

Ethnic identity, power, compromise, and territory: ‘locals’ and ‘Moroccans’ in the Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux vineyards

Chantal Crenn

This contribution concerns the process of dynamic construction of the concept of territory, stressing its variations and instabilities. We take as the definition of ‘territory’ the whole of inhabited landscape and the collective representations of it by the humans who live within it (Simon 1981). At the same time it is produced by them and incorporated into their history and their culture. In this particular way it pertains to ethnic identity, a phenomenon with multiple dimensions: certainly geographical, but also historical, cultural, symbolic, and maybe even poetical. In this chapter, we will mention, in addition to those who call themselves native, not only the peoples who came mainly from Morocco to work as farm workers in some of the Bordeaux vineyards in the 1960s and 1970s, but also those from Tunisia or Algeria. These workers settled there, and their families remain to this day.

It is interesting to note that in the field of interethnic relations and international migration, the countryside has been neglected, both in the recent history of French anthropology, and from the viewpoint of relevant public policies. Thus, for an anthropology trying to find its place in Western societies in the contemporary world, the rural ambit is ignored because it is too marked by a memorial anthropology; that is, the protection of a disappearing world. From the standpoint of public policies and researchers, the countryside is seen as idyllic with ‘no problems’, without ‘immigrants’, without suburbs, thus with no need for research on these issues. Migrants from North Africa and the Sahara are rarely taken into account in policy research on the rural world. Just as they are neglected by anthropologists, in public policy they also remain invisible, only being considered in relation to the tasks they perform in the vineyards and not as members of the community.

In opposition to this neglect, this chapter will take into account the ethnic identity of ‘Moroccan’ farm workers as an additional possibility of organising their relation to others on the territory of vineyards. We place inverted commas round the word ‘Moroccans’ because it is a demeaning cultural categorisation employed by the rulers who call them this way even though they can hold French nationality. However, in order not to make the text unwieldy, we won’t systematically bracket

the word with commas. But it is important to remember that these migrants can also be Algerian or Tunisian. If Algerian, they come from the region of Sidi Brahim; if Tunisian, from Thelpete. For those who actually come from Morocco, most originate from the region of Garb. Initially farmers, they came from the countryside surrounding the city of Meknes, but some first migrated to the city of Meknes before leaving Morocco. Others come from Rabat or Casablanca, and worked on farms in the south-east of France before settling in the south-west, thanks to a network of mutual acquaintances and the labour needs of the French State, which links residence and employment. In this wine area, the high number of people from Morocco is quite significant and has an impact on the way the other North Africans establish their presence.

That these immigrants are still labelled 'Moroccan' today, however, highlights their marked exteriority to the French nation, and in this case particularly to the vineyards. The French urban population thinks it is the responsibility of vineyards to testify to a 'pure' 'authentic' past. The vineyard is part of the attributes designated by the then Minister for Industry, Eric Besson (2009), to refer to the French national identity. However, the wine world has much in common with the urban environment. Here we're talking about the French gaze, which sees in the formerly colonised populations a radical, indeed irreducible, otherness between East and West. It is crystallised in religion, the status of women, and eating practices. At lunch time in the vineyards, the fact that Moroccans neither drink wine nor eat pork *pâté* is regarded by their fellow workers and bosses, who consider themselves 'native French' or 'European', as an additional boundary. As we will see, racism suffered by these workers is not confined to the lower classes. The town councillors themselves are no exception, pejoratively calling their small town 'Marrakech'. The installation of video surveillance cameras, requested by the inhabitants of Sainte-Foy-la-Grande because of the imagined presence of the Moroccans' children (often adults) on the streets at night, further strengthens the process of ethnicisation in this wine territory. In addition, middle-class families bypass their local school to avoid their children mixing with Moroccan children.

Ethnic boundaries not only take shape in relation to the majority, but also among minority populations (in the sociological sense). With so-called Gypsies or Romany, relations are contentious. The members of these two groups set the Moroccans apart from the wine territory because of the latter's alleged affiliation to Islam and their relatively recent presence; unlike those (Christians) who have been settled there for generations.

The mobility of groups of individuals and their fitting into a given space reveals their processes of participation in social spaces. In the case of Moroccan workers employed in the vineyards, their social itinerary (migratory, professional, religious, etc.) will relate to the spatial and temporal dimensions of that itinerary.

As we can begin to perceive, ethnic identity is not a natural layer on which community life can be established. It is in fact produced by it. This study on the identity

of Moroccans in the French countryside concerns the actual situation of the group claiming this identity. This chapter therefore leads us to analyse their situation as a minority in the wine-producing environment and to specify the objective social relations that it establishes. Beyond the everyday racism experienced, we will see that the feeling of social exclusion felt by these populations is also due to the fact that they hold the lowest place in the wine sphere.

It is why we need to insist on the political and socio-economic contexts (we could say 'exogenous factors') of this particular rural space, enmeshed as it is in national and international logics. Although these elements might appear external to the Moroccan group, in fact they cannot ignore or avoid them, because these elements, among other things, influence not only social and geographical mobility, and processes of differentiation, but also endogenous factors. These endogenous factors influence both the institution of the group's collective organisation (e.g. power relations, leadership, ethnic trade, occupation of territory, collective happenings in public space) and its interpretation within individual trajectories.

We will first present the historical and economic context of the vineyard around Sainte-Foy-la-Grande and the processes of distinctions; identifications that profoundly involve the situations of interethnic relations; and the definition, which those who consider themselves indigenous, give to Moroccans. We will then discuss the rural–urban continuum in which the vineyard and Moroccan families are situated. Finally, we will see that, by their own occupation of the wine territory, Moroccan ethnic identity is not reducible to external labelling. We will also see how it is involved, in turn, in the building of the country surrounding Sainte-Foy. The eating practices of the Moroccans occupy a very interesting place in this rural location.

