these elements of the concept of '*pays*', the territory of Ensérune. And it is this concept which is a big opportunity for us. And when we bring our clients here, and we take them on the '*pie grièche*' walk and show them the quality of our products, the investments we have made in our sites, there's a territorial anchorage, and they say to themselves this anchorage is specific to this territory and no-where else. Commercially you need stories to tell, a history of the quality of the product. But it's clear that in terms of a strategy of differentiation all of these elements are going to be strong points for us. Because it's true that in today's world, on the one hand we face globalisation and homogenisation and on the other differentiation."

Some farmers appreciate this line of argument and believe that the VPE's engagement in territorial projects, such as the AE schemes, the CTE and the '*projet du pays*', confers advantages for the group. They recognise the project's value within a production logic, as contributing to an improvement in quality, as a means of adding value and as beneficial in the marketing of their products. The majority of farmers, however, express little interest in these multifunctional initiatives and moreover, talk specifically in terms of the threats they pose to the individual farm business. Garcia, for example, perceives the CTE as a disadvantage, channelling energy away from the production of quality wine.

Gabriel Garcia (p141): "You only have to look what's going on elsewhere, in other vineyards, notably in the Southern hemisphere, our principle competitors, who make wine of a quality equal to our own, if not higher - wines which are sold at much lower prices and with farm costs which are a lot less. It's easy for us to say that the climate isn't comparable and in part that's true. But it's not only that. Because life's ten times easier for those guys, there are ten times fewer rules that regulate their production. Those guys make wine and it stops there. They have enormous fields, they plant vines, they train them and they make wine. They don't bother themselves calculating whether they should sign a CTE to protect a scorpion or a beaver or whatever. Those guys aren't lumbered with all that. They're not going to expend energy on this sort of thing over there. For them, their objective is to produce wine in large quantities, of a recognisable quality, and to invest as much as possible in its marketing."

Freysinnet also perceives these environmental initiatives as a threat because they require increased time and money adding additional pressure to over-stretched

farms and reducing profit margins. When pushed as to whether he saw this as a way of differentiating their product, linking it to a specific territory, he is sceptical, arguing that he thought the consumer was more concerned about the quality-price ratio rather than being attracted by a product which guarantees a territorial origin or has been produced according to 'environmentally-sound' production processes. Many farmers perceive that the benefits to them are indirect ones and that diversification beyond production presents too many risks for the individual farm business.

Bataille adopts a more ideological stance towards the environment compared to the VPE's Directors. He develops an argument about corporate social responsibility and can be regarded as being engaged in wider debates rather than the specificities of the regional dynamics of sectoral and vineyard restructuring. Bataille believes that agriculture's roles, responsibilities and relationship to the rest of society need to be reconfigured. Agriculture must be repositioned in a closer relationship with the rest of society in order to respond to consumption concerns about alimentary security and environmental degradation. Furthermore, he notes that the VPE were innovators in developing initiatives such as the CTE and that their development was underpinned by a bottom-up, social ideology.

Michel Bataille (p190): "Yes the environment effectively can represent an opportunity to sell, um, to sell our products. Well there are two things, first of all it's an opportunity in terms of the sale of products, but I'm not sure if that is the most important thing. So it provides us with an opportunity to sell our products on the one hand and on the other, there's also a type of, how shall I say it, a sort of social consensus, so that businesses, at a moment in time, so that businesses are respectful of the environment. And really when I think about it, I guess this is what I feel personally, I'm responding to this wider societal demand when I encourage our farmers' involvement in environmental activities.

TC: So current debates about multi-functionality which consider new roles and responsibilities for farmers, how do you think they sit with the more traditional preoccupations of agriculture?

MB: For me, traditional preoccupations are no longer relevant. We must reconstruct an agriculture which is more embedded in society ... (tape changed) ... So if we don't find the means to take the current form of agriculture out of the ghettos in which it finds itself, this type of agriculture will be dead. So I think that

following on from the period we've just lived through, in which agriculture has been isolated, cut off from the rest of society, there's a real need to reorient agriculture, to add value to it and I think that multifunctionality is a factor in its development - it's more of a human and intellectual development than an economic one - but I think it's the start and that as a concept it's important in responding to society's demands of today and for the future."

Other actors see the extension of the viticultural network as an opportunity, integrating agriculture more fully in the rural space and forging new links with the rest of society. Augé observes that the CTE has precipitated an association between members of the Agricultural Profession and non-sectoral partners, emphasising the importance of collective reflection and local participation. This leads to 'new' horizontal forms of organisation and working rather than prescribed practices imposed from the top.

Bernard Augé⁵⁷: "If we take the case of Ensérune, with the AE measures and the CTE, well in my opinion, this territorial logic has led to a new organisation of actors, an association with other actors in the zone. For me this is a real change. Because with the CTE, we've effectively opened up the combined reflections of local actors, local Mayors, inter-communal representatives and producers ... [he digresses to tell a story about a local development project in which he participated in 1998 which involved meeting all of the communal Mayors, establishing relations with them and discussing the problems that concerned them most] ... As soon as we started to become interested in these projects, we encouraged the Mayors to think differently about agriculture and the rural space, and these were Mayors who had not thought about the social and economic benefits of viticulture. And these are simple reflections that no one had considered before. And it's true that the CTE, the CTE project, and the manner in which we experienced it, led to this type of, of collective reflection. If we had not been a part of these projects, we wouldn't have, no that's not true, we would have, but technicians like myself would have written a glossy report, but without this collective reflection no-one would have taken on board what we had written."

⁵⁷ Bernard Augé is the director of the FDCCH, responsible for representing the interests of their 94 members (of a total of 101 viticulture cooperatives in l'Hérault). The FDCCH roles include dealing with problems relating to legislation regulating the cooperative movement, the promotion of cooperativism, and take an active part in decision-making processes with the government. Augé worked closely with M. Bataille and M. Gazels on the development of the CTE d'Ensérune before the departmental contract menus were elaborated.

Crepin talks about the introduction of Agri-Environmental schemes in the region and how national schemes failed to work. A regional and decentralised approach was necessary. Prior to the AE schemes there had been little dialogue between different actor groups and, with the advent of these initiatives, people started working together. The discursive nature of the process generated a mutual understanding, important in facilitating attitudinal change, and increased the scope for capacity-building. He sees these schemes as both an opportunity for environmentalists in terms of their increased integration in the agricultural world, and for the VPE as a means of helping to sell their products.

Daniel Crepin (p170): "At the beginning of the 1990s the Agricultural Profession, the farming world didn't talk very much to the naturalists and so it was necessary to get all these people around a table, people started to talk, started to develop projects together, to elaborate management plans, to negotiate, and we set up 26 local AE programmes, and so it was a completely decentralised initiative. Because in France there were two AE systems, the first system was a national catalogue, with national measures defined at the national level. We tried to apply this at the regional level but it failed completely. However, what worked very well here was defining a local territory and within that territory uniting the concerned actors, putting them around a table and that started in '93, '94 - six years ago - and that was the start of a real agri-environment culture in our region.

TC: And did you see the agri-environment culture as an opportunity and if so for whom?

DC: Well straight away it represented an opportunity for us, in the environmental world, because we were involved at the level of the *département*, in the reflection on the measures, the management plans, we had a significant influence and it has meant that now we are used to working with agricultural actors, we get on well with them, people in the Chamber of Agriculture, producer groups. In terms of the VPE I will give you the view of an outside observer, but you must put the question to them. However they have no reservations on this front, they're convinced, and Michel Bataille says this at public meetings, that the quality of the environment in which they produce their product is an important element in the image of quality and therefore enables them to be more successful in selling their products.

TC: Do you think that the MAE and the CTE, these local initiatives are going to bring about changes on the ground? And by that I mean real changes in terms of an improvement of the environment, or changes in people's attitudes?

DC: I think that the key thing is [a change] in people's attitudes. There'll always be people who say that nothing's changed, but when I see the behaviour of viticulteurs

and of naturalists, their behaviour has completely changed. That appears to me to be the heart of the matter. Because to get someone to plant three trees or to clear ditches for a subsidy, that's just a smoke screen. Whereas the evolution of people's attitudes, this sensibility, this mutual understanding, that's the most important thing to effect change and that's something that takes time. I think that amongst some members of the VPE this project [of attitudinal change] is complete. That's to say it developed during the AE initiative and there's a real continuity anchored in experience, an accumulation of acquaintances, of methods. They have a proven capacity to capitalise on."

Two environmental representatives spoke in detail about the opportunities AE initiatives and the CTE have afforded them, raising similar points to those made by Crepin. They talk specifically about their role in local CTE projects, how this enabled them to influence the nature of the measures in support of the environment, and how it allowed them to access agricultural sources of funding from which they had been previously excluded. Beyond this they noted the establishment of new partnerships, the opportunities for environmentalists to form coalitions with agricultural actors, along with greater mutual understanding.

Claudie Houssard (p166): "I would really like to respond to that. Well from the point of view of the *Conservatoire*, I think that this radically changed our partners because it has allowed us to make contact with farmers. Before we weren't in contact with anyone. It's allowed us to increase our network of acquaintances, and also to acquire methods of working which are a lot more efficient. Our key concern is abandoned agricultural land and we were able to make contacts with farmers and people in the Chamber of Agriculture. I don't know, but I find that it has completely overturned, well perhaps not overturned, that's a bit too strong, but that has allowed us to completely ...

Xavier Ruffray: To be integrated into the agricultural world.

CH: I've been at the *Conservatoire* since 1997 and the CTEs were in 1999. They must have started at the end of 1998 and I see it as an opportunity because it's a lot simpler, it's enabled the *Conservatoire* to be integrated in the agricultural world.

XR: With the CTE, we have a link with the agricultural world that is much wider. Before, there were the AE measures in the Languedoc which were very localised, whereas with the CTE, these projects cover the whole region. And well we've worked principally in l'Hérault, that's to say on practically all of the 15 CTEs that have been completed, and we were invited to do the environmental surveys. And that allowed us to get to know a lot of people. The network grew, we know viticulteurs in St-Chinian, in the Minervois, whereas before we didn't have these

contacts. And also these were zones that we didn't go to, the big viticultural zones towards Béziers, all of this area was completely ignored by naturalists because it was planted with vines and frankly that didn't interest us. And in fact we've realised, through being involved in this type of thing that in fact it's more interesting than we thought. For me, speaking for GRIVE, I think we have relationships with the agricultural sector that we didn't have before and even now, it's allowed us to get to know each other and to foster a mutual appreciation between naturalists and agricultural administrators, and even the technicians. And now the Chamber of Agriculture, GRIVE has already run a training course on bio-diversity for farmers and I think that if we hadn't had these contacts made through the CTEs, these relationships would never have been established. And people were very interested, farmers and even the technicians of the Chamber of Agriculture who attended this training were very interested because they saw the agricultural zones from a different perspective."

Environmental representatives including Crepin, Houssard and Ruffray talk, in the main, about the establishment of partnerships and social networks as a result of the emergence of AE schemes and the CTE. The regional representatives offered a wider view, talking about the opportunities afforded to the region by an agricultural sector integrated into the local community through the reinforcement of the region's social and economic fabric. Jouillé, an elected regional councillor who worked with the VPE on the CTE d'Ensérune, discussed the emergence of multifunctionality within the viticulture sector. She saw it as an engagement of the sector in activities, roles and responsibilities over-and-above those purely linked to production, as well as a tool to bring about an improvement in quality and to address consumer concerns about food security. She talks about the VPE and the way in which they have contributed to rural development through the preservation of the environment, rehabilitation of cultural heritage and the establishment of a bird walk. Although these initiatives are being driven by an economic organization, a viticultural producer group, they present an opportunity for other actors, creating openings for artisans and the tourism sector. I asked her whether these initiatives represented an opportunity for the region and why the Languedoc's *Conseil Régional* had adopted an active role from the start.

Charlaine Jouillé⁵⁸: "Well we mustn't forget that there's a political interest, yes, and the fact is that if a *département* wants to add value to its agricultural assets, the best way to do it is to anchor its agriculture in a territory. That's the reason why we, here at the *Conseil Régional* support these schemes. At least it seems to me to be logical that the best political ploy for a *département* is to add value to the *département*. But it's not an explicit strategy. I'm not saying that the *département* has seized these projects, like the CTE of Ensérune, or the '*projet du pays*', to add value to itself. It's not like that. It's that, in any case, [the territory] is the foundation of the *département* - the *département* and its elected representatives. So with regard to the CTEs, I think there was willingness on the part of our President for the region to be involved early on, to propose a position statement at an early stage in relation to a demand put in place by the State. So when a project emerges from the territory itself, the *département* has a stake in it. I've lost my line of thought, I no longer know what I want to say ...

TC: You were talking about the President's endorsement of these territorial projects because they were perceived as a means of adding value both to the agricultural sector and to the region itself. But when we talk about 'adding value' how does this work?

CJ: When people start to take note of the territory, and agriculture is really integrated into the community, the sector is brought closer to the territory, we know that if jobs are created in this context, this creates a solidarity between the farmers and other actors – artisans, the tourism sector – and this solidarity is a key factor in the fabric of the local economy. If farmers, through increasing integration, associate with other actors, that's to say, the vine is also part of the culture, the language, and if we mix all that together, we reinforce the local fabric and we add value to the territory and by extension agriculture."

Fabre, a consultant who worked collaboratively with the VPE on the '*projet du pays*', noted the establishment of a network of people starting from the contacts of the President of the VPE, who is inserted in viticultural as well as political networks extending to the national scale. This network built upon an existing local capacity generated through the AE schemes and the CTE which meant that the stakeholders were used to working with each other. She emphasises the importance of collective working in the wake of globalisation. Furthermore, she talks about the complicity of the group, in the sense that they shared an enthusiasm for the project and a common purpose. She perceives that there was a consensus amongst viticultural

⁵⁸ Charlaine Jouillé works for the *Conseil Régional* of the Languedoc, responsible for co-ordinating and overseeing the operation of the region's CTEs.

representatives and elected politicians that bottom-up initiatives were important for the economic development of the region. In combination, these factors facilitated the emergence of the project. These endogenous rural development projects have served to effect a partial shift from the administrative organisation of the rural space, as incarnated in the commune system, to a more territorial organisation.

Marie-Hélène Fabre⁵⁹: "I think that [the emergence of the project] really corresponded to what we describe as a demand, people felt that it was a good thing, and perhaps several years ago the project wouldn't have been possible, because the commune system would have prevented it. Because I think that we used to work more by village, whereas now people really felt that it was necessary to regroup, we felt that there was a demand for that and it was the right moment to do something.

TC: And you talk about a demand. What was it founded on, did it relate to the objectives of the project or to a perceived need to work with others across a territory rather than within a commune?

M-HF: Well I think that a lot of people, I'm talking about the *département* and even the elected representatives, they waited for a while to see that this was an organised project. But the strong demand, and I'm talking in particular about the actors from the *département*, they wanted the *Biterrois*⁶⁰ to organise themselves.

TC: And so they were waiting for an initiative which came from the bottom, from local actors?

M-HF: Yes, I think that the elected representatives, you got the sense that there was this expectation, that they were happy that these projects came from citizens, from local actors, and I think that this project raised everyone's hopes. You see, around Béziers, traditionally there's not been coherence amongst rural actors, they're not used to working together and so this represented something new.

TC: And why were they not used to working collaboratively?

M-HF: Because it's those regions that are weaker economically who're more used to working together. And here it wasn't like that for several reasons. On the one hand, because in economic terms there was less of a need, and also, how shall I describe it, there are big differences here between sectors. You have viticulture, the viticultural plain with producer groups that are getting bigger and bigger and there are the tourist resorts who work on their own, they're a little bit individualistic and that's why we're a bit behind.

TC: And so what is driving this project? You have talked about the elected

⁵⁹ Marie-Hélène Fabre is a partner in a private consultancy, 'Architecture et Territoire' which manages rural development projects throughout France. Their particular expertise is rural tourism and the management of abandoned agricultural land.

⁶⁰ The area surrounding Béziers and its inhabitants.

representatives wanting a project inspired from the bottom and that it was a pertinent time to do it, but what did the participants see as the advantage of working together now?

M-HF: Well I think the main thing is that we are in a period of globalisation. The commune doesn't mean anything anymore, well yes it's our heritage, our cultural heritage, that's true but it doesn't mean anything anymore. To be a part of the global economy we need to work together."

Bindner also talks about the recomposition of territorial organisation and the shift from traditional administrative units towards the organisation of actors around a set of social relations and an economic activity such as viticulture. She identifies the role of the CTE in underpinning the emergence of these new forms of governance.

Barbara Bindner⁶¹: "I think that the really innovative element in these projects is to regard the territory as an economic unit and no longer solely as an administrative or political unit. I think that the real innovation is to consider that in fact, a territory's strength is derived from its economic activity, so well, of course that shakes up a

⁶¹ Barbara Bindner read an undergraduate and Masters degree in agriculture. She assumed a post at CEPRO in 1991 and worked on their early agri-environment initiatives including the FGER (river management and tree planting), the PLAC and the AE project in the *Basses Plaines de l'Aude*. M. Gazels took over her post in 1994 and she currently works on tourism development for 'La Domitienne'. 'La Domitienne' is a 'community of communes', established in 1995 and one which groups together the 6 communes of Maraussan, Montady, Cazouls, Maureilhan, Nissan and Lespignan (M. Frances, 3 October 2000, pers. comm.). The intercommunal law was passed in February 1992 in an attempt to address France's extreme local territorial fragmentation through intercommunal cooperation. Such cooperation has proved particularly important in rural areas because rural communes do not have the organisational and personnel resources to meet the new functional roles ascribed to them as a result of decentralisation (Wollmann, 2000). Cooperating communes work collectively on issues of economic development and the management of the territory. The 'Community of Communes' Council comprises elected representatives from the municipal councils of participating communes and a President (Crochet, 1995).

little the existing powers, the political powers, we're withdrawing from administrative structures and it's clear that we're moving towards what we call new systems of governance. Systems in which different actors, because they have economic weight, as well as social weight, shake things up a little. I would say it's to recreate an equilibrium, the challenge is to re-create an equilibrium between the human, administrative, political and economic aspects, which is far from the actual case in France. And I think it is exactly this, these traditional forms of organisation are changing through the elaboration of projects such as the *projet du pays* and the CTE and perhaps this creates new forms which are a counterbalance to globalisation, that in fact, we're going to arrive at a counterbalance to globalisation."

6

Motivations and Strategies

Introduction

Chapter 5 examined individuals' perceptions of the shifts described in chapter 4 as either opportunities or threats, and why these changes represented threats and opportunities for some but not others. This account began to 'explain' the differentiated and contested nature of the shifts through the narratives of the case study actors. The story is advanced in this chapter through an exploration of the ways in which these opportunities have been utilised and threats negotiated, and how these have been translated into the motivations and strategies that lie behind actors' actions.

From Quantity to Quality: Motivations and Strategies

Farmers advanced three positions which encapsulated their relationship with the cooperative. Some rejected outright collectivism as a way of working, because they perceived that with a break-down in collective responsibility this form of social organisation could not deliver the move to quality wine production. Other farmers, along with some regional representatives of the viticulture sector, did not support the further expansion of the VPE. They felt that structural change was undermining some of the traditional cooperativist principles and, in turn, was leading to feelings of marginalisation and a sense of the betrayal of the local-ness of the institution. A third group of actors favoured restructuring and both economically rational and social arguments were mobilised to support this position. They endorsed a move towards the principles of profit-making, a division of labour and increased specialisation. They perceived that an increase in the size of the cooperative rendered it more competitive in a modern, global wine industry. They also thought they had benefited from improved sources of information through increased social exchange, a direct consequence of restructuring. The diversity in their positions suggests that some actors are deriving advantages from restructuring, whilst others are losing out.

The Administrative Council provides a space at the heart of the cooperative in which choices are debated, strategies formulated and decisions taken. It is also where the interests of cooperative members are represented. In many ways, its role transcends that of a representative body, it is also an arena for information dissemination and learning. The interviews reveal, however, that the relationship between cooperative members and the Administrative Council is not a straightforward one and increasingly, as village cooperatives have merged to form the VPE, relations between administrators and individual members have become strained and more complex.

For some farmers, participating in the VPE's Administrative Council and committees represents an opportunity to gain access to technical information. Renée Bonnet, for example, cites the importance of being connected. He perceives that serving on the VPE's Administrative Council affords increased awareness of new initiatives, important for the successful working of both the cooperative and the individual farm business.

Renée Bonnet (p149): "I serve on the VPE's *terroir* committee and well we have contacts with the Chamber of Agriculture. So we meet with its technician, he explains things to us and it's because of that that we've moved towards *la lutte raisonnée*⁶², towards the CTE.

TC: And have these links with experts outside of the cooperative been important in shaping future trajectories in the cooperative and on your farm?

RB: Yes, well yes. You see, perhaps as Nissan cooperative, on our own, we might not have followed this trajectory, whereas, as is the case now, when the advisor comes, he comes for the seven sites, for the VPE, well that's my personal view, totally personal. But I think that being a bigger group allows us to be connected and if you're not connected you're not up-to-date. If you're not up-to-date, you can't do your work properly. So the aim is to be connected, in order to be up-to-date."

⁶² 'Integrated farming' or 'sustainable agriculture' is the closest equivalent to '*l'agriculture raisonnée*' in a UK context (see Morris & Winter, 1999). There are many related terms including '*la viticulture raisonnée*' and '*la lutte raisonnée*' which refers specifically to the measured use of pesticides and chemical treatments in viticultural production. *L'agriculture raisonnée* as a concept first appeared in the early 1990s and represented a change in discourse surrounding agriculture, as an intensive mode of production was increasingly challenged on environmental, food safety and quality counts. In 1993, Farre was created, the '*Forum de l'agriculture raisonnée respectueuse de l'environnement*' and they defined *l'agriculture raisonnée* as a "competitive agriculture which balances the economic imperatives of producers with the demands of consumers and a respect for the environment" (Bonny, 1997). Farre was launched as a coalition between professional agriculture groups, agriculture unions and businesses, principally those of the phyto-sanitary industry (which in 1995 provided 70% of the organisation's finances), (Roué, 1999). As such, it is a closed community of agricultural interests whose primary concern is to improve agriculture's image, degraded as a result of intensive practices, to regain consumer confidence and to reassert farmers' legitimacy as trusted countryside managers. The concept of *l'agriculture raisonnée* has progressively gained credence and although unspecific in terms of exact measures and regulation, is universally understood and used in the context of debates surrounding multifunctionality and the future of agriculture. Indeed it has been appropriated by large supermarkets and the products produced according to these agricultural practices are marketed as being environmentally-sound and of a high quality, situated on a continuum between standardised 'mass-produced' products and the niche products of organic agriculture (Roué, 1999).

Blanchet plays an active role in the Administrative Council of the VPE. For him, this serves his personal interest and he identifies the greatest benefit as being easy access to information and technical advice which he then utilises in the management of his farm business. He also talks in a more abstract sense about the Administrative Council representing the heart of the cooperative and thus this provides him with the opportunity to serve and support the collective. Similarly, Laroche describes the benefits he derives personally from the Administrative Council in terms of access to information which is beneficial to his own farm. His motivation for participating also stems from the contribution he wants to make to the group. Interestingly, these two farmers support collectivism as a form of working and at the same time favour reform of the cooperative for economic reasons.

André Laroche (p137): "The reason why I serve on the Administrative Council is very simple. Because on the one hand, when I invest my cash in something, I like to know how it's being spent, how the thing is working. Also it's a way of keeping up-to-date with things, which allows me to anticipate things on my own farm. That's really at the personal level. But also it's a passion because it's always interesting. I really like taking part in things as part of a collective, bringing a little stone to the edifice, very small certainly, but at least it's a contribution."

Deschamps, for example, also perceives that the Administrative Council provides a useful information resource, even though he acknowledges that the Councils of village cooperatives have retained little decision-making power. More generally, however, he is motivated to participate because he believes it is the duty of young farmers to be involved and contribute to the cooperative in order to ensure its continuity and future success.

Serge Deschamps (p156): "When I took over the farm, I needed to know which grape varieties to plant, about the future, what was in store, I needed information. So the ideal way to do this was to sit on the Council, and also, well it's true that as a young farmer, the Council, the cooperative, it's my future. It's what will sustain my livelihood, so you have to be involved in order to ensure that it's well

maintained. It's not those farmers approaching retirement who are going to get involved, so it's the young ones just starting up who must take over from the older generation. Well it's my duty, it's practically an obligation for me, I had to sit on the Council. Well the pity is that the Council of Lespignan, everything is decided over our heads at Maraussan. Here, we're like the chairs, the furniture right (laughter). Well it's true, we no longer have any power of decision-making, we've lost something that was, at one time, quite significant when the cooperative operated alone. It was significant, we made decisions, we were here for something. Now, today we're not really here for anything. Well, the Council [of Lespignan] has lost its value and that's a shame."

Whereas Deschamps recognises that Lespignan's Administrative Council has lost much of its former power, he is still motivated to be involved. Not all farmers share his view, including those who articulate a feeling of loss of representation and voice, and as a result are actively disengaging from the group. In their narratives, marginalisation appears to constitute a strong demotivating factor and many are sufficiently disillusioned to feel that they would derive little material benefit by participating in the administration of the cooperative. This disengagement is further reflected in the fact that many members do not vote in annual elections. In 1999, for example, only 65 out of a total of 370 members of Nissan cooperative voted to elect their representatives and the VPE's President observes that many do not attend information meetings, citing those held in year 2000 concerning the state of the wine market and the CTE. Perret was one of those farmers who expressed a desire to leave the cooperative (see chapter 4) and I asked him what being a cooperative member meant for him and what benefits he derived from being a member of this group. He was ambivalent, replying that the benefits were nominal, and so I asked where he acquired information to manage his farm business. He argued that the media and the world-wide web met his information needs, because for him, information of a generic nature is more pertinent than the place-specific, local knowledge provided by the cooperative. As such, he is privileging anonymous sources, rather than people he knows personally, signalling a breakdown in the trust-bond that has traditionally bound cooperative leaders and members.

Patrick Perret (p143): "We receive information leaflets from the cooperative, from the FDCCH. I don't even read them, instead I read the newspapers, *'Le Paysan du Midi'*, I switch on the TV.

TC: And the information you get from the media, is it sufficiently technical or detailed to help you make decisions about the management of your farm?

PP: Well yes, that's where I learn about consumer demands, the future direction of the market. Today on the TV you see stories about mad cow disease, that people are now buying organic food and I try to incorporate these things in the management of my farm. I even read about these things on the internet – about agriculture, the environment, politics."

As we saw chapters in 4 and 5 the replanting of the vineyard to effect the transition to quality wine production was widely perceived as an irrevocable trajectory. The majority of farmers are replanting with globally-recognised varieties such as Merlot, Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon, varieties without a specific historical link to the region. At present, only a few innovative farmers are experimenting with the planting of grape varieties typical of the region, and so the production of grapes for customised products represents a marginal strategy. The transition to quality, however, although seen as irrevocable, is an area of contestation and struggle. Some farmers have planted with improved grape varieties and adopted new vineyard practices, but only slowly or in a limited way.

The primary motivation for replanting is an economic one, illustrated both by the responses of farmers and confirmed in an observation made by M. Besselat, director of the economic service of la DDAF, l'Hérault. Amélie and Vincent Jarrige are unequivocal in their commitment to the production of quality grapes and their position is largely representative of the majority of full-time farmers. They perceive this as a straightforward economic calculation and strive for their grapes to be classed in the top quality tier in order to attain the highest price for them. As younger farmers they are largely free from a historical burden epitomised by an adherence to 'quantity' as they are not accustomed to being paid for producing large volumes of grapes.

As previously noted, the shift to quality wine production is not unproblematic. One of the reasons advanced is that the production of quality grapes requires specialised skills and it carries more constraints. Simon notes how the transition to a quality system of production has necessitated the acquisition, by vinegrowers, of new skills, that vineyard practices are more complicated and laborious, engendering a reluctance or lack of capacity to make the necessary changes.

Raymond Simon (p149): "Only several years ago, people made a good living producing large volumes without really exerting themselves. Because a vine cultivated the old way, that's to say traditionally, was a lot less demanding and people were able to get a good return per hectare. Whereas with the improved varieties, you have to put in posts, iron wires. You have to train the vegetation vertically, to top the vines. And that brings a lot more pressure, it requires a lot more work, a lot more skill. So for that reason, some people have been holding back, continue to hold back with replanting with improved varieties."

Renée Bonnet shares this view whilst insisting that the production of quality wine represents the only viable strategy.

Renée Bonnet (p149): "We must produce a quality product because we must access these markets, like those we're just gaining access to in England with the *cuvée prestige* and *super prestige*. But it's true that this [type of production] has its pressures. Because today you have to cut off some of the grapes, you have to have perfect vines, prune them in a particular way – *le cordon de Royat* – you have to train them properly. And well, all these things represent a pressure, they take time and require considerable skill. But the vinegrowers must, they must adapt to this way of cultivating."

Likewise Gazels, in a discussion on new vineyard practices such as *la lutte raisonnée*, suggests that many of the cooperative's members do not have the skills to produce grapes in accordance with a revised set of standards and to train them will require a large investment of time.

Didier Gazels (p166): "I would say that in the future, *la lutte raisonnée* will be imperative. But then, the problem is that we are faced with a population of people who don't have the skills to do it because during, for the last 30 years they have

treated their vines every day. Things are changing but not necessarily on the ground. It's a real problem. It means that today [a farmer] has to be able to identify precisely those parasites that are causing him problems, the diseases that are causing him problems, and that requires knowledge that they don't have. And so it's necessary to train all of these people and it's slow, it's not easy to teach them to recognise a *cycadale*⁶³, or a little insect which is several millimetres long. They need training, and that requires a certain amount of time and considering the number of cooperative members it will take a lot of time."

In the production of quality grapes, therefore, it appears that farmers perceive that they are subject to increased regulation in the vineyard. It is certainly a more skilled and specialised activity, and yet those who are able to participate in this strategy are presented with a wider range of options as exemplified in the experimentation with new grape varieties (see Paillard, chapter 4). Indeed, those farmers with the disposition, skills and information have the possibility of producing grapes for wine designated for niche markets. For many farmers, however, with large debts and insufficient capital, these 'choices' embodied in new initiatives represent too great a risk.

Bernard Lacroix (p136): "Because with this system when you remove some of the grapes, if then there's a hail storm or a frost you've lost all your grapes. We cut off the grapes and then there's an attack of oidium⁶⁴ and then the grapes that are left are all rotten. If it rains, if it rains before the harvest, the week before and the grapes start to rot and you've already removed half the grapes. For me, that's why it's too great a risk. Because at the end of the day, the people who advise us aren't the people who pay us."

The following two quotes from cooperative administrators further reinforce the observation that only some farmers are being enrolled in new initiatives.

Jean-Luc Fauré (p152): "About 20% of our producers own 80% of the vineyard, with holdings of between 15 and 50 hectares. We could call them professionals and

⁶³ Cycads. Gymnosperms; plants with seeds unprotected by an ovary.

⁶⁴ *Oidium tuckerii* (powdery mildew). Fungus parasite that attacks the vine and affects the grapes (Unwin, 1996).

also we have a lot of pluriactives who don't derive their principal income from viticulture. Well many of the VPE's members are pluriactives and that's one of the difficulties of the cooperative system. It's a lot of work to get people to take on board new ideas, new initiatives. But once people have taken on board these concepts, the process unfurls automatically. And so this year we've launched our *super-prestige* vintage and we've got a club of producers [involved in the production of grapes for] *prestige* and *super-prestige* wine, about 40 people who are really going for it, who're prepared to look to the future, to take the risks. But the obstacle is that we must invest time in explaining this to the rest, and we recognise that the biggest problem is in relaying information. So in a way it's easier for us to enrol this core group of dynamic producers, but then for the rest it's much more difficult."

Gazels also observes how as a cooperative administrator charged with the promotion of the VPE's environmental initiatives, he seeks to enrol innovative farmers in the first instance. He provides an insight into the functioning of the group and the exchanges between farmers based on trust, important in the dissemination of information and new ideas.

Didier Gazels (p166): "Well it's true that we have a tendency to contact those people who do things voluntarily. And they are not necessarily administrators. It's people who are well known in each village, those who, when they do something others say, uh, normally, he, he does things well, if he's doing it, it must be good. And so amongst our members there are a certain number of innovators, because we always see them in the committees, they're always asking questions, asking how we're going to do things such as the CTE. And these are the people who will influence others, they're well known and when they start to treat their vines the others say, he's doing it, so I must do it. And so these are the people we try to enrol because in the VPE there are a lot of pluriactives, who aren't full-time vinegrowers and who tend to put their trust in those people whom they regard as competent."

A second explanation for the struggles experienced by farmers as they negotiate the transition to the production of quality wine concerns their relationship with their viticultural past. Blanchet talks about the speed and magnitude of change, and about the clash of a 'modern' and a 'traditional' culture, which he perceives as being incompatible or conflictual. He actively aligns himself with the modern world, differentiating himself from the older generation which he views as having

little motivation to change their established practices because they are approaching retirement. He sees the entrenchment of their position as an obstacle for the group as a whole. As emerged in chapter 4, Masson exemplifies this entrenched position. He concedes in an abstract sense the imperative to produce grapes of a higher quality but he does not want to change his practices. This is how he has always produced and furthermore he enjoys seeing vines laden with grapes.

Lionel Blanchet (p135): "But they don't understand at all, or rather they understand very little. They don't understand why we do it and also, um, a lot of the vinegrowers are old. There are a lot of old vinegrowers who knew the old system, before we planted with improved grape varieties. There's been such change that they no longer understand. Well, also, some of them are approaching retirement and they aren't even replanting their vines. They aren't replanting, they have vines of Carignan, well they say they're approaching retirement and there you go. Even some of the younger ones don't understand. They don't understand why ... we were talking about grape varieties and the changes in the vineyard, well it's the same thing. They were around when they treated the vines with hyper-toxic products, they did everything, well not everything and anything but well ... It's two different worlds and it's true that some of them don't understand at all and moreover they especially don't want to bother with demands like that [quality production]."

This description of the older generation is not universally true. Teyssier, for example, is an exception to this generalisation. He is approaching retirement and yet 60% of his farm is replanted with improved grape varieties and he is one of the only farmers to have adopted a *cahier de charges* or management plan to produce traceable grapes. He engages with debates about consumer concerns surrounding food safety, and talks about food scares resulting from an intensive mode of production. His personal motivation to adopt these new practices stems from his desire to respond to such concerns and he maintains that traceability provides a means of guaranteeing food safety, thereby rendering the VPE's products more attractive to consumers.

Notwithstanding farmers' struggles surrounding the transition to the production of quality wine, cooperative administrators are rehearsing 'modern' interpretations of

what constitutes a quality product. Lopez, for example, describes a broad range of criteria in his definition of quality which differ substantially from previously-held production norms. He emphasises the importance of the production process satisfying a series of regulations which are widely recognised by consumers and therefore indicate a universally-accepted standard of quality. In addition, however, he notes the importance of the role of a collective of economic actors, as a repository of skills, knowledges and experiences in the production of quality grapes.

TC: "How do you define quality, not your personal definition, but in terms of the VPE? How do you define it and what are its main themes?"

