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The Changing Face of the Contemporary Countryside

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The Editors
Ana Maria S.M. Bicalho and Lucette Laurens

Introduction

Ana Maria de Souza Mello Bicalho

Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

This book is a result of the 20th Annual Colloquium of the Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems (CSRS) of the International Geographical Union (IGU) held at the Université Paul Vallery Montpellier 3 in August, 2012, in Montpellier, France. The chapters are based on presentations from the meeting but each underwent a process of peer review by an international advisory committee, which together with comments and suggestions made at the meeting, enhanced the quality of the contributions.

The contributions display a diversity of contemporary trends in the countryside of different countries with an emphasis on local people who seek to devise sustainable land use and rural livelihoods. The chapters treat how changing global, regional and national farm and environmental policies provoke rural transformations at the same time that rural people come under increasing pressure from transnational agribusiness. The authors explore how when faced with these pressures local actors adapt and innovate in novel ways in the specific contexts of each country. In the process new rural functions and values are constructed involving creative forms of connectivity and governance in order to achieve their aims.

These subjects have increasingly assumed greater importance in the annual meetings over the years and were prominent in the presentations at the Montpellier colloquium. This colloquium marked twenty years of existence of the Commission of the International Geographical Union since it was first established as a Study Group in 1992 and raised to commission status four years later. Over the years each colloquium was held in a different continents and countries which provided diverse settings for addressing issues of rural sustainability.

The first three chapters of this book deal with new kinds of agriculture which represent strategies for overcoming threats to farming

and for enhancing rural livelihoods. Laurens questions the idea that agriculture is doomed to disappear in and near cities. In her case study of Montpellier, a major city located in the south of France, she shows how urban agriculture has regained importance and is much more robust than usually thought. For Portugal, Firmino challenges another orthodoxy, namely that of rural decline, where in a context of economic crisis young people are moving to the countryside, taking up farming and in the process reversing a long term trend of rural aging. In the third chapter Bicalho and Feres discuss how Brazilian organic farmers developed participatory guarantee systems in order to retain control over their farming practice and the marketing of labelled organic goods which are being threatened by large national and trans-national firms.

The two contributions of Cawley and of Ferreira treat how marginal and remote areas of Europe, in Ireland and Portugal respectively, have ceased to be productive farming landscapes and seek new functions based on rural tourism involving outdoor activities, natural landscapes and traditional cultural heritage. At the same time that new functions open opportunities for local people they also generate conflict with outsiders over access to land. The two cases demonstrate the need for active governance and specific norms and legislation in order to avoid conflict between different rural functions and social groups.

Pina further explores new functions involving cultural heritage in building contemporary rural livelihoods. For the Douro World Heritage Site of northern Portugal the author shows how symbolic and religious dimensions, such as festivities and processions, can be at the centre of rural tourism and attract a large contingent of people who can also consume other local rural goods and services.

In chapter 5 Jones and Birdsall-Jones treat an area of western Australia where a top-down process of setting up conservation units in the Shark Bay area and then its listing as a UNESCO World Heritage Site divided communities and caused conflict over land and sea resource use which pitted the local population against provincial and national government and outside tourists.

Amit-Cohen also deals with the implementation of a conservation unit, the Wadi Zalmon National Park located at the headwaters of the

Jordan River in northern Israel. In a Middle East context, regional political tensions are recreated in a dispute between the local Arab population and the park authorities in which formal third-party mediation was necessary to diminish conflict.

In chapter 7 Kim and Hoang provide a brief history of tourism and rural tourism in Vietnam in recent decades and focus on rural tourism in the Mekong Delta. International tourists are attracted by the typical Asian river and rice paddy landscape of the Delta and its local traditions and rural culture. The activities are shown to be orchestrated completely by travel agencies with little input from local people which reduces the cultural attractiveness for tourists.

Hoefle critically evaluates the environmental and cultural turn in tourism studies in a regional comparison of the opportunities created for local people in different types of rural and eco-tourism versus farming in the Central Amazon of Brazil. In the study rural tourism is shown to involve mass tourism which caters to the regional population while eco-tourism only attracts a small number of international tourists. The author presents employment and income data which demonstrate how local population gains little benefit from tourism while their farming activities are far more important.

In the last chapter Sorensen reflects on seventeen years of participation in the Commission colloquia, which enriched his thinking of rural spatial systems and sustainability through a comparative international perspective. This experience allowed him to better evaluate Australian rural policies with regard to economic efficiency and environmental soundness and how these policies differ from those adopted in other countries.

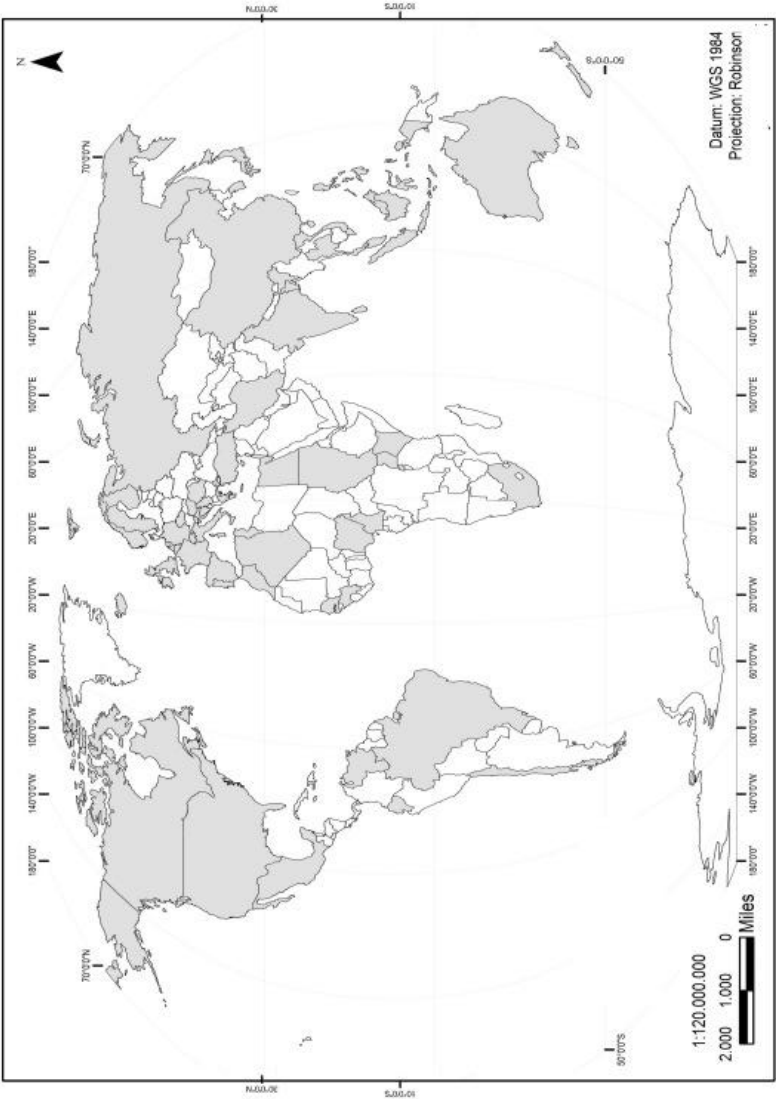
Sorensen is not alone in being influenced by the wide range of research presented by participants and members of the Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems over the first twenty years of its existence. Meetings were held in twenty-one different countries, embracing all of the continents of the world (Table 1). Participants hailed from thirty-eight different countries, each having its own unique context of opportunities and challenges for rural sustainabilities and livelihoods (Figure 1).

Table 1.1. Host countries of CSRS conferences and sessions in IGU congresses.

| <i>Continent</i> | <i>Country (year)</i> |
|-------------------------|--|
| Africa | Morocco (2007), South Africa (2002), Tunisia (2010) |
| Americas | Brazil (2003), Canada (1993, 1999), Chile (2011) |
| Asia | Israel (2010), Japan (1995, 2013), South Korea (2000) |
| Europe | Czech Republic (1994), France (2001, 2012), Germany (2012), Holland (1996) Ireland (2010), Italy (2005), Portugal (1998), Romania (2014), Scotland (2004), Slovenia (2009), Spain (2008) |
| Oceania | Australia (1997, 2006) |

The fact that the colloquia were held in different venues around the world also permitted the participation of local researchers whose presentations and comments enriched CSRS discussions. In each host country, the colloquia also included a number of technical visits to local institutions and experiments in rural sustainability which provided the opportunity for interacting with the people who envisioned them. The local and visiting academics, technicians and non-academics involved in these visits passed through an extraordinary experience of building collective knowledge. This empirical contact with local actors gave rise to comparison of similarity and difference between countries, identifying both universal and specific processes of contemporary rural transformation.

Figure 1.1. Country of origin of participants and corresponding members of the IGU-CSRS.



Over the year at the most general level the main issue debated in the CSRS colloquia involved identifying and interpreting the nature of the contemporary countryside and rural sustainability. Discussion usually focused on land use, the combination of agricultural and non-agricultural activities and new functions of the countryside. Agricultural functions dealt with livelihood strategies based on organic and quality food production which aggregates greater income and environmental value. Non-agricultural functions treated often involved rural tourism, environmental conservation and the relationship with cities. Both agricultural and non-agricultural functions were united in research on changing rural identity, cultural heritage and social diversity. Research usually emphasized the local dimension in governance, social networks and scalar relationships in the sustainability of rural restructuring. These issues are addressed in the different chapters of this book which presents a good representation of the thinking of the Commission on the state of the contemporary countryside.

L'agricole dans la Ville, entre Marginalité et Nouvelle Centralité? L'exemple de Montpellier (France)

The Agricultural Area in the City, between
Marginality and New Centrality? The
Example of Montpellier (France)

Lucette Laurens

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Introduction: En marge de, espace marginal, marginalité?

Observer, analyser, chercher à comprendre les espaces agricoles délaissés périurbains, c'est s'intéresser à des espaces qui sont qualifiés par un ou des usages agricoles, eux-mêmes en déclin, en recul voire disparus: tout ceci en limite de l'étalement urbain. Ce sont donc des espaces pris en étau entre plusieurs dynamiques que l'on peut éventuellement juger contradictoires ou peut être qui se nourrissent les unes des autres.

Ces espaces seraient donc en marge des systèmes agricoles, n'y contribueraient plus. Ils seraient ainsi désuets par rapport à des normes économiques, sociales voire politiques. Ils sont aussi localisés sur une nouvelle frontière, en cours de constitution mais mouvante qui est celle de l'avancée de l'urbanisation. Ils deviennent un objet intéressant pour comprendre l'évolution du projet urbain.

Cette double réalité nous amène à nous intéresser aux concepts de marginalité et de centralité. L'un et l'autre ne prenant sens que dans ce contexte bien particulier du périurbain, réalité socio-spatiale mouvante par excellence. Ces concepts "recouvrent à la fois un état social et une position géographique" (Bailly, 1986:51).

Des espaces agricoles délaissés, en état de marginalité, dans un processus de marginalisation, en cours de recentralisation? C'est donc bien un processus temporel où tout est relatif (Rocheftort, 1986).

Un espace marginal, une marginalité spatiale, un processus de marginalisation?

Être en marge de, en raison d'une position géographique, ou en liaison avec une situation défavorisée? Bailly (1983) met en évidence que la marginalisation se caractérise par deux processus: (i) une ségrégation spatiale liée à des mécanismes différentiels de valeur, (ii) une segmentation sociale. Ces deux processus généreraient des discontinuités, des frontières, des interfaces, une intermédialité, des hybridations, des mixités, des entre-deux, des interstices, des périphéries... Ces marges pourraient être à l'abandon, couvertes de friches, en crise, en déprise, sujettes à des changements, en cours de passage du passé au présent et du passé au futur... On imagine volontiers que les facteurs de leur apparition, de leur temporalité et de leur spatialité sont multiples.

Parler de marginalité spatiale, c'est s'intéresser à un espace dans une situation temporelle qui se caractérise par un processus d'exclusion socio-spatiale. Qu'est-ce qui fait ségrégation spatiale? F. Dagognet (1977) précise qu'une telle situation peut résulter de la position d'un espace entre deux espaces extrêmes, différents voire antinomiques. Cet espace intermédiaire demeure ouvert et sans limites car il est en cours de construction mais une construction non stabilisée. Cet espace est différent de ceux qui l'entourent. Il constitue une transition, un passage entre les deux espaces qui se rencontrent. Il représente un espace intermédiaire entre deux espaces distincts, définis, qui produisent un hybride au lieu de leur rencontre. Elle produit des transformations, l'émergence d'un espace nouveau, de nouvelles relations socio-spatiales. Va-t-on vers un espace d'interface, un espace de rupture, un espace de métamorphose, un espace conflictuel, un espace créatif, un espace nouveau? Cet espace peut être *a priori* un lieu d'expérimentations pour peu que les acteurs concernés acceptent l'idée qu'ils pourraient ici innover, faire preuve d'imagination. On peut *a contrario* observer une volonté de normaliser cet espace, de le faire rentrer dans des cadres déjà établis de part et d'autre. De ce fait, la marginalité spatiale est-elle un handicap, une contrainte ou une opportunité?

Un mot très riche dont l'analyse est controversée

L'utilisation du terme marginalité en tant que notion ou objet d'études mobilise les différentes sciences sociales depuis les années 1960. Il n'a été intégré dans la géographie que tardivement bien que le terme de marginalité ait une dimension géographique. Par contre, il a acquis une dimension opérationnelle dans différentes politiques en raison de sa portée sociale. Cette proximité entre concept et actions a été établie par différents travaux de sciences sociales. Morelle et Laumonier (2006) retracent ce parcours. Les historiens, en s'intéressant aux marginaux dans l'histoire, dressent deux portraits qui concrétisent la marginalité et lui donnent une réalité sociale. Le premier type est celui de l'individu en rupture et le second associe marginalité, déviance et pauvreté. Ces marginaux seraient refoulés aux périphéries de la ville, donnant ainsi naissance à la marge urbaine. Séchet (1996) et Castel (1995) considèrent que cette mise aux bords de la société va changer d'échelle par la stigmatisation de quartiers entiers justifiée par le lien entre criminalité et marginalité. La marge devient une question de société puisque la marginalité risque de remettre en cause la société elle-même. La marginalité n'est donc plus seulement un objet de recherches en sciences sociales mais elle justifie par exemple le développement de la politique de la ville en France. On mesure bien la dimension idéologique de ce concept.

Les marges ont une réalité ambiguë puisqu'elles sont à la fois incluses dans le système mais elles peuvent aussi permettre de comprendre le système via les pratiques et les réalités hors-normes qui les caractérisent (Ph. Hugon, 2006). Le système produit des marges et les marges transforment la société.

Marge, marginalité: s'intéresser à des dynamiques

Les dynamiques en question sont liées aux marges elles-mêmes et également aux contextes dans lesquels elles se trouvent. A quelles échelles territoriales peut-on repérer et traiter des marges? Il y a donc différentes réalités et significations sociales, spatiales et temporelles pour de mêmes marges. Si l'on reprend la figure "Penser la tension entre

le *in* et le *out*, entre l'exclusion et l'intégration" proposée par B. Lautier (2006), il s'agit de replacer et d'observer la marge dans son contexte. En effet, elle se caractérise à la fois par des processus de mise à l'écart et d'autres processus d'inclusion. Ces processus d'inclusion peuvent utiliser la marge sans la faire disparaître si cette dernière est utile en tant que telle.

Différents niveaux d'analyse de ces dynamiques

Le processus de marginalisation peut être analysé à 3 niveaux:

- Via les pratiques spatiales, en particulier les usages présents et les rapports entre les lieux
- Via les représentations de l'espace: quelles sont les représentations collectives?
- Via les discours sur l'espace qui objectivent l'espace

Il s'agira de se servir de ces 3 niveaux d'analyse pour comprendre comment se joue le processus de marginalisation des espaces agricoles délaissés en périurbain. Les pratiques spatiales permettent d'identifier la succession des usages, en mettant en évidence les ruptures et les bifurcations. Nous considérons que ces moments, ces événements contribuent à la création de marges. Les représentations seront identifiées par les enjeux et les risques. Les enjeux et les risques permettent de repérer comment les acteurs politiques perçoivent ces marges, comment ils les pensent. Quant aux discours, je partirai des documents présentant les projets publics actuels qui construisent une nouvelle réalité socio-spatiale. On est ici dans le registre de l'action et des justifications de celle-ci.

Comment penser la tension espaces agricoles délaissés périurbains / ville? Des éléments contextuels

Depuis plusieurs décennies, la croissance urbaine se fait par étalement spatial au détriment des terres qui entourent les villes. En France, 600 km² sont artificialisés chaque année. La progression des surfaces artificialisées est quatre fois plus rapide que la croissance démographique. La population a augmenté de 8 % entre 1982 et 1999

et les surfaces artificialisées de 42 %! Les espaces agricoles et naturels sont les premiers concernés par cette avancée de la ville. Ainsi entre 2000 et 2006, 90 % des sols artificialisés proviennent de zones agricoles dont près de 35 % ont de bonnes capacités agronomiques en France (Commissariat général au développement durable, 2011).

Historiquement les espaces agricoles ont été à la fois repoussés par la ville vers la périphérie tout en restant pendant longtemps nécessaires à l'alimentation des villes (cf. ceinture maraîchère de Paris). Récemment, ces espaces sont recherchés pour leur production d'aménités paysagères, environnementales alors que les activités agricoles reculent. Ces relations demeurent ambiguës car la relation est déséquilibrée. Le différentiel de prix entre terre agricole et terre à urbaniser est considérable. Les terres et prés vendus libres se sont échangés à 5.430 €/ha en moyenne en 2011, soit une hausse de 6 % par rapport à 2010. Le prix moyen à l'hectare des terres et prés libres et non bâtis a en effet augmenté de 52% au niveau national entre 1995 et 2010, soit environ 3 % par an en moyenne, passant de 3.200 à 4.900 euros. Le prix du terrain à bâtir est de l'ordre de 124 €/m² en moyenne en France, la conversion du prix à l'hectare est sans commentaire!

En 2011, près de 2 800 hectares ont été "consommés" pour l'urbanisation en Languedoc-Roussillon, dont 30 % de terres agricoles et 70 % d'espaces naturels. On assiste à une forte augmentation du marché des terres agricoles réalisé par des non-agriculteurs. En effet, celui-ci progresse de 945 hectares en superficie et de 85.924.000 euros en valeur. La progression du marché non-agricole est essentiellement liée à l'artificialisation des sols agricoles, soit 3.730 hectares en 2011 qui ne retourneront plus à l'agriculture (SAFER LR, 2012). Le prix moyen des terres agricoles vendues en 2011 dans le département de l'Hérault est passé de 7.750 € en 2010 à 7.900 € en 2011. L'importance de ce prix est lié au marché des non-agriculteurs dans un département qui connaît une forte croissance démographique et un fort attrait touristique.

L'agglomération de Montpellier a connu une forte croissance démographique. La population de la ville de Montpellier a presque doublé depuis 1962. Celle de l'agglomération est passée de 200.000 habitants en 1968 à environ 400.000 habitants en 2004. Pendant cette

période, 15.000 ha ont été consacrés à l'urbanisation. Chaque habitant supplémentaire a nécessité l'utilisation de 800 m² pour son installation et la création de services. La pression foncière et la spéculation se sont donc intensifiées. Depuis 2007, le rythme moyen de construction de 5000 logements par an a été dépassé.

Les années 1950-1960 marquent d'ailleurs une rupture qui va modifier profondément la relation entre la ville et l'agriculture, en témoignent les propos de G. Cholvy (2007):

“Le 7 avril 1948 se tient, à la Société d'enseignement populaire, une conférence dont le thème est: “Pourquoi Montpellier se meurt?”... Il est vrai que, au lendemain de la guerre, la vie montpelliéraine restera assez végétative. Elle le sera jusqu'en 1956, date de la première vague d'arrivants qui va dynamiser la ville... Montpellier compte alors moins de 100 000 habitants, une taille assez comparable à celle de Nîmes ou de Béziers, deux villes qui, à l'époque, lui disputent la primauté... Ces individus de la petite à la haute bourgeoisie sont aussi très souvent propriétaires fonciers de vignobles plus ou moins grands. Le lien avec le monde rural, et en particulier la viticulture, était d'ailleurs tangible à l'époque... La vigne, pour sa part, se situe immédiatement aux portes de la ville... Entre 1962 et 1968, la ville va gagner plus de 40 000 nouveaux habitants et obtenir le “rurban bleu de l'expansion””

Des marges au statut ambigu: des espaces agricoles en forte mutation

Observe-t-on un rejet de ces marges ou une reconnaissance de ces marges comme ayant des potentialités, offrant des opportunités? Ces marges agricoles sont de plus en plus intégrées dans les dynamiques urbaines. Font-elles l'objet de stratégies de développement agricole ou bien sont-elles convoitées pour leur disponibilité foncière? Comment est gérée la croissance urbaine? C'est à partir de l'exemple de la stratégie agricole de l'agglomération de Montpellier que j'illustrerai ce questionnement.

- Quelle est la réalité des usages agricoles dans la périphérie urbaine? Comment évoluent-ils?

- Quels sont les enjeux et les risques identifiés?
- Quels sont les projets et les discours qui construisent la légitimité de ces actions publiques et l'intervention des acteurs urbains sur ces espaces agricoles?

Réalités et évolution des usages agricoles dans la périphérie urbaine

A l'échelle du département de l'Hérault, l'espace agricole représente 34 % du territoire, les zones naturelles 58 % et les zones urbanisées 8 %. De 1993 à 2003, le taux d'artificialisation a augmenté de 29 %.

L'espace environnant de l'agglomération de Montpellier est essentiellement constitué de 3 ensembles: la garrigue (matorral), la plaine viticole plus ou moins diversifiée, les lagunes. Si le dernier ensemble n'est pas vraiment un espace agricole, les deux autres ensembles ont été ou sont encore des espaces agricoles.

Dans la plaine montpelliéraine, l'agriculture recouvre 45 % du sol, la zone naturelle 33 % et l'espace artificialisé 22 %. La surface en vignes représentait en 2000 43 % de la Surface Agricole Utilisée (SAU). Elle ne représente plus en 2009 que 27 % de la SAU soit 8.850 ha. Entre 2006 et 2009, 937 ha de vignes ont été arrachés dans le cadre des aides européennes. Ce recul se fait au bénéfice des cultures annuelles qui permettent plus de souplesse et paraissent de ce fait plus adaptées au contexte périurbain. La plaine viticole autour de Montpellier a connu une diversification agricole à l'est de Montpellier grâce au réseau d'irrigation BRL. Cette diversification est moindre et plus tardive à l'ouest.

La garrigue est l'ensemble où l'agriculture a reculé le plus tôt pour quasiment disparaître. En 1985, le CNRS en donnait cette définition:

“La garrigue est marquée par la prédominance du paysage naturel (même si on y trouve divers degrés d'artificialisation), la faiblesse de l'occupation humaine, la précarité de la valeur productive, la diversité conflictuelle des usagers (éleveurs, forestiers, cueilleurs, chasseurs, viticulteurs, touristes), un dualisme agraire (petite propriété viticole des bassins, grands domaines pastoraux des plateaux).”

D'ailleurs R. Dugrand constatait en 1961 qu'une garrigue était morte et une nouvelle était en train d'apparaître. Un des meilleurs indicateurs est une forte progression du taux de boisement entre 1946 et 1979, qui est passé de 7 à 49 % (CNRS, 1985). Cette progression est liée au fort recul de l'élevage ovin. On dénombrait 400.000 ovins en 1894 dans le département de l'Hérault et seulement 88.000 en 1968 (Dugrand et Werey, 1971 in CNRS, 1985). Parallèlement, le territoire cultivé a régressé à partir de la fin du XIX^e siècle (abandon des parcelles de vignes les plus difficiles suite au phylloxéra, abandon de l'olivier après le gel de 1956). La garrigue se caractérise par différentes séries de friches, plus ou moins anciennes. Cependant, ce long déclin des activités agricoles n'est pas totalement irréversible puisqu'on repère, depuis les années 1980, des défrichements et des remises en culture.

Les enjeux et les risques identifiés

À l'image du projet politique de l'agglomération de Montpellier, l'enjeu majeur est celui des usages futurs de l'espace et de leur répartition respective: "La prolongation de cette tendance [étalement urbain] conduirait à mobiliser entre 9.000 et 10.000 ha supplémentaires. Cette perspective est contraire aux objectifs de développement durable du territoire tels que le projet d'agglomération les a retenus" (CAM, 2004). Ce sont des acteurs urbains qui se projettent dans l'avenir et interrogent les modalités et les formes de la croissance urbaine à venir. D'où les deux principales questions affichées: "Comment organiser le développement urbain afin d'en limiter l'étalement? Comment valoriser le territoire en économisant l'espace?" (CAM, 2004). Le questionnement est a priori urbano-centré.

À partir de cette préoccupation, ces acteurs considèrent qu'ils se doivent d'imaginer une autre "agriculture urbaine", capable de contribuer à transformer le cadre de vie de l'agglomération. L'enjeu est de déplacer la perspective en bougeant le statut des espaces agricoles qu'ils définissent de façon très large. En effet, ils associent les plages, étangs, vignes et mas, garrigues et pinèdes soit des espaces agricoles, des espaces naturels et récréatifs. Ces espaces agricoles et naturels doivent devenir l'écrin de l'urbanisation au nom d'une ville durable. Ils parlent de l'armature des espaces naturels et agricoles.

D'autres risques sont associés à ce premier enjeu dont le risque d'incendie de forêt, le risque d'inondation, celui d'une perte de la biodiversité.

Les projets et les discours qui construisent la légitimité de ces actions publiques et l'intervention des acteurs urbains sur ces espaces agricoles


La reconnaissance de ces enjeux, leur combinaison avec des espaces reconnus est probablement un moyen de réédifier la ville *via* un nouveau projet urbain (Pradel, 2012). Comment redonner du sens à la ville, lui permettre de redevenir le lieu privilégié de la sociabilité et de l'urbanité? Si B. Pradel l'aborde à partir de la fête, on peut transférer le questionnement vers les espaces agricoles et naturels. Plusieurs registres sont combinés dans les discours et les projets des acteurs urbains.

Biodiversité


La ville de Montpellier est aujourd'hui intégrée dans le réseau "Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity" de la CDB, dont l'objectif est de partager toutes les avancées en matière de développement urbain respectueux de la biodiversité. Elle est membre de la Convention sur la diversité biologique de l'ONU.



Dans son Plan pluriannuel Biodiversité 2010-2014, la municipalité affirme que la ville possède un patrimoine naturel extraordinaire et qu'elle a l'ambition de devenir une référence nationale et internationale en matière de biodiversité urbaine. Trois grands thèmes d'actions ont été retenus pour la période: observer et connaître, conserver et restaurer, sensibiliser et éduquer. L'inventaire des éléments de la biodiversité semble être un gros travail qui devrait déboucher sur la réalisation d'un atlas. La phase plus opérationnelle passe par des modes de gestion "plus écologiques et durables" des espaces verts de la ville. Une mention particulière est portée au site du Mas Nouguier, espace agricole acheté par la ville en 2007 (25 ha) et sur lequel la ville entend porter un projet d'agriculture biologique à des fins pédagogiques, cf. illustration n° 1.

Illustration 2.1: Le plan biodiversité de la ville de Montpellier, action du mas Nouguier.



PLAN BIODIVERSITE 2010-2014



| ACTION | DO | Conduite en agriculture biologique de l'Agriparc du Mas Nouguier et certification |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| POUR QUOI ? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposer d'un guide pour la conduite des cultures. Garantir la qualité des produits de l'agriparc. Protéger les abeilles du rucher municipal. <p>La certification et la conduite en agriculture biologique de l'Agriparc du Mas Nouguier permet d'établir un système de production agricole (apiculture, viticulture, oléiculture) basé sur le respect du vivant et des cycles naturels, qui gère de façon globale la production en favorisant l'agroécologie mais aussi la biodiversité, les activités biologiques des sols et les cycles biologiques.</p> <p>Ce mode de culture permet également aux consommateurs potentiels de s'approvisionner en aliments sains.</p> |  |
| POUR QUI ? | Usagers, scolaires | |
| AVEC QUI ? | Direction du Paysage et de la Biodiversité, organismes de certification en agriculture biologique, Chambre d'agriculture, entreprises chargées des travaux agricoles. | |
| OUTILS & MOYENS | <p>normes de la Fédération internationale des mouvements d'agriculture biologique (IFOAM); les cahiers des charges des Labels</p> <p>Modalités d'implémentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interdiction de l'usage d'engrais et de pesticides de synthèse, ainsi que d'organismes génétiquement modifiés menaçant la biodiversité. La lutte biologique protège les cultures des parasites, et des insectes ravageurs, par exemple par l'emploi d'insectes entomophages. Les cultures associées, en combinant plusieurs espèces végétales sur une même parcelle, limitent la prolifération des parasites et ravageurs, et permettent parfois des gains de productivité. Les techniques culturales simplifiées limitent le travail du sol. Le semis direct sous couvert permet de restituer au sol les nutriments prélevés, d'entretenir les bactéries permettant leur assimilation par les plantes, et de limiter le développement des adventices. Le compostage et le paillis permettent de restituer les nutriments prélevés au sol, de limiter les métaux des engrais, et d'entretenir le développement de l'humus. Les purins permettent de tuer les insectes, adventices et parasites, et peuvent également être utilisés comme fertilisants. |  |

Source: Ville de Montpellier.

En 2009, la ville a élaboré une stratégie afin de mieux valoriser les espaces municipaux en friche (ferroviaires, agricoles, industrielles). Il s'agit de trouver les moyens d'associer les espaces naturels urbains formels avec ces milieux de végétation spontanée. Il s'agit d'assurer "la prise en compte des délaissés dans les systèmes naturels urbains qui sont pour la ville un des axes majeurs d'expérimentation scientifique et sociale". Cela correspond au projet trame verte de Montpellier ou schéma directeur du réseau vert qui construit une nouvelle approche de la friche. Si celle-ci est traditionnellement un espace marginal, elle est ici complètement réintégrée dans le projet urbain. Cet exemple me semble éclairant même si les espaces agricoles sont rares. *Via* l'intégration des friches dans le projet urbain, il s'agit de favoriser la présence de la nature en ville en privilégiant dans les aménagements urbains les espaces de nature en ville, considérés comme essentiels au cadre de vie des citoyens dans un contexte d'intense urbanisation. Il s'agit également de favoriser la biodiversité et de changer l'image de ces espaces dits dégradés. L'inventaire a permis de dresser une typologie des délaissés et de faire apparaître les enjeux (écologiques, urbains, paysagers, sociaux et culturels, de gestion et poétiques). L'objectif est d'intégrer ces délaissés dans un réseau vert, des corridors, de façon à créer "une continuité écologique entre les parcs, les jardins et les parcelles agricoles". L'ensemble des actions est focalisé sur la prise en compte et la préservation de la biodiversité, que ce soit dans les pratiques des jardiniers de la ville, dans la matérialisation de continuités biologiques, ou dans la volonté d'en faire un support pédagogique pour la population.

Ville durable

Dans son rapport¹¹ 2012 intitulé "Montpellier, la cité à énergie positive", les responsables politiques justifient leur action au nom du rôle spécifique dévolu aux villes: "Les villes sont considérées comme des hauts lieux de la lutte contre les changements climatiques et de l'évolution du modèle énergétique. Dès lors, Montpellier, avec l'un des plus fort

1 Dans le cadre du décret d'application de la loi n°2010-788 du 12 juillet 2010 portant engagement national pour l'environnement est rendue désormais obligatoire la rédaction d'un rapport sur la situation en matière de développement durable pour toutes les collectivités territoriales et les EPCI à fiscalité propre de plus de 50.000 habitants.

taux de croissance démographique national, et une économie qui a le potentiel de se diversifier (économie circulaire, énergies renouvelables, innovation, écoconception, écomobilités...) entreprend depuis de nombreuses années sa mutation, afin de garantir aux générations futures le développement économique, la sécurité énergétique et un cadre de vie de qualité.” (ville de Montpellier, 2012). Ces acteurs se projettent à l’horizon 2040 dans leur projet urbain qu’ils souhaitent cohérent avec l’échelle de l’agglomération. Ils affirment que la ville des années 2040-2050 doit être pensée comme un écosystème dans lequel l’objectif est d’atteindre une véritable résilience du territoire et de ses habitants.

L’agglomération de Montpellier porte ainsi le concept d’agri-parcs, inscrits en termes d’actions prioritaires dans son agenda 21. Il s’agit de combiner les usages agricoles et urbains, en particulier dans les espaces d’interface (illustration n°2). La mise en œuvre de ces agri-parcs devrait permettre de s’attaquer aux limites de l’urbanisation, aux franges urbaines afin de valoriser “la relation ville-campagne, les vues sur le grand paysage et l’accès à la nature”. “Un agri-parc doit se définir comme un espace par essence multifonctionnel qui doit concilier fonctions urbaines et fonctions agricoles dans une stratégie gagnant-gagnant “ (CAM, 2012). La multifonctionnalité pourrait être atteinte en combinant les quatre fonctions identifiées:

- Il convient de préserver la fonction de production, en tant qu’activité économique et humaine, des risques de disparition auxquels peut l’exposer la spéculation.
- La fonction de consommation permet de fournir aux citadins des produits alimentaires locaux de qualité grâce à des circuits courts de commercialisation (marchés, paniers, jardins familiaux) ou par l’intermédiaire de la restauration collective.
- Les espaces agricoles assurent une fonction environnementale en tant que valeur patrimoniale et paysagère et leur contribution à la biodiversité par le maintien des continuités écologiques.
- Les lieux de loisir, de promenade ou de découverte, tant récréatifs que pédagogiques constituent la fonction ludo-éducative.

Illustration n° 2.2: L'intégration de l'agriculture dans l'agenda 21 de l'agglomération de Montpellier.

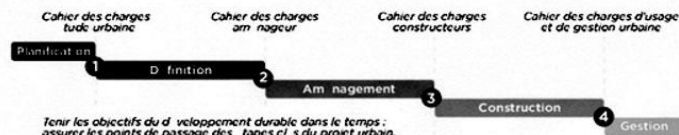
lettre_No_4_Agenda_21_cle6da86d.pdf

<http://www.agenda21.languedoc-roussillon.developpement-durable...>

L'co-r f rentiel di

Les 5 cibles du dév

Ces cibles devront être prises en compte tout au long du processus de fabrication des projets urbains. L'co-r f rentiel identifie 4 tapes cl s dans ce processus, positionn es au passage de relais entre des documents d'chelle diff rente et r al is s par des acteurs d'positaires de cultures professionnelles diff rentes. Ces tapes se concr tissent dans la r daction de cahiers de charges garants de la prise en compte tout au long du projet urbain des enjeux du d'veloppement durable.



1

Valoriser les paysages, la biodiversité et l'agriculture de proximité

Objectifs

- Pr server et valoriser les espaces naturels et agricoles contigus aux projets.
- Pr server l'identit g ographique et paysagère des sites.
- Maintenir la biodiversit existante et assurer la protection des milieux.
- ...

Leviers

- Limitation du remodelage des sites.
- Am nagement en p assant les limites d'urbanisation.
- Maintien des continuit s paysagères.
- Augmentation de la part des espaces publics et appropriation favoris e de ces derniers.
- D'veloppement d'une agriculture de proximité.
- ...



Jardins familiaux partag s à proximit imm diate des habitations

2

Intégrer l'hydraulique comme partenaire utile du projet

Objectifs

- Cr er les eaux pluviales au plus près du cycle naturel.
- Utiliser l'eau comme un r gulateur thermique à l'chelle des projets (toits, plans d'eau...).
- ...



Bassin de r tention paysager

Leviers

- Corrélation des diff rents modes de gestion hydraulique amont-aval (r tention, coulement et ondage).
- Limitation de l'imperméabilisation des sols.
- Conception d'am nagements hydrauliques enrichissant la qualit paysagère des projets.
- Mise en place de techniques alternatives de gestion des eaux pluviales.
- Limitation de l'emprise au sol en connectant les b timents.
- Volution des prescriptions des zones d'al a en fonction des projets d'am nagement.
- ...

2 sur 3

28/03/2013 15:20

Source: Lettre de l'agenda 21, n°4, 2011, Agglomération de Montpellier.

Plusieurs sites sont en cours d'expérimentation dans les communes voisines de la ville de Montpellier. Ces sites associent plusieurs problématiques autour d'un espace agricole délaissé. Dans un contexte urbain, le déclin

des usages agricoles met en évidence l'intérêt de cette activité pour traiter d'autres problématiques telles que les inondations, la diversité biologique, l'existence d'un espace récréatif. Les premières expériences se structurent autour des deux cours d'eau qui encadrent la ville, la Mosson à l'ouest et le Lez à l'est. Le lancement de ces opérations pose l'urgence de la question foncière. De plus en plus, les collectivités locales se lancent dans l'acquisition des terres (ex. domaine de Viviers) mais reste ensuite à trouver la bonne formule pour stabiliser les activités agricoles dans la durée.

Illustration n° 2.3: Programme de "Manger local" du Château de Flaugergues.

26 & 27 mai 2012 · Château de Flaugergues
Montpellier

INTOLERANCES ALIMENTAIRES
ALIMENTATION-SANTE
LE BIO & LOCAL en questions

Les journées
Manger autrement
S'INFORMER, ECHANGER, PARTAGER

CONFERENCES
avec la présence de

Marion Kaplan, bionutritionniste
auteur de «Alimentation sans gluten, sans laitage»
L'association **Kokopelli**

Scarlett Lolson, naturopathe,
auteur de «La santé commence par les intestins»

Christine Calvet,
pour l'association 'Un plus Bio',
auteur sur les intolérances alimentaires

Florence Arnaud, blogueuse
auteur sur les intolérances alimentaires
... diététicienne, AMAP etc...

ATELIERS DE CUISINE PARTICIPATIFS

Village de **STANDS**

ANIMATIONS
pour les grands et les petits

PRODUCTEURS LOCAUX

SAMEDI CINE-RENCONTRE

Entrée avec participation (pré-inscription en ligne)
www.manger-autrement.fr

NOS SOUTIENS

Colibris

bio

Source: <http://www.manger-autrement.fr>

Alimentation de proximité

En matière d'alimentation de proximité, on observe une grande quantité d'initiatives, venant d'acteurs très variés tout en observant une volonté régionale d'encadrer cette dynamique *via* l'association "Manger local". celle-ci est médiatisée par une manifestation grand public, cf. action de mai 2012 à Montpellier.

Les enjeux économiques identifiés sont la création ou le maintien d'exploitations agricoles et d'emplois, la contribution au développement local, à l'attractivité d'un territoire, l'amélioration de la valeur ajoutée pour le producteur et la mise en place des systèmes d'échanges basés sur un partenariat équilibré entre producteurs, intermédiaires et consommateurs.