Vineyards reinvented or 'cultivated difference'

Sainte-Foy-la-Grande is situated at the eastern end of the Gironde department, 70 km from Bordeaux, 20 km from Bergerac and 15 km from Duras in the Lot et Garonne. It almost forms an enclave in the Dordogne department. This *bastide* (fortified town from the Hundred Years War) built in 1255 on a previously inhabited area has long been a refuge for freed serfs, Albigensian heretics, Huguenots, Spanish republicans, some 300 citizens from Longwy during the Second World War, and finally Malagasy nationalists, exiled after the 1947 revolt. Migrations have always played a major part in the establishment and shape of its population. From 1870 to 1970 the area also witnessed the establishment of various foreign groups: Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, and French migrants such as Bretons from Brittany, French Muslims (*Harkis*), or French from Algeria (*Pieds Noir*). More recently two types of foreign populations have come in: Moroccan vineyard workers, and many British people. On top of that, in the 1980s numerous French people chose to make their homes there, and they represent a sizeable neo-rural population.

Wine and Protestantism

The all-important economic activity of the area has been and still is wine production, even though, according to our informants, its economic future is not as bright as it used to be; viticulture and its local history are therefore a sure source of identity.

As can be seen from historical research on the region, the vineyard, its production and its trade have established local economic and symbolic activity for centuries. If the charter granted to Sainte-Foy by Alphonse of Poitiers in 1256 alluded to wine only twice, its confirmation by Louis XII in 1498 was much more explicit. Like those in Bordeaux, the vine-growing inhabitants of Sainte-Foy were granted the privilege of being the only ones allowed to harvest their wine before St Martin in winter (on 11 November). The charter then provides information on the many taxes to pay to bring in, leave, or sell their wines in the city. The abundance of texts about wine available for the entire jurisdiction until 1756, stressed the spatial importance of the vine not only in this area but also in the local economy. Wine was then the great cash crop of the region and, as such, a major source of enrichment. This was reflected particularly by the weight of taxes and the emergence or strengthening of a sense of belonging to a 'Sainte-Foy country' which was organised by the control of the production and especially the marketing of wine.

Wine and its production were responsible for the construction of a vast Sainte-Foy-country, between Bergerac and Libourne, probably thanks to its port and its local trading where, as in Bergerac, Protestantism played a prominent role. Its existence continues beyond the revolutionary period, and by the end of the nineteenth century around Sainte-Foy, there was a wine country producing Bergerac-type sweet white wine, called the Little Sauterne from Libourne.

In this region, once known – and even today by some local scholars – as the 'country of the new conquest', the local story written by Protestants about their seeking refuge in the area from the sixteenth century is still used today to forge a contemporary professional identity, via wine cooperatives and trade unions. It is also the struggle between Protestants and Catholics in the vineyard that characterises the borders of this territory in the collective imagination. Tales of the Hundred Years War, of cloistered monks and anarchistic geographers punctuate family conversations on wine estates.

The Catholic Italians: social rise thanks to the vine

The Italians, who arrived from the 1920s on, also have a central place in the wine area, in so far as the topic we are interested in (Guillaume 1990). Settling in great numbers decades before the Moroccans, the Italians were employed either as sharecroppers or as agricultural or domestic labourers on mixed farming properties. Regardless of the native region, unemployment in the Italian countryside influenced the decision to emigrate. High birth rate, low economic activity, and familiarisation

with immigration thus prompted whole branches to leave the family farm, relieving the father and also any brother who had migrated, to settle where a job awaited them in Switzerland, Austria, or France.

There was great demand for agricultural workers in France after the 1914–18 war. The country lacked a work force and much of the land lay fallow. However, even prior to that at the end of the nineteenth century in south-west France, re-establishing the vines after the phylloxera plague had required much labour. Furthermore, during this period there was a heightened indigenous emigration from the area. Farms were deserted and passed on to Italian sharecroppers. However, for many of these sharecroppers what was left to them after giving the owner his dues provided only a meagre salary.

Poverty and deprivation are very obvious in the stories of these Italian sharecroppers' descendants. Community life oscillated between two activities: church and family gatherings. Similar to their dedication to working the land, church was at the centre of people's life stories, and they regularly attended church services outside working hours. Religion was an important factor for acceptance by some of the local population, that is, the Catholics among them. But it was also an obstacle to overcome if they were to achieve the social rise expected in a Protestant land. After the Second World War, some of these immigrants bought agricultural properties (not only vineyards, because mixed farming was then the norm in the region), when indigenous exodus was the rule and when economic conditions were unfavourable to the wine trade. Thus, today they think it is by their selfless work in agriculture, particularly through their investment in the production of the vine, that they have 'deservedly' legitimated their presence in the region and have competed with the religious and political power of the local Protestants. Few evoke the racism that they and their parents suffered. The grandparents have done everything to avoid being treated as 'Macaronis' by their work and fervent religiosity. Thus the arrival of the Moroccans revived the threat of being stigmatised, and of being reduced to immigrant workforce status.

Heritage, label and wine: a feeling of belonging for whom?

Yet the vineyards are places that have been recruiting foreign labour for a long time and it is where the Moroccan workers have been traditionally employed. These workers usually followed 'a boss', the French owner of a vineyard in Morocco, Tunisia, or Algeria, back to France at the end of the French protectorate in Morocco in 1956. Also, some came because they heard of possibilities by word of mouth; they sought a better economic situation than in Morocco, and sometimes joined parents already on site.

For the most part, the Moroccans are salaried by private vineyard owners or by cooperatives, formed by 'new agriculturalists' and which try to create a new driving force via the union of several young producers of organic wine. These also succeeded

in reviving the Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux label (*Appellation d'origine contrôlée*), which dates from 1937 (Crenn and Téchouères 2004). However, the label was abandoned after the Second World War because it was no longer economically viable; it had become more profitable to sell the wine under the Bordeaux Supérieur label. The Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux label was reinstated in a global context in 1999, to distinguish it from the labels of Saint-Emilion and the great Bordeaux. What we have here, therefore, is a meeting between political and economic interests, as the appellation is being used by the local council to develop tourism in the area. At the same time, it is interesting to note that the region is experiencing a strong sociological change because many people are now working in Bordeaux, Paris, or London and do not depend directly on the wine industry.