Jean-Luc Lopez (p145): First of all you have to unpack the term quality. On the one hand there's quality in a holistic sense which covers everything, that's to say a quality product, in other words, being capable of satisfying the last link in the chain, assuring the consumer that everything has been put in place to bring him a product which is produced in accordance with known or recognisable regulatory norms. That is one aspect of quality. I think that what sums it up best is the ISO9002 norm. This must also include, for example, a norm which has a long-term vision, the norm 9004, which concerns the management of the global environment. So that is one view of quality. Secondly quality, such as I see it, is that when the consumer tastes a wine from Ensérune, he derives an *organoleptique* pleasure. I want him to say that it is a good wine and that he enjoys drinking it and secondly, and in addition to this, I hope that he is capable, and this is the icing on the cake, of understanding that in order to produce it, an economic grouping of actors is in place upon whom his enjoyment depends. I think that this is the best definition of what is meant by holistic quality. Therefore, afterwards, you have to recognise these different aspects of quality and try to incorporate them in the production of the grapes and during the vinification process."

Fauré elaborates and emphasises not just the importance of the quality of the primary material, grapes, but also of the range of services, from vinification, to bottling and distribution. Similarly, in his definition of a quality product he combines globally-recognised standards of quality with the specificities of production at the local level. He draws attention to the territorial anchorage of their wines and makes a connection between quality and the place of production. More specifically he argues that the countryside must be well-maintained. He introduces

the notion of product branding with the 'Ensérune' brand, a reference to a particular local territory, embodying these broad indicators of quality.

Jean-Luc Fauré (p152): "My vision of a quality product, well I'm going to give you several responses. Quality for me concerns the product. Then there is quality in terms of service. There you go, product and service. So if we take the example of Merlot, well it's true that there are now global standards, and if we fall below this standard, we can't enter the market.

TC: And what does quality of service mean?

J-LF: Well, we realise that if we produce a superb product, and we're not first-class in terms of the quality of the bottle, the label, the cork, logistically, we won't be able to gain a firm footing in the market. So when I talk about service, it's in a very wide sense, and also, of course, service in relation to the consumer. And then if we broaden the notion of quality, there's the quality of the countryside, quality of the environment and that's all part of the Ensérune brand. Yes, so when I talk about the concept of Ensérune, effectively the notion of quality goes right across the board. Quality includes the quality of the countryside, the environment, the management of the land, indeed it incorporates all of the elements I have described above."

Bindner suggests that changes must be made to the economic and social organisation of rural actors if a quality form of production, conceived in these holistic terms, is to be realised. She talks about the formation of partnerships and the emergence of new forms of collective action in order to imbue grape production and other rural economic activities with a territorial anchorage. She highlights a new use of territorial resources and, in particular, the association drawn between the final product, its qualitative status and a locality's cultural resources.

Barbara Bindner (p207): "Well when they were just producing the primary material [grapes], they were on their own, cut off, in their own little world, they worked and there was no need to go and see what was going on elsewhere. Now that we are producing quality, quality production needs a territory, it means that it has to be beautiful, you have to publicise it, and you have to promote cultural activities. A cooperative can't be on its own, it needs to associate with people who are involved in all sorts of things. It's a very important part of the production of quality. So they [VPE] got involved, they made links with cultural actors. So the way I see it is that in general rural actors are increasingly taking into account other people in the territory who are engaged in complementary activities that can bring them benefits.

It's an association which can be advantageous to their own activity. And I think that we're moving more and more in this direction, people are ready to do it and moreover, when you're producing quality it's important. But quality at all levels, campsites for example, they realise that if the territory surrounding the campsite is unattractive their own activity will be less successful. What I mean is that everyone is realising that it is in his or her interest for this to work well. And so people are uniting, working together in different places and it's a good thing."

Huillet, however, expresses a more traditional view to that espoused by Bindner in his support of collective working which he regards as critical in effecting the transition to the production of quality wines. He emphasises the importance of sectoral collective working and the imperative for viticultural actors to unite so that they can act as a strong force when competing against other economic interests for access to land in the rural sphere.

TC: "Why is the viticulture sector developing along the lines of this territorial model and why are you promoting it at the FDCCH?"

Jean Huillet (p189): Well, in the Languedoc we have some very big economic issues. First of all we have a policy for tourism. In the past, tourism [in the Languedoc] was industrial and that, that was very destructive to the territory. The second thing is that we're a corridor, so we have the TGV⁶⁵, the motorways and all that disturbs the territory - we've significantly transformed the microclimate. Afterwards there's the issue of urbanisation. So there's Montpellier that keeps developing, so everywhere between Nîmes and the west of Montpellier is on stand-by, stand-by. That's to say that no one dares to put in place a real agricultural policy in this area because they say that the new *Montpelliérains* are going to live there. Then there are political interests, the Mayor of Montpellier wants a beautiful town, the Mayor of Nîmes wants a beautiful town and then there are all the industrial zones, industries are encouraged to develop here. And all that means that the economic interests colour the political decision. And so, at some point we need to be strong as a lobby, farmers must group together to say stop. We want people to visit, we're welcoming by nature, but I'm not going to plant my vines along the pavements of the *Comédie* [pedestrian square at the heart of Montpellier], it's not possible! But we need to plant them somewhere so we must organise the territory and its actors, and it's for that reason that today, the question of 'territory' and our stake in it is a fundamental issue."

⁶⁵ TGV (Train à grande vitesse); high-speed train.

Whilst these regional actors, in a variety of forms, are propounding the benefits of collective action in the production of quality wine, there exist obstacles internal to the cooperative system which undermine this strategy, or at least render its evolution slow and uneven across space. As we saw in chapters 4 and 5, many farmers feel that they are locked into the role of grape-producer with little understanding of the rest of the production chain. In turn, this division of labour has resulted in the abnegation of responsibility on the part of some farmers for the quality of the final product, undermining the capacity of the group as a whole to produce quality wine.

This issue has been addressed in two ways. In the first instance, some of the VPE's administrators appear to accept this as an inevitable 'inconvenience' in a system of collective working and, as Fauré describes above, dynamic farmers are enrolled to produce quality grapes which are then vinified separately. The emergence of a two-tiered system, however, with an 'elite' group of vinegrowers producing an 'elite' product, distinct from that produced from the majority of the cooperative members' grapes creates its own problems. Others adopt a more inclusive stance and are attempting to formulate strategies to re-engage cooperative members and to encourage all farmers to take responsibility for the final product. Paillard, for example, suggests that the 'taste' of the grapes should be accorded a greater weight in the set of 'quality' indicators elaborated by the VPE to assess levels of payment. He believes that this represents one way in which vinegrowers can participate personally in evaluating the quality of the grapes they have produced⁶⁶. Augé promotes a similarly inclusive discourse to mobilise all vinegrowers behind quality wine production. He describes how, in the early 1990s, the FDCCH instigated an initiative designed to encourage vinegrowers to take pride in their grapes and to

⁶⁶ Indeed when the Australian oenologues selected the grapes from which to produce the *cuvée super-prestige* (2000 vintage) they went into the vineyards and personally tasted the grapes rather than employing the set of quality indicators used by the VPE to assess their classification in different quality tiers (Dave Mavor, chief oenologist, pers. comm., 2000).

promote links between them, the producers, and consumers of wine to accompany sectoral adjustment and the shift to quality production.

Bernard Augé (p201): "We were in a purely sectoral logic, the main thing was to re-plant with improved grape varieties, it didn't matter how we did it. The integration [of the wine sector] in the territory was far less important. But it's true that at that time, the Administrative Council of the FDCCH were sympathetic to rural development projects. In general, these were secondary to the sectoral concerns which centred more on economic problems, such as whether surplus wine-stocks should be distilled, or if one should ... But in comparison our approach was slightly more global in scope. What we brought to the debate was [the acknowledgement] that there was a global approach, where we said that wine must be sold, but this wine comes from vineyards. So at the FDCCH we also put in place simple communication tools; [we highlighted] the link with the *terroir* which was a way of saying to the *vignerons*, welcome visitors from London and elsewhere, welcome them and show them what you do – why you've made a certain product and make it a part of your daily activity."

A Multifunctional Agricultural Regime: Motivations and Strategies

Cooperative administrators evoke a neo-productivist argument in explaining the VPE's engagement in multifunctional activities. Their motivation for promoting the VPE's elaboration of environmental initiatives is a commercial one, to create a positive product identity and as a means of differentiating their products from those of their competitors. Crepin highlights the importance of image creation for the VPE. He notes, however, that it is a strategy that could only be realised on account of the experience they gained through running an agri-environmental programme and the existence of a common position and mutual understanding between the VPE's administrators and local ecologists.

Daniel Crepin (p170): "A group's motivation [for participation in the CTE] is quite interesting because well, how well the group runs a project like this is going to depend on the period in which they embarked on the environmental theme, and the exchange, the mutual sensitivity between the farmers and the ecologists. Also it depends on the personality of the leader. But we realise that there's always a risky side, it's like betting. So you say, right I'm getting involved, I'm taking a bet, and after several years you say it was good to get involved or it was wrong to do so. It's founded on experience. This is why those who are several years ahead become involved more easily because they know that at all these levels it's a good thing. It's going to bring them a bit of money and it's going to improve their image, and in fact for the VPE, it's the improvement of the image of their products that is an extremely motivating factor. And so those groups like the VPE realised this early on, and at the end of the day they're winners."

Lopez talks about the importance of an ethical and environmentally-sound agriculture in responding to global consumption demands and he highlights the importance of producers and the natural environment in the production of quality products. Furthermore, he is reconstructing the relationship between producers and the natural environment in which they farm. Many of the VPE's non-production activities are the same as those engaged in under the AE initiative. However, in the frame of the AE programme the environment was construed as a

public good and farmers bemoaned the fact that this portrayed them as perpetrators of environmental crime. Cooperative administrators are constructing the relationship between producers and the natural environment in different terms through the medium of the CTE. In turn, this is allowing producers to reassert their 'ownership' of the territory, as managers of the rural spaces, and to appropriate the natural environmental capital of the zone of production, incorporating these elements into the image of their products.

Jean-Luc Lopez (p145): "The VPE have been leaders in this respect because our president realised early on the importance of the environment in our marketing strategy, in order to differentiate ourselves from others. Everyone is capable of producing quality grape varieties, to vinify them well, to market them, everyone is capable of doing that. So we asked ourselves, what could we have as a trump card to add value to our global strategy? [Our trump card] was to raise the quality of our production, but to position the product in an environment which is visually pleasing and to be able to say, the product that you are buying, yes it's a Cabernet Sauvignon or a Merlot or a Chardonnay. Sure it's a very good product, but this product has a soul because it has been produced by *vignerons* who work in a territory where the notions of geography in its widest sense - environment, countryside, quality of life - are respected and have been elevated to an ethical status. I think that as a group we are aware that agriculture is one of the fundamental elements of the management of the rural space and of its geography. So today, what we can say is that within the VPE, we've tried to adapt viticulture to the new criteria demanded at a global level but we want to bring a supplementary touch, which is the management of the territory and the integration of those people who work in it, and we're putting in place production norms to avoid the destruction of the countryside. So if you like, we have a marketing strategy which is compatible with our other strategies, we want to highlight our territory, our men, as an element of differentiation in the marketing and sale of our products. Certainly we try to derive some commercial benefits, and if marketing our environmental activities allows us to secure a bigger share of the market and to assure a better income for our members it's most definitely a good thing."

Paillard explains the VPE have utilised the opportunities afforded by the range of social, cultural and ecological resources of the zone of production in the differentiation of their products. He recognises that consumers of wine are

increasingly concerned about environmental issues in general and about agricultural production practices which are sympathetic to the countryside.

Antoine Paillard (p160): "It was our *groupe-pays* initiative, the territorial anchorage, it was the *pie grièche*, it was all of those things and it's true that our quality initiative, this customisation, it was something, it was driven from within the VPE, and is understood by everyone. And so, in my view, [society's concern for] the environment, it's a plus for our initiative because it will precipitate a reaction amongst people, a reaction to adapt to this type of production. And so we needed to differentiate our product, to highlight its origin, which is a bit like the French AOC system. So the *Basses Plaines de l'Aude* initiative, the *pie grièche*, our countryside, the CTE, has helped us as producers to be aware of the consequences of our cultural practices on the environment, to consider that our countryside is not just our battle field. And so having developed this image, we must promote it, because it's true that when you buy wine, you also buy an image, an image of a countryside which is clean, pleasant and one in which you see the engagement between people and the environment because *vignerons* are, in terms of surface area, the biggest countryside actors, *vignerons* are countryside managers, in inverted commas."

Some farmers have adopted similar arguments to those advanced by Fauré and Lopez. They seek to rationalise the VPE's engagement in environmental activities and the CTE in terms of the potential benefits it confers on the group, but many do not express the same enthusiasm for these projects in the context of their individual farm businesses. This means that there is discordance between this perception of opportunity in a general sense and the lack of motivation expressed by farmers to participate in person in agri-environmental initiatives or to sign a CTE. Buisson, for example, recognises the advantages afforded in selling their wine, noting that "it shows that we make good wine of a certain quality, that we are serious" and thus the discourse of 'adding value' has infiltrated his narrative. Part of Chastaing's motivation for supporting the VPE's involvement in environmental activities stems from the pleasure he derives from the positive image these activities create for the group. It conforms to his self-identity and he can ascribe comfortably to the image of environmental protector, allowing him to reject that of a polluter. Later in his narrative he differentiates himself from those who do not care about pollution, and

argues that for farmers to be motivated to sign up to these initiatives, they need to have a sensitivity to nature and to subscribe personally to the norms underpinning the environmental ethic.

Michel Chastaing (p158): "I prefer to be known as 'you're the vinegrowers, the VPE, who carry out activities for, for, what's it called, to protect the bird that's on the verge of disappearing. You protect the fauna and flora, and so you're not polluters'. That really pleases me, it brings me some sort of pleasure, it's flattering."

Laroche reflects on the motivation of the VPE's President for elaborating and promoting the AE schemes and the *CTE d'Ensérune*. He conceives of it in terms of the President's astute awareness that environmental and ecological issues carry significant political and social weight following recent food scares in France and a growing awareness of the deleterious environmental effects of an intensive agriculture. As such, these initiatives are perceived as a means by which the cooperative can respond to contemporary societal demands.

André Laroche (p137): "I'd say that it [CTE] is the perfect publicity stunt.

TC: What do you mean by that?

AL: In that respect we were miles ahead. It's the best publicity that we could have had. Because ... for me, honestly right, it's what I said to you the last time we met, I'm entirely convinced that the average cooperative member doesn't give a damn that we are protecting the *pie grièche* because three quarters of them don't know what it is, and it isn't their primary concern. They want to know how they are going to pay for the tractor or pay off their loans to the *Crédit Agricole*. In my opinion, for the average cooperative member, the CTE, it's here but they don't give a damn.

TC: And what do you think, do you share their position?

AL: In my opinion, it's a very effective marketing tool. For one simple reason which is that, at least it has the advantage of really being pertinent at the moment in that it responds to contemporary demands, particularly at a political level. When a cooperative like the VPE has a visit from a government Minister who has come to sign the first CTE contracts and we are able to say 'we are actors who are concerned about the environment, we are concerned about the state of tomorrow's planet', it's magnificent, it's pleasing, and moreover it's smart."

There is a contradiction in his response, however. He identifies the advantages conferred by these initiatives to the group but has not personally signed a CTE. He is willing to do so if it does not undermine the objectives of his farm business, and in this sense he retains an open-mind, but he observes that if the measures threaten his ability to optimise production or require a substantial modification of behaviour, he is not prepared to be involved. In contrast, Simon is in the process of preparing a CTE for his farm business and thus he exhibits a different position from others who recognise the indirect benefits to the group and who are not personally motivated to participate. Simon recognises the importance of highlighting the specificity of the local zone of production, in terms of its ecological capital, in the production of products for niche markets.

Raymond Simon (p201): "My objective? Well it's to conserve ... to make us recognisable, to customise our wines, and above all to publicise our site, our low-lying plains, because we're not typical, with the *Basses Plaines de l'Aude*. So what's interesting about the CTE, is [that it will allow us] to be recognised through the *Basses Plaines*. And so there are environmental measures, and [measures] to customise our wines, because we're now producing high quality vintages. And so my motivation with the CTE is to be able to say we produce in the *Basses Plaines*, we've taken part in environmental schemes and because of that we produce particular products. So really it's to try to find a niche, a different niche from that of others."

Landes and Paillard were the first vinegrowers to sign a CTE in the *département* of l'Hérault. In explaining their motivation for participating, they mobilise a range of arguments. Landes, for example, exhibits a strong conservation ethic and interest in ornithology. He describes the enhancement of wildlife habitats as a result of the specific environmental measures adopted in his CTE. Paillard, in contrast, evokes a commercial rationale for his participation in a CTE. As we saw in chapter 4, one of the objectives of his CTE is to replant an area of his vineyard with Marselan vines, a commercial variety typical of the region. Guillard is another farmer who has expressed interest in signing a CTE. He is neither a vinegrower nor a cooperative member and thus his motivation is founded entirely on personal interest, rather

than deriving from a concern for the potential benefit to the group. He participated in the pilot committee of the *CTE d'Ensérune* because he wished to be involved in the decision-making surrounding the formulation of strategies that would, in the future, impinge directly on the way in which he manages his farm business. His farm covers a significant area of the '*l'Etang de Montady*', a Roman drainage system which is classified as a UNESCO world heritage site. This status confers constraints on the management of the ancient ditches on his farm and he sees the CTE as a means through which he will be remunerated for activities he is currently obliged to undertake. He notes that at a national level, representatives of the cereal sector are resistant to the CTEs because it was perceived that they represent a diversion of funds away from arable area payments to be invested in the CTE, conferring advantages to other sectors, including the viticulture sector of the Languedoc. As a cereal farmer in the Languedoc, however, under a specific set of circumstances, he feels that he can derive benefits from signing a CTE.

The majority of farmers, however, are not motivated to undertake environmental activities. They regard this diversification in activity as jeopardising the production side of their farm businesses. Moreover, they are sceptical about what a participation in agri-environment activities or the CTE would deliver in terms of improving farm incomes.

M. Cabane⁶⁷: "Motivation is always based on personal interest. The farmer who signs a contract, he's going to do an economic calculation. He's going to consider the constraints that will be imposed on him, the risks he takes, the time it will take, the materials he will have to invest in, so he does his sums and he will conclude finally that the CTE is perhaps interesting and he will sign the contract. Well beyond that, there are the farmers whose motivation is a bit more – how shall I describe it – more intellectual. I need to protect my environment, it's ethical, there are those who invest their project with an ethical dimension, but of course that depends on the individual."

⁶⁷ M. Cabane works for the environmental service of *la DDAF* responsible for l'Hérault's agri-environment initiatives and the CTEs.

Sabassier is typical of this position. Financial considerations are his fundamental concern and his priority is to have enough money to live comfortably and to ensure the economic viability of his farm business.

Christophe Sabassier (p144): "The aim of viticultural producer groups is to achieve the maximum sale potential, to best satisfy their members. Because even if they don't explain things well, even if at times we don't understand, if at the end of the month we have a fat cheque, we'll say nothing and we'll be very happy. If a guy works in viticulture, he's not doing it for love. It's not for the satisfaction of saying "I have vines, I harvest the grapes, I'm a vinegrower" ... I really don't know ... when you become a vinegrower you're not becoming a priest, your motives are not abstract."

The importance of financial incentives to encourage farmer enrolment in AE schemes is exemplified by Masson. His participation in the AE initiative does not mean that he has accepted the conservation ethic, nor does it represent a true appropriation of 'environmental' principles. He later notes that when the funds for pruning trees stop, he will also cease this activity.

TC: "Did you take part in the Agri-Environment initiative?"

Henri Masson (p157): Yes, I took part in the scheme for the trees, for the treatments, all that.

TC: And what motivated you to take part in this scheme?"

HM: Well really my main motivation for taking part was because they paid us. And a vinegrower's problem, well I think it's the same for everyone but ... to make someone do something he doesn't want to do, you just have to give him some money and he'll do it. We have never pruned the trees, they gave us some money and so we pruned them. It's all settled. You mustn't be ashamed to say it, right? They said to us that this tree is 10 years old, it is overgrown, if we say to you, we'll give you 500 francs if you prune the lower branches ... for one tree, perhaps you'd say no, but if there are 30 or 40 you'd say yes straight away. We spend two days less hunting and we prune the trees and that brings in a bit more to pay for better cartridges (he laughs). And that's where the logic lies, with money you can mobilise anyone."

Teyssier reiterates these arguments articulated by Sabassier and Masson. He believes that as soon as it is financially propitious to sign a CTE the majority of farmers will do so. He does not believe that the current dis-engagement is founded

on any normative or ideological resistance, it is simply the result of an economic calculation. With sufficient financial incentive, change will be effected.

Gerard Teyssier (p146): "I think that, I think that gradually people, we'll come round to the CTE. If there's a carrot at the end we will come round, if they say well you must sign up to the CTE, or *la lutte raisonnée*, and your wine will sell at 100F more or 50F more, people will come round, automatically. It was like that with the new methods of training our vines, they paid us more and we changed our techniques. So, uh, gradually people started to replace their stakes, to make the stakes higher, the leaf surface higher in order to try to gain a bit, a bit more money. I think it'll be the same with the CTE, it may take four or five years perhaps, I don't know, but it's the presence of the carrot that is the most important thing."

Likewise Gazels is adamant that there must be adequate financial incentive to encourage farmers to enrol in the CTE project. He spent a lot of time elaborating the CTE contract menus with regional and national actors, deciding upon measures and appropriate levels of payment. He contends that if a financial incentive does not exist, the whole process is rendered worthless. He acknowledges that a farmer calculates the costs that he or she, as an individual, will incur through signing a CTE contract, and whether there is sufficient incentive to compensate for these costs. In his view, farmers will not directly consider the environmental externality costs arising from an intensive form of production in their calculations.

Didier Gazels (p166): "In general people produce in an aggressive manner, and one which is very aggressive towards the environment, because they're always trying to derive a financial advantage. People treat their vines, they apply chemical weed-killers and after a certain time the soil becomes completely impermeable, the water runs off the top of it and that can create problems, especially here, around Béziers, where we're susceptible to flooding. And so the role of the CTE is to help them change their practices without their suffering a financial loss, even right from the start there must be a financial incentive. And in my opinion this financial incentive is very important because a vinegrower is going to calculate the cost to him as an individual of participating in a CTE, and after that, he doesn't understand the external costs, the costs of flooding and things like that, he's only making a calculation with regard to himself. And so we must take into account these added costs and there has to be a financial incentive because otherwise it will be

unworkable. Because if people don't sign up to the measures, I'd say we will have developed the CTE for nothing, it's as simple as that. As long as a vinegrower has a choice, he won't sign up."

In addition to these economic arguments, many farmers recognise that in the future they will be obliged to participate in these projects and will be stripped of their choice to opt out. These arguments about obligation are nuanced. In the first instance, some farmers occupying leadership roles feel that they will be obliged to enrol to set an example to the average cooperative member. The tension between an individualistic position and their responsibility to the collective emerges in their narratives. Blanchet, for example, regards the *CTE d'Ensérune* as being good publicity for the group, and he talks with pride about having a well-ordered and 'clean' (*propre*) countryside. As such, he advances a view of the 'preserved countryside' in which farmers, as 'countryside managers', exert control over the untidiness of nature. He also says that he feels obliged to sign a CTE because as a member of the Administrative Council of the VPE, he does not want to compromise the message of endorsement of these schemes as promulgated by the VPE's President. His position shifts, however, when he discusses the CTE in relation to his own farm business. He is one of the biggest farmers in the group and has expanded extensively, taking out large debts to finance capital investments in machinery and land. In the context of this strategy of modernisation and expansion, a CTE represents a low priority, and he says that he cannot reorient his activities away from the production of grapes.

The majority of farmers, however, do not share this feeling of responsibility and their sense of obligation is linked instead to a withdrawal of choice. Desaille is not motivated to sign a CTE, in part because he is not ready to do so. His reasons are simple; for him, the CTE represents a new culture of viticulture, presaging material changes in the way he works. He perceives that in the future, his choice to participate (or not) will be taken away from him and he regularly evokes government as the key driver dictating future agricultural trajectories.

TC: "Why do you think there are only a small number of farmers who want to participate in these schemes [the CTE]?"

Louis Desaille (p138): It's because it's the beginning, yes because things start off like that and then gradually ... It's true that, and then it's just that there are a lot of people who aren't ready, we're not ready, for me, there are enormous numbers of people who aren't prepared to make the transition to this type of viticulture, to this type of vine culture.

TC: Why do you think that they aren't ready, is it because it's new?

LD: It's because it's a new culture, a new way of thinking about the vine, it's another, well it's not too different, but well, it's another way of thinking, and that's why they're unsure. You see, for the time being there's no obligation, you're not obliged to sign up. But they're going to close the stable door, for me I see it like that because it often works like that."

Valadour is also not motivated to sign a CTE, although he was one of a minority of farmers who attended an information meeting headed by the VPE's President and M. Gazels. He is well informed about the initiative, and whereas many farmers dismiss the CTE as representing an encroachment on their capacity to take decisions in relation to the management of their farms, he is able to substantiate these claims with concrete examples. He perceives that entering into a contract is too restrictive and this forms part of a wider complaint he has concerning the increased regulations to which vinegrowers are exposed. He identifies 'outsiders' as the primary benefactors of a well-managed countryside with few direct benefits to farmers themselves.

Masson, although he participated in the AE initiative, has no inclination to sign a CTE. He justifies his position through a widely-held discourse about freedom. He wishes to be 'free'⁶⁸ and he does not want to be answerable to anyone. He describes

⁶⁸ The importance farmers accord to the condition of 'freedom' is interesting when one considers that they are cooperative members. As such, they are implicitly conforming to the rules and norms by which the cooperative is governed. Furthermore, one of the artefacts of a community with a high level of integration is that there is plentiful opportunity for surveillance of an individual's behaviour by other members of the group. In turn a moral pressure is exerted so that behaviour conforms to the rules of the group which provides a guard against actions that are harmful to the group. These farmers, therefore, do not appear to consider these collectivist rules and social sanctions as representing a significant encroachment on their individual freedom. They do, however, regard entering into a contract with the state in different terms. They perceive the CTE to be more tightly regulated as any deviation by a farmer from his obligations as stipulated in the contract results in a withdrawal of subsidies. This negates the possibility for resistance and capacity for personal

himself as being a “man of the land” which he sees as irreconcilable with a “man of papers”. These views underpin his objection to entering a contractual agreement with the State, as epitomised by the CTE, which obliges farmers to carry out prescribed functions and activities.

Chastaing exhibits an ecological sensibility demonstrated through his involvement in an ecology group, la PEGASE, and his preservationist attitude towards the trees on his farm, the habitat of the *pie grièche*. Whilst most regional officials, including M. Cabane (la DDAF) and Carole Bernard, who works at the regional Chamber of Agriculture on the region’s CTEs, consider the CTE to be a natural corollary to the AE schemes, farmers perceive this differently. In spite of his engagement in the AE initiative, and the place nature occupies in his value-system, Chastaing does not want to sign a CTE considering it an infringement on his personal liberty. He talks about wishing to conserve his autonomy, an attribute that he equates with being a vinegrower, and to be in a position which allows him to take his own decisions. He comments;

Michel Chastaing (p158): “I like to be free to do what I want to do on my own farm ... I don’t want to have obligations to anyone and by signing a contract with the State, this would be an infringement of my freedom.”

But like many other farmers, he sees the adoption of the CTE as part of an inevitable trajectory, and when the State obliges him to partake he will be forced to comply. There is an almost fatalistic acceptance of the hegemony of the State as a regulatory body and frequently the State is evoked as a driver of change in comparison to the moral pressure of neighbours and cooperative members.

expression. Indeed, this question about freedom challenges the contradictory positions held by the farmers.

In addition to these arguments about financial incentive and a sense of obligation, ideological arguments were mobilised to explain an individual's resistance or motivation to participate in environmental activities. These ideological arguments centred on an individual's relationship with nature and the way in which he or she understands this relationship. Some of the farmers who have participated in AE schemes do so on account of an ideological commitment to the environment or to the historical make-up of the countryside. Deschamps, for example, regards his involvement in AE schemes as a means of reconciling his production of grapes with a personal vision of the countryside and a farmer's place in that countryside. He describes his own aesthetic appreciation of a well-maintained countryside and his personal pleasure in having an attractive vineyard. He has also avoided the intensive use of chemical products on his vines because he considers them to be detrimental both to himself as product-user and to the quality of his grapes. It is a contrasting attitude to that held by those farmers who express little personal responsibility for the final product. His motivation for participating in the AE scheme reflects previously-held ideological commitments.

Two representatives of regional environmental organisations, Claudie Houssard and Xavier Ruffray, reflect on the differing motivations of those actors who participated in the pilot committee of the *CTE d'Ensérune* and in the elaboration of the project. Both claim a genuine concern for the natural environment. They regard the environment, and specifically birds, as a public good and they see the CTEs as an instrument in their armoury to protect it. However, they view the positions of others in different terms. Although they recognise the environmental sensitivity of the VPE's President, they suggest that his motivation in instigating environmental initiatives was founded on a recognition that the '*pie grièche*' could be appropriated as a symbol and deployed to add value to the VPE's territory and their products.

Claudie Houssard (p166): "At the heart of the VPE, those who participated, amongst the farmers, there were some vinegrowers and they were in fact the cooperative administrators. So they are very dynamic people and ones who occupy key posts. Xavier Ruffray: It's clear that everyone who participates, generally, they have an interest. But it's not always the same, it's not necessarily linked to economic or individual interests ... Although there is that side of it and generally you recognise those types of people immediately, villains, a bit Mafioso. And then there are also some people who are very interested in the territorial project, but when they know they have something to gain, what interests them is managing a dynamic farm. And the VPE's president, his interest is to gain something, the fact of integrating the environment – well it's true that he's someone who is passionate, he is sensitive to the environment – but on the other hand he's someone who knows he will reap benefit from the *pie grièche*, it will add value to his territory. But that's not what motivates us. Our motivation for participating in the CTE, uh, well we do it really out of passion, we do it out of passion because we're crazy about birds. If tomorrow the *pie grièche* disappeared from France, well then I'd be upset. Moreover I think the CTE can deliver some environmental benefits. Whereas for the VPE's President, behind his environmental sensitivity there is an economic interest, to add value to his territory which he hasn't forgotten at all. For him, the CTE is first and foremost a label, it can't be denied. It's not 'Ah great, we're going to be able to conserve the heterogeneity of our habitat.' No it's not just that, for him it's really a label."

Other farmers do not regard the CTE as an innovative instrument, rather they perceive it as precipitating a return to a former mode of production. They include farmers, such as Chatonnier, who evokes a past era, prior to the intensive application of pesticides, in which production was more in harmony with a self-regulating ecosystem. The advent of intensive production practices has led to the current situation of degradation of the natural environment and he believes that there needs to be an extensification of agricultural practices. One way of achieving this is through the adoption of schemes such as the CTE and *l'agriculture raisonnée*. Similarly Martin, who exhibited an attachment to the region's heritage in advocating the retention of some traditional vines, draws upon an argument concerning the preservation of the region's cultural heritage in support of the CTE. She expresses an interest in signing a CTE and her motivation derives from the fact

that some of the measures are directed at the preservation of the countryside to which she personally attaches considerable value.

Florence Martin (p157): "I see the advantage of the CTE, well I don't know all the details but I'm going to take this example because this is the one that interests me. You know that in some vines, there are little stone houses that we call '*grangeots*', and I think we must preserve our heritage, it's very important. So when we want to renovate these buildings, which for the most part are in ruins, rather than paying for it yourself, you can do it with subsidies, with this CTE. Well I think that's a very good thing. Equally we have trees in the vines, bordering our fields and we can receive money to maintain them, to prune them a little bit each year. So it's a subsidy for the vinegrower who wants to, in this case, save his or her heritage."

The following two farmers recognise that in the future they may be obliged to participate in the CTE, but in ideological terms they oppose being paid for the delivery of environmental goods at the expense of performing a production function. Perret claims that the visions espoused of an environmentally sound agriculture belong to 'outsiders', with little understanding of the established relationship between farmers and nature. He believes that these visions undermine the role of farmers as 'natural' guardians of the countryside and serve to disrupt what he sees as a 'natural order' in the countryside. He also challenges the objectification of the countryside, as manifest in the voyeuristic behaviour of ecologists who visit the countryside 'to stare' at rare species.

Patrick Perret (p143): "It's not vinegrowers who want to move in this direction [the CTE]. They are pushing agriculture (us) in this direction, by giving us money for the moment, and then there will no longer be any money available. At the beginning it's optional, they'll give us money to clear our ditches, and then we'll be obliged to do it.

TC: And when you talk about 'them', who are you referring to? Who is driving this agenda?

PP: Well it's the State, the ecologists, the Greens.

TC: And why are you personally not motivated to participate, and what do you see as the difficulties of agriculture moving in this direction?

PP: Well it's against life, our heritage, hunting. It runs counter to everything we know. Because when the ecologists go and look at the *pie-grièche* with their binoculars, well the birds are going to leave, because they haven't asked those guys to come and stare at them. When you're at home, you don't want people coming

to disturb you, and with the *pie* it's the same thing. And then they say that we must clear the ditches, to pay us to do that. But if we clear the ditches we're going to lose the vegetation, and what'll happen to the blackberries, my grandmother used to collect blackberries to make jam. It's the same with hunting, [if the ditches are cleared] the rabbits and animals and all the insects will disappear and then there'll no longer be any food and that'll be the end of hunting – we'll all be eating pills. So I think that it's all nonsense, and I'm against it [the CTE]. Things should stay as they are, we've looked after the countryside, the fauna and flora up to this point, leave us to get on with what we normally do."

Bonnet also suggests that the reorientation of agriculture, and the adoption by farmers of multiple roles, is being driven by outsiders. Contrary to Perret he does not identify himself as a 'natural' guardian of the countryside and thus, his resistance to these initiatives stems from the fact that he feels that he will be forced to be sympathetic to the natural environment, which runs counter to his personal instinct.

Renée Bonnet (p149): "We will have to move in this direction because Europe is pushing us. So *la lutte raisonnée*, the AE measures, the CTEs and after a certain time there is a risk that they'll say to us 'Do you want subsidies? Have you signed a CTE? No, well no subsidy.' With *la lutte raisonnée* it's the same thing. Because there are certain buyers like *Carrefour* who've started to sell organic products, traceable products, and so we must do it, we must go along with it.

TC: So you feel that this is the future direction of the market, and this is why you promote these schemes in the cooperative, to the members?

FB: Well yes, I know we must do it but personally it unsettles me. I'll do it, because I have to, but it bothers me, it's against my instinct.

TC: And why is this?

FB: The reason why I personally don't want to do it, and it may sound a bit strange what I'm about to tell you, but, I like my vines but beyond that, I'm not interested in nature. You will never see me going for a walk, gathering snails, things like that. You see I work in the countryside, I work in my vines because it's my job, it's my daily-bread, but the countryside is only the context for my work, I'm not personally attached to nature."

7

Interpretations and Conclusions

Introduction

This thesis addresses a series of questions concerning contemporary change in the rural spaces of Western Europe. To do so, a case study approach is employed to examine the recent restructuring of the viticulture sector of the Languedoc as an exemplar of broader social processes underpinning rural change. The focus of the empirical investigation is a local actor-network, which coheres around a viticulture producer group, *Les Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune*, and includes their production and territorial partners operating up to the regional scale. In addition, a bottom-up approach is utilised within the case study which privileges 'local voices', such that the narratives of change are essentially those of the case study actors.