Les enjeux environnementaux sont l'équilibre entre espaces agricoles et urbains et maintien de ceintures vertes, entretien de l'espace et diminution des risques d'incendies, réduction des déchets (moins d'emballages), et réduction des distances entre lieu de production et lieu de vente. Lorsqu'il s'agit d'agriculture durable ou biologique, préservation de la biodiversité et du paysage, réduction des impacts sur l'eau et les sols et moindre consommation énergétique.

Les enjeux sociaux doivent permettre l'entretien d'un lien de confiance entre consommateur et producteur, la valorisation du métier agricole et des savoir-faire, le développement des solidarités, la participation à la vie locale, l'éducation à l'environnement et à l'alimentation, l'amélioration du cadre de vie.

Tout le monde ne peut qu'être d'accord avec ces grands principes. Reste à trouver les moyens de les mettre en œuvre. Cette évolution se traduit par l'arrivée et l'investissement de nouveaux acteurs tels l'association Terracoopa. Cette association a pour but d'aider à l'installation progressive de nouveaux agriculteurs sur des modes alternatifs (agriculture biologique et circuit court). Ces expériences sont modestes mais elles appuient des systèmes agricoles alternatifs, probablement capables de valoriser cette interface ville-agriculture.

Par le biais de ces différentes expériences, le projet urbain se réoriente en validant de nouvelles façons d'intégrer l'agriculture et l'espace agricole dans la ville. Cette réorientation n'est pas que matérielle,

elle met également en jeu des symboles qui contribuent à une refondation des sociabilités et de l'urbanité. L'agricole est une façon de repenser le lien entre ville et nature. Il s'agit de changer la focale en intégrant l'agricole comme producteur d'aménités paysagères, environnementales, alimentaires. Ces actions portent sur la forme, la matérialité de cette interface: l'exploitation de certains symboles (paysages, images), la création d'événements (fête des vignes à Montpellier). On est moins ici dans l'urbanisme temporaire, l'évènementiel (Pradel, 2012) que dans un urbanisme de l'interface. L'interface apparaît être un espace nécessaire à la réécriture du projet urbain. Elle n'est plus seulement l'espace où l'on relègue marginaux et marginalités sociales.

Conclusion

Les marges agricoles de la ville ne seraient plus si marginales que cela. Le renouvellement du projet urbain les intègre très clairement *via* de nouvelles préoccupations portant sur la préservation de la biodiversité, une meilleure intégration de la ville et de la nature, la contribution à de nouveaux modes d'habiter et de vivre ensemble. La nature et l'agriculture semblent être nécessaires pour y parvenir. *A contrario*, en matière de méthodes de mise en œuvre, les actions sont plus hésitantes et s'apparentent souvent à du bricolage. Bricolage qui peut avoir des vertus puisqu'il autorise une plus grande souplesse, une plus grande créativité de la part des acteurs sociaux.

A l'échelle de la ville et du projet urbain, les espaces agricoles sont de moins en moins marginaux. Par contre, ils sont instrumentalisés au service d'un projet qui leur est étranger. C'est donc bien de nouveaux espaces qui sont en train de se construire dans une configuration socio-spatiale originale, différente de ce que ces espaces ont connu par le passé. Par l'intermédiaire de différentes actions, opérations, ils sont de plus en plus intégrés. C'est cette intégration qui construit leur contribution aux centralités urbaines.

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The Future is in the Countryside: Survival Kit for a World in Crisis?

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“These experiments might make their members unhappy- unbearably so, sometimes – but they are pursuing a dream, striving for a better life and seeking a better alternative. They are, I suggest, utopias in process, moving slowly, and sometimes unevenly, towards a better life in this imperfect world.”

Lucy Sargisson 2009: 189

Introduction

The Portuguese countryside has been presented as a fragile and marginal area, depopulated after decades and decades of migrations either internal or to foreign countries, where the remaining population comprises mainly elderly people and all those who through either physical or intellectual constraints were not able to move out. It is also often described as a stagnant area, where illiteracy and lethargy prevails (Carvalho. 2006; Correia. 2006). However almost imperceptible but rather significant changes are occurring that question this trend. According to Alvarenga (2012) during the last decade between 3 and 10% of the urban population in Lisbon and Porto have moved either to the urban periphery or to the rural areas.

- 1) Who are these new-comers, some of whom present themselves as the “New Settlers” and why are they leaving the most developed areas?
- 2) Is this a response to the economic crisis that has been responsible for the closure of so many enterprises in Portugal and contributed to an unemployment rate of 16.5%?

- 3) Are these people, some of whom are going back to their familial roots, looking only for a place which allows them to survive until new opportunities emerge?
- 4) Are the Portuguese following the advice of their President who says that the future is in the countryside and has invited the citizens to invest in agriculture?
- 5) Who are the young people who are looking for a different societal model, based on permaculture and seek to build intentional communities according to the concept of “Transition Towns” which was created by Rob Hopkins?

These are the main questions that framed this study, which also aims to understanding the profile of these new “country people” and their strategies for survival and success. Alternative sources of financing and different livelihoods are giving a new look to the countryside which enable it to contribute more positively to sustainable development of these areas, and eventually to what Lamberton designates as sustainable sufficiency “consistent with ecological preservation and social welfare” (Lamberton 2005: 66).

A brief overview of the past 50 years of European rural change

In the European Community, the success of the agricultural policies undertaken by Sicco Mansholt after World War Two led to an unbearable situation of surplus, that was costly to maintain (the so called rivers of wine and milk and mountains of butter, for instance) and led to adverse societal and environmental impacts.

In spite of the warnings that over the decades tried to raise the awareness of academics, politicians and citizens in general to the rapid depletion of environmental resources that was happening, such as: the classic *Silent Spring*, by Rachel Carson (1962) in the sixties; *Limits to Growth* by MIT scientists Donella Meadows, Denis Meadows and Jorgen Randers (2004) in the seventies’ and the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: *Our Common Future*,

also known as the Brundtland Report (www.un-documents.net/our-common-future.pdf) in the eighties, to quote only a few of the most well-known, it was necessary to wait some decades until there was a larger consensus acknowledging the negative effects of some of these approaches and consumption models.

It is not easy to change the attitude of people towards the environment and to society. However as a consequence of the disruptions to numerous ecosystems there is a growing awareness by technicians and consumers in general that something has to be done to mitigate soil erosion, water and air pollution, the loss of a considerable genetic pool, due to the preference for HYV (High Yield Varieties) and a disarray in the agrarian structure exacerbated by the disappearance of small farmers, who are not able to compete with large agribusiness organisations.

In Portugal the environmental impacts resulting from the dramatic change in agricultural production systems (enhanced by the policies launched in the sixties by Sicco Mansholt for the modernisation and mechanisation of agriculture) were not significant until the country entered the European Community in 1986. Thus the concomitant overloading of the carrying capacity of the ecosystems in the rural territories were not particularly apparent, if we exclude the calamitous environmental impacts resulting from the wheat campaign in the twenties, mainly in Alentejo (South Portugal). However the increasing number of people migrating from the rural areas either abroad or to the coast, was especially important during the sixties and the seventies, due to the scarcity of jobs in their regions and the investments made along the coast, where the larger cities are located, contributed to an increasingly uneven distribution of the population. Today more than 2/3 of the population live in the coastal areas, where 85% of the PIB is also produced. This was in a certain way a result of the failure of the Perroux model in the country, since important investments, such as the Sines Oil Cluster, which should have generated a spread effect, and thus multiplied the poles of development to the interior, instead had a backwash effect, concentrating human and financial capital in a single pole on the coast. Furthermore, many Portuguese decided to

migrate to Germany and France, the two countries that received most Portuguese emigrants at that time.

This pattern reflects the circular cumulative causation principle enunciated by Hodge and Whitby (1981) stating that an initial reduction in the agricultural jobs leads to a deterioration in the age structure, which in turn causes the natural growth rate to drop and consequently reduces the population, leading to a decrease in the demand of services, that will bring about another round of decline (in Gilg 1985: 70).

Signs of change

The Agro-Environmental Measures, brought in at the beginning of the 90's, were of particular importance in address the specifics problems facing the Portuguese countryside, especially in the less favoured areas, where structural fragilities and high demographic decline, as well as a lower living standards and the effects of the ageing of the population were most significant. Among other important measures it was decisive that Integrated Pest Management was promoted and that the organic mode of production was supported since these initiatives provided added-value that compensated in quality for what the countryside was not able to produce in quantity.

The Leader Program, also starting in the 90's, brought a new hope for the rehabilitation of these rural areas based on a specific methodology whereby the bottom – up approach gave back more autonomy to the locals and enabled them to carry out projects of small and medium size that were appropriate to their financial and management capacities. Although it was argued that these investments did not create many jobs, nevertheless they often provided the possibility for younger generations to stay in their birth areas, which, for some, was a privilege and a source of great joy, as a guide in the Arouca Geopark observed. Rural tourism also generates some local wealth, and a small number of jobs. Furthermore, it brings people, who also seek other services, to rural areas where they can appreciate the rich patrimonial heritage, buy handicrafts and taste the regional gastronomy, generating a spread effect beneficial for all.

The creation of protected areas produced a need to employ specialists such as biologists. This offered the opportunity to young bachelors, who could not find a job in the cities, to start living in rural areas and to bring a new dynamic to regions that were mainly inhabited by old people. These examples were a first sign of change in the local population dynamics that contributed to the diversion or attenuation of the trend of migration from the rural to the urban areas.

In a previous study (Firmino, 1996, 141/2) it was foreseen that either the Leader Program or the Agro-Environmental Measures might contribute to the revitalization of rural areas, since both schemes created jobs, but some other undertakings such as the provision of basic infrastructure (sewage treatment, water supply and electricity, roads) and cultural events (concerts, theatre, movies and temporary exhibitions) should also be available to people living in these areas to address some of the most frequent complaints made by the newcomers.

The Portuguese countryside today has undoubtedly benefited from these improvements which allow the “Neorurals” who seek to make a living in a rural area to gain the best of both “worlds”. They can find at least some of the comforts of the cities in the countryside.

The rural idyll

The idealization of Nature has characterized Mankind throughout History. Although there may have been some periods of excessive idolatry, as in Anglo-American culture in the XVIII century, when William Cowper wrote: “God created the countryside and Man the city”, the European aristocracy, for instance, always spent some period of the year in the countryside, where many of them still kept large properties. Indeed, one of its more significant representatives, Charles, Prince of Wales, has challenged for more than thirty years, “the accepted wisdom; the current orthodoxy and conventional way of thinking” that, mainly since the 60s, has favored technology although its roots are to be found more than 200 years ago when the process of industrialization started. The Prince of Wales has tried to make it clear that all our problems are inter-related and only persist because we

have not been able to look at them in an holistic way; on the contrary we have ignored important basic principles that are responsible for “Harmony” (Prince of Wales et al 2010: 5).

Harrison (1982, cited in Bunce 2003: 15) argues “that the values that sustain the rural idyll speak of a profound and universal human need for connection with land, nature and community, a psychology which, as people have become increasingly separated from these experiences, reflects the literal meaning of nostalgia; the sense of loss of home, of homesickness”. Schama (1996, cited in Bunce 2003: 15) adds “that countryside satisfies basic spiritual needs and that its landscapes stand as metaphors for associations buried deep in our memories”. Although some authors, such as Cloke (2003, 1) state that it is almost impossible to get away from this idyllic view of rurality since “we are brainwashed from birth by idyllic representational values which present a cumulative foundation for both reflexive and instinctive reactions to rurality”, others explain that “maybe it persists precisely because of the questioning of its validity and the threats to the environment that it celebrates. The rural idyll, in fact, is now embedded deep in the politics of the countryside” (Bunce 2003: 28).

Perhaps many of the young people, who seek to start afresh in the rural areas, are dreaming of “spaces enabled by nature, offering opportunities for living and lifestyle which are socially cohesive, happy and healthy, and presenting a pace and quality of life that differs from that in the city”, which are common precepts “deep down in the early twenty-first century psyche”, (Cloke, 2003: 1).

If we recall “Green Acres”, an American series (1965-1979) broadcast in Portugal until 2001 under the title “Live in the Countryside” (*Viver no Campo*) and the tribulations experienced by a lawyer from New York, played by Eddie Albert, who decided to move into the countryside with his eccentric wife (Eva Gabor) and live as a farmer, we can even satirize and parody these high minded aspects of the rural idyll.

However it is not so easy to understand why so many young people recently became interested in permaculture and aim at adopting a different style of life, which may also encompass living in an intentional

community. This is the question that I will now pose, based on my own experience, inquiries and visits to several intentional communities in Portugal and abroad (e.g. Findhorn, Scotland).

Figure 3.1. Publicity photo for the premiere of *Green Acres*.



Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_Acres.

But first it would be good to define what an intentional community is. Meijering (2006:19) presents the following criteria based on authors such as Jansen 1990; Miller 1999; Pitzer 1997; Schenker 1986; Zablocki 1980: “(1) no bonds by familial relationships only; (2) a minimum of three to five adult members; (3) membership is voluntary; (4) geographical and psychological separation from mainstream society; (5) a common ideology that is adhered to by all members; (6) sharing of (a part of) one’s property; and (7) the interest of the group prevails over individual interests. These criteria encompass a wide range of intentional communities that practice varying degrees of withdrawal from mainstream society”.

Figure 3.2. Masters Students of Geography (New University of Lisbon) during a visit to the Community of Quinta do Luzio, Janas, Sintra, Portugal.



Source: Author's photo (2012).

Reasons to start a new life in the countryside

Long-term unemployment can influence a person's decision to migrate to a rural area, where the living costs are lower, and or/start a different type job on their arrival.

One example that shows how adversity can turn into a success story started in the sixties, in Scotland, and involved a couple (Peter and Eileen) their three children (Christopher, Jonathan and David) and their colleague Dorothy Maclean.

They were unemployed and living on about 20 dollars a week Unemployment Benefit. Moved by a deep faith in God, they believed that they had a mission to accomplish and thus, in November 1962, they parked their small caravan in a site where the six of them would live for the next seven years.

"One day on the sand of this caravan park a garden would flourish and, eventually, a thriving spiritual community of nearly 200 people. We knew none of this at the time" writes Peter Caddy (Findhorn Community 1975: 2). Today "the Findhorn Foundation is a spiritual community, eco-village and

international centre for holistic education, helping to unfold a new human consciousness and visions from all over the world and create a positive and sustainable future ... Within the Findhorn Ecovillage, at the Park, sustainable values are expressed in the built environment with ecological houses, applied technology in the Living Machine waste water treatment facility, the biomass boiler, and electricity generating wind turbines, as well as the community's social, economic and educational initiatives". The Findhorn Foundation is now an NGO associated with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations (www.findhorn.org/aboutus/) which receives thousands of visitors per year.

In a more recent period the economic crisis has probably been one of the most evident factors encouraging migration to rural areas in Portugal. The "delocalization" of enterprises and the bankruptcy of some factories (notably in the textile industry) stimulated the return of many workers to their roots, especially in the last decade. This process has been reinforced by the fact that social welfare payments for unemployed have been reduced and indemnity for the loss of a job is less readily available. In Portugal, as elsewhere, "this sharp increase in long-term unemployment is a sign of severe labour market distress, characterized by extremely weak job creation, an increase in persons receiving unemployment benefits, growing risks that the unemployment will slip through the cracks of the underlying social protection systems as benefits are exhausted and a risk of long-term structural damage in the labour market due to growing skills mismatches (ILO 2013: 35).

Portugal has the third highest unemployment rate among the younger generation in the European Union. According to Eurostat (December, 2012) in the EU zone unemployment among the population under 25 years stood at 24%; in Portugal it reached 38.3%. The most disturbing prospect is that "discouragement and rising numbers of youth neither in education, employment or training, the so-called NEET rate" contributes so that "many youth in a number of countries risk going from being unemployed or out of the labour market to becoming unemployable" (ILO 2013: 32).

Under these circumstances one possible alternative is to look for opportunities in the areas of the interior, especially when the local

administration gives incentives to young couples willing to establish themselves in their parishes and examples of success stories are presented in the media.

“Rural Territories and the Crisis” is the title of the 19th edition (April, 2012) of the three monthly magazine “Viver” (meaning Live), published by ADRACES, an association for the development of the South Interior Beira Region (close to the border with Spain) which was created under the Leader Program. Its director, António Realinho, calls attention to the fact that the crisis itself engendered a new demographic cycle in the rural territories, transforming them into locations offering opportunities and alternatives to the younger generations.

In the above mentioned magazine a sketch of Portugal is published depicting the interior areas as places with the opportunity to find a job and generate wealth, as opposed to the coastal area where unemployment is causing more debt (Figure 3). Comparatively, in Figure 4, we can understand the imbalance in terms of population density, dictated by former political decisions and investments that have privileged the areas along the coast (so-called “coasterization” according to Luisa Schmidt et al 2012: 2).

Indeed it is mainly in the NUTs¹ North (35.2%) and Lisbon and Tagus Valley (34.6%) that there was the highest concentration of population in 2009, although between 2001 and 2009 there was a slight decrease (0.6%) in the North and Central NUT’s (Carrilho and Patrício 2010).

Since the rural areas lost population over a long period many Portuguese no longer seek jobs in agriculture, and many farms depend on immigrants to perform these tasks. These immigrants have been responsible for the growth in national population since 1993 (a positive migratory balance of 0.14%, in 2009) since they more than compensate for the negative natural balance (-0.05% in 2009). The most represented nationalities responsible for this growth at present are the Ukrainians (11.6%) and the Romanians (7.2%) (idem, p. 26) who are often the workforce on the farms (for instance in Tapada da Tojeira, an organic farm in South Interior Beira, specializing in the production of olive oil, employs six Romanians).

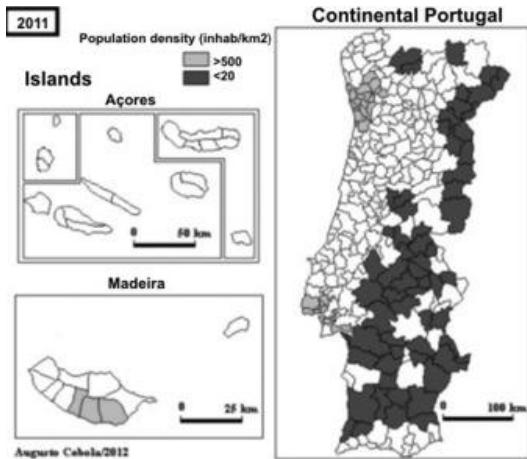
¹ NUT = Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (Reg. (CE) nr. 1059/2003). The NUT classification is a hierarchical system for delineating economic territories of the European Union.

Figure 3.3. The Rural territories and the crisis.



Source: ADRACES (2012).

Figure 4. Population density in Portugal.



Source: http://www.essmaria.org/escola/images/stories/portugal_e_numeros/portugal_mapas_e_numeros_3_24jan12_.pdf.

Who are the new settlers?

“Neorurals” is the name given to designate a new class of people who were born in the cities but prefer to live in the countryside (<http://www.facebook.com/novosrurais.farmingculture>). Those between 35 and 45 years old and with 10 years of professional experience, are generally the best suited to start a “New Settlers Project” (www.novospovoadores.pt). Frederico Lucas came from Lisbon to launch the New Settlers, a consultancy company which aims to attract people in the cities who want to set up businesses in the interior of Portugal.

Financed by the town hall of Alfândega da Fé, in NE Portugal, and utility company EDP, New Settlers head hunts possible candidates for resettlement, gives advice on their business plans, helps families to resettle and plug into the local economy, and helps cut bureaucratic red tape. A total of 1,000 families have applied, 32 have moved inland and 30 more families will resettle by year-end (Alvarenga, 2012).

The project “Global Villages” is the second phase of the Project New Settlers. It will start in 2014 and intends to convert abandoned villages into entrepreneurial centers for small and medium sized enterprises. They espouse co-work bringing together people who may create a Territorial Networking (different actors contributing to the same project).

Louise Meijering (2006) identifies four types of intentional communities in the western world: Religious, Ecological, Communal and Practical Communities.

The religious communities are the most stable because they are “unified by strong ideological values, based on religious or spiritual beliefs ... were founded relatively early, on average in 1973 compared with 1984 for the other three types” (Meijering, 2006: 45). They are not discussed in this paper because they are usually old established communities with a long history of religion. However it is important to emphasize a characteristic of their members that matches the trend to less materialistic values among the young settlers, in accordance with the volunteer simplicity approach defended by Serge Latouche. The religious members are “expected to share property and personal capital, to forego extravagance, and to live soberly” (idem: 45).

The ecological communities “withdraw to remote locations, where they attempt to live up to their ecological ideals through low-impact lifestyles”. Berger, 2004; and Melville, 1972 (quoted by Meijering, 2006: 45) consider that people living in these communities are usually in the countercultural movement, and have “left suburbia, and retreated to small, primitive intentional communities in rural areas, advocating social, political and economic change”.

The communal communities advocate a communal ideology, and focus on interpersonal contacts between the members. As in the ecological communities, decisions are made by consensus. According to Meijering (2006: 46) “communal groups often withdraw from urban areas to rural areas or villages to realize a lifestyle evolving around communal sharing”. They are usually highly educated and live in families with children. Meijering also notes that “with regard to the origin of their members, communal groups are often international, which can be related to their intensive contacts with other communities at both the national and international level” (idem: 46). These are the less stable communities, since this communal ideology can change on the demand of some of their members, which may cause fluctuations in the membership.

Practical communities are often located in suburban areas and their members live together for utilitarian reasons, i.e. they share facilities and goods. “Examples are sharing a house, a common use of a kitchen, maintaining a vegetable garden, sharing household appliances, and car-pooling” (Meijering 2006: 47). According to this author “most communities consist of families with children, from (upper) middle class backgrounds. ... The apartments or houses are privately owned, and members are mostly financially independent. Organisation is relatively often carried out through democracy” (idem: 47). Since these communities are usually main stream, there are no conflicts about ideology and the membership is relatively stable.

Many of these communities practice permaculture (permanent agriculture) a concept developed by Bill Mollison. “Permaculture is the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive ecosystems which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural

ecosystems. It is the harmonious integration of landscape and people providing their food, energy, shelter, and other material and non-material needs in a sustainable way. ... Permaculture design is a system of assembling conceptual, material, and strategic components in a pattern which functions to benefit life in all its forms. The philosophy behind permaculture is one of working with, rather than against, nature; of protracted and thoughtful observation rather than protracted and thoughtless action; of looking at systems in all their functions, rather than asking only one yield of them; and of allowing systems to demonstrate their own evolutions" (Mollison 1999: backcover).

Societies in transition (examples from Portugal)

Although imperceptible to most of the Portuguese population, several examples of communities or individuals who seek a different model of living exist in Portugal, some of them for several decades. This is the case for Tamera, an intentional community of nearly 200 people, with residents (mainly German) and visitors (from all over the world) who spend periods of time together either to experience living in a community or to attend the summer university. For the Tamera community the summer university "is not the opportunity to come to Tamera as inexpensively as possible. Rather we ask all participants for conscious and responsible participation in this experiment and these research questions. ... We are looking for new ways and we are taking a step towards a new form of economy – the Gift Economy. What can an economic system look like that is based on mutual trust and responsible participation of all – and in which one can actually make the shift to the consciousness of abundance? Can I, for example, donate something so that others can take part?" (www.tamera.org/index.php?id=657). Tamera houses people from all ages, some already born there, and predominantly the adults have higher education qualifications, many of them having worked in Germany in responsible jobs for decades before abandoning them to participate in this global project.

The community was founded in 1995 by Dieter Duhm, Sabine Lichtenfels and Charly Rainer Ehrenpreis and others, is spiritually oriented to promote global understanding and peace in the world and

follows a non-violent philosophy inspired by Dieter Duhm's thoughts. In 2006 they started the "Monte Cerro" Experiment in Tamera aiming at establishing an Healing Biotope in a communitarian organism "in which the living conditions for a non-violent future are researched and applied practically" (Duhm 2007: 93)

Permaculture and Alternative Energies are two of the areas in they have invested heavily. Together with Sepp Holzer, an Austrian consultant on permaculture (www.krameterhof.at), who is known as the rebel farmer for challenging conventional knowledge about farming (Holzer 2004), they have been creating water landscapes, that can become a blessing for Alentejo, where Tamera is located in a dry province in South Portugal, where the locals experience the hardness of a dry climate, poor soils and scarcity of water.

According to Holzer's premises, lakes were dug to collect rainwater and to create a microclimate. They also diversify the production and experiment with seeds adapted to the local physical conditions, thereby providing a reference point for other farmers. They try to be as self-sufficient as possible based on a vegetarian diet.

In the field of alternative energy they are implementing an outstanding project: a solar village, which uses oil heated in the energy greenhouse and stored in special containers. The oil supplies the heat to cook day and night and can also be used to power saws and disinfecting and refrigeration systems (Dregger 2010: 53).

Many other smaller communities have been founded in more recent years in Portugal, either in the rural areas or in the suburban fringe of the Metropolitan areas. One example is Quinta do Luzio (quintadoluzio.wordpress.com) near Sintra/Lisbon, founded less than one year ago, where seven active members endeavored to share a communal life and organize a range of workshops, for example on how to restore old stone walls, how to build a low cost greenhouse or courses on Permaculture Design.

An example of an individual initiative is given by a young unemployed man, who decided to look for a house in the countryside, because it was cheaper. He found one in Aldeia da Mata Pequena, "a small rural village, located within an extremely rich and well-preserved

natural landscape, which origins date back to the Roman occupation. The accurate restoration allowed the Aldeia to recover its original identity, establishing it as one of the rare examples of Traditional Architecture in the Saloio region” (Lisbon District) (www.aldeiamatapequena.com). Today this man and his family make their living in the village renting six houses fully furnished to national and foreign tourists, who enjoy the experience of living in a traditional hamlet with all the comfort of the city.

Territories or Mentalities in Crisis?

During the nineties large amounts of money were sent to Portugal through several European Programs, covering different sectors, in order to help the country to catch up with the other EU members in terms of infrastructure and living standards. “We must be modern, cosmopolitan and European” was a common message spread by politicians who paid more attention to emblematic investments (the largest dam – Alqueva - and the longest bridge – Vasco da Gama - in Europe) than to the real needs of the country. The food sector was particularly left in the hands of importers, with the excuse (still common today, although it is not always true) that “the products that come from abroad are better and cheaper”. The rural areas, in spite of all the romantic and idyllic view that is associated to them (Cloke, 2003) are still considered by many as areas of backwardness and stagnation, and the relevance of agriculture (although it is no longer the main activity in many rural areas) is not acknowledged as a strategic sector for the food security of the country. In short, it is an activity with no prestige.

In the two last decades there were large investments in motorways, 10 new football stadiums, plans for a new airport, a high-speed train ... and food security? The neglect and ostracism which agriculture experienced led to a dangerous dependence of about 70% on food imports that, in 2010, incurred a cost of 6 915 million Euros (Observatório dos Mercados Agrícolas). The situation is particularly obvious in wheat production (we import almost 90% of our needs). In 1990 Portugal produced 40% of the cereals consumed in the country; in 2010 this figure dropped to only 25%. If we except milk, wine and olive-oil, where

we are self-sufficient or almost so in the latter case, most of the other food products are imported which implicates not only a heavy burden for our economy but also for the environment (e.g. the food miles of the 60% of garlic imported from China!).

As a consequence, 500 000 ha of agricultural land were not cultivated between 2000 and 2010, which has generated economic and social ruptures, as well as increasing the risk of fires with all the negative impacts that this implies for the landscape and for the assets and lives of the population.

The crisis that we are experiencing is a consequence of a mentality that rules in favor of the materialistic accumulation of goods and megalomaniac investments that will indebt the future generations.

The countryside – survival kit for a world in crisis?

YES! As long as the carrying capacity of these territories – environmental, demographic, economic – is respected. Notwithstanding it is not only a survival kit for the crisis, but a territory to be used with a more balanced distribution of the population.

The communities that have been founded and the movements that silently but steadily try to make their living pursuing an ideal of a better life based on values that defeat the materialistic world that still rules our society, are a good sign that some of us are endeavoring to create a better world. Sheik Abdul Aziz bin Ali al Nuami, the so-called green Sheik of the United Arab Emirates, terms this wish as an “holistic living which describes one as being connected to the daily circle of life; balancing the spiritual, the intellectual, the physical, the emotional, the aesthetic, the environmental and my own inner peace to help spread peace throughout the world and in the process achieve wisdom” (www.greenprophet.com/2010/04/green-sheik-unit).

The countryside has the potential to house these newcomers since it offers space to new ideas and projects. Thus it can be a survival kit for all those who are in search of introspection and enlightenment to create a better world. As Bill Mollison wrote: “a person of courage today is a person of peace. The courage we need is to refuse authority and to accept only personally responsible decisions” (Mollison 1999).

At present there are still many potentialities to be developed (many opportunities for business in Nature, agriculture, cultural heritage, tourism, handicraft, social agriculture, hubs of social innovation, incubators using communication systems...)

A change in mentalities and behaviors is needed! And this is already on the move. One of the “dreamers” who is leading this transition is Rob Hopkins (2008), the author of “The Transition Handbook: from oil dependency to local resilience”, that has been inspiring many people around the world.

I find it particularly impressive and positive that these movements related to transition based on permaculture, are unlike other groups in the past, “more face-to-face, place bound, less virtual, though they make extensive use of Internet, pragmatic, solutions-focused, partnership building, non-ideological” (freely adapted from Barry and Quilley 2009:13).

They are not as grant dependent as were earlier movements, although they seek to use available investment sources. However, they also use alternative funding systems, such as crowd-funding to get the money they need.

In 2006 Michael Sullivan coined the term ‘crowd funding’ when describing the process of raising money online for video projects. In 2008, Brad Damphousse and Andrew Ballester launched ‘Create-a-Fund’, one of the earliest crowd funding websites for individuals. In 2009 crowd funding was popularized by musicians, filmmakers and inventors using a variety of crowd funding sites for artists. In 2010, “Create-a-Fund” was renamed to GoFundme, which emerged in 2012 as one of the most popular crowd funding sites on the Internet - growing by over 20% each month” (<http://crowdfunding.com/>).

Most of these communities organize workshops, mostly related to practical activities, the acquisition of capacities in permaculture design, for instance, that are attended by significant numbers of people. Thus the participants get the skills (to build a low cost greenhouse, for instance), pay to learn and usually have fun doing it, and the organizers get the work done and are still paid for it - an absolute win-win situation!

Will the Permaculture movement contribute to a better world in a resilient and peaceful way? According to Bill Mollison (1999:2):“...

whether we continue, without an ethic or philosophy, like abandoned and orphaned children, or whether we create opportunities to achieve maturity, balance, and harmony is the only real question that faces the present generation”.

However, as Lucy Sargisson writes (2009:189) “these experiments might make their members unhappy- unbearably so, sometimes – but they are pursuing a dream, striving for a better life and seeking a better alternative. They are, I suggest, utopias in process, moving slowly, and sometimes unevenly, towards a better life in this imperfect world.”

Conclusion

Contrasting with the emphasis on growth, whose advantages were praised by economists and technocrats mainly in the sixties, today some individuals and groups dare to point out the need for a deep transformation of society as the solution for a crisis, which they perceive as not only economic but mainly of values.

Serge Latouche, professor emeritus of economy at the Faculty Jean Monnet for Law, Economy and Management, of the University Paris XI, advocates an autonomous society of decrease represented in eight interdependent changes, as follows: reevaluation, re-conceptualization, restructuring, redistribution, re-localization, reduction, reuse and recycling. According to Latouche these interdependent goals are capable of unleashing what he calls a process of quiet decrease, sustainability and conviviality (Latouche 2011:50).

Other scholars, such as Schumacher (1973) support this vision in favor of decrease, identifying the right livelihood as the goal of Buddhist economics. More recently Lamberton (2005) presented the concept of sustainable sufficiency, which he defines as “achieving economic objectives consistent with the principle of right livelihood, ensuring the preservation of the natural environment and the welfare of each individual and society-at-large... Ecological, social and economic objectives contained within the concept of sustainable sufficiency are interconnected and mutually supportive. Critically, economic objectives are not prioritized ahead of, or in conflict with, the social objective to ensure welfare for all members of society, or the ecological objective to

preserve the natural environment” (Lamberton 2005:61). He concludes by appealing for “the need for the (economically) developed world to reduce consumption levels as a prerequisite to the transition to a sustainable society” (idem).

Utopia only exists when it becomes true, “but what is one person’s utopia may be another person’s dystopia”! The changes that are currently occurring in society open up possibilities for the concretization of more and more “utopias”. Who would have thought, a couple of years ago, that an enterprise like EDP (a supplier of energy in Portugal) would finance small innovative projects aiming at promoting local products and tourism such as the Solidarity and Sustainable Trade Certification launched by Ecogerminar (www.ecogerminar.org) in Castelo Branco? (<http://www.fundacaoedp.pt/envolvimento-comunidades/programa-edp-solidaria-barragens/edicao-2010/142>). Or that a bank such as BES, would offer a service of crowd funding? (<https://bescrowdfunding.ppl.pt>) These are not the only ones and many other enterprises will follow, as a result of changes in consumer profiles and the images that these enterprises wish to project to the society under the label of “social responsibility”.

Finally, and taking examples from South Interior Beira (Castelo Branco) as a case in point, I will answer to the questions raised at the beginning of this paper.

The newcomers are mostly young, educated people, between 30 and 40 years old, with some professional experience, often gained abroad (United Kingdom, Germany...). A few left the countryside because they felt a need to pursue a different life model and start a different activity. Some of them inherited properties in the region. They match the groups 3 and 4 (the militants and those looking for spiritual experience identified by van Dam (2005:66-7). These two groups converge in their need to pursue a different life model, for their own personal development. The militants moved mostly due to their feelings of animosity towards the system; those looking for experience are more in search of introspection, reflecting on the purpose of their lives.

The economic crisis can explain why some people moved into the countryside, especially after a more or less long period of unemployment,

since life there is less expensive and some mayors, like those in the municipality of Castelo Branco, have invested in a social economy that makes them proud to say that there are no homeless people in their region. Furthermore, some local councils give grants to young couples with children to settle in their territories.

It is thus possible that some are only using the countryside as a survival kit until they find another solution that better matches their ambitions. But it is also possible that some will definitely settle down in these areas, as already happened in the 70's, after the revolution in 1974, when about 750 000 Portuguese came back from the former colonies and had to restart their lives from the ground up. In Castelo Branco, for instance, some of these so-called “retornados” founded industrial enterprises, such as Centauro (www.centauro.pt/) in 1978. This organization produces refrigerators and air-conditioners, with a yearly revenue of about 20.000.000.00 Euros and exports mainly to North Europe; or Iophil, created in 1979, and 70% bought out 10 years later by Danone (www.danone.pt/somos/historia.aspx). The “retornados” not only settled down in this area but also created conditions so that others could do the same.

Indeed there was a change in the priorities identified by the politicians that may facilitate the decision to move into the rural areas. Today the President of the Republic appeals to the entrepreneurial initiative of the young generations and recommends investment in the countryside, notably in agriculture. In his speech on the “National Day” of the 10th June 2011, he emphasized the importance of agriculture to help the country to compensate for the negative balance of trade and urged young people to go to the countryside. In a visit to the Cherry Feast in Fundão, he declared to journalists that, while it may sound utopian, there were farmers who would create their own enterprises if conditions are created in order to make them profitable (www.tsf.pt/PaginaInicial/Portugal/Interior.aspx?Content_id=18). As a response to this appeal, the bank of land, so necessary to make properties available to new farmers, has just been created (Bill 63/2012) and PROVERE, a joint EU-Portuguese Program is available aiming at valorizing these endogenous resources economically, by promoting competitiveness in

low population density territories, with natural resources, historical heritage and traditional skills (<http://www.incentivos.com.pt/concursos/programa-de-accoes-provere>).

Some rural areas are a sanctuary for those who embrace alternative values and have a different view of life in society, even if the locals, or a few of them, may look at the outsiders with animosity and mistrust; but with time people tend to tolerate differences as was the case with the neighboring population of the community of Tamera. Among the new settlers, who decide to live communally and adopt a voluntary simplicity in their consumption patterns, are those who accept that we live an era of increasing scarcity and that it is necessary to make the transition from a society dependent on oil to one without oil, as postulated in the Transition Towns model proposed by Rob Hopkins. They are more likely to find the conditions to develop their experiments, namely those based on Permaculture Design in less densely populated rural areas. Such settlers are usually young, dynamic, educated, with initiative and often with some experience abroad (the Erasmus Program often provided them with an opportunity to be confronted by different mentalities and models). The site of Permaculture Portugal depicts them as being: “more and more conscious, audacious, resilient, natural and happy”! (http://permaculturaportugal.ning.com/?xg_source=badge).

Final Remarks

In 1849 Feliciano de Castilho, a Portuguese writer with a classicist and conservative background, in the book *Happiness through Agriculture* expressed his belief that happiness lay in the countryside, where chastity and moral values prevailed and agriculture was the support of the economy and survival of manhood, as opposed to the cities where all kind of sins were supposedly committed. He recognized that the benefits that he identified for those living in the countryside were an anticipation of ideas that would probably only be accepted 200 years later (Castilho 1987:21). Even taking into consideration the fact that the countryside is not always a suitable place for radical social, economic and environmental change, and thus conflict may arise, factors such as the economic crisis and the improvement in

accessibility and infra-structure that in the meanwhile occurred in these areas may contribute to this new interest in the countryside. It seems indeed that agriculture and the quality of life offered by the rural areas are attracting people, as Peter Brul (1-2012) writes in an article about Portugal: “Young people from the cities are looking for a future in organic farming”. In the years to come we will see if this trend will be maintained but it is possible that, in the modern context explained above, and not only in the rural areas (urban allotments, the prophecies of Castilho about happiness through agriculture will come true!

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Participatory Guarantee Systems as a Tool for the Empowerment of Small Organic Farmers in Brazil

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Introduction

New strategies for regulating organic products through participatory guarantee systems (PGSs) are shown to be an effective way for organic producers to resist third-party certification so that farmers continue being directly responsible for guaranteeing product quality as they always have been. These strategies arose in reaction to new agents and interest groups in the organic production chain who induced the institutionalization of third-party regulatory systems under the allegation that production for distant markets involving anonymous consumers required technical regulations defining organic product quality through independent certification of authenticity.

The shift from the typical community-based system of certification of the organic movement to third-party certification provoked vigorous protest from organic farmers in the United States and European countries, who like other organic farmers in the world run small-scale family operations which have long been responsible for the greater part of global organic production (De Master, 2012; Renard, 2005; Vos, 2000). Organic farmers reacted as they lost decision-making capacity concerning all stages of production and marketing which large transnational companies tried to usurp (Eden, 2011; Cienfuegos, 2004).