To approach agricultural workers through the medium of wine offers a threefold interest. First, it allows us to understand the appropriation of the Sainte-Foy territory by the wine-producing community and the establishment of its rules for the whole of the local population. Second, it shows us the professional world in which the Moroccans try to fit: a world characterised by transmission of know-how, professional culture, social hierarchy, interethnic relationships, racism, etc. We notice for example that the Moroccan agricultural workers are totally absent from the agriculturalists' discourse about the vine and the 'land'. The professional world they belong to tends to completely ignore the Moroccans. Indeed, the agriculturalists were surprised by our theme of fieldwork on a minority that they had never even considered as an identified group who would have brought something to the wine community: their skills, availability, and flexibility. If they *are* described, it is to expose their shortcomings: poor attendance at work, and lack of compatibility with the dominant social and cultural norms. Third, this approach allows us to analyse the extension of the concept of 'heritage' (local term meaning, here, 'national heritage') in two areas: (a) a technical scientific one, heritage being supposed to provide protection from the excesses of modernity on the environment and humans; and (b) the preservation of elements of a culture, thought to be disappearing (Di Méo 1996: 247–69).

In this context, the interlocutors who define themselves as 'Protestant wine growers' are at the same time both marginals and local wine industry leaders. In our opinion, they always insist on their innovative and free spirit. They want to appear as *avant-garde*, compared to the other Sainte-Foy inhabitants, that is, 'Catholics'. The values held by these interlocutors are also those of commercial companies, of success, of the spirit of independence, and of adaptation; values that, according to them, have necessarily produced local leaders for the vineyards. Their central role in the erection of the regional cooperative wineries and their commitment to the rebirth of the Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux Union by adopting a 'reasoned wine growing' is also meant to show their sense of individual and collective responsibilities.

In the same way, these interlocutors see the place of 'Moroccan migrants' (i.e. minorities) as being associated with their ancestors seeking refuge in this area

in the past. As a result, 'Protestants' strive to appear to be more tolerant in their attitude towards the Moroccans, but in reality they do very little to help them settle. For instance, the Protestants only speak about them when directly questioned by the anthropologist. They openly denounce the racism that the Moroccans suffer, but they do not interact with them on a daily basis.

The Protestant heritage has become a lever used by these actors to legitimise wine production in the area and thus to claim a unique identity locally speaking, but also faced with the globalisation of wine markets. Mechanised harvesting, bottling using microbubbles (the measured oxygenation of wine), other modern winemaking techniques, the most appropriate dosage of fermentation, and wine marketing via the internet are all being developed. However, in addition, the Protestant winemakers we met use the *Nuits du Patrimoine* (nights when, throughout France, the local architectural heritage is celebrated) to promote their properties and wine to local inhabitants and to the large number of passing tourists. Elements of the past are selected to meet the current trends of consumption: the search for authenticity and quality by consumers. In a manner akin to the exploitation of the concept of 'terroir' (Trubek 2008; Demossier 2010), the 'making of heritage' is here deployed as a category which structures ways of understanding 'how to drink properly' and 'how to be in harmony with its social and natural environment'.

This relationship, which the Protestant growers articulate between local land and local heritage, seemed to meet the expectations of the French urban population facing their 'natural' environment but also appears to be in agreement with a mythicised past. The reactivation of the Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux Union and the establishment of a brotherhood with its own costume, the re-introduction of the 'harvest meal' (though they are now almost non-existent in the majority of estates) at the time of the *Vituriales* (the feast of the Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux Union on the first weekend in August), reflect the symbolic motives available to these elite and economic resources, which give it the ability to promote its identity locally. By presenting the quality of their wine in this way, the quartet of winemaker, land, heritage, and global market has found a place where the individual relationship to consumers is central and where the Protestant affiliation is mobilised.

For this reason, the Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux Union has a problem of recognition locally by the whole population. It is usually associated with a rather Protestant elite; though even if many Protestants are in the Union, not all its members are Protestant. Many winegrowers do not join the Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux Union; precisely those (mainly Catholics) who worked to accomplish the huge modernisation effort cannot recognise themselves in a professional identity which, according to them, values the stereotypes of the past. They cannot recognise themselves in a local identity centred only on Protestant heritage. They do not want to belong to the Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux Syndicate just because the economic and symbolic consequences of membership in the *Bordeaux Supérieur Appellation* have previously borne fruit. They therefore claim their places as actors of wine production outside of the Union. Moreover, if

the Union struggles for recognition of a specificity of the Sainte-Foy land through geological surveys and a common denominator in the characterisation of wine when it is tasted, many producers are not fooled and think that basically 'willingness is necessary to find the nuances'.

In this context of upheaval, where Protestant Christian history is strongly claimed, 'Moroccan farm workers' struggle to find their place despite the rather tolerant speech (in front of the anthropologist) of the 'Protestant elite'. As we have seen, the concepts of common heritage and respect for the environment are today very evident in the vineyards where the Moroccans work, and they have a noteworthy impact not only on their way of life but also on their ethnicity. Among the new uses inscribed in this rural space is the importance of the Moroccan workers' presence in the area for over thirty years. We can thus ask: What is their position? How are they seen by others? What is their impact on wine production? How are their cultural differences perceived?

At the centre of the urban–rural continuum: 'Moroccan workers' and their families

The Moroccans in the vineyards are in the middle of a complex history process. The old dichotomy town/country is not yet totally erased. But it has changed shape. If it is always possible to define a rural space as opposed to an urban one, the forms taken by the Moroccans' interaction are new. The idea of an urban domination is being slowly replaced by that of a continuum between these two worlds where the notion of rurality is now valued.

The way in which the Moroccans have been established locally has changed over the twenty to thirty years. In the past, the men (without their wives, who were left in Morocco) were housed collectively in makeshift shelters on the property. Following the urbanisation–modernisation programme of the countryside, and after the law favouring family regrouping was passed and implemented in 1976 by President Valéry Giscard D'Estaing, they were housed with their families (wives and children came from Morocco) in low-rent council housing recently built on the periphery of the small town of Sainte-Foy (population 3,000). Sited near a motorway, these buildings, together with the construction of nearby shopping areas and petrol stations, as well as a tourist information office, considerably changed the landscape, creating an urban space within a broader rural one.