This final chapter serves three purposes. It revisits the epistemological position that underpins the research and interrogates further some of the issues raised by employing a bottom-up approach. It provides an analysis of the approach by identifying some of the key characteristics of the nature of the material produced and addresses the important methodological question of how the findings of a case study can contribute to broader meta-narratives of change across Western Europe. The question is how can we link socially specific aspects of change to broader levels of international and comparative analysis? Moreover, how do different types of knowledge, and in particular the 'local knowledges' as represented by the stories of local actors, relate to local knowledges in other places?

The empirical material produced by a bottom-up approach is a collection of situated, subjective and experiential stories which constitute the understandings of change of the case study actors. It follows, therefore, that critical to achieving a negotiation between these local narratives and general understandings of change is an appreciation of the particular spatio-social context, for it is within this context that local experiences are formed and, in turn, through which top-down theorizations of change are filtered¹. In other words, the spatio-social context is the point of translation, in which one form of knowledge or understanding, local and meta-narrative, is translated into another. The context for this piece of research is the Languedoc region and its viticulture sector, to which close attention was afforded in chapter two². Two sets of relations emerge as being key specificities of this context. These are the relationships between the local and the extra-local (an amalgam of economic, political and social relations) and local social relations, epitomised by the cooperative system and expressed as the tension between individualism and collectivism. The second section of this chapter thus interprets the actors' experiences of the shifts from quantity to quality and from productivism

¹ The importance ascribed to the spatio-social context is not specific to the articulation between the particular and the general within the frame of a bottom-up approach. Some commentators on contemporary rural restructuring have acknowledged the context-dependent nature of social practices and processes (for example see Murdoch & Marsden, 1994; Hart, 1997; Lowe *et al.*, 1997), all of whom are mindful of the particularities of place and specific socio-cultural and institutional contexts. Moreover, in recognising the importance of time and space as key factors in the considerable variability of contemporary rural restructuring (see Knickel and Renting, 2000; Van der Ploeg & Renting, 2000), these authors argue implicitly for attention to be afforded to the temporal-spatio context in which our understandings of change are situated.

² Sayer (1991) attempts to deconstruct some of geography's dualisms (contextualising versus nomological approaches; the abstract and the concrete; theory and empirics and generality and specificity) through an examination of the ways in which these terms are defined and related. In addition, he highlights a pervasive tendency to conflate different dualisms, particularly in relation to scale. He argues, therefore, that there is no relationship *per se*, between nomological approaches and the global, or between contextual approaches and the local. Equally the relationship between the abstract and the global and the concrete and the local, cannot be assumed. For clarification, therefore, the examination of the specificities of a local context, the viticulture sector of the Languedoc, derives not from an uncritical conflation of specificity with a particular geographical scale, rather it is because of the scale of analysis of the thesis and its examination of the micro-level social processes of change.

to multifunctionality within the frame of these two key sets of relations and the tensions these create within the specific context.

In the third section, the transitional conceptualisation of change as discussed in chapter one is revisited and the findings from the case study drawn upon to illuminate the contested nature of change and the range of positions held by actors. In addition, the processes through which an individual moves from one point on the spectrum of change to another are discussed along with those processes underpinning the social construction of meanings which may serve to explain why an individual occupies a particular position on the spectrum. Ideas for future research are suggested and as a final word, other case studies, conducted across Western Europe are considered in an attempt to identify common understandings and trajectories of change.

An Analysis of a Bottom-Up Approach

This thesis adopts a specific epistemological position. As a corollary, a range of qualitative methodologies have been employed and the empirical material is presented as the actors' stories, with a limited interpretative voice by the researcher. These approaches were used to arrive at local actors' subjective experiences and understandings of the shifts from quantity to quality in wine production and from productivism to multifunctionality. An implicit assumption is that the material generated may provide different or alternative insights of change from those afforded by meta-narratives. This assumption is interrogated through the course of this chapter.

The epistemological position adopted recognises the existence of plural forms of knowledge. It privileges the voices of the case study actors - local knowledges - yet at the same time proposes to negotiate between the particular and the general to contribute to 'decontextualized' explanations or meta-narratives of rural change across Western Europe. At first sight the project appears contradictory. A bottom-up approach that privileges the voices of local actors is normally located within a post-modernist / post-structuralist project, one that emphasises difference and plurality and thus, by subscribing to a relativist position, rejects the derivation of meta-narratives (White, 1991; Gandy, 1996). Indeed, if we glance briefly at some of the work conducted in this vein in the field of rural geography (see Philo, 1992; 1993; Halfacree, 1993; Murdoch & Pratt, 1993; Little, 1999), the post-modernity debate has focused on the need for greater sensitivity to social and spatial difference. This work has highlighted the existence of competing discourses of rurality and the fluidity of people's social identity. It has argued that attempts to derive meta-narratives disavow the partial and fragmented condition of the rural, through a focus on 'Mr Average' and the demotion of 'multiple forms of otherness' (Philo, 1992; 201). These ideas in turn have impacted on methodologies and

epistemologies in terms of giving voice to neglected others and exploring the positionality of knowledge claims (Phillips, 1998). Although similarities exist between the epistemological position posited in this work and my own, the overall project is a different one. The one seeks to understand difference and the processes which engender marginalisation, whilst my own seeks to negotiate between local knowledges and meta-narratives. In an attempt to address this contradiction it is helpful to consider two other areas of literature within the sociology of science and the sociology of knowledge.

Research conducted within the sociology of science has sought to interrogate, and undermine, the imperialistic position enjoyed by science as a form of knowledge. Ethnographic studies of the laboratory concerned with examining 'science in the making' and the construction of scientific knowledge (Knorr-Cetina, 1981; Law, 1994) have revealed the socially contingent nature of the production and practice of science. Their conclusions lead to the position that the hegemony enjoyed by scientific knowledge is neither explained nor legitimised by some objective superiority, a claim often made by reference to science's universal applicability, its rationality, its decontextualized generalizeability and thus its capacity for abstraction. Rather it is the view of these researchers that this hegemonic status is achieved on account of the power held by the institutions and actors of science, manifest in their ability to enrol, convince and enlist others into the scientific network on terms which, in turn, allow scientists to 'represent' others (Callon, 1986; Law, 1986; Wynne, 1996³). By dismantling science from its hegemonic position and undermining the distinctions between this form of knowledge and others, this research paves the way not only for the recognition that science represents a 'partial' form of knowledge (Kloppenburg, 1992, quoting Busch, 1984) but also that

³ Ambivalence was expressed by the scallop fishermen of St Brieuc Bay (Callon, 1986) and the Cumbrian sheep farmers (Wynne, 1996) towards the validity of scientific knowledge and its applicability to local conditions. Local knowledges were drawn upon to resist or mediate the terms of engagement.

other sorts of knowledges exist and may, in certain contexts, enjoy a 'symmetry' or equality of status (Murdoch & Clark, 1996; Murdoch, 1997a; 1997b).

Having established the existence of plural forms of knowledges, their partiality and their potential symmetry, the degree of commensurability between these forms of knowledge must be addressed. It is important to establish how we may find ways of arriving at a complementarity between forms of knowledge, essential to any project that seeks to negotiate between the particular and the general. Indeed, some authors reject outright the role that local knowledges can play in a wider context on account of the fact that the contextual detail and degree of subjectivity that local knowledge brings to understandings about a particular place, event or process has little utility outside of it. Whilst this is a legitimate concern, it is exactly this same extrication of detail and nuance that is one of the key strengths of such an approach if local knowledge can be shown to be commensurate with or to complement other forms. In considering the issue of commensurability, Kloppenburg (1991) provides an analysis of feminist interpretations of science. He identifies the existence of two differing positions. Feminist empiricism suggests that local knowledges and scientific knowledge are fundamentally complementary, and that local knowledges are more or less translatable into existing scientific frameworks even if these frameworks are restructured by such a translation (see Flora, 1992). A differing stance, offered by feminist postmodernism, maintains that while scientific and local knowledges constitute separate realities, productive interactions between ways of knowing can be established. The purpose is not to translate or combine these knowledges, but to permit a mutually beneficial dialogue (Kloppenbourg, 1991).

This discussion has centred on the relationship between scientific and local forms of knowledge and it is acknowledged that the nature of, and distinction between the two, is not strictly analogous to local knowledges and meta-narratives of change, the concern of this thesis. However, demonstrating the existence of these plural knowledge categories, their potential symmetry and the ways in which they may be

shown to interact or complement each other, has illuminated the way in which a 'hybridisation' between different understandings of change may be achieved. Indeed, other authors have recognised that subjective experiences and understandings of the rural are not necessarily incompatible with concepts which address general sets of changing relations and thus advance the possibility and potential advantages of a hybrid approach. In arguing for a two-way translation process, Cloke (1994) is implicitly signalling the complementary nature of two knowledge categories.

"The exploration of different experiences and imaginations of the rural, however, lead to a wish to engage increasingly with lay discourses (see Halfacree, 1993) and indeed with the use of ethnographies there is a strong attempt to route academic discourses through lay discourses. This will involve a two-way translation process, interconnecting the voiced and otherwise represented experiences, attitudes and meanings of rural people and the processes of academic conceptualisation, as well as translating academic concepts into more widely understandable languages." (Cloke, 1994: 185).

Murdoch and Clark (1996) reiterate this position and formalise the two-way translation process described by Cloke into the notion of 'hybridity'. They issue a call for a new social science approach to the relationship between the local and the universal which stresses 'hybridity' and the extent to which categories of knowledge are inextricably mixed. As part of the same hybridisation project, Phillips (2002) critiques recent discussions in rural geography which have polarised post-structuralism and political economy approaches, constructing them as antithetical 'others' (see debates by Miller, 1996a; 1996b; Crow, 1996). He is sceptical of this dualistic construction. Taking rural class analysis as his example, he argues that rather than a recognition of multiple social identities serving as a means by which modernist categories of class are rejected outright, because it is argued that an individual's identity cannot be tied neatly to class relations, this diversity can be incorporated into the concept of class which retains some explanatory power (Phillips, 2002). In combination, therefore, these approaches can lead to an understanding of the discursive character of class. As such, by stressing

the interconnections between these post-structuralist and political economy approaches he is arguing that post-structuralism can add nuance to a 'universal' structure and in so doing he explores the way in which a 'hybridisation' between the contingent and the universal may be practised and achieved.

In conclusion therefore, it is argued that by 'giving voice', in the first instance, to local understandings of change, the diverse and inherently contested nature of change is emphasised. The value of such an approach⁴ is that it reveals the multifaceted character and functionality of contemporary rural development and the complexity of the processes and activities that contribute to it (Knickel & Renting, 2000; Van der Ploeg & Renting, 2000). Local accounts will fill in the details that meta-narratives, by virtue of their reductionist nature, necessarily gloss over and, in turn, elaborate these meta-narratives. This, however, is only one direction of the translation process and a rigorous theoretical frame allows for local understandings to be interpreted outside of the particular context in which they were formed and permit the tracing of common and divergent processes of change unfolding in other contemporary rural spaces of Western Europe. This process of translation and the practice of hybridity can only be achieved if the specific spatio-social context in which knowledges are formed and through which general processes are filtered is rendered explicit, and the process of translation between knowledge forms is a reflexive and transparent one.

⁴ One of the artefacts of this approach, or at least the way it has been interpreted and implemented within this piece of research, is that the narratives contain a large proportion of raw material in the form of quotes. The weight accorded to direct quotations means that the actors' stories provide a data source, both in English and in French, for other researchers investigating rural change. The narrative presented in the thesis is the result of one particular process of analysis, while a retention of the material in its 'raw' form renders it open to analysis and interpretation by others.

**The Shift from Quantity to Quality Wine Production:
A Reconfiguring of Local / Extra-Local Relations and the
Consequences for Local Social Relations**

As actors in this local network negotiate the shift from quantity to quality wine production, an established, although not static, set of relations with other vinegrowers and wine-producers in France is disrupted. The shifts in these relations and the ways in which they are reconfigured, in turn, exert an effect on local social relations as expressed through the tension between collectivism and individualism. This section, therefore, explores these changing sets of relations through an interpretation of the narratives of the case study actors. The shift to the production of quality wine in the Languedoc has engendered three key consequences, at least as perceived by actors in the case study. The first consequence is that the shift is contested by some actors in the network, with the effect that the sectoral collective, sustained by local cooperatives, is under increased strain. Secondly, the production of quality wine has resulted in shifting relations with the extra-local, in turn precipitating the upwards rescaling of the 'local', as traditionally represented by the commune and its cooperative. Finally, there has been a reassertion of the importance of 'place' in the production of wine, with a local stock of social, cultural and ecological capital drawn upon to differentiate the VPE's products in an increasingly globalised market-place. These three consequences are discussed in turn.

The progressive decline in the consumption of table wine from the 1960s onwards in France and in other core producer countries (Rosell & Viladomiu, 2000), coupled with intensified competition in the domestic market from table wine producing countries such as Italy through the institution of the CMO for wine (Montaigne, 1998), had constituted a direct challenge to the sovereignty of table wine production in the Languedoc by the end of the 1970s (Jones & Clark, 2000). A consensus emerged among some members of this network that the production of table wine

was no longer sustainable (see Blanchet and Bonnet⁵) and that the production of quality wine represented the only viable future strategy for viticultural activity in the region. It was a view held by regional officials including Dance, Devic and Huillet⁶ and shared by the cooperative's administrators. Fauré⁷, for example, argues that the production of quality wines is essential to generate sufficient capital for farmers to reinvest in their vineyards and to adapt to changing consumption patterns, especially the increased demand for luxury wines for 'occasional' consumption (see Le Gars & Hinnewinkel, 2000). Furthermore, the production of quality was a strategy supported by the State and facilitated by the introduction of uprooting subsidies and replantation subsidies (Ben Amor, 1993; Senuik & Strohl, 1996; Montaigne, 1997).

The production of quality wine is, in 2000, an irrevocable strategy, even though 60% of the VPE's combined vineyard is planted with traditional grape varieties (see box 3.1, chapter 3). There is little debate over any 'real' alternative. A clear indication of the dominance of this trajectory is provided by the fact that the majority of farmers are replanting their vineyards with improved grape varieties, even though the transition to the production of quality wine is a slow and uneven process as individuals have contested this shift. This is not, however, a straightforward contestation. There is a group of passive disengagers, often farmers approaching retirement and those without a successor (see Jaurès⁸). These older farmers find it difficult to adapt to a new set of production imperatives and have little motivation to replant their vines and to change their vineyard practices. They are perceived by younger farmers⁹ as part of 'the old world', and 'on the way out', because as Desaille¹⁰ observes, an individual's disengagement from the dominant trajectory of modernisation and the production of wine of a higher quality will lead to their

⁵ Blanchet, p.153; Bonnet, p.154.

⁶ Dance, p.162; Devic, p.163; Huillet, p.196.

⁷ Fauré, p.152.

⁸ Jaurès, p.140.

⁹ Blanchet, p.153; p.218; Jarrige, p.154.

eventual demise. For some farmers¹¹, though, a traditional form of grape production exerts a tenacious hold, and they may be conceived as active resisters, looking back with nostalgia to a past era when vinegrowers in the region were rich as a result of the profitability of the production of table wine on account of the large volumes of grapes they were able to produce. Masson¹², for example, is reluctant to relinquish the competitive advantages afforded by the agronomic potential of the soil of the viticultural plain and propitious climatic conditions, even though in reality, the production of large volumes of grapes for table wine is no longer an economically sustainable strategy. For other farmers, their resistance to the production of quality stems from the pleasure and sense of satisfaction they derive from productivity (see Shucksmith, 1993) because in their eyes, the production of large volumes of grapes equates to 'a job well done'¹³. In the final instance, some farmers contest the reorientation to the production of quality wine because they perceive that they are excluded from this form of production. They suggest that they encounter difficulties because the production of grapes for quality wine is a more specialised activity¹⁴, demanding new skills and additional capital¹⁵, while the regulations which surround it are complex, engendering increased responsibilities on the part of farmers¹⁶.

The transition to the production of quality wine has also exerted wide-ranging effects on vinegrowers' relations with the extra-local. Through the production of varietal wines, vinegrowers are now more fully integrated in the wine global commodity chain (Korzeniewicz *et al.*, 1995) which in turn has served to expose them to an increasingly competitive global market-place (Castillo Valero & Gil Jimenez, 1995). The production of quality wine in the Languedoc is following two

¹⁰ Desaille, p.138; p.139.

¹¹ Valadour, p.153; p.160.

¹² Masson, p.157.

¹³ Masson, p.157; Chastaing, p.158.

¹⁴ Laroche, p.188.

¹⁵ Jaurès, p.188; Simon, p.215; Renée Bonnet, p.215; Gazels, p.215; Lacroix, p.216.

¹⁶ Freyssinet, p.155.

distinct trajectories; the production of varietal wines and *Vins de Pays* (see chapter 2). The VPE are typical in this respect, producing both varietal wines and *Vins de Pays* and thus are linked into two different markets. Their engagement with the notions of customisation and differentiation of wines, part of a *Vins de Pays* strategy, is, however, much more recent.

The most widely cited threat, experienced by farmers and recognised by cooperative administrators and regional officials, is that posed by the growing volumes of wine produced in the southern hemisphere entering the export market, and in particular penetrating the United Kingdom market, traditionally an important outlet for French wines (Le Gars & Hinnewinkel, 2000). Richards¹⁷ identifies the cause of the current crisis in the viticulture sector of the Languedoc as being the over-production of varietal wines at a global level. Huillet¹⁸ reiterates this prognosis, making reference to an increase in production in Australia with detrimental effects on the value of the Chardonnay wine produced by his cooperative. Farmers echo these concerns. Garcia¹⁹ cites the threat to his farm business posed by producers in the southern hemisphere and Deschamps²⁰ explains his uncertainty about the future in terms of vineyard extension programmes in Australia and the unpredictable nature of the global wine market. The narratives of different members of the network are suffused with a palpable sense of interconnectedness, the deeply intertwined nature of the 'local' and the 'global', and they make sense of the world through a series of global economic relations. Farmers convey an appreciation of the fact that the actions of producers in Australia and Chile, for example, exert a direct effect on the fortunes of their individual farm business and are shaping their 'everyday', parochial experiences. This is manifest in the feelings of uncertainty and anxiety expressed by Deschamps, Jarrige and

¹⁷ Richards, p.195.

¹⁸ Huillet, p.196.

¹⁹ Garcia, p.199.

²⁰ Deschamps, p.156.

Martin²¹; in Sabassier's feelings of dislocation as the focus of cooperative meetings has shifted towards global issues, and in Laroche's description of the 'perpetual movement' of the modern and global world²².

The restructuring of production to support the shift to quality wine has served not only to transform the nature of the local but also to influence the shape of the global. In their work on the globalisation and restructuring of the food sector, Marsden & Arce (1995) and Page (1996) argue that global processes are mediated, and at times refracted, by regional and local specificities. Page (1996) contends that as agricultural industrialization is conditioned by the natural basis of production, along with local social relations, the patterns of uneven development in agriculture are not solely attributable to industrial dynamics. Instead he argues that

"[they] are produced through the complex articulation of these processes with diverse sets of places ... [and that] embedded local conditions have important effects upon agriculture, often serving as powerful barriers to industrial transformation." (Page, 1996; 389).

This contention signals that not only is the 'local' transformed by global processes of restructuring, but in turn, local actors and institutions shape the trajectory or nature of these global processes as they are negotiated in particular places. In other words the global and the local are mutually transforming and constitutive. Some have critiqued these analyses of the processes of globalisation because inherent to them is the construction of the local and the global as *a priori* definable and distinct geographical categories. It is argued that, by constructing them as fixed categories and ones which are dialectically opposed, the possibility of conceiving spatial scale as fluid and dynamic is precluded. Swyngedouw (1997) supports these positions by arguing that scale is perpetually shifting and that its transformation is the result or product of processes of sociospatial change. Specifically,

²¹ Deschamps, p.156; Jarrige, p.156; Martin, p.157.

²² Sabassier, p.151; Laroche, p.179.

“scale becomes the arena and moment, both discursively and materially, where sociospatial power relations are contested and compromises are negotiated and regulated. Scale, therefore, is both the result and the outcome of social struggle for power and control.” (Sywonedouw, 1997; 140).

He argues, therefore, that scale is produced and its transformation is the result of social struggles. These arguments about the reconstitution of scale provide a useful lens through which to interpret the shifting nature of the ‘local’ as members of this network negotiate extra-local processes of change²³. The following discussion reveals that for many actors in the network, ‘the local’ is being redefined and re-scaled upwards. There is a sense that ‘the very local’, as represented by the commune and its cooperative, is losing its importance, and the ‘local’ is being reconstituted at the sub-departmental level particularly through the vertical restructuring of the production chain. This transformation of the local in terms of the emergence of a ‘new’ local scale and the transgression of an established one is a contested process. We may conclude that as the local is redefined some actors flourish whilst others articulate a feeling of marginalisation.

The shift from quantity to quality has been accompanied by a restructuring of the production side of the sector. In 1976, the village cooperatives in the case study area merged to form CEPRO, and latterly the VPE, and VPE administrators were engaged in discussions at the time of the fieldwork (2000) to work more closely

²³ It is acknowledged that the scalar categories of the local and the extra-local are ambiguous. To an extent this ambiguity is purposeful for two reasons. The first is that because it is argued that geographical scales are the ‘produced’ outcome of sociospatial processes, they are shifting; and secondly, in order to undermine the binary construction of the local and the extra-local it is helpful to think of these scales relationally, with actors occupying ‘actor-spaces’ and ones which are connected through a series of social relations across space (Murdoch & Marsden, 1995; Whatmore & Thorne, 1997). It is necessary, however, to advance some sort of definition, with the proviso that a definition is problematic. It is problematic, in part because if we do think of scale in relational terms, such a distinction is artificial, and secondly, the definition advanced is to a large degree an artefact of the research design. The local, therefore, is defined as the spatial reach of this network (up to the regional scale) as opposed to the extra-local or those actors beyond it. By making this distinction it is argued that the local and the extra-local serve as analytical categories. They provide a sense that actors in the network recognise that they are embedded in, and interact with, a wider set of economic and social relations and afford the opportunity to explore different constructions of the ‘local’ as actors negotiate changes in the ‘extra-local’.

with Foncalieu, a viticultural producer group, serving members throughout the Languedoc and with bottling, distribution and marketing facilities. Those actors who favour restructuring mobilise economically rational arguments in support of these developments. Farmers such as Teyssier, Deschamps and Renée Bonnet²⁴ argue that the VPE, with a large membership and extensive combined vineyard, are able to produce large volumes of wine which confers power when negotiating with wine merchants, and specifically the big supermarkets, not enjoyed by smaller village cooperatives. With the increasing power of supermarkets in the retailing of wine (see Unwin, 1996; 341), Buisson²⁵ observes that local wine merchants no longer exist, and that this form of market exchange based on personal relationships at the micro-level has been lost. Similar arguments are mobilised in support of greater association with Foncalieu. Rather than bemoaning the loss of the 'local' character of the cooperative, formerly embedded at the level of the commune, Lopez and Laroche²⁶ perceive vertical restructuring in advantageous terms. They cite Foncalieu's resources, in terms of its marketing expertise, distribution facilities and links with international buyers, as important in supporting the VPE's production of quality wine and ensuring a retention, by vinegrowers, of some of the value added to the product at the point of vinification and marketing. The critical point is that these actors, although some of them express ambivalence, are not fundamentally contesting the upwards re-scaling of the VPE. They accept their insertion into a longer chain of production and a bigger structure as necessary in order to sell their wine and ultimately to guarantee the future of their farm businesses (see Simon and Renée Bonnet²⁷). In this sense they are 'winners'; they are not marginalised in the struggle over the reconstitution of the local even if their long-term economic position as individual producers may not be secure.

²⁴ Teyssier, p.146; Deschamps, p.146; Renée Bonnet, p.149.

²⁵ Buisson, p.150.

²⁶ Lopez, p.145; Laroche, p.180.

²⁷ Simon, p.148; Renée Bonnet, p.211.

Opposing positions are held by some actors who contest the loss of importance of the very local. Opposition to the declining importance of the 'very local' is expressed most vociferously in relation to the centralisation of decision-making within the VPE. The merger of village cooperatives to form the VPE has served to divest local Administrative Councils of their decision-making power. Deschamps, for example, observes that members of Lespignan's Administrative Council are now just 'part of the furniture', when once they had significant control over the decisions taken. Many farmers feel that as cooperative members they have lost their voice²⁸ and describe the shift in cooperative governance from a horizontal to a hierarchical form, displacing the power base from the local scale²⁹. As a result, some farmers have difficulty in identifying with the aspirations and positions of their leaders³⁰. In the redefinition of the scale at which decisions are taken, these farmers feel they are marginalised, resulting in Garcia's protestations that he may leave the cooperative and Desaille's observation that he is considering abandoning viticulture altogether³¹.

There is general agreement that there is an ever-increasing spatialisation in the division of labour and in the skills base of actors as a result of modernisation and the concomitant restructuring of the production side of the sector. Some farmers see the narrowing of the skills base at the local level as a threat. They note that they do not possess the same breadth of skills as their fathers, often owners of private *caves*, because as cooperative members they have abdicated knowledge surrounding vinification. The narrowing of the skills-base at the local level is countered by the concentration of skills, held by experts working in extra-local institutions. For example, Australian oenologues were responsible for the production of the 2000 '*super-prestige*' vintage, appropriating the role traditionally performed by the manager of Nissan cooperative. This team of 'peripatetic

²⁸ Garcia, p.142; Desaille, p.184; Freyssinet, p.185.

²⁹ Garcia, p.142; Freyssinet, p.185; Beauverie, p.185.

³⁰ Amélie Jarrige, p.186; Guillard, p.186; Garcia, p.187.

winemakers', with specialist skills in the production of quality wine, are employed around the world, vinifying wine for both the Australian and French vintages. Equally, marketing expertise is increasingly held at Foncalieu, locking farmers into a position of dependency³². This concentration of skills away from the local in turn underpins the feelings of disempowerment expressed by some farmers including Sabassier³³, for example, who expresses a feeling of disconnection as a direct result of a spatialisation in the division of labour. He argues that as a grape producer and "as a cooperative member, there's only one scale, I've only one rung to my job, the first rung and so I want to leave ..."

The identities of many farmers are bound up with the very local scale. As village cooperatives are subsumed into larger structures they contest the challenge they perceive this to represent to their locally-constituted identities. Chatonnier³⁴, for example, makes an explicit connection between the loss of his identity as a grape-producer as the wine produced from his grapes is no longer associated with the vineyard of Nissan cooperative. The identities of many farmers are formed through their relations with their village, their cooperative and the vine more generally. The local embeddedness of a village cooperative is sustained by a set of social relations, reinforced by frequent exchange, personal contact, the proximity of peoples' vineyards and a particular system of land tenure. Teyssier³⁵ notes that the degree of personal exchange is lessened because this is a scaled activity which is difficult to sustain over long distances³⁶. Moreover, these social relations have a history. Many

³¹ Garcia, p.142; Desaille, p.139.

³² Martin, p.157.

³³ Sabassier, p.144.

³⁴ Chatonnier, p.181.

³⁵ Teyssier, p.183.

³⁶ Svendsen & Svendsen (2000) discuss the accumulation and subsequent erosion of social capital in the Danish cooperative dairy movement from its establishment at the end of the nineteenth century. Social capital rests on the existence of trust and the notion of reciprocity (Putnam *et al.*, 1993; Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000). Svendsen & Svendsen (2000) refer implicitly to the importance of scale to sustain social capital. They conclude that it is the demarcated, small-scale nature of local communities which seems to stimulate face-to-face exchanges, which in turn generates trust, encourages reciprocity and strengthens the socio-economic ties between people. In the 1960s, with structural changes in Danish

of the farmers' forbears lived in the same villages and some were the founding members of the village cooperatives. Jaurès³⁷, for example, identifies himself as a *paysan*, an identity constituted in direct opposition to that of town-dwellers and tied to his village and a cohesive rural community.

In turn, the restructuring of the production side of the sector has served to engender fractures in the sectoral collective as sustained by the village cooperative. As discussed earlier, rifts appear as not all farmers have been mobilised around the production of quality wine. These differences in position are further exacerbated by a widely-held perception that restructuring is undermining some of the core principles upon which cooperativism rests. Cooperative administrators, regional actors and some farmers continue to emphasise the importance of collective working, in supporting the shift to the production of quality wine (see Huillet and Bataille³⁸). For the large part, however, they are advocating a redefinition of collective working and a reconfiguring of the principles upon which it is founded. Cooperative administrators mobilise a different set of discourses about the role of cooperatives and emphasise a profit-oriented and capitalist logic at the expense of a commitment to solidarity and mutuality. Fauré³⁹, for example, is critical of the traditional principles of democratic management which he perceives as representing an outmoded form of governance and an obstacle in allowing the VPE to adapt quickly to the challenges of economic competition. Many farmers conceive these 'modern' collective principles as antithetical to 'traditional' cooperative principles. It is generally agreed that in the past, the cooperative played primarily a social role, and through mutual help and solidarity between small farmers, collective working represented a strategy for small farmers to counter the instability and vulnerability of their position, rendering them better able to negotiate the

agriculture and the centralization of dairy production, many of Denmark's local dairies were closed. One effect was that levels of communication, interaction and trust between producers and a centralized structure decreased, leading to an erosion of social capital and a sense of community.

³⁷ Jaurès, p139.

³⁸ Huillet, p.189; Bataille, p.190.

pressures inherent in modernisation⁴⁰ (see also Gröger, 1981; Moulin, 1991). These farmers understand cooperation as performing a social role, equal in primacy to its economic function and one which they do not wish to see usurped.

As well as the upwards rescaling of the local, there has, at the same time, been a reassertion of the importance of 'place' in the production of quality wine in the region. Similar arguments exist elsewhere in the food literature. For example, it is argued that the production of quality foods is frequently located in those areas that have remained marginal to industrialised agriculture (Ilbery & Kneafsey, 1998). Food production systems in these areas have escaped the inimical environmental effects of an industrialised system of production and thus may be embedded in the local ecology. Increasingly, a connection is made between quality and foods that are 'local' and 'natural' (see Nygard & Storstad, 1998; Hinrichs, 2000), leading some academics to argue that the turn to quality in consumption may presage the emergence of 'alternative' geographies of food production (Ilbery & Kneafsey, 1998; Murdoch *et al.*, 2000). The gradual qualitative shift in the Languedoc has a different provenance from similar shifts observed in other regions and sectors. For example, it is not a marginal farming region and it has experienced a highly industrialised system of vine monoculture from the mid-nineteenth century. In the past, the viticulture sector of the Languedoc produced an industrialised product for blending, with no identification of its geographical origin. Increasingly, to compete in a globalised wine sector, producers are drawing on specificities of the local territory and there is a new use of social, cultural and ecological resources in the customisation of their products. 'Place' in product identification is constituted in a variety of ways by different actors. Lopez⁴¹ defines place in spatial terms, and his strategy is to identify the VPE's products with a particular zone of production so that they are recognised through an identification of geographic origin. Others,

³⁹ Fauré, p.192.

⁴⁰ Frédéric Bonnet, p.147; Jaurès, p.184.

⁴¹ Lopez, p.145.

including Jaurès and Blanchet⁴², for example, argue that one of the key factors that differentiates their wine from competitors in the southern hemisphere is the fact that wine production in this region has a history, there is a capital of skills and knowledges, built up through time. Others conceive of the identification of 'place' in social terms, including Lopez and Huillet⁴³ who highlight the social and cultural specificities of production, specifically that their products 'have a soul', important in differentiating their products.

⁴² Jaurès, p.196; Blanchet, p.197.

⁴³ Lopez, p.219; Huillet, p.189.

**The Emergence of a Multifunctional Agricultural Regime:
A Reconfiguring of Local / Extra-Local Relations and the
Consequences for Local Social Relations**

The shift to multifunctional roles for farmers is engendering a new set of relations between farmers, the State and society at large. Houssard and Ruffray⁴⁴, for example, understand multifunctionality in terms of farmers' metamorphosis into countryside managers, with responsibilities to the rest of society for the upkeep of the environment. Indeed, some farmers find this image flattering (Chastaing & Laroche⁴⁵), while others feel that it at once conforms to and confirms their 'natural' place as stewards of the land. Lopez⁴⁶, for example, observes that farmers are the key actors in the management of the rural space, sustaining the image of 'natural conservationists' in the sense that they have maintained the countryside without premeditated effort. For a long time, and because of agriculture's territorial and cultural importance in France, farmers have not had to defend their historic status as guardians of the countryside (Berlan-Darqu e & Kalaora, 1992; Buller & Brives, 2000). Gazels, Bataille and Paillard⁴⁷ however think that an unconditional public trust in farmers is eroding. Agriculture must nurture its links with the rest of society and respond to changing consumption demands, centring on the non-material aspects of rural development such as nature, landscape and cultural integrity.

A consequence therefore of the VPE's adoption of environmental initiatives and the CTE is an evolution of the relations between farmers in the group and the rest of society. Their narratives convey a sense of their connections, relationships and responsibilities to non-farming actors. Valadour⁴⁸, for example, makes sense of the VPE's engagement in environmental activities in terms of farmers providing

⁴⁴ Houssard, p.117; Ruffray, p.117.

⁴⁵ Chastaing, p.227; Laroche, p.227.

⁴⁶ Lopez, p.225.

⁴⁷ Gazels, p.166; Bataille p.200; Paillard, p.226.

environmental goods for urban-dwellers, in his eyes, the prime beneficiaries of these initiatives. Jaurès⁴⁹ adopts a broader perspective and understands the maintenance of the countryside as a means through which all sectors of local society can work together to enhance the region's image. In itself, the development of rural-urban links is not new. At times of crisis throughout the history of the sector, unions have succeeded in mobilising the support of urban actors in part because of the importance of the vine in the region's collective identity (see Lem, 1988; 1994). But the nature of these relations has changed. They are no longer bolstered by production concerns, rather they are reconstituted through consumption demands.

Since the start of the twentieth century, the viticulture sector of the Languedoc has been engaged in a close, although contentious, relationship with the French State. The nature and intensity of this relationship is exemplified by the protest acts of 1907 (Stevenson, 1976), the disputes over *la chapitalisation* of wine produced in northern regions of France (Marin, 1996) and the fracas of the 'Wine Wars' with Italy in the 1970s. These protest events and the concomitant lobbying of successive Agriculture Ministers by the region's viticulture representatives, represented a call for State intervention to protect the economic circumstances of vinegrowers of the Languedoc. On each occasion the State responded with a variety of appeasing and conciliatory measures⁵⁰. The narratives of the case study actors reveal that their relationship with the State is being reconfigured as a result of changing societal demands surrounding the roles and functions of farmers. A new relationship is being formalised through the CTE, a contract entered into between an individual farmer and departmental Prefect (BIMA, 2000), the local representative of central government, and one which is founded on the notion of exchange. Farmers receive subsidies in return for the provision of environmental and social 'public goods' (see

⁴⁸ Valadour, p.233.

⁴⁹ Jaurès, p.171.