This happens in Brazil and the present work analyzes strategies of resistance used by small farmers who try to adapt to new legislation concerning third-party regulation undertaken by a new sector of certifiers and accreditation bodies, situated outside production and aligned against the basic precepts of their historic organic movement.

The ensuing conflict resulted in the legal recognition of alternative ways of certification based on participatory guarantee systems, which today can receive the same Brazilian label for organic products used for products certified by third parties.

Participatory guarantee systems represented a victory in retaking power and Brazil was the first country to officially recognize this kind of system (Meirelles, 2010). Similar models were developed in other countries and presently are accepted as legitimate procedures by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM, 2012). However, it must be pointed out that PGSs do not involve the farmers simply attesting to organic quality. In Brazil a PGS must conform to a number of strict norms involving farmer organizations in the certification process. This involves a good deal of community reorganization and the mobilization of considerable social capital. The objectives here are to understand how PGSs function, how farmers reorganize themselves in order to make this kind of certification work and how power disputes involving inclusion and exclusion of social actors results in retaking control over production and marketing chains.

As a PGS requires grass roots organization for collective strategy, it may be asked how do small farmers, as individuals and groups, control and guarantee the quality of organic products and how social networks are strengthened and power relationships with regulatory and marketing sectors redefined. As a PGS is viewed to be less costly than third-party certification, another question is whether this system actually presents economic advantages by reducing certification transaction costs.

These issues were investigated for a PGS group of the Association of Biological Farmers of the State of Rio de Janeiro (ABIO) in order to: 1) evaluate adaptations and limitations of small farmer PGSs, 2) show how the ABIO PGS forum arose and evaluate its role in permitting small farmers to adapt to new organic regulations and 3) understand how PGSs depend on prior farmer organization and how at the same time they reinforce local social capital.

Research Methods

Research methods involved tracing the evolution of norms and legislation concerning organic agriculture from 1980 onward, when at the insistence of the organic movement, the first laws were passed regulating the sector, until 2009, when participatory forms of guaranteeing quality arose. There are few academic studies on organic agriculture in Brazil and those that exist are usually of a technical and economic nature and none treat actual farmer behaviour, decision-making processes or their movement for the certification of organic products through participative regulation. So the present research deals with first-hand empirical information.

Apart from some general statistical data at the national level concerning organic agriculture in Brazil and rough estimates provided by non-governmental organizations, information about organic production and farmers has to be obtained directly from farmers and their organizations. This was the case in the present study in which the ABIO was the main source of information. This organic farmer association includes a PGS with 174 members organized in fifteen groups. The most active ABIO-PGS group is located near Rio de Janeiro in Petrópolis municipality and was selected for detailed investigation. The research was undertaken in 2011 and 2012 and relied on data and documents from the ABIO archives, on interviews with its directors responsible for guaranteeing the quality of organic products and on participant observation of PGS farmers of Petrópolis. Five association meetings were attended in order to see how decisions are made and conflicts resolved. The minutes from nineteen meetings were analyzed, including the five meetings attended, in order to check the fidelity of the documents with what actually happened in the meetings. Participation in three certification visits permitted observing the interplay between members when inspecting a farmer's organic methods. Interviews with leaders and with association extension agents had the objective of determining how the association arose, how the quality control mechanisms were developed and how members arrived at agreed-upon technical standards used in inspections.

Losing and Regaining Power in the Regulatory System of Organic Food Production

Organic farmer movements arose over time in different countries of the world in order to pursue technical standards built on trust and product identity with local consumers and to promote the expansion of the production of quality food uncontaminated by agro-chemicals which degrade the environment and cause health problems (Vos, 2000). In the last decade, increasing consumption and distance between farmers and consumers, induced several countries to regulate organic production at the national level and create national organic labels. The basic justification for labelling is that new consumers have no direct knowledge of how food is produced and need to be able to identify legitimate organic products. As organic production increases large agro-food industrial firms have entered the sector and have tried to interfere with regulation in their favour (Eden, 2011; Renard, 2005).

Regulation has assumed the structure of third-party certification, which introduces governmental and non-governmental inspection agencies between farmers and consumers, and so alters the prior relationship of trust and reciprocity which existed between them. Regulation increasingly follows the logic of impersonal capitalist markets in opposition to the “alternative” behaviour of close contact in solidarity markets of the past in which the farmers guaranteed product quality and gained consumer confidence. In third-party regulation organic farmers are excluded from the certification process and because of their self-interest are assumed to be dishonest by nature at the same time that third-party certifiers are thought to be neutral and to defend consumers from unscrupulous farmers who would sell tainted produce (De Masters, 2012; Eden 2011; Vos, 2000).

Consequently, the new system goes against everything the organic movement stood for. Production and marketing always were the responsibility of farmers and they were the ones who first developed general norms which established a balance of collective interests in the certification of their products. In the past no one doubted the honesty of organic farmers who guaranteed produce quality. Indeed, self-regulation involved norms that were highly social and ideological

in nature and not economic or materialist. Organic farmers possessed a mentality alien to mainstream agriculture in which the fear of incurring social stigma for transgressing norms could be much more efficient for curbing fraud than the possibility of imposing economic fines (Michelsen, 2001).

New regulations not only exclude farmers and reduce confidence between social groups but also impose restrictions on production in the form of bureaucracy in the certifying process and the additional cost of paying for third-party certification. The vast majority of organic production is undertaken by family farmers whose operations can be rendered unviable by the new certifying process (Bicalho, 2005; Eden, 2011). It is also naïve to think that third-party certification is merely an uninterested service that protects consumers. As the market for organic food has expanded an enormous power struggle has resulted as firms from the conventional agriculture sector want to seize new market opportunities in the organic-label products sector.

Eden (2011) has argued that regulation and the politics of certification and traceability of eco-label products involve shifting power relations in which consumers are induced to buy only “good” products and this strengthens regulatory and marketing agents to the detriment of farmers. Regulation in its very nature creates a contradiction with the organic movement because “certification does not merely verify and circulate information on labels, but can be used by powerful corporations, especially food manufacturers and retailers, as yet another tool to exploit powerless producers, especially small agricultural business and cooperatives” (Eden, 2011, 174). Giant trans-national corporations, such as Heinz, Danone, Kellogg’s, General Mills, Unilever, Proctor and Gamble, Carrefour, Woolworths and even Coca Cola, saw the opportunity for profits in the expanding organic sector and tried to substitute the objectives of sustainable production of the organic movement with the idea of providing “healthy food” to consumers (Cienfuegos, 2004; Monk, 2011).

This is a direct assault on the organic movement. The process of certification was highjacked in the name of consumer protection. The previous relationship of reciprocity and confidence which existed

between farmers and consumers was replaced by farmers being reduced to mere “suppliers”, who lose their autonomy and decision-making power and cease to be important social actors and agents in green governance.

Power then is the central issue at stake in the institutionalization and regulation of organic certification. Certifiers, accreditation bodies, manufacturers and large-scale retailers penetrate the sector and farmers lose power. PGs arise as grass-roots resistance movements which try to re-empower organic family farmers, but what exactly is empowerment?

Friedmann (1992) proposed empowerment as a tool of alternative development for the poor which permits them to overcome the economic and political exclusion that maintains them in poverty. This kind of development model focuses on families in their pursuit of life and livelihoods and how they dispose of three kinds of power: social, political and psychological. Social power involves information, knowledge, skills, participation in social organizations and financial resources. Through political power family members access processes in which decisions are made concerning their futures, make their voices heard and undertake collective action. Psychological power involves self-confidence and sense of agency resulting from successful action in the social and political domains. The three kinds of power go hand-in-hand so that without one it is difficult to achieve the others. They also must be internalized and cannot be orchestrated by governing elites, which would only be cooption. The exercise of these kinds of power need not be limited to the local community but can be enhanced by external agents, such as NGOs or the State, who may serve as an initial catalyzing force or mediator with other scales of action. This notwithstanding, the local group must assume the central role and the outside agents should only occupy complementary and supportive functions.

For Kaufman (1997), empowerment and participation are the same thing and both represent a goal and a method of change. As a goal, popular participation means that there is no longer a monopoly of power in the hands of a single class, sex, social stratum or bureaucratic elite. Common people are involved in both decision-making and implementation and above all in defining the terms and nature of their participation.

Empowerment is thus a key concept for working with social exclusion. It involves the power of individuals to manage their own lives and communities according to priorities established by them and other individuals fundamentally connected to the community in which they live. It confers power to the powerless, the weak and the poor. As a goal it occurs when a group undertakes its own development, giving rise to new relationships between the members of the group as well as between them and government and institutional agents. For this to happen empowerment depends on the development of individual and collective capacities, which can be enhanced by external agents, facilitators and mediators, but always with popular participation because empowerment is constructed by the people and not conceded to them (Page and Czuba, 1999).

With this in mind it is possible to relate empowerment to building social capital. The capacity of a social group to interact with mediators, institutions and government in order to attain collective goals is related to different kinds of social capital. Woolcock (2001) identified three types of social capital created by a group as its horizons for collective action expand. First of all, participation depends on the internal cohesion of a group working toward common goals, which is bonding social capital, while the relationship developed with mediators and facilitators involves bridging social capital and connectivity between mediators of groups and institutions with national and international organizations is linking social capital.

In power relations surrounding third-party certification, economic interest is disguised by simplistic environmental discourse alien to the organic movement. The organic movement in different countries was based on much more than just the production of healthy food for consumers but also included environmentally friendly farm methods which contributed to improving the quality of life of family farmers. Objectives and aims were established by the farmer organizations and not external agents and this contributed to the development of organic methods better attuned to local environmental and social needs and of products recognized to be different from conventional products so that they better met demand from organic consumer markets.

In other words, through empowerment, farmers became key figures in building capacity and knowledge used in production and marketing organic products. Social movements were the mechanism for transforming social capital into empowerment. As Michelsen (2001) argues, social movements develop self-defining identities, special perceptions and worldviews which are articulated in such a way as to gain general public support and political influence in relation to competing actors, in this case conventional mainstream agriculture and industries. This author highlights the fact that “the influence of a social movement on society therefore depends on its ability to diffuse its values among citizens and decision makers ... in fact organic agriculture has been able to gain political support” (p.67) and this was mobilized against third-party certification.

Third-party certification moved in the opposite direction, disempowering farmers to the benefit of agro-industry, certifiers, accreditation bodies and retail chains. Large industry and commercial firms sought to dominate the negotiations and regulatory mechanisms for certifying organic produce in order to exclude organic farmers from the process. The holistic view of organic production was reduced to the bottom line of mere economic gain under the guise of the alleged quality of the products for consumers.

In reaction, farmers sought out strategies to bypass the contradiction between new regulatory procedures and the organic movement. The fact that the rise of organic food production was the result of social movements which existed forty years prior to national-level, third-party certification meant that farmers were already well organized and capacitated for devising alternative strategies and operational structures such as participatory guarantee systems. The recognition of PGSs by the IFOAM as a legitimate way of guaranteeing quality and the growing number of farmers within these schemes attests to the success of this line of farmer resistance (IFOAM, 2012). Other strategies were also elaborated, such as home delivery, online sales and local fair trade, which bypass the corporate-dominated production and marketing structure. All of the solutions bring farmers and consumers into closer contact again, reinforce

trust and confidence and guarantee the presence of small producers in local and national markets.

Organic Certification and the Rise of the Participatory Guarantee Systems

Organic certification systems were devised in the 1970s and were undertaken by regional organic farming groups in which the producers themselves inspected members of a farm group on a voluntary basis of self-evaluation. Typical small-scale direct marketing schemes arose in which consumers personally knew farmers and may even had had direct contact with production methods on organic farms. With growing demand for organic products, large processing food companies, commercial firms and governments moved to regulate and to mandate certification by third parties, which became a complex and expensive process. Most government regulations follow standards based on third-party certification as initially recommended by the IFOAM. However, it should be remembered that the basic parameters created by the IFOAM were developed by the organic movement as composed by farmer groups from different countries. Eden (2011) also points out that organic certification does not follow norms established by international treaties and that there are different ways of classifying and defining organic production in specific countries and certifying bodies. Despite this, consensus exists concerning basic parameters of the organic movement which are similar and followed around the world.

Norms and institutionalization of organic production undertaken by governments tend to establish rigid national standards implemented by third-party institutions for certification and accreditation. Bowing to commercial and industrial lobbies, which want to dominate the sector and subordinate or eliminate historical organic producers, technical rigor in the classification of what qualifies as organic produce has been relaxed in order to ease agribusiness entry into the sector, as occurred for example in the United States (Morgan and Murdoch, 2000; Vos, 2000) and in Poland (De Master, 2012).

Third-party certification is particularly threatening because it imposes new costs which not all small farmers can meet, especially in countries characterised by great inequality and poverty. Many Brazilian small farmers took up organic production as a specialty niche in which they could compensate their lack of capital with family labour and so be competitive at a time when conventional agribusiness increasingly dominated commodity markets. Bicalho (2005) observed this historical trend in Rio de Janeiro State and Blanc (2009) noted that organic agriculture gave new life to rural communities in São Paulo State. This could all be undone if third-party certification becomes the only way of guaranteeing organic production.

Due to the difficulties which third-party certification poses for small organic farmers, a number of their organizations pressured for participatory guarantee systems, which were eventually recognized by the IFOAM. An important joint workshop organised by the IFOAM and the Latin American and Caribbean Agro-ecological Farming Movement (MAELA) on alternative forms of certification took place in Brazil in 2004. In the meeting shared practices were recognized, which could serve as a common basis for defining participatory guarantee systems as an alternative to third-party certification and these established norms were suggested as guidelines for national organic farming legislation (Feres, 2012; Meirelles, 2010). The workshop coincided with the date of the institutionalization of third-party certification in Brazil and in fact was a reaction to it in an attempt to regain recognition of previous local and group-self-evaluation of organic farmers. Since then the IFOAM has recognized a large number of organic PGS groups and independent farmers across the globe, in countries as different as Bolivia, Brazil, France, India, the Philippines, the United States and Zimbabwe.

Participatory guarantee systems can now be defined as an alternative to expensive third-party organic certification, which involve collective responsibility between stakeholder farmers in order to verify that all members are following proper organic practices. PGSs are thus based on reciprocity and mutual trust and require building considerable social capital and personal networks, which are

mobilized to perform on-farm inspection by commissions composed of volunteer members, who report their findings to the larger group for decisions and actions concerning first certification, continued certification or de-certification of specific farmers. PGSs are usually regulated by national governments but if they so desire they can be directly evaluated and recognized by the IFOAM.

Participatory Guarantee Systems in Brazil

The Brazilian market for organic products is regulated by Law 10831 of 2003, which specifies the technical norms of production and third-party certification as necessary for obtaining an organic label (BRASIL, 2007). This law was created after great controversy arose in 2002 when the Ministry of Agriculture tried to unilaterally impose new regulations merely reproducing norms of international certifiers based solely on third-party certification. This 2003 law included forms of alternative certification closer to prior practice of farmers and their associations which are now regulated by Decree 6323 of December of 2007. One such form of alternative certification permits obtaining an organic label through participatory guarantee systems. The process through which the necessary technical norms for participatory certification were created involved a struggle between the historic organic movement in Brazil and the large corporations which were trying to appropriate organic production. If we look back a bit at the rise and development of organic production in Brazil, we can see how social capital was created and empowerment constructed which allowed organic farmers and their organizations to prevail in this struggle.

Organic certification began in Brazil together with the first local and regional organic farming associations and consumer cooperatives in the 1980s. Articulated in different forums these organizations worked to establish technical norms and quality control in organic agriculture well before the State entered the process. One of the pioneer organizations was the Association of Biological Farmers of the State of Rio de Janeiro (ABIO), which was the first to establish criteria for certifying organic farms and it opened the first organic farm market in Brazil in 1986 (Bicalho, 2005; Meirelles, 2010). In the same year

the Instituto Biodinâmico (IBD) also created rigorous organic norms (Fonseca, 2005). In 1989 the Associação de Agricultura Orgânica (AAO) of São Paulo State was set up and started to register producers for an organic market inaugurated in 1992 and in 1996 it created its own organic label (Souza, 2001).

During the 1990s organic production expanded and the number of farmers increased. Farmers organized themselves in associations similar to small cooperatives with the aim of developing agro-ecological productive systems, guaranteeing product quality and market visibility. Organic production expanded mainly throughout the South of Brazil and there the Rede Ecovida de Agroecologia developed a self-regulation certification system that was to be a model for the PGSs in Brazil and worldwide.

At this time social and political power was in the hands of those who were creating the organic sector and establishing production and certification norms built on their experience. Farmers were the only ones who possessed knowledge of the organic production systems, quality control and consumer habits. As Friedmann (1992) would say they held social and political power and were also active participants in decision-making and implementation, two other important dimensions to empowerment according to Kaufman (1997). But in the early days they were invisible because organic production had a modest participation in the Brazilian food market and was not taken seriously by agronomists and other rural actors. Nevertheless organic production continued to expand and attract consumers in different regions of Brazil.

Parallel to this by the end of the 1990s a few supermarket chains introduced some organic products in stores located in upscale neighbourhoods in the largest cities of Brazil. With these developments farmers and institutions involved in the organic movement started to pressure government for legislation regulating the sector with strict technical standards for production and mechanisms for ascertaining quality so as to prevent fraud from opportunist producers. In addition to this, when Brazil started to export organics international certification bodies pressured for guarantees of quality (Fonseca, 2005).

These demands resulted in establishing national boards together with the Ministry of Agriculture (MAPA) as forums for discussing strategies for certifying organic products. With this the State started to interact directly with the sector and the MAPA published Norm 7 of 1999 which established national technical parameters for production, processing, packing and transport of organics (Brasil, 1999). Medaets and Fonseca (2005) argue that this document was the “possible consensus” reached between the interested parties because of the active participation of civil society and the State acted as a partner and not as a sole agent.

With Norm 7, certifiers, who were almost all farmer associations at the time, could establish procedures for guaranteeing organics which had a legal basis for marketing throughout Brazil. This was an important gain because most Brazilian organic production was food for the domestic market even if a large international market for all types of products with organic labels was anticipated for the future. By 2000 only two Brazilian associations certified at the national and international levels: the Instituto Bio-Dinâmico (IBD) and the Associação de Agricultura Orgânica (AAO). However, beginning in 2000 a number of international certification organizations decided to set up subsidiaries in Brazil with the expectation that they could export produce: Ecocert from France in 2000, Organización Internacional Agropecuaria (OIA) from Argentina and the Institut für Markökologie from Switzerland, both established in 2001 and the Farm Verified Organic (FVO) from the United States in 2002 (Feres, 2012).

In 2003 the scenario for organic farming in Brazil changed radically with Federal Law 10831 banning association certification and requiring third-party certification, which small farmers could not afford. Their associations also had great difficulty in reorganizing their administrative structure in order to meet the demands of ISO 65 which was now required for accreditation of certifiers by the Brazilian national institute of standards INMETRO.

The new law threatened to reverse the course of the development of organics in Brazil by disempowering producers from decision-making concerning productive and marketing regulation, by usurping

their knowledge built up over the years and by reducing the scope for participative actions. For Friedmann (1992) one of the pillars of empowerment is psychological power, which he defined as self-confidence and sense of agency acquired in successful participative collective endeavours, an emphasis on participation which is also present in other definitions of empowerment, such as those formulated by Kaufman (1997) and Page and Czuba (1999). It was exactly the prior experience in collective participation and accumulated social capital constructed over decades, which between 2003 and 2007 enabled the organic movement to react and demand clear instructions for implementing participatory certification. The outcome was Decree 6323 of December 2007 which permitted participatory guarantee systems in Brazil and gave the farm associations two years to implement the systems. Different mechanisms of quality control for organic products in Brazil were consolidated when the Ministry of Agriculture published Norm 19 of 2009 (Brasil, 2009).

However, this does not mean that the PGSs which arose were mere products of the unbridled interests of farmers and their associations. To the contrary, the decree calls for systems demanding strict collective controls and internal inspections undertaken by associations in order to gain an organic label and the concession of the latter involves direct inspection of the associations and surprise check inspections on specific farms by the Ministry of Agriculture. All of this required a good deal of reorganization and adaptation of farmer groups in which farmers had to collectively develop new managerial and administrative capacities. The case of the Association of Biological Farmers of the State of Rio de Janeiro (ABIO) provides a good example of how farmers have adapted to the new national organic regulations.

From Association to Participatory Certified Organization – ABIO-OPAC

The Association of Biological Farmers of Rio de Janeiro state (ABIO) was founded in 1984 and is the oldest organic farmer association in Brazil. Over the years its objectives have been to bring dispersed

organic farmers in the state into a collective group for developing organic methods, improving product quality, creating marketing channels and developing organic standards following IFOAM guidelines.

There are three kinds of members in the association: 1) producers with a farmer background who bring agricultural experience to the association, 2) ex-urbanite farmers who have technical and managerial experience as well as contacts with governmental agencies and 3) city people with second houses in the countryside who participate and encourage local organic production.

These different backgrounds produced a fusion of interests and experience in the form of a network which created considerable bridging and linking social capital. Together the members developed knowledge and skills for organic production and for accessing external governmental and non-governmental organizations in order to achieve their aims. Through this network the association has been able to mobilize three of the four types of knowledge cited by Morgan and Murdoch (2000: 159-160) as being fundamental for innovation: *know what* (information), *know how* (technical skills) and *know who* (social skills). Social skills are particularly important for gaining access to information about who knows what and who knows how. The fourth type *know why* is scientific knowledge which did not exist and arose afterward when researchers became interested in the know how of organic farmers and started to interact with them.

Until 2003 the ABIO guaranteed organic production for consumers who lived in the city of Rio de Janeiro and created an identity for the organic farmers of the state. Federal mandated third-party certification shook the organization to its roots because its work with production quality had to be separated from that involved with certification. One reaction was to attempt to attain a viable scale of operations necessary for third-party certification. The ABIO, together with three other organic farmers associations of the South-east (the Associação de Agricultura Natural de Campinas e Região, Chão Vivo and Minas Orgânica) tried to set up a joint certification agency called REBRAC. When this scheme did not work out the ABIO took another line of action and became a Participatory Evaluation of Conformity Organization (OPAC). In this

way it could still legally operate as a farmer association and also certify a PGS created within the ABIO-based local groups.

The administrative reorganization separated the different activities of the ABIO as a farm association forum from its work as a PGS forum. Today there are 174 members who work in fifteen PGS groups. Participation and decision making takes place at two levels. At the local level within PGS groups specific issues are treated concerning certification on member farms and at the state level the ABIO acts as a forum for meetings of representatives from all of the PGS groups in which issues affecting collective action are treated. This system has proved to be efficient and has maintained contact between members and groups as well as guaranteeing external credibility.

The PGS group of Petrópolis has 40 members and is the largest and best organized of the ABIO PGS groups so that it serves as a model for the others in the state. The PGS has three different functions: monthly meetings in which all members must attend and two types of participatory guarantee verification. One type involves a verification commission consisting of four farmers and a facilitator extension agent, who directly check the practice of six farmers per year so that after six years all farmers receive full inspections. New members nominated by an existing member also undergo full inspections. The other farmers receive peer verification from a fellow farmer at least once a year, who makes a written report using criteria based on internal norms of the PGS which in turn are based on Ministry of Agriculture directives for PGSs (Feres, 2012).

All members convened in the monthly meetings analyze the two kinds of inspection reports, vote on approving, making suggestions or rejecting reports and in the case of continued disobedience vote on excluding members from the group. New members are also closely screened in these meetings to make sure that they will follow the rules properly. PGS members take these functions very seriously because one bad farmer can destroy their collective reputation and consequently consumer trust in the quality of their produce. The Ministry of Agriculture occasionally undertakes surprise visits to specific farms to check the efficiency of the system and this was confirmed in interviews with farmers who had received such visits. Under the new system

local groups became internally better knit through participation in frequent mandatory meetings which members cannot shirk attending. In addition, via the ABIO, a good deal of exchange of experiences between different local groups from across the state takes place in the attempt to attune new participatory practices.

Without doubt the monetary expense with the PGS is lower than third-party certification, basically the cost of the association membership fee. However, the savings in financial costs come at a social cost, i.e. time spent in meetings and visits. But meetings are not just spent discussing certification. The meetings also have their technical and social functions of exchanging information and news between neighbours and friends, which is a less traumatic experience than being grilled by an automatically suspicious outside auditor doing conventional third-party certification. Therefore, the nature of transaction costs has shifted from being monetary in third-party certification to being time spent in meetings, which is more constructive. The PGS also caused farmers to develop their own direct marketing channels independent of exploitive supermarkets through home delivery, street markets, markets located on university or government grounds and even in large residential condominiums.

Conclusion

The rise of participatory guarantee systems in Brazil demonstrates how well organized organic farmers were able to react to and resist attempts to de-power them through new legislation demanding third-party certification. When threatened with losing control over productive and marketing phases in organic agriculture the movement reacted and mobilized different types of social capital created over time at the local, regional and national levels in Brazil in order to create an alternative form of self-regulation through participatory guarantee systems.

Active participation and organization of organic farmers were the key to retaining power which was brought to bear on government demanding changes in the new legislation in order to include PGSs in the certification process. These were built on previous forms of self-regulation based on trust involving image and identity of organic agriculture constructed over

time which were already successfully diffused in civil society. With PGSs, prior forms of self-regulation undertaken by organic farm associations were adapted to the new certification context by grafting long-standing social norms on to mechanisms which clearly guarantee product quality. The proper functioning of social norms controlling group behaviour is central to participatory guaranteed quality in which the image of the group is used to pressure individual farmers to conform. Specific farmers who do not conform are given a further chance to rehabilitate themselves but if they do not they can be excluded in order to preserve the reputation of the group.

The new system required restructuring associations into separate interconnected sectors with different attributes and functions. One sector continues the historic role of associations in offering extension services, elaborating joint projects and managing external relations with other actors and agents. The second sector is directly engaged in guaranteeing collective quality through the mechanism of the specific PGSs. The first sector involves bridging and linking social capital when the association interacts with other Brazilian organic groups and external NGO and GO agents. The PGS sector is based on bonding social capital mobilized specifically in certification. Bridging social capital is also present when the ABIO connects different PGS groups in the state and unites the two sectors of the association.

The strong reaction to third-party certification was also based on economic considerations, especially the high cost of external auditing. Participatory guarantee systems involve lower monetary cost than third-party certification because in the latter on-farm inspection is paid for and the travel expenses of the auditor must be covered. The impersonal nature of external auditing is also disagreeable because the process is not constructive. The auditor merely determines whether according to a predetermined check list the methods used are correct or not, approved or rejected, in which case the farmer loses his organic label. PGSs on the other hand are constructive in nature because they allow for correction, refinement and innovation in farmer practice.

Participatory guarantee systems by contrast involve the basic cost of membership in the association and inspections are far less traumatic

than external auditing. However, lower monetary transaction costs are substituted by higher social transaction costs in the form of attending frequent meetings and verification visits but these also have a social side. Greater work is involved with inspecting other farms but this can also be an occasion for trading experience. However, taking into account all of the work involved and time spent in self-regulation, production and direct marketing, the end result can be an excessive work load, which can negatively affect personal involvement and social cohesion of the group.

Because of the legislation certification is very complex and bureaucratic, even for PGSs. A good deal of paper work is required which farmers are not used to doing. Management skills are needed and bureaucratic transaction costs are incurred, which may be the most problematic aspect of PGSs. Farmers have to learn how to do systematic accounting and paper work filling in numerous government forms. The majority of organic producers in Brazil are small farmers who do not have high educational attainment and consequently have great difficulty with bureaucracy, which can create serious barriers to maintaining their operations.

In sum, participatory guarantee systems represented a victory for the organic movement in Brazil. The movement was able to adapt itself to the changed context of new laws of certification and reached a compromise with external agents and the government concerning self-regulation. At the same time, the farmers guaranteed their autonomy vis-à-vis commercial certifiers and different agribusiness sectors. However, the future of organic farmers depends on strengthening their organizations in order to overcome two latent problems: 1) excessive work and 2) administrative bureaucracy imposed by the regulation process which is ultimately controlled by the State.

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Conflict Associated with an Alternative Land Use: Irish Experience

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Introduction

Many areas of the European countryside, especially in mountainous and more remote locations, have gradually ceased to function as productive agricultural landscapes over time. The reasons are several and include: changing market conditions; decline in the economically active population through prolonged outmigration and falling natural increase; and the reduced intensity of land use arising from reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) since the 1980s. Mountainous and remote areas have, however, acquired new use values as recreational locales, in response to increased interest internationally in health and outdoor activities (Pigram and Jenkins 2006). Access for recreation differs between countries according to the legislative basis of land ownership and practice relating to entering privately owned property. In some instances rights of access to unenclosed landscapes and forests are long-established through custom, as in the case of *allemansträtten* (everyman's right) in the Scandinavian countries. In other countries such as England, Scotland and Wales such rights have been introduced through legislation (Keirle 2002). In yet other countries, accessing privately owned land for recreational purposes, including walking, hiking and mountaineering, is the focus of conflict arising from private property rights. This is particularly the case in Ireland. Although recreational use of land has been advocated as part of farm diversification strategies during the past two decades in Ireland, and walking per se is promoted as a tourist activity, gaining access to both upland and lowland areas has proven problematic (Buckey et al. 2009a; Cawley 2010). Finding a

resolution to the problem involved landowners, recreationists, the state and its agencies and extensive debate over almost a decade before an interim solution was brokered. This chapter analyses that debate as a conflict between two different approaches to control over land use; namely, the absolute right of owners to exclude noninvitees, on one hand, and attempts to establish a right of access to certain areas of land for recreational walking and hiking (and mountaineering), on the other.

Walking and hiking increased in importance in Ireland as tourism activities during the 2000s: visitors who spent at least 24 hours in the state who reported hiking or hill walking during their visit increased from 207,000 in 2002 to 335,000 in 2007 (Fáilte Ireland 2007). The Irish upland landscape, which does not in any place exceed 1100 metres above sea level, is viewed by the national tourism development authority, Fáilte Ireland (2005), as providing considerable potential to attract increased numbers of tourists interested in outdoor recreation. Opportunities for independent walking and hiking are promoted as part of holidaying in Ireland, as are specific walking holidays. Recreational walking among day visitors also increased substantially from the 1990s, most notably on the southern fringe of Dublin city where the Wicklow Uplands Council (2007) negotiated access with landholders through partnership agreements. Publicly owned land provides the largest resource for walking and hiking in the state in the form of 11 forest parks, six national parks, and 8000km of forest roads and 150 sites owned by the state forestry company (*Coillte* meaning woods), the towpaths of canals, National Waymarked Ways (NWWs) and looped walks. The NWWs cover some 3000km of public roads and private land (Figure 1). Research shows, however, that recreational walkers and tourists wish to access open and upland landscapes which the state forests, dominated by sitka spruce, do not provide (Fáilte Ireland 2005). Also, demand exists for off-road access which the NWWs do not deliver fully because parts of the longer routes are usually along minor roadways. Hence, there has been increased discussion around access to the countryside.

and hikers and a range of institutions engaged in rural development and in tourism support and promotion in various ways (e.g., farmer and walker representative organizations and state agencies). The main sources used are publications and web sites of the stakeholders and articles and letters published in *The Irish Times*, the newspaper of record in Ireland. Some 200 separate articles, editorials and letters were analysed thematically dealing mainly with the years 2000-2010, only a small selection of which are included here. All of the articles were summarised and attributed to their source and entered into an Excel data base. Analysis was conducted by correspondent and stakeholder group with reference to the content of the arguments forwarded, their evolution over time and the social, economic and political contexts in which they were framed. The chapter begins by discussing property as a construct before engaging with the particular circumstances that gave rise to conflict between landowners and recreationists in Ireland from the late 1990s, the form that this conflict assumed and the strategies that were used to find resolutions.

Access to the countryside in context: the role of property rights

Blomley (2005) urged geographers to remember property rights when discussing land use and his admonition is particularly apposite in the case of access to private land for recreational purposes. Land may be defined as a good or resource which is subject to control in a range of ways which confer rights of use and rights to exclude others from usage which are usually enshrined in the law of a country. According to Sandberg (2007) there are four logical types of goods or resources which arise from the feasibility or costs of exclusion and the jointness of use. All four types are pertinent in the context of recreation: "(i) private goods, where exclusion of users is feasible and the use is subtractible (e.g., privately owned land where damage may be caused by a trespasser); (ii) toll or club goods, where exclusion of users is feasible but where the good or the service is enjoyed jointly with others, without one person's use affecting other persons' use (e.g., a golf club); (iii) commonpool

resources, where exclusion of users is infeasible or costly, but where the good or the services are subtractible, so that one person's use... is affecting other persons' use (e.g., commonly-owned land); (iv) public goods, where exclusion of users is infeasible or unacceptable and where the joint use of the good or the service is without problems" (e.g., state-owned parks and nature reserves) (Sandberg 2007: 618).

Sandberg (2007) further refers to the modalities of power involved in delivering goods and services which also apply in the case of land. Private use and the right of exclusion are usually supported by the authority of the law. In the case of a toll or club resource, access may be negotiated with the owners through payment of a fee (market arrangements). Common-pool resources are owned and used jointly but may be subject to the 'tragedy of the commons'; all owners are responsible for maintenance of the quality of the resource but in reality no one may be willing to take responsibility to undertake this task (Hardin 1968). Publicly-owned resources are freely available but their use is regulated by the state and its agencies. The capacity to exercise influence over land use involves the exercise of power. According to Giddens (1993) an understanding of power requires an analysis of the organization of resources and their interaction with structural principles, institutions, practices and agency. To quote Woods (1997: 457), "power cannot simply be derived from control over resources. It comes from manipulating relations, being able to use others' influence and, most significantly, power is discursively constructed". The ways in which property ownership in Ireland is discursively constructed and its implications for access are discussed in the next section.

Property ownership in Ireland and access to the Irish countryside during the 1990s

Ireland differs from many other European countries because there is no automatic right to roam in the countryside and landowners have a right to exclude uninvited visitors from their property, except providers of essential state services (e.g., water and electricity) where access must be permitted. Furthermore, strong sentiments of attachment to

control over land exist which must be understood in the context of the history of accession to ownership. Until the end of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries most landholders in Ireland were tenants at will of the landlord. During the period of the Great Famine of the mid-nineteenth century, in particular, dispossession for nonpayment of rent was common and short leases were the norm. At the end of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century, through a series of Land Acts, the British Parliament purchased most of the former estates from the owners and subdivided the land into smaller holdings (Gunnane and Miller 1997). These holdings were allocated to the former tenants who acquired ownership through paying annuities in place of rents. Article 43 of the 1932 Constitution of Ireland stipulates rights of property and “acknowledges a natural right, antecedent to positive law, to the private ownership of external goods” (Southerland 1984: 35). Thus, the common law of Ireland does not recognise a ‘right to roam’ as exists in many other countries. Most land in Ireland is privately-owned and entry without the permission of the owner constitutes ‘trespass’ which is actionable in law.

Rights of way across the property of others, which are of particular importance in accessing the countryside for recreation in England, have existed in Ireland in the past where fragmented plots were amalgamated to create consolidated farms. When some plots remained separate from the new farms, access was provided to the plot or plots across other farms. Thus ‘rights of way’ became established through regular use. Many of these rights of way became extinguished over time through nonuse, particularly in mountainous and coastal areas where population decline has taken place over many decades (Buckley et al. 2009b). In 2004 a member of the Green Party, which was then a member of the government, introduced a Bill in the Dáil (the lower house of parliament) to have rights of way included in all county development plans, as a method of retaining existing access rights. The bill was defeated mainly because of the uncertainty relating to where such rights actually exist (O’Halloran 2004a, b).

In the absence of a network of rights of way, access for walkers and hikers was provided during the 1990s through payments made

to farmers for recreational purposes through the agri-environmental scheme known as the Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS), introduced as part of the 1992 reform of the CAP. Some 300 landowners, mainly located in coastal areas of the southwest and the west, benefited from the scheme from 1994 to 1999 (MacConnell 2003). An *Occupiers' Liability Act 1995* was introduced by the Irish government to clarify the responsibilities of landowners to visitors whom they might permit to enter their property under the REPS arrangements (Government of Ireland 1995). The duty owed to recreational users (present for recreational purposes) and trespassers (persons other than visitors or recreationists) is defined as, "a duty (a) not to injure the person or damage the property of the person intentionally, and (b) not to act with reckless disregard for the person or property of the person". Interpreting the duty of care is, of course, subject to legal judgement which was viewed by landowners as a source of uncertainty. Landowners who became involved in what were known as National Waymarked Ways (NWWs) under REPS, or other arrangements brokered by local development groups, were indemnified against claims for injuries usually through the local authority. However, the increased access established in the 1990s did not meet the desire of some walkers and hikers to roam in the countryside more generally, and concerned individuals and groups established an organization known as Keep Ireland Open (KIO) in 1994 to pursue three aims: "to achieve a network of well-marked, maintained rights of way in lowland areas to allow short walks and to reach open ground; to gain freedom to roam over rough grazing land, that is about 7 percent of the total land area; and to minimize barbed wire fencing in mountain areas, as it is visually intrusive and severely hinders walkers" (KIO 2007).

From access to acrimony

The decade from 1998 until 2008 was marked by considerable acrimony between landowners and farmer representative groups, on one hand, and KIO, on the other, which focused on the right to exclude walkers from private property. A number of events were of particular importance in this context. Closure of access to areas of coast in the

southwest and west of Ireland followed the withdrawal of payments for provision of recreational access at the end of the first phase of the REPS programme in 1998 (Emerson and Gillmor 1999). The farmer representative groups sought to have the payments assumed by the Irish state and lobbied in that regard using the withdrawal of access in areas of high amenity as a bargaining point, although access continued to be provided in many other areas along NWWs (MacConnell 2003). KIO became increasingly active in targeting the closed routes to highlight what they viewed as the unreasonable attitudes of farmers. Because of the more confrontational approach being adopted, the Mountaineering Council of Ireland (MCI, now known as Mountaineering Ireland), the representative body for hill walkers and climbers in Ireland, withdrew from membership of KIO in 2002.