It is not just that merchandise and urban fashions have invaded the countryside, thanks in particular to the creation of new circuits of distribution, headed by hypermarket chains such as Leader Price (especially popular among the Moroccan families). Significant, additional factors have included the changes to the organising modes of management activities, as well as in distribution and work patterns. In this wine-growing zone where the Protestant elite has, since the nineteenth century, attempted to reduce the frontier between traditional rural culture and scientific

culture, the new technological processes were adopted quickly in wine production. Harvesting is now carried out by machines, and specialists take over the wine making, both of which have important consequences on the possible 'career' of the Moroccan workers who, today, are only allowed to perform basic menial tasks along the production line.

In the early 2000s, despite the mechanisation of tasks and less use of manual labour at harvest time, a new direction became apparent. Some Moroccan families invested in real estate: in building lots in the middle of the surrounding countryside, and constructing their own houses, 'each family helping the others' (Brahim, aged 60). These lots are situated on the opposite bank of the river, in Port-Sainte-Foy, facing Sainte-Foy. The new direction has much to do with the fact that a mosque was raised in this area. Also, the land is cheaper, and being there does not brand the inhabitants as 'those of the fairground' (Brahim), i.e. the very low-class suburban area. In these labourers' migrant itinerary, access to private property was essential, as it allowed them to recreate a home in a familiar half-rural, half-urban environment. The particularly well-tended vegetable gardens display mint and coriander borders, attesting to the presence of Moroccan gardeners. These are about the only exterior signs of the Moroccan identity of the inhabitants although, inside, their homes conform to the norms of Moroccan housing. As far as vegetable and animal production is concerned, the local farming culture is sufficiently close to their own, so that they can reappropriate it without changing its meaning. Thus their settling outside of town and not in council buildings was realised in a manner of apparent total freedom.

New technologies of distribution and communication have also contributed to the change of their rural landscape. Indeed, these new technologies bring into their homes the very heart of economic globalisation. All the families have television, telephone, and radio. Satellite TV allows them access to television news other than those of the Western channels and to follow 'Arab' events of the day thanks to the Al-Jazeera channel (for example, during the Iraq war). Furthermore, satellite TV also allows them to access the same news and information as their family in Morocco. Of course, they also share with the locals the great sporting events and other important programmes on local or international TV (Abélès 1996: 9). With this media input, the Moroccans' construction of identity is no longer produced within the traditional game of opposition between Self and Other, between the interior and the exterior. Instead, these migrants and their families are creating for themselves a specific rural world, making use of all the images presented in the media. In the process, they construct for themselves 'an imagined Arab community' akin to 'the imagined community' of Benedict Anderson ([1983]; 2006). Through the media they are presented with images from all domains: economy, politics, fiction, sport, etc. These images enable the collective appropriation, in different ways, of a 'public sphere of exiles'. Locally, and in their situation as 'outsiders', this imagined Arab community appears to be, above all, a means of resistance towards the dominating local population.

Seen from this point of view, the rural territories of the Moroccans should not be confused with enclaves. They are rather spaces of circulation, recognised by the migrants who set up a network of complementary, functionally differentiated spaces. We have identified here, as in urban areas, the same Moroccan capacity at constructing the countryside, not as a succession of different spaces, but as a network of broadly connected, topographic and social circuits.

The Moroccans have thus contributed to the transformation of the French countryside. Despite the complexity of their cultural and adaptive references, we can consider them as rooted in the area. The families have taken over the rural space without completely transforming it. They did not attempt to reduce it into a simple prop for a community life closed in upon itself. Instead, like Lévi-Strauss's *bricoleurs*, they 'invented' their occupation of the land as something between Morocco, the imagined Arab community, and the local and national context.

In spite of the complexity of their references, one can here speak of an 'anchoring', to the extent that most of the young born or raised in France remain in the area, very often after having married locals. Those who have found work elsewhere come back every weekend. They may express their attachment to the place of their childhood by renting a house not far from that of their parents, or by continuing to participate in local activities, for example the football team, whose president is a descendant of Tunisian rural workers.

For those who have invested in their own individual house, return-trips to Morocco, Algeria, or Tunisia were less frequent when they were working but, once retired, they made return-trips on a regular basis, at least as long as they were in good health. The choice of their final home is debatable, which reflects the difficulty of choosing between the country of departure and arrival. Besides, the concepts of 'arrival' and 'departure' are relative and, for these individuals who have lived longer in France than in Morocco, depend on where they are currently living.

This strong feeling of belonging to the vineyard land of Sainte-Foy but also to the Moroccan countryside can perhaps be explained by the construction of Moroccan identity as rooted in the countryside: first in Morocco, then in France. Most of the families are from rural Morocco where vines are still cultivated. Indeed, for many years, the proceeds from emigration have served not just to put up beautiful houses emblematic of migrants' economic success, but at the same time to enlarge familial estates: a strategy until then reserved for some rich families (Crenn 2003). However, even if they have funded the expansion of familial property in Morocco, they have worked all their lives in the Sainte-Foy countryside. Financing the family property over there, enriching the wine region through their work here: they have a sense of belonging to both at the same time.

We notice that the Moroccan image of the vineyards fits into a transnational context. They are producing their very own 'locality' in a moving context. The identity of this group is not fixed. It makes use of elements, coming sometimes from other cultures, and sometimes from the local vine-growing culture. However, this

identity is also built within the framework imposed by the structural constraints of the vineyard.

The ideological context of the vineyard: the exploitation

In the vineyards, to be categorised 'Moroccan' is to be seen as poor, uneducated, a Muslim, and having no respect for women: 'Here we say that a good Moroccan is a Moroccan who does not understand French, who does not know their rights as employees' (Protestant wine worker, aged 55). Thus the figure of the (male) migrant farm worker exploited at will, without knowledge of his rights or not seeking to benefit from them, is still relevant in the wine sphere, and is a point that interests us. Incidentally, a number of growers and agricultural businesses are still looking for such employees, in search of unskilled and docile labour. However, those already settled for thirty years constitute a population that no longer quite fits these criteria. The Moroccans face competition from Polish and Spanish workers or 'Andalusian Moroccan'. The wine business is, in this region, still in need of secondary workers, who are numerous but seasonal; few people now enjoy permanent contracts.

Some of those interviewed worked on several farms over the last twenty or thirty years to complete various activities, the most common being cleaning and pruning the stems and '*tirer les bois*' (removing the dead wood). Some of the workers were seasonally hired as 'permanent' but then dismissed for economic reasons or sometimes in favour of a stepson or brother of the owner, who was in search of employment.