Renting & Van Der Ploeg, 2001 for a similar form of new contractual arrangement between the State and farmers in the Netherlands). But this reconfiguration is also a contested process. For the large part, farmers expressed resistance explaining their position by drawing on notions of farmer freedom and identity. Farmers such as Desaille, Bonnet and Perret⁵¹ conceive of the CTE and AE measures as a reduction in managerial choice. They anticipate the progressive withdrawal of general production subsidies and their replacement by those with specific managerial requirements, as constituting a perceived encroachment on their freedom to make autonomous decisions and stripping them of their agency. To participate or not will prove not to be a decision 'of their own making'. The same point is made by Valadour and Chastaing⁵² but in different terms. Their lack of motivation for participation in the CTE stems from a perception that it will impose too many constraints on the management of the farm business. This concern may be exaggerated on account of the bottom-up nature of the process, although other researchers have shown that farmers participating in a Wildlife Enhancement Scheme in southern England, for example, regard the precise timetable of the ditch-clearing measures to be too prescriptive and not in harmony with the natural rhythms of local conditions (see Burgess *et al.*, 2000). In contrast, Masson's participation in the AE scheme does little to challenge the nature of conventional vineyard production practices and therefore he does not see these measures as influencing the decisions he takes on his farm business. There is little evidence to suggest that he has accepted a conservation ethic as he continues to exhibit a strong attachment to productivity⁵³.

A more subtle infringement of freedom is articulated by other farmers, framed in terms of the freedom to experience the world according to a set of 'local' or

⁵⁰ The Agricultural Union Act of 1910 (Ulin, 1996), the *Statut Viticole* of 1935 (Loubère, 1990) and Jacques Chirac's imposition of an import tax on Italian table wines (Stevenson, 1976).

⁵¹ Desaille p.233; Bonnet p.238; Perret p.237.

⁵² Valadour p.233; Chastaing p.234.

⁵³ Masson p.157 & p.233.

personal norms. Masson⁵⁴, although he has participated in the AE scheme, feels that the CTE, a whole-farm management plan, would reconfigure his identity from 'man of the land' to a 'man of papers'. These conflicting identities, although they are not always constructed in such oppositional terms, resonate with the positions of many farmers. They describe the freedom that viticulture confers in terms of working outdoors, and as owner-proprietors they are without a boss. A 'man of the land' encapsulates a special and valued relationship with nature and the rhythms of the countryside. In contrast, 'a man of papers' evokes a sense of the prescriptiveness of an imposed bureaucracy, along with a marginalisation of a farmer's relationship with nature and with their vines. Perret⁵⁵ conceives of the encroachment of his freedom in terms of the imposition by 'the State, ecologists and greens' of an 'outsider' view of nature. In his mind it is a view that ascribes greater importance to the *pie grièche* on account of its rarity or consumption value over the more ubiquitous elements of nature such as blackberries, hares and insects which he values personally. The imposition of 'alien' and 'non-local' values which are at variance with Perret's appreciation of nature, divests him of his freedom to experience the world as he understands it⁵⁶.

The local is also being redefined as an outcome of another set of sociospatial processes linked to the emergence of a multifunctional agricultural regime. France's decentralisation reforms of 1982 – 1983 led to the downwards rescaling of State interventionism in agricultural policy to the regional level. One consequence of this is that the local (sub-departmental level) is perceived to be the most appropriate form of territorial unit to deliver rural development projects (see Buller, 2000). As such, Agri-Environment initiatives, the CTEs and rural development projects are elaborated and implemented by departmental agricultural actors and institutions, with the measures defined according to the specificities of local

⁵⁴ Masson p.233.

⁵⁵ Perret p.237.

agricultural production along with those of the natural environment (Boisson & Buller, 1996; Guyvarc'h & Lorvellec, 1998). Indeed Augé, Bataille, Crepin and Fabre⁵⁷ all emphasise that the region's CTEs were developed in accordance with 'bottom-up' and participative principles, with attention afforded to local forms of social organisation, economic activities and the natural environment. They are convinced that this type of approach, with its focus on partnerships and its adoption of a 'soft' horizontal organisational form, is important if local support is to be mobilised and retained.

Houssard, Ruffray, Fabre and Bindner⁵⁸ all talk about the importance of partnerships in rural development initiatives in fostering a mutual understanding between rural actors and a more efficient and cohesive way of working. Specifically, two actors, working on rural development projects, Bindner and Fabre⁵⁹ see this kind of territorial recomposition as a counterbalance to globalisation; in order to cope with globalisation people need to work together. Indeed, Fabre suggests that the commune, the traditional unit of territorial organisation, does not mean anything anymore in the new era of globalisation, and instead new collectivities should be formed at whatever larger scale is appropriate. Furthermore, endogeneity is often considered to be inclusive and centres on the empowerment of local actors, by conferring them with agency. But to assume that this inclusivity is always real or the functioning of local social relations is always directed towards collective goals avoiding the marginalisation of some actors, is not supported by the narratives of many farmers. The opportunities provided by collective working depend significantly on the manner of their delivery and the agreement on, or the progressive agreement on basic world views that are in

⁵⁶ For a discussion about the way in which farmers and conservationists hold different values of nature see Carr & Tait, 1990; McEachern, 1992

⁵⁷ Augé, p.201; Bataille, p.200; Crepin, p.170, p.202; Fabre, p.206.

⁵⁸ Houssard, p.203; Ruffray, p.203; Fabre, p.206; Bindner, p.220.

⁵⁹ Bindner, p.207; Fabre, p.206.

themselves shifting (see Crepin⁶⁰). For example, it is not enough just to pay farmers to clear ditches or plant trees for a subsidy. Enrolment in a scheme does not equate to attitudinal change (see Morris & Potter, 1995). What is important is the mutuality that comes through partnerships to establish a common understanding and sensitivity, which in turn generates a capacity to build upon. Richards⁶¹, however, contests this territorial organisation. In this he is both advocating a traditional form of sectoral organisation and a more radical opposition to the rescaling of territory because of what he sees as a series of tensions in a vertical sense, between local groups of actors and those viticultural civil servants operating in regional and national circuits. A further consequence is that as horizontal forms of organisation and consensus emerge between certain local actors and territories over multifunctionality, this may serve to undermine the established relationship between local producers and their representatives at a regional level.

⁶⁰ Crepin, p.202.

⁶¹ Richards, p.169.

Towards a Broader Understanding of European Rural Change

Chapter one discusses the conceptualisation of rural change according to a transitional shift, from a period of productivism to one of post-productivism. It is argued that whilst an identification of the diagnostic components of productivism and post-productivism is useful as a means to establish that a secular change in agrarian priorities is occurring, there is a growing imperative to elaborate upon this conceptual tool through empirical enquiry. The need to do so is emphasised by the emergence of a collective, if unorganised, scholarly project which seeks to investigate rural change in Western Europe across a variety of geographical settings that differ in their social, cultural and political-economy makeup. It is this diversity that renders the translation of indicators of post-productivism from one space to another problematic. In particular, there have been no attempts to apply the ideas of the PPT, developed largely in northern Europe, to change in the rural economies and societies of Mediterranean Europe.

The discussion in chapter one identified what are commonly agreed to be the components of post-productivism, and drew on a range of empirical studies to reveal the differentiated nature of the shift to post-productivism. The co-existence of productivist and post-productivist policies, farming practices, ideologies and norms is manifest at different scales of analysis. A patchwork of productivist and post-productivist strategies is evident across the rural spaces of Western Europe. Likewise, they co-exist within farming communities in particular regions, resulting in a plurality of views held by agricultural actors surrounding, for example, the adoption of environmentally-friendly farming practices and differing motivations for enrolment in AE schemes (Morris & Potter, 1995; Battershill & Gilg, 1996; 1997). If we reduce the scale of analysis still further, productivist and post-productivist thought and actions are exhibited simultaneously by individual farmers (see Wilson, 1997; Lobley & Potter, 1998) often leading to apparently contradictory

behaviour, if it is interpreted within the dichotomous frame of productivism and post-productivism. This diversity or spatial heterogeneity in actors' positions towards post-productivism is further compounded by the fact that farmers are operating within a range of structural constraints which force them into the pursuit of strategies which at times lie in contradiction to their personal values and belief-systems. Added to this geographical or spatial unevenness is a temporal dimension, for the internal logic of productivism and post-productivism, through the application of the prefix 'post', imbues the conceptual device with an implied directionality and sequentiality. Thus, not only is there an uneven 'geography' inherent in farmers' attitudes towards the environment, but attitudinal change occurs at different times and therefore renders it difficult to identify in real-time terms when a shift has occurred or, perhaps more specifically, when one phase finishes and is superseded by its successor.

These observations lead Wilson (2001) to suggest that rather than focusing exclusively on the elements of productivism and post-productivism, along with an overt emphasis on the macro-economic forces driving agricultural change, the concept requires elaboration. He argues that attention must be afforded to one of the hitherto neglected dimensions of the post-productivist transition, specifically whether the values of actors directly involved in processes of agricultural change reflect the postulated shift to post-productivism. By drawing on a range of studies conducted within the frame of actor-centred and behaviourally-grounded approaches, he seeks to reveal the multidimensional coexistence, through time and across space, of productivist and post-productivist thought and actions in different actor-spaces. This diversity leads him to suggest that different actors are situated at different points along a productivism - post-productivism spectrum, the corollary of which is the conceptualisation of change in transitional terms.

It is also suggested in chapter one that a transitional conceptualisation of change could be elaborated upon still further through an actor-centred approach which

focuses upon the social processes underpinning change. This has the potential to examine both the processes through which an individual moves from one point on the spectrum to another, but also those processes which underpin the social construction of personally-held meanings. These meanings engage with a range of abstract questions such as an actor's identity, sense of freedom (Carr & Tait, 1990) and relations with nature (Morris & Andrews, 1997), to more concrete matters such as whether they see themselves as 'winners' or 'losers' in an economic sense, or marginalised (or otherwise) in terms of local social and political relations. An understanding of the processes underpinning the social construction of meanings would help to explain why an individual occupies a particular position on the spectrum.

This particular case study provides an opportunity to develop some of these ideas. It is not an explicit aim of the research to identify whether the viticulture sector of the Languedoc is entering a post-productivist phase. Such an imposition of an analytical structure runs counter to the principles of a bottom-up approach and the epistemology that underpins it. However, the material does illuminate and elaborate upon some of these ideas and therefore can be said to contribute to wider conceptual debates about the nature of agricultural change as presented in chapter one, and realised through the hybridisation of local understandings and meta-narratives of change.

The empirical material collected for the Languedoc case study clearly demonstrates the difficulty in identifying in real-time terms when a shift in agrarian priorities has occurred, for the requisite transformation of actors' attitudes occurs at different times, and indeed, some actors may be seen to be at once 'modernisers' and 'traditionalists' in their responses to different dynamics. For some farmers there is not a disavowal of previously-held practices, norms or belief-systems. Thus, they continue to adhere to the practices of a traditional mode of production, often founded on normative preoccupations including the innate pleasure of producing

large volumes of grapes. Others exhibit an adherence to the norms and ideologies of collectivist working, and express resistance to the restructuring of the cooperative and its adoption of the principles of profit-making and hierarchical decision-making. In practice, the situation is even more complicated because an adherence to traditional norms is also represented among some farmers who have modernised their farms. In other words, it is common for individual farmers to hold historically-rooted social norms alongside modernising business strategies and outlooks. Those farmers who are prepared, or have the means, to take economic risks by investing in quality production and the uncertainties of globally competitive wine production, often seek 'refuge' or some sense of certainty in traditional and local social relations and behavioural forms. Only some respondents saw the 'contradictions' in such a position and advocated, or accepted, the necessary local changes in social and political relations either to meet the regional and global imperatives associated with the economic restructuring of the wine industry, or to adopt a multifunctional perspective necessary to meet a wider social purpose for farming in the twenty-first century. From this it must be concluded that shifts in the positions of individuals are multidimensional and an appropriation of a modernising logic in terms of agricultural production does not automatically equate to a concurrent shift of position to an acceptance of the provision by farmers of 'modern' consumption goods.

Part of this complexity lies in the variable relationships actors have with their Languedoc-based pasts. The majority perceive that the region's identification with the production of table wine has to be subsumed by a more positive image, and one which incorporates a range of local resources into a reconstructed territorial identity (see Ray, 1998). One of the 'contradictions' this leads to is, on the one hand, the rejection of one relationship with the past, and on the other, its replacement with another which emphasises the importance of a collective organisation of wine production, an organisational form rooted in the past. Therefore, although actors' experiences of change are characterised by some 'universal' tendencies, such as

increased mechanisation, the shift to quality and a growing awareness of the multifunctional roles demanded by society, these shifts are adopted by different actors at different times, whilst at the same time, allegiances to a past-regime persist.

The conclusion must be that actors' understandings of change cannot be compressed into the constituent elements of either productivism or post-productivism and points to the expediency of moving away from the reductionism inherent in a diagnostic conceptualisation of change. These local understandings of change incorporate a whole series of shifts which are engaged in differently, from 'traditional' to 'modern' forms of production, from the production of quantity to quality, from productivism to multifunctionality. These shifts could be conceived as a series of overlapping planes, comprising cultural, economic and social dimensions. As actors, they are exposed to the forces of globalisation and the imposition of new consumption demands which ricochet against their varying allegiances to social norms, cultural identities and economic rationality. At different times, all of these elements may be drawn upon to inform an actor's motivations, the strategies pursued and the choices taken, resulting in positions that are economically rational or framed by normative concerns. It is the interaction of these different elements that explains the diversity in positions, suggesting the expediency of a more holistic and integrative conceptualisation of change.

Finally, the narratives of the case study actors, along with the interpretation of this material, has served to reveal a diversity in the positions of actors in this particular network towards the broad changes unfurling in the viticulture sector of the Languedoc. Of particular note is that the individualised accounts of change of the farmers reveal a greater range of positions compared with those of off-farm actors. Off-farm actors, including cooperative administrators, local civic actors and regional officials are reasonably unanimous in their view about the expediency of the shift to quality wine production, for example. They can be seen to be rehearsing

an economically rational view, free from the burden of personal commitments to local, social collectivist norms. The production of quality wine, the emergence of multifunctional roles, and the attendant synergies and partnerships that ensue are neither universally engaged in nor do they impart universal opportunities. Some actors contest these broad shifts. They perceive them as either a threat to personal belief-systems, often epitomised by traditional cooperativist principles, or they feel that they are being marginalised in the hegemonic dynamics of modernisation and globalisation. In turn, perceptions of threats impact upon actors' motivations and actions, propelling them to disengage from decision-making and knowledge-sharing spaces, or in extreme cases to consider leaving the cooperative and viticulture altogether. In contrast, there is a group of 'active engagers' who, through preferential access to a range of knowledge and cultural resources, finance and social capital perceive that they are able to capture the opportunities afforded by a particular trajectory of change and ultimately prosper. There exists a pattern of 'winners' and 'losers' in this landscape of change, and one which emerges from the personal accounts of local actors. This observation suggests an interesting avenue for future research, based on the supposition that these differences in experience and the emergent pattern of 'winners' and 'losers' may be ascribed to a variable capacity to act. One way forward might be the application of Actor Network Theory (see Callon, 1986; Law, 1986; Murdoch, 1997; 2000) to explore to what degree the ability of an actor to exploit, and in turn create, opportunities is a function of their capacity to mobilise resources. Such a study to incorporate an analysis of power relations and the processes which underpin the exercise of power at the micro-level into the post-productivist transition would allow an examination of the processes which underpin an actor's movement, in one direction or another, along the spectrum of productivist – post-productivist thought and action, serving to elaborate the concept's explanatory power.

The discussion has hitherto focused on the specific case study and the direction in which research into the social processes underpinning agricultural change could be

taken. At this stage, attention is turned to other case studies, to identify, in brief, trajectories, or aspects of change which are common to them all. This is by no means an exhaustive review, but the discussion points to the emergence of two key similarities, the identification of which presages a series of questions which could serve to frame future research. Firstly, there is a growing body of literature that recognises the importance of place and the re-territorialisation of agricultural production (Ilbery & Kneafsey, 1998; Nygard & Storstad, 1998; Van der Ploeg, 2000). Viticultural production in the Languedoc is becoming embedded even more firmly in the local physical, natural, cultural and human resource base, and in the attempt to differentiate their products, the VPE have appropriated local cultural markers. This observation has a clear resonance with the work of Ray (1998; 1999a; 1999b) and Kneafsey *et al.*, (2001) who have examined the role of local cultural resources in developing regional capacities and underpinning endogenous rural development. In a similar vein, Van der Ploeg, (2000) argues that one of the characteristics of the new rural development paradigm is the appropriation and creation of a new resource base, and the ways in which resources that were obsolete under modernisation are reconstituted as representing value in alternative development strategies. The second area of similarity lies in a growing recognition that the capacity for collective action at the local level is one of the key elements of the 'new' rural development paradigm as revealed in the work of Brunori & Rossi (2000). Local collective action is often the result of the formation of new interrelationships between farmers, rural actors and society at large (see Knickel and Renting, 2000 for a discussion on the creation of coalitions between actors around the dairy and organic farming sector of the Rhön area, Germany, which in turn creates new opportunities for growth). More specifically, in the light of these commonalities, the following questions could provide the basis of an on-going research agenda:

- Which territories, as this can no longer be assumed to be a given, are participating in the new rural development paradigm and in what ways?

- Does the new paradigm provide a realisable strategy for marginal agricultural regions with a relatively intact stock of cultural and natural resources?
- Are there certain regionally-embedded resources (comprising cultural, natural and social capital) which allow some regions to adapt to this trajectory more easily than others?
- Does amplified cooperation serve to enhance regional capacities and in turn allow regions or actor-groups to negotiate more successfully the interaction between local and extra-local dynamics of change?
- Does such a development trajectory confer more broadly distributed opportunities or only build upon the existing pattern of 'winners' and 'losers'?

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Appendix 1. Semi-Structured Farmer Interviews, Question Check-List

Introduction: I am conducting this research as part of a PhD project. I am linked to the geography department at the University of London. I intend to conduct approximately 30 interviews with farmers from Nissan and Lespignan cooperatives. These interviews are part of a larger project, I will also interview administrators in the VPE and viticultural representatives at la DDAF, la DRAF and the Chamber of Agriculture in Montpellier to gain a broad perspective on recent changes in viticulture in this region. The aim of the research is to gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which farmers have experienced the profound changes to beset the viticulture sector of the Languedoc over the last twenty-five years.

All of the responses you give will be confidential and when I write up the research, your identity will be disguised through the use of a pseudonym if I quote what you say directly. I hope you feel that you can talk to me as freely and openly as possible. I want to emphasise that there are not any right or wrong answers to the questions that I will ask, only that I am interested to hear your personal views on the subject of the question.

The interview is arranged into 5 parts. In the first section I will ask you some specific questions about your farm business. In the second section we will talk in brief about your family history. The third section relates to the cooperative, how it is organised and governed. In the fourth section we will discuss the changes that you have experienced on your farm business and in the final section we will talk about the agri-environmental programmes run by the VPE.

I expect that the interview will last between an hour and an hour and a half. In order to record your responses I can either take notes as we speak or tape the interview. I would prefer to tape the interview because this will allow me to concentrate more on our discussion. When we have finished I will take notes

from the tape and then it will be erased. No-one else will hear the tapes and the responses are confidential. Do you mind if I tape the interview?

Before we start, do you have any questions?

Contextual Information

Birthplace

When did you move to Nissan-lez-Ensérune and why?

- inheritance of land

Age (20 - 29, 30 - 39, 40 - 49, 50 - 59, 60 - 69, 70+)

Profession?

- full-time, part-time vinegrower?

- do you have any other jobs?

What is the size of your farm business (hectares)?

Do you own all of this land or do you manage the land for someone else?

- who else? - family members

Do you employ anyone to help you with the farm business?

Do you receive help from family members?

Do you have a successor?

Is all of your land planted with vines or do you cultivate any other crops?

What proportion of your vineyard is planted with improved grape varieties?

When did you start replanting?

What grape varieties have you planted?

Have you received any formal training related to viticulture?

Did you learn about viticulture from other sources?

How long have you been a member of Nissan cooperative?

Do you play an administrative role in the cooperative? Have you in the past?

- administrative council, VPE committees

Do you play any roles in the local community?

- Credit Agricole, la SAFER, mutual credit society

Section 2.

To begin, can you describe to me the history of you close family in relation to viticulture?

- other vinegrowers in the family

Did they farm in the commune of Nissan?

Did they own the vines they farmed or were they a tenant farmer?

- who did they work for? - family members or a boss

Were they a member of Nissan cooperative?

What have you inherited from them?

- in terms of land, an apprenticeship, an appreciation of the vine

Were you the only successor?

- before retiring, did your father sell any of his land, uproot his vines

Is the way you manage the farm business different from that of your father?

Section 3

I understand that 7 village cooperatives fused to form le CEPRO in 1976 and the VPE was created 5 years ago.

- what were the drivers behind these fusions?

Do you perceive that there have been any significant changes in the cooperative as a result of these fusions?

How would you describe these changes?

- governance
- organisation
- functioning

Have these changes conferred advantages to you as a cooperative member?

- effect on farm business
- effect on relationship with the cooperative

Have these changes conferred disadvantages to you as a cooperative member?

What are the successes of the fusion in your opinion?

- did you support the fusion?
- did you regard it as necessary?

What are the weaknesses of the fusion in your opinion?

What role does the cooperative serve for you?

- social
- economic

- provider of information

Has the role of the cooperative changed since you first became a member?

What are the advantages of being a member of a cooperative?

Do you (or have you) served on the administrative council of your village cooperative or the VPE?

Can you describe to me the role of the administrative council and the President?

- do they play a representative role?
- as a channel of communication?
- if you have any concerns or worries do you communicate them to a member of the administrative council?

I understand that each year there are elections to elect the cooperative President and members of the administrative council. Do you vote in these elections?

- if not, why not?

Do you receive advice or information pertinent to the running of your farm business from sources other than the cooperative?

Section 4.

I would like to talk about the changes in viticulture over the last twenty-five years.

What have been the significant changes on your farm business?

- in the vineyard
- in terms of vineyard practices

What has been your motivation for introducing these changes?

Has the cooperative supported you in making these changes?

Have you encountered difficulties in adapting to these changes?

If we talk more generally, what have been the principle changes in the policies of the cooperative?

- the reorientation towards the production of varietal wines
- the reorientation towards the production of Vins de Pays
- a diversification of activity
- an engagement in agri-environmental activities

Do you see these changes as conferring advantages on you as a farmer?

- for the success of your farm business?

Do they provide you with opportunities?

- greater choice

How do you anticipate viticulture in this region will evolve in years to come?

Section 5.

The VPE are involved in several environmental initiatives. Are you familiar with these?

Where did you learn about these initiatives?

In your opinion, what are the objectives of these initiatives?

- environmental objectives
- to promote the image of the region
- to increase the value of the product? (Are there other possibilities to increase the value of your product?)

In your opinion, do these initiatives deliver advantages?

Who benefits from these advantages?

- the farmer
- the VPE
- the consumer / society at large

In your opinion, are there certain individuals who have been particularly influential in the promotion of these initiatives?

- can you identify them?

In your opinion why are they committed to pursuing these initiatives?

Have you participated in any of these initiatives?

- AE programme, CTE, la PLAC

If so, which one?

If so, what are your reasons for doing so?

- personal motivations
- conferring advantages to the individual farm business

Can you describe your experiences of participating in this scheme?

Do you regard yourself as an ambassador of these schemes?

- do you see a role for yourself in promoting them to others?

If you have not participated, what are your reasons?

- time constraints
- financial constraints
- geographical constraints

Do you think you will change your position in the future?

- what factors would encourage you to do so?

Do you think vinegrowers will be more disposed to participate in these schemes in the future?

Thank you for a most interesting conversation and for your time in talking to me.

Appendix 2. Context Sheet for Formal and Informal Interviews

Actor

Date of interview

Meeting number

Interview setting

Others present

Contacts made

1/ Preparation, gaining access

Recruitment

Gatekeepers

Gaining access

2/ Contextual information

Actor's position within institution

Institution

Role of institution

Affiliation with other institutions / roles in other organisations – multiple roles
in network

What « hat » they are wearing

Brief career history

Sense that an institutional line is being advanced or more personal account

3/ Relations between interviewer and interviewee

General characterisation of our relationship (met in social context, multiple meetings, anonymous interviewer etc.)

The nature of the role played by interviewer (ignoramous, pupil, expert / authority)

Does this role or the subject positions of "researcher" and "researched" change during the course of the interview? What factors come into play to affect this shift in dynamic? (For example, the negotiation of power and control, prompted by anything particular in the interview)

Any immediate tangible effects on interview content

4/ Additional information

Appendix 3. A chronological account of taped interviews, untaped interviews and participation events in each fieldwork phase

Field Trip 1, Taped Interviews.

NU.	DATE, 1999	ACTOR	MTG NU.	INSTITUTION	POSITION
1	13 Sep.	M. Cheylan	1	Maison de la Géographie	Researcher
2	16 Sep.	M. Guiheneuf	1	GEYSER	Agri-environment consultant
3	20 Sep.	Mme Dance	1	Domaine de Piquet, Grabels	Viticulture proprietor with teaching responsibilities. Involved in training vinegrowers in association with Montpellier's agricultural lycée
4	22 Sep.	M. Richards	2	La DRAF	Civil servant, Agriculture Administration, viticulture service

Field Trip 1, Untaped Interviews.

NU.	DATE, 1999	ACTOR	MTG NU.	INSTITUTION	POSITION
1	3 Sep.	M. Richards	1	La DRAF	Civil servant, Agriculture Administration, viticulture service
2	14 Sep.	M. Chevalier	1	La DDAF	Viticulture service
3	18 Sep.	M. Cebrain	1	Domaine de Piquet, Grabels	Permanent viticultural labourer
4	20 Sep.	Clare Quelin	1	Chambre d'Agriculture de l'Hérault	Responsible for local Agri-Environment schemes
5	22 Sep.	Dr Touzard	1	INRA, Montpellier	Researcher on viticulture sector, Languedoc

					cooperative system and rural restructuring
6	23 Sep.	M. Gazels	1	VPE	Responsible for environmental and territorial initiatives
7	4 Oct.	Dr Buller	1	Paris VII University	Academic

Field Trip 1, Participation Events.

NU.	DATE, 1999	EVENT
1	27 Aug.	History of viticulture, Montpellier. Square Planchon, 'Jardin des Plantes'.
2	31 Aug.	Farmer protest organised by ' <i>la Confédération Paysanne</i> ' for the freeing of José Bové.
3	1 – 3 Sep.	Statistical Service, la DRAF. Identification of agriculture institutions, initial tracing of viticulture networks.
4	13 Sep.	Visit to ' <i>Maison de l'Environnement</i> ' to determine their role at the interface of viticulture networks, in terms of AE initiatives and the CTE.
5	15 Sep.	Visit Béziers, the region's 'wine capital'.
6	17 Sep.	Visit to Maraussan cooperative, headquarters of VPE and surrounding villages
7	18 Sep.	' <i>Vendanges à l'ancienne</i> ', Domaine de Piquet, participated in traditional grape harvest, discussions on local history
8	20 Sep.	Visit library at the Chamber of Agriculture, l'Hérault, to assess access to library resources and range of documents
9	28 Sep.	Café Ecologiste, Montpellier. Discussion on ' <i>Quel aménagement pour le littoral languedocien?</i> '

Field Trip 2, Taped Interviews.

NU.	DATE, 2000	ACTOR	MTG NU.	INSTITUTION	POSITION
1	13 July	Louis Desaille	1	VPE	Vinegrower
2	20 July	Joseph Freyssinet	1	VPE	Vinegrower
3	20 July	Gérard Teyssier	1	VPE	Vinegrower
4	25 July	Gabriel	1	VPE	Vinegrower

		Garcia			
5	26 July	Patrick Perret	1	VPE	Vinegrower
6	28 July	Charles Valadour	1	VPE	Vinegrower
7	29 July	Marcel Chatonnier	1	VPE	Vinegrower
8	7 Aug.	Lionel Blanchet	1	VPE	Vinegrower
9	9 Aug.	Renée Bonnet	2	VPE	Vinegrower
10	10 Aug.	André Laroche	4	VPE	Vinegrower
11	12 Sep.	Didier Gazels	3	VPE	Responsible for environmental initiatives
12	27 Sep.	Jean-Luc Lopez	1	VPE, Foncalieu	Commercial Director
13	27 Sep.	David Mavor	1	Bibendum	Australian Oenologue
14	3 Oct.	M. Frances	1	'La Domitienne', Communauté des Communes	President
15	6 Oct.	Antoine Paillard	2	VPE	Vinegrower
16	9 Oct.	Celine Roux	1	Cru de Minervois	Responsible for the CTE of Minervois
17	9 Oct.	Mme Corona-Champrigaud	1	ADAPM 'Association pour le développement de l'aménagement du Pays Minervois'	Director of ' <i>charte intercommunale</i> ' of Minervois
18	10 Oct.	M. Phan	1	Conseil Général	Tourism and wine
19	10 Oct.	Florence Martin	1	VPE	Vinegrower
20	10 Oct.	Serge Deschamps	1	VPE	Vinegrower
21	11 Oct.	Henri Masson	1	VPE	Vinegrower
22	11 Oct.	Bernard Lacroix	1	VPE	Vinegrower
23	11 Oct.	Raymond	1	VPE	Vinegrower

		Simon			
24	12 Oct.	Amélie & Vincent Jarrige	1	VPE	Vinegrowers
25	13 Oct.	Christophe Sabassier	1	VPE	Vinegrower
26	16 Oct.	M. Storai	1	Conseil Général	Director of agriculture department
27	16 Oct.	Daniel Crepin	1	La DIREN	Civil servant
28	17 Oct.	Jean-Luc Fauré	1	VPE, Foncalieu	Director
29	18 Oct.	Yvette Beauverie	2	VPE	Vinegrower, elected representative of Chamber of Agriculture, l'Hérault
30	19 Oct.	Michel Chastaing	1	VPE	Vinegrower
31	20 Oct.	M. Cabane	1	La DDAF	Environmental service
32	24 Oct.	Frédéric Bonnet	1	VPE	Retired vinegrower
33	28 Oct.	Xavier Duchamp	1	VPE	Vinegrower
34	2 Nov.	François Buisson	1	VPE	Vinegrower, deputy Mayor, Lespignan
35	2 Nov.	Pierre Jaurès	2	VPE	Vinegrower
36	3 Nov.	Michel Bataille	3	VPE	Vinegrower, President VPE

Field Trip 2, Untaped Interviews.

NU.	DATE, 2000	ACTOR	MT G NU.	INSTITUTION	POSITION	THEMES
1	10 May	Didier Gazels	2	VPE	Environment representative	Introduction to research, negotiating access
2	12 May	Jean-Claude	1	Municipal Council,	Mayor	Introduction to research and stay

		Galan		Nissan		in village
3	12 May	M. Pinchon	1	Foyer Rural, Nissan	President	Role of Foyer Rural in village life, history and administration of institution, cultural activities and services, cooperative – village relations
4	17 May	André Laroche	1	Municipal Council, Nissan	Elected representative, vinegrower	Introduced research, advised to contact president of Nissan cooperative. Talking about identity of village in relation to viticulture, employment, social and labour relations
5	23 May	Renée Bonnet	1	Nissan Cooperative	President and coop. manager	Introduce research, approaching farmers for interview
6	1 June	Mme Françoise Hivert	1	Capestang Cooperative	Employee	Territorial activities of VPE
7	2 June	André Laroche	2	Nissan cooperative	Vinegrower, Municipal council	Selecting two cooperatives for farmer interviews, circumscribing case study area, discuss draft farmer interview script
8	2 June	Mme Jeanette Reverte	1		'Midi Libre' journalist	Viticulture change, boss-worker relations, 'Basses Plaines de l'Aude' project involving VPE
9	3 June	Michel Bataille	1	President	VPE	Introduction to research

10	3 June	Mme Myrian Tangogne	1	Resp. for local agri-env. schemes	Chamber of Agriculture, l'Hérault	Introduction to research
11	4 June	Antoine Paillard	1	VPE	President Capestan g coop.	Organised hike through vineyards. Introduction
12	4 June	Mme Françoise Hivert	2	VPE	Employee	Supper. Union of VPE with Foncalieu, farmer responses
13	13 June	Dr Ann Honegger	1	CNRS lab., Paul Valéry University	Academic	Introduction to our respective research interests; introduced to Prof. Alain Berger, Laurence Fabbri, Francois Michaud, PhD students.
14	14 June	Philippe Mendz	1	VPE	Cooperative manager, Nissan	Structural information on Nissan coop., age pyramid of members, production total, size of farms, full-time / part-time farmers, discussed farmer interview script
15	20 June	M. Laurent Rippert	1	'Syndicat mixte de la Basse Vallée de l'Orb'	Water engineer	Advice on incorporating flood information in CTE, river basin management in relation to 'CTE Saint-Chinian', water management an issue in the 'Basses Plaines de l'Aude'
16	27 – 28 June	Dr Jacques Blanchet	1	INRA, Grignan, Paris	Researcher	
17	27 – 28 June	Dr Alain Revel	1	INRA, Grignan,	Researcher	

				Paris		
18	28 June	Dr Touzard	2	INRA, Montpellier	Researcher	Meeting with Masters student, Kristen Lucbert. Dissertation on 3 CTEs (<i>Ensérune, Cru de Minervois, l'Etang de l'Or</i>). Touzard started to trace Administrative networks of CTE
19	13 July	Louis Fonquerné	1	VPE	Former president of Nissan cooperative	History of Nissan cooperative, creation of CEPRO and VPE
20	18 July	André Laroche	3	VPE	Vinegrower	Identification of farmer sample for interview - Nissan
21	19 July	Jean-Marc Ribet	1	Chateau de la Vernède	Proprietor	'Domaine' system, viticultural aristocracy
22	1 August	Michel Bataille	2	VPE	President	Research update, choice of second cooperative for farmer sample – Cazouls or Lespignan, AE schemes, VPE as innovative group
23	2 August	M. Naudo	1	VPE	Vinegrower	Untaped farmer interview
24	4 August	Yvette Beauverie	1	VPE	Vinegrower, elected representative of Chamber of Agriculture, l'Hérault	Introduce research, justify use for farmers, policy-makers, academic, where published etc. Role of Chamber of Agriculture & Michel Bataille, political motivation for initiating CTE
25	10 August	Toni Cano	1	VPE	Vinegrower	Untaped farmer interview

26	28 August	André Laroche	5	VPE	Vinegrower	Visit to St. Pons & St-Chinian, relation of villagers to Australian wine-makers, cooperative membership, the marginalised
27	30 August	Mellyn Massebiau	1	Conseil Général	Research placement	Working on department's CTEs, political context of CTE, history of Ensérune CTE, Administrative response
28	6 Sep.	M. Chapeau	1	Carrefour	Viticulture buyer, integrated agriculture	Future directions of agriculture, productivist agenda, environmental discourse, relationship between producers and supermarkets
29	6 Sep.	M. Serge Puel	1	VPE	Director of the 'Commission du Terroir'	Future directions of agriculture, productivist agenda, environmental discourse, relationship between producers and supermarkets
30	7 Sep.	Willy Tujague	1		Nissan villager	Village social relations, importance of rugby, family links, viticulture – village relations
31	18 – 19 Sep.	Laurence Fabbri	1	CNRS lab. Montpellier Uni.	PhD student	Network tracing and institutional roles
32	18 – 19 Sep.	Dr Ann Honegger	2	CNRS lab. Montpellier Uni.	Researcher	Network tracing and institutional roles

33	4 Oct.	Pierre Jaurès	1	VPE	President of Lespignan coop., vinegrower	Discussion of farmer interviews in Lespignan, selecting farmer sample, CTE
34	12 Oct.	Alain Landes	1	VPE, Foncalieu	Vinegrower	Trip to farm, discussion of management practices in relation to the CTE
35	14 Oct.	M. Pugibet	1	Domaine de la Colombe	Vinegrower	Quality production, experimentation with grape varieties and vinification techniques, marketing strategies
36	14 Oct.	Sylvie Fontaine	1	Domaine Daumas-Gassac	Wine-buyer for German distributor	Quality production, European commodity chain, consumer preferences
37	14 Oct.	M. Flavard	1	Domaine de Granouplac	Vinegrowers	
38	20 Oct.	M. Phan	2	Conseil Général	Oenotourism service	Discussion on tourism and wine sectors in regional economy
39	27 Oct.	Yvette Beauverie	3	VPE	Vinegrower, elected rep. in Chamber of Agri., l'Hérault	Elections for Chamber of Agriculture, teams, who they represent and voting procedure, Bataille's campaign. Viticulture crisis.
40	30 Oct.	Prof. Montaigne	1	INRA-ENSAM	Academic	Discussion about my research

41	30 Oct.	Dr JM Touzard	3	INRA	Researcher	Research update
42	30 Oct.	Marcel Chatonnier	2	VPE	Vinegrower	Lack of loyalty to cooperative, loss of faith, disenchantment
43	1 Nov.	André Laroche	6	VPE	Vinegrower	Analysis / reflections on my experience, feedback
44	6 Nov.	Prof. Raymond Couderc	1	Mairie de Béziers, Paul Valéry University	Mayor of Béziers	Introduce research and discussion of social and economic role of viticulture in Biterrois region
45	6 Nov.	Prof. Alain Berger	1	CNRS laboratory Paul Valéry Uni.	Academic	Thank laboratory for support and hospitality

Field Trip 2, Participation Events.