Because of ongoing dissatisfaction relating to accessing private land for walking and the obvious implications for tourist numbers, the government minister with responsibility for rural affairs sought to negotiate a settlement. The issue was assigned as a responsibility to an Agri-Tourism Strategy Group established by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRGA) in March 2003; the group included the farmer representatives, tourism and recreational interests and the national training and employment agency which administered social employment schemes (MacConnell 2003). One of its objectives was to consider measures to provide payments to farmers for the maintenance of walkways under existing social employment schemes. An All Party Committee, established in 2003 to consider Articles in the Constitution on the protection of private property, also included access to land for recreational purposes in its remit and sought submissions from the public. In 2004 the Council for the Countryside (*Comhairle na Tuaithe*- CnaT) was established with representatives of eighteen membership organisations which had interests relating to agriculture, forestry, angling, heritage, tourism, walking, planning and development and the recreational use of the countryside more generally. It was assigned three priority issues: "(i) access to the countryside; (ii) developing a countryside code; (iii) developing a countryside recreation strategy" (CnaT 2006: 4). CnaT published its *National*

Countryside Recreation Strategy in 2006. This recognised that no one solution was applicable to solve issues of access because of varying local circumstances. It recommended, however, that on NWWs and walks managed by local action groups “landowners should be given the opportunity to benefit financially from participation in providing countryside recreation” (ibid: 13). It was further recommended that landowners who were not already covered by the existing insurance policy in place on NWWs should be indemnified against the risk of claims from recreational users of their land (ibid: 14).

In 2006 also a Supreme Court judgement over-ruled an earlier High Court decision to award compensation to a tourist who injured her ankle on private property, a judgement that was viewed as offering reassurance to landowners about the responsibility of the walker as well as the property owner (Binchy 2005/06) (although the issue of liability continued to be used by farmers as an argument against permitting access). The duty owed by the occupier to (invited) visitors was described as being the “common duty of care” as specified in the *Occupiers Liability Act 1995*. In determining whether an occupier has acted with reckless disregard, regard is had to “all the circumstances of the case” which include the “conduct of the person and the care which he or she may be reasonably expected to take for his or her own safety” (DCRGA 2007: 16). In 2007 an Expert Group established by the government to report on the legal issues surrounding land access for recreational purposes did not view the property rights of landowners as being threatened by permitting access and proposed collective rights of access, in essence a ‘right to roam’ on uncultivated land, with provision for recompense when pathways had to be provided across enclosed land (DCRGA 2007).

Throughout 2007 extensive consultation took place with the farming representative groups to seek to broker a solution to attain access for walking and hiking. The main farming representative group, the Irish Farmers Association (IFA), in particular continued to seek payment for access whilst the Minister for CRGA was unwilling to cede to this request. The Irish Country Milk Suppliers Association was willing to enter into a licensing agreement for payment as long as

assurances were given that the property rights of their members were protected. Eventually the IFA agreed to accept payment for maintenance of walkways (up to a maximum of €2900 per annum per person) instead of payments for access provision, and a Walks Scheme was launched on March 4, 2008 (DCRGA 2008: 7). The conditions of this scheme now apply to 20 National NWWs and 20 looped walks developed by Fáilte Ireland as well as other priority walks that traverse both public and private lands. The development and monitoring of the pathways is overseen by The Irish Sports Council (2006) and the scheme is implemented in collaboration with local integrated development companies. At the end of 2010, there were 1804 landholders involved; for budgetary reasons there was no expansion of the scheme in 2011, the most recent year for which information is available (DECLG 2013).

Debates surrounding access to the Irish countryside for walking and hiking

Woods (1997) has referred to power as being discursively constructed. In the case of access to private land for walking and hiking in Ireland, the two main stakeholders appealed, respectively, to two different constructs – the right to control access to private property (based in the constitution) and the right to gain access to that property (based on practice in other countries, the common good and support of landowners through subsidies from the public purse). Both sides wished to gain public support for their respective stances, particularly the representatives of walkers and hikers, and they targeted the print media towards this end. *The Irish Times* provides one of the most comprehensive sources of information in this regard. The contributions discussed are those of the farmer representatives, representatives of the MCI, journalists who were either neutral reporters or had a personal interest in walking and hiking, and KIO.

Following the removal of payment for access to land for recreational purposes from the REPS provisions in 1999, farmers sought payments from the state and some access routes were closed in scenic areas which provoked protests from KIO. In response, the farmer representative

organisations and particularly the IFA appealed to their constitutional right to exclude uninvited visitors, to the possibility of liability for accidents, damage to their property and loss of privacy (Devlin 2000; Dillon 2005a). They also pointed to overemphasis by KIO on a limited number of areas where access had been denied, following the cessation of REPS payments, and lack of attention to the more extensive collaboration that was in place with walking groups in many areas of countryside (Dillon 2005b). By 2006, discussion was in train for two years through CnaT, of which the farming groups were members, without progress being made on providing access. The lack of progress was considered to be damaging to tourism by more neutral observers, including the Editor of *The Irish Times* (Editorial 2006), who called for legislation to introduce a right to roam in the countryside. The MCI, which had been sympathetic to the concerns of farmers (O'Keffe 2004), also expressed the view in June 2006 that unless the latter were willing to engage in a partnership approach, legislative change would be necessary (Lynam 2006). More generally, refusal to accept the reassurance given by the ruling of the Supreme Court in 2006 relating to the duty of care of the walker on property was viewed negatively. The income subsidies which they received were highlighted increasingly also and their reluctance to contribute to society in return. In response to an increasing lack of support for their cause, the representatives of the IFA began to show willingness to provide access in return for payment but continued to express concerns relating to diminution of property rights (Walsh 2007). In the event, the IFA delayed, for almost a year, the introduction of the Walks Scheme, based on payment for maintenance of access routes, when other members of CnaT had agreed to its conditions. They succeeded, however, in getting strong legal assurances that their right of exclusion would not be diminished and attained the maximum possible compensation, in the circumstances, for the maintenance of walks. They also obtained the right to withdraw access with six months' notice.

KIO's members include individuals, local groups and a number of national organizations with vested interests in the outdoors and recreation. In letters to the editor of *The Irish Times* in 2001 the officers

of KIO listed walks from which access had been withdrawn in the southwest and west of Ireland (Herman 2001, 2002). They also repeatedly referred to walkers going to Wales and Scotland because of lack of access in Ireland and the loss of revenue that was taking place as a result. Their chairman in 2002 called for a complete network of rights of way, pointed out that it was not usual to pay for access in other European countries and that the government should “get all of the stakeholders around the table to negotiate” (Garland 2002: 15). The establishment of CnaT in 2004 met this request. In 2004 the chair of KIO became increasingly critical of the MCI in pursuing a partnership approach with farmers (Herman 2004). During 2005 farmers’ obligations arising from subsidies received from the public purse became a recurring theme in letters to the editor of *The Irish Times* (for example, Herman 2005). In July 2006, there was welcome for the MCI’s recommendation that legislation should be introduced, if a partnership approach with farmers did not solve the access problem, accompanied by a threat to the government that KIO would “make this an election issue” (Garland 2006: 15). Even after the introduction of the Walks Scheme in March 2008, KIO continued to refer to access not being universally available, a lack of footbridges and signposts and a need for legislation in that regard (Garland 2010). This continued to be their position in early 2013 (<http://www.keepirelandopen.org/>).

Discussion and conclusion

Tourism is frequently advocated as an alternative source of income in lagging rural areas undergoing processes of economic restructuring. Yet the transition to tourism, as part of a multifunctional approach to land use, is not unproblematic. Recent experience in Ireland, where walking and hiking are being actively promoted as tourism pursuits, illustrates some of the difficulties that can arise in affording access to land for recreation in areas where private property ownership dominates. Areas of public land and marked walking trails are limited in extent and some of the landscapes that are most attractive to walkers in mountainous and coastal districts remain in private or communal ownership. Agreements to provide permissive access were negotiated

through an agri-environmental programme, REPS, during the 1990s and between walking clubs, local tourism groups and private landowners on a piecemeal basis. By the late 1990s payments were no longer available through REPS, demand for access was increasing and a more integrated approach was required. Tension had emerged between two groups in particular, farmers and KIO which represents a range of stakeholders with vested interests in recreational walking in the countryside. It was suggested here that this tension reflects two discourses of power relations that pertain to property: control over land which resides with owners whose rights are supported by the authority of law, and the exercise of attempts to undermine that control by appealing to practice elsewhere, the common good and responsibility to reciprocate for the subsidies received. The central state, through the department that had responsibility for rural development at the time, established a special countryside council which provided a forum for discussion where the competing interests were represented through which an agreement was eventually brokered after four years. The Walks Scheme introduced in March 2008 provides for access to an increased number of NWWs and looped walks in return for payments for maintenance and is subject to renegotiation in 2013. The Irish experience illustrates vividly the validity of Blomley's (2005: 125) advice to "Remember Property".

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The Changing Functions of Low-Density Territories in Central Portugal

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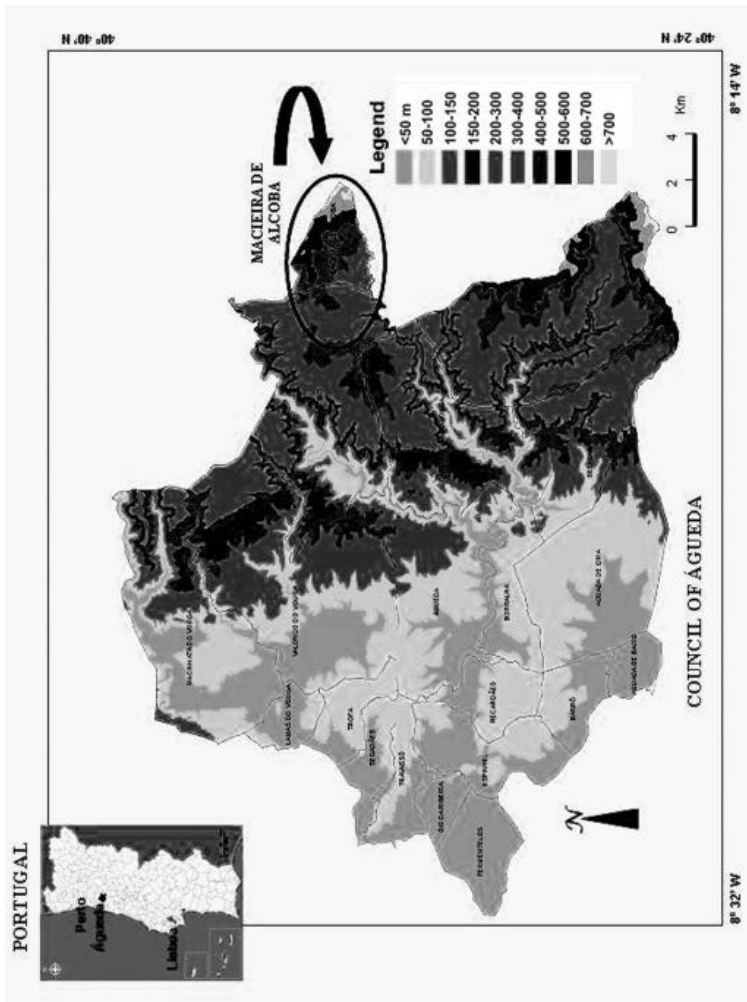
Introduction

The geography of low density territories has undergone significant change resulting from new dynamics of regional transformation which have contributed to a process of territorial restructuring. This process involves partnerships between local people, governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations which enable these territories to develop positive dynamics (Azevedo, 2010; Baleiras, 2011; Covas, 2011; MADRP, 2009).

The case study presented here of Macieira de Alcoba parish located in a mountainous area of central Portugal is undoubtedly an example of positive territorial restructuring, even if local demographic structure has suffered from population loss and ageing. Although this area has few people living there today it is dynamic. Access routes have been improved, which has encouraged second homes and the renovation of historic buildings. Its natural landscapes can now be appreciated along new hiking trails and other rural tourism facilities, which have attracted visitors from surrounding cities so that the village has become a dynamic tourist hub for urban people who consume its rural culture. Numerous events promote natural heritage, religious celebrations of local identities and memories, and gastronomy, which have boosted sustainable development.

Local and municipal authorities have been essential to the success of these new dynamics who together with the local people formed public-private partnerships and non-governmental organisations to safeguard highland culture. This contributed to increasing the parish's attractiveness and to reinventing local rurality in a way so as to stem population loss. The objective here is to show how spatial governance can contribute to promoting processes of social innovation and new mechanisms for cooperation among local actors and so enhance integrated development in low density rural territories (Azevedo, 2010).

Figure 6.1. Location of the parish of Macieira de Alcoba and altitude variation in the Águeda Council Area.



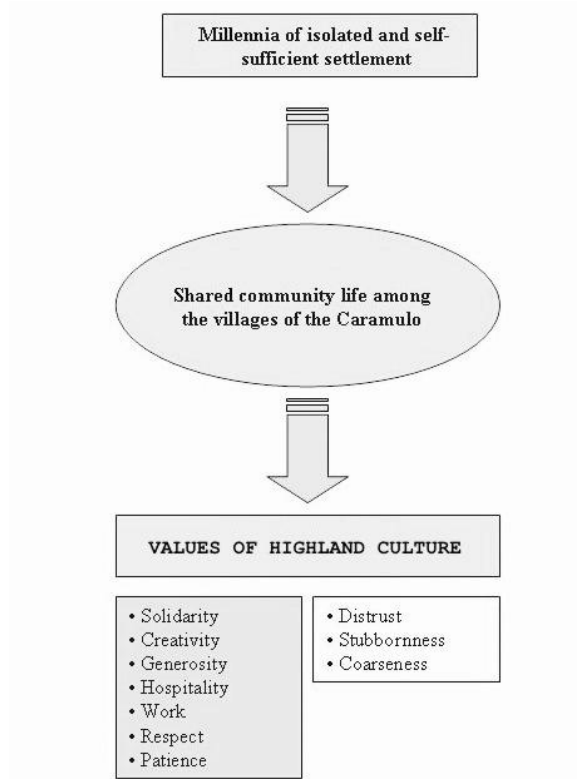
Source: <http://www.cm-agueda.pt>

The Setting of the Parish of Macieira de Alcoba,
Council of Águeda – Portugal

Macieira de Alcoba is one of the easternmost parishes of the Águeda Council Area (Figure 1). It is located on the western slopes of the foothills of the Serra do Caramulo between the Águeda and

Alfusqueiro valleys. Águeda is the nearest town located at a distance of twenty-five kilometres.

Figure 6.2. Highland cultural values in the villages of the Caramulo mountains.



Source: Associação Etnográfica Os Serranos (2010).

Located in central Portugal, the Serra do Caramulo is 30 kilometres long and stretches NNW/SSE, parallel to the coastline, with a maximum height of 1,071 metres. Its slopes have distinctive geomorphological features which influence human settlement. The geomorphological features of the western slope of the Caramulo, where Macieira de Alcoba is located, with steep slopes and lack of arable terraces, is an impressive failure escarpment that explains the relative isolation of countless rural micro clusters (Associação Etnográfica Os Serranos, 2010). For centuries this isolation

has instilled a community spirit of solidarity and values which created a highland culture (Figure 2). Their almost exclusive dependence on farming the land led them to be frugal with natural and produced resources.

The parish of Macieira de Alcoba covers an area of about 9.39 km² and is formed by four villages: Macieira de Alcoba, Carvalho, Ribeiro and Urgueira. The latter is situated at the highest altitude and is the westernmost village of the parish. Convex slopes close to 20° prevail and altitude ranges from 180 metres near the Águeda River to 762 metres in the hills of Urgueira (Figure 1). Fertile humid cambisols are found in the area of Macieira de Alcoba. With a Coastal North Atlantic climate, winters present minimum temperatures between 2°C and 4°C and minimum temperatures are below 0°C during fifteen to thirty days. In summer, the maximum temperature ranges from 23°C to 29°C. Rainfall occurs mainly in autumn and winter and annual precipitation is 1,883.5 mm (Ferreira and Coelho, 1995).

The natural mountain vegetation consists of tree species such as oaks (*Quercus faginea*), cork oaks (*Quercus suber*) and chestnut trees (*Castanea sativa*), while the shrub vegetation is mainly formed by broom (*Genista monspessulana*), *carqueja* [a flowering bush plant] (*Chamaespartium tridentatum*), heather (*Erica arborea*), gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) and ferns (*Pteridium aquilinum*), among others. During the second half of the 20th century, new species were introduced in the area. Reforestation campaigns fostered by the Estado Novo regime in Portugal in the 1940s introduced maritime pine (*Pinus pinaster*) and later in the 1970s eucalyptus trees (*Eucalyptus globulus*) which, because of the more frequent occurrence of forest fires, increasingly took over.

Table 1 shows the evolution of the population in Macieira de Alcoba from the 20th Century to date, highlighting a process of depopulation in the village after the Second World War. Significant out-migration to the coastal cities and abroad occurred, where economic development in northern Europe and North America attracted Portuguese workers.

The preliminary data of the 2011 population census shows that there are 84 residents in Macieira de Alcoba, which, according to the

data in Table 1, means a decrease in population of about 23.6% since the last census. The current age structure (Table 2) reveals an aging population, with the age group of those over 65 corresponding to 62% of the resident population. In addition to elderly farmers who did not emigrate, other older people are returning emigrants who retire and go back to their place of origin.

Table 6.1. Evolution of the population of Macieira de Alcoba from the 20th century to present.

| Year | Population |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 1900 | 328 |
| 1911 | 339 |
| 1920 | 305 |
| 1930 | 315 |
| 1940 | 356 |
| 1950 | 350 |
| 1960 | 311 |
| 1970 | 236 |
| 1981 | 177 |
| 1991 | 167 |
| 2001 | 110 |
| 2011 | 84 |

Source: INE. General Population Census.

Table 6.2. Age structure of the population of Macieira de Alcoba in 2011.

| Age group | Men | Women | Total |
|------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| 0 – 14 years | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| 15 – 24 years | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 25 – 64 years | 10 | 17 | 27 |
| + 65 years | 24 | 28 | 52 |
| Total | 38 | 46 | 84 |

Source: General Population Census (preliminary data), INE (2011).

Features of Macieira de Alcoba in the 20th Century

During the 20th Century and especially after 1960, new activities were introduced with the intention of promoting economic development in highland villages. The introduction of eucalyptus trees was one such innovation which distorted rural space by replacing pine trees and so causing an imbalance in forestry. The lack of roads, electricity and the isolation in which they lived caused younger residents to move to the coastal cities or abroad in search of a better quality of life and this depopulated the villages.

The almost total absence of local communication infrastructures with the outside world helped to preserve the community way of life and self-sufficiency of this mountain parish. It should be noted that the only road passing through the parish, the EN230, linking Águeda and Talhadas, was paved in the 1970s and 1980s, and the electricity grid, installed after the communication routes, only reached the villages of Macieira de Alcoba in the 1980s (Associação Etnográfica Os Serranos, 2010). Until the 1990s, telephones were rare, with only one public telephone in the parish and very few families had private lines.

Agricultural area decreased over time as a result of the out-migration of the younger population and the aging of the remaining population. In 1965 farm land constituted only 11.8% of the parish area and in 1993 this fell to 9.7% (Ferreira, 1995). The people of Macieira de Alcoba live almost exclusively from subsistence farming practised on small property units.

Without a significant commercial or industrial activity, the economy of Macieira de Alcoba is poor. The village depends on outside goods for every thing beyond basic food stuffs. Only one tavern and a small coffee shop exist and a grocery van comes by every week and less frequently a fish van. Some other services are available, such as the parish council office, the primary school, the São Martinho church and the chapels of Our Lady of Fátima in Carvalho and Our Lady of the Guide in Urgueira, a milk depot and a post-office with the only public telephone located in a private house.

The town cluster has a linear alignment along the road (Figure 3). Most old rural houses have granite block walls, although some

plaster and whitewashed houses dating from the mid-20th Century are encountered.

The only public transport facilities available consist of a daily van which stops at Macieira de Alcoba in the morning goes to Águeda and returns at night. In the 1980s there were only thirteen cars and three motorcycles, often used jointly by the villagers (Riobom *et al*, 1983). The village at that time did not have a sewage system or public water supply to the houses. The people used two public fountains as well as private springs and wells.

Figure 6.3. Linear layout of the urban cluster of Macieira de Alcoba.



Source: Ferreira (2012)

In the 1980s, the City Council of Águeda embarked on a series of initiatives together with the Porto School of Fine Arts to preserve local heritage, especially in mountain villages, like Macieira de Alcoba. The preservation of old buildings, cultural traditions and environmental amenities were meant to contribute to tourist development.

Macieira de Alcoba in the 21st Century: Dynamics of Change and Territorial Restructuring.

The interest shown by the City Council of Águeda in developing tourism in this village dates back to 1977, when an article published in the newspaper *Diário Popular* on 15 September of that year presented it as a village with good potential for tourism. Indeed, highland culture, with its fairs and festivities, dances and singing, gastronomy and the quality of its landscape, strengthens this new function of the village. It was clearly a question of uniting wills, i.e. involving the municipality, the parish and the local population in the effort to redesign the village within a perspective of sustainable development that combines progress and heritage. The highlanders were able to overcome the obstacles to tourist development through strong resolve and are directly responsible for preserving their cultural heritage for future generations.

Through a number of changes, the parish acquired new dynamics which caused extensive territorial restructuring which is still in course. Accessibility to the village was improved and mains electricity provided. Public and private buildings, some intended for tourism accommodation, were renovated and the old distinctive granite roads were recovered. The primary school no longer in use was converted into a restaurant called “The School”, which is run under a public-private partnership (Figure 4). A water tower with the capacity of 5,000 litres was built to supply the population with treated water. A dumper was purchased for maintenance work in the parish as well as a nine-seat bus for transporting students, the elderly and the general population to locations providing educational and health care services. Leisure facilities were refurbished. Two hiking trails were built to allow closer contact with the landscape attractions of the parish. A number of festivals and traditions long lost in time were recovered, such as the community oven and the pilgrimage in honour of Nossa Senhora da Guia (Our Lady of the Guide) in Urgueira.

The Urgueira pilgrimage is one of the recovered traditions that has become a major attraction for tourists who visit the parish (Figure 5). The pilgrimage is associated with a legend surrounding a peasant from the village of Urgueira who left for Brazil in 1810. The peasant made a vow to Our Lady of the Guide that if he returned safe and sound, he would build

a chapel in her honour as well as a community oven in a place with a view of the sea (Urgueira is located at 760 m, the highest point in the parish). The oven would serve to bake bread for the pilgrims. The peasant did indeed return to the village and fulfilled his vow. According to legend, one day when the procession was passing, a man took a flower from the float, placed it between his teeth and went into the oven. Although the man was barefoot and did not have any type of protection, he came out unharmed and the flower was as fresh as when he went in. This was considered to be a miracle and from that day onward the bread baked in the oven was considered to be sacred and to have healing qualities. People present at the festival would save the bread to later give it to a sick person.

Figure 6.4. The restaurant “The School”, new function of the closed primary school of Macieira de Alcoba.



Source: Ferreira (2012)

Some years afterward the pilgrimage was forbidden by royal decree and was not held for almost a century. It was recently recovered by the ethnographic association “Os Serranos”, which gave it new life and revived the old tradition. Today, on a Sunday in August, sacred bread is once again baked in the oven and the re-enactment of the ceremony attracts thousands of visitors to Urgueira village. This case shows how the local and council authorities together with the “Os Serranos” non-governmental organization helped transform a depressed rural area in a positive way.

Figure 6.5. Re-enactment of the Miracle of Urgueira pilgrimage.



Source: Ferreira (2012).

Two new hiking trails in and around Macieira de Alcoba are also important attractions which permit visitors to come into contact with the beautiful rural landscapes. The two trails have different features to

better suit the specific interests and capabilities of visitors. The *Trilho da aldeia* (the PR3) is a low difficulty trail for hiking and biking over 2.4 kilometres through the countryside and the village. The *Trilho das terras de granito* (the PR4) is a moderate to high difficulty trail over a 8.5 kilometre-circuit along urban, rural and forest pathways.

In 2010, the CARUMA (Centre for Arts and Rural Affairs of Urgueira and Macieira de Alcôba) was opened in Quinta de Santa Maria and was projected to handle large tourist groups. The Centre has local crafts on display, which are linked to the symbolism, inspiration and tradition of the villages of Macieira de Alcoba and Urgueira.

Going a step further Macieira de Alcoba presented an application to the Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural (PRODER, Rural Development Programme) in 2011, for a project called “Macieira de Alcoba - Aldeia Pedagógica do Museu do Milho” (‘Macieira de Alcoba – Teaching Village of the Maize Museum’). This project is meant to transform Macieira de Alcoba into a living museum, the Maize Museum, because, as the old proverb says, “Whether we like it or not, there will always be maize in Macieira”. In the past, Macieira de Alcoba had several maize-flour mills, of which there are still traces as well as the memory of those who used them during most of their lives. The project will rehabilitate the mills in a park associated to another hiking trail along the Chão do Ribeiro River.

The aim of all of the projects in Macieira de Alcoba is to promote the recovery and enhancement of important natural and cultural heritage of the village, in the form of mills, granaries, threshing floors, tanks and irrigation systems, landscape, gastronomy, traditions and local hospitality, thus contributing to local development and the preservation of collective memory.

Conclusion

In the case presented rural space has been redesigned through dialogue between the old and the new, the past and the future, where progress and heritage go hand-in-hand in a process of sustainable development. Customs and traditions are preserved in order to keep them alive and as a continuing part of daily life. Macieira de Alcoba and

its 84 inhabitants, 62% of whom are over the age of 65, is an example to follow in other low-density territories.

Through projects such as the Maize Museum and the Mill Park, the cultural heritage of Macieira de Alcoba is preserved and local development pursued. According to Domingues (2011), no place possesses unchanging identity and the stability of places is closely related to the stability of the societies present there. Macieira de Alcoba is a small rural society that is receptive to change as long as its identity is maintained. In this rural territory, one encounters expectation and contradiction, concern with protecting natural resources and enjoyment of the pleasures of the countryside, without forgetting rural sustainability.

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How Do We Enhance, while Preserving, the Social and Cultural Heritage of the Rural Douro Region, including the Festivities?

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Introduction

Although some very heterogeneous rural areas show a clear demographic decline and stagnation, or even deterioration, of the economic framework, they preserve several potential aspects and peculiarities that need to be revived. This is particularly true when we address a territory such as the Douro Demarcated Region (DDR), partially classified by UNESCO in 2001 as World Heritage. We normally prioritize its landscape, architectural, cultural, social and gastronomic heritage, and relegate its symbolic and religious aspects, such as festivities and processions, to a lower level of priority. But while these festivities have a religious component, they also include cultural, social, economic and touristic elements, enabling the preservation of customs and habits, valuable aids to better understand the collective past (Oliveira, 1984).

Such events also correspond to a revival of experiences because, whilst they pay homage to the patron saint, they ultimately support the implementation of dynamics in areas which are at times very problematic. They are also intense moments for locals, in addition to affecting a more or less vast area, providing a window of opportunity for reuniting with those who had to sever their ties when they embarked to the diaspora.

It is in this context that we will examine Cambres, a parish in the council of Lamego. The wine industry is the economic backbone of this area, which has an exceptional landscape and a prime location, for it is situated between two multifunctional urban centres that play a major role in the region: Lamego and Peso da Régua (Pina, 2009). This parish is also fortunate to have good access routes, especially after the opening of the A24, making it easier for connections to the coast

and Spain; moreover, it benefits from the railway (a structuring route in the Douro area, since its implementation in the 19th century) and the waterway, the Douro River.

Despite its propitious landscape and location, there are many barriers to its development. Indeed, the demographic decline and the aging of the population structure are beyond question, as is the degradation of the economic framework associated with the wine sector, which is the economic mainstay of the parish. The multifunctional landscape became the order of the day to strategically develop this region, yet still ignoring various parameters with the potential of expanding local dynamics, e.g., built heritage, cultural and religious elements, and immaterial heritage.

The parish worships *Nosso Senhor da Aflição* [Our Lord of Affliction], a festivity held in the last week of July. The origins of this procession are inseparable from the troubled 19th century marked by the spread of several phytosanitary pests, especially phylloxera, in the vineyards, a time when the population turned to divine intervention as they lacked the technical and human alternatives to save the vineyard. Because their prayers were answered, they have continued to hold celebrations in gratitude, in a place where the media and more recently the ICTs have helped disseminate them.

On the other hand, whereas in the early 21st century the priority was the urban centres and their festivities, in the rural areas chapels lacking maintenance were common, since the previous forces that maintained the cult intact became less frequent, until they almost disappeared, with only the most prominent remaining. It is, therefore, pertinent to question the impact of the festivities and processions in rural areas such as Cambres in the current context. Moreover, how do we reconcile culture, tradition, preservation and innovation, in the prospect of having coherent dynamics in this territory? One cannot ignore that, being the reflection of a long history that needs to be preserved, the landscape remains, but is anchored in the human activity of the locals, to which, occasionally, is added the activity of other players, normally economic ones.

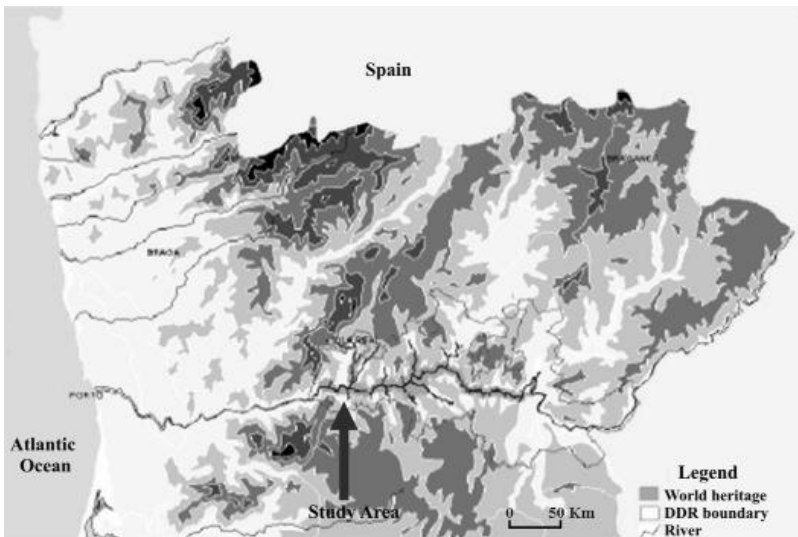
The methodology used in this article combines a thorough analysis of a vast literature, historical documents and newspaper articles, and is

complemented by intense fieldwork focused on the period of festivities, during which we interviewed and surveyed the most important local players, e.g., organizers, residents, traders and tourism lodgings, and, of course, visitors and tourists. We used this methodology to complete this work, dealing with an example of festivities that continue to exist in rural areas, and the issues surrounding them.

Cambres: a wine-growing parish in the DDR

The parish is located in the council of Lamego (Figure 1) and spreads over 11.16sq.m, from the left bank of the Douro River to the northern limit of Lamego, at about 440 m height. The landscape is characterized by many traditional terraces, very difficult to work in, but also the terraces that have recently been restructured and mechanized (Figure 2, 3), one of the ways to overcome the shortage of workers and the strong impact of high wages related to it. Nonetheless, the region is marked by a naturally appealing landscape formed by schist soil and a changing Mediterranean climate, where the scattered population and the persistence of a clear biodiversity favour the preservation of a unique landscape heritage.

Figure 7.1. The Douro Demarcated Region and the parish of Cambres.



Source: Plano Interm de Ordenamento Territ. Alto Douro Vinhateiro. UTAD: Vila Real

This scenario is also confirmed by the presence of a vast and magnificent architectural heritage that reflects the background of wine-growing and, especially, of Port Wine. Therefore, 17th to 19th century manor houses keep cropping up, in farms and scattered inhabited places. The foundations of the human occupation in Cambres, however, date back in time, as evidenced by the existence of fortified hills, cobble passage ways from the Roman period (Costa, 1992), sundials, and especially the religious heritage from the 17th and 18th centuries. In fact, in addition to the parish church, other chapels are scattered across the inhabited places or in renowned estates, such as Quinta de Monsul, which was part of the Salzedas Monastery estate in the Middle Ages (Azevedo, s/d.), or Quinta de Santo António, containing some 17th century images, or the chapel of Quinta da Azenha, from the 18th century (Costa, 1992), and of Quinta do Mosteiro, where the friars of the Cistercian Order were laid to rest (Azevedo, s/d). Although there are many such examples, public heritage has often suffered deterioration (Resende, 2006); therefore a process of structuring, cyclical dynamics is a matter of some urgency, to support development at many levels and to cover all territorial components.

Figure 7.2. Traditional terraces in Cambres parish.



Source: Photos by the author, 2011.

Figure 7.3. New mechanized terraces in Cambres parish.



Source: Photos by the author, 2011.

Despite the very appealing aspects mentioned before, Cambres has several problems, particularly those related to the wine sector. There is age-old evidence on the history and relevance of this activity, e.g., references exist on the presence of the vineyards in Cambres in the 16th century (Dias, 1957). This culture, however, expanded during the period of the Marquis of Pombal, supported by several terraces on its hillsides. Today, however, some of the problems are poor land structure of the farmsteads, old vineyards, lack of manual labour and its poor technical training, and also the undeniable demographic decline since the 1960s. This indicates the many regional wine crises, inducing large migration flows of the younger, active population and, thus, the structural aging of those who stay behind. In this context, in 2011, of the 2066 residents (INE, 2011), about 23% of the resident population was over 65 years of age, and the young population had increased its cultural and technical training, though the majority had only a basic education level. The young active population has chosen to work in the tertiary sector in the region's urban centres, but also help the elderly after work in the family farm, since some of

the work is mechanized. The youth therefore have to hold two jobs, and the elderly support the wine sector (Pina, 2007).

It is, however, the wine sector that supports the local economy. In fact, small family-type farms prevail in Cambres, because although the average size of farmsteads was, in 2009, 4.8 hectares, 41.2% were less than 1 hectare (INE, 2009). On the other hand, the real size of plots was even more worrying, because, on average, the area of each farmstead was subdivided into 2 to 3 scattered plots, with blocks under 0.5 ha in size still common. The only exceptions are the corporate farms, but these are limited in number.

We thus have more and more small farm owners (about 65% of the total), who preserve these landscapes as long as these farms deliver a minimum yield, and owners and their families are driven by the cultural and sentimental heritage (Pina, 2005). This calls for the modernization/restructuring of vineyards and training of farm owners and their workers, as this is the only way to overcome the larger obstacles hindering sustainable growth.

At the same time, this landscape has been upgraded through investments, especially in the Rural Tourism or Tourism in Rural Areas (*TER-Turismo em Espaço Rural*). This activity appeared in the early 1980s, and then increased in the 1990s especially after the Douro region was classified by UNESCO as “World Heritage”. In general, properties joining this type of activity are average and medium-sized, with a privileged landscaping and a remarkable architecture, managed by the family to allow guests to learn more about the wine industry and the region (Pina, 2009).

Because seasonality is a reality, this activity is further complemented by two hotels, that materialised in ambitious projects such as the “Aquapura Douro Valley” (five-star hotel), and the “Hotel Douro River” (four-star hotel), both boasting a Spa. These two hotels began to operate between 2007 and 2009. Tourism, in its various forms, is indeed a strategic investment that has boosted this region, favouring also the preservation of the landscape, in an environment where the wine sector remains its economic mainstay, despite showing many problems. However, the “immaterial” heritage

and local festivities, e.g., *Nosso Senhor da Aflição*, must also be stepped up and enjoyed.

The festivities of *Nosso Senhor da Aflição*

From the origins to the late 19th century

Despite the different interpretations taking place over the years, festivities and processions have always attracted the population, varying according to the history of these festivities, geographical location, accessibilities and, more recently, their dissemination and marketing. Nevertheless, they have decreased in number in rural areas, in comparison with the 1980s, as is evident in the publications of José Leite de Vasconcelos and other authors.

In 1940, for example, in times of world conflict, when food was rationed and Port wine exports were interrupted, the main festivities continued, attracting “people from all parishes nearby. This is the season when the people pray and sing, fulfil their vows and dance at night, with a clear conscience and joy to the sound of brass bands and bagpipes” (Vasconcelos, 1997, 302).

Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira also noted that “processions are essentially religious celebrations in honour of a saint, divinity, patrons of a place or sanctuary, and consist of a mass celebration with a sermon and rituals, and a procession (...) a typical profane festivity in which all religious, profane, Christian, magical, ceremonial and festive elements come together” (Oliveira, 1984, 217). He adds that processions “were the most important regional events (...) a meeting opportunity for people from their province to revive and renew knowledge, learn about the latest news, establish relationships and businesses, strengthening ties, and also to show off and have fun (...). These processions boasted, rather vividly, the particularly rich features of local cultures, customs and mores, folklore, and even handicrafts” (Oliveira, 1984, 220).

These are, therefore, complex events that involve many players, different profane, religious, social and economic dynamics, which are a significant part of a cultural heritage that causes considerable demographic movements. Nevertheless, nowadays these festivities are increasingly limited

to major population centres, associated with municipal events, while in the rural areas where they still take place, especially in the more peripheral areas, the situation is deteriorating. There are fewer exceptions, yet the festivities in honour of *Nosso Senhor da Aflição* are worth disseminating.

Although the patron of the parish is St. Martin of Tours, the Cambres population and those living in this large territory consisting of urban centres neighbouring the parish worship *Nosso Senhor da Aflição*. Although there are records of a Christian community in Cambres in the Celtic period (Costa, 1979), the origin of this popular festivity is unknown.

Until the 17th century, there are references to a mix of crops that combined the vineyard with cereals, chestnuts and other fruit trees, but where the forest still prevailed, being gradually replaced by the vineyard. The Christian community developed in direct connection with the expansion of this vineyard. But the worship of *Nosso Senhor da Aflição* only emerged in the 19th century, spreading rapidly to the wine parishes and to the population of the surrounding urban centres. In fact, the inauguration of the *Peões Bridge* in 1872 and the new railway, a “*via acellerada*” [fast rack] (Pina, 2007) to Régua made it easier for the population of Régua to join the festivities, and even expanded its influence to the city of Porto. However, until 1800 and regardless of the source document used, there is, in fact, no reference to *Nosso Senhor da Aflição*.

The region experienced very critical times in the late 18th century with a series of bad harvest years, and the early 19th century endured the effect of the French invasions and the sluggish exports of wines. This negative context deteriorated even more in the first half of the century under strong political and social instability, and from the 1850s to the 1870s endured a number of fungal diseases such as spot diseases, rust and powdery mildew, which facilitated the widespread development of cholera and yellow fever (Sousa, 2006). It was, however, after 1875, when phylloxera devastated the vineyards in the region, and that dangerously approached the Cambres vineyards, that the residents found themselves powerless to overcome it and requested divine intervention to protect their vineyards, organizing a “procession of penitence” in 1880, as reported in the newspaper “*Jornal da Regoa*”: “The procession of penitence was held on Sunday organized by the inhabitants of Cambres,

to implore divine protection against phylloxera. The procession left Cambres carrying the image of our Lord with great ceremony, to Senhora dos Remédios, in Lamego. The penitents were about 3,000, among them many women” (“Jornal da Regoa”, 10/07/1880, p.2).