One day my boss told me: 'I have bad news for you, my son-in-law does not work, I decided to hire him, because of family solidarity, you can understand that?' Of course I understood but it was hard ... well, I received my dismissal indemnities as it should be, but I had no more fixed workplace. (Brahim, 58)

Others are laid off and replaced with seasonal, rather than permanent workers, who are sent by flourishing agricultural contractors in the region. Permanent workers were called 'the Arab' or 'the Moroccan' of such-and-such.

I was the first in the village to hire a real North African, and everybody told me: you're going to invade us with 'your' Moroccans ... So when I sold them a piece of land to build their house, it was the revolution. (Protestant winemaker, 57)

His former employee Mohammed, now seasonal, recalls being called 'the Arab of the Maubastit'.

Those who are lucky enough to remain permanent still face the same labelling. However, in general, when the oldest of them reminisce, they usually show their attachment to the property on which they worked the longest. A kind of scattering emerges from their interviews too. 'Before being hired fifteen years at X's, I did a season with so and so, then another at another's. By the way, this one never called me

back.' Walking in the vineyard one of them said, 'Look, I grafted a year in this plot of land that belonged to X then the one next door.' According to Moroccan workers, it was difficult to establish friendly relations in this context of movement and instability. These statements are confirmed by the winegrowers, who do not know the individual identity of their seasonal workers. This is reinforced today when they delegate the maintenance of the vines to a company. They no longer have any direct contact with the workers. However, those who benefited from a permanent contract have fond memories of the links forged between 'them' and their boss and experienced the modernisation and economic difficulties of the vineyard as if it were their own. Among the oldest employees, who had brought their wives along with them in the 1970s adventure and now find themselves back with their first status (i.e. seasonal worker) bitterness is perceptible. Their children's unemployment forced the workers to migrate to town when they themselves feel threatened by unemployment (because they are increasingly excluded even from the simplest tasks), which makes ageing difficult. And their eviction from the vineyards causes a form of nostalgia.

Women also establish a difference between the urban and wine-growing areas: 'In the vineyard, we were free, no one was aggressive towards us, we could wear the veil or not. It's not like in town where people do not hesitate to make racist remarks' (Fatima, 57). Their stories are those of the vineyard and, paradoxically, 'the love of the vine'. All these life stories also show an ambiguous feeling of love/disgust for the 'bosses of the vine' who provide economic resources. They regard their work as a real form of participation in the local economy, a professional identity, and the hope of a final integration, but which also offers poor working conditions and discrimination.

Many of us are unemployed or seasonal, sometimes I work two months, sometimes seven ... It's hard. But I am not complaining like those who have lost their jobs after an accident at work and have never been able to have the fault of the employer recognised: employers who, until then, cherished them as they were good vine pruners, born leaders, or simply exploited at will! (Karim, a seasonal worker, 54)

Indeed, accidents at work are numerous, and in these times of conflict they reveal the social status given to these workers. Brahim, aged 57, who lost two fingers of his right hand, states:

I was considered like his son. With my wife, we had housing just for us. He gave me responsibilities. I do not know why he treated me better than my fellow workers who were housed in groups on beaten earth. Maybe because I was working well. But the day I cut my fingers, we had to go to court ... But here I lost. He knew all the judges ... He won and I have a ridiculous disablement pension ... I cannot work any more.

Others discovered that once dismissed and at the time of retirement, their boss had not declared them during the first years of their contract, preventing them from claiming their full retirement pension. Contempt towards their boss at the way in

which they were managed is therefore understandable. Halema (aged 50) bitterly recalls the long waiting hours by the phone when it was time to thin out, and remove the dead wood: 'Last year I worked on a farm in Saint-Emilion. They were very satisfied with my services, and they said "Next year, we will call you back." They never called back ... They preferred a Moroccan from Morocco without her papers!' For some, like Halema's husband, the situation is considered a little less precarious, as he is 'rehired' every year by the same boss but also 'laid off' by the end of the season. This entitles him to claim unemployment benefits. This precarious status will continue throughout their working lives. However, some, like Ahmed, have fond memories of the time when, as a permanent worker, he participated along with his boss in all stages of winemaking from the vine to the wine storehouse. He had got what he wanted: a permanent contract, but only for a while:

When I was at B's, an organic winemaker, and Protestant, we were as much in the cellar as in the vineyard. So, we knew what was happening ... The office was next door to the wine cases ... Sometimes I was going to the trade fairs because I had got my truck licence. He told us everything. Now my new boss sells everything to the wine cooperative and I am relegated only to the upkeep of the vines. So I'm less informed. I do not see anything anymore.

Brahim recalls how initially their lives were devoted only to work and expresses what Sayad (1999) called 'the truth of immigration':

When I got married in Morocco, under duress by the way, I came here with my wife. We had only one thing in mind: to work and earn money. In Morocco nothing was waiting for us. I could not live on my uncle's farm or my stepfather's. Then we came here. My wife, I introduced her to my employer and she was immediately hired. We ate on site. I remember we did not cook as much as now. We ate what was prepared. Halal didn't exist! When our children were born, we had them looked after by a French woman, so that Djema could continue working. Our whole life was organised around our job and the vines. Nevertheless, my boss let me go the day I had an accident at work.

They would have accepted anything, endured everything for a final status, a little recognition, and a fixed salary. By dint of non-recognition, mistrust and the internalisation of a negative identity against bosses – and by extension French people – is evident in their words. Ahmed: 'Even those who call themselves Protestant and more tolerant, they are racist towards us.'