NU.	DATE, 2000	EVENT
1	10 May	Dr Francois Leger, INRA. Presentation of student project about conflicting land use and management within Ensérune territory with invited audience of local actors. Opportunity to introduce work.
2	12 May	Filming of ' <i>Nissan under the occupation</i> '. Organised by ' <i>Les Amis de Nissan</i> '. Occasion to meet villagers and introduce research.
3	17 May	Meeting of ' <i>Comité de la Ramade</i> ', preparation for Nissan's traditional labourer's fete. Most members of Municipal Council present and cooperative representatives.
4	18 May	Village meeting about recycling initiative, tabled by Mayor. Afterwards ate with members of Municipal Council, discussed my work; composition and functioning of Municipal Council; history of Nissan as viticulture village.
5	19 May	Spent day in the Mayor's office, looking at cadastral plans, land ownership, viticulture families.
6	23 May	Attended meeting of Nissan cooperative's Administrative Council, informal presentation of research to members of team. Discussion of market crisis, stocks of unsold wine and preparation for national ' <i>Fête du Vin et de la Vigne</i> '.

7	25 May	Meeting of the ' <i>Comité de la Ramade</i> '.
8	27 May	Set up exhibition in village hall of old photographs and artefacts for labourer's fete.
9	27 May	General Assembly of rugby club.
10	28 May	Labourer's fete. VPE stall, sat in street with Nissan cooperative President, introduced to people.
11	30 May	Simone, an old villager took me to visit local sites of historical interest - <i>Etang de Montady, Tour de Montady, 15th Century chapels, Tunnel de Malpas, Canal de Midi, Oppidum d'Ensérune</i> . Many of these are represented in the VPE logo. On our return she requested that we drove around the village square three times, waving to her friends from an English car.
12	3 June	Bird count and survey of the nests of the ' <i>pie grièche à poitrine rose</i> ' with farmers and ornithologists.
13	3 June	' <i>Fête du Vin et de la Vigne</i> ', cooperative meal.
14	4 June	Hike through the vineyards and meal at Capestang cooperative.
15	10 June	General Assembly of Nissan rugby club.
16	13 June	Meeting of working group of ' <i>Pays d'Ensérune</i> ' project, tensions between different stakeholders.
17	16 June	' <i>Assises Environnementales</i> ', Narbonne. Michel Bataille gave a presentation on the role of farmers and their participation in flood management in the ' <i>Basses Plaines de l'Aude</i> '.
18	16 June	Inauguration of water purification station, invited by Mr. Galan, Mayor of Nissan. Attended by VPE representatives, local politicians, prefect and deputy prefect of l'Hérault.
19	26 – 29 June	IDEAS meeting. EU-funded project on agricultural innovation and diversification.
20	1 July	Inauguration of bird walk, Lespignan, leading through vineyards of VPE.
21	14 – 16 July	Village fête, meal for entire village in village square.
22	18 – 19 July	Field trip with Laurence Fabbri & Francois Michaud, PhD students. Visited each cooperative of the VPE and the whole of the VPE territory. Meeting at Chateau de la Vernède.
23	4 August	Meal for 200 farmers of Nissan cooperative to prepare for the start of the grape harvest, great anticipation, anecdotes about the harvest and grape pickers.
24	11 August	Farmer protest. Coaches from Nissan and other communes of VPE travelled to Montpellier. 500 protestors led by Jean Huillet, signalling their discontent against foreign imports and falling prices. Opportunity for farmer recruitment and show of support.
25	5 Sep.	Harvest of white grapes. In fields at 6am to harvest the Sauvignon grapes with Louis Desaille. Spent afternoon at the cooperative, met group of Australians oenologues. Talked through the vinification process, grape quality and differential payment system. During the harvest the cooperative is very busy, lots of activity, discussion and the sense that people are bound by

		a common activity.
26	6 Sep.	Visited vineyard with M. Chapeau, viticulture buyer for Carrefour, Serge Puel, Director of the ' <i>Commission du Terroir</i> ' and Gérard Teyssier, vinegrower. Examination of practices and management plans for ' <i>la conduite raisonnée</i> ' and farmer experience of this.
27	13 Sep.	Picked Carignan grapes by hand with team for a small farmer.
28	15 Sep.	Apéritif to celebrate the end of the harvest with Nissan cooperative members.
29	18 – 25 Sep.	University in Montpellier – identifying and contacting administrators / regional officials.
30	14 October	Visit to domains - <i>Domaine Daumas-Gassac, Domaine de la Colombette, Domaine Granouplac</i> - with David Mavor, Australian oenologue. Discussed their commitment to high quality production, growing techniques, experimentation with grape varieties, vinification techniques and marketing strategies.
31	20 October	' <i>Les passages viticoles héraultais, un atout pour le tourisme vert</i> ' – the cultural landscape of viticulture and green tourism. Conference organised by Gîtes de France with the participation of l'ENSAM, FDCCH, Conseil Général & Régional. Speakers Prof. Couderc, Prof. Alain Deloure & Dr Jean-Claude Martin, l'ENSAM.
32	21 - 22 October	<i>Pic St Loup</i> , AOC designated area. Hike through vineyards and wine tasting.
33	23 – 30 October	University of Montpellier, Agriculture Chamber and INRA library – collecting grey literature and policy documents.
34	26 October	' <i>Fête des primeurs des vins de l'Hérault</i> ', - the young wine from the 2000 vintage. VPE hosting event for the department, attended by viticulture representatives, Jean Huillet, Bataille, Fauré, Gazels, Augé, Storai, president of the Regional Council, the Prefect and Senator for l'Hérault. Coincides with start of celebrations for centenary anniversary of Maraussan cooperative.
35	27 October	' <i>Fête des primeurs</i> ', Lespignan, guest of M. Paletta, president of Lespignan cooperative. Celebrated with performance of ' <i>Coop Epopée</i> ' a play by Michel Cordes recounting the history of the VPE's cooperatives - local interpretation of key historical events. Presented with script of play.
36	3 Nov.	Meal for the 1500 members of the VPE to celebrate the end of the grape harvest, village hall in Cazedarnes & Cazouls. Congratulations for finishing harvest, presentation of awards, talk of crisis, must not be complacent.

Field Trip 3, Taped Interviews.

NU.	DATE (2001)	ACTOR	MTG NU.	INSTITUTION	POSITION
1	21 Feb.	Claudie Houssard	1	Le Conservatoire des Espaces Naturels	Responsible for abandoned agricultural lands, CTE
2	21 Feb.	Xavier Ruffray	1	Le GRIVE	Ornithologist, responsible for CTEs
3	23 Feb.	Alain Tonnelier	1		Livestock farmer
4	23 Feb.	M. Chevalier	2	La DDAF	Economic service
5	26 Feb.	Mme Villa	1	La DRAF	Civil servant, CTE
6	26 Feb.	Mme Fabre	1	Architecture et Territoire	Consultant working on local rural development initiatives
7	27 Feb.	M. Arénales	1	Chamber of Agriculture, l'Hérault	CTE coordinator
8	27 Feb.	M. Richards	4	La DRAF	Civil servant, Agriculture Administration
9	28 Feb.	Mme Barbara Bindner	1	'La Domitienne', intercommunal structure	Local territorial projects
10	28 Feb.	Hervé Guillard	1		Cereal farmer
11	1 Mar.	M. Thomas Erguy	1	Regional Chamber of Agriculture	Viticulture
12	1 Mar.	Carole Bernard	1	Regional Chamber of Agriculture	CTE
13	5 Mar.	M. Devic	1	Le Conseil Interprofessionnel des Vins du Languedoc, Narbonne	Director
14	6 Mar.	M. Besselat	1	La DDAF	Director of economic service
15	6 Mar.	Jean Huillet	1	La FDCCH	President FDCCH
16	6 Mar.	M. Augé	1	La FDCCH	Director

17	7 Mar.	Charlaine Jouillé	1	Conseil Général	Responsible for the Ensérune CTE
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Field Trip 3, Untaped Interviews.

NU.	DATE, 2001	ACTOR	MT G NU.	INSTITUTION	POSITION	THEMES
1	12 Feb.	Alain Revel	2	INRA	Researcher	M. Besselat contact
2	12 Feb.	Dr Touzard	4	INRA	Researcher	Presentation on history of Languedoc viticulture sector
3	12 Feb.	M. Richards	3	La DRAF	Civil servant	Viticulture sector
4	15 Feb.	Serge Perret-Martin	1		Vinegrower, St Christol	Environmentally-sustainable farming, Farre demonstration farm, CTE - St Christol

Field Trip 3, Participation Events.

NU.	DATE, 2001	EVENT
1	22 Feb.	Day organised by INRA on the CTE ' <i>l'Etang de Thau</i> ', practitioners, academics and participants
2	27 Feb.	Chamber of Agriculture, l'Hérault. Meeting for farmers, explaining CTE measures, advice on filling in contract forms, information dissemination and recruitment

**Appendix 4. The Partners of the
Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune as Identified by Themselves**

ACRONYM	INSTITUTION	ROLE
	La Pégase	Local environmental group – fought the expansion of viticulture in communes of Nissan and Lespignan in order to protect habitat of the 'pie grièche'. Its members are primarily urban ecologists although one farmer from Lespignan is an active member.
	Mairie	Commune – unit of local government Couple of farmers hold positions on the municipal council.
ASA		Irrigation group in Lespignan – charged with the desalination of the viticultural plain. Many farmers particularly in the commune of Lespignan worst affected by flooding of the river Aude belong to this group.
	Foyer Rural	Rural development, social activities. Worked with VPE on 'projet du pays'.
	Schools	Involved in ornithological walks
	Cereal and livestock producers	Associated with VPE through pilot committee of CTE d'Ensérune
	Communauté des Communes	Local territorial administrative unit, instituted through the intercommunal law passed in February, 1992
	'Architecture et Territoire'	Consultancy group – work throughout France, advising on inclusive and collective processes for the delivery of territorial / rural development projects. Helped VPE with 'projet de pays d'Ensérune'
CUMA	Coopératives d'Utilisation de Matériel Agricole	Machinery cooperatives
GAEC	Groupement agricole d'exploitation en commun	
	Private proprietors	Association through sharing machinery
	Oenologue team	Responsible for the vinification of the grapes of cooperative members. In the case of the VPE, this team

		consisted of traditional cooperative managers and peripatetic or “flying winemakers”
	Crédit Agricole	Established by Government to encourage agricultural modernisation. Farmers were provided with favourable rates of interest and tax relief to make capital investments and to increase the size of their holding. Many farmers sit on the local branch of the Crédit Agricole.
	Mutual Credit Societies	Many farmers sit on local branch of these societies.
SAFER	Société d’Aménagement Foncier et d’Etablissement Rural	Responsible for land market issues, consolidation of holdings etc. Set up to encourage the break up of large estates and re-distribution of land to small farmers. Many vinegrowers sit on local Administrative Council.
GEYSER		Agri-Environmental initiative delivery and evaluation.
GRIVE		Ornithological group. Participated in the pilot committee for the CTE d’Ensérune – environmental advisors.
	Conservatoire des Espaces Naturels	Participated in pilot committee for the CTE d’Ensérune.
DDE	Direction Départementale de l’Équipement	Role in pilot committee of the CTE d’Ensérune.
	Le Cru de Minervois	Defends the interests of the producers in the Minervois Cru.
ADAPM	Association pour le Développement et l’Aménagement du Pays Minervois	Rural development initiatives in the Minervois region
	Chambre Départementale de l’Agriculture	Comprises elected agricultural representatives which often include local mayors. Responsible for the promotion and dissemination of new policies, including the restructuring of holdings, improving quality and technological innovation (in terms of negotiation and not regulation). CTEs fall under its remit.
DDAF	Direction Départementale	Departmental component of the Agricultural Administration.

	d'Agriculture et des Forêts	Civil servants, ingénieurs and technicians Responsible for aids, subsidies.
CDOA	Commission Départementale de l'Orientalion Agricole	Reports to Prefect on CTE, responsible for department's agricultural strategy
ADASEA	Association Départementale pour l'Aménagement des Structures des Exploitations Agricoles	Agents work closely with farmers, serve as intermediaries between farmers and the DDAF. Retirement schemes for farmers and social security issues. Close links with SAFER. ADASEA meet regularly with farmers, often in village halls, providing them with technical advice and support.
	Préfecture – Beziars Water engineer	Plan de Prévention des Risques – controls land-use in areas of flooding
	Le Conseil Général	Departmental Council - increased role in CTEs
FDCCH	Fédération des Caves Coopératives de l'Hérault	Defend cooperation and the interests of their members – cooperatives and their members. Director worked closely with the VPE in the development of CTE d'Ensérune
FDSEA	Fédération Départementale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles	National agricultural union which has traditionally represented the interests of cereal-growers in the north
	Confédération Paysanne	Agricultural union, predominantly left wing Group standing for the Chamber of Agriculture elections
CNJA	Comité de Défense des Jeunes agriculteurs	Michelle Bataille – former President
	Carrefour	Tracability, clients – go and examine vineyards – source of product. National supermarket chain – largest in France. Particular interest in organic produce
INRA	Institut National de la Recherche Agricole	Work with Finance Director of the VPE in economic and market analyses, institutional restructuring and territorial advice
SIME	Service de Montagne et l'Elevage	Livestock producer group in upland areas, played key role in local AE initiatives
DIREN	Direction Régionale de	Regional branch of the Ministry of

	l'Environnement	Environment, administrative function. Civil servants.
CRAE	Commission Régionale Agri-Environnementale	Predominantly agricultural representatives and 2 representatives of environmental organisations. Defines regional priorities, controls budgets and oversees individual agri-environmental schemes.
	Chambre Régionale de l'Agriculture	Represents agriculture at the scale of the region. Mix of union leaders and elected agriculturists, technicians and agronomists. No financial or regulatory role.
DRAF	Direction Régionale de l'Agriculture et du Forêt	Regional antennae of the Ministry of Agriculture - administrative function. Civil servants, agricultural engineers and technicians. Regulatory and financial function.
	Conseil Régional	Regional Council. Agents play an increasingly important role in rural issues and represent new partners in the rural sphere. Involved in developing strategies for the region's agriculture, planning its future trajectory and in the formulation of PLACs, 'programmes locaux d'aménagement concerté' - local rural development initiatives with a territorial orientation.
ONIVINS	Office National Interprofessionnel des Vins	QUANGO. They are responsible for distribution of viticultural subsidies to vinegrowers. Engaged in drive for improved quality.
CIVL	Comité Interprofessionnel des Vins du Languedoc	Represents the interests of two economic actor-groups, AOC wine producers and wine merchants
	Foncalieu	Viticultural producer group
	Syndicat de Défense des Vins de Pays	Represents the interests of producers of Vins de Pays
	Ministry of the Environment	
	Ministry of Agriculture	
	INRA – Paris	Development of CTE with Bertrand Hervieu – close links with Bataille & Augé
Bibendum, London, UK		Wine brokers and distributors. Buyers of VPE wine.

**Appendix 5. The Codes Used in the Analysis of the Interview
Transcripts Arranged Alphabetically**

A PRIORI CODES	OPEN CODES
Activities (production / non-production)	
Advantage identification – shift to quality, shift to multifunctionality	
Agricultural strategies	
	Changing culture
	Class relations
Coalitions	
Collective capacity to act	
Cooperative role	
Cooperative restructuring	
	Disempowerment
	Enrolment
Drivers of change	
	Equity issues
Farm management	
Farmer's role	
Farmer identity	
Future visions	
	Freedom
Governance	
Individual capacity to act	
Individual motivation	
Information dissemination	
Ideas circulation	
	Isolation
Lack of motivation	
Leader's role	

	Marginalisation
Mobilisation	
Obstacles to change	
Opportunity non-perception	
Opportunity perception	
Partnerships	
	Pressures
Production system	
	Relationship to viticulture
Restructuring vineyard	
	Resistance
	Risk
Routines	
	Skills
	Specialisation of roles
	Speed of change
Threat non-perception	
Threat perception	
Vineyard restructuring	

Appendix 6 : Quotations in French

Local Experiences of Change

1. Lionel Blanchet : « Et à l'époque si tu veux, bon, un gars qui avait cinq hectares comme mon grand-père, il vivait très bien. Par la suite il a fallu vraiment agrandir les exploitations pour pouvoir vivre. Donc, au départ je me suis agrandi au fur et à mesure, en attendant d'avoir suffisamment de surface pour pouvoir laisser tomber mon boulot et faire que ça. C'est pendant cette génération-là, que les exploitations se sont agrandies pour que ça soit vivable, et donc c'est vrai qu'à l'époque, avec cinq hectares de vignes mon grand-père il vivait très bien quoi.

TC: Il était viticulteur à temps plein ?

LB: Oui. Il vivait très bien. Alors qu'actuellement, enfin c'est un peu différent parce qu'à l'époque y avait pas tous ces crédits, on pouvait pas emprunter comme on peut emprunter à l'heure actuelle aux banques comme ça. Mais c'est vrai qu'avec cinq hectares ... »

2. TC : « Est-ce que vous êtes en train d'agrandir?

Bernard Lacroix: Je finis mon agrandissement pratiquement, je vais arriver à vingt, entre vingt et vingt-cinq hectares, j'arrête.

TC: Pourquoi vous arrêtez-vous à cette taille-la?

BL: C'est suffisant, c'est largement suffisant.

TC: Est-ce que vous avez un ouvrier qui vous aide sur votre exploitation de 20 hectares?

BL: Non, non, j'ai pas d'ouvriers.

TC: La famille vient vous aider?

BL: Oui, disons que j'ai mon frère, j'ai mon père qui vient m'aider, j'ai mes neveux, enfin, c'est familial. Beaucoup d'aide familiale. Donc, c'est pour ça que je finis mon agrandissement, sinon ça devient une entreprise, industrielle, il me faut un ouvrier, enfin ça change la dynamique, la nature d'exploitation. »

3. André Laroche : «Je sais que quand je suis arrivé, sur neuf hectares que j'avais de mes grands-parents, la plus grande, elle faisait, je sais pas moi, 0.5 hectares. Maintenant la plus petite sur mon exploitation, elle fait un hectare et demi.

TC : Ça fait qu'il y a une consolidation au niveau des parcelles.

AL : Voilà, il y a une consolidation des parcelles et une modification au niveau de l'encépagement. Mais c'est, ça a été extrêmement long. D'une part parce qu'il fallait modifier les mentalités, et d'autre part parce que ça coûtait un pognon énorme. Et c'était un travail, et c'est toujours un travail, parce qu'on a pas fini. »

4. Louis Desaille : « Disons que mon père n'a pas connu la mécanisation, tout ce passage-là, comme c'est modernisé ou quoi, et bon il ne le comprend pas trop ou quoi. C'est un autre, c'est une culture un peu différente de la vigne, et lui, ah bon, il

n'est pas trop à cheval la-dessus, tandis que moi, je vois un peu des choses autrement ou quoi, parce que je vois très bien que je suis obligé de mécaniser ou quoi, parce que sinon, on peut pas survivre ou quoi. »

5. André Laroche : « A l'heure actuelle j'ai 26 hectares, je travaille comme un âne, t'es obligé de faire des heures et des heures et des heures... Au niveau financier, ça passe chaque année mais à la limite, enfin tu jongles sur le fil du rasoir. Mais c'est normal hein, je suis un jeune agriculteur, il a fallu faire des investissements, il faut les payer, bon ça c'est normal hein? Ce que je veux dire, je me plains pas, c'est pas ça. Mais si demain on me rajoute des contraintes encore plus importantes, et qui au risque de te prendre du temps et en plus qui risquent d'être coûteuses, là c'est extrêmement dangereux, tu peux mettre en danger ton exploitation. »

6. TC : « Quels sont les conséquences des changements que tu as décrits, et comment vois-tu leur effet par rapport à ton exploitation et à la coopérative à l'avenir ?

Louis Desaille : « Bon il y a toujours cette pression de moderniser, voilà, et la qualité, oui, de privilégier la qualité. Mais ça aussi, ça amène une pression aussi parce qu'il faut investir à changer les cuves, les matériels et tout ça, quoi, qui coûte cher. Oui pour moi, bon je sais que, pour moi, c'est qu'il me faut acheter des matériels plus modernes, c'est le coût, c'est le coût de la, ça c'est une grosse pression, oui, et pour la coopérative c'est pareil. C'est qu'elle faut se moderniser pour pouvoir suivre l'apport des raisins qui va aller plus vite. Donc que la mécanisation nous permet d'aller plus vite, enfin de travailler plus rapide, et il faut que la cave coopérative peut soutenir l'apport des raisins à chaque fois et bon il faut qu'elle se modernise par rapport à ça. »

7. Pierre Jaurès : « Et ben les 25 dernières années, ça correspond aux débuts de la mécanisation. On est passé de l'ère du cheval à l'ère de, c'est l'agriculture moderne qu'on a attaquée. Et donc on s'est adapté à ce changement et maintenant on est à un autre tournant. A l'époque on était à un tournant mais on était dans un tournant à une époque meilleure que celle qu'on aborde aujourd'hui. Parce que c'était un tournant dans la continuité, en améliorant la qualité de vie de l'agriculteur. Alors qu'aujourd'hui le matériel qu'on propose c'est pas pour améliorer la qualité de vie de l'agriculteur c'est pour le pressuriser et le stresser. Mais là, c'était une période où tu travaillais, tu gagnais des sous, mais c'était bien. Maintenant les gens ils sont à dix kilomètres de la mer, même six et il leur faut la piscine devant la porte. Ça sert à quoi, c'est une grosse connerie ! A l'époque ça existait pas. C'est-à-dire qu'à l'époque y avait moins de gens de la ville qui venaient dans nos villages. C'était une ambiance rurale, c'était le monde de la ruralité, on était les paysans. Mais c'était quelque chose de bien, parce qu'on vivait chez nous et on était bien chez nous. Mais les gens de la ville qui habitaient dans les HLM, petit à petit ils ont aspiré aux joies de la campagne, alors ils sont venus chez nous et ils ont modifié profondément la façon de vivre les gens. Les gens ont voulu les copier et ils ont

perdu une partie d'eux-mêmes en voulant copier sur les autres. Et maintenant on le remarque y a plus ce truc village fort, ce lien fort qui existait entre les gens ici. »

8. André Laroche : « Ils ont été énormes, énormes. Des changements en viticulture, notamment en Languedoc, ça a été une véritable révolution. Les 20 dernières années qui ont passé, on est passé d'une, d'une activité viticole qui était vraiment très familiale, parce qu'y avait beaucoup, beaucoup de petites exploitations, où ça représentait je dirais les 95% de l'économie régionale la viticulture, avec un mode de production de vins de très basse qualité mais avec des niveaux de rendement excessivement élevés, du fait, parce qu'il y avait une demande. Et suite à cela, dans les années 70, la crise viticole a débuté. Y a beaucoup de viticulteurs qui sont partis, qui ont arrêté ou si tu veux, y a pas eu une succession. »

9. Pierre Jaurès : « Je suis sur le reculoir.

TC : Et le fait que vous n'avez pas d'héritier, influence-t-il la mode de gérer l'exploitation ?

PJ : Je vais te dire effectivement, parce que bon, de toute façon j'aurais pas vendu, j'aurais rien vendu si j'avais eu un héritier, j'aurais rien vendu. Mais c'est sur que ça influence ... les gens qui ont quelqu'un derrière qui vient, qui ont des enfants pour prendre la succession, même s'ils la prennent pas, ils travaillent, ils pensent à l'avenir, ils veulent les laisser quelque chose. »

10. Gabriel Garcia : « Si je travaille, parce que moi le 14 juillet, le dimanche je vais travailler, si je travaillais pas peut-être que derrière j'aurais moins de choses. Ma motivation c'est économique et moi ce qui m'intéresse c'est la structure, mon exploitation. J'ai deux enfants qui font des études supérieures, j'ai besoin d'argent pour réinvestir et pour nourrir ma famille. Aujourd'hui les gens sont obligés d'avoir les structures de plus en plus grandes afin de survivre. Maintenant 50 hectares, pour moi c'est rien 50 hectares. De nos jours 50 hectares c'est comme si j'avais 5 hectares à l'époque. C'est rien, c'est une structure qui représente rien. On est obligé d'avoir des structures vachement importantes. »

11. Gabriel Garcia : « Je suis rentré à la coopérative parce que quand je me suis lancé j'avais rien. Au départ donc j'avais rien. Je me suis installé en métayage et après j'ai acheté. Donc je pouvais pas créer une structure, une cave particulière. Donc je suis rentré dans la cave coopérative pour des raisons de facilité. Au départ, la cave coopérative, le conseil d'administration était du village, c'était géré différemment. C'est-à-dire c'était nous les viticulteurs qui décidaient, qui mettaient nos avis, tandis que là, c'est plus le cas. Ils gèrent leur propre structure eux-mêmes sans savoir que derrière, c'est nous les patrons. Parce que les patrons c'est les viticulteurs. Et c'est faux, c'est pas ça. En Allemagne, par exemple, les Allemands, ils produisent du raisin et ils le vendent. Ils arrivent dans une cave et ils disent voilà, ton produit, il vaut tant et il est payé. Et la cave après, elle commercialise le produit, et elle en tire le bénéfice.

TC : Mais un avantage du système coopératif c'est que vous retenez la plus-valeur quand les raisins sont transformés en vin du fait que vous possédez en commun les matériels de la vinification. A votre avis c'est bien un avantage ?

GG : Shais pas. Au moins qu'avec ce système-la, le coopérateur, il sait à quoi s'en tenir. Tandis que nous, on rentre un produit et après ils se font ce qui se fait, ils commercialisent et tout, et après ils se vendent sans demander l'avis de la base. Il y a une déconnexion entre la base et le conseil et un manque d'information et avec une structure comme la mienne, c'est grave.

TC : Vous gérez une structure de 50 hectares. Avec une structure de cette taille est-ce que vous pouvez faire cavalier tout seul, vous avez le choix de quitter la coopérative ?

GG : J'y réfléchis. »

12. TC : « Tes espérances sont-elles différentes de celles de ton grand-père et en quel égard ?

Patrick Perret : Lui, il a investi dans la coopérative. Mon but, c'est d'investir pendant 10 ans dans mes vignes, de faire une propriété convenable et puis partir de la cave et faire le vin pour moi. Je pense pas rester.

TC : Pour ton exploitation, quel est l'avantage de partir ?

PP : Faut remarquer que maintenant c'est nous les employés, avant c'était les viticulteurs qui étaient patrons, qui décidaient. Tandis que maintenant c'est eux qui décident pour nous. Ça peut pas aller, un jour il n'y aura plus personne.

TC : En quittant la coopérative, tu as l'impression que tu auras plus de contrôle sur les décisions par rapport à la gestion de ton exploitation ?

PP : Pour moi, ce qui comptait c'était à la rigueur se regrouper pour faire la qualité, c'est-à-dire bien structurer pour faire la qualité. Et c'est sur qu'on fait plus le même vin qu'avant, j'en suis sur. Mais je vois les petites caves, elles y arrivent, elles font du bon vin, meilleur qu'à la coopérative. Donc je vois pas pourquoi les petites elles y arrivent et nous étant 1800, on n'y est pas arrivé. Donc à mon avis, pour faire la qualité, à l'avenir je ferai le vin pour moi, tout seul. »

13. Christophe Sabassier : « Je me sens frustré parce que je n'ai pas les informations que par, par quelques paroles de temps en temps avec un viticulteur ou avec un autre. Mais je n'ai jamais le pourquoi, le comment, enfin comment on est arrivé à faire. Je ne fais pas les choix, voilà. Et c'est vrai que c'est frustrant au niveau des choix, mais aussi au niveau de, d'être au courant de l'évolution des marchés, de l'évolution des vins, de la vente, mais aussi du produit lui-même. A la fin du jour, je suis un producteur de raisin, en tant que coopérateur, je suis pas un viticulteur.

TC: Et quelle est la différence entre les deux?

CS: Eh ben, producteur de raisin, c'est-à-dire que je fais des raisins.

TC: Et un viticulteur c'est quelqu'un...

CS: Qui les vinifie. Donc qui sait ce que ses raisins donnent – s'ils sont bons, s'ils donnent un bon produit et un viticulteur c'est aussi celui qui vend son produit. Et pour moi, comme coopérateur, il n'y a qu'une échelle, je n'ai qu'un échelon de mon

métier, le premier échelon, et donc j'ai envie de me lancer tout seul, mais pour pouvoir faire ça, il faut que mon exploitation soit plus grande. »

14. Jean-Luc Lopez: « L'historique du développement de l'activité commerciale, je mets 3 périodes. La création du groupement de producteurs entre 1973 et 1985 où nous avons constitué l'apport total. Entre 1985 et 1990, c'était la première organisation et structuration de l'offre par rapport à la demande, qui a débouché sur une organisation différente. C'est-à-dire à partir de 1993, la création des 'Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune' et l'absorption des caves adhérentes pour faire une seule entreprise qui a continué à travailler sur l'organisation et la structuration de l'amont. On a fait du commercial mais on a surtout fructifié l'amont. En 1995 on a senti que l'amont avait été beaucoup mieux, était arrivé à un stade suffisant pour passer à la vitesse supérieure au niveau du commercial, et de commencer à pouvoir aller vers le consommateur en lui disant 'voilà, le produit que vous achetez provient d'ici. Il a été produit sur ces critères.' Donc il a fallu passer d'un stade d'organisation économique à un stade d'organisation commerciale, où nous étions plus que des vendeurs de matière première mais que nous étions capables d'intégrer le maillon industriel de conditionnement et de distribution et d'amener ce produit vers le consommateur. Donc de pouvoir être identifié, ce qui n'était pas le cas auparavant, par le consommateur final. La solution retenue par la direction pour aller vers le consommateur c'était de se rapprocher d'un groupe coopératif qui avait un outil industriel et une force de vente pour aller déjà vers un marché, de prendre une grosse participation au niveau de ce groupe, et ce groupe est Foncalieu. Aujourd'hui nous sommes en train de monter, disons, ce qui sera l'évolution principale de ces 10 prochaines années, Ensérune devra être identifié en trace finale par le consommateur. De toute façon la finalité est qu'on maîtrise 100 % et que le produit final est identifié avec Ensérune. »

15. Gérard Teyssier: « A l'époque, quand ça a été le moment de signer la fusion, bon il y avait eu des pour et des contre. C'est vrai qu'il y avait de la réticence, pas mal de réticence, mais bon finalement après bon ils ont compris que peut-être ... mais il faudrait pas que ça va être trop loin, il faudrait pas que ça va trop loin. Bon enfin aujourd'hui avec l'union avec Foncalieu les gens sont sceptiques encore une fois. Ils sont sceptiques parce que ça va nous coûter cher et les frais de vinification augmentent. Parce que le but de l'union, normalement c'était pour baisser les frais de vinification, seulement bon le fait qu'on a beaucoup planté des améliorateurs, il a fallu faire d'acheter des presses pneumatiques, l'investissement c'est phénoménal et alors ça fait que, ça c'est les chiffres par les centaines de millions ou quoi, moi je ne sais pas. »

16. Frédéric Bonnet: « Les petits ils voulaient se regrouper, ils voulaient se regrouper pour se défendre, tandis que les gros, ils comptaient que pour eux. Ils pensaient pas qu'il y a des gens à côté, pas tous hein, je généralise, mais ceux qui avaient les plus gros propriétaires, ça les embêtait d'être à la même machine que les

autres. Ils voulaient garder leur autonomie à eux, ils voulaient être libres de faire ce qu'ils voulaient. Mais ça s'est fait partout, à Millau, ben, les gens comme ma femme là qui faisaient les gants. Mais tout ça, ça a disparu maintenant avec les machines et tout ça, mais à Millau, ils se sont regroupés, ils se sont regroupés, autrement, ils étaient bouffés. »

17. Vincent Jarrige : « Et après c'est à nous les jeunes, et quand les vieux ils vont prendre la retraite ...

Amélie Jarrige : L'avantage c'est que jeunes sont avec d'autres idées, je pense qu'on arrive ...

VJ: Peut-être on arrivera pas ...