Even then the influence of Nosso Senhor da Aflição among the population of Cambres was undeniable. Then, as now, this divine resource was of great significance against great odds and for the protection of their vineyards. In this context, references to Nosso Senhor da Aflição abound, e.g., in 1880 when the festivities were announced in a daily Porto newspaper: “The festivities and procession of Senhor da Aflição will be held on the 24th and 25th of this month, in the parish of Cambres, near the Régua railway station. On the 24th, two bands will be playing in the afternoon, and in the evening the procession will walk to the church. At 9.30 pm, there will be a display of fireworks and balloons (...). It will be a bright event. On the 25th, a mass and sermon will be held at 11 am, followed by a magnificent procession at 4 pm (...); security forces will, over the two days, control the event, one of the most peaceful and popular events known” (“O Primeiro de Janeiro”, 18/07/1880, p.1).

This source clearly refers to the accessibility and the popularity of the events, as confirmed by the existence of two processions and a special grant for a rural environment. These festivities were advertised in the region. Moreover, because in 1880 the local vineyards were spared from phylloxera, since then the evening procession has been included in the existing events. On the other hand, as we approached the 20th century, the religious element was increasingly constrained by the profane and social elements, as can be seen in 1894, with about 51.3% of overall expenses allocated to the festivities, a very large amount of money, despite the difficulties in marketing wines; for their part, the religious services included only the salary of the chaplain, and 3.3% of funds were associated with mandatory subsidies (Irmandade N. S. Afflicção n.d.a)

The 20th century and transformations/ innovations prior to the 1974 revolution

In 1900, this procession was already considered to be “one of the most popular and famous processions in this region”, lasting 3 days,

“there were three processions, the last one most impressive, with many lights and fireworks, (...) easy accesses (our emphasis) from this town (Lamego) and other towns nearby to the site of the procession”. Public transport was also provided, because “every three days there will be a well-organized and low cost car transport system from Lamego to the parish of Cambres.” (“A Semana”, 21/07/1900, p.1 and 2).

As time progressed, other “innovations” stressed the profane, and above all, the social aspect of the procession, among them the reference to the *“dansa de pretos”* [black dancing], in 1905, and the festivals that continued long into the night, with bands playing, in addition to the continuous references to the lights and fireworks. What stands out, however, is the connection between the festivities and the introduction of electricity in the parish (1909), an extraordinary innovation that changed many habits and was enhanced by the festivities (“A Semana”, 18 / 07/ 1909, p.2).

There is no doubt that the festivities had a strong social and economic impact, since they facilitated socialization, and the business in taverns and shops in the parish increased, thereby marketing the indigenous agricultural products (wine, olive-oil, fruit and sausages). Moreover, local factors still evident today, such as landscape heritage and accessibility, were already a fact at the time and had a major impact. Indeed, in 1907 references made to “there will be a high turnout of visitors from this town (Lamego) and Régua, because the route to Cambres is among the best”, all the more so because the festival “is among the best in Beira Alta, not only because of the location, very close to the railway station of Régua, but also because of its diversity and originality of attractions.” (“A Esperança”, 16/07/1907, p.1).

In this line of reasoning, it is not surprising that in 1912 over 60% of annual expenditures on festivities were allocated to profane aspects (fireworks, decoration and lighting), while only 18.5% of financial resources were intended for the religious part, even though it is always important (Table 1). Thus the profane increased at the request of residents, outsiders and the descendants of Cambres inhabitants who lived in the main urban centres. The latter returned to Cambres during the festival period to see their family and friends, and stock up on local produce, which they carried in wicker baskets, also manufactured locally.

In the 1930s, after the “Pastoral Guidelines on Festivities” was promulgated, the Church tried to do away with the profane and introduced changes that were often not accepted by the population, e.g., cancelling the festivals. This was the case in Cambres. Indeed, although in 1930, during the three-day festivities, reference was still made to “a great festival, all night long, with dazzling lights and fireworks, which will be set at 10 pm” (“A Fraternidade”, 19/07/1930, p.1), in addition to an annual cattle fair, in 1939 these festivities were called off by the Church, but were reinstated the following year.

Table 7.1. Cost of the 1912 festivity in honour of Nosso Senhor da Aflicção.

| Description | Amount (reis) |
|---|-----------------|
| Prints | 2\$100 |
| 4 dozen torches | 1\$120 |
| Fire Licence | 1\$300 |
| Policing | |
| 7 policemen at the dances | 5\$500 |
| 31 soldiers of the 9th Infantry Regiment | 6\$300 |
| Fireworks | |
| 36 dozen fireworks at 1\$500 reis | 54\$000 |
| 36 dozen fireworks at 1\$500 each | 54\$00 |
| 5 dozen fireworks for the processions | 3\$000 |
| 8 dozen fireworks for the processions | 4\$000 |
| 10 banger fireworks to announce the festival | 10\$500 |
| Decorations, lighting, entertainment | |
| 24 balloons for the dances at 270 reis each | 6\$480 |
| 200 banners to adorn the Church | 6\$500 |
| 1340 Venetian balloons for lighting | 25\$000 |
| Zés Pereiras for the 3 days | 3\$000 |
| Work by the philharmonic of Cambres (dances and festival) | 31\$000 |
| Work for the dances and festivities | 30\$000 |
| Make 3 stands for the music | 4\$500 |
| 8 kg of wax sold for the festivity | 6\$400 |
| Religious part | |
| 28 angel and virgin figures for the procession , | 24\$000 |
| decorate the Church and float of N. S. Afflicção | 9\$780 |
| 5 priests, sermon and festival of the Church of N. S. Afflicção | 24\$000 |
| Total | 312\$480 |

Source: Irmandade N. S. Afflicção (n.d.b.).

Figure 7.4. Programme of festivities in honour of Nosso Senhor da Aflição in 1950.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>21st – Beginning of the Novena in honour of Our Lord of Afflictions, to take place at 7 o'clock in the morning.</p> <p>During the nine days, there will be Mortar Salvos in the morning, at midday, and at night.</p> <p>28th – At 8.30 in the evening, the penitence procession will leave the Parochial Church, with the float of Our Lord of Afflictions, which will follow the usual route to the Chapel of St. Antonio. The Cambres band will take part in the procession.</p> <p>29th – The <i>market</i> will be held on the morning of this day, which will be embellished with the Cambres and Lousada bands.</p> <p>- From 4.00 to 8.00 in the evening, these bands will hold a <i>classical music concert</i> in the Boulevard square.</p> <p>- At 8.30 in the evening, the Procession from the Chapel of St. Antonio to the Parochial Church, which will be accompanied by the same bands and will end with a sermon.</p> | <p>P</p> <p>R</p> <p>O</p> <p>G</p> <p>R</p> <p>A</p> <p>M</p> <p>M</p> <p>E</p> | <p>30th – At six in the morning, a praying mass and General communion.</p> <p>- From 10 to 11 o'clock, concert in the Boulevard by the two bands mentioned previously.</p> <p>- At 11 o'clock, Solemn Mass, grand instrumental by the Cambres band and sermon.</p> <p>- At 3.30 in the afternoon, <i>football match</i> between the honourable boys of the J.A.C. and one of the best teams in the province. One of the bands will play at this sports event.</p> <p>At 6.00 in the evening, the grand triumphal procession in honour of Our Lord Of Affliction will depart from the Parochial Church.</p> <p>31st – At 9.30 in the morning, Solemn Mass, grand instrumental by the Lousada band and sermon.</p> <p>From 4.00 to 8.00 o'clock in the evening, <i>folk music concert</i>, in the boulevard, by the Cambres and Lousada bands.</p> |
|--|--|---|

Source: Varanda do Douro, July 1950, p.2

The situation remained practically unchanged in the following decades, with only slight variations according to the agricultural year and the quantity of wine produced, since the donations made to Senhor da Aflição depended on this production. In fact, the interruption of festivities was impending several times in the 1960s and 1970s, but this was avoided because it would set a precedent that could lead to the full suspension of festivities. Another aspect to highlight is related to the importance attached to music, always performed by brass bands. They would brighten the religious ceremonies and provide an atmosphere favourable to socialization, as in 1950 (Figure 4), thus boosting the parish.

This situation lasted until the 1970s, always combining the religious aspect to the profane, yet controlling spending on fireworks and brass bands because the situation of the wine sector was not propitious. Meanwhile, the open fair, football matches and other activities were suspended, and musical groups performed in addition to the brass bands. The Senhor da Aflição festivities were still the highlight of the parish, opening opportunities for social contacts, economic activities, and maintenance work on buildings and in the surrounding landscape.

From the late 20th century to the present

Another event to highlight in the regional festivities, due to its consequences, was the 25 April 1974 revolution. Despite the political transformations, there were also major economic and social consequences, particular in the DDR, because not only the quantity of Port wine to be produced increased, but the monetary value per barrel increased too, creating the conditions for some recapitalization of the production sector. With the help of European funds, the vineyards were restructured, thus improving the quality of wines. Consequently, the civil Society was boosted and more investments were made in the festivities of Senhor da Aflição, although these investments combined tradition with modernity, as in the 1986 festivities (“Livro de despesas da Irmandade do Senhor da Aflição”, Cambres, 1986 (manuscript)). Indeed, in addition to the spending required by law (police surveillance, fire-fighters, licenses), three things stood out:

- a) although very significant, spending on lighting was gradually being “transferred” to pay for the diversified musical shows;
- b) the impact of fireworks on the overall budget; despite being high, decreased (while in 1912 the fireworks absorbed more than 40% of the overall budget, in 1986 it did not exceed 22.3%);
- c) religious events absorbed less than 10%, when in 1912 they were responsible for 18.5% of the investment.

Everyone was attracted by the profane, social and especially the leisure nature of the festivities, particularly the younger groups and non-residents. In this context, in the programme of festivities for 2011 the musical groups stand out as the leisure activity (and in the budget), while the amount spent on brass bands was limited, but still significant. In fact, the bands played in the four days of the fair and staged their own farewell performance on the last day of the festival, which, because it is so rare, attracts many visitors, including the young people. The latter still prefer the music concerts, mostly concentrated in the evening. There are still three processions and solemn masses, distinctive and specific of the parish, which need to be preserved. The leisure activity, music, is nevertheless highlighted (Figure 5, 6 and 7).

Figure 7.5. Image of Our Lord of Affliction, with two bunches of grapes within the protection of his hands.



Source: Photos by the author, 2011.

Figure 7.6. Procession of Our Lord of Affliction.



Source: Photos by the author, 2011.

Figure 7.7. Brass band in procession of Our Lord of Affliction.



Source: Photos by the author, 2011.

On the other hand, the lights and decorations in the main streets are still being used, as well as the fireworks, boosting the local market, in addition to street vending. The social aspect is also boosted. So, while most festivities in rural areas succumb, the festivity of Senhor da Aflição continues, driven by the locals, the believers of nearby parishes, and Cambres natives living in other urban centres and immigrants who participate in these festivities with friends, helping to revitalize the region and the local festivities.

We are quite clear on the potential of the rural festivities and believe that if they are boosted and coordinated in network, in a schedule including also the urban festivities, although stressing the distinctive features of each, we can avoid their extinction, because they animate these territories while preserving local culture and traditions. To this end, we need to motivate the endogenous agents to revitalize and preserve their history and heritage. This will be a success if public and private entities join forces, especially the local governments.

Although investing in tourism in the Douro region is a strategy (“Turismo Portugal”, 2007; CCDRN, 2007), one can never disregard the wine industry, because this is the economic mainstay of the parish and of the DDR, or the individuals, who will help preserve local heritage. If we include festivities and processions when programming tourism enhancement events, we will also reduce the seasonality of the tourism in the region, which is still much concentrated in the harvest period. However, this will need official support from local governments, industry and Church. Fortunately, this dynamics is emerging, as demonstrated with the accession of the Diocese of Lamego, in 2009, à “Turel– Desenvolvimento e Promoção do Turismo Cultural e Religioso”, although the support received covered only the inventorying and understanding of the existing religious heritage. Its preservation and rehabilitation are expected (Resende, 2006), since it is possible to apply with projects to EU funding.

Conclusion

Although very frail, the rural world has a lot of potential that is not always best put to use. Even though problems persist in economic

and social terms, there are new strategies that are likely to reverse these trends. For example, the multifunctional potential and attractions of the landscapes, highlighting Rural Tourism (TER), but relegating the wine sector, even though it is the economic mainstay of the region, and of Cambres. A similar fate is reserved for other aspects, for e.g., built heritage, but especially the immaterial heritage, the festivities.

Even if these events highlight the religious component, they also integrate culture, society and economy, thereby facilitating the preservation of customs and mores, historical values and built and immaterial heritage. Understanding the collective past is thus made possible, and especially the implementation of dynamics in sometimes problem areas, like rural areas. Festivities and processions fall within this range, being particularly intensive moments as their dynamics uplift not only the territory in which they take place, but also a vaster territory that varies according to the history of the festivity.

The festivities dedicated to Senhor da Aflição in the parish of Cambres, Lamego, are a good example, although difficulties are expected in the future. Because this region has a privileged landscape and good accessibilities, the problems increase and investments have to be made to minimize them, especially in terms of the multifunctional potential of the landscape, where tourism stands out, yet ignoring other prospective aspects. Although tourism is a strategic investment for its development, to match the “National Strategic Plan for Tourism”, which considers the Douro region as a “priority hub” (CCDRN, 2007), and guidelines are introduced that lead to investments in distinctive factors, when we do try to implement them, we prefer the environment, landscape, and the vineyard and the wine, relegating its culture, traditions and, obviously, the mythical and religious aspects.

The overall endogenous potential should, therefore, be stepped up, by raising the awareness of regional and local agents to the upgrading, preservation and revitalization of this heritage, while not ignoring an attractive marketing that will consolidate and improve the Douro image. Such strategies should be implemented in a comprehensive perspective, through networks, but without overshadowing the rural resources by the influence of urban attractions. Note that the success

and continuity of festivities in rural areas depends not only on the endogenous drive, but also on the strategies and official support and external requirements of those who live in nearby parishes, and those who have settled in more distant places, in the country or abroad.

There should be more activities to complement the existing ones, integrating the surviving festivities and processions, creating, for example, a “Roadmap of Festivities and Processions”. In short, we will be able to revitalize these rural areas in a sustainable way in a cyclical perspective, involving all components and potential of the territory in question, focusing on a complementarity between the rural and the urban environment, in a network. The real matter is the maintenance of a region classified by UNESCO as World Heritage!

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The Coast and the Inland: Sustainability and Change in Two Remote Communities in Western Australia

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Introduction

In 1996, the Western Australian government launched a planning strategy to guide the state's development to 2029, the bicentenary of British colonisation of the western third of Australia (Western Australian Planning Commission, 1996). The rhetoric of this document was rooted firmly in the sustainability paradigm. The strategy was based on an integrated decision-making model focussed on the environment (water, air and land conservation and resource use), the economy (jobs, income, resource development and efficiency) and the people (homes, access and a sense of community) and contended that "to work effectively there needs to be a balance between these interrelated components since a significant weakness in one might jeopardise the sustainable development of the state" (Western Australian Planning Commission, 1996:16).

At the current half way point in the State Planning Strategy's timeframe we focus, topically, on the aspect of the people (homes, access and a sense of community) and, locationally, on the two small, remote settlements of Denham and Meekatharra to consider the prospects for socially sustainable development in these towns, given their isolated, environmentally challenging and resource dependant contexts. In doing so, we will seek to demonstrate, as part of a broader consideration of their sustainability challenges, how recent local revolutions in aspects of their accessibility have brought about major disruptions to the nature of both the homes and the senses of community in these two small towns.

Figure 8.1. Western Australia.



Source: www.PlanetWare.com.

Denham and Meekatharra both have populations of under 1,000 (Denham ca. 600, Meekatharra ca. 800). They are both deemed

“Very Remote” on the Accessibility Remoteness Index Australia 2006, being ca. 800 kilometres from the state capital of Perth (with a population now exceeding one and three quarter million) and ca. 400 kilometres from the regional centre of Geraldton (with a population of approximately 25,000) (Figure 1). Nevertheless, they are both the administrative centres for and the providers of local services to vast and underpopulated hinterlands (ca. 25,000 square kilometres for the Shire of Shark Bay (Denham) and 100,000 square kilometres for the Shire of Meekatharra). In both cases the surrounding shire population is about half that of the main town and is located on pastoral stations, road houses, tourist resorts, Aboriginal communities and mine sites.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (largely) European settlers opened up much of remote Australia for pastoral, mining and marine exploitation (Blainey, 1963; Bolton, 1992) disrupting and displacing the local Aboriginal populations in the process (Reynolds, 1990). This process was one of dubious sustainability and, in recent decades, radical economic and social shifts have occurred in remote Australia, a phenomenon described by Holmes (2006) as a “multifunctional rural transition”. In part, this has been – and is currently – “a post-productivist transition with a difference” (Holmes, 2002) through which protection and consumption values are being added (or, from an Indigenous perspective, perhaps reinstated) to complement the productivist ethos which has largely characterised remote Australia for the last century or so. A more comprehensive statement of the challenges facing Denham, Meekatharra and, indeed, the whole of remote Australia has recently been provided by Walker et al. (2012) in their emotively titled report “Fixing the Hole in Australia’s Heartland”. They contend that:

- The pattern of settlement has changed as transport and communication technology has changed travel patterns.
- The nature of mining operations and workplace practices has changed.
- The nature of family pastoral leaseholds has changed.
- The tourist industry has changed, and

- The approach of governments to Aboriginal settlements has changed.
- (Walker et al. 2012: 23)

In recent and, it would seem, in the coming decades all of these trends have had and will continue to have a considerable impact on the homes, the accessibility and the senses of community of either Denham or Meekatharra or both. These trends will not only apply at the scale of these two settlements. They will impact on individuals and households of these towns as their expectations and aspirations, and therefore their consumption patterns, increasingly converge on those of the country as a whole. However, a further trend identified by Salt (2003) serves to differentiate the two settlements. Salt has described the “Big Shift” whereby the Australian population is retreating from the inland to the coast, a phenomenon also focussed on by Walker et al. (2012: 8) who note that more than 85% of Australia’s population now lives within 50 kilometres of the coastline as the inland movement which characterised early European settlement of the continent has now been reversed. While Connell and McManus (2011) have discerned a ‘tree change’ migration flow to certain favoured inland areas of Australia, this only applies to scenic temperate areas close to major cities and not to the remote, arid inland. In these circumstances it would appear that Denham is likely to experience sustainability challenges related to expansion and Meekatharra to those of decline.

Methodology

In the case of Denham, the issue that prompted the fieldwork (by Jones) in the town was that of World Heritage designation. Shark Bay was the first World Heritage site to be designated in Western Australia in 1991. While this area is notable historically for its early discovery and exploration by European navigators (notably Dirk Hartog and other Dutch sailors) in the seventeenth century the basis of this designation was the exceptional environmental values that it possessed (Jones and Shaw, 2012). This was therefore a pivotal event in

what had been a gradual escalation in environmental protection levels in the Shark Bay area since the 1960s. It was also both symptomatic and emblematic of the shift towards protection and consumption values in what had hitherto been a community almost entirely dependent on the productivist activities of fishing, pearling, pastoralism and mining. In 2010, following discussions with Sue Jones, Chair of the Shark Bay Community Consultative Committee, Jones conducted interviews with and obtained background material from state and local government representatives in both Denham and Perth on the impacts of World Heritage designation on the area (Jones and Shaw 2012). The Indigenous owners of a wildlife tourism enterprise in the area had already been interviewed for an earlier project (Birdsall-Jones et al. 2007). In 2011, Jones was approached by the State Department of Environment and Conservation to conduct a larger investigation of the community and economic impacts of the World Heritage designations of both Shark Bay and the neighbouring Ningaloo Reef. In the course of this project further fieldwork was undertaken in Denham, a more extensive search of the 'grey' literature occurred and interviews were conducted with a broader section of the Denham community as well as with relevant government stakeholders in Perth (Christensen et al. 2013).

Birdsall-Jones has conducted two recent fieldwork projects in Meekatharra. In 2010, she undertook a study of town identity for the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (Beer et al. 2011) and, in 2012, an investigation of homelessness issues for the Federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Aboriginal Affairs (FAHCSIA) (Birdsall-Jones 2013). On both occasions, she conducted interviews with a range of government and community stakeholders on a range of social and economic issues confronting the town.

Denham/Shark Bay

In the 1870s and 1880s both pearling and pastoral operations were established by European settlers in the Shark Bay area. Although the pastoralists were required by the colonial government in Perth to obtain leasehold agreements over what was and still is Crown Land,

regulation and oversight of these remote operations were minimal. In the generally arid environment of Shark Bay, drinkable water supplies were available at Denham, which became the largest pearling campsite and was gazetted as a townsite in 1889. By 1900, it had a store, a school and a pub and 30 pearling boats were based there. Access to the outside world was almost entirely by sea and in 1911 the State Shipping Service established itself as the monopoly supplier of transport services to Perth and the outside world. It was not until World War Two that, for strategic reasons, a dirt track linking Denham with the (also dirt surfaced at that time) North West Coastal Highway was upgraded for motor traffic. By this stage, fishing had largely replaced pearling as the town's economic base, but a legacy of the pearling industry was a mixed race population (Christensen, 2012). In the late nineteenth century Asian pearl divers and even pearl masters were working in small coastal towns across northern Australia. In Denham/Shark Bay, the Aboriginal population also became involved in this industry and, perhaps given the isolation and small size of this community, intermarriage across ethnic lines was more common here than elsewhere in the colony/the state.

From the 1970s, however, this isolated community began to change with increasing rapidity. The main North Western Coastal Highway was sealed past the Denham turnoff in the late 1960s and the 140 kilometre track from this turnoff to Denham in 1985 – notwithstanding a vote of several hundred to one against this initiative at a local town meeting. As recently as the 1980s, this community overwhelmingly wished to preserve its isolation and, thereby, to resist change. This became increasingly unfeasible as external pressures for both the protection and the consumption of the area around Denham grew. With regard to protection, and in line with trends apparent throughout the developed world, an increasingly large amount of the land and water area in and around Shark Bay was designated as National and Marine Parks (State Planning Commission and Department of Conservation and Land Management, 1987). More significantly, and in the context of the 1990 federal election (in which the Labor government was seeking the 'preferences' of Green Party voters under Australia's single transferable vote system), the federal government proposed that an area of 2.3 million

hectares around Denham be submitted for World Heritage listing by UNESCO. In scientific terms this initiative was thoroughly justified. Shark Bay is one of only 19 World Heritage properties worldwide to have been nominated for “all four outstanding natural universal values” (UNESCO, 2009). However, as the interviews in Denham confirmed, many of the local population perceived this move as having the potential to place considerable restrictions on their frontier way of life, imposed not merely by the state government in Perth, but also by the federal government in Canberra and even UNESCO in Paris. A town meeting in February 1988 had voted 299 to 1 that “no intervention at Shark Bay by the Commonwealth (federal) government should take place in regard to World Heritage Listing” (Edwards, 2001).

Over this period, therefore, the natural and environmental attractions of Shark Bay became increasingly widely known as well as increasingly accessible. In the 1980s, a group of dolphins at the nearby beach at Monkey Mia, which had been interacting with humans since the 1960s, became a global tourist attraction. By 1985, with the sealing of the access road 50,000 mainly West Australian tourists visited the town; this number grew to around 150,000 (47% West Australian, 22% interstate and 31% international) by 1991, of which ca. 100,000 were primarily attracted by the dolphins (Dowling, 1993). In the early 1990s tourist numbers levelled out, in part in response to a national economic downturn. However, the coincidence of this trend with the 1991 World Heritage designation and the, perhaps inevitable, delays in branding the World Heritage areas and upgrading the local infrastructure for tourists and locals alike and resulted in considerable local frustration and caused Sue Jones (2007), the Chair of the Shark Bay World Heritage Community Consultative Committee, to deliver a public presentation on “World Heritage listing (If I was going there, I wouldn’t start from here!)”.

In the last few years, however, the Shark Bay World Heritage Area brand has been established with a logo, an entry statement at the main highway turnoff and extensive signage and interpretation along the road to Denham and Monkey Mia which has now been named World Heritage Drive. There has also been considerable recent investment in

the town, by tourism and other businesses developing and upgrading accommodation and services and by governments. New public facilities include a multi-million dollar World Heritage Area interpretation centre, school buildings, a nursing post and a recreation and (cyclone) emergency centre.

Inevitably, these changes over the last few decades have impacted considerably on both the provision of homes and on Denham's sense of community. Land has been set aside on the edges of the town for new residential developments, with many lots having panoramic sea views. The houses being constructed in recent years are considerably larger and more expensive than the modest dwellings that characterised the original fishing/pearling community and, while a number of these are occupied by those who have taken up employment in the expanding government and service/tourism sectors, many are second homes for (often elderly) Perth residents who move north for the winter months. Even in the houses that are more permanently occupied, turnover is frequently high. Many public servants (police, teachers etc.) only seek to remain in Denham for a specific tour of duty and, even though Denham is seen an attractive country posting, they are likely to move back to Perth or a regional centre as their children approach high school age.

This temporary or seasonal use of Denham as a 'home' by many of its residents is clearly a barrier to the development of an all-encompassing sense of community. But, in recent years at least, it has been the town's shift from a predominantly productivist to a majority post productivist economic base that has caused some of the most serious community divisions. The strength of the original community's feeling about change was made evident in the two town meeting votes in the 1980s alluded to above. When change did occur, it was the local employees of the Department of Conservation and Land Management (later the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC)) who were often seen as both the harbingers and implementers of new and, for some traditionalists, unacceptable ways of doing things. DEC often sought to protect vulnerable plant and animal species by fencing off and gating areas of land, or imposing catch limits on commercial and recreational fishers. At Monkey Mia, they were tasked with ensuring

that the human-dolphin interaction occurred safely for both species, even when the crowds of people were extremely large. Some of both the long term residents and the early ecotourism operators regretted the “locking up” of areas to which they had formerly had access, the removal of exotic trees which had formerly shaded a popular beach and what they saw as excessively officious control of tourist behaviour. Some informants referred to instances of ostracism of DEC staff by long term inhabitants, sometimes even extending to their families and to their children in the local school. Interestingly, our Aboriginal informants, both the fishers (who saw DEC as keeping their small scale industry sustainable) and the Indigenous/ecotourism operators (who saw DEC as ‘caring for country’ in a manner that the pastoralists had not) were consistently accepting of the new environmental regimes.

Particularly in our interviews in 2011, however, we discerned positive (though not invariable) signs of greater community cohesion. The most notable shift had occurred electorally. In the 2007 Shire elections a significant change in council membership occurred, with individuals from the conservation and tourism sectors taking over from pastoralists and ‘mainstream’ business figures and the DEC employee with specific responsibility for World Heritage matters becoming Shire President. This council and president were then re-elected in 2010. By this time, DEC had become the largest employer in the town, even outstripping the Shire and, twenty years after World Heritage designation, several DEC staff and their families had become long term residents. It would also seem that the long delays between designation and the branding and infrastructure upgrades had engendered a sense of promises being broken for many in the community in the 1990s and early 2000s. Several respondents referred to the local benefits of World Heritage designation being ‘talked up’ by state and federal government representatives from whom they had expected rather more prompt delivery. By 2011, however, it was increasingly recognised that infrastructure and service improvements were occurring.

The challenges facing a partially transient population seeking to make their homes and develop community consciousness in a small remote town that is essentially reinventing itself and its role are

considerable and it is not surprising that a number of conflicts have occurred over recent decades. Nevertheless Denham now appears to be progressing to a more sustainable future, not just environmentally but also in economic and social terms.

Meekatharra

As in Denham/Shark Bay, European settlers began to take up pastoral leases in the country surrounding Meekatharra in the 1870s and 1880s. In the succeeding decades, a large proportion of the local Aboriginal population moved onto the pastoral stations which had been created on their lands where, according to their gender, they performed stockman and domestic duties, generally for little more than their keep. A short lived gold rush occurred around the present day site of Meekatharra in 1896. A second and larger gold discovery was made in 1899 and, in 1903, Meekatharra townsite was gazetted. Very soon thereafter the town became an important transshipment hub and a centre for the surrounding area. In 1908, the Canning Stock Route was opened, connecting Meekatharra with major cattle properties in the better-watered Kimberleys in the far north of the state. In 1910, the state railway network was extended to Meekatharra, linking the town with the port of Geraldton and, ultimately, with Perth. The town therefore became a significant railhead where livestock, wool and minerals could be transhipped to state, national and global markets.

Nevertheless, it is mining and specifically gold mining which has been both the economic base and the source of the town's identity for more than a century. Inevitably, as the more accessible deposits were worked out and as the gold price fluctuated, the fortunes of the town ebbed and flowed. As is the case in the current global economic downturn, gold prices were high in the 1930s and the town flourished at that time, circumstances that were repeated in the mid-1980s when a number of gold mines reopened. However, the last active mine worked by miners living in and around Meekatharra closed in 2008, though the town still supports a number of mining related services from the hire and supply of equipment to prospecting teams to the presence of a court for the lodging of mining claims. Respondents

to the 2010 interviews in particular talked about the town's mining identity and speculated, though not always optimistically, about "when the mines come back". However, this is unlikely to reoccur in a manner that provides significant benefit to Meekatharra. Over the last two decades, the mining model for remote Australia has shifted from the use of a local workforce to that of Fly In Fly Out (FIFO) whereby the labour force and their families live in the capital cities or in distant major regional centres and the mineworkers are flown in for tours of duty of several days or weeks to remote mine sites where they are accommodated in serviced quarters and have virtually no contact with or make any economic contribution to any local towns. Several mine sites operate in this manner around Meekatharra using no town facilities other than the airport. The railway was removed in 1976 and, when the Great Northern Highway, which passes through the town and connects Perth with the newer, larger iron ore mines in the Pilbara to the north, was sealed in the 1980s, Meekatharra became merely a "drive through town" in the words of one of our respondents.

In these circumstances, the commercial services in the town struggle to survive. Many businesses in the main street have closed and only one new business (a pharmacy) has opened in recent years. But, while the commercial service sector, like the mining sector, is in decline, the town has a significant and long established public service base, related to both its central position within the state and to its relative accessibility by air and land. Meekatharra became an early base of the Royal Flying Doctor Service in the 1930s. During the Second World War, American forces significantly extended the runway for strategic reasons to a point where it can now handle large passenger planes should these need to be diverted from Perth in an emergency. The Flying Doctor Service and the associated Meekatharra Hospital have been developed significantly since then and now serve an extremely large, if sparsely populated area. Similarly a branch of the School of the Air was established in the town in 1959 and this, together with Meekatharra District High School, also play a major regional role. In fact, the economy of the town is "dominated by various government and non-government services" and, in turn,

their “clientele is dominated by the Aboriginal residents of the town” (Beer et al., 2011).

This point requires further explanation, as does the more general fact that the town now has a 44% Aboriginal population. This population began to grow in the 1960s, when national legislation decreed that the Aboriginal population would be counted in the national census and the States agreed that the Federal Government would henceforward set policy on Aboriginal affairs for the nation. With their inclusion in the national Census it was possible to plan for and fund services for Aboriginal people and thereby they became eligible for various pensions. In 1968, the Federal Court ruled that Aboriginal people should receive wages equal to those of the rest of the working population. Up to this point most pastoralists had employed Aboriginal stockmen and domestic workers essentially on a subsistence basis, providing them with very basic levels of food, clothing and shelter. After 1968, most dismissed them rather than pay them the same wage rates as white Australians. Those Aboriginal people who were turned off the stations tended to move to nearby towns, such as Meekatharra, where welfare services could be provided for them. In the course of the late twentieth century, they were gradually provided with public housing but, in a town where both pastoral and mining jobs were becoming increasingly scarce, very few employment opportunities were open to them. A significant proportion of the Aboriginal population of Meekatharra is therefore both welfare dependant and susceptible to drug and alcohol abuse. This situation is further complicated by the fact that this population moved to Meekatharra from a number of widely scattered pastoral stations and is therefore composed of a number of different kin groups. These kin groups are the primary social groups of this population and any disputes that arise between them can, particularly under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, readily escalate into quite widespread violence. It is therefore not surprising that the town supports considerable health, welfare, education, police, child protection, legal and public housing bureaucracies to cater for this population.

Even though the Canning Stock Route is now only an attraction for 4 wheel drive tourists and the railway was closed decades ago,

Meekatharra could be said to still be well provided for in terms of accessibility, given its location on a major national highway, its substantial airport and its important role in the provision of such iconic Australian services as the RFDS and the School of the Air. However, it should also be clear from the preceding background information on the town that the other two components of social sustainability as identified by the state government, namely homes and a sense of community, are less likely to be achieved.

More so than in Denham, many of the employees in the hospital, the School, the police station and court house and the other local, state and federal government offices are likely to see Meekatharra as a temporary posting. Certainly it is a location in which service professionals can gain valuable, and perhaps even extreme, experience but for most it is not a town in which educated and primarily city-based employees are likely to want to spend long periods of time. Their need for a 'home' tends to be, at the most basic level, a need for a house or unit that is well appointed and approaches the standard that they might expect in the larger regional towns and cities. Their likelihood of obtaining such accommodation will vary according to their employer and according to the availability of such housing in the town. Both the local (shire) and the state governments have invested heavily in providing suitable accommodation for their employees and their families when they move to such a remote location. Given the high costs involved when both building materials and tradespeople have to be brought from hundreds of kilometres away to construct and maintain these dwellings, this is a major but necessary investment. The federal government, however, expects its employees to find their own accommodation in what is an extremely small town, 100 kilometres from an even smaller town and 400 kilometres from the nearest regional centre. This is frequently unfeasible and federal offices have often been left understaffed for long periods because of this problem.

The issue of Aboriginal housing can be even more contentious. Given the low incomes/welfare payments received by this group, many struggle to afford even the public housing rents. One solution to this is "humberging" – essentially intimidating (usually elderly) relatives

into providing younger family members with a place to stay. Others sleep in cars. Still others, particularly children, may wander the streets. Such behaviour is particularly common when adult members of the household are violent and/or severely affected by drink or drugs. The public housing shortage can be exacerbated, either by poor maintenance (the Aboriginal population characteristically moved from pastoral station camps to edge of town camps to rented public housing, an experience not conducive to the acquisition of home maintenance skills) or by active damage to the properties. The public housing in the town is predominantly made from asbestos. When violent disputes occur, rocks and stones are thrown at the windows and walls of these houses or they may be set on fire. Serious vandalism and arson occur primarily to houses that have been left vacant, waiting for necessary maintenance to bring them up to the standard required for occupation. The problem is that the longer a house is left vacant the more vulnerable it becomes to such treatment. One informant showed us numerous houses exhibiting serious damage from a variety of missiles and several that had been completely destroyed in the course of disputes or careless or deliberate arson. Recently the Shire has been demolishing approximately three houses per year when they have been damaged beyond repair.

Given either the difficulties for or the disinclination of many of those at or near the top and the bottom of Meekatharra's socioeconomic spectrum to make relatively permanent homes for themselves in the town, the challenges for developing a sense of community here are massive. The present situation contrasts starkly with that of past decades when a substantial proportion of the town's population were employed in local mines, shared similar lifestyles and had comparable stakes in the town's wellbeing. In the course of our fieldwork, we were massively impressed by the dedication of many of the town's (largely white) service providers and by the determination of members of the Aboriginal community to improve their own and their people's situation but, unless or until a more broadly based economic future can be discerned for the town and the current levels of alcohol and drug abuse and child neglect can be brought under more control, it is difficult to envisage Meekatharra attaining a satisfactory state of social

sustainability in the immediate future. Indeed, one Fly In Fly Out doctor recently contended that the town was “in danger of ‘complete social demise’” (Cutler, 2012).

Conclusion

In remote Australia the achievement of both social sustainability and sustainability more generally are highly subject to national and global influences over which the generally small local populations have little or no control. These influences can be: simply financial, such as the fluctuations in wool or gold prices; technological, such as the advances that have made FIFO mining operations increasingly feasible and profitable; or political, such as the designation of World Heritage or other conservation areas or the change in the citizenship status and therefore the wage levels of the Aboriginal population. Locally, it does not matter whether the consequences of these external decisions are intended, such as the opening, closing or ‘FIFOing’ of mines or the conversion of pastoral or fishing areas to conservation zones, or unintended, such as the removal of the Aboriginal populations from the pastoral stations by their former employers on the granting of equal wages. In all cases they have required the local settlements to change and adapt.

With specific reference to the social components of the State Planning Strategy, it would seem that Holmes’ (2006) “multifunctional rural transition” is impacting on remote Australia at a time when the region’s accessibility levels are rising rapidly and, in many ways, this could be said to be facilitating and intensifying this externally driven change. In this process, the small, characteristically specialised and frequently close knit (although not necessarily culturally uniform or particularly sustainable) communities of remote Australia are being required to accommodate increasingly diverse and transient populations for whom the attainment of both homes (at least in the sense of an attachment to place) and of a sense of community are becoming increasingly difficult. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify – at least relative – winners and losers in this process of change, with coastal Denham being an example of a beneficiary and inland Meekatharra of a casualty of Salt’s (2003) ‘big shift’.

In the case of Denham, a combination of increased accessibility and increased environmental awareness has facilitated a growth in employment opportunities in both tourism and environmental management in a way which has constrained, but by no means prevented the continuance of local pastoral and fishing activities. As the population and services have increased in line with the town's growing ease of access and in combination with its climatic and environmental advantages, it has become increasingly attractive as a site for retirement and/or seasonal migration. Meekatharra, by contrast, has seen its increased accessibility, as manifested by FIFO, essentially destroy its local employment in mining while the movement of the Aboriginal population from the pastoral stations into the town was one of desperation (the need for basic material support) rather than aspiration. While this has produced a demand for employment in a wide range of both generalist and specialist support services in the town, Meekatharra struggles to provide an environment in which these employees may wish to remain there for other than financial reasons.

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A Mediation Agreement to Resolve Environmental Conflict in Rural Israel and its Social Implications – the Case of Wadi Zalmon National Park

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Introduction: mediation and environmental conflict, definitions and examples

Mediation refers to an informal process in which a neutral third party helps parties in conflict attain an agreement which they were unable to reach on their own. Usually such an agreement, once attained, ends the negotiations or resolves the disputes, all or part. As to unresolved disputed matters, the mediator will assist the parties to formulate an agreed upon procedure of continuing the negotiations, or agree on ways of resolving these issues.

Among characteristics of mediation procedures, three stand out:

- 1) Absence of any compulsion throughout the entire process. Indeed, in order to commence the mediation process and complete it successfully, the parties must mutually undertake to act and persist toward reaching an agreement;
- 2) High degree of involvement by the parties to the dispute, viewing themselves to be the principal actors, rather than their representatives. This characteristic is unique, distinguishing the mediation process from court procedures, and even from arbitration;
- 3) The mediator may meet with each party separately, without impairing the legitimacy of the process or the neutrality of the mediator. The importance of this characteristic has been stressed by many, who believe that the separate meetings enable the mediator to identify the true interests of the parties, prod them to move ahead in the process, present a variety of solutions and reach an agreement acceptable to all.