Many remember the precarious conditions in which they were subjected in their house. Nadya (aged 51) recalls the days when her family lived in the 'free' house of the employer, located near the wine land: 'The wind came in. It was wet, there was no heating, no bathroom either. The children were always sick, just like us!' Before Nadya's arrival, the rooms had been used to store equipment or agricultural products. To make them into dwelling places, the few changes made were mostly limited to the division of the space into several parts: a common room, a room used as a bedroom, and a kitchen. The lack of insulation and openings, plus

broken, unrepaired tiles, resulted, they remember, in the walls becoming saturated with water. According to a doctor from the Mutualité Sociale Agricole at the time, parasites and humidity caused chronic coughs and skin diseases. Some fathers, who suffered regularly and were forced to take an increasing amount of sick leave, had their jobs threatened. Sheikh (aged 63): 'The boss always finds someone else, and we ended up on the street, jobless, homeless.' These statements were corroborated by a Mutualité Sociale Agricole factory inspector working in the Libourne region. He informed us that this type of housing was still available in the 2000s and that there were still unfair dismissals if the employees were considered to be taking sick leave too frequently. According to employers, the move to bring the work and rest places closer together offered the migrant workers the opportunity to own a home free of charge and to get to work without a vehicle, thus masking material and symbolic dependencies and the lack of basic necessities. Unhealthiness associated with the feeling of 'being ill-housed', migrants said, could not be completely eradicated by individual home ownership, because the shift to apartments in the housing project has not completely removed the impression of 'malaise'. In the same way, living in the *bastide* of Sainte-Foy-la-Grande contributes to their feeling of exclusion, because the town centre is today deserted by the French middle classes. Therefore, to be 'ill-housed' is as much a feeling of social exclusion as living in unhealthy conditions. Yet migrants believe that they have everything in place to try to find a social balance through work. Some of them have already achieved this on account of '*un bon patron*', but this is rare.

Despite the subordinate tasks the Moroccans were given, they found a special meaning in their work. For instance, pruning – a particularly valued part of the job – was made a symbol of success when they became known for their ability. The women, who are affected by the division of labour (they are usually given less valued tasks than pruning) and by the periods of insolvency, symbolically revalue their jobs. As Colette Pétonnet wrote in her ethnography of French suburbs, no worker can be expected to conduct a job just to earn a living (Pétonnet 1979). In this way these women give a sense of purpose, a positive value to their occasional presence in the vineyards. They try to keep their dignity and to oppose the negative representation, or worse, the silence that the majority have of their work. These women bring to their labour a specific family meaning: 'My father worked in the vineyards in Morocco, I always accompanied him in his duties. I am extending a family know-how.' Another: 'This vine is like my child. I have planted it, cared for it, watched it grow. It is part of my life.' They reinterpret the precariousness of employment as a positive virtue: that of free time organised as they please. 'The piecework for us women is better. We organise our time as we want, and the boss has confidence in us. As long as the job is done, it's good!'

In the anthropologist's eyes, at a discursive level, men and women can make their presence essential – depending on the timescale. In the current appreciation of the 'handmade', they attribute the guarantee of quality to their actions in the vineyard: 'If

mechanisation, chemistry does the work for us, the consumer will lose out. He will not have the quality in his glass.' They reinterpret their relegation on farms according to the crisis in the wine sector in France: 'We discuss the price of wine with the boss. We understand that, given the competition, he has trouble keeping us.' Trust between 'them' (the bosses) and 'us' (the workers), based on the assurance of a job well done, punctuates their speech about the vines, leaving the ethnic variable aside. 'The boss, he leaves us alone to work, evidence that he has confidence in us.' 'He hires us every year, because he knows he can rely on us and, above all, we work faster than the Gypsies.' Their professional pride is at stake.

At the same time, if this work of symbolic self-appreciation can help them to withstand the concrete reality of work or the lack of it, they are not fooled. They know full well that it is a symbolic device. We can say that this trick worked until the demise of permanent employment. But now their status as 'seasonal' sticks; this symbolic work is less and less effective because the majority (national employers and employees) does not 'work anymore'. There is no possible progress, although there are a few exceptions of young Moroccans who have become cellar masters. Absenteeism becomes, then, a defence mechanism. Faced with the impossibility of social climbing through skilled work on the vines, 'to let them down' is experienced as a way of organising their time to their advantage (e.g. family matters, doctor's appointment) or as a weapon against the powers of work organisation. Finally, to be absent is experienced by some as a way to go on strike individually, because ever more frequent compulsory free time conveys to them their uselessness. They live the paradox of 'the unemployed immigrant', who cannot go back home without having succeeded, yet can no longer justify his presence in front of the majority of the immigrant society. Unemployment doubles the internalisation of a negative identity.

However, none of them moves to try to find a job elsewhere. They all say they belong in Sainte-Foy, and they regard the landscape of vines with joy when they come back from Morocco, Algeria, or Tunisia after the summer holiday. Leaving the area would be experienced as a new uprooting. Until then, their use in the vineyards justified their presence in the eyes of the majority in the vineyard. But the economic difficulties in the vineyards, along with the bad press attendant on 'Islamic' terrorism, expose them to a widespread racism found in the wine-producing towns and in French society in general.

Vineyards as 'one's own territory'

Despite precarious living conditions (e.g. seasonal employment, undeclared work, housing, racism), the Moroccans feel they share with their vine-growing employers, a know-how of the agricultural 'land' and particularly of wine making. Their attachment and belonging to Sainte-Foy manifests itself in the wine production; but at the same time they also feel strong links with a Muslim country, where drinking alcohol is prohibited.

In Sainte-Foy, before the arrival of mechanisation, they remember having participated in all the scheduled events leading to the wine production, and thus felt an affinity with the vineyard and its running. Even if things have changed, their family life is still punctuated by the different phases, which they recite as a litany, of vine cultivation and wine production. For them, their future as men and women depends on it. Their children's early familiarisation with the vines will be a way to learn and internalise what the French call a '*terroir*' (Trubeck 2008), in all its complexities and subtleties. The various plots managed by their parents are defined as specific entities, and through precise characteristics pertaining to soil, geographical situation, age of the vine, and so on.

The transmission of this know-how requires the unpaid physical work of the children, which is supposed also to develop their sense of effort. If the parents do not wish their children to work in the vines, as they have, it is still the case that some of these youths go on to replace a retired relative, usually their father. As a cultural marker, work presides over all transmission, and it is essential for young workers to prove themselves in this professional milieu in order to take the relative's place. For example, thirty-year-old Ahmed became '*maître de chais*', or winery technical manager, after the retirement of his father from the same estate. Others establish agricultural businesses, based on the knowledge transmitted by their previous, unpaid physical work.