AJ: On arrive maintenant à une tranche d'âge où on s'intéresse plus à la cave et ce qu'elle fait, et pourquoi elle le fait. On se pose plus de questions, je pense, et même pendant la formation je vois nous intégrions à chercher à savoir et à comprendre et à dire, si à dire même si ça pouvait ne pas porter, mais à dire même si on a qu'une proposition à faire qui est un goût d'eau, mais de mettre le goût d'eau, quoi. Donc je crois que ça va plus dans ce sens-là. »

18. Raymond Simon : « Il y a des gens qui ont été contre, oui. Il y a des gens qui voulaient rester clocher village. Ils avaient peur de se faire manger par une multinationale comme ils disent, par une grosse structure. Mais je pense que ... moi quand j'étais artisan on avait monté des groupements hein, c'est pareil. On avait monté une société, on était grossiste en produits électriques. Moi j'ai toujours été pour, se regrouper de toute manière. On a des CUMAs, je suis président d'une CUMA aussi. On a du matériel en commun et de toute manière c'est pour pouvoir être puissant, pour pouvoir avoir un impact quelque part. Et beh, il faut être regroupé de toute manière. Pour être industriel, pour être professionnel jusqu'au bout c'est pour pouvoir être cas de force de toute manière. »

19. Renée Bonnet : « C'était à la fin des années 70, qu'a débuté un petit peu le système des fusions, comme 'Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune', qui à l'origine était le CEPRO. Alors ils ont commencé à mettre ensemble du vin pour essayer de le vendre plus facilement aux négociants. Parce qu'en étant plus groupé, le panel de vins était différent et les volumes plus gros. Et ça a permis d'être assez puissant sur le marché, parce que bon, un petit viticulteur il aurait eu cinq hectos de Merlot, et il aurait rien fait avec ces cinq hectos... Alors que nous, on peut présenter sur le marché une cuve de dix mille ou vingt mille hectos et ça attaque aux grandes surfaces. Bon il faut avoir des unités du vin conséquentes, parce qu'ils achètent pas cinq hectos, et avec l'ensemble des coopératives on peut leur fournir ces volumes de vin, voilà. »

20. François Buisson : « Aussi au niveau des coopératives, elles débutaient aussi à modifier un petit peu leur outil de vinification, parce que les produits changeaient et il fallait un outil de vinification particulier qui permette de pouvoir sortir de la

qualité. Et d'autre part, il y avait les modifications économiques qui étaient en train de s'engager au niveau de la région. A savoir que, de plus en plus en France, t'avais de moins en moins de négociants comme on les connaissait, le voisin qui était négociant parce qu'il t'achetait du vin et il te connaissait et ça devenait de plus en plus des centrales d'achat par l'intermédiaire de gros supermarchés. »

21. Pierre Jaurès : « Je te parle en tant que ... le monde coopératif, nous, pour nous le rôle des hommes c'est d'essayer d'anticiper ce que seront les marchés demain. Pour pouvoir, pour pouvoir donner à nos adhérents une info qui nous paraît être la bonne, pour les faire avancer dans la bonne direction, d'y arriver, sinon les premiers, dans les premiers. C'est-à-dire qu'on dit tiens, le marché il va s'orienter vers là. D'anticiper, et pour essayer que le jour où on arrivera là, que le marché c'est vraiment ça, nous on ait les produits en face. Mais c'est pas facile. Parce que dans le monde du, du vin, maintenant avec la mondialisation, mais c'est complètement la folie. Puisque dans le monde du vin, maintenant c'est devenu un monde comme le reste, parce que c'était un peu épargné jusqu'à présent, parce que c'était quelque chose un peu particulier le vin malgré tout. C'était le monde de la concurrence là, tiens les bordelais, les beaujolais, mais c'était au niveau national. Et maintenant comme on voit dans le monde du négoce, tout ça c'est des, des trusts internationaux. Y a, y a des intérêts français en même temps que les intérêts anglais sur des marques et c'est à ça qu'on est arrivé. »

22. Christophe Sabassier : « A l'époque c'était des caves coopératives et chacun gérait leurs, leurs problèmes. Puis après bon, c'est allé très vite quoi. Dans l'espace de dix ans, on est passé d'une réunion qui était consacrée aux problèmes de la cave coopérative, et puis après au regroupement et maintenant au fait que ce soit européen, puis mondial quoi. Donc moi j'ai perdu un petit peu pied quoi. »

23. Jean-Luc Fauré : « Aujourd'hui, nous sommes au seuil d'une grave crise mondiale de surproduction. On a planté de la vigne à tour de bras, et dans les 5 prochaines années, nous allons rentrer sur un déficit entre la demande et l'offre. Uh, avec la filière viticole il y a les producteurs d'un côté, des intermédiaires qui sont chargés de transformer la matière première, et le marché. Toute la plus-value dans ces produits est prise à partir de la transformation et surtout du marketing. Dans ce cadre là on risque d'apercevoir les prix se laminer. Et donc à certain moment ne plus permettre aux gens qui produisent d'avoir un revenu suffisant pour non seulement continuer à produire, mais surtout à développer, adapter leur production à la nouvelle attente économique, aux nouveaux modes de consommation. C'est-à-dire on aura plus les capacités d'investir sur la vigne et sur les outils de transformation pour pouvoir adapter les produits à la nouvelle demande des consommateurs. Donc à partir de là du moment que tout le monde sera capable de produire un Cabernet Sauvignon, un Merlot ou un Chardonnay de très belle qualité, il faut amener les éléments marketing intégrés à l'outil de production, c'est-à-dire il faut qu'il y ait une certaine plus-value qui soit reversée

aux producteurs, et pour ce faire il faut intégrer dans notre démarche commerciale une optique de différenciation du produit par rapport à l'élément concurrentiel. »

24. TC : « Quels étaient les principaux changements dans la viticulture pendant les dernières 25 années, selon votre expérience ?

François Buisson : Surtout un changement de mentalité puisque à l'époque on faisait pas mal de rendement, on avait beaucoup de cépage - Carignan, Aramon, Cinsault - qui faisaient beaucoup de rendement et il a fallu changer le fusil d'épaule comme on dit chez nous et aller vers la qualité pour faire des cépages plus nobles, de nouveaux cépages. »

25. Louis Desaille : « C'est-à-dire que les gens passent à une autre culture, à une autre culture, on vient de plus en plus à la qualité, et c'est vrai qu'on vit autrement, à l'époque de mon père ce n'était pas, était, on a privilégié un peu plus la quantité ou quoi, alors que maintenant on change complètement le but. »

26. Charles Valadour : « Les viticulteurs au début du vingtième siècle, ils étaient tous riches. D'ailleurs t'as qu'à regarder les maisons dans le village, toutes ces maisons que tu vois à deux étages, c'était des maisons des viticulteurs. Parce qu'ils étaient riches, maintenant on l'est moins. »

27. Lionel Blanchet : « Mais à l'époque c'est vrai que bon on s'apercevait que de toute façon on avait de plus en plus de difficultés à vendre les cépages traditionnels, et donc, enfin, on a senti ... la politique de la cave a été, on s'est dit bon, c'est l'avenir, sachant qu'y en a qui avaient déjà dix ans d'avance sur nous là-dessus. Et c'est vrai que les anciens ne sont, ne se sont pas préoccupé de ce problème-là. Ils ont pas réfléchi à l'avenir quoi. Sachant que bon, dans le passé, ça évoluait beaucoup plus lentement que ça peut évoluer depuis dix, quinze ans. Y a une évolution tellement rapide, que, bon, il faut vite s'adapter. Alors qu'à l'époque, depuis peut-être une, deux générations ou trois, les gars ils faisaient leur rendement, ils vendaient leur vin, et ils le vendaient très bien quoi. »

28. Renée Bonnet : « La fin des années 80, c'était un moment fort où il fallait manifester, vider des camions, heu vider notre désespoir un petit peu. Le marché du vin de table s'effondrait, on avait des problèmes de méventes et il fallait un changement de direction. De ce moment-là, il fallait que la bibine soit consacrée au passé. »

29. Amélie Jarrige : « Je pense que les gens qui vont arriver maintenant ont complètement le même esprit que nous. C'est-à-dire qu'ils sont orientés vers la qualité. Mais c'est pas vrai de l'ancienne génération, on vit pas dans la même époque, même dans la vie courante on vit pas la même chose que. Il y a des générations, ils auront pas le même état d'esprit, qui fait que peut-être en tant que collective on n'arrivera pas. »

30. Joseph Freyssinet : « Tout ce que mon père nous a donné comme vignes, on a tout arraché, et on a tout replanté. Mon père avait des Carignans, des Aramons et on a tout arraché. En plus il avait planté un mètre cinquante, tu sais, petite vigne, avec des tuteurs, maintenant c'est deux mètres cinquante avec des fils de fer et, et voila, on a tout arraché.

TC: Et pour vous, le re-encépagement, un mode de conduite différent, ces orientations vers un mode de production plus qualitatif, c'étaient les changements les plus importants?

JF: Ben ouais, ouais. Ça fait douze ans et en douze ans on a tout arraché, on a tout replanté. Chais pas combien, on a fait vingt-quatre hectares, vingt-cinq, peut-être plus, entre vingt-cinq et trente hectares. Qui n'est pas mal, mais ça fait du travail et de l'argent, un investissement énorme. »

31. Joseph Freyssinet : « Disons qu'y avait pas beaucoup de responsabilités avant que maintenant quoi. Avant les gens vendangeaient leurs raisins, tous allaient ensemble, y avait pas les problèmes de marché qu'il y a maintenant avec les nouveaux cépages, euh. Avant on payait tout pareil, hein, tu rentrais, t'avais tant de kilos de raisins, ça faisait tant de vin, tu payais tout pareil. Tandis que maintenant tu paies davantage certaines choses que d'autres, donc c'est plus complexe, c'est plus compliqué, c'est plus ... le système n'est pas bien.

TC: Et pourquoi croyez-vous que le système n'est pas bien? Vous avez replanté toutes vos vignes. Les nouveaux cépages sont-ils plus porteurs?

JF: Shais pas moi. En principe, mais ça ne marche pas tellement comme ça. A l'époque c'était moins compliqué, plus transparent, quoi. »

32. Serge Deschamps: « On sait pas trop. On sait quand même en Australie ce qui se plante, le petit chemin. Mais ce qui va se passer, on sait pas trop ce qui va ... si d'autres pays, est-ce qu'ils vont planter davantage, est-ce qu'ils vont arracher, on sait pas comment l'économie va être, on sait pas. C'est tellement difficile que, bon, on a quand même une petite vision.

TC: Et la petite vision?

SD: Ça c'est certain, c'est vers la qualité, mais savoir quels cépages, ce qui va se vendre, on n'en sait rien. Ça dépend de tout le marché mondial. »

33. Amélie Jarrige : « C'est-à-dire que bon, il y a une certitude de la vie, il y a toujours du vin. Mais il y a une incertitude quant à l'évolution du marché, de ce qu'il faudra faire.

TC: Et est-ce que cette incertitude est universelle à tous les viticulteurs du groupement à ton avis ?

AJ: Moi, je pense oui, nous le ressentons juste comme ça, il y a aussi une incertitude et à tous niveaux, une incertitude aussi bien au niveau du marché, et au niveau de l'état. Il y a pleines de questions qui, qu'on n'a pas la réponse et on est incertain. »

34. TC : « Quels sont les développements principaux envisagés par rapport à la viticulture dans ce coin et comment vous les intégrez dans la gestion de votre exploitation ?

Florence Martin : Ça, pour ma part, je peux pas vraiment répondre. Il faudrait demander aux personnes responsables de la coopérative parce que c'est eux qui nous guident avec un cahier des charges à respecter et qui nous guident avec des directives qui chaque année peuvent être modifiées. Donc, je peux pas répondre à la question. »

35. Henri Masson : « Les rendements. Y a les rendements qui ont changé, ça aussi. Pas nous, mais les coteaux, Saint-Chinian tout ça, ils ont pas ce problème de rendement, ils sont toujours à un bas rendement. Mais nous à l'époque, on s'en sortait beaucoup en faisant du rendement, d'ailleurs on y est encore à faire du rendement hein. On n'est pas encore trop basé sur la qualité parce qu'on dit que la quantité gagne un peu plus que sur la qualité. Malgré que c'est pas vrai hein ! Mais nous on se dit que c'est vrai. Ça viennent des terres, on a des terres riches en fin de compte, on est embêté pour faire de la qualité par rapport à nos terres parce qu'on a des terres qui font du raisin. »

36. TC : « Est-ce que les Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune sont en train de reprendre à cette demande?

Michel Chastaing : Ah oui, oui. Eux ils veulent y aller. C'est nous les viticulteurs qu'on suit pas bien. Les viticulteurs veulent faire du très bon produit, qu'on nous le vende cher, mais nous on amène pas ce qui faut.

TC : Comment vous expliquez ça?

MC : Parce que, comme je vous le dis, on le taille pas comme il faut, on est toujours un peu trop sur le rendement. Quand on est dans une vigne et qu'on taille comme je vous le dis une bûche longue, on peut pas dire qu'on veut faire la qualité. Mais une fois qu'on amène à la cave coopérative, on fait ça comme je vous dis (4 frappements des mains.) Ah oui, oui, je suis un peu comme ça, moi je pars pour faire de la qualité et après ...

TC : Vous y croyez en théorie ?

MC : Parce que quand je passe dans une vigne moi, j'aime voir des raisins parce que je suis de 15 ans en arrière. Quand on passe dans une vigne et qu'on voit qu'il y a pas de raisins, on croit qu'il a pas travaillé. Quand vous voyez des raisins, ben c'est joli. Bon cette année on a commencé à enlever des raisins, de faire les vendanges en vert. Et moi, il faudra y venir peut-être, mais moi j'ai pas participé cette année, j'ai pas voulu le faire. Parce que tu travailles toute l'année les vignes et d'enlever des raisins avant la récolte? Malgré même qu'on donne une prime. Ça encore, ça c'est pas net. »

37. Frédéric Bonnet : « Tout le monde faisait du vin, mélangé, si tu portais du bon ou du mauvais c'était pareil on mettait tout ensemble, on faisait un vin. Tandis que maintenant, si tu portes du Merlot ou du Cabernet, on te paie du Merlot ou du

Cabernet et pour moi les paiements différenciés ça a été un des plus grands changements. »

38. Charles Valadour : « Avant c'était la quantité. J'étais un de ceux qui récoltait le plus à la coopérative en rendement hectare. Je faisais 165 hectolitres à l'hectare.

TC : La priorité c'était le rendement ?

CV : Voilà, c'était le rendement. C'était pas la qualité. C'était de faire un vin à huit, dix degré si tu veux, et d'en faire beaucoup. Plus tu en faisais, plus tu étais payé quoi. Maintenant il faut pas faire beaucoup à l'hectare. Mais je faisais davantage d'argent avant que maintenant tout en faisant de la qualité. »

39. TC : « Pourquoi est-ce que le taux de re-encépagement est différent entre les viticulteurs, pourquoi quelques-uns sont plus en avance que les autres ?

Antoine Paillard : Je crois que c'est un peu l'attitude des vigneron d'ici quoi, c'est, c'est un petit peu un fatalisme ou quoi. Ici, on a encore une image, à l'extérieur on a de nous, les vigneron du Languedoc, une image de la grosse bibine. Mais c'est pas de l'extérieur, cette image, encore c'est ancré dans nos esprits et c'est vrai que les vigneron d'ici ils n'ont pas confiance en eux, ils n'ont pas confiance à leur terroir, ils n'ont pas confiance à leur savoir-faire. Et je pense que c'est général et c'est la fatalité, on peut pas faire du vin de qualité, c'est pas possible chez nous. Il y a beaucoup des coopérateurs qui m'ont répondu ça. »

40. Henri Masson : « Le problème qui se passe, c'est que nous, on est pas des faiseurs de vin. On fait des raisins. Et là, c'est une grosse différence. Nous, on amène les raisins à la cave et puis on fait (deux claquements des mains.)

TC : Et après ils sont plus votre responsabilité?

HM : Tandis que, j'ai la machine à vendanger moi avec un copain qui est en cave particulière. Lui il amène les raisins, il se fait son vin et puis il se le vend. Donc il fait la qualité pour vendre de la qualité. Tandis que nous, on fait des raisins pour de l'argent. Ça a rien à voir. »

41. Vincent Jarrige : « Ils amènent les raisins à la cave et puis ils s'en vont. Ils s'en foutent complètement de la cave, comment ça fonctionne, de la collective.

AJ : La majorité c'est comme ça, ils vont pas, alors leur souci c'est leur vigne, leur temps, d'abord leurs raisins, d'abord le degré, et puis après de regarder la compte.

VJ : Et c'est tout, après, ils s'intéressent plus.

AJ : C'est comme un salarié, il va regarder son salaire, il va pas regarder l'entreprise si ça fonctionne, ça fonctionne pas, s'il y a un marché, s'ils ont des clients, pas de clients. Après ils disent c'est la responsabilité de la cave, quoi. »

42. M. Erguy : « Un viticulteur en cave particulière, il réfléchit pas pareil. Le propriétaire d'une cave particulière, il pense à vendre son vin, il pense à la commercialisation, il pense à sa vigne, à faire son meilleur raisin, à faire bien son vin. Quelqu'un en cave coopérative, c'est presque un fonctionnaire ... il a pas de

clients, il a pas de vin à vendre. Il porte son raisin, une fois qu'il a vidé sa benne, même si son raisin il est tout pourri, c'est plus son problème. Y a quelqu'un d'autre derrière qui le gère. Donc, heu, c'est pas le même état d'esprit. »

43. Mme Dance: « Ce que je dirais c'est que l'évolution du midi viticole qui est une évolution qui est maintenant longue. Elle s'est traduit par une évolution à la fois sur la production, la restructuration des terres. Vous avez toute une autre évolution de l'encépagement dans le sens de la qualité et aussi de réduction des rendements, et de plus en plus vers des cépages 'mondiaux', qui ne sont plus tous des cépages typiques de la région. Peut-être de manière plus récente, vers aussi une réflexion sur des pratiques culturelles plus respectueuses de l'environnement et adaptées aux terroirs. »

44. Bernard Devic: « Sur les 10 ou 20 ans qui viennent, on arrivera à relier encore plus fort, dans le cadre des CTEs ou dans le cadre d'autres ouvertures, la production viticole, la filière viticole avec ce qui est un territoire et développer au maximum une politique de marque, comme par exemple, les VPE. Je parle des sites de Carcassonne ou des Cathares - tout le potentiel historique de la région. Et ça demande beaucoup de moyens financiers pour développer bien sur la communication. Alors ensuite les metteurs en marché, parce que là, on a parlé de la production, les metteurs en marché, c'est-à-dire les gens qui vendent, les négociants, les distributeurs, ne peuvent qu'être d'accord de cette stratégie.

TC: Et relier plus fort la filière viticole avec son territoire, est-ce que ça représente une nouvelle stratégie ?

BD: Tout à fait parce qu'on se rend compte qu'un vin de cépage, mettant vin de cépage classique, Chardonnay, Merlot, si on lui donne pas la pesanteur, la puissance du territoire, la concurrence sera tellement forte que ... et d'autre part comme semble-t-il les consommateurs du monde entier, ils sont de plus en plus à la recherche des produits qui sont originaires d'un territoire et d'une culture dans ce territoire. »

45. TC : « On a parlé de re-encépagement. Quels sont les facteurs qui influencent votre choix de cépages ?

Antoine Paillard : « C'est vrai qu'il y a des cépages aromatiques qui sont sur le plan de la rémunération, sur le plan de la qualité qui sont pas uniformes (interruption) ... il y a des cépages qui sont, qu'on peut considérer comme rémunérateur d'une façon uniforme, avec des qualités qui sont intéressantes dans les années qui sont homogènes sur la qualité-produit. Ça c'est le cas de Cabernet, de Sauvignon. Il y a des autres orientations, c'est les cépages méquis, qui sont moins connus. Ils n'ont pas d'avenir autant que vins de cépages, mais que par contre qui ont d'avenir dans le chemin des Vins de Pays. C'est le cas de Marselan, c'est pour ça que je me suis engagé dans la plantation du Marselan et c'est d'ailleurs un des objets de mon CTE. »

46. Florence Martin : « Moi, mon objectif, c'est améliorer l'existant. Parce que, disons que mon père avait une manière de travailler plutôt à l'ancienne, donc moi, j'essaie d'apporter à l'exploitation ce que j'ai appris. Par contre, je voulais revenir au niveau des cépages, moi, je suis pas du tout pour supprimer les cépages qui sont en place depuis des années, comme le Carignan. Je serais plutôt pour conserver ces lignes-là et faire un vin typique de la région. Parce qu'en fait le Carignan c'est un cépage qui est vraiment d'ici, tandis que des cépages comme le Merlot, ce sont des cépages qui ont été amenés du Bordelais. Et je pense qu'il y a quelque chose à faire avec les vieilles vignes que nous avons et il faut pas tout arracher, et de garder une proportion raisonnable d'anciens cépages. Enfin, ça c'est mon opinion très personnelle, je suis une des rares à penser ça. »

47. Didier Gazels : « La multifonctionnalité est partie d'un discours, c'est reparti du reste de la société vers l'agriculteur. Il y a un certain nombre d'agriculteurs qui l'ont compris, qui l'avaient toujours compris, qui se disaient, on va pas dans le bon sens. Ils sont les gens qui ont bien entretenu la terre, les fosses. Pour les autres, c'est sous le poids de la pression de la société. Donc qu'il y a un discours maintenant de la société dans son ensemble qui demande des choses, qui dit, 'on voudrait que l'espace rural soit entretenu d'une certaine façon', alors, qu'ils ont une certaine vision de l'espace rural qui rassemble un jardin peut-être. Et il y a une pression de la société qui dit 'bon il y a des pratiques culturelles qui sont peut-être une efface sur, par rapport aux risques naturels, aux inondations, des choses comme ça, et on veut pas manger des produits, on veut pas prendre un risque en mangeant.' Donc il y a des pressions de la société qui font qu'ils les intègrent, petit à petit. Maintenant ils commencent à entendre ce discours tout le temps, ils l'intègrent, ils le comprennent.

TC : Et vous croyez que dans les années à venir, les agriculteurs vont l'intégrer et que ceci amènera à un changement dans les pratiques ?

DG : Tout à fait, parce que je pense qu'effectivement les agriculteurs ont pris conscience, ils faisaient des choses qu'il ne fallait pas faire quand ils ont produit pour gagner le plus possible, mais il faut pas non plus tout détruire. Mais c'est pas une situation facile à vivre non plus, c'est vrai qu'il faut qu'on les aide à changer des pratiques. »

48. TC : « Qu'est-ce que vous entendez par la notion de la multifonctionnalité ?

Xavier Ruffray : La multifonctionnalité de l'agriculture. C'est-à-dire aussi bien la production, qui est la fonction première, après, entretien du paysage.

Claudie Houssard : Oui, y a beaucoup de mesures qui sont d'entretien, en fait, entretien des haies, entretien des fossés, entretien des chemins. Donc c'est vrai que ça peut repositionner les agriculteurs comme gestionnaires de l'espace rural.

XR: Et c'est vrai qu'elle est motorisée par les CTE, c'est-à-dire quand les CTEs ont été construits, y avait la nécessité de faire un projet de territoire, comme les VPE. Donc, c'était voir ce qu'il y avait sur le territoire comme enjeu et essayer de faire en sorte de répondre à ces enjeux. »

49. TC : « On a parlé d'un changement du discours au niveau de la politique nationale, avec l'émergence du concept de la multifonctionnalité et on a constaté que le CTE est un des outils pour réaliser cette transition. Quels sont vos avis par rapport aux CTEs ?

M. Richards : Il y a des gens qui croient que le CTE est la solution de tous nos problèmes, en terme de maintien des paysages, du territoire, de l'activité économique et le fabrique social de l'espace rural. Mais les gens comme moi, on a su dès que le départ que ça peut pas marcher. Donc je suis contre, du moins réservé pour le CTE parce que ceux qui s'en sont emparés sont des rêveurs, qui ont, comment dire, des visions réductrices ou simplistes de l'agriculture.

TC : Et qu'est ce que vous entendez dire par cela?

Richards : L'esprit du CTE - le maintien des emplois, les pluriactifs - ça c'est les idées des gens qui ne connaissent pas les problèmes du monde viticole. Si vous voulez, ils défendent des structures qui sont dépassées parce qu'eux ils parlent d'agriculture partagée, de valeurs partagées, mais ils se trompent. Parce qu'on ne partage des valeurs, on ne partage de l'argent que si on en gagne. Et c'est pour cette raison que je parle des analyses réductionnistes de l'agriculture. Et à mon avis il faut pas rejeter une politique de filière, il faut pas oublier que c'est le vin qui soutient les gens, plus que la pie grièche, plus que le territoire, et il faut pas qu'on l'oublie. Et donc à mon avis il faut qu'on organise le front de production, le contrôle des rendements et qu'on reste organisé en filière. »

50. Daniel Crepin : « Vous avez vu comment c'est fait hein ... Donc on définit des objectifs sur un périmètre, on définit les personnes qui sont concernées, et donc on cale le projet. Mais, pour en arriver là, et bien on a travaillé avec un paysagiste qui a défini le projet. Donc les objectifs n'ont pas été bâtis sur des préoccupations purement agri-agricoles. On a travaillé sur qu'est-ce qu'on voulait comme paysage, la commune s'est impliquée. Et donc ça c'est une démarche complètement patrimoniale. Les acteurs ne sont pas les viticulteurs essentiellement. »

51. Louis Desaille : « C'est mon impression oui, je sais peut être quelque part un tournant quoi, de la viticulture, il semble qu'on va de plus en plus vers, vers ce côté là ou quoi, vers du respect de l'environnement. »

52. Pierre Jaurès : « Y a quand même quelque chose qu'avant ça se, ça se serait pas fait. Mais effectivement, sur le plan national, on s'aperçoit qu'on met un tas de choses en place, justement pour faire que tout aille dans le même sens. On le voit au niveau de, de, on conçoit que l'agriculteur devienne gestionnaire de l'environnement. On donne des primes pour ça, pour essayer de gérer l'environnement. Bon, ça se faisait pas avant. Donc, on a mis des choses en place pour essayer justement, parce que les gens de la ville sont demandeurs, heu, d'espaces qui soient agréables et tout. Et en même temps ça met en relation avec ces gens-la puisque ces gens-la ils viennent voir les choses qu'on arrange ou autre. Donc c'est pour que tout le monde soit plus sensibilisé et fasse mieux passer l'image

de sa région. Il faut que tout le monde tire dans le même sens pour faire avancer une région. Alors on essaye de, bon, au travers de l'environnement, y a une volonté nationale de, d'amener vers ça. »

53. André Laroche : « Il fallait être capable de mettre en place un système qui permette une évolution vers la qualité. On disait oui, avant on faisait comme ça, mais maintenant, il serait bien de faire comme ça. Et c'est vrai que de plus en plus on voit de nouvelles productions – la bio, machin, et tout ça. Et les CTEs ont été un des moyens. En plus les primes, où y avait la productivité, tout ce genre de chose, ont disparu. Maintenant on a mis de l'argent de nouveau sur les CTEs pour essayer de faire changer les choses. Maintenant, moi je suis pas du tout convaincu. J'espère que c'est l'avenir hein. J'espère que c'est l'avenir, que demain on pourra bouffer que des bons trucs, des vaches qui ont mangé de l'herbe, des brebis qui ont mangé de l'herbe, des poulets qui ont été élevés en plein air et tout ça. J'espère que ça sera ça. Mais malheureusement, y a des impératifs économiques qui font qu'il faudra continuer à pouvoir alimenter tout le monde. Et que pour pouvoir produire un poulet au grain, élevé en pleine nature, déjà, il faut deux fois plus de temps et il coûte deux fois plus cher. Et cette différence de prix ou on augmente les salaires ou alors on dit on continue à faire comme avant, à faire de la merde, et on peut nourrir les gens. Y a pas 36 solutions hein. »

Opportunities and Threats

1. André Laroche : « Les Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune, on peut dire que c'est un franc succès. C'était même une nécessité. Caves coopératives en étant seules, à mon avis, elles avaient pas d'avenir. Parce que Nissan toute seule, demain y a un metteur en marché qui vient acheter du vin, il va dire 'c'est ça, et c'est pas autrement le prix'. Y a pas moyen de discussion. Que par l'intermédiaire d'une structure comme VPE, elle peut se permettre de dire 'nous on représente tant d'hectos, on représente tant de surface. On est les acteurs incontournables de la région en matière de viticulture'. Et les metteurs en marché sont obligés de passer avec toi, mais si tu veux, tu auras des éléments de pression que tu n'aurais pas si tu avais été seul quoi. Une structure qui, à l'heure actuelle ne fait rien, qui vit sur ses acquis est pour moi une structure qui n'a pas d'avenir, dans peu de temps elle se cassera la gueule. Etant donné le monde actuel comme ça fonctionne, à la vitesse que ça évolue et le perpétuel mouvement qu'il peut y avoir, on peut pas, on peut pas dire 'nous on a nos traditions, on reste comme ça'. C'est terminé avec cette rigidité, c'est figé. On est sûr d'être mort. Il est nécessaire de conserver nos traditions, parce que c'est notre image, notre histoire, mais par contre il faut que ce soit un outil, pas un frein. »

2. André Laroche : « L'occasion à l'avenir, je crois que c'est Foncalieu, les occasions à l'avenir est de faire cette intégration et de devenir beaucoup plus grand en fait. A mon avis, c'est une opportunité, c'est une occasion, parce qu'ils ont une structure déjà, existante, ils ont un savoir-faire, il y a un outil. Et je crois que c'est l'avenir, c'est être capable de produire, faire pousser des raisins, les vinifier, les mettre dans une structure comme Foncalieu qui les commercialisera complètement, qui les préparera, et qui ira directement au marché. Ça veut dire que dans tout ça là, tu as éliminé tout un tas d'intermédiaires. Et c'est exactement le même schéma que Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune avant, avant qu'ils aient fusionné. Y avait plusieurs caves, qui avaient chacune leur identité propre. C'est vrai qu'elles ont perdu de leur identité mais tu en as recréé une nouvelle, et avec un gros avantage, c'est que tu as été capable de te structurer de façon à pouvoir assurer un avenir à tes coopérateurs. Moi demain, si on me dit heu, il faut fusionner Foncalieu à 'Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune', sachant qu'à Foncalieu y a d'autres personnes à l'intérieur que vigneron, moi ça me gênera pas. Si ça doit m'assurer un revenu et une pérennité dans mon travail, pourquoi pas, et on créera une nouvelle identité. Je veux dire, c'est pas, et ça veut pas dire obligatoirement, parce que tu as fusionné avec un autre que tu vas oublier tout ton histoire, que tu vas oublier ton passé, ton identité. Tout ça, ça peut rester. C'est simplement un mélange culturel, dans tous les pays maintenant il y a des mélanges ethniques, y a des mélanges culturels. Au départ l'assimilation de ces cultures est difficile, mais il arrive un moment où ça marche. Mais à mon avis, c'est pas prêt de passer dans les, dans les mentalités encore. Parce que les gens ont du mal à le vivre, à le digérer, à le comprendre.

Pour moi, à mon avis, c'est une bonne chose, par contre, je suis intimement persuadé que tu vas avoir les trois quarts des coopérateurs qui vont avoir un mal fou à l'avaler, parce qu'il faut plus de temps.

TC : Et pourquoi ils auront du mal à l'avaler ?

AL : C'est vrai qu'on a du mal à le cerner, à le comprendre, à l'heure actuelle, parce qu'encore c'est tout nouveau, c'est assez flou. Mais malgré cela, à mon avis, c'est une opportunité, c'est une vraie occasion. »

3. Marcel Chatonnier: « Pour moi, nous avons perdu notre identité. Le vin n'est plus mis en bouteille à la cave coopérative de Nissan, il est mis en bouteille à Maraussan. Mis en bouteille par les VPE à Maraussan. Maraussan c'est au bord de l'eau, Ensérune c'est ici. Pour moi nous avons perdu notre identité et l'avons donnée à d'autres.

TC: Et cette association avec Maraussan, pourquoi vous la voyez comme une perte, une mauvaise chose?

MC: C'est un peu comme si on disait Cabernet, vin de Bordeaux. A Bordeaux il se fait du Cabernet, pour quel motif nous ne mettrions pas 'vin de Bordeaux' à l'étiquette, au contraire nous gagnerions notre nom vin de Bordeaux. Ce que je veux dire c'est que s'il n'y a pas de lien entre le produit et le lieu de production, on n'a plus d'enjeux. On n'est plus de producteurs fiers, nous avons perdu notre identité, on devient des agriculteurs anonymes sans être reconnus. »

4. Antoine Paillard: « Le succès, c'est que bon, ça a permis aux personnes de se rencontrer, disons que, moi je connaissais personne sauf de Capestang, et que maintenant bon je connais des gens de Maraussan, de Cazouls, de Cazedarnes, de Lespignan et même les techniciens, les directeurs de Foncalieu qui ne sont pas les vignerons. C'est vrai, bon il y avait un contact humain, et ça c'est une bonne chose parce que sinon on était chacun dans son truc, on connaît rien, bon ça c'est une bonne chose.

TC: Et pourquoi vous la voyez comme une bonne chose, les rencontres avec plus de personnes ?

AP: Bon mais c'est clair, c'est non pas seulement une bonne chose pour moi personnellement – mais bien sûr pour moi, ça m'a permis d'être au courant de nouvelles idées, d'initiatives, ce qui est important pour mon propre exploitation, mais aussi pour le groupe, pour la base c'est une bonne chose. Ça permet les gens de se rencontrer, de partager les idées, d'apprendre des choses et si les gens parlent entre eux, les choses avancent plus vite.

TC: Et est-ce que vous croyez que tous les exploitants de Capestang bénéficient de cet avantage de faire des rencontres et de partager des idées?

AP: Certes, il y en a, mais c'est toujours les mêmes, chez les coopérateurs c'est toujours les mêmes qui prennent les initiatives, c'est toujours les mêmes aux réunions du Conseil. »

5. Gérard Teyssier : « Mais ce qu'il faut dire c'est qu'il faudrait pas aller trop loin parce qu'après qu'on peut pas plus le contrôler. Parce que bon, moi le premier c'est que je peux pas mettre le nez tous les jours à la cave pour voir ce qui se passe, je n'ai pas le temps et parce qu'après bon ...

Mme Teyssier : On sent moins proche de la cave, on sent qu'il y a moins de contact.

GT : Voilà, il y a moins de contact.

Mme Teyssier : Ça je sens, et les gens sont pas du tout au courant, à l'époque quand c'était que Nissan, même le CEPRO encore mais là, on sent qu'il y a une barrière.

GT : Il y a une barrière entre l'administration qui siège à Maraussan ...

Mme Teyssier : Oui une barrière ...

GT : Et les viticulteurs de base, qui lui est informé de rien. Enfin que nous à l'échelon local, il y avait une réunion l'autre jour, mais enfin nous, on était là pour nous informer mais on peut pas faire une porte à porte pour leur expliquer la vente du vin. Si quelqu'un me demande quelque chose, je lui réponds, mais je peux pas faire une porte à porte, après je n'ai pas le temps moi. Mais bon, maintenant ils envoient des feuilles, mais enfin les gens sont plus éloignés, moins de contact qu'à l'époque. On devient d'administrateurs, les gens bon ils ressemblent leurs comptes, et puis après ils s'en foutent si ça se vend pas, là, il s'agit que tous les mois l'argent il tombe après ils se balancent ou quoi. »

6. Pierre Jaurès : « Il faut pas oublier qu'on est dans le monde coopératif, et le monde coopératif c'est pas des gens de 50 ou 100 hectares. Y en a pas beaucoup justement. C'est des petites exploitations qui se suffisent juste à elles-mêmes, mais qui pourraient pas exister s'il y avait pas la coopération. Parce que le gars a le vignoble, a le matériel pour exploiter ça, mais il a pas les moyens d'avoir la cave pour faire son vin et tout. Même sans parler de problèmes de vente du produit, même si on lui enlève le problème de la vente du produit, il saurait pas faire. Ça veut dire que cette coopé nous sert à ça. »

7. Louis Desaille : « J'en suis pas sur de l'avenir de la coopération. Parce que la coopérative à l'origine était créée pour les petits viticulteurs, qui se sont regroupés pour pouvoir se sortir ou quoi, pour pouvoir ... et donc je pense que carrément, c'est autre chose, c'est plus de tout le même esprit, c'est plus la même politique ou quoi, c'est la politique qui a changé et pour moi la politique n'est pas bonne. Pour moi elle n'est pas bonne, parce que tous les petits viticulteurs qui ont trois hectares ou quatre qui font ça à coté de leur bulot, tout ça qu'il pas mal de traditionnels, ils peuvent pas en sortir ou quoi. Bon déjà, je vais voir du mal, et c'est pour ça que je ne sais plus si je vais arrêter, si je vais continuer, je ne sais plus, on va voir. »

8. Joseph Freyssinet : « C'est ça que j'ai peur, d'être trop grand, c'est difficile à maîtriser après. D'ailleurs maintenant euh, le propriétaire euh, le, à la base on sert à rien, toutes les décisions sont prises, c'est plus la base euh qui, on est perdu complètement, ils font ce qu'ils veulent. Le principe de la coopération c'est que, c'est la base qui commande, c'est fini ça ... 'fin ici c'est de petites caves, encore y

s'arrivent déjà à savoir ce qui se passe, mais là maintenant, on sait plus. Les décisions, elles sont prises, quand tu les sais, c'est fini déjà. »

9. Yvette Beauverie: « Ça c'est l'éternel problème, la lourdeur de la structure. C'est vrai que la cave particulière il a l'acheteur en face de lui, il dit oui il dit non, il sait ce qu'il fait. Là je crois qu'on perd en efficacité et toujours pareil, manque de communication avec la base et tout ça.