For many years mediation served mainly to solve social, economic and political conflicts (Bingham, 1986), but since the 1970s it has also been used to solve environmental disputes (McCubbin, 1989; Wondolleck & Crowfoot, 1990; Buckle & Thomas-Buckle, 1986; Talbot, 1983).

Mediation is of great value in places where people and organizations continue to live and act jointly; places which attempt to develop democracy and maximum realization of the rights and needs of the individual. In conflict situations within such environments, it is desirable that the responsibility for finding a solution of the conflict remains with those involved, rather than be transferred to a third party (a lawyer or official source).

Examination of mediation as a social equality phenomenon, is reflected in many studies dealing with characteristics of the mediation process, primarily how it builds a broad consensus that satisfies the desires of all those involved in the conflict. Many researchers argue that since this process enables to jointly develop solutions and adopt creative decisions, the populations that are partners in the process achieve mutual respect and understanding of one another, while the process itself is stable and is envisioned to be implemented better than any other agreement (Susskind, McDernan and Larmer 1999). The process is characterized by a high degree of transparency on the part of all those involved, and is based on willing and sincere participation of all interested parties. Thus, throughout its course there is equal access to sources of information facilitating effective participation in the process (Yenov 1996, Sneh-Cohen 2006, Alberstein 2007). Susskind, McKearnan and Larmer compared different cases in which a mediation process was conducted and they found that the process succeeded when and if several conditions were met:

- Participants in the group had faith in the position of the chosen mediator. The mediator maintained neutrality and assisted building a consensus.
- Within the consensus building process, the parties in conflict translated their demands into written official rules or bylaws, accepted by all.

- The parties in conflict required considerable time to become familiar with the needs and wishes of each and every party and their characteristics (Susskind, McKernan and Larmer, 1999).

As distinct from the group of researchers that sought the common and inclusive, Carpenter (1999) argued that there is no uniform strategy for building a consensus but rather a unique process needs to be adapted to each case. At the same time, the principles forming the substance of the mediation process must be retained: finding a neutral mediator, acquaintance between the parties in conflict, and finally, intention to reach an agreement accepted by all parties involved. The call for adapting a unique mediation process for each case stems from the social linguistic represented by this process. Various researchers argue that it is first and foremost a social conflict composed of different groups or persons possessing a variety of different characteristics and desires, and therefore the process must also consider human nature and social behavior (Libiszewski 1992).

The social linguistic characterizing the mediation process enables it to serve as a means for solving a conflict between population groups struggling over the same landscape unit. Each group perceives the space in a different manner both in its characteristics as well as its inherent potential and the possibilities of utilizing such.

In Catron County of New Mexico in the U.S., characterized by its isolation and a rural population engaged in logging and cattle farming, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service declared a restriction on logging and grazing. The restriction stemmed from the desire to protect a rare owl in danger of extinction that was added to the Endangered Species list. As a result of this impediment, many local residents lost their livelihood. The restriction on logging created a conflict between several bodies: The Fish and Wildlife Service which declared the region a nature preserve and freeze all logging activity in order to protect endangered species, while the inhabitants desired to continue logging as their means of livelihood. Additional interest groups were involved: environmental groups, the Federal Government, the U.S. Forest Service, as well as the lumber and livestock industries. In 1996, it was decided to resolve the conflict by means of mediation. The mediation process was financed by

the New Mexico Center for Dispute Resolution and characterized by a high degree of public involvement in the process. In order to ensure that members of the community become full partners in the mediation procedure, a group of people involved in the conflict decided to establish an educational project for young people. The objective of the project was to acquaint the local population with the mediation and cooperation process. This confidence building measure was carried out by means of joint tours, meals and debates which were also attended by the general public. The mediation agreement was signed in 1998 within a broad consensus of the groups involved in the conflict (Smith 1999).

Another case of mediation applied to resolving an environmental conflict took place in 1983 in the San Juan National Forest in southern Colorado in the U.S., near Vallecito Lake. A conflict arose between the U.S. Forest Service that wanted to cut trees in order to pave an access road that would separate the forest and the local residents who feared landscape and environmental damage in the vicinity of the forest. In this case as well, it was decided that the conflict would be resolved by mediation. The mediation activities softened the objections of the parties, promoted joint acquaintance and understanding. Although the road was ultimately paved, its route took into account the wishes of the community, thus causing minimal harm. In this case, none of the groups achieved all their expectations from the mediation, but all parties were satisfied with the decisions taken and moved on toward their full implementation (Tableman 1990).

The mediation procedure was also indicated as a solution in the case of differences of opinion in respect of permitted land use in the Chesapeake Bay area within the boundaries of the states of Virginia and Maryland. The bay is renowned for its unique landscapes, variety of species it houses and its cultural heritage assets. In the 1970s and 1980s, the bay landscape was damaged due to extensive industrial development with the attendant soil, water, and air pollution. The deterioration of its physical state required intervention by federal, state and local authorities. The initial attempts by the authorities to enforce rehabilitation of the bay were unsuccessful. Due to this, a step was taken to launch a mediation procedure in order to reach a broad

agreement on rehabilitation of the bay. Participating in the process were representatives of industrial plants, the public, farmers and representatives of the various authorities. Rehabilitation commenced in 1986. The action was supported by the Bay Preservation Law, its legislation agreed upon by all involved in the conflict (McCubbin, 1989).

Examination of the three environmental cases attests to several recurring characteristics:

- The conflict over the landscape unit involved two groups: the authorities and the local population that did not benefit from the unit yet needed it for leisure and recreation, and groups that benefited economically from the landscape unit. The first demanded to preserve the unique landscape and minimize any harm to it, while the economic beneficiaries refused to give up utilization of the resources and land use that were developed in the landscape unit.
- The mediator chosen to resolve the conflict “created” encounters that facilitated dialogue (communication) and joint action. These activities action were conducted through educational projects as well as social and festive events.
- The structured mediation procedure was made up of five stages: 1) a preparatory stage of bridging and creating mutual trust; 2) mediation commencement stage – presenting and explaining the goals of the negotiations; 3) holding bridging social activities; 4) acquaintance and bargaining; 5) broad agreement and signing the agreement for implementing the mediation decisions.
- In all three cases no examination was made of the effect of the mediation process on attitudes of the involved populations toward the landscape object that led to the conflict.

Comparative analysis and identification of similar characteristics of the mediation process in environmental conflict were conducted out in a study of Crowfoot & Wondolleck (1990). Three key social characteristics were identified that determine the success of the environmental mediation process:

- 1) Willingness to consent to participate in the process. This also applied to those obligated to participate in the process by virtue of their office (such as the head or representative of a local or regional authority).
- 2) Deliberations are carried out directly between all parties involved in the process. The function of the mediator is to direct the participants, thus facilitating agreement and reinforcing their relationship.
- 3) The process is complete when broad agreement is reached and joint decisions are taken by all participants, regarding the manner of implementing the agreed upon decisions in the mediation agreement.

This study, as well as in others, repeatedly stressed the importance of social characteristics, particularly broad consensus, for ensuring stability of the mediation agreement (Mernitz 1980; McEwen & Maiman 1981; Amy 1987).

All studies presented above lack a long term evaluation facilitating examination of the changes that occurred in the populations participating in the mediation process in respect to their attitudes to the disputed landscape unit. Such an examination would be particularly important in regions and countries characterized by political territorial conflicts, such as Israel. These regions are characterized by a multicultural society in which each social group attempts to appropriate within the common space the assets representing its specific heritage. Mediation may serve as the means to create awareness of diverse values and willingness to accept such in order to facilitate social-cultural coexistence (Amit-Cohen, 2009).

Several Israeli researchers proposed mediation as a tool to solve landscape conflicts in Israel (Shamir & Sullivan, 1985; Bar and Elias 1995, Alberstein, 2007), but in order to analyze the success of the mediation process additional examination of implications the mediation process has on population groups involved in the environmental conflict is required: their attitudes to the landscape unit, their identity and their relationship with each other. This study focuses on such an examination while stressing yet another facet – the social-cultural implications.

Purpose, objectives and methodology

Purpose

The aim of this article is to present a study examining how relations between several population groups in a rural area of Israel have developed over a period of time into a mediated agreement intended to solve a dispute over a scenic area (environmental conflict). Examination over time is intended to examine whether changes have taken place in the population groups in respect to the agreement and its implications.

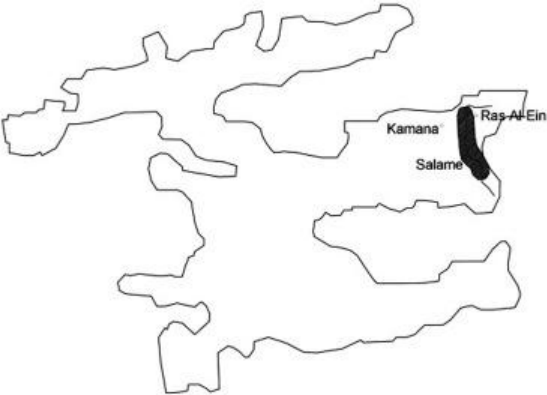
The study deals with Wadi Zalmon in Israel (Figure 1), a stream flowing from east to west in Western Galilee, and its environs, declared a National Park. Several population groups reside in the park vicinity – Arabs, Bedouin and Christian Arabs. Some live in permanent settlements (Salame, Ras Al-Ein and Kamana), while others live in more distant localities but farm the land in the vicinity of the streambed (Figure 2). In 1981, the State of Israel confirmed the decision of the Nature and Parks Authority to declare Wadi Zalmon a National Park – due to its natural resources and cultural heritage assets. The declaration was supposed to provide this landscape unit protection against overdevelopment and harm to its uniqueness. Notwithstanding this, considerable areas within the park remained under private ownership and agricultural cultivation.

The decision led to a conflict between several bodies representing two positions: 1) to declare the area a protected area, to retain its unique landscape and protect the land from further development. This is the position held by the State and public authorities (represented by the Regional Council - Misgav), the Nature and Parks Authority and government ministries, and 2) not to change the status of the streambed and its surroundings, or in other words, to allow the owners of the land to continue to cultivate the soil, and residents of nearby settlements to manage, foster and develop the landscape unit (the Bedouin of Salame, Ras Al-Ein and an extended family of Christian Arabs, residents of the Wadi Zalmon National Park). The declaration of the area as National Park was delayed until a solution to resolve the conflict will be found.

Figure 9.1. Location of the Zalmon National Park.



Figure 9.2. Misgav Regional Council administrative boundaries, Zalmon National Park boundary and the settlements involved in the environmental conflict.



In July 2004 a decision was taken to launch a mediation process to resolve the environmental conflict, which would ultimately result in the signing of an agreement to prevent the degradation of the landscape while concurrently allowing it to serve as an agricultural area. The mediation process was conducted by JEMS – the Joint Environmental Mediation Service and by the local collaborative Jew-Arab IINK (NGO). It ended three years later in July 2007 and the agreement was signed in June 2009. Although the first such experiment in Israel, it is unique not only due to its originality, but also due to the fact that it includes many populations representative of the multicultural distinctiveness of Israeli society: Christians, Moslems, Bedouins and Jews (Smootha, 2002). Therefore the conflict in Wadi Zalmon can be analyzed as an example of a broad political conflict that characterizes Israeli society (Smootha, 2002; Levin 2005). On the one side are the representatives of the establishment who represent the values adopted by a sovereign state with a Jewish-Zionist majority: preserving nature, open spaces and historical heritage. On the other side are the Bedouin who belong to the minority groups in Israel. In the past the Bedouin were characterized by migration, dispersion and unplanned settlement. Since the 1960s onward, the State has chosen to consolidate the Bedouin and provide them with a permanent consolidated settlement. This process was dubbed “the Bedouin installation” and to this end several regions were chosen throughout Israel. The Wadi Zalmon region was chosen to consolidate within it Bedouin from throughout the Galilee and create for this purpose a large Bedouin settlement to be named Salame.

Social and cultural characteristics allow us to classify the involved groups into three: groups residing within the National Park or nearby; ‘decision makers’ (state and public authorities – Misgav Regional Council, Israel Nature and Parks Authority and government ministries); neutral groups composed of mediators (JAMS, LINK and representatives of CBI – the Consensus Building Institute in Harvard University, leading by Prof. Lawrence Susskind) and social organizations.

1) Social groups

1. Bedouin residents residing within the National Park.
2. Christian Arab residents settled within the National Park.

3. Bedouin residents – house owners residing in villages adjoining the National Park.
- 2) Decision makers
 1. Representatives of municipal bodies
 2. Representatives of institutions – Nature and Parks Authority
- 3) Neutral bodies
 1. Mediators in the conflict
 2. Social organizations

Objectives and methodology

The implications of mediation process related to an environmental conflict are many; this study focuses only on one of them - social-cultural implications. It aims to examine whether the mediation agreement led to a change in attitudes toward the landscape unit among the populations involved in the environmental conflict, toward possibilities of its development and its function in forming their identity. Since such an evaluation requires an interpretative examination, the study was based on an ethnographic method. Such method can serve as an important research tool in cases where populations different from one another are examined as to their attitudes to a delineated geographic space. A researcher who seeks to examine these attitudes searches for ways of creating trust among the populations being studied by him in order to encourage them to respond. By way of meetings and interviews a relationship of closeness, trust and friendship, linkage, identification and sensitivity to their concerns can be developed. The trust created may enable the researcher to observe from the side, study and listen, thus evaluating their sensitivities, their cognitive tendencies and their perception of space (Maykut and Morehouse 1994; Seidman 1991; Woods 1996).

And indeed, in the present research, observations and interviews were conducted in two separate time periods. The first – from June 2009 (following the signing of the agreement, while the mediation was continue for several more months to help in the implementation of the

agreement) to March 2010 consisted of 42 interviews. The second from September 2010 to June 2011 consisted of 29 interviews. In this period the representatives of governmental authorities and neutral bodies like JEMS – the Joint Environmental Mediation Service – are not involve).

The observations and the interviews were carried out during various events: meetings, festive events and discussions that took place in the groups involving environmental conflict. The subjects discussed in the two interviews were repeated and were uniform for all interviewees. The contents of the answers were documented, examined and compared (both among the respondents belonging to the various groups and between the periods). The change that did or did not emerge in the answers exposes the implications of the mediation process and the degree of agreement as to the attitude of the populations to the landscape unit studied and their expectations from the mediation agreement.

The social and cultural implications of the mediation process in Wadi Zalmon

In the course of 2009-2011 interviews and observations were conducted within seven population groups involved in the mediation in Wadi Zalmon intended to resolve the conflict between those who sought to declare the landscape space a National Park and those who sought to continue to utilize and develop its resources for agriculture. As mentioned above, the interviews and the observations were conducted at two points in time. The aim of the observations and interviews was to reveal the implications of the mediation on attitudes of these populations toward the Wadi Zalmon landscape unit.

The subjects dealt with by these interviews were uniform:

- 1) Physical changes in the National Park following the mediation agreement and their conformance to the expectations of the interviewees. These were the focus of two questions:
 1. Has a physical-geographical change occurred in the area of the stream as a result of the agreement and what were its physical manifestations?

2. Did the development carried out along the streambed and its environs meet your expectations?
- 2) Social and cultural changes following the mediation agreement. These too were the focus of two questions:
 1. Were social-cultural activities conducted following the mediation process and what was their nature?
 2. To what extent did these activities contribute to your local identity and the vigor of the entire community?
- 3) Economic-status or social-political change. The attitude to this subject was the focus of the following question: Did the mediation agreement and the changes along the stream and its surroundings bring any economic or political benefit whatsoever to you or your community?
- 4) Ethical-environmental awareness. The attitude to this was explored by way of two questions:
 1. Did the mediation agreement and changes along the streambed and its surroundings contribute to a new attitude toward value subjects (heritage, community values, co-existence, cultural tolerance, love of the countryside or of the land unless love of country in the patriotic sense)?
 2. Did the mediation process contribute to environmental attitude (recognition of environmental values and their importance, protection of the landscape and nature resources, greater involvement in environmental preservation and controlled development)?

In this paper, replies of the interviewees are presented in three stages: table, accompanying interview and summary. Due to the limitations of the length of this paper, the three stages are presented only for the main three population groups that were involved in the mediation process and agreement (Table 1 represents the attitudes of 3 social groups; Table 2 represents the attitudes of 2 groups of state and public authorities and Table 3 represents 2 groups of mediators).

Social Groups

Table 9.1. Attitude of Bedouin residents living along the stream to the mediation agreement in the Wadi Zalmon conflict and its implications.

| | | Subjects | June 2005-March 2006 | Sept. 2006-June 2007 |
|---|-----|--|---|---|
| 1 | 1.1 | Physical changes, their expression in the preserve and attitude of interviewees to these changes | Most interviewees noted that a physical change has taken place. They related to construction of a fence and terraces at the entrance to the stream | 50% of the interviewees noted that no change has taken place; the other 50% noted a minor change which they viewed to be negative: illegal building by a clan member residing in the northern part of the stream. The group was of the opinion that such building stemmed from disappointment, frustration and shattered trust between residents and authorities. |
| | 1.2 | Physical changes in the stream and its vicinity met expectations | Most claim that their expectations are being realized and added their hope that over time the change will become more noticeable. | Most claim that the changes did not meet their expectations; they are disappointed and stress that not enough was done, if anything at all. |
| 2 | 2.1 | Educational and social activity in respect to the National Park | Most are aware and are partners in the educational activity both within the family and the school toward cleaning and preserving nature along the streambed and its surroundings. Cleanup campaigns are carried out by youth and environmental subjects are taught in school. | Most noted hardly any educational social activity regarding the stream and its environs, except for explanations in school. |
| | 2.2 | Contribution of the activity to community identity and vigor | Contribution is felt primarily regarding Bedouin identity and heritage, on subjects related to agricultural work and its methods along the stream and its environs. | Majority expresses disappointment due to lack of support toward promoting the National Park and it becoming an element representing local heritage. |
| 3 | | Economic or political gain | The majority hopes for future economic gain after recognition of the stream as a National Park, primarily in matters of tourism in its vicinity or in adjoining settlements (tourist rooms, bakery, kiosk). Most noted that legal recognition of houses and issue of permits to residents did not lead to change in their status. | Disappointment is in evidence, even though some hope remains for future economic benefit following the recognition of the stream as a National Park, and a change in the attitude of the authorities toward the group and its needs. |

| | | Subjects | June 2005-March 2006 | Sept. 2006-June 2007 |
|---|-----|---|---|--|
| 4 | 4.1 | Awareness of cultural and heritage values | Awareness was strengthened in the entire group toward subjects such as esthetics, cleanliness, organizing the space. The mediation process moreover contributed to recognition of the importance of social tolerance and coexistence among the groups involved in the mediation process. Also reinforced was the recognition of the historical importance of the stream and its environs for expressing Bedouin heritage. | Considerable importance still exists within the group regarding esthetics, cleanliness, organizing the space, preservation and durable development. At the same time disappointment and frustration are impacting on their tolerance of the authorities and decision makers in respect to the stream and its environs. |
| | 4.2 | Awareness of environmental values | Environmental awareness exists, expressed by a hope for change in the community's attitude to matters such as: maintaining cleanliness, understanding the importance of creating physical means for preserving the National Park and avoiding harming it (paths, signs, waste baskets). Residents report on their attitude toward visitors in the park, reveal tolerance and seek ways of coping with scornful attitude, such as: dirt, visitors who enter into residents' houses and even damage the crops (pick fruit). | Environmental awareness still exists, but it is weakening. Moreover, most residents show little tolerance for visitors in the park. They are angry at the trespassers (who enter residential areas) and even accost them. |

Summary: Cautious optimism regarding the mediation process prevailed at the first point in time among the Bedouin residents belonging to the group of homeowners and landowners in the northern and northwestern part of Wadi Zalmon. They hoped for an economic change that would benefit them and also ascribed to environmental education a function that would lead to a social change in their status and reinforcement of their identity. At the second point in time disappointment set in and doubts arose regarding the future implementation of the agreement and its contribution to an economic, social and cultural change.

Decision Makers

Table 9.2. Attitudes of representatives of municipal bodies that are party to the mediation agreement in Wadi Zalmon and its implications.

| | | Subjects | June 2005-March 2006 | Sept. 2006-June 2007 |
|---|-----|--|--|--|
| 1 | 1.1 | Physical changes, their expression in the preserve and attitude of interviewees to these changes | Some noted no physical change in the streambed which remains at the planning stage. Others noted some development work but barely detectable. All claimed that the physical change in the field will be seen when the final plan is approved by the various committees. | Some claim that there is no change at the present. In their opinion, a change will come about in the future when the agreement will be implemented. On the other hand, some others cite the physical change in adding another story to two houses located in the northern part of the streambed. |
| | 1.2 | Physical changes in the streambed and its vicinity met expectations | All interviewees claim that the change meets expectations. Nonetheless, the bureaucratic process is long and tedious, thus immediate change cannot be expected. | All interviewees claim that the change meets expectations. They would like to see the agreement implemented quickly, but this is stymied by bureaucratic constraints. |
| 2 | 2.1 | Educational and social activity in respect to the National Park | Educational activity is conducted only among the youth. Thus, for example, youth from the village school meet with youth from Misgav to engage in activities related to bridging, heritage and preserving the environment. There is moreover a plan to develop a cultural center and activities for residents and visitors in the streambed. | The activity conducted among youth at the first point in time is continuing now as well. |
| | 2.2 | Contribution of the activity to community identity and vigor | Interviewees ignored the issue. | Part of the interviewees did not relate to this issue. Others argued that the streambed residents are proud of the very action taken (testified to by the signing of the mediation agreement). "The residents are prepared to join together toward preservation of their tourist gem". |

| | | Subjects | June 2005-March 2006 | Sept. 2006-June 2007 |
|---|-----|---|--|---|
| 3 | | Economic or political gain | There is no economic gain. There is expectation for the park becoming the tourism anchor for the local population. Namely, there is possibility of developing guest rooms, restaurants, heritage centers, etc. Nor is there political gain for the population residing in the streambed and its vicinity. Nonetheless a few argue that political gain may accrue to the council members. | There is no economic change whatsoever. When the agreement will be implemented it will have economic implications and the residents will have the opportunity to implement that which was decided. As to political gain some claim that they have no idea and others claim that the council has gained politically since it took a step that succeeded, but this gain will evaporate if the agreement is not implemented. |
| 4 | 4.1 | Awareness of cultural and heritage values | Interviewees are unaware of any change in respect to these values. They believe that the educational activity will affect awareness of the values of heritage, co-existence and importance of the environment. | At present no change has taken place in respect to these values, but they believe that such a change will take place in the future. |
| | 4.2 | Awareness of environmental values | Such awareness is expressed in a minor way following educational activity. Furthermore, the council has an interest in local residents being included among the employees of the park, in order to create a true partnership in preserving the nature and cultural heritage of the park. | It appears that the residents care about the environment and its development and thus part of them attempts to create facts on the ground by way of illegal building or private initiatives. Such actions harm the unique environmental values of the park. |

Summary: At the first point in time development work began and with it expectation in the involved communities of future economic and social-cultural change. At the second point in time there is some disappointment yet hope remains for a change in the future.

Neutral Body

**Table 9.3. Attitudes of the mediators toward the Wadi
Zalmon mediation agreement and its implications.**

| | | Subjects | June 2005-March 2006 | Sept. 2006-June 2007 |
|---|-----|--|--|---|
| 1 | 1.1 | Physical changes, their expression in the preserve and attitude of interviewees to these changes | One mediator states that there are a few physical changes. In his view, most of changes take place in the form of private initiatives by residents of the park. For example, plowing and clearing weeds. A second mediator states that there are no physical changes, but there will be such in the future. | Very few changes, such as exposing the aqueduct and illegal building by one of the streambed residents. |
| | 1.2 | Physical changes in the streambed and its vicinity met expectations | Yes, the changes meet the expectations since we are dealing with a gradual process. | There is considerable disappointment that development of the park, paths, entrance and exit has not began, and more important that there is still no official recognition of the houses of the residents in the park. |
| 2 | 2.1 | Educational and social activity in respect to the National Park | One mediator states that there is no educational activity but there will be in the future. A second mediator states that there is educational social activity among youth who are often enlisted for cleanup campaigns. | Not known whether activities of this type are carried out. Hoping that they will be in the future. |
| | 2.2 | Contribution of the activity to community identity and vigor | Such contribution exists. Residents are united under the mediation agreement which attained broad consent on the part of all involved bodies. | Community vigor was created after the mediation procedure. Accessibility by residents to the authorities increased, residents are gaining information and are acting (more or less) as a single united body. |

| | | Subjects | June 2005-March 2006 | Sept. 2006-June 2007 |
|---|-----|---|--|---|
| 3 | | Economic or political gain | Minor economic gain exists. For example, a resident of the streambed sells ice cream and profits from the visitors. Most of the economic gain will take place in the future when the houses will be legally approved and increase in value. The mediators do not see any political implications in the present but do not dismiss the possibility that the agreement will have political-class ramifications. | Not known if whether there is change in economic gain.. On the other hand it may be said that there is political gain expressed by forming direct contacts with representatives of the authorities. |
| 4 | 4.1 | Awareness of cultural and heritage values | Social values have been reinforced. For example, the residents view the visitors as tourists and not invaders whose sole aim is to cause damage. Heritage values have not been reinforced. It may be assumed that they will be reinforced in the future when the flour mills will be restored. | Mediators are unaware whether any change has taken place. |
| | 4.2 | Awareness of environmental values | There is initiative followed by development of environmental awareness, but not always positive. For example, residents are involved in improving the vicinity of the streambed by clearing weeds. They believe that in this manner they help preserve the streambed, yet in fact they harm the habitats and the natural flora of the streambed. In another case, a resident decided on his own to build a rock garden or level the ground in the streambed, unaware of the environmental damage he was causing. | No awareness whatsoever. Some residents behave like lawless criminals when they take matters in their hands to implement the mediation agreement in the streambed, without any supervision. Their action is contrary to customary practice and Israeli law. |

Summary: At the first point in time the mediators were aware of commencement of the initiated work in the streambed, primarily by residents and volunteers and also stressed the social and cultural change that has taken place among those involved in the process, particularly in respect to nature and landscape values. This positive change was ascribed to the success of the mediation agreement.

At the second point in time, the mediators noted that there is neither spatial change nor social-cultural change, except for personal initiatives by residents, some of which are negative.

Results and conclusions

Results

Examination over time of attitudes of the various population groups involved in the mediation agreement reveals various changes showing the longer term successes and failures of the mediation process, the signed agreement and their social-cultural implications:

The mediation agreement, appearance of the streambed and social-cultural implications

The attitude of all interviewees reveals a uniform opinion. In the first period all groups expressed satisfaction with the agreement and its implications on the improved appearance of the National Park. The second period was marked by disappointment and frustration. A majority of each group claimed that progress fell short of their expectations from the mediation process, yet while the decision makers ascribed this to bureaucracy, the social groups (residents of the National Park or Bedouin living in its vicinity) did not point to those being responsible or the reasons for the delays, but rather stressed lack of faith in the agreement and its ability to change their economic situation or social status.

The mediation agreement and its contribution to social-educational action

In the first post-mediation period, most interviewees from the various groups cited the cooperation between the groups (decision makers and the social groups). Such activity had implications on the sense of social vigor of the Bedouin living in the vicinity of the National Park. Villagers, decision makers and mediators all favorably cited the educational activity and its contribution to community identity and vigor. On the other hand, residents within

the National Park did not cite a change in their social vigor as long as the mediation agreement did not really produce options for their development and economic progress. They showed no interest in social-educational activity, which for them was not an issue to relate to in the mediation process. In the second period, a further deterioration took place in the sense of social vigor both among the decision makers and mediators, as well as among the Bedouin in villages adjoining the National Park. Although the Bedouin in the adjoining villages described educational activities related to the park, they did not view these as making a contribution to the formation of their identity.

Mediation agreement and possibilities of economic development and their social-cultural implications

The economic results expected by the Bedouin residents of the park from the mediation agreement in the first two interview periods and their disappointment have already been noted above. The interviews indicate that except for the mediators who stressed during the first two interview periods the economic gain expected in the future due to the mediation agreement and its contribution to strengthening the involved populations, the other groups did not expect any economic gain whatsoever.

The mediation agreement and the political-status gain

At the first point in time the mediators stressed the political gain and the change in status that will take place among the residents of the park and its vicinity in the eyes of the government authority and the public authorities and institutions. At the second point in time as well, the mediators again stressed the expected political gain. At the first point in time, the remaining interviewees did not ascribe any importance to political gain. However, at the second point in time, interviewees from among the residents in the National Park and its environs expressed expectations for a change in their status following the mediation procedure.

Awareness of heritage and its contribution to social-cultural vigor

At the first point in time the various groups related to values and heritage. At the second period in time cracks began to be seen in the consent among the groups regarding awareness of heritage. With the exception of the municipal authority (Misgav Regional Council), all interviewees claimed that historical awareness of the values of the National Park and the importance of its assets, while still there, had been damaged due to the residents' disappointment that the mediation agreement has not been implemented in full.

Environmental awareness and its contribution to social-cultural vigor

At the first point in time all groups stressed the importance of the mediation agreement for development of their environmental attitudes and its contribution to their social vigor. At the second point in time, no unity was displayed. Representatives of the state authority (NPA) claimed that no change has taken place and that the attitude toward the National Park and its vicinity has deteriorated with there being no desire to protect it from ecological and physical damage. The municipal bodies stressed that environmental awareness led to undesirable activity, claiming that the residents within the park and its vicinity developed initiatives that damaged the park's assets. The social groups continued to argue at the second point in time as well that while environmental awareness regarding the National Park exists, it does not suffice to affect the status of the groups in the view of the establishment and the various authorities.

Conclusions

1. Following the mediation agreement and the process of its implementation, greater awareness was created among participants in the agreement regarding the uniqueness of the geographic environment and possibilities of its development, primarily for tourism. Such activity can be developed within the National Park, but also in the vicinity of the surrounding villages. Throughout both interview periods the motivation

for such hardly diminished although a change had occurred. Residents of the National Park and its environs stressed the backing for tourism activity at the outset of implementing the mediation agreement, but this has weakened with the passage of time and was thus expressed in interviews in the second period, primarily with interviewees residing within and near the park. The head of a Bedouin clan residing within the National Park states as follows: “[...] when we signed the agreement I was promised that I could sell *pitta* and do business with the tourists [...] now we were abandoned, we are alone, don’t know what is happening and why everything got stuck [...]”.

Besides the backing issue, everyone stressed the gap formed in the course of time between promises and implementation. The decision makers and neutral bodies explained this gap as administrative problems (bureaucracy). Thus, for example, NPA representatives claimed that personnel changes at NPA harmed progress of the agreement and the possibilities of tourism-geared development. Residents of the park and its vicinity blamed the change that has taken place in the attitude of decision makers toward the agreement. They claimed that as time passed the cooperation cooled and recognition of the importance of the mediation agreement ebbed.

2. The mediation agreement contributed to higher environmental value awareness among all those involved, supported also by educational activity. The social groups, both residents living in the park and in the nearby Bedouin villages, cited educational activity intended to imbue knowledge of environmental resources, heritage values and possibilities of promoting lasting development. This activity was adapted to the uniqueness of the Wadi Zalmon National Park and the characteristics of the communities situated within the park and its environs. The authorities, NPA and the Regional Council, all enlisted toward reinforcing such awareness through active involvement in the educational programs. At the outset, everyone had great hopes from the mediation agreement, and educational activity was perceived as the means for reinforcing local pride and identity. Support of educational activity on the part of the authorities further reinforced these expectations.

At the outset, the educational programs gained the status of an “information transmitting pipeline”; through the programs youth were exposed to the uniqueness of the environment – from the geographical-physical aspects as well as economic, social and cultural aspects. The information was also conveyed to the adults who were invited to participate in the educational activities. In this way, the sense of partnership, responsibility and cohesion of all residents was reinforced, those residing within the park and residents nearby villages. The joint educational activity and awareness of the uniqueness of the National Park encouraged the adults to forward various ideas for tourism related development.

3. Differences exist between the residents, both in the park and the villages, and the authorities, regarding issues of preservation and development. The residents viewed the mediation agreement as approval of the unique status of the park and thus removal of the bureaucratic barriers to implementing development plans. Due to this, ideas were proposed and practical initiatives were forwarded for development within the National Park and its vicinity, even if they haven't gone through the official procedure of licensing and approval. Preservation of the park's values and landscapes was not perceived by them as a factor preceding development. The Nature and Parks Authority, the Regional Council, the mediators and volunteers, viewed the mediation agreement to be first and foremost a means for preserving the uniqueness of the park. They hoped that the development would be carried out by means of an orderly procedure in light of preservation requirements. The difference in interpretation created a conflict between the participating groups in respect to the function of the mediation agreement.

4. Inhabitants of the National Park and the villages adjoining the park ascribed to the mediation agreement a means of forwarding their interests. Inhabitants of the park viewed the agreement as reinforcing a decision to permit them to live within the park and in this way to facilitate the building and development they require. They did not ascribe importance to recognition of their historical uniqueness but rather recognition of their legal right to live within the park. And indeed, the Christian inhabitants of the park stressed at every opportunity

the economic issue as the factor that would bring about the change in their status and did not view the mediation agreement as the means for obtaining social-cultural achievements. The Bedouin residents of villages adjoining the National Park, ascribed to the park leverage for reinforcing their identity and a means for recognizing them as a body that is a partner in the decision-making process not only in respect to the park but also on issues related to the entire region.

An explanation for these differences may be found in the fact that many Bedouin serve in the IDF and have obtained as a result housing benefits (an expression of such may be seen in their place of residence, in the Bedouin villages adjoining the National Park). Another explanation is revealed in the interviews themselves, in which they argued that they herded and lived in the vicinity of the National Park over the course of many years, even prior to the permanent settlement process. In those years they crystallized a local heritage and identification with the landscape of the streambed and its remains. The National Park is in fact "their cultural landscape". On the other hand, the Christians inhabiting the streambed acquired the land and cultivated it, but never identified with its historical values nor crystallized a local heritage.

The mediation agreement as a solution for a social environmental conflict is of great value in a democratic society, in locations where different population groups live alongside each other and relate to common landscape units, and it therefore necessary to observe it. Yet maintaining the mediation agreement is not enough. Examination of its success over time is required, primarily analysis of its implications not only on the landscape environment which is in dispute, but also the desires, expectations and aspirations of the groups that are involved in the environmental dispute. Such desires do not end with the economic interest; they also include social-cultural needs as well as reinforcing identity and local pride.

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Vietnam's Immature Rural Tourism Industry: A Case Study of the Mekong Delta Region

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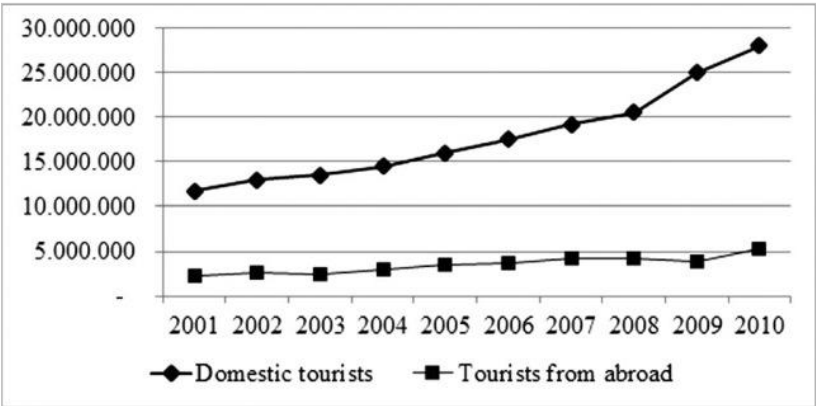
Vietnam's tourism industry is relatively young, with only around 40 years of significant development (VNTA, 1995). Further, in comparison to other Asian countries, Vietnam has only recently announced the importance of tourism in its national economic development strategy (VNTA, 1995). In 1986, the 6th Party Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam launched an economic reform program known as "Doi Moi" (meaning "renovation" in English), opening its doors to foreign investment and tourism, and setting Vietnam firmly on the path to free-market reform. However, it was not until 1992 that "Doi Moi" was actually enforced.

Ever since "Doi Moi," Vietnamese tourism has experienced rapid growth: from 250,000 foreign tourists in 1990, to a number that quadrupled to 1,000,000 in 1994, reaching 5,200,000 in 2010. In addition, the number of domestic tourists has increased rapidly: from 11,700,000 tourists in 2001 to 28,000,000 tourists in 2010 (Figure 1). Although the number of tourists has increased remarkably, tourism's contribution to Vietnam's GDP remains low: only 3.52% in 2005 and 5.8% in 2010 (Figure 2).

Moreover, tourism in Vietnam is usually concentrated in urban areas such as Ho Chi Minh, Hanoi, and so on. Tourism in rural areas is in the beginning stages of its development and is still immature. Similar to the case in many other developing countries, the rural tourism operating in Vietnam, more often than not, results in a negative impact

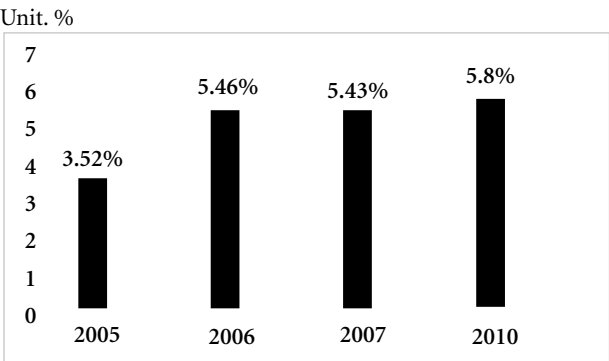
on the regions (for example, excluding local residents from being tourism stakeholders). This paper attempts to describe the current situation of rural tourism in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam and discusses the challenges of rural tourism in Vietnam.

Figure 10.1. Number of tourists in Vietnam, 2001-2010.



Source: ITDR (2011).

Figure 10.2. Ratio of tourism in Vietnam’s GDP (%).



Source: ITDR (2011).

Rural tourism in the context of Vietnam

The concept of “rural tourism” can be defined in three ways: (1) all tourism and recreational activities taking place in the countryside, (2)

a number of activities usually accepted by participants and providers as being “rural,” or (3) any activities taking place in any setting that participants perceive as rural and then behave accordingly within it (Tribe, 2000). Every region understands the term “rural tourism” differently, according to their background and resources, with regions interpreting it as farm tourism, green tourism, agritourism, ecotourism, and so forth on the basis of the types of activities offered (Tribe, 2000). Bramwell (1994) suggests that rural tourism is the way in which touristic activities have a small-scale and functional relationship with open space and nature, heritage, or the traditional societies that make them “rural.” Visits to museums and historical attractions, festivals, farmer markets, guided walks, and themed routes are examples of rural tourism activities (Bramwell and Lane, 1994).