In the workers' discourse, this professional knowledge emphasises the idea of local rootedness. They speak of the vine as their 'infant' which they have planted and raised. The very landscape is constitutive of their social identity. The description of a vine requires a specific gaze on its general appearance, of the rows of vines, of the plot. This evaluation is concerned with its strength, colour, and cleanliness: the whole has to be considered. In conversations, the concept of work well done, of beautifully tended vines, keeps on coming up:

Haléma (aged 38): 'When I come back from Morocco and that I see once more the hills with the vines, it moves me.'

Ahmed (aged 60): 'When I am not in the vines, I think about them, how will they grow ... We love beautiful vines.'

Fatima (aged 55): 'The vines are here, all around us. I planted them. I look at them grow, my beautiful vines.'

Pruning is established as a supreme model of social recognition. Each of them has a tale showing off his or her particular pruning technique. When visiting vines, they can never resist evaluating the quality of work done by colleagues, and they will stop to assess the vineyards in detail. The youngest take part in pruning contests in the area and they do not hesitate to compete in national events.

When the wine-producing profession has to be defended, they are at one, they say, with the winery owners. In these times of crisis they stress the importance of the '*terroir*', against massive Australian and South American production. Over the

course of their lives, they have marked out the Foy territory from Bergerac to Saint-Emilion, and recognise the excellence of the Saint-Emilion wines. They explain precisely the differences between the appellations: differences in pruning, cleaning, tending, harvesting, etc. For them the wine from Saint-Emilion has all the noble qualities because of the amount of manual labour involved in its production. They condemn mechanisation as it is now practised around Sainte-Foy because, according to them, it goes against the production of real 'quality'.

Since the 1990s the Moroccans have witnessed, with fear and consternation, their gradual exclusion from the sphere of wine production; their relegation to subaltern and episodic tasks. This is, of course, mainly due to mechanisation, and the economic expansion of the area, to which they have largely contributed. Yet they have a feeling that this contribution is not recognised either by their employers or by the townspeople with whom they share a territory. From time to time they are employed on properties within a radius of 50 km from the village; but they do not move from the area of Sainte-Foy, where they feel they belong.

In the vineyards, indigenous categories reveal, in this respect, social antagonisms. French locals tend to distinguish the 'old ones' (Italians) from the 'new ones' (Moroccans). We can add 'rooted' and 'stranger' to this dichotomy, which reflects the marginal position the Moroccans are given today in local economic development. As a minority group they crystallise the economic difficulties of the vineyard world. Their decreasing participation or 'disinvestment' is badly understood and misinterpreted. 'Why are they absent when we have need of them? They go off to the doctor instead of coming to work' (Jean Claude, 45, vineyard owner).

The professional precariousness that is affecting some of these Moroccans questions the established order, so often universally presented as a constructor of legitimate identities: the attachment to a place, to the various hierarchies it generates, and so on. The 'economic valorisation' of the territory, to which they actively participate, is poorly recognised or not recognised at all by their employers who continue to give them precarious and seasonal employment. This leads some of the workers to develop further what we have already mentioned: a type of transnational collectivity, whether that be imaginary or real.¹

Spaces of one's own: a permanent construction

In the face of this marginalisation in the professional and public sphere, these now part-time agricultural workers have found ways of redefining their identities, as consumers. The older ones know that they will obtain nothing more from the locals. Thus they act in other spheres.

They are creating specific links and spaces through their production, distribution, and consumption of food. The study of these initiatives, which include establishing a network of meat provision (with farmers to buy sheep or cattle), the creation of a halal label of quality, and the setting up of ethnic businesses, illustrates the

construction of identities in response to local conditions of integration and social division (Bertheleu 2001).

We have considered here the environment in its social meaning, since we want to examine the relationship established by these migrants with their new surroundings through the acquisition of food. In this rural world a specific 'Moroccan' but also 'Algerian', or 'Tunisian', network of food production and distribution has been established, more particularly concerning fruit, vegetables, and halal meat. (Inverted commas are placed around these terms for the same reasons that they frame our use of 'Moroccans'; these are indigenous mainland-French terms exposing a hierarchical culturalist categorisation of others resident in France, who went to live there either because of mass recruitment organised by the French State on decolonisation in 1960, or because they followed a French patron during the same period.) The average 'shopping basket' seemed to us able to define borders within a territorial entity, itself generating identity. Organising food provisions, cooking in a context of migration, which may be regarded as facts expressing identity, can open up perspectives on the question of multiple constructions and the crossing of territories.

The choice of a so-called Moroccan grocer, of a vegetable grower from the Lot et Garonne, of a producer of 'Blonde d'Aquitaine' cattle, and of the slaughter house in La Réole or Bergerac, each with its own Muslim sacrificer approved by the Paris mosque and able to bleed the animals 'as one should', allows them to express not only the values of their group but also the different ways of belonging to this particular rural area of France. The way they shop for foods is inspired by the various components present at the local level, therefore reflecting their own structuring of the territory of Sainte-Foy. They go to the various supermarkets (e.g. Leclerc, Leader Price, Intermarché) choosing them not only for the nature of the shopping, but also for the prices – the women exchange information on the day's bargains. The Saturday morning market has also become a not-to-be-missed event in the week, to such an extent that an Arabic language teacher has had to change the schedule of her courses to accommodate it.

Immigrant women used to visit a kosher butcher's shop in Lamonzie Saint Martin once a week for stocking up on meat for the family's freezers. They are now using halal butchers that have opened in the villages of Sainte-Foy-la-Grande itself, or Grand Frais in Bergerac. Buying from these stores gives them the certainty of eating not only halal meat, but also a safe and healthy meat. 'It has the stamp on it, it's marked on the meat ... Like that at least we know what we are eating' (Fatima, 50).

'Moroccan' stalls at the local weekly market cater for Moroccans of course, but also for locals increasingly curious of 'foreign' cuisines. Three small shish kebab restaurants have opened in Sainte-Foy, thus allowing the locals to explore and share specific foods. School fairs also are scenes of 'exchanges' between 'French' and 'Moroccans', through pastry stands and other foods produced by the Moroccan women. As one of them expressed it:

When we have a pastry stand at the fair, they look at us more positively, but otherwise, in the public spaces of Sainte-Foy, it's hate and contempt. I know that I have French nationality, but they don't look on me as French. With our sweet pastries, we try to soften things. (Haléma, 38)

It is mostly through food that they try to establish contact with the locals. Invited to a town hall meeting on the participation of Moroccans in the local festive events of Sainte-Foy, the representatives of the mosque suggested giving a lamb to the college for the festival of Eid el Kabir. This provoked sharp reactions among the members of the town council who, given the long-standing secular tradition of the French State, were opposed to any display of religiosity within the schools.