TC: Et cette lourdeur de la structure c'est un des plus gros problèmes?

YB : C'est surtout parce qu'on ne t'écoute pas toujours. On a surtout l'impression de pas être écouté, que quand on arrive tout est décidé. A la fin de la réunion on te dit ça tombe bien on avait déjà décidé et je ne l'apprécie pas. Je sais qu'y a des gens qui seraient volontaires pour plus s'associer à la structure de la coopération mais quand il voit comment ça se passe ils partent démoralisés et ça c'est grave. Car c'est notre boulot et j'estime que même si on est en coopérative, on peut être associé après au travail à la vinification, qu'est-ce que ça a donné. En réunion hier soir, Michel Bataille a dit a un moment on a eu 5000 hectolitres refusés en Vin de Pays d'Oc et y a un gars à coté de moi qui me dit, 'mais c'est énorme!' Je lui dis et l'année d'avant combien c'était? Il savait pas. Il y a des laments forts qui pourraient les convaincre de changer leurs pratiques et je suis sûre qu'il y a énormément de gens qui savent pas ce genre de chose. On est trop coupé de l'ensemble de la chaîne et quand en plus tu mets Foncalieu, là on coule. »

10. Amélie Jarrige : « On le considère plus comme un politique que comme un, c'est vrai, comme on le considère comme une tête, bon, c'est un agriculteur mais on le considère pas comme un agriculteur. »

11. Hervé Guillard : « C'est les mecs, ils parlent, parlent comme des livres, entre ce-mec-là et le paysan qui taille sa vigne, c'est, enfin ils sont pas sur la même longueur. »

12. Gabriel Garcia : « Donc notre président, je pense qu'il n'est pas tellement représentatif, il est représentatif parce que bon, il est président. Donc, c'est un personnage, mais il est pas représentatif de nous vis-à-vis d'un CTE. C'est un cas à part lui - il est président, il est ceci, il est cela. Quelqu'un qui peut être représentatif, c'est quelqu'un comme par exemple André, qui est au terrain, qui peut être leader de là. »

13. Henri Masson : « Donc mon père, il a été ouvrier agricole, et puis, bon il a acheté une paire de vignes, puis après il en a acheté trois, puis quatre puis après, bon, il s'est lancé dans l'agriculture. On se lançait plus facilement que maintenant je pense. Avec quatre ou cinq hectares, un cheval qu'un collègue prêtait ou un truc comme ça, on arrivait à démarrer. Maintenant quelqu'un qui veut démarrer...»

14. Pierre Jaurès : « A l'époque les gens faisaient ce métier parce qu'ils avaient pas d'autres moyens, c'est-à-dire qu'ils avaient pas de niveau d'instruction, les parents pouvaient pas tenir les petits aux écoles. Donc ils faisaient la vigne comme les parents. Quand on savait pas faire autre chose, on faisait la vigne ici.

TC : Et les choses ont changé et dans quel égard ?

PJ : Donc maintenant c'est un métier comme un autre. Et donc ça demande une formation avec l'emploi de produits phytosanitaires et tout ça, quand est-ce qu'il faut traiter, pourquoi on traite. Et donc tout ça c'est des choses un peu particulières et les gens qui ont pas eu de formation comme moi, on apprend un peu sur le tas, mais on y laisse des plumes comme on dit, ça veut dire qu'on perd des sous des fois hein ! Alors que les autres ils sont plus professionnels et maintenant si on veut vivre dans le monde où on est, il faut être professionnel. »

15. André Laroche : « Pendant les années tu as eu une spécialisation sur l'ensemble de la filière, c'est une spécialisation. Les viticulteurs, on les spécialise au maximum. Y a des techniciens qui ont été mis à disposition pour les vigneron, de façon à leur apprendre les nouvelles techniques, ce qui peut se faire de mieux pour amener de la qualité, ce genre de chose. On les spécialise au mieux. C'est vrai que je vois, comparé quand je me suis installé et maintenant, les modes culturels ont vachement évolué, et ça devient de plus en plus pointu quoi. Déjà les vigneron sont spécialisés, les structures de vinification sont de plus en plus spécialisées. Y a qu'à voir le pognon qu'on met dans le matériel œnologique de façon à être le plus performant possible. Et ensuite quand tu passes sur les structures comme Foncalieu, elles sont spécialisées en matière de commerce, de mise en marché, de préparation de vin, d'embouteillage, d'aller directement à l'acheteur. Sur l'ensemble de la production y a des spécialisations, chacun a son rôle précis. »

16. Jean Huillet: « Nous venons de vivre une énorme révolution culturelle en France, puisque toutes les lois d'orientation depuis qu'elles existent, étaient des lois d'orientation qui avaient la logique productivisme. Cette loi d'orientation, la dernière qui est sortie, elle a comme logique le territoire et, heu, je dirais le développement harmonieux sur le territoire. Alors nous, ça nous va bien, parce qu'historiquement une coopérative est le croisement entre la logique de produit – nous sommes là pour élaborer un produit qui s'appelle le vin, le mieux possible - et en même temps, nous sommes là sur une logique de territoire. Parce que nous, à la coopération, le territoire on connaît. On connaît pourquoi? Parce que là, où il y a des coopératives dynamiques, on se rend compte qu'il y a un territoire organisé. Donc la coopérative, par son fonctionnement, puisqu'elle fédère, par exemple, je prends dans mon village, heu, la coopérative fédère 200 personnes. Il y a 200 adhérents dans la coopérative. Alors parmi ces 200 adhérents, il y a de gros propriétaires viticoles, des gens qui ont plus de trente hectares, il y a des moyens, comme moi, qui sont aux environs de 15 - 20 hectares et il y a de tous petits propriétaires, qui ont un ou deux hectares, mais qui ont un autre métier ou qui sont des retraités. Donc heu, si la coopérative n'existait pas, tous ces gens là avec les

petites exploitations n'auraient pas de vigne et s'ils n'avaient pas de vigne il y aurait des abandons de la friche, de la déprise viticole importante. Donc avec des conséquences sur les équilibres naturels parce qu'il est très difficile aujourd'hui d'avoir une réponse individuelle par rapport à l'environnement. Alors donc, la cave coopérative avec ses 200 adhérents – en moyenne dans chaque village – elle a un acte sur le territoire. Et donc, une cave coopérative, aujourd'hui, est le lieu idéal pour avoir une bonne logique de, d'organisation du territoire et une logique de développement durable. »

17. Michel Bataille : « Les caves coopératives ont été certainement l'élément prédéterminant de cette évolution parce qu'ils ont été ...

TC : Donc vous voyez une coopérative comme un élément facultatif de cette mutation viticole et ne pas comme un obstacle ?

MB : Voilà. Si tu veux, c'est eux qui ont été capables de pouvoir réunir tout le monde, et de dire qu'il faut faire ça maintenant. Si tu veux, c'est grâce aux caves coopératives. Parce qu'elles ont été capables de les lier ensemble. Que si ça avait été tout le monde en cave particulière, seul dans son coin, t'as tendance déjà à vivre pour toi-même et il est très difficile de pouvoir communiquer. Justement étant donné que tout le monde était en cave coopérative, ont été capable de réunir tout ce monde et de savoir prendre les bonnes décisions. »

18. Jean Huillet : « On est en train de mettre en place un cahier des charges déontologiques de la coopération, parce qu'on s'est aperçu qu'effectivement, depuis 100 ans, il y avait eu une déliquescence, un effritement de l'esprit coopératif, et qu'il y a des principes fondamentaux qu'il ne faut pas déroger. Par exemple, on ne veut pas essayer de prendre les adhérents de la coopérative voisine. Bon ça, il faut pas, il faut pas le faire. Aujourd'hui, dans un système libéral, avec une domination de système libéral, certains vigneronns ont envie de mettre en compétition les coopératives, en disant voilà, si à ma cave coopérative historique j'ai pas ce qu'il me faut, je vais voir un autre. Bon ça il faut casser parce que la coopération ce n'est pas le système libéral. C'est un système complètement différent puisque nous avons des obligations coopératives que n'ont pas les sociétés privées. Mais heu, la coopération a des obligations importantes par rapport à ses adhérents, et donc voilà un des éléments importants sur lequel il faut revenir. Y en a d'autres, c'est-à-dire sur la notion du collectif, qui est une notion qui ne doit pas être prise comme une espèce de contrainte, qui, au contraire, doit être le lieu où chacun peut exprimer sa différence à travers une espèce de projet commun. Parce que si, dans l'intérêt coopératif, des gens font n'importe quoi, et font mal leur métier, ils en font subir immédiatement les conséquences à leurs voisins. Souvent il m'arrive de dire à des vigneronns, ne dis pas 'je fais mal ça parce que je veux embêter la cave coopérative parce que je suis pas d'accord politiquement avec eux, parce que je suis pas d'accord religieusement avec eux. Je vais vous embêter au conseil d'administration.' Moi je leur dis 'tu m'embêtes pas. Tu embêtes celui qui est ton ami. Ton voisin, celui avec qui tu vas prendre l'apéro le samedi ou le dimanche.'

Parce que si tu amènes des raisins de mauvaise qualité, globalement la coopérative aura une image de marque qui sera mauvaise, et donc celui qui dans la coopérative fera bien son travail sera pénalisé. Donc ça veut dire qu'en coopérative, il faut prendre bien conscience que tout acte individuel qu'on fait a une conséquence immédiate sur le collectif. »

19. TC : « A votre avis, quelles sont les faiblesses de la coopération actuellement ?

Jean-Luc Lopez : Aujourd'hui, euh, les faiblesses des VPE spécifiquement c'est ... Disons que pour appliquer toutes ces démarches on prend beaucoup de risques, et la faiblesse, ça serait que les difficultés du marché soient tel que tous les chantiers ne nous laissent pas le temps de, de réagir assez rapidement pour gagner ce marché. Bon ben ensuite être gros aussi, et ça peut être une faiblesse. Ça induit beaucoup d'inertie, il y a beaucoup de gens à convaincre. La coopération est une force, est une faiblesse en elle-même. C'est-à-dire que d'une part c'est une force formidable parce que ça joue un rôle de catalyseur d'énergie. D'un autre côté, euh, le nombre de gens à convaincre sont tels que ça procure une grosse force d'inertie. Le problème c'est qu'au niveau des VPE on a beaucoup des coopérateurs qui sont les pluriactifs. Bon, ça c'est historique mais ça amène à une inertie. Disons, une des faiblesses c'est justement cette inertie, le nombre de gens à convaincre et à faire suivre pour qu'ils adhèrent. »

20. André Laroche : « Au niveau de la restructuration du vignoble encore y a beaucoup de travail à faire. Y a beaucoup de travail aussi au niveau du re-encépagement. Il faut savoir qu'on est à peu près à 40% sur Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune en cépage améliorateur, et encore, il en reste une bonne partie qui est en cépage traditionnel.

TC : Et ce pourcentage est à peu près pareil dans toute la région ou est-ce que vous êtes en avance chez les Vignerons du pays d'Ensérune?

AL : Par rapport à d'autres coins on est peut-être en retard. Tu as qu'à voir quand tu es montée à Saint-Chinian lundi, tu as pu remarquer qu'il y avait peu de cépage améliorateur. La restructuration a été différente parce qu'ils ont un potentiel de terroir qui est différent du nôtre. Eux ont les mêmes cépages que nous, font du très bon vin. Nous on faisait je dirais un peu de la merde.

TC : Parce qu'il y a une différence au niveau du terroir?

AL : Du terroir, ouais et de la terre. Et un peu sur les mentalités. Etant donné qu'eux, de toujours, ils avaient été habitués à faire des petits rendements, parce qu'ils avaient pas le potentiel agronomique, de toujours ils avaient fait un vin qui était supérieur au nôtre. Nous, ici, il y avait un potentiel au niveau des terres qui était tel, qu'on pouvait faire du 200 du 250 hecto-hectares et ça faisait de la merde, mais étant donné que tu faisais beaucoup de volume, et qu'il y avait une demande pour ça, tu arrivais à vendre ton vin. Après les choses ont changé et c'est vrai que ce sont les pays viticoles de plaines qui ont été touchés en premier, de plein fouet par la crise viticole. Dès le départ, ils avaient un potentiel qualitatif existant, d'expérience, ils pouvaient faire des produits qui intéressaient. Que nous, bon, il a

fallu mettre en place tout le vignoble, d'apprendre des choses aux vignerons et de ce fait, on a pris du retard en matière de commercialisation et d'image. Au niveau national, international on est connu pour faire de mauvais vin, on a une mauvaise image et ça, pour nous, c'est le plus grand obstacle qu'il faut qu'on adresse. »

21. Frédéric Bonnet : « Parce qu'il y avait même le ministre de l'agriculture qui avait dit que heu, dans le Languedoc on faisait de la bibine. Il disait qu'on faisait de la bibine. »

22. Florence Martin : « Notre région a beaucoup souffert de l'image qu'elle a eue avant. Dans les années 60, 70, on faisait un vin qui était de qualité relativement médiocre, entre guillemets, faut pas se cacher et donc on a énormément souffert de cette image, et il faut maintenant redorer le blason en faisant de la qualité et en le faisant savoir. »

23. M. Richards : « Bon c'est la viticulture de Vins de Table, avec le volet Vins de Cépages qui est en crise, mais en crise par la faute en partie des producteurs et en plus c'est le système coopératif. Je suis dur pour les coopératives, mais là vraiment on s'en rend compte que les coopératives ne maîtrisent pas les rendements et maîtrisent mal la qualité. Et heu, il y a une succession d'événements internes à la région et extérieurs qui ont fait que la viticulture est en crise. Il y a eu année de grosse récolte en 99, avec une mauvaise qualité, suivie d'une autre grosse récolte en l'an 2000 avec une bonne qualité. Mais parallèlement il y a eu des pertes de marchés sur l'Angleterre parce que les Australiens avaient leurs vignobles qui arrivaient progressivement en production si bien que la conjugaison de l'ensemble fait qu'on a eu des problèmes sur l'exportation des produits. Mais globalement, c'est des problèmes qualitatifs qui ont entraîné des pertes de parts de marché. »

24. TC : « La filière viticole languedocienne faite face à quels menaces aujourd'hui? Jean Huillet: Il y a une crise de surproduction. Le monde entier a planté du Chardonnay, les Australiens ont planté des hectares et des hectares de Chardonnay, que le fait que le Chardonnay de la cave de Valros est noyé dans un océan de Chardonnay. Et que donc, si on veut s'en sortir, c'est soit on fait des Chardonnays avec un coût de revient très bas, soit on change notre méthode de production et stratégie de commercialisation et on cherche des marchés de niche. Donc, à partir de là, si on prend la première solution, ça veut dire que, il faut qu'on organise le front de production avec des rendements, des méthodes de vinification différentes, soit si on n'est pas capable de faire, il faut chercher un marché de niche. Et le marché de niche est un marché plus compliqué, plus segmenté. Mais heu, voilà alors donc, l'avenir, moi je crois beaucoup à l'avenir de la coopération à ce niveau là en terme de sa capacité de mobiliser les gens autour de nouvelles initiatives.

TC : Et pour suivre la deuxième stratégie, les marchés de niche, quels sont les produits qu'il faut que vous produisiez, quels sont leurs caractères?

JH : Bon, il faut qu'ils soient de la qualité, mais le plus important c'est qu'ils sont typiques de la région. Il faut qu'on mette en exergue qu'ils ont été produits par les hommes, groupés en coopérative et dans une région qui pendant des années a produit du vin. Donc, on doit essayer de souligner le côté culturel et social de nos produits. »

25. Pierre Jaurès : « Ce qu'on voit comme le futur c'est que quand on vendra le vin, il faudra vendre le pays, l'image. Alors il faut vendre l'image en même temps. C'est ce qui fera qu'on privilégiera, qu'on achètera plutôt un vin que l'autre, c'est par rapport à l'image.

TC : Et en fait c'est un outil pour que le produit soit différent ?

PJ : Ce qui se passe aujourd'hui avec la technologie c'est que le produit c'est vite fait avec les ordinateurs, ta, ta, ta, et on sait le produit ça sera le même. Donc il faut apporter un plus au produit. Et le plus au produit ça va être ça. Et le plus au produit, là on a une carte à jouer parce que nous on est le vieux monde.

TC : Le vieux monde, ça veut dire ... ?

PJ : On est un pays vieux, un pays qui a une histoire. Les Australiens ça a pas d'histoire, les Américains ça a pas d'histoire. »

26. Lionel Blanchet : « L'opportunité à l'avenir, bon, c'est d'abord le label 'France' et de se lancer dans la tracabilité ou les CTE quoi. Donc tu vends le produit et tu vends la carte postale à côté tu vois. Voilà. C'est vrai que bon, en plus tu fais un peu d'historique, tout ça. Sachant que c'est vrai qu'avec tout ce qu'on appelle les pays du nouveau monde là, enfin, eux n'ont pas d'historique puisque eux ... c'est des exploitations à schéma industriel, où ils ont une parcelle de 500 hectares, où ils plantent leurs vignobles et au milieu de ça, ils mettent une cave ultramoderne, et c'est vrai qu'eux peuvent faire des choses que nous on peut pas faire, au niveau des produits qu'ils mettent dedans pour modifier les arômes. Nous, on a pas le droit de le faire, mais après on a l'avantage de l'histoire, de notre patrimoine. »

27. Jean-Luc Fauré : « Une des occasions pour les VPE c'est qu'on a toute notre logique 'groupe-pays', où on a travaillé avec les autres acteurs et là on a essayé de créer des maillages avec le milieu associatif, avec le, les collectivités locales et territoriales, pour se faire reconnaître au-delà de notre métier de base, de la qualité de nos produits. Il est clair que si on crée ces, ces liens c'est pour effectivement notre notoriété soit meilleure. Je crois qu'à un moment donné, quand on a travaillé sur l'aspect territorial, quand on a planté des arbres, je crois qu'on a joué donc un rôle sur le territoire, sur l'aménagement du territoire et il est important qu'on soit reconnu aussi sur cette action-là, environnementale. Parce que, bon, y avait les Basses Plaines de l'Aude, les zones d'étangs, y avait un certain nombre d'éléments au niveau du territoire qui permettaient effectivement d'enclencher naturellement des actions.

TC : Vous considérez ces initiatives d'être un élément clé dans les axes de développement futur des VPE ?

J-LF : Ben c'est oui, oui, parce qu'à un moment donné c'est de dire comment valoriser des produits. Bon si un produit est bon et si en plus les paysages sont pas agressés, y a une beauté des paysages, si au niveau du territoire y a des choses bien structurées, bien entretenues ... Bon, on est en train de développer un concept avec un agent anglais qui est spécialisé dans le lancement de marques et ce concept est un petit peu particulier. C'est un mixte entre la qualité du produit, parce qu'il faut être au minimum du standard mondial, mais aussi avec d'autres aspects. Donc avec des hommes, avec un territoire particulier, avec des actions agri-environnementales, avec des préservations du patrimoine. Ce mixte-là est séduisant parce que c'est un concept qui est vierge qu'on n'a pas utilisé ici. Mais, bon, on est en train de mettre en avant tous ces éléments du concept 'pays', territoire d'Ensérune. Et ça, le concept et tous ses éléments, ça c'est une occasion pour nous. Quand on fait venir nos clients ici, on les amène sur le sentier pie grièche, on leur montre la qualité des produits, les investissements que l'on fait sur nos sites, y a un ancrage territorial et ils se disent c'est là et nulle part ailleurs. Commercialement, il faut avoir des histoires à raconter, or l'histoire sur la qualité du produit. Mais il est clair que dans une logique un petit peu différenciation, tous ces éléments vont être des points forts pour nous. Parce que c'est vrai qu'aujourd'hui, d'un côté il y a la mondialisation, mais d'un autre côté aussi la différenciation. »

28. Gabriel Garcia : « Tu as qu'à regarder un petit peu ce qui se fait ailleurs, dans les autres vignobles, notamment l'hémisphère sud, qui sont nos principaux concurrents, qui font des vins de niveau qualitatif quasi égal aux nôtres, si ce n'est plus - avec des prix de vente qui sont beaucoup plus bas, et des frais d'exploitation qui sont beaucoup plus bas. On a beau dire que c'est le climat qui est pas la même chose, et en partie c'est vrai. Mais y a pas que ça. C'est que les mecs ils s'emmerdent dix fois moins la vie. Y a dix fois moins de règles qui régissent leur production. Les mecs ils font du vin, ça s'arrête là. Ils ont des parcelles immenses, ils mettent de la vigne, ils les palissent et ils font du vin. Ils s'emmerdent pas à calculer qu'il faudra des CTEs pour protéger le scorpion ou le castor à ailes de je sais plus où. Les mecs ils s'en tapent de tout ça. Là ils vont pas faire une dépense d'énergie sur ce genre de chose. Eux leur objectif, c'est de faire du vin avec des rendements les plus élevés possibles, un niveau qualitatif qui tienne la route, et mettre le plus de moyen possible sur le commerce. »

29. Michel Bataille: « Oui l'environnement peut représenter effectivement une opportunité pour vendre, um, pour vendre nos produits. Bon, il y a deux choses, d'abord il y a une opportunité pour vendre mais je ne sais pas si c'est laquelle qui est la plus importante ou pas. Donc c'est une opportunité pour vendre des produits d'une part, et d'autre part, il y a aussi une espèce de, comment en dire, une espèce de consensus social pour que les entreprises, au moment donné, pour que les entreprises soient respectueuses à l'environnement. Et c'est sur que quand je me pose la question, je crois que c'est mon avis personnel, quand j'incite la base de

participer dans nos actions environnementales, je réponds à cette attente globale de la part de la société.

TC: Donc si on parle de la multifonctionnalité, avec les nouveaux rôles et les responsabilités pour les agriculteurs, comment se retrouvent-ils avec l'intérêt traditionnel de l'agriculture?

MB: L'intérêt traditionnel, elle est morte pour moi. Il faut qu'on reconstruise une agriculture insérée dans la société ... Donc, si on trouve pas des moyens de sortir cette agriculture un peu des ghettos dans lesquels elle se retrouve, elle sera morte cette agriculture. Bon je crois que suivant la période qu'on vient de se vivre, dans laquelle l'agriculture s'est cloisonnée de la société, il y a une nécessité de revaloriser, de réorienter l'agriculture et donc la multifonctionnalité est un facteur de développement - plus de développement humain et intellectuel que de développement économique - mais à mon avis c'est le début et que comme concept c'est un concept intéressant pour les attentes d'aujourd'hui et pour l'avenir. »

30. Bernard Augé: « Si on prend le cas d'Ensérune, avec les mesures agri-environnementales et le CTE, bon, à mon avis, cette logique du territoire, ça a mené à une nouvelle organisation des acteurs, une association avec des autres acteurs de l'espace. Pour moi ça c'est un vrai changement. Parce qu'avec la démarche CTE, on ouvre effectivement la réflexion combinée entre des acteurs locaux, les mairies, les chartes intercommunales et des producteurs ... Dès qu'on a commencé à s'intéresser à ces logiques-là, on amenait les mairies effectivement à réfléchir différemment sur l'agriculture et l'espace rural et des mairies par exemple qui n'ont pas d'idées sur ce que rapporte socialement et même économiquement la viticulture. Et ça c'est des réflexions simples que personne n'avait mises dans la réflexion. Et c'est vrai que le CTE, la réflexion CTE, de la façon dont on l'a vécue, amène ce type de, de réflexion collective. Si on n'avait pas été dans ces logiques-là, on n'aurait pas eu, si, on aurait eu, mais des techniciens comme moi, on aurait écrit des belles pages, mais sans ce type de réflexion collective personne ne se serait appropriée notre réflexion. »

31. Daniel Crepin: « Au début des années 90, la profession agricole, le milieu agricole communiquait peu avec le milieu naturaliste et donc il a fallu mettre les gens autour de la table, les gens ont commencé à se parler, ont commencé à bâtir des projets ensemble, à élaborer des cahiers des charges, à négocier, et on a monté 26 opérations locales, donc une démarche complètement décentralisée. Puisque sur l'agri-environnement il y avait deux systèmes en France, il y avait le système avec un catalogue national, avec des mesures nationales définies au niveau national. On l'appliquait au niveau régional et ça n'a pas du tout marché. Et ce qui a très bien marché ici c'est de définir un territoire local et dans ce territoire, de réunir les acteurs concernés, de se mettre autour de la table et ça a commencé en '93, '94, disons il y a six ans et là s'est bâtie une véritable culture agri-environnementale dans notre région.

TC: Et est-ce que vous avez perçu cette culture agri-environnementale comme une occasion et pour quels acteurs?

DC: Bon, tout de suite ça a représenté une occasion pour nous, le milieu naturaliste, puisque nous avons participé au niveau du département, dans toute la démarche départementale de réflexion, les cahiers des charges, et on a eu une influence pas négligeable et ça fait que maintenant on a une habitude de travailler avec les acteurs agricoles avec qui on s'entend bien, les Chambres d'Agriculture, les groupements d'agriculteurs. En terme des VPE, je vais dire en observateur extérieur, mais il faudrait leur poser la question. Mais ils n'ont plus de réserves, ils sont convaincus, et Michel Bataille l'annonce en réunions publiques, ils sont convaincus que la qualité des milieux sur lesquels ils produisent leur vin est un élément considérable d'image de qualité et donc un élément facultatif pour bien vendre leurs produits.

TC: Et êtes-vous convaincu que les MAEs et le CTE, ces démarches locales vont-elles apporter des changements au niveau du terrain? C'est-à-dire les vrais changements en terme d'une amélioration au niveau de l'environnement ou un changement dans les mentalités des gens?

DC: Je crois que l'essentiel c'est dans les mentalités. Bon il y aura toujours des gens pour nous dire rien n'a changé, mais quand je regarde les comportements aussi bien des viticulteurs que des naturalistes, les comportements ont complètement changé. Ça me paraît de l'action de fond. Parce que faire planter trois arbres à grand coup de financement ou épurer les fossés, ça c'est du feu de paille. Par contre, l'évolution des mentalités, cette sensibilité, cette compréhension mutuelle, ça c'est la plus grande chose pour effectuer un changement et ça c'est du long terme ça. Je crois qu'au niveau des VPE et parmi certains gens, cette démarche là est faite. C'est-à-dire on l'a fait dans le cadre de l'agri-environnement et donc maintenant il y a eu une véritable continuité, calée sur leur savoir-faire, sur tout ce qu'ils avaient cumulé de connaissances, de méthodes. Ils ont une telle compétence dans laquelle ils peuvent capitaliser. »

32. Claudie Houssard: « Ben, moi, je veux bien répondre. Bon, pour le Conservatoire, moi je pense que ça a changé radicalement nos partenaires parce que ça nous a permis de rentrer en contact avec des agriculteurs. Avant, on était pas en contact avec personnes. Ça a permis d'accroître tout un réseau de connaissances, et puis même d'acquérir des méthodes de travail qui sont beaucoup plus efficaces. On a un objectif, c'est les friches, et on a eu la possibilité d'avoir des contacts avec les agriculteurs, comme par exemple avec la Chambre d'Agriculture. J'sais pas moi, je trouve que ça a complètement bouleversé, enfin peut-être pas bouleversé, c'est peut-être trop fort, mais ça nous a permis de complètement ...

Xavier Ruffray: D'être bien intégrés dans le monde agricole, quoi.

CH: Alors moi, c'est que depuis '97 que je suis au Conservatoire et les CTEs c'était '99. Ça a dû démarrer fin '98 et donc euh, moi je le vois comme une opportunité parce que c'est beaucoup plus simple, ça permet d'intégrer le Conservatoire dans le monde agricole.

XR: Disons qu'avec le CTE, on a un lien avec le monde agricole qui est beaucoup plus large. C'est-à-dire qu'avant, y avait les MAEs en Languedoc-Roussillon qui étaient quelques sites très ponctuels, alors qu'avec le CTE, il y a eu des projets sur l'ensemble du territoire. Et bon, nous, on a surtout travaillé dans l'Hérault, c'est-à-dire que quasiment les quinze CTEs qui ont été faits, on a été sollicité pour faire les diagnostics environnementaux. Ça nous a permis de connaître énormément de gens. Le réseau s'est élargi, c'est-à-dire que maintenant on connaît des viticulteurs sur St-Chinian, dans le Minervois alors que ces contacts-là, on les avait pas. Et en plus c'est des zones où on allait pas forcément, de grandes zones viticoles, comme vers Béziers, toute cette zone-là qui est complètement délaissée par les naturalistes, parce que c'est de la vigne et que franchement ça ne nous intéresse pas. Et en fait, on s'est rendu compte, en allant dans ces choses-là, que c'est quand même plus intéressant qu'on ne le pensait. Alors, bon moi, je vois ça pour le GRIVE, je crois qu'on a des relations avec les agriculteurs qu'on n'avait pas, et même maintenant, ça nous a permis de se connaître et de s'apprécier un peu entre naturalistes et administratifs agricoles, et même plutôt techniciens. Et maintenant la Chambre d'Agriculture, c'est-à-dire que le GRIVE a déjà fait une formation biodiversité pour des agriculteurs et je pense que si on n'avait pas eu les contacts qu'on a pris lors des CTEs, ces relations se seraient jamais faites. Et les gens étaient très intéressés, et les agriculteurs, et même les techniciens de la Chambre d'Agriculture qui nous ont accompagnés pendant cette formation étaient très intéressés parce que toutes les zones agricoles, ils les voyaient sous un autre angle. »

33. Charline Jouillé : « Alors, il faut pas oublier que c'est un enjeu politique, oui, de toute façon, et le fait est que si un département veut faire valoir l'atout de son agriculture, le mieux à faire, c'est d'ancrer l'agriculture sur le territoire. C'est pour ça qu'on valorise le territoire et le conseil régional dans son soutien à cette démarche. Du moins cela me semble logique que le meilleur atout pour la politique d'un département, c'est de valoriser le département. Mais, ça, c'est pas un enjeu explicite, hein. Je dirais pas que c'est quelque chose dont le département s'est saisi pour valoriser sa position, le CTE d'Ensérune, le projet du pays, c'est pas ça. C'est que, de toute façon, c'est l'assise même du département, le département et les élus du département. Donc pour les CTEs, je pense qu'il y a eu une volonté du président d'intégrer de façon précoce, de proposer un positionnement de façon précoce par rapport au dispositif mis en place par l'Etat. Quand c'est quelque chose qui part du territoire, ça devient un enjeu pour le département. J'ai perdu le fil par rapport à ce qu'on disait précédemment, je sais plus ce que je voulais dire.

TC : Vous étiez en train de dire que la volonté du président d'intégrer dans ces démarches était à cause d'une perception qu'elles peuvent représenter un moyen de valoriser la filière agricole en même temps que la région elle-même. Mais quand on parle de la valorisation, comment marche-t-elle ?

CJ : Quand il y a cette conscience du territoire, et que l'agriculture est vraiment intégrée dans la communauté, et que la filière est ramenée au territoire donc, là on se rend compte que si l'emploi est créé dans ce contexte-là, donc qu'il y a une

solidarité qui est mise entre les agriculteurs et les autres acteurs - les artisans, les acteurs touristiques - et que cette solidarité est un facteur clé du tissu économique local. Si les agriculteurs, en s'associant avec les autres acteurs, c'est-à-dire que la vigne, ça fait aussi partie de la culture, la langue et si on croise tout ça, on renforce le tissu local et on renforce la valorisation du territoire et donc l'agriculture par contrecoup. »

34. Marie-Hélène Fabre : « Je crois que ça correspondait à ce qu'on dit une attente, les gens sentaient que c'était mieux, avant peut-être il y a quelques ans, le projet n'était pas possible, parce que le système des communes l'a évité. Parce que peut-être on a travaillé plus par village, tandis que là, ils sentaient bien qu'il soit nécessaire de se regrouper, oui, on a senti qu'il y avait une attente de ce côté-la et c'est au moment de le faire.

TC : Et vous parlez d'une attente. Quel était sa fondation, c'était par rapport aux objectifs du projet ou est-ce qu'il y avait une attente de travailler en partenariat dans le cadre d'un territoire et ne pas d'une commune ?

M-HF : Je crois que beaucoup de personnes, là je parle du milieu départemental ou même des élus de secteur, ils attendaient un petit peu que c'était une force organisée. Mais la forte attente, je parle surtout notamment au niveau des instants départementaux, c'était pour qu'il soit le Biterrois dans son ensemble qui s'organise. TC : Et donc, ils attendaient un projet qui était animé de la base, des acteurs locaux ?

M-HF : Je crois qu'eux, les élus du territoire, ça c'était bien senti qu'il y a eu cette attente, eux ont été contents que des projets viennent du concitoyen, voilà, de la base, et je crois que tout ça a soulevé des espoirs. Il faut comprendre, autour de Béziers, traditionnellement il n'y avait pas de cohérence parmi les acteurs ruraux, ils n'avaient pas l'habitude de travailler ensemble. Donc ça a représenté un départ.

TC : Et quelles sont les raisons pour lesquelles ils n'avaient pas l'habitude pour travailler ensemble ?

M-HF : Parce que ce sont les régions plus pauvres économiquement qui ont une plus forte habitude de travailler ensemble. Et ici ça ne s'est pas fait pour plusieurs raisons. D'une part, il y avait certainement moins de besoins en terme économique et surtout il y a des très grands, comment en dire, différences entre les filières. Il y a la viticulture, la plaine viticole avec les groupements du producteur qui sont en train d'agrandir et il y a des stations littorales qui se battent un petit peu seuls, ils sont un peu individualistes, et c'est pour ça qu'on a prit un petit peu de retard.

TC : Et à votre avis quelle est la moteur de ce projet ? Vous avez parlé en terme des élus de secteur qui voulaient un projet inspiré de la base et que c'était un bon moment de le faire. Si ces gens travaillent ensemble, quels seront pour eux les avantages ?