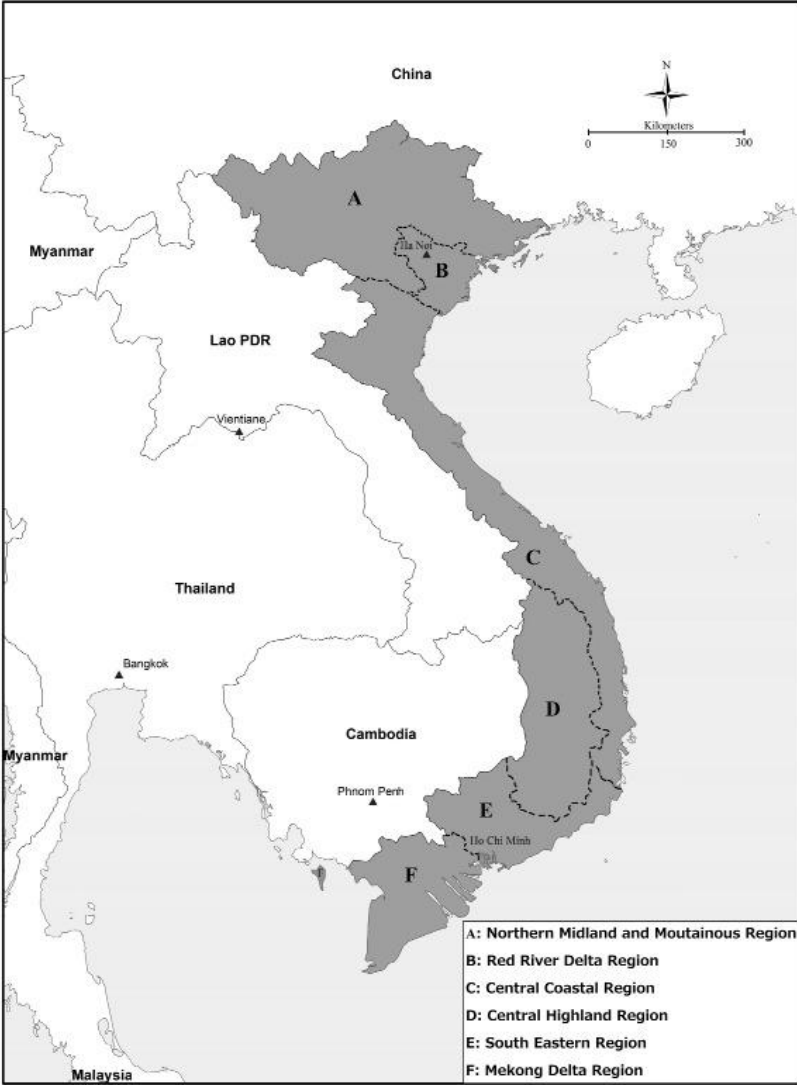
In Vietnam, although the term “rural tourism” has not yet been officially recognized in legal documents, there are many types of tourism being operated in rural areas throughout the country. Some famous destinations are Tien Giang, Ben Tre, and Vinh Long in the Mekong Delta region and Sapa in the North. In recent years, tourism in rural areas—or rural tourism—has been mentioned in the *Strategy of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2011-2020*, issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) in 2009. Specifically, the tourism strategy for rural areas, which is divided into six agricultural ecology regions (Figure 3), is described as follows:

Based on the foundation of comparative advantages and traditional aspects of each province and forecasts for the future market, the plan is organized to attract all economic sectors to invest in the traditional villages, service villages in the North mountainous region, Mekong River Delta region, Red River Delta region, Central Coast region [...] bringing into play the role of community and civil organizations to connect with agricultural regions, traditional villages, and both rural and cultural tourism.

The strategies for tourism development in each agricultural ecology region are shown in Table 1. The description of rural tourism in Table 1 shows the diverse usages that are finally focusing on “development,”

through the provision of a variety of local resources and services, and not just on enhancing local capacities for tourism. In short, the term “rural tourism” has only recently been cited in official documents in Vietnam, but the meaning is yet to be clearly defined.

Figure 10.3. Vietnam’s main agricultural ecology regions.



Source: MARD (2009).

Table 10.1. Models of tourism development in the agricultural ecology regions.

| Region | Tourism development model |
|----------------------------------|--|
| North, Midlands, and Mountainous | <i>Highland villages</i> , with connections to agriculture and forestry, to develop tourism |
| Red River Delta | <i>Rural connection to tourism</i> —entertainment areas within a rural space that is filled with <i>local culture and environmental ecology</i> , and where one can relax and reside. |
| Central Coast | Rural model close to the sea [...] developing <i>rural tourism</i> [...] Model of luxury resorts associated with tourist villages in the planning areas with connections to rural villages that have handicraft, agricultural, and aquaculture activities, in order to serve tourists... <i>culture tourism, coastal ecology tourism</i> [...] |
| Central Highlands | <i>Traditional rural villages associated with agriculture and ecological forestry, with tourism services in ethnic minority communities</i> highlighting the tradition, culture, and unique customs, [...] increasing the livelihood of ethnic minority communities through <i>community-based tourism</i> . |
| Southeast | <i>Developing fruit gardens associated with ecotourism</i> . Protection of special-use forests combined with ecotourism and recovery of forests. |
| Mekong Delta | <i>The rural model of orchards connected with rural tourism and urban centers</i> . Resident areas connected to agricultural activities such as orchard planting and <i>rural tourism</i> . This is the model for conserving the southern culture of orchard gardens. |

Source: MARD (2009).

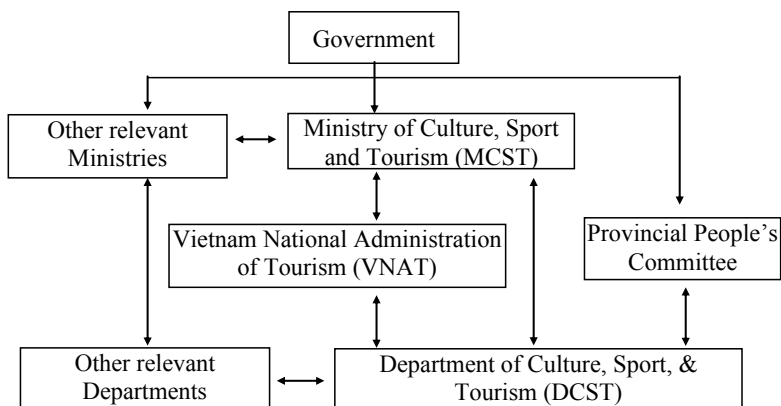
Administrative system of tourism in Vietnam

From 1960 to 1992, the administrative system of tourism in Vietnam underwent six alterations¹¹⁾ in terms of its organizational structure (VNTA, 2010). In Vietnam, the administrative system of tourism has not been consolidated and still lacks uniformity in management between the central and local governments.

From 1992 to 2007, the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNTA) was established as a government agency directly under the control of the central government; it was in charge of the management of tourism across the country. Since 2007, the VNTA has been under the control of the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MCST). At the local level, a provincial Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism (DCST) is governed by both the Provincial People's Committee and the VNTA (Figure 4).

In terms of laws, the Tourism Ordinance of 1999 is the primary framework for Vietnam's tourism industry. In 2003, the VNTA was given the responsibility of drafting the nation's first formal set of laws on tourism, aiming for sustainable tourism development. In 2005, the congress approved the tourism law that suitably combined the policies, guidelines, and institutions related to tourism. Although the administrative system of the tourism industry has been improved, the capacities of policy making at the provincial or lower levels are still very limited.

Figure 10.4. Administrative structure of Vietnam's tourism industry.



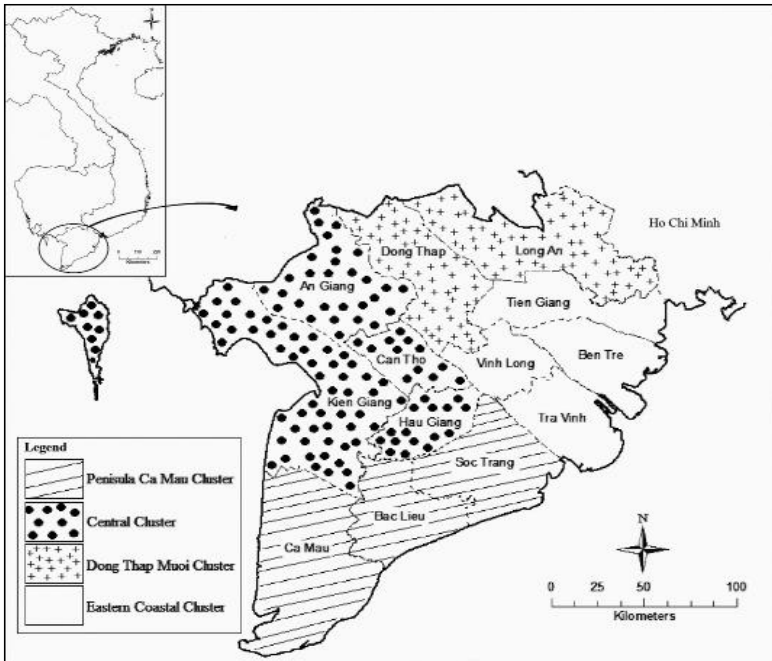
Source: Developed on the basis of Tinh (2009).

Rural tourism in the Mekong Delta

The Mekong Delta is a region in the southwest of Vietnam comprising 13 provinces²², with a total area of about 39,734 km². Of this area, 65% is used for agriculture and aquaculture and has a total population of

17,178,871 people (GSO, 2009). The Mekong Delta is a peninsula; its eastern, southern, and western boundaries border the sea, giving it a 700 km coastline. On the west, it shares a border with Cambodia, and the North borders the Economic Zone of the southeast of Vietnam. This region—the Mekong Delta—is known as “Vietnam’s rice basket,” and provides more than half of the country’s total rice production and 90% of the country’s rice for export. Moreover, the Mekong Delta provides 60% and 70% of the country’s fruits and aquaculture products, respectively. The Mekong River is connected to the Mekong Delta with two river branches—the Tien and Hau Rivers. The tangled system of canals and channels has been naturally developed, along with mountains, forests, islands, and beaches, to form a diverse ecology within the region. According to the national tourism plan for the Mekong Delta developed by the MCST (2010), the Delta is divided into four clusters on the basis of the characteristics of each region (Figure 5). Each of these clusters possesses their own desirable traits (Table 2).

Figure 10.5. The four main tourism clusters in the Mekong Delta.



Source: MCST (2010).

Table 10.2. Characteristics of the four tourism clusters in the Mekong Delta.

| Cluster | Characteristics |
|-------------------------|---|
| Central | This is the most important region of the Mekong Delta, with the central tourism areas of Can Tho City and Phu Quoc Island. The Central cluster has international borders that may have advantages in developing border tourism. At present, this cluster has three airports. The area's key tourism products include waterway tourism, festival tourism, sea and resort tourism, and so on. |
| Ca Mau peninsula | This cluster covers two-thirds of the Ca Mau peninsula area. The cluster is famous for the Khmer culture, and its important tourism products are visits to the southernmost point of the country, ecotourism in the mangroves, cultural tourism, and so on. |
| East coast | Including Tien Giang, Ben Tre, Vinh Long, and Tra Vinh, this cluster boasts the Mekong Delta region's key tourism products. Most tourists come to this cluster to experience, firsthand, the rural life and cultural values of this region. |
| Dong Thap Muoi | This cluster is full of salt-marsh forests. The most common type of tourism in this area takes place around the submerged forests. |

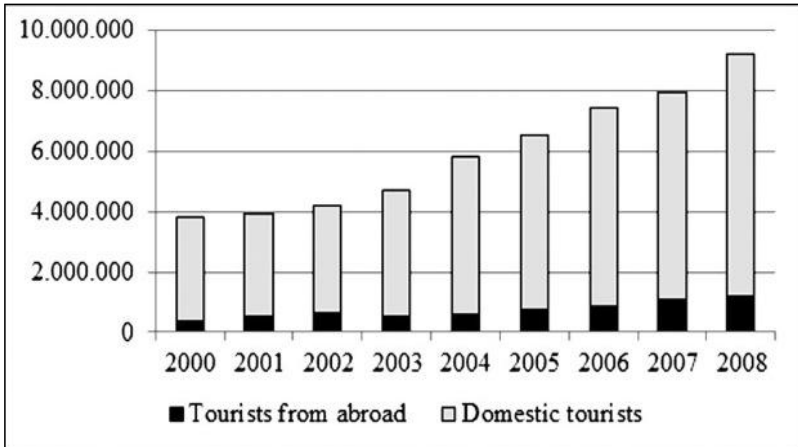
Source: MCST (2010).

The number of tourists visiting the Mekong Delta region continues to rise (Figure 6). The growth rate of foreign tourists visiting the Mekong Delta between 2001 and 2008 was 16.4% (ITDR, 2010). In 2008, the Mekong Delta attracted over 1.2 million international tourists—that is, 9.4% of the total number of foreign tourists in Vietnam—and over 8 million domestic tourists—that is, 13% of the total number of domestic tourists (ITDR, 2010).

Typical examples of rural tourism in the Mekong Delta include hiring a motorboat or rowboat to travel along the river and canals; experiencing the production process of traditional local foods such as coconut candy, popped rice, and so on; visiting the floating markets; listening to the traditional music called *Vong co*, country music, and so on; and riding bicycles along the countryside lanes and small village roads.

However, tourism in this region has not yet been fully developed. This is due to the poor tourism facilities; low education standards; the fact that the region's local labor force lacks the necessary knowledge and skills required in the tourism sector; and the repetitive and monotonous nature of the tourism activities in these areas.

Figure 10.6. Number of tourists visiting the Mekong Delta.



Source: ITDR (2010).

Figure 10.7. Rowboat cruising on the canals.



Source: Photo by authors in 2011.

The tourism facilities in this region have had little development. In 2007, the region had 696 lodging facilities, representing only around 8% of the total number of tourist lodgings in Vietnam. From among these, there were only a few one- to four-star hotels and there were no five-star hotels (Binh, 2008). In 2010, there were around 900 tourist accommodation facilities, with 17,000 rooms, with a total capacity to accommodate about 6.2 million tourists per year. In general, these are small-scale operations (averaging 20 rooms per accommodation facility), with only 19 tourist facilities being three- or four-star (around 1,248 rooms) and around 656 tourist accommodation facilities (11,334 rooms) having no star rating at all (Vuong, 2010).

Figure 10.8. Performance of traditional *Vong co* music.



Source: Photo by authors in 2011.

The majority of the labor force in the tourism sector is unskilled or semi-skilled, and they possess a low level of formal education. According to a Ministry of Education and Training report, in 2010 in the Mekong Delta, 45% of people aged 15 years or above had never been to school; only 33% had been to primary school, 14% had passed the secondary level, and 5% had graduated from high school. Graduates and above accounted for just 4% of the population aged between 20–24 years. Only

17% of the workers are trained and, of these, only 25% are trained to the national average standard. This data helps to explain the conclusions of an NGO when it explored the model of agritourism in the Mekong Delta: “farmers are not yet prepared to compete in the international market, mainly due to their lack of general knowledge and skills to be compliant with international standards” (Agriterria, 2010).

The Mekong Delta’s model of rural tourism usually follows a pattern where tour operators and/or travel agencies assist local farmers to improve their lands so that they become attractive destinations for tourists. These tourism destinations are usually associated with the traditional cultures of local villages, such as the traditional music and manufacture of local goods. However, the tourist operations are predominantly carried out in a sporadic and fragmented manner. Local residents engaged in tourism activities - the primary subject of rural tourism - are fully dependent on tour operators and/or travel agencies, and they hold almost no rights and receive only a small income from tourism activities (Tuan, 2009).

Together with the difficulties in coordinating with tour operators and the unbalanced profit sharing, the tourism activities of the Mekong Delta have been evaluated as being significantly repetitive. Some provinces have copied or imitated others in their choice of tourism activities, highlighting typical activities such as rowing boats, visiting orchards, listening to traditional music, and tasting fruits, and this has resulted in tourism activities becoming increasingly uniform across the provinces. With regards to this issue, the ITDR (2010) and MCST (2010) have reached similar conclusions, documenting the tourism activities as having become “almost identical among provinces [...] because of the same tourism activities being put in a similar natural context (in terms of geology and geomorphology, etc.) and the obvious commercial atmosphere in operation when doing traditional activities just for show, etc. [D]ue to this, tourism in the Mekong Delta is considered to be monotonous and boring.”

To sum, rural tourism in the Mekong Delta, still immature in its development, is strongly dominated by travel agencies, allowing for limited participation by local residents.

Concluding remarks

In spite of the rapid increase in the number of tourists in Vietnam, rural tourism in the country is at the beginning stages of its development. The term “rural tourism” is still new and has not been fully understood by the locals, particularly the rural residents. Together with this vague conceptualization, the administrative system of tourism is not functioning well, resulting in inconsistencies in tourism development strategies among the different levels of administration. Moreover, tourism facilities and infrastructure in rural areas are poor and insufficient. Most of the labor force engaged in tourism is unskilled or semi-skilled. While all these factors contribute to the immature nature of rural tourism in Vietnam, the most important factor is that there are only a few opportunities for local residents to participate in tourism as stakeholders.

Notes

1 - 1960: Vietnam Tourism Company set up under the Ministry of Foreign Trade. (Decree of 26-CP, dated 9/7/1960, Cabinet Council). 1969: Vietnam Tourism Company transferred to the Prime Minister's Palace. (Decree of 145-CP, dated 18/8/1969, Cabinet Council). 1978: Vietnam National Administration of Tourism set up under the Cabinet Council. (Resolution 262 NQ/QHK6, dated 27/6/1978, Vietnam Standing Committee of the National Assembly). 1987: Vietnam National Administration of Tourism had its functions, duties, and organizational structure regulated and made responsible to the Cabinet Council. (Decree 120 – HDBT, dated 15/8/1987, Cabinet Council). 1990: Vietnam General Tourism Company set up under the Ministry of Culture, Information, Sport and Tourism, on the basis of the restructured Vietnam Tourism Administration of Tourism. (Decree 119-HĐBT, dated 9/4/1990, Cabinet Council). 1992: Vietnam National Administration of Tourism set up directly under the Government. (Decree 05-CP, dated 26/10/1992).

2 - An Giang, Ben Tre, Bac Lieu, Ca Mau, Can Tho, Dong Thap, Hau Giang, Kien Giang, Long An, Soc Trang, Tien Giang, Tra Vinh, Vinh Long.

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Critical Approaches to Rural and Eco-tourism: Sustainable Development or Green Washing the Amazon?

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Introduction

Over the last twenty years rural-based tourism has been a common theme in Commission meetings, particularly those which were held in European and Mediterranean venues (1998, 2004, 2005, 2007-2012). Under the guise of post-productivism and multi-functionalism, tourism is usually presented as a non-agricultural activity which can contribute directly to small farmer incomes or indirectly through the employment of family members. Following this line of thought, counter-urbanization in post-industrial countries and the rise of other kinds of non-farming employment including rural tourism help explain why rural population has remained at about 20% of the total national population in many of these countries at the same time that the workforce employed in agriculture has declined to about 2-5%.

As the participants in our colloquia are over-represented by geographers from such countries and from emerging industrialized countries, non-agricultural rural activities which complement small farmer income frequently have been the focus of many presentations in the colloquia, particularly in what Bryant *et. al.* (1982, 1992) call the city's countryside as well as in depressed regions in these countries. Good examples of this kind of research in our meetings, some of which are more critical than others, are: Amit-Cohen (2009), Cawley (2000), Laurent and Cousseau (2000), Lorber (2011), McKenzie (2011), Moreno and Comíns (2009), Nieves and Paredes (2009), Pina (2009), Sancho and Tort (2011), Sansolo and Bursztyn (2009), Takahashi (2001) and Thissen (2001).

However, we should be asking what kind of employment is created by rural and eco-tourism? Is the work full-time and year round or

merely part-time and seasonal, at the same time that more hours of work are added to the long hours that farmers already work? Does the work conflict with farm hours and so interfere with agricultural activities? In the 2008 Spain colloquium Annabelle Boulay was asked about multi-functionality for the highly productive, commercial farmers of Normandy and the answer was that the farmer families did not have the time or the inclination to undertake rural tourism given the fact that they already earned good incomes from full-time farming. From this we may conclude that rural tourism may be more relevant for underemployed farmers in locations readily accessible to tourists, which is the case in point in the study presented here concerning the Brazilian Amazon.

Building on research on farming systems undertaken in different parts of the Amazon between 1997 and 2013, new opportunities opened by rural and eco-tourism will be critically evaluated in comparison to those present in farming. The chapter is divided into two parts. In the first part, critical approaches to tourism are reviewed and are separated into two types of critique: 1) Neo-Marxist approaches of the 1970s and early 1980s, which raised social and economic issues and 2) Post-modernist and Political Ecology approaches which focussed more on cultural and environmental considerations from the mid-1980s onward. These issues are then raised in the different kind of tourist activities encountered in the Amazon.

Critical studies of tourism: passport to sustainable development?

Given the scale of global tourism today it is not surprising that tourist studies have become a virtual industry and over the years a large number of basic course texts have been produced. In 1975 the global tourist sector generated US\$45 billions while in 2011 this surpassed US\$1 trillion (de Kadt 1975, UNWTO 2012). During the so-called development decades of the 1950s and 1960s the World Bank considered tourism to be an important way for Third World countries to earn hard currency from vacationing visitors from the First World,

which could be used to help finance development. With minimal training, underemployed and unemployed local workers could find jobs as caretakers and chambermaids so that standards of living could be raised (de Kadt 1979, ix, 12, 48).

Studies of tourism in the social sciences at that time were based on Functionalist and Structuralist theoretical perspectives with a pronounced emphasis on quantitative transport models analyzing how urban-based tourists from developed countries arrived at their destinations at a ski lodge in Europe or North America or at an international seaside resort located in a poor country. Abstract formulas and transport models were presented and real people were seldom cited (see figure 2.9 in Smith, 1983, 43-44). Actual tourists appeared as faceless households which had preferences for the attractiveness of certain areas which were measured by multiple regression analyses (see figure 6.3 in Smith, 1983, 139) and the local community only appeared as the site of their leisure activities and as a source of labour (see figure 2.3 in Pearce, 1981, 17). The economic determinism present in Structuralist development models was reproduced in tourist impact studies so that Pearce devotes ten pages of analysis to economic impacts and only three and a half pages to environmental impacts and three pages to social and cultural impacts (1981, 46-63).

There was a considerable delay between the first appearance of radical perspectives in the social sciences in the late 1960s and early 1970s and when more critical approaches to tourism started to appear with the landmark publication of de Kadt (1979) in a global overview of the sector, ironically financed by the World Bank. With regard to the alleged objectivity and quantitative methodology of Structuralist social science, a first critique which could be levelled at this kind of tourist study was that of Bourdieu and Passeron who questioned the dominant Sociology of their day as social science without a Subject, i.e. without the people studied and based on a naïve view of scientific objectivity (1967). With regard to the topics covered in tourist studies, prior research was criticized by Marxists for involving Western scientists analyzing the motivations of middle- and upper-class Western tourists, which was just another facet of capitalist global domination. This

was made worse by the fact that scalar analysis used in tourist studies emphasized global, national and regional levels, which masked centre-periphery regional inequalities in which most income generated by the tourist sector accrued to operators in developed countries who were positioned at the top and centre of capitalist accumulation, while the low-paying service jobs created for the indigenous population, i.e. as maids and gardeners, generated little income at the local level. In fact, greater social inequality was introduced by international tourism, i.e. between the comparatively rich tourists from developed countries and the poor 'natives', particularly when the former demanded hotels with First-World quality, that were well above the local standard of living.

From the mid-1980s onward, tourist studies changed more quickly and became better attuned to state-of-the-art social science which became more culturally and environmentally critical with the advent of Postmodernism and more radical forms of Political Ecology. The hallmark text was Urry's *The Tourist Gaze*. In this new perspective, international tourism was not just another facet of global capitalist domination but also of Euro-centric cultural imperialism. Because the ideas of spectacle and performance and of cultural and environmental difference are central to tourism, instead of being a backwater subject, tourism assumed a central place in theoretical approaches in the social sciences.

In the Postmodernist interpretations of tourism, affluent visitors expect to travel in a sanitized Western cocoon to and from their destination as well as during their stay in a luxury hotel with air conditioning and the same ambient control in tourist coaches for their 'excursions' into the cities and countryside. Local tourist structures and performances are created to frame and direct the tourist gaze toward an idealized 'landscape', which is kept at an arm's length (ideally off on the horizon). Promotional material read before the trip in tourist guides anticipates what to expect in the 'encounter' so that little surprise is actually experienced because everything is planned down to the apple for dessert at lunch, even if the apple came from home. Inauthentic simulacra and 'folklore' performances are presented as (re-invented) tradition and tourist trinkets are scaled down to what can fit in a suitcase.

While much of the Political Ecology literature reflects a more conservative case-study empiricist research epistemology and a pragmatic approach to local development which highlights community-based sustainable tourism as a means of achieving environmental conservation and social inclusion. Radical approaches question the carbon footprint (emissions) produced by transporting tourists long distances to exotic destinations and the ubiquity and ambiguity of the concept of sustainability being used to 'green wash' socio-environmental disturbance. Just as the concept of economic development was used in the past to justify dubious schemes which did not benefit local people, claims about environmental preservation and sustainable development are employed today to clean up the image of practices which result in exactly the opposite (Fennell 2008, Hunt and Stronza 2011, 2012).

So much has changed in tourist studies that today texts have very little in common with the Structuralist studies of the 20th Century (Table 1). Specialized volumes exist on a variety of environmental and cultural topics, such as climatic change (Becken and Hay 2008, Scott et. al 2012), animal ethics (Fennell 2011), eco-tourism (Buckley 2008, Cater and Cater 2007, Eagles and McCool 2000, Stronza and Durham 2008, Zeppel 2006), gender and body (Pritchard et. al. 2007, Waitt and Markwell 2006), sex and prostitution (Clift and Carter 2000, Ryan and Hall 2001), volunteer tourism (Garland 2012, Wearing 2001) and a number of research texts (Pierce and Butler 1993, Rakic and Chambers 2011, Richards and Munsters 2010, Ritchie et al. 2005). Nevertheless, the impression given is that the sector is still catering to urban Westerners who are now worried about such environmental and cultural issues and rural and eco-tourism in the Amazon illustrates this well.

The Amazon is one of the world's great socio-environmental hot spots and among the different green solutions to regional problems proposed by scientists, environmental activists, government officials and business groups, eco-tourism is often touted as an important way of preventing deforestation and of promoting the social inclusion of 'traditional' populations. Environmentally sensitive tourists want to

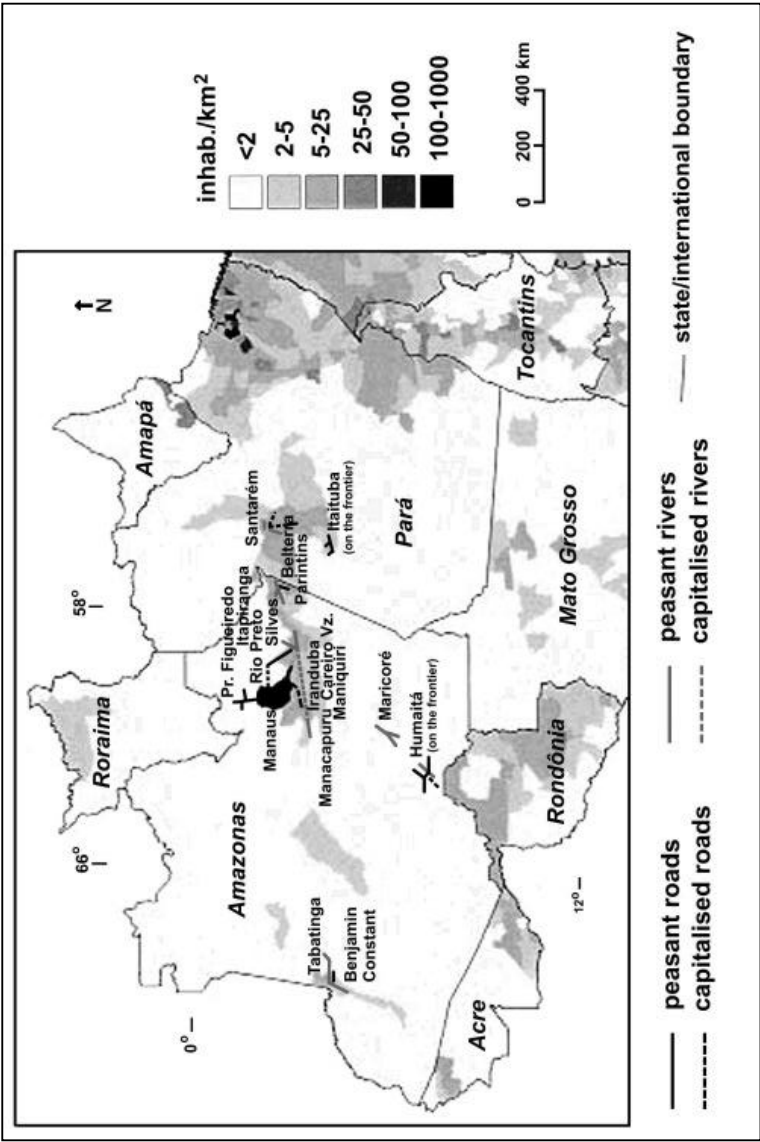
immense themselves in preserved parts of the Amazonian rain forest and hire local guides who know where giant trees, wild animals and fish are found. At the same time, eco-tourists stay in jungle lodges which create employment for hotel personnel and when they leave they take local handy craftwork with them. The different critical perspectives on tourism outlined above are mobilized to paint a less rosy picture of actual-existing eco-tourism in the Amazon rather than that idealized by developmentalist and environmentalist advocates of the activity.

Table 11.1. Topics in rationalist-structuralist approaches versus interpretative approaches.

| Contents S. Smith (1983) | Contents Franklin (2003) |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Descriptive research on location | Introduction |
| Descriptive research on travel | What is tourism? |
| Explanatory research on location | The foundations and traces of modern tourism |
| Explanatory research on travel | Elaborations of tourism |
| Predictive research on location | Tourist objects, tourist rituals |
| Predictive research on travel | Objects and rituals of seaside |
| Normative research on location | Objects and rituals of heritage |
| Normative research on travel | Tourisms of body and nature |
| Conclusions | Sex and tourism |
| | Conclusion – a world of tourism |

Most research on tourism is overly specialized, inwardly focussed, does not compare tourism to other economic sectors present and so does not answer the basic question as to whether the employment created is really better than that already or potentially available locally. The IGU Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems on the other hand takes a holistic approach to rural studies and includes tourism among pluri-activities available to farmers or as another multi-functional element within rural economies so that we have a privileged vantage point for critically evaluating tourism in the countryside.

Figure 11.1. Study municipalities and type of farmer in the Central and Western Amazon.



Such an integrated approach was used in research on rural and eco-tourism as part of general research on rural systems undertaken in seventeen municipalities of the Central and Western Amazon since 1997 (Figure 1). Whenever a tourist activity was encountered in the field it was studied together with the farming and other activities present. Consequently, comparable data is available to evaluate the opportunities created by tourism *vis-à-vis* other activities. Spatiality is central to the comparison made here. Due to transport limitations, rural and eco-tourism in the Amazon is concentrated near the largest cities, which have airports that can receive full-size jet aircraft and are connected to the destinations by paved highways and larger river boats. The same logistic advantages and proximity to large cities also create the best opportunities for farming in the Amazon and the basic conclusion argued here is that this kind of rural producer is probably better off concentrating on agriculture and forgetting tourism.

Farming and/or tourism in the Brazilian Amazon

As one moves away from the major cities in the Amazon the type of tourism shifts from that which caters to the regional population to different kinds of tourism geared to middle and upper-class foreign tourists. The typology of tourists and impacts developed by the anthropologist Valerie Smith (1977) is used as an interpretative tool for evaluating tourism in the Amazon (Table 2). In this model, Westernization (and what is called Disneyfication today) increase with the exponential growth in the number of international tourists arriving, who demand all the creature comforts of home. In the extreme case of large-scale 'jungle lodges' it could be asked why they even left home at all. Here Smith's sequence is inverted, starting with mass tourism near the large cities and ending with explorer and off-beat tourism which is practised deeper into the forest. The different kinds of tourism are evaluated using both old Structuralist arguments concerning logistics and access (so that maybe one should not throw the baby out with the quantitative bathwater) as well as more recent cultural and environmental interpretations of tourism.

Table 11.2. Tourist type, volume and expectations.

| Tourist Type | Volume of Tourists | Adaptation to Local Norms |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Explorer | Very limited | Accepts fully |
| Off-beat | Uncommon but seen | Adapts well |
| Elite | Rarely seen | Creates enclave of Western amenities |
| Incipient mass | Steady flow | Seeks Western amenities |
| Mass | Continuous flow | Expects Western amenities |
| Charter | Massive arrivals | Demands Western amenities |

Adapted from: V. Smith (1989, 12).

Lake bar day trippers and weekend house owners in the city's countryside

One of the most common forms of rural tourism for the regional population of the Amazon is for a group of lower and middle-class families or friends from the state capitals to go on a Saturday or Sunday outing to a bar located on lakes and rivers in the outer metropolitan area. In the study area this kind of mass tourism involves day-trippers going by car or coach to watering holes located along the paved AM-10 in rural Manaus and Rio Preto da Eva municipalities, 40 to 80 kilometres north-east of the city centre of Manaus. The kiosks and restaurants attend to swimmers who may eat a snack or lunch but the main interest is to engage in heavy drinking. Patrons under the influence of alcohol can become aggressive and this occasionally results in homicide which, in parallel research on violence in the Amazon, was characterised as 'cane-spirits killings' by municipal criminal archives clerks (Hoefle 2006). The owners of the establishments are local farmers who entered this line of business or are from Manaus, as are the workers. At best the latter earn the minimum wage when hired on a full time basis, which was US\$929 in 2002, but most only received a payment of US\$4.29 per day worked on weekends.

Weekend houses owned by middle and upper class elite tourists from the state capitals represent another common form of rural tourism in the Amazon. In the study area this kind of tourism is practised in the same rural space of the outer metro area in Manaus and Rio Preto

da Eva municipalities. The houses are typical second homes but some double as hobby ranches and a countryside health spa retreat is also encountered in this area. The country houses recreate urban comforts with electricity, running water, satellite phones and televisions, in a domesticated countryside without the forest and wild animals normally associated with an Amazonian landscape.

Caretakers earn the minimum wage and are usually unemployed urban workers who leave the city to take a job on a weekend house in the nearby countryside. Some farmers sell out to weekend tourists and return to Manaus after having tried their luck without success in frontier farming. They originally squatted on public land which became more readily accessible when the AM-10 was paved and then cashed in on the increased value of the land. Some weekend tourists also gained land by squatting in which case they too acquired their property free of cost.

In the same rural space located in the inner and outer metropolitan area one also encounters some of the highest farm incomes earned in the Amazon so that the income earned in rural tourism compares poorly with that earned in commercial farming. Interviewed small capitalised farmers in the outer metro area earned US\$5,180 in 2002 and inner metro farmers US\$16,022 in 2005 while non-capitalised farmers and workers located in the outer metro area earned US\$1,197 and US\$929 respectively in 2002. The income earned by the latter is about the same income that could be earned in tourism if a full-time job were found. Normally part-time workers live on neighbouring farms where they produce foodstuffs for their own consumption and earn part of their income selling that produced above their needs. The other part is earned from weekend work in the tourist sector, which is a typical form of rural multi-functionalism.

Mass tourism on the nearby frontier

Weekend tourists from Manaus can also travel another hour by paved road to Presidente Figueiredo municipality, located outside the metropolitan area 109 kilometres directly north from Manaus. As is common for many such weekend tourist destinations which are

located one and a half to two hours distance from large cities in Brazil, Presidente Figueiredo is considered to have a better climate than in the city. The town is situated at 200 metres altitude, which by hot and muggy Amazonian standards gives it a 'cooler' drier climate where mosquitoes are less common.

Over 90% of the tourists are from the capital but about 10% are visiting foreign tourists. Presidente Figueiredo is listed in guide books on Brazil as a suggested destination in the vicinity of Manaus. As with all tourism in the Amazon, this type is highly seasonal, with about 2,000 tourists visiting Presidente Figueiredo annually on weekends during three to four months in the dry season. At this time of year there is less rain and it is safe to swim in the rivers and waterfalls. At wetter times of the year the water courses swell and drowning has occurred, which caused the county government to close facilities for most of the year.

Tourists from the capital come to pass the day swimming in the waterfalls and rivers, barbequing fish and drinking large amounts of beer. The day-trippers bring everything they need in their car or on a tour coach, buy very little locally and leave trash. This forced the county government to mount a campaign to instruct visitors to use trash bins. The river front was turned into a park, restaurants opened and decoration was added in an attempt to increase local income generated from tourism. Out in the countryside the farms with waterfalls on their property charge a US\$2-4 entrance fee and do not allow people in with coolers so that money can be made from selling drinks.

More solidly middle-class tourists from Manaus pass the weekend in one of the twenty local bed-and-breakfast establishments or the lone full-fledged motel from where they venture out by car to visit the waterfalls. Double rooms cost from US\$34 to US\$77 a night in 2002. The motel tries to cater to this kind of tourist by advertising that rooms are air conditioned, have individual bathrooms with hot water and that satellite-dish TV is available in order to keep up with the latest happenings in the soap operas. The habit of keeping up with the soap opera shows how little tourists mentally remove themselves from town. The hotel is located on a cleared area with

grass which keeps the forest at a distance and creates an enclave of urbanity in a frontier area.

A fair amount of work is created in lodging, about two to three employees in the bed-and-breakfasts and more in the motel, but the salaries earned are only the minimum wage and only for three to four months a year or roughly US\$214-286 in 2002. Income for farmers planting basic food crops in Presidente Figueiredo municipality was US\$2,209 in 1999 while agro-forestry farmers earned US\$4,897 that year, so that the generalization that, "the wages of hotel employees everywhere compare favourably with wages in agriculture, and even more so with earnings in subsistence agriculture" in the World Bank global survey edited by de Kadt (1979, 37) does not hold up in the Amazon.