Through eating habits, the various operations of appropriations of the environment show how individuals can transform it according to their general interests, both practical and symbolic, not only in function of local but also national constraints.

The healthy eating 'heritage': between Morocco and France, an idealised rurality?

This research has shown that new ideas about nutrition are emerging among these families while at the same time, as Moroccans, they are being accorded a very unequal position in the social relationships that shape their working life in the vineyards. Despite this, for both parents and children, the 'vine-growing territory' is considered their 'natural' environment, one favourable for the production of good food, and for the maintenance of good health, through self-production, direct purchase of vegetables and meat, and the possibility of an appropriate lifestyle. Following the general evolution of the representation of what constitutes 'good nutrition', industrial foods are a particular theme on which they openly voice their fears (Hubert 2000).

We have tried to show here how the Moroccans of the vineyards reintegrate the discourse and representations of the majority on the contemporary craze for a 'reassuring and healthy countryside', whether Moroccan or French, in a search for 'authenticity' and 'tradition' (Lenclud 1987). In 1990 the Moroccans thought that this order had been disrupted by the Westerners who gave animal products to herbivores. They therefore think that Muslim practice will give them a greater control over their foods and thereby their health. Ethnic, religious, and health requisites are intertwined here.

We have also shown how 'Moroccan' and 'rural' identities are valued to justify healthy diets, or put aside to signify a belonging to urban France and a well-balanced lifestyle. Nevertheless, the discourse, as noted above, should not make us think that these populations only consume 'local products' and halal. They also consume products of the agro-food industry, but oscillate between these three poles, valuing their rurality and their Muslim faith in the present context of valorisation of 'terroir' but also of political edginess towards Muslims. Studies of eating habits show how these

minorities transform their territory according to their practical and symbolic interests and also to economic and political constraints.

Thus, in a changing countryside, globalisation, migration, imaginary projections, rural and urban territories, ethnic interactions and cultural identity are all linked, giving each other meaning in an ever changing pattern. At the same time, the study of cultures and territories must be placed within the political environment of societies – themselves part of a world system. In this case, like the Protestants, the Moroccans appropriate this rural territory, making it their own through their history and their work in the vines. The so-called Moroccans of this wine-growing area, despite being excluded from the professional field, invest in the local area by building houses and developing a local food network, for example a halal butcher or their own vegetable gardens. What is interesting to note, is that they develop the same ideas of this territory: a territory which they consider to be their own, ‘authentic’ and ‘pure’, in contrast to the town.

Note

- 1 For some young people, comings and goings between France and Morocco develop into commercial activities (Tarrus 2001).

References

- Abèlès, Marc in A. Appadurai (ed.) 2005 *Après le colonialisme. Les conséquences culturelles de la globalisation* (Paris: Payot, coll. ‘Petite bibliothèque payot’. Orig. pub. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. 1996).
- Anderson, Benedict 2006 *L’Imaginaire national réflexions sur l’origine et l’essor du nationalisme* (Paris: La découverte. Orig. pub. 1983).
- Bertheleu, Hélène 2001 *Identifications ethniques: rapports de pouvoir, compromis, territoire* (Paris: L’Harmattan).
- Besson, Eric 2009 *Grand débat sur l’identité nationale: 18 Novembre*. www.gouvernement.fr/gouvernement/grand-debat-sur-l-identite-nationale-25-000-contributions-recues-des-la-premiere-semaine. Accessed 10 June 2013.
- Crenn, Chantal 2003 ‘Alimentation et santé des familles d’émigrants au Maroc: acculturation et ethnicité’, in I. Gobatto (ed.) *Dynamiques locales de la mondialisation: les Afriques en perspective* (Paris: MSHA/Kathala), 167–202.
- Crenn, Chantal 2013 ‘Des invisibles trop visibles? Les ouvriers agricoles “marocains” dans les vignobles du Bordelais’, *Revue Hommes et migrations*, sp. issue ‘Migrations et mondes ruraux’, 130 (January–February–March): <http://www.hommes-et-migrations.fr/index.php?numeros/migrations-et-mondes-ruraux/7080-des-invisibles-trop-visibles>. Accessed 3 April 2013.
- Crenn, Chantal and Isabelle Téhoueyres 2004 ‘Enracinement, production de la différence et nécessités du marché; l’exemple du président du syndicat Ste Foy-Bordeaux’, *Anthropology of food* [Online], 3 December, <http://aof.revues.org>. Accessed 26 June 2013.

- Démossier, Marion 2010 'Le point de vue de l'anthropologue', in *La Gouvernance des terroirs du vin* (Bordeaux, Edition Feret), 201–09.
- DiMéo, Guy 1996 'Production des identités et attachement au lieu', in Lamy Yvon *L'Alchimie du patrimoine, discours et politiques* (Talence: MSHA), 247–69.
- Guillaume, Pierre 1990 *Étrangers en Aquitaine* (Talence: MSHA)
- Hubert, Annie 2000 'Alimentation santé: la science et l'imaginaire', *Cahier de nutrition et de diététique*, 35:5, 353–6.
- Lenclud, Gérard 1987 'La Tradition n'est plus ce qu'elle était ...', *Terrain*, 9, (October) <http://terrain.revues.org/index3195.html>. Accessed 25 June 2013.
- Pétonnet, Colette 1979 *On est tous dans le brouillard. Ethnologie des banlieues* (Paris: Galilée).
- Sayad, A. 1999 *La Double absence. Des illusions de l'émigré aux souffrances de l'immigré* (Paris: Le Seuil, coll. 'Liber').
- Simon, Pierre-Jean 1981 'Minorités et territoires', *Pluriel débat*, 25, 35–7.
- Tarrus, Alain 1992 *Les Fourmis d'Europe* (Paris: L'Harmattan).
- Trubek, Amy 2008 *The Taste of Place: A Cultural Journey into 'Terroir'* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press).