M-HF : Parce que comme même le facteur clé c'est qu'on est dans une ère où on connaît la mondialisation. La commune ne veut plus rien dire, bon c'est l'héritage, c'est notre héritage culturel, bon ça existe, mais ça ne plus rien dire. D'être partie de l'économie globale il faut qu'on soit regroupé. »

35. Barbara Bindner : « Donc je crois que la vraie nouveauté se serait quelque part de considérer le territoire comme une unité économique plus seulement comme unité administrative ou politique. Je crois que la vraie nouveauté c'est de considérer comme en fait, un territoire il est une force par son économie, alors bien entendu ça bouscule un petit peu les pouvoirs en place qui sont souvent plutôt les pouvoirs politiques, on a retiré les structures administratives et ça uh, c'est clair qu'on va vers ce qu'on appelle les nouveaux systèmes de gouvernance. Donc des systèmes où les différents acteurs, parce-qu'ils ont un poids économique, mais aussi un poids social, on va dire que ça bouscule un peu des choses alors. Je dirais l'enjeu c'est de recréer un équilibre entre l'humain, l'administratif, la politique et l'économie, uh, qui est loin d'être le cas actuel sur le territoire en France. Et je crois qu'au travers les projets comme le projet du pays, les CTEs ça bouscule les formes traditionnelles d'organisation et peut-être ça crée les nouvelles formes qui sont le contrepoids de la mondialisation en fait, on va arriver à un contrepoids de la mondialisation. »

Motivations and Strategies

1. Renée Bonnet : «Moi j'en fais partie de la commission terroir, et puis, bon, on a les contacts avec la chambre d'agriculture. Donc on se réunit avec le technicien de la chambre, et ils nous expliquent ce qu'il y a et c'est pour ça qu'on est allé vers la lutte raisonnée, vers le CTE etc.

TC: Et ces liens avec des experts de l'extérieur, ils sont importants en terme du développement futur de la coopérative et de ta propre exploitation ?

RB : Oui, ben oui. Alors que peut-être, cave coopérative de Nissan seule, on y serait pas allé, tandis que là, bon, quand le conseiller, il vient, il vient pour sept sites, pour les VPE mais ça c'est mon avis personnel, tout à fait personnel d'ailleurs. Mais je crois qu'en tant que grosse entreprise, ça fait qu'on est impliqué et si t'es pas impliqué, t'es pas au courant. Si t'es pas au courant, tu peux pas faire ton travail comme il faut. Alors le but, pour être au courant, c'est d'être impliqué quelque part. »

2. André Laroche : « Ah c'est très simple ma raison pour participer au Conseil. Parce que d'une part quand je mets les sous quelque part, j'aime bien savoir à quoi ils servent, et comment ça fonctionne. En plus c'est un moyen de se tenir au courant, ce qui me permet de pouvoir anticiper pas mal de choses au niveau de mon exploitation. Ça c'est vraiment à titre privé. Et en plus aussi par passion quoi, parce que c'est toujours intéressant. Moi j'aime bien participer à des choses en collectivité, amener la petite pierre à l'édifice, toute petite, certes, mais au moins la lui amener. »

3. Serge Deschamps : « Quand j'ai pris la propriété, il me fallait savoir au niveau des cépages ce qu'il fallait planter, l'avenir, où c'est qu'il était, il fallait que je me renseigne. Donc, l'idéal, c'était au Conseil, bon, et puis c'est vrai qu'en tant que jeune, le Conseil, la cave, c'est mon avenir. C'est un outil qui me sert à vivre, donc pour l'entretenir, il faut s'en occuper. C'est pas les personnes qui sont près de la retraite qui vont s'en occuper, donc c'est les jeunes qui arrivent qui doivent prendre la relève des anciens. Bon, mais c'est mon devoir, mon obligation pratiquement, il me fallait entrer au Conseil. Bon, là, c'est dommage que le Conseil de Lespignan, tout se décide là-haut à Maraussan. Ici, on est comme les chaises, comme des meubles, hein (rires partagés.) Non, c'est vrai, on n'a plus aucun pouvoir de décision, on a perdu quelque chose qui à l'époque était intéressant quand il y avait la cave toute seule. C'était intéressant, on décidait, on était là pour quelque chose. Là, maintenant, on est là pour pas grande-chose. Mais enfin, le Conseil a perdu sa valeur et ça c'est dommage. »

4. Patrick Perret : « On reçoit des courriers de la cave, de la FDCCH. Je les lis même pas, je lis les journaux, le Paysan du Midi, j'allume la télé.

TC : Et cette information que tu reçois au travers des médias, est-elle suffisamment technique, détaillée pour t'aider dans les décisions qu'il faut prendre dans la gestion de ton exploitation ?

PP : Mais, oui, c'est par rapport à ça que j'apprends des attentes du consommateur, le développement futur du marché. Aujourd'hui, ce qu'on entend à la télé, ces histoires de la vache folle, que maintenant le mec il achète biologique et j'essaie d'intégrer tout ça à la gestion de mon exploitation. Même sur l'internet je lis les trucs sur l'agriculture, l'environnement, la politique. »

5. Raymond Simon : « C'est-à-dire qu'encore il y a quelques années en arrière les gens gagnaient bien leur vie en faisant les gros rendements sans se fatiguer quoi pratiquement. Parce que une vigne disons menée de méthode ancienne, disons traditionnellement était moins contraignante et les gens arrivaient à avoir un revenu /hectare correct disons. Tandis qu'avec des cépages améliorateurs il faut installer tout ce qui est les piquets, les fils. Il faut remonter la végétation, il faut écimer. Ça demande beaucoup plus de contraintes, beaucoup plus de travail, beaucoup plus de savoir-faire quoi. Alors c'est pour ça que les gens, il y en a qui ont été réticents, qui sont toujours réticents encore à planter des cépages améliorateurs disons. »

6. Renée Bonnet : « Il faut faire de la qualité parce qu'il faut décrocher des marchés, comme les marchés qu'on vient de décrocher en Angleterre sur des cuvées prestige ou super prestige. Mais c'est vrai que ça, y a des contraintes. Puisque là, en ce moment, il faut tomber des raisins, il faut avoir des vignes impeccables, une taille spéciale, taille Royat et tout, tailler comme il faut. Et donc, toutes ces choses-la, y a des contraintes, ça prend du temps, ça demande une compétence importante. Mais il faut, il faut que les viticulteurs s'adaptent à cette façon de cultiver. »

7. Didier Gazels : « Je veux dire qu'à l'avenir la lutte raisonnée, ça doit être impérative. Alors là, le problème c'est qu'on se trouve à la face d'une population de gens qui n'ont pas la compétence pour le faire, puisque pendant, pendant trente ans ils ont traité tous les jours. Ça change, mais sans forcément sur le terrain. Et c'est un vrai problème. Ça se fait que maintenant il faut qu'il puisse identifier précisément des parasites qui posent un problème, les maladies qui posent un problème, et donc ça demande un savoir-faire qu'ils n'ont pas. Donc il faut former tous ces gens et c'est long, c'est pas évident à leur connaître une cycadale ou un petit insecte qui fait quelques millimètres de long. Donc, il faut de la formation, il faut un certain temps, et vu le nombre de coopérateurs, il faudra du temps. »

8. Bernard Lacroix : « Parce qu'avec ce système où tu enlèves des raisins, après il y a un nuage de grêle ou de la gelée et tu n'as pas plus de raisins de tout. On coupe des raisins et s'il y a une attaque de l'oidium et les raisins qui restent sont pourris. S'il pleut, mettant qu'il pleut avant les vendanges, la semaine avant, et que les raisins ils pourrissent, et qu'avant tu as enlevé les raisins, c'est pour ça, moi, ça

représente un trop grand risque. Parce que les conseillers sont pas les payeurs, uh, au fond du compte ce qui conseille c'est pas lui qui paie. »

9. Jean-Luc Fauré : « Il y a à peu près 20% de nos producteurs qui doivent faire 80% des surfaces, avec des exploitations de 15, entre 15 et 50 hectares. Des professionnels on va dire et ensuite il y a les pluriactifs qui retirent pas un revenu principal de l'activité viticole. Bon, on a beaucoup de pluriactifs au niveau des Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune et ça c'est un des problèmes du système coopératif. Il y a un gros travail de fond à faire pour que les gens approprient de nouvelles idées, de nouvelles démarches. Mais une fois après qu'il y a eu cette appropriation, ça se déroule automatiquement. Alors on a lancé cette année des cuvées très haut de gamme et on a un club maintenant des producteurs de super prestige et de prestige, un club de 40 vigneron qui ont senti l'intérêt, qui pensent à l'avenir, qui sont prêts à prendre des risques. Mais l'obstacle, par rapport aux autres c'est qu'il faut s'investir, il faut prendre le temps d'aller expliquer et le gros problème qu'on a bien entendu, c'est le problème des relais d'information. Donc pour nous, d'une certaine façon c'est plus facile d'inscrire ce noyau de gens dynamiques, mais pour le reste c'est beaucoup plus difficile. »

10. Didier Gazels : « Bon mais c'est vrai qu'on a tendance à contacter des gens qui font des choses volontairement et alors c'est pas forcément les administrateurs. C'est des gens qui sont reconnus au sein de chaque village, quand ils font quelque chose les autres se disent, uh, d'habitude lui, il fait quelque chose de bien, s'il le fait, ça doit être de bien. Et donc parmi les coopérateurs il y a un certain nombre qui sont moteurs parce qu'on les voit tout le temps dans les commissions et ils sont toujours en train de poser des questions et de se dire comment on peut faire et tout, sur le CTE. Donc c'est des gens qui risquent à influencer des autres, ces gens sont assez réputés, et c'est souvent quand tel commence à traiter, les autres se disent, oop la, il fait ça, il faudrait que je le fasse. Et de toute façon c'est ces-gens là qu'on essaie d'inscrire dans nos démarches parce que le VPE, on est plein de pluriactifs qui ont la tendance de se fier d'autres personnes qu'ils estiment compétents. »

11. Lionel Blanchet : « Mais eux le comprennent pas de tout quoi, ou très peu plutôt. Ils comprennent pas pourquoi on fait tout ça et en plus, heu, au niveau des viticulteurs, bon y a beaucoup d'anciens quoi. Y a beaucoup d'anciens qui ont connu l'ancienne époque en plus, avant même qu'y ait les cépages améliorateurs. Y a eu une telle évolution qu'ils comprennent plus quoi. Bon, certains, en plus, sont pas loin de la retraite donc même ils replantent pas. Ils replantent pas, ils ont des Carignans, ils disent on arrive à la retraite et puis voilà. Même ceux qui sont en dessous, certains ne comprennent pas quoi. Ils comprennent pas pourquoi ... on parlait des cépages et de l'évolution du vignoble, là c'est pareil. Ils ont connu des périodes où ils traitaient avec des produits hyper-toxiques, ils faisaient tout, enfin pas tout et n'importe quoi, mais bon ... C'est deux mondes différents et c'est vrai

que certains ne comprennent pas du tout et ils ne veulent pas surtout pas s'embêter avec des contraintes comme ça. »

12. TC: « Quelle est votre conception de la qualité? Et pas la qualité telle que vous la percevez personnellement, mais la qualité VPE? Comment est-ce que vous arrivez à la définir et quels sont les principaux thèmes qu'elle recouvre?

Jean-Luc Lopez: Alors d'abord il faut différencier le terme qualité. Il y a d'une part, la qualité globale sur laquelle on intègre tout. C'est-à-dire c'est la démarche qualité, c'est-à-dire être capable de satisfaire le dernier maillon de la chaîne, en lui assurant, euh, que tout ce qui a été mis en œuvre pour lui amener le produit est fait selon des règles réglementaires connues ou reconnues. Ça c'est un certain aspect de la qualité, je crois que ce qui la résume la mieux c'est la norme ISO 9002. Ensuite, et qui doit intégrer également par exemple une norme à long terme qui est la norme 9004, qui est celle de la gestion de l'environnement global. Alors ça c'est une certaine vue de la qualité. Deuxièmement la qualité telle que je la vois personnellement, c'est que le consommateur final qui déguste un vin d'Ensérune, euh, il trouve une satisfaction d'abord organoleptique. Qu'il dise c'est un bon produit, je me régale de le boire, et deuxièmement qu'en plus de ce plaisir, on soit capable euh, c'est la cerise sur le gâteau, bon de comprendre que pour le produire il y a un ensemble d'acteurs économiques et humains qui ont été mis en place pour satisfaire son plaisir final. Ça je crois que c'est la meilleure définition de la qualité globale que l'on peut avoir. Donc euh, après c'est de percevoir ces différents aspects et d'essayer de les mettre en œuvre au niveau des vinifications, de la production du raisin. »

13. Jean-Luc Fauré : « Ma vision de la qualité, bon mais c'est vrai que la qualité y a plusieurs réponses. Bon la qualité pour moi, au sens strict c'est au niveau du produit. Ensuite, il y a la qualité au niveau du service. Voilà, produit et service. Si on prend par exemple le Merlot, bon, c'est vrai qu'il y a un standard mondial maintenant et si on est en dessous de ce niveau qualitatif-là, on peut pas rentrer sur le marché.

TC : Et la qualité du service, pourriez-vous élaborer un peu ?

J-LF : On se rend compte que si on a un super produit, si on est pas très bon au niveau de la qualité de la bouteille, l'étiquette, le bouchon, si en terme de logistique on est pas bon, on pourra pas s'implanter durablement sur les marchés. Donc quand je dis le service, c'est un service très large, qui intègre, bien entendu, dans le service, la disponibilité par rapport au client. Bon, si, si on élargit, il y a la qualité des paysages, qualité de l'environnement et ça fait partie un petit peu du pack 'Pays d'Ensérune'. Je veux dire quand je parle du concept d'Ensérune, effectivement, la qualité, elle est transversale. Qualité au niveau des paysages, de l'environnement, de la gestion de l'espace, enfin tout ça quoi que je viens de décrire. »

14. Barbara Bindner : « C'est-à-dire que quand ils étaient sur un produit de matière première, ils étaient chez eux, enfermés dans leur petit monde, ils travaillaient et ils

n'avaient pas besoin d'aller voir ailleurs. Maintenant qu'on fait la qualité, la qualité a besoin d'un territoire, il faut que ce soit beau, il faut faire de la communication, il faut faire de la culture. Une cave coopérative ne peut pas être seule, alors elle a besoin de s'associer avec les gens qui font la culture, les gens qui font tout un tas de choses. C'est une partie très importante de la qualité. Donc ils l'ont fait, ils se sont associés avec des gens qui savent faire la culture. Pour moi, je vois qu'en général, les acteurs ruraux tiennent de plus en plus compte des gens qui sont avec eux sur le territoire et qui ont une activité complémentaire qui peut favoriser la leur. C'est une association qui peut favoriser la leur. Et je crois qu'on va de plus en plus vers ça, les gens, ils sont prêts, et puis d'ailleurs quand on fait la qualité c'est important. Mais la qualité à tous les niveaux. Un camping par exemple, ils s'aperçoivent que si le territoire aux alentours est pourri, ça marche moins bien. Je veux dire que tout le monde s'aperçoit qu'ils ont tous intérêt à ce que ça marche bien partout. Et il y a des démarches de fédération qui sont là un peu partout dans différents endroits et c'est bien quoi. »

15. TC : « Pourquoi la filière se développe-t-elle selon ce modèle du territoire, et pourquoi vous le promouvez chez la FDCCH?

Jean Huillet: Heu, donc, en Languedoc on a des enjeux économiques qui sont excessivement importants. On a d'abord heu, tout ce qu'on appelle la politique tourisme. Alors il fut un temps où on faisait un tourisme industriel et ça a démolit un territoire. Deuxième élément, on est une heu, on est un couloir, donc on a le TGV, on a des autoroutes, et tout ça c'est, c'est un déséquilibre territorial, et on a crée des transformations de microclimat de façon importante. Après il y a une urbanisation. Bon, y a Montpellier qui est en train de se développer, donc tout ce qu'il y a entre l'ouest montpelliérain et Nîmes, est une, est en stand-by, est en stand-by. C'est-à-dire que personne n'ose mettre en place une véritable politique agricole parce que tout le monde se dit que les nouveaux Montpelliérains ils vont habiter là. Ensuite il y a des intérêts politiques, le maire de Montpellier veut une belle ville, le maire de Nîmes veut une belle ville, et puis il y a les zones industrielles, on fait venir des entreprises. Donc tout ça fait que l'enjeu économique aujourd'hui perturbe la décision politique. Et donc au moment donné il faudra que nous soyons suffisamment forts en terme de lobby, agriculteurs ensemble, pour dire stop. On veut bien que les gens viennent ici, nous on, on est accueillant, par nature, mais, moi je vais pas faire les vignes le long des trottoirs de la Comédie, c'est pas possible! Mais il faut bien que je les fasse quelque part, et donc il faut organiser les territoires, c'est pour ça qu'aujourd'hui, l'enjeu du territoire et notre rôle dedans est un enjeu fondamental. »

16. Bernard Augé : « On était sur une logique purement filière, l'essentiel c'était de replanter des cépages améliorateurs, peu importe comment quoi. La cohérence par rapport au territoire, elle était très secondaire. Mais c'est vrai que le conseil d'administration de la Fédération des Caves, à l'époque, était sympathique aux initiatives territoriales. En général, ces initiatives étaient secondaire dans la logique

de filière où on s'occupait plutôt de problèmes très économiques qui étaient de savoir s'il fallait faire une distillation ou s'il fallait faire ... Mais nous, par contre, on avait cette approche un peu globale de la démarche. Ce qu'on avait amené-nous dans la réflexion, c'est qu'il y avait une approche globale, où on disait, il faut vendre du vin, mais ce vin il est produit à partir des vignobles. Donc on avait aussi mis en place à la Fédération des Caves des outils de communication; qui étaient la rencontre avec le terroir et qui était en fait de dire aux vigneron, mais recevez des gens qui viennent de Londres ou d'ailleurs, recevez-les et montrez-leur ce que vous faites, pourquoi vous l'avez fait mais de le faire au quotidien. »

17. Daniel Crepin : « Alors la motivation d'un groupe c'est assez intéressant parce que heu, le fonctionnement du groupe va dépendre de l'époque à laquelle le groupe est parti sur ce thème-là, et de l'échange, de la sensibilité mutuelle qu'il y a eu entre les agriculteurs et les naturalistes, et puis ça dépend aussi de la personnalité du leader. Mais on s'aperçoit qu'il y a toujours un côté risque, on fait un peu le pari. Alors on dit, je me lance là dedans, je fais le pari et c'est au bout de quelques années qu'on dit j'ai bien fait de m'engager là dedans ou j'ai eu tort de le faire. Mais c'est sur la base de l'expérience. C'est pour ça que les gens qui ont quelques années d'avance s'engagent plus facilement parce qu'ils savent que finalement c'est bon à tous les niveaux. Ça leur apporte un peu d'argent, ça améliore leur image, et en fait, l'amélioration de l'image de leurs produits est un facteur très motivant pour les VPE, et donc les gens comme les VPE ils se sont aperçus qu'au bout du compte ils sont gagnants, quoi. »

18. Jean-Luc Lopez : « Nous avons été un peu leaders au niveau du VPE, parce que notre Président a très tôt compris l'importance de l'environnement dans une démarche marketing globale, c'est-à-dire pour se différencier des autres. Faire de bons cépages, tout le monde est capable d'en faire, bien les vinifier, tout le monde est capable de le faire et de les commercialiser. Par contre, qu'est ce qu'on pouvait avoir comme atout pour mieux valoriser cette démarche globale ? Ça a été produire mieux, mais signer le produit dans un environnement qui est agréable à l'œil et pour dire, le produit que vous achetez c'est certes un Cabernet Sauvignon ou un Merlot ou un Chardonnay. C'est certes un très bon produit, mais ce produit a une âme parce qu'il a été produit par des vigneron qui travaillent dans un pays où les notions de la géographie en terme large - c'est-à-dire l'environnement, le paysage, la qualité de vie - sont respectées et sont élevées à une ligne d'éthique. Je pense que nous, on est un groupe de personnes qui est conscient du fait que l'agriculture est un des éléments fondamentaux de la gestion de l'espace rural et de la géographie. Donc aujourd'hui, ce qu'on peut dire c'est qu'au niveau des VPE, on a essayé d'adapter la viticulture aux nouveaux critères de demande mondiale, mais on veut amener une touche supplémentaire qui est la gestion de l'espace et l'intégration des hommes qui travaillent dans cet espace et on met des critères de production pour éviter des dérives qui mènent à la dénaturation du paysage. Donc si vous voulez, nous avons une démarche marketing globale qui est compatible à toutes les autres

démarches, nous voulons mettre en exergue notre pays, nos hommes comme élément de différenciation au service du marketing et de la vente des produits. Certes on essaie de dériver des avantages commerciaux et si nos activités environnementales nous permettent d'assurer une meilleure part du marché et d'assurer un meilleur revenu à nos adhérents, donc forcément c'est une bonne chose. »

19. Antoine Paillard : « C'était la démarche groupe-pays, l'ancrage territorial, c'était la pie grièche, c'est tout ça, et c'est vrai que cette démarche qualité, cette personnalisation c'était quelque chose, c'est une force qui vient de l'interne des VPE, et qui est comprise par tout le monde. Et donc, à mon avis, la situation de l'environnement extérieur, c'est un plus pour cette démarche parce que ça va précipiter la réaction des gens et la réaction et l'adaptation à ce genre de production. Et donc on a eu besoin de différencier nos produits, de faire voir une origine, ce qui est un petit peu l'image de l'AOC française, voilà. Donc la démarche des Basses Plaines de l'Aude, la pie grièche, notre paysage, les CTEs nous aident en tant que producteurs à prendre conscience des conséquences qui peuvent avoir nos pratiques culturelles sur l'environnement, prendre considération du paysage qui n'est pas forcément notre cheval de bataille. Et ensuite cette image-la, il faut la promouvoir parce que c'est vrai que quand on achète du vin, on achète aussi une image, une image d'un pays qui soit propre, plaisant et où on regarde un engagement entre des acteurs et leur environnement puisque les vigneron sont, en terme de surfaces et d'occupation des sols, ce sont les plus gros acteurs au niveau paysage, ce sont des paysagistes entre guillemets, les vigneron. »

20. Michel Chastaing : « Moi je préfère m'entendre dire, 'ah, c'est bien, vous les viticulteurs, les Vignerons du Pays d'Ensérune, vous menez des actions pour, pour, comment ça s'appelle, pour défendre l'oiseau qui est en voie de disparition. Vous protégez la faune et la flore, comme ça, vous êtes pas des pollueurs.' Ça fait plaisir, quelque part, ça flatte. »

21. André Laroche : « Je dirais que c'est le parfait panneau publicitaire.

TC : Qu'est-ce que tu entends par ça ?

AL : Là on a été au top. C'est la plus belle pub qu'on ait pu faire. Parce que moi, honnêtement hein, je suis entièrement convaincu que le viticulteur de base, il s'en fout complètement de savoir qu'on a protégé la pie grièche, parce que les trois quarts du temps ils savent pas ce que c'est, et que leur préoccupation première elle est pas là. Ils sont à savoir comment ils peuvent payer le tracteur ou payer les frais du Crédit Agricole. A mon avis, pour le coopérateur de base, le CTE, c'est arrivé là, mais, ils s'en foutent.

TC : Et qu'est-ce que tu en penses ? Tu es d'accord avec eux ?

AL : A mon avis, c'est un très bel outil promotionnel. Pour une simple et bonne raison, c'est que ça a au moins l'avantage d'être vraiment dans le sens de l'histoire à l'heure actuelle ou dans les demandes qu'il peut y avoir, notamment au niveau

politique. Quand tu arrives à faire venir un ministre dans une cave comme VPE pour signer les premiers CTEs, en disant, 'nous sommes des acteurs qui nous occupons de l'environnement, on est intéressé par ce qu'aura fait la planète demain,' c'est magnifique, ça fait plaisir et en plus ça brille ça. »

22. Raymond Simon : « Mon objectif? De toute manière, c'est de préserver ... de nous faire reconnaître, personnaliser nos vins, et de faire reconnaître surtout notre site et nos basses plaines, parce que nous, on est spécifique dans les très basses plaines de l'Aude. Donc l'intérêt de ce CTE, c'est d'être reconnu par l'intermédiaire de ces très basses plaines de l'Aude. Et il y a des mesures environnementales et de personnaliser les vins puisque maintenant on a des vins disons de cuvées spéciales. Alors ma motivation de participer c'est pour être capable de dire, on est dans les très basses plaines, on a fait des mesures environnementales et de là on fait des produits spécifiques. Donc c'est pour essayer vraiment de trouver une niche, une niche à part parmi les autres de toute manière. »

23. M. Cabane : «La motivation est toujours une motivation personnelle. L'agriculteur qui souscrit un contrat, il va faire son calcul économique. Il va regarder les contraintes que ça va lui imposer, les risques qu'il prend, le temps qu'il va y passer, le matériel dans lequel il va devoir investir, et donc il fait son petit calcul et il dit tiens mais finalement le CTE c'est peut-être intéressant pour moi et donc je vais signer le contrat. Alors après qu'on a des agriculteurs qui aient des motivations plus, comment dire, plus intellectuelles. Il faut que je protège mon environnement, qu'il y ait de l'éthique, qu'il y ait ceux qui mettent un peu plus d'éthique dans leur démarche, mais bien sur, ça dépend de chacun. »

24. Christophe Sabassier : « Et la finalité quand même des groupements de producteurs viticoles, c'est d'être au maximum de son potentiel de vente, pour satisfaire au mieux les coopérateurs. Parce que même s'ils communiquent mal, même si des fois on comprend pas des choses, si à la fin du mois on a un gros chèque on dira rien, on sera bien content. Les mecs, s'ils travaillent en viticulture, c'est pas pour des prunes. C'est pas pour le plaisir de dire 'je fais des vignes, je les vendange, je suis viticulteur.' J'en sais rien, tu deviens pas curé quand tu deviens viticulteur. Tu fais pas abstraction de tout. »

25. TC : « Est-ce que vous avez participé dans la démarche agri-environnementale ?
Henri Masson : Oui. Oui, j'en fais partie là pour les arbres, pour les traitements, tout ça.

TC : Et quelle était votre motivation pour participer dans la démarche ?

HM : Oh ben déjà, la première motivation, c'est qu'on gagnait de l'argent. Et le problème d'un viticulteur, enfin, je pense c'est un peu tout le monde mais ... pour obliger à quelqu'un à faire quelque chose qu'il veut pas faire on a qu'à lui donner de l'argent et il va le faire. Les arbres, on les a jamais travaillés, nous, on nous donne de l'argent et ben on les travaille. C'est réglé. Il faut pas avoir honte de le

dire hein ? On nous dit cet arbre ça fait dix ans qu'il est là, y a des branches qui partent en bas d'un côté et de l'autre, si on te dit tiens, tu coupes les branches, on te donne 500 francs. Pour l'arbre peut-être on va dire non. Mais quand on en a une trentaine d'arbres ou quarante d'arbres on dit oui de suite. On va deux jours de moins à la chasse et on coupe les arbres et ça rapporte un peu plus pour payer des cartouches un peu meilleures [rire]. Et la logique, elle est là, avec l'argent on fait avancer n'importe qui. »

26. Gérard Teyssier : « Oui je pense que, je pense que petit à petit les mecs, on viendra au CTE. S'il y a une carotte au bout on y viendra, s'ils disent mais bon il faut rentrer dans le CTE ou la lutte raisonnée, votre vin on va vendre mettons cent francs de plus ou cinquante de plus, les gens ils y viendront, automatiquement, eh. Ça c'est comme les palissages, ils nous payent de plus et on a changé des techniques. Donc, uh, petit à petit les gens ils sont venus à remplacer les piquets, de mettre les piquets plus haut, des surfaces plus hautes en essayant de grignoter un peu, un peu plus d'argent. Je crois que ça va être pareil avec le CTE, ça va prendre 4 ou 5 ans peut-être, je ne sais pas, mais c'est la présence de la carotte qui est la chose la plus importante. »

27. Didier Gazels : « Des gens généralement produisent d'une manière un peu plus agressive ou beaucoup plus agressive par rapport à l'environnement parce qu'ils pensent trouver un avantage financier. Les gens traitent leurs vignes, ils appliquent que de désherbage chimique et au bout d'un certain temps, le sol devient complètement imperméable, l'eau passe la-dessus et ça peut créer des problèmes, surtout ici où on est susceptible aux inondations, sur Béziers. Et donc le rôle du CTE c'est de les aider à changer leurs pratiques sans avoir une perte financière, même au départ ça doit être une incitation financière. Et à mon avis cette incitation financière est extrêmement importante parce qu'un viticulteur, il va calculer le coût à lui pour souscrire dans le CTE, et après il comprend pas les coûts externalisés, le coût des inondations, des choses comme ça, après il calcule le coût à lui. Et donc il faut au moins qu'on prend en charge les surcoûts et qu'il y a une incitation financière, parce que sinon ça va être inopérable, parce que si les mesures sont pas prises, je veux dire qu'on aura fait le CTE pour rien, tout simplement. Pourvu qu'un viticulteur a un choix, il prendra pas le CTE. »

28. TC : « D'après toi, pourquoi la proportion des gens qui ont exprimé d'intérêt de s'engager dans ces initiatives est-elle encore très petite ?

Louis Desaille : C'est parce que c'est le début, oui parce que ça démarre comme ça et puis petit à petit ... C'est sûr que, puis il y a beaucoup de gens qui sont pas prêts ou quoi, on n'est pas prêt, pour moi il y a un énormément de gens qui sont pas prêts à passer à cette viticulture là, à cette culture de la vigne.

TC : Ils sont pas prêts parce que c'est une nouvelle culture?

CD: Parce que c'est une nouvelle culture, une nouvelle façon de penser pour la vigne, c'est un autre, bon c'est pas trop différent mais bon, c'est autrement, et c'est

pour ça qu'ils hésitent. Pour le moment c'est pas une obligation, tu n'es pas obligé. Mais ils vont fermer la porte ou quoi, pour moi, je le vois comme ça, parce que souvent ça fonctionne comme ça. »

29. Michel Chastaing : « Moi, ça me plaît d'être libre de faire ce que je veux quand il s'agit de mon exploitation à moi. Je n'accepte pas les obligations imposées par les autres et si je signe un contrat avec l'Etat automatiquement ça me rend moins libre. »

30. Claudie Houssard : « Au sein des VPE, les gens qui ont participé, parmi les agriculteurs, bon y a eu quelques viticulteurs qui étaient en fait administrateurs. Donc, ce sont des gens très dynamiques et qui occupent des postes-clé.

Xavier Ruffray : Non, c'est clair que tous les gens qui participent, généralement, ils ont des intérêts. Mais c'est pas toujours pareil, c'est pas forcément lié aux intérêts économiques ou individuels. Bon y a cet aspect-là et généralement ces gens-là, on les reconnaît de suite, un peu crapuleux, un peu mafieux. Et puis après, y a les gens qui sont vraiment intéressés par le projet de territoire, mais où ils savent qu'ils vont attirer le profit, et ce qui leur intéresse, c'est de gérer une structure dynamique. Et le président des VPE, son intérêt est de tirer quelque chose, le fait d'intégrer de l'environnement, bon, c'est vrai que c'est quelqu'un qui est passionné, il est sensible à l'environnement mais d'un autre côté c'est quelqu'un qui sait qu'il va tirer profit de la pie grièche à poitrine rose, pour son territoire, pour mettre en valeur son territoire. Mais c'est pas au même stade que nous. Nous, notre motivation ça c'est vraiment par passion, on fait ça par passion parce qu'on est tellement fou des oiseaux. Moi si demain la pie grièche disparaît de France, alors là j'aurais un petit coup au cœur et en plus je crois que le CTE peut rendre des bénéfices environnementaux. Alors que Michel, il y a derrière un intérêt économique, mise en valeur de son territoire qu'il a pas du tout oublié. Pour lui, le CTE, c'est avant tout un label, faut pas se leurrer. C'est pas forcément 'Ah, c'est super ! On va pouvoir conserver la petite taille de nos parcelles.' Non, c'est pas forcément que ça, pour lui c'est vraiment un label. »

31. Florence Martin : « Bon, l'avantage des CTEs, j'en connais pas toutes les subtilités, mais bon, mais je vais prendre cet exemple parce que ça m'intéresse. Vous savez que dans certaines vignes, il y a de toutes petites maisons en pierre qu'on appelle des grangeots, donc, moi je pense que, le patrimoine qu'on a, il faut le garder, c'est très important. Donc, lorsqu'on veut faire rénover ces grangeots, qui tombent la plupart du temps en ruines, plutôt que de le faire soi-même, on peut le faire selon des aides, avec ce CTE. Donc, ça, je pense que c'est une très bonne chose. Egalement lorsqu'on a des arbres dans les vignes, en bordure de parcelles, pour les entretenir, les tailler un petit peu quelquefois par an, on peut toucher quelque chose. Donc, c'est une aide financière au viticulteur qui veut, dans ce cas-là, conserver son patrimoine. »

32. Patrick Perret : « Ah non c'est pas les viticulteurs qui veulent arriver là, c'est eux qui nous font arriver là, en nous donnant de l'argent pour le moment, après y aura plus d'argent. Au début c'est facultatif, ils nous donnent de l'argent pour nettoyer les fossés et bientôt on va être obligé.

TC : Et quand tu parles 'd'eux', qui motorise cette démarche ?

PP : C'est sûrement l'Etat, les écologistes, les verts.

TC : Et si on parle de ta motivation personnelle, pourquoi es-tu réticent d'y participer et quelles sont les difficultés en terme de l'orientation de l'agriculture dans cette direction-là ?

PP : Mais c'est contre la vie, contre notre patrimoine, la chasse. C'est contre tout qu'on connaît. Parce que les écologistes, quand ils vont regarder la pie grièche avec leurs jumelles, bon les pies elles vont partir parce qu'elles n'ont pas demandé aux gens d'aller les visiter. Quand on est à la maison on est bien d'être tranquille à la maison et une pie c'est pareil. Enfin eux ils disent qu'il faut nettoyer les fossés, de nous payer pour faire ça. Mais si on nettoie les fossés on va perdre la faune et qu'est-ce que se passera avec des mures dans les fossés, ils les veulent plus - ma grand-mère elle ramassait des mures pour faire de la confiture. C'est pareil avec la chasse, si on laboure les fossés, les lapins, les animaux ils vont partir, toutes les bestioles elles vont partir aussi. Y aura plus de chasse, on mangera des cachets. Donc pour moi se sont les conneries et je suis contre. Il faut que les choses restent ... jusqu'au présent nous, les agriculteurs, on a bien gardé les paysages, la faune et la flore, laisse-nous tranquilles pour continuer ce qu'on fait d'habitude. »

33. Renée Bonnet : « On aura besoin d'aller vers tout ça parce qu'avec l'Europe, on y va. Heu, la lutte raisonnée, les mesures agri-environnementales, les CTEs et qu'après un certain moment, il risque de nous dire, bon, 'Vous voulez des subventions ? Est-ce que vous avez souscrit un CTE ? Non, clac ! Pas de subventions.' La lutte raisonnée, c'est pareil. Parce il y a certains acheteurs comme Carrefour qui commencent maintenant à vendre les produits organiques, de faire la tracabilité et donc il faut le faire, il faudra y aller.

TC: Et donc tu sens une certaine obligation par rapport au développement futur du marché, et c'est à cause de ça que tu avances ces démarches à la coopérative, aux coopérateurs de base ?

RB: Mais oui, je sais qu'il faut y aller mais ça me perturbe. Je le ferai pour ma part parce qu'il faudra y aller mais ça me perturbe, je le ferai mais à contre-cœur.

TC: Et pourquoi est-ce que cela te perturbe ?

RB: Mais, moi, j'ai pas trop envie d'y aller, et ça va peut-être te paraître bizarre ce que je vais te dire mais moi, j'aime mes vignes mais après, la nature après je l'aime pas. Tu me verras jamais aller me promener, ramasser les escargots, les choses comme ça. Je travaille dans le paysage, je travaille dans mes vignes parce que c'est mon travail, c'est mon gagne-pain, mais le paysage ce n'est que le contexte de mon travail, je n'ai pas un attachement personnel à la nature. »