'Jungle' lodges for foreign elite tourists

Luxury jungle lodges are located relatively close to Manaus along the beautiful Rio Negro in Iranduba and Airão municipalities. From the tourism point of view this black water river is the most scenic of the Amazon tributaries, particularly in the Anavalhas finger islands situated 120 kilometres upstream from Manaus. As a sediment-poor river population is sparse, just enough to make it seem 'native', which can extend to dressing river peasants of Amerindian origin in tribal dress and have them perform dances. There are also far fewer insects and pests present than on sediment-rich white water rivers. Less fish are available to catch but there are fewer inhabitants with whom to compete for the fish that are present.

Foreign tourists arrive by air in Manaus, are bussed down to the port and taken by boat to floating hotels or hotels located on the river edge. The size of transport craft ranges from covered outboard-powered boats up to small cruise ships. Rooms are expensive, ranging from US\$711 to US\$1,627 for three nights in a double room in 2012. In an advertisement published in a glossy tourist magazine, one hotel billed itself as 5-Star hotel in middle of the forest, with 268 rooms in eight towers each with six floors, all equipped with internet, cable TV, telephone and air conditioning, which are said to be rare in the middle of the jungle.

From the comfort of a glassed-in salon or a screen-in veranda of an individual room the beams and girders of the lodge frame a lovely view of the expansiveness of the river and the opposite bank where the forest stretches out as far as the eye can see on the horizon. Catwalks at tree level fan out from the lodge into the forest so that tourists can see the trees up close without having to walk on the ground which can be muddy and, if flooded, dangerous due to the presence of alligators. To see more of the river, boat trips are made in covered outboard craft and sun block is used amply so as not to burn the lily-white skin of the foreign tourists who come down from their winter.

Seeing live monkeys, jaguars, pink dolphins and manatees is not so easy as watching a nature documentary programme on television back home. The lodges put a number of photographs of the fauna on their web pages and tourists are disappointed when the animals do not show up on time for performance. Indeed, the material presented borders on false advertising. A dolphin may be trained to jump out of the water and take a piece of fish from a handler but this raises all sorts of ethical issues similar to the garbage bears of Yellowstone in the past, e.g. Yogi Bear, etc. Wilson (1991) published one of the first critiques of the abuse of animal actors in amusement parks and nature films. Apart from the Flipper clones, to the irritation of the tourists, dolphins are notoriously difficult to photograph when they briefly come up to the surface for air and their image can only be captured by pointing a camera in film mode in their general direction and hoping that they come up at that precise point.

Dancing natives are even more ethically dubious. One advertisement promised “not just the usual photos of alligators, walks in the jungle, piranha fishing and canoeing in lakes, creeks and flooded forest but also a visit to an Indian village to see a ritual celebrating the tribe”. One group of Tucano Amerindians from the upper Rio Negro near the Colombian border moved downstream close to Manaus to get in on the action and it must be remembered that today there are more Amerindians of lowland Latin America living in or near cities than on tribal reservations set up for them in the remote places to which their ancestors fled in the past in order to avoid enslavement (McSweeney and Jokisch 2007).

A lodge of this type was studied in 1999 in Silves municipality located in the middle of one of the largest lake systems in the Amazon, which can be accessed from Manaus going east overland on 250 kilometres of paved road. The lodge is owned by the local mayor and has all the basic amenities of air conditioned rooms with a separate bathroom with hot water, mini bar and television. The buildings are surrounded by gardens with tropical plants and grass through which guests stroll on cemented walks so as not to muddy their shoes. The main attraction is lake tours in covered aluminium boats powered by outboard motors.

The lodge is part of the see Brazil package and stays range from three to five days. In 1999 the price for a couple was US\$56 per night and in 2011 this had increased to US\$177 which reflected the devaluation of the US dollar. Almost all of the tourists are Italians (95%) and the rest are also Europeans but a rare Brazilian may stay at the lodge from time to time. A heavy dependency on European tourists gears the lodge to their social calendar and to a certain extent reduces dependency on climatic seasonality, which restricts tourism during the rainy season in the Amazon: November to May. Europeans come in greater numbers during winter in the northern hemisphere to get away from the cold. The movement picks up during fall in Europe and peaks in winter and then falls off during spring. There is another peak in July and August during the European summer vacations (Table 3).

The higher hotel positions require knowledge of foreign languages and cosmopolitan culture which only Brazilians from the southern part of the country possess while lower paying jobs are filled by locals from the nearby town (Table 4). The lodge has a division of labour by gender for work inside and outside but which does not result in women earning less than men. To the contrary, the management positions are held by two women from southern Brazil with higher education and language skills. However, given the urban source of labour it cannot be claimed that this tourist work benefits local farmers in a multifunctional way. Excluding management, incomes earned are at best the equivalent of the minimum wage and many positions are seasonal which limits annual worker income.

Table 11.3. Estimate of hotel guests per month at a jungle lodge in Silves.

| month | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|----|
| guests | 275 | 275 | 275 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 175 | 275 | 60 | 150 | 250 | 60 |

Source of data: Field research (1999).

Table 11.4. Number, origin and salary of workers at a jungle lodge in Silves (1999).

| worker type | manager | assistant manager | chamber maid | waiter | gardener | security | boatman | guide |
|---------------------------|---------|-------------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------|
| number | 1 | 1 | 4-6 | 3-4 | 6 | 1 | 3-4 | 1 |
| sex | F | F | F | F | M | M | M | M |
| origin | South | South | local | local | local | local | local | local |
| salary/ year (US\$) | n.a. | n.a. | 720-1040 | 720-1040 | 1040 | 1040 | 720-1040 | 1040 or less |

Source of data: Field research (1999).

Community-based lodges for foreign off-beat tourists

Nearby the conventional lodge of Silves another lodge was built for more adventurous younger tourists as part of a conservationist project meant to preserve the fishing resources of the lakes for local craft fishers. Foreign activists associated with the Pastoril da Terra arm of the Catholic Church helped the local fisher association mount successive projects with Brazilian and foreign funding agencies which financed building the lodge and subsidised the operating costs for more than seven years. The rationale was that the lodge would eventually turn a profit which would finance the conservation actions.

The community-based lodge is more Spartan in comparison to most tourist accommodation in the Amazon. The rooms are simple, equipped with an overhead fan and a basic bathroom with a rudimentary electric shower. In addition to sightseeing in open aluminium boats, guests are encouraged to stay a night in the houses of residents in a riverine community where each tourist sleeps in a hammock in a different house to see how the locals live, including using the community outhouse.

Obviously this sort of tourism is not for everyone. Ninety-two per cent of the guests are young Italians who participate in various types of ecological and social solidarity organizations and the rest are US university groups on excursions. In 2005 the cost with all meals included was US\$90 per person per night.

The lodge created twenty-eight jobs and all workers were recruited from local? fishing communities, even the management. Pay is somewhat better than at other tourist operations in the Amazon but there is some gender bias reflecting local social standards, which shows that, just because the social values are local, does not mean that they are necessarily fair (Table 5). Those who work in the hotel do so year round even if tourist arrivals are concentrated in the summer months of the northern hemisphere. This seasonality does cause variation in the income earned by the communities visited where families only earn US\$3 a night, two to three days a week for three to four months a year. About a third of the families in a community receive visitors and only a couple of communities are visited in an area with more than fifty communities, which shows how regionally insignificant the operation is for creating work and income.

Table 11.5. Number, origin and salary of workers at a community-based lodge in Silves (2005).

| workers | manager | administra- tive | cook | chamber maid | waiter- gardener | laundry | boatman- guide |
|----------------------|---------|---------------------|-------|-----------------|---------------------|---------|-------------------|
| number | 1 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| sex | M | M | M/F | F | M | F | M |
| origin | local | local | local | local | local | local | local |
| salary/ yr (US\$) | 6392 | n.a. | 3196 | 1598 | 2397 | 1598 | 1598 |

Source of data: Field research (2005).

The lodge itself never turned a profit so that it did not fulfil its original function of funding conservation activities in the Silves lake area, which would have been for the benefit of all. Almost US\$2 million was received from different projects and when the funding ran out the lodge was forced to reduce the number of employees to a more realistic level.

As this is not an area of capitalised farming for the Manaus market, rural incomes are low, on average US\$1,171 per year in 2005, plus another US\$1,562 from retirement benefits and other government transfer payments, but even so the income earned in tourism is not significantly more than that earned in the farm sector.

Another community-based lodge was researched in 2008 in Santarém municipality located further down the Amazon River, midway between Manaus and Belém. The lodge is located about twenty-two kilometres from the medium-size city of Santarém, which is served by a jet airport and also by larger river boats from Manaus and Belém. It is situated in a community of riverine origin but today is served by an unpaved feeder route to a paved road which connects Santarém to the major tourist attraction of Alter do Chão Beach.

The lodge started as a rustic vacation home for a middle-class Dutch man built in 2000, which was donated to the community in 2008. Over the years, rooms were added to the house increasing it to eight rooms in order to handle more guests. The wooden building is even more rustic than the Silves community lodge. Individual rooms have a small fan, a bed and a dresser and guests use a collective bathroom without hot water and cook their meals in a collective kitchen.

Until 2008 the lodge was run by a tourist agent located in Santarém who kept most of the income, which was the reason why it was donated to the community. The lodge is meant to serve foreign tourists travelling along the Amazon in common river boats who stop on their way to Manaus or Belém. The guests are usually Dutch and Germans who are members of a responsible tourist network. This kind of off-beat tourist usually stays for a couple of days taking a rest from the monotony and filthy conditions of the river boats. The main attraction is to see community life and to go to the beach in Alter do Chão. The rate of US\$11 a night is very low for the Amazon where a clean room in a basic hotel in town is usually more than US\$70 a night. Tourism is limited to the dry season when the Tapajós River is low and white sand beaches come out of the water for a couple of months.

There is one local employee who works six days a month cleaning the lodge and maintaining the grounds. No grass is present and work

consists of maintaining the area under the trees clear of underbrush. The young man earns US\$42 a month, which is fine for him but not for a married adult. The community is located near Santarém, which is one of the largest cities in the Amazon with considerable demand for farm produce. Local fruit farmers earned on average US\$3279 a year in 2007, which is far more than the income earned by the caretaker of the lodge.

River boat trips for foreign off-beat tourists

For off-beat semi-rough foreign tourists a three to seven day trip up the Rio Negro in a typical Amazonian river boat is an alternative to the cocoon atmosphere of a luxury cruise ship. A small double-deck river boat can be rented from a specialized tourist agent based in Manaus who subcontracts a boat from a local small owner-operator. The boats are atypical in that they are clean, have no cockroaches, a WC which is not used by more than forty people and good food is prepared by the wife of the operator instead of the greasy chicken of dubious sanitary precautions normally served on typical river boats. As all provisions are bought at the port in Manaus before departure this kind of tourism does not aggregate much local value at the places visited on the Rio Negro.

The boats leave the general port of Manaus and at the end of each day dock at a convenient place along the river and the tourists sleep in hammocks with mosquito nets. Night-time entertainment consists of drinking beer while admiring a starry night sky and flashing lights into the eyes of alligators to observe them feeding on fish and nesting birds. Some fishing can be undertaken, but as mentioned above, the Rio Negro has fewer fish than white-water rivers.

In 1999, a family boat owner, his wife and his son as crew earned US\$56 per day if the group was of two or US\$78 if of four tourists. When a bilingual guide was needed this person earned another US\$22 a day. Tourists paid the agent in Manaus US\$190-260 per group, which, less the costs of US\$56-78 per day, created a profit of US\$112-204 per day. Due to seasonality, at best a boat might be rented for sixteen days a month for about four months a year so that the owner could earn up to US\$3,584 per year. This is a better source of income than that earned in farming along the Rio Negro area where poor soils limit cropping and

interviewed poor farmers were found to have earned only US\$469 per year in 2002. However, the income earned in this kind of tourism is less than that earned in fruit and vegetable cropping in the rich alluvial soils along the nearby Amazon River where farmers have access to the large Manaus consumer market and on average earned US\$4,787 per year.

Distant sport fishing for foreign explorer tourists

Perhaps the roughest eco-tourism practised in the Amazon involves sport fishing in remote locations. For a couple of years in the late 1990s this kind of camping for anglers was undertaken in a pristine part of the Marmelo River, a tributary of the Madeira River, located in Manicoré municipality. Foreign tourists would fly from Miami to Manaus and then take an air taxi to the small Manicoré strip, about an hour's flight. Then they would travel in open aluminium boats for four to five hours up the Madeira and into the Marmelo. Well up the Marmelo they would camp on a large lake which during the dry season was low and teeming with fish.

The operator from Ft. Myers, Florida, said that they practised catch-and-release fishing and only kept what they would eat on a particular day. Given the distance this was probably the case but this kind of fishing in other regions of Brazil involves each fisher taking home huge coolers with thirty to fifty kilos of fish, a practice which has recently been banned by the Ministry of the Environment.

In 1997 the cost per tourist, not including air fare, was US\$1,000 for the ten day excursion. The operator organized excursions during the dry season three to four months a year in the Brazilian Amazon and another four months in Venezuela, which is located in the northern hemisphere and has opposite seasons. His groups had up to fifteen people and mainly consisted of US citizens with an occasional Japanese sports fisherman included.

Virtually no local value was added. Arriving early in Manicoré the group would have breakfast at the local hotel but would leave immediately afterward for the Marmelo. Temporary work was created for a couple of aluminium boat owners and that was about all. The lake was located in an Amerindian reservation and when no payment for use was made to

the Amerindians further access was denied. Today operators organize such excursions in the Negro and Amazon Rivers near Manaus but there fishing is not as easy as in a pristine lake during the dry season.

Conclusion

Rural tourism in developed areas of the Amazon involves tourists from large cities visiting the nearby countryside. It is more intrusive and results in greater socio-environmental impact. Extensive landscaping results in greater deforestation and significant difference in income arises between owners and poorly-paid service workers. Eco-tourism takes place in preserved areas of the central Amazon and is less intrusive locally and does not result in significant deforestation. However, both realities are light years away from the dust, smoke, blood, sweat and tears of the frontier in the eastern and southern Amazon, where the greatest socio-environmental problems are present in the form of extensive deforestation, land conflict between small and large holders and where poor peasants struggle to make a living along the bumpy roads of the Amazon far away from consumer markets. These protagonists are the key actors in the destruction of the Amazon and it is hard to imagine how eco-tourism in pristine areas represents an alternative form of livelihood which could save the rainforest on a regional scale.

Eco-tourism is also geared to foreigners, which raises a number of ecological and social issues. In the first place, they have to travel thousands of kilometres to reach the Amazon and this raises questions concerning the carbon footprint involved in travelling to the region. Also knowledge of English and basic cultural etiquette of European and North American societies are required which local rural people rarely possess so that more knowledgeable workers must be brought in from developed parts of Brazil. Therefore, as usually occurs with tourism the world over, the only work available for local people is low-paying services, such as chamber maid, cook and maybe as waiter or trail guide if the language barrier can be overcome. Issues with cultural authenticity are involved when peasants are dressed up as 'Indians' and downscaled craft products are made to fit in the suitcases of gullible foreigners. Typical Amazonian bows and arrows are two metres long

so that tourists are offered shorter ones which are not functional and of course do not have curare poison on the arrow tips.

As ecotourism does not significantly contribute to 'saving the Amazon', the charge of green washing comes to mind because the socio-environmental impacts it produces, even if limited, are not justified by a greater goal of regional preservation. Even community-based schemes can suffer a number of these problems so that eco-tourism, like conventional tourism before it, is not a passport to sustainable development or cultural interaction. Consequently, in most of the cases presented here local people would be better off farming when they have good farm land, some investment capital, transport facilities and markets available for their produce. Rural and eco-tourism is a more viable option in accessible places on beautiful nutrient-poor black-water and crystalline-water rivers where farmers do not have these conditions. However, access to such places is difficult and is a perennial problem for all economic activities in the Amazon.

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The Last Seventeen Years: a personal perspective on the Commission's work and its achievements

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Aims

My task is to reflect personally on some of this Commission's work over the last 17 years and how it has helped me refine my knowledge of the nature of rural spatial systems, the processes shaping them, the problems and opportunities arising, transformations being made, and the role of both governments and communities in attempting to steer the course of events. Over all this time, I have found international perspectives a valuable contribution to the formulation and re-formulation of my ideas about Australian rural affairs, assessing how they differ from other nations, and estimating the extent to which my own country's policies and strategies are effective in shaping economically efficient and environmentally sound ruralities. All this in turn has shaped my thinking about the core notion of sustainability – what does it mean and how useful is it? This piece is lightly referenced because, to some extent, it draws on hundreds of papers delivered over many years.

On Sustainability

Indeed, the definition of sustainability in rural systems is a good place to start, for it has many dimensions – economic, social, cultural, and environmental whose relative importance appears to differ greatly from one jurisdiction to another. Moreover, there is disagreement over the meaning of sustainability within each of those dimensions. For example, economic sustainability might be about maintaining – or even increasing – output of goods and services over the long term; or about maintaining existing suppliers / producers (the structure of production); or about long-run stability in the value and/or volume

of the production of individual commodities or manufactures. These aspects are not necessarily congruent and may be hugely divergent. If we want to maintain stable value or volume of output, they might only come through the dramatic reorganisation of production systems – for example large-scale amalgamation of farm holdings or switching commodities from those with low return on investment to high returns. And this reminds me of Jack Welch's famous remarks to the effect that if "If the rate of change on the outside exceeds the rate of change on the inside, the end is near" and "willingness to change is a strength, even if it means plunging part of the company into total confusion for a while".

More recently, Nassim Taleb (2012) has coined the idea of Antifragility and I suspect that this is what we are on about when talking about economic sustainability. He sees the task of business, the communities in which it is embedded, and governments as identifying fragilities (or weak points) in our rural systems and developing strategies either to eliminate the causes of weaknesses, if possible, or speed up the pace of change and adaptation to keep ahead of unavoidable forces bearing down us. Thus, in the economic realm antifragility is partly about conservation of resources in good times and considered, or even risky, change when opportunity presents itself or conditions turn adverse and threaten the survival of business enterprises or the wider economy. So, economic action can vary enormously according to circumstances.

Economic fluidity is also mirrored in cultural, social or environmental dimensions. It is difficult, if not impossible, to freeze any of them and indeed we might go so far as to pronounce unchanging cultures and societies as clinically dead. Even ecologies are in permanent passage from one state to another, and humans now have the power to change the path of evolution and adaptation. What really matters here is the pace at which adaptive transformation proceeds without causing unreasonable stress to our systems, and I have argued that one of the great achievements of societies since the start of the Enlightenment (c. the last 400 years) is their accelerating capacity to adapt and deliver what I term stable adaptation, and one contributor to stable adaptation is public policy aimed at increasing the pace of change (through

education, infrastructure supply, circulation of information and ideas, and aspects of social security).

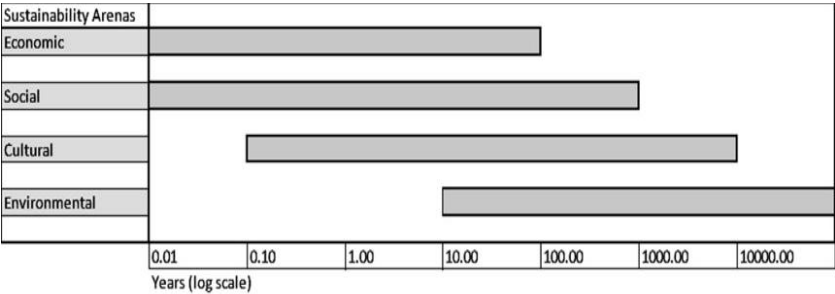
One of the greatest challenges to overall stable adaptation is the fact that economies, societies, cultures and environments all tend to evolve at different speeds. The first of these is potentially very fast (possibly only minutes or hours in the case of stock, commodity and currency markets), and the last may take millennia (see Figure 1). Moreover, the interplay of all four dimensions is often hugely complex, though that too is spatially variable depending on whether we are living in places like Silicon Valley or the far recesses of the Amazon basin. Sustainability of outcomes is also shrouded or cocooned within, and influenced by, a variety of organisational structures – legal, political, jurisdictional, civil society (and its constituent interest groups), economic (varying degrees of market orientation vs regulatory control), fiscal and monetary settings, and so on. It is hardly surprising then that definitions of sustainability and how to optimise local delivery of them vary so massively between countries, regions and interest groups – and according to the crises of the day (including financial melt-down in Europe). Figure 2 attempts to summarise these potential confusions.

So the notion of sustainability in rural space varies according to:

1. The local mix of economic base (e.g. various types of agriculture, forestry and fishing; leisure – tourism – recreation; mineral and energy resources; visual quality; proximity to major urban centres; and transport and communications corridors) – and many of these have clear geographical / environmental dimensions;
2. The quantity, quality and cost of local consumer services – also partly geographically determined;
3. The extent of interregional competition in both #1 and #2 above and of comparative and competitive advantage between regions;
4. Economic distortions introduced into items 1-3 by such public policies as trade barriers, producers subsidies, fiscal settings, management of exchange rates, industry regulation,

- social security arrangements, the presence or even absence of environmental regulation;
5. A raft of community preferences and perceptions embedded in local cultures – and how well individual communities / regions can put their views across and capture regulatory minds subject to institutional and political pressures + regional psychologies concerning valuation of the past present and future;
6. The antifragile capacity of various business, government and community actors

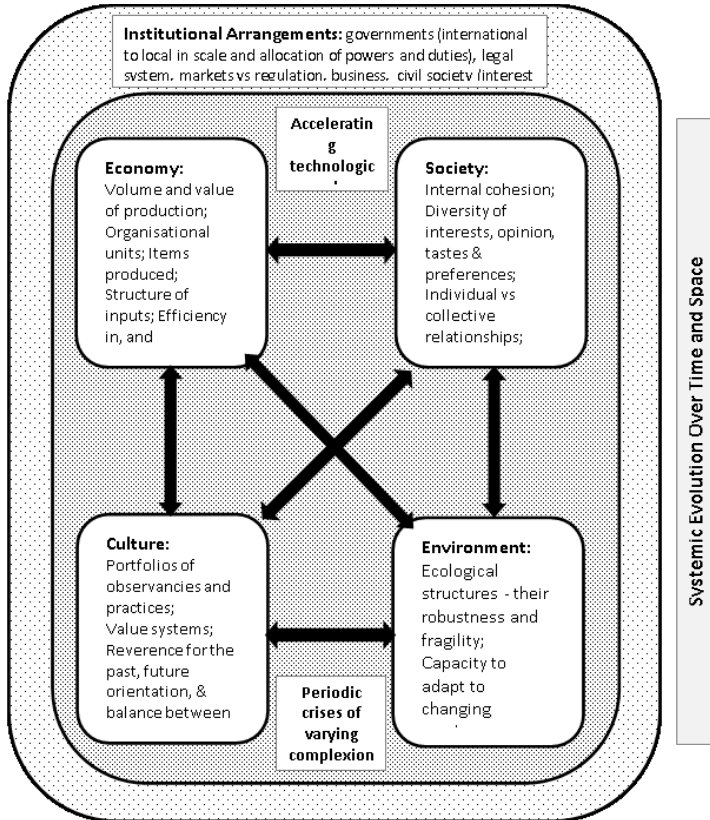
Figure 12.1. Sustainability time scales.



Source: The author.

The interaction of all these strands effectively means that there are no, or only limited, fixed reference points for what is sustainable between (a) different sections of the community, towns or industries in any one region, (b) individual regions and (c) countries. Over the years, the work of this Commission has amply demonstrated differences in perspectives over many issues. First, we have debated the value of, and need to conserve, tradition and heritage, whether economic, social, cultural or environmental. Then, secondly, there is the issue of what merit we see in social and cultural cohesion, the maintenance of family ties, and strong sense of place. Thirdly, we have explored the necessity of pursuing commercial efficiency through early adoption of innovation, reaping economies of scale (which are often much larger than we would like to admit), and changing management models towards best-practice commercial structures. Fourthly, have been unable to avoid the enduring

Figure 12.2. Pillars of sustainability.



Source: The author.

debate over the relative importance of individual market processes and public sector intervention in delivering preferred outcomes. Here, we have witnessed much greater faith on the part of European members in the benign ability of governments to resolve problems and issues, compared with my own country which has typically taken a much more aggressive pro-market stance on rural development. Then, finally, we have often debated the relative weightings of (i) self-sufficiency and trade and (ii) natural or organic systems of production and life-style relative to human attempts to modify both nature and production systems. I may have

omitted a range of other dimensions, but my crucial observation is that there appears to be no single optimal position on any of these questions, but rather a spectrum of valid personal, business and community opinions. Thus we have witnessed huge differences in sustainable rural practices across all spatial dimensions from the global to the local and the Commission has provided a valuable forum to express our views on these matters and try to convince others of our positions. Other complexities arise from the fact that our understanding of sustainability is partly a personal assessment, which legitimately varies between individuals. If we accept this position, it is clear that our perceptions of what is sustainable and what is flexible will evolve over time in the light of on-going research – which moulds scientific – and social debate over community values, tastes and preferences. Either way definitions of sustainable conditions are inherently fluid and far from fixed!

Australian Sustainability Themes

As noted previously, Australian ruralities are substantially removed from most of European practice and even such developed economies as the United States. This is so across a large range of dimensions which include:

- Substantially free development of *large-scale of production*;
- Heavily commercial orientation ... and *emphasis on business profitability*;
- *Strong readiness to innovate* in commodities / goods produced
- *Fast production and uptake of new scientific or management technologies*;
- Relative *lack of government subsidies and other forms of regional support*;
- *Considerable freedom to produce whatever combinations of commodities, manufactures, or services business owners decide*;
- Substantial *freedom of international and interregional trade*;
- *Foreign ownership of productive assets allowed*, with some reservations;

- Strong, but often *pragmatic, environmental regulation*;
- *Relative lack of cultural and heritage prohibitions / preferences* (except among Indigenous populations);
- Strong *ethic of personal responsibility for one's well-being matched by a correspondingly restricted welfare-state*; and
- Considerable *tensions between competing producers (within agriculture, between agriculture and mining or other sectors)*.

In essence, this structure is much more market oriented, innovative and forward looking and less regulated than most ruralities. It is rapidly changing with little regard for heritage and tradition and strongly profit oriented. The town-based consumer services sector is likewise heavily commercial and rapidly adaptive. These traits are generally long-standing, but incorporate subtle changes over time. Thus, for example, Australia has become much more market oriented over the last 30 years as successive governments of different complexions have wound back many roles of the state.

My perceptions of European conditions – and indeed East Asian – attitudes, preferences, and processes shaping their ruralities differ significantly from Australian conditions – based on hearing many papers offered to this Commission. In these assessments I am not offering judgements about the merits of different approaches. I just observed that values and approaches differ. They tend to place higher value on heritage and tradition (and are more retro-regarding than indulging in future imagination). They tolerate rent-seeking to a greater degree rather than self-reliance and are more accepting of a higher degree of collectivism – as against individualism. And, as noted previously, they have a higher regard for the capacity of government.

Processes Driving Rural Change

The complexion of rural life and development is almost everywhere dynamic rather than static, but usually sustainable in the sense of stable adaptation. This reflects the intersection of a huge array of highly

interconnected factors, which have featured prominently in many presentation heard over the last 17 years. This extensive list testifies to our struggle to conceptualise rural sustainability and change. While it is easy to construct such a list, it is hugely difficult to explain how all the forces for change mutually interact and sometimes collide forcefully with each other to shape rural systems. In a simple system of four variables there are $N^2 - N = 12$ possible interactions between them. My list has 16 entries – several of them internally complex, and this gives us 240 possible interconnections. Moreover, most of these connections are impossible to measure accurately because data are unavailable, unreliable or unstable; cause and effect is lagged – possibly over many years; systems have substantial numbers of often lengthy feedback loops; linkages are frequently non-linear; and occasionally we encounter tipping points which lead to system melt-down. Perhaps we may be excused if quite often our analyses appear incomplete or illogical, mine included. Have a look at the list shown in Table 1.

Table 12.1. Principal drivers of rural change.

| | |
|----|---|
| 1 | All manner of technologies / growing sum total of knowledge |
| 2 | Demographic change (numbers – ethnicity – age and family structures) |
| 3 | Changing social structures – especially diversification and fragmentation of long-accepted social norms |
| 4 | Growing personal wealth |
| 5 | Evolving consumer tastes and preferences |
| 6 | Rising inter-regional and international competition |
| 7 | Large swings in supply of and demand for rural commodities |
| 8 | Changing business structures (e.g. demise of small-scale producers vs growth of corporate farming) |
| 9 | Evolving governance systems (both public and private) – changing powers and duties |
| 10 | Changing roles of government and the market |
| 11 | Rising economies of scale |
| 12 | Qualities of leadership and entrepreneurship – or of imagination |

| | |
|----|--|
| 13 | Changing environmental and production regulation approaches / systems – expanding in the case of environmental systems and sometimes contracting for producers |
| 14 | Changing government fiscal and budgetary structures |
| 15 | Emerging qualities of xenophobia or tolerance |
| 16 | Changing balances between future orientation and retrospective sentiment |

Source: The author.

Moreover, if we re-examine Figure 2, we see all of these dimensions interacting among each other in a never-ending loop against a background of perpetually changing institutional arrangements, and these in turn operate differentially across the spectrum of spatial scales from the local to the global. However, over the last century the power to control or influence events has migrated persistently from small spatial scales to the larger scales as trade has become freer and supra-national authorities have arisen to mediate international relations and conflicts. So the systems shaping rural society are multi-layered, complexly interwoven, often flexible and adaptable, and perpetually in transition from one state to another. And personal or collective interpretations of sustainable conditions are also buffeted by similar evolutionary conditions – to the extent that I doubt if consensus can ever be reached.

Can Human Institutions Control the Evolution of Sustainable Rural Systems?

To answer this question, I'll return to the factors shaping rural society and ask 6 key questions about them:

1. How well do we understand
 - a. The individual factors concerned,
 - b. Their interconnections with other factors, and
 - c. Likely resultant future trajectories of events?
2. Are those future outcomes likely to be sustainable in any generally agreed sense, given analysts' and practitioners'

often large conceptual variations on the nature of the term?
[Note that I've found geographers' future imaginations often deficient anyway!]

3. If not, in what respects might unsustainability emerge and what sustainable goals might be set?
4. Which of the slate of contributing factors is most damaging to preferred outcomes?
5. Do we have any (hard) control or (soft) influence over those factors that is significant enough to deliver preferred outcomes? And is that control or influence likely to strengthen or weaken over the forecast period?
6. Were we to attempt such control or influence, would the sustainability improvements be greater than potential losses (including opportunity costs) arising from such action? *[Note here that public control or influence over individual processes - but not whole systems - tends to be malign because goal setting and execution among different strands are often uncoordinated and indeed contradictory and our political masters are adept at choosing second-best solutions to avoid conflict.]*

Let's respond to these difficult questions briefly, while recognising that we are facing the ultimate (super)-wicked problems and social messes. Basically, the answers to these questions are extremely difficult because of:

- The large number of contributing variables;
- Their complex mutual interaction, with numerous feed-back loops;
- Fast-paced semi-autonomous changes in settings;
- Considerable differences in analysts' opinions about
 - a. Current and past states of the systems in question
 - b. Future system prognoses
 - c. The relative contribution of individual causal variables
 - d. The definition of sustainability

e. Desirable outcomes (in sustainability terms)

- The preponderance in our understandings and preferences of powerful personal opinions and beliefs (the subject matter is frequently shaped ideologically, or by fears and worries, or through conservative reverence for familiar situations and attitudes)
- Human preference to control their living and/or operating environments (for reasons of power, security, and familiarity). We are, I suspect, control freaks in one way or another – me included
- This in turn leads to our over-estimation of our extent of control or influence and under-estimate our propensity to gamble and the extent to which we take needless risks
- The framing of public policy to deliver ‘sustainable’ outcomes is inherently fraught with other nasties:
 - a. Deciding how much of tax-payers’ money to put into the achievement of public goals – assuming they can be defined accurately in the first place [this has to be a delicate balancing act between the sum total needed to solve a problem (which is largely unknown!) versus resources available (subject to citizen’s willingness to pay taxes) and conflict between alternative ends (largely the result of politicians’ perceptions of what the public would like to see)]
 - b. Deciding how to allocate expenditure over multiple policy levers to optimise returns on investment (the economics of this is largely devoid of hard data)
 - c. How best to avoid funding policy levers that are mutually antagonistic (this is also largely a closed book!)
 - d. Whether to fund place specific strategies at the expense of general policies [note that the more mobile are the factors of production, the more likely it is that general policies will be more rewarding than place specific outlays]
 - e. Politicians’ enduring preference for compromise and

spreading the benefits of outlays widely [the second-best option imperative]

- f. New technologies continually come on stream capable of upsetting budgetary estimates [it seems that political actors are often very slow to perceive the impacts of technology compared with individual actors or corporations operating in competitive environments!]
- g. Arising from all of the above is ultimately scant knowledge of the net benefits of public policy.

Perhaps policy-makers are not too far removed from Christopher Columbus who, you may recall, set out not knowing where he was going; did not know where he was when arrived; and did not know where he had been on his return. Collective exercises are more likely to suffer this complaint (or defect) than more single-minded and focused corporations or leading individuals.

For these reasons, I have long favoured public policies designed to accelerate the capacity of individuals and businesses to perform a wide variety of tasks more effectively and efficiently. These include their ability to seek and perceive development opportunity; honing their future orientation through research, education and skills acquisition; developing their capacity to better assess and take risk or to seek and acquire venture capital; increasing their mobility to locations offering higher rewards for effort; working together to enhance synergies and spin-offs ventures; developing their leadership roles and abilities; infecting other community members with the goal of self-improvement; conserving important resources so that they're available for longer – or developing substitutes; and marketing their achievements and opportunities. Some carefully selected infrastructure projects and research fields may also be funded – but with an eye on future needs for high quality services, opportunity development, and competitive efficiency. I might also add to this list community strategies to enhance their psychological perceptions and behaviours suited to the task of rapid adaptation to fast-changing environments, though I've never seen a formal strategy to do this.

The Commission's Future

The commission has, I believe, a bright future, and my task here is to set out key research themes stemming from previous analysis.

To begin with, there is still a need to refine the notion of sustainability. But, there is no absolute definition in my view. Rather, we have to focus on the range of human aims (or goals) and actions that deliver long-run maintenance of (or increase in) productive activity within high quality social, cultural and environmental experiences. The ranges of sustainable activities and outcomes are likely to vary legitimately between regions and countries, and a second task of the Commission would be to investigate the bounds to those ranges able to deliver preferred outcomes.

A third task is to explore the nature of rural systems across different nations or regions within nations. I have noticed how much conceptions of the 'rural' differ between Australia on the one hand and Europe and East Asia on the other. In Australia, rural regions are usually far removed spatially from metropolitan orbits and lie firmly within a productivist realm. In Europe or East Asia it is often difficult to find ruralities not bound up with post-productivist and post-industrial lifestyles where much of the countryside is in effect home to urban elites and a playground for city dwellers. And, of course, rural regions in many developing countries are partly labour reservoirs for urban-based industrial expansion, and partly subsistence regimes more or less cut off from the outside world, except perhaps as the ultimate escape for cashed up tourists seeking untamed wildlife and cultural experiences. These various types of rurality are not just functionally different but bring into play different notions of sustainability, whose contestation is likely to be conflictual and bad-tempered. In some cases, for instance, US and Chinese companies are buying up large swathes of Africa for commercial agriculture using increasingly scarce groundwater. Native populations are frequently cast aside from their traditional homelands by their own governments pursuing increasing export income. What is sustainable for the US and China manifestly differs from local conceptions!

Fourthly, this Commission might focus on the capacity of rural regions (and of course their inhabitants) to adapt more rapidly to the changing circumstances confronting them – cultural, social,

behavioural, economic, technological, environmental, geo-political, governance. I suspect that a hoard of threats and opportunities are about to sweep across largely unprepared ruralities and their survival and prosperity alike will reflect their adaptive capacity. As noted previously, governments' increasing role most likely lays in fostering adaptability rather than trying to buttress the status quo, but this is much more difficult to conceptualise and implement than the traditional hand-outs to existing interests. It involves, effectively, laying communities out a psychologist's couch and manipulating their behaviours – something few governments have ever contemplated.

Fifthly, I believe this Commission could begin to conceive alternative rural futures. Geographers seem to shy away from such a task, but I suspect that our breadth of focus across environment, economy, society, governance and culture places us in a good and possibly unique position to peek into future ruralities and chart courses of action through the maze of competing options. I have actually looked into my Australian crystal ball and imagine the emergence of highly skilled and professional rural communities of unsurpassed wealth, though their populations may be smaller and younger than now. Their services are likely to be substantially reorganised in the internet and social networking age. Traditions will expire, except where functional in the sense that they are highly valued and contribute substantially to economic well-being. Much of the economy will scale-up in size and global orientation / connectivity. Australian ruralities will likely be far more culturally and ethnic diverse than now as humanitarian and skilled migrants alike move in. To me this what sustainability is about – the creation and on-going re-creation of completely new rural systems with the goal of generating great wealth and diversity endogenously – with new commodities to produce, new and unheralded manufactures, good quality services and high environmental amenity. The past is past; the future beckons and with imagination and entrepreneurship will emerge seamlessly from the past.

And then, sixthly, there are crucial issues about how to feed 9 billion humans in 2050, which on some estimates will require an increase of food supply of between 50% and 73%. How can this be done without

impairing environmental health and rural amenity and damaging the interests of farmers in developing nations, while promoting national and international food security?

I could go on, but this may be sufficient food for thought. We are adrift in a sea of rising uncertainty and it is our task to try to make sense of it, and chart best course for the future using the best techniques at our disposal.

Reference

Taleb, N. 2012. *Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder*. New York: Random House.

This timely book explores critical global issues in the countryside of different regions of the world. The chapters focus on how local people seek to devise sustainable land use and rural livelihoods in the face of changing global, regional and national farm and environmental policy and competitive pressure from transnational agribusiness. The authors show how local actors adapt and innovate in novel ways in the specific contexts of each country and in the process construct new rural functions and values involving creative forms of connectivity and governance in order to achieve their aims.

All of the authors are active participants in the International Geographical Union Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems which brings together rural geographers from across the world to discuss how contemporary rural restructuring can be made sustainable. Over the years the comparative international perspective of this forum has challenged participants to rise above their individual experience in specific countries to truly think globally. This book expresses this kind of thinking and critically examines contemporary strategies of rural resilience to urban encroachment, market pressures and national farm and environmental policy. New agricultural and non-agricultural functions, such as organic farming, novel marketing schemes, eco-tourism and rural tourism are highlighted. Territorial and cultural dimensions are also shown to be fundamental for new livelihood strategies so that rural dynamics is seen to be a much more complex process than merely adopting new economics activities.

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