Henk de Haan • Norman Long (Eds)

IMAGES AND REALITIES OF RURAL LIFE

Wageningen Perspectives on Rural Tranformations

Table of Contents

Images and Realities of Rural Life. Introduction

Henk de Haan and Norman Long

This book celebrates fifty years of sociology at Wageningen Agricultural University. Its contributors are all staff of the newly formed Centre for Rural Development Sociology, whose institutional origins can be traced back to the two departments of rural sociology established in the late 1940s – one specializing in the rural sociology of the Netherlands and Europe, and the other in the rural sociology and anthropology of 'developing countries.'

The 'founding fathers' of these departments – Evert Willem Hofstee and Rudie van Lier – were, each in his own distinctive and sometimes idiosyncratic ways, formidable intellectuals who shaped the contours of Wageningen sociology. Hofstee is best remembered for his fine-grained regional analyses of differential farming and cultural styles in the Netherlands; while van Lier – though skeptical of man's ability to steer the course of social change – promoted a sociology of development that took a critical and reflexive stance to understanding intervention processes.

This collection, however, is not intended primarily as an occasion to pay tribute to the founding fathers, nor does it aim to survey the history and personalities of the past fifty years that have made Wageningen rural development sociology what it is today. Such ancestral rituals have their function in strengthening the sense of identity among current staff members and students, and may also serve as an historical claim on the present and future existence of a robust sociology in Wageningen. But the ambitions of this book are different. Whatever identity or standing Wageningen sociology may have will be determined by our colleagues and audiences elsewhere. It can only be constructed by others on the basis of our research profile, thinking and academic performance. Claims to local, national and international reputations are built on achievements, and not on institutional and intellectual pedigrees.

This volume, then, offers a sample of recent work by sociology staff members and sketches out possible future trajectories. We leave it to others to judge how far Wageningen sociology constitutes a distinctive, lively and coherent set of activities with some common goals and perspectives. The contributions have been deliberately chosen for their theoretical and reflexive character. They provide theoretical and/or methodological

insights into critical areas of rural research, spanning a wide spectrum of social, cultural, economic, political and ecological contexts and phenomena.

Situating the Work of Wageningen Sociology

Before outlining the themes and organization of the volume, some comments about the setting of Wageningen sociology are necessary in order to delineate the kind of social and institutional context in which it has developed.

Wageningen is often seen as the place where much emphasis is given to relating theory to practice: to policy issues, agricultural problems and development intervention. While this view has a good deal of validity, we wish also to underline the importance of situating applied and problem-oriented work within the framework of research programmes concerned with the empirical exploration and theoretical understanding of processes of a more 'foundational' character. Hence theory, empirical research, and practical and policy dimensions are all interrelated and unthinkable without each other. In the chapters that follow theoretical issues are interwoven with, and shown to be relevant to, specific political and policy debates, problems of development intervention, the implications of global/local relationships and representations, and the more general dilemmas of creating and sustaining viable rural environments and livelihoods.

It is, of course, undeniable that the formation of an academic identity is an historical process and that past events contribute to the present image of a particular group of scholars. Thus, sociologists in Wageningen had positioned themselves within Dutch academia as the 'Wageningen School' as early as the 1960s. Hofstee, who occupied the chair of rural sociology for more than thirty years, always denied the existence of such a School, but he could not change the vision of colleagues from the 'world outside.' Four decades later this label carries a more international flavour, embracing as it does both rural sociological work on the Netherlands and Europe and development sociology and anthropology of the 'Third World.' It is this reorganized and reinvigorated rural development sociology with which members of the new Centre for Rural Development Sociology now tend to identify.

Labelling by outsiders and forms of self-identification, whether based on authentic or inaccurate images or criteria, always carry some significance. Despite its multifaceted character, personal differences and interests, and a broad international orientation, Wageningen sociology does have some distinctive characteristics, moulded by the conjuncture of local, national and international influences. Although we do not wish to explore further the intricacies of academic identity, we think it may be interesting

to mention briefly the constituent factors that have shaped the formation of Wageningen rural development sociology.

The institutionalization of sociology in Wageningen – as in all universities in the Netherlands – was part of a general recognition that its knowledge was essential for understanding processes of social and politico-economic change. When the state and non-governmental organizations began to define their role as major agents in bringing about social and economic reform through intervention and extension, social research was considered an essential instrument for policy making. In the Wageningen context, social science research and teaching were very much embedded in the general role expected of the agricultural sciences. Their mandate was to produce 'expert' sociological knowledge that would be instrumental to the framing and implementation of agricultural and rural development policy.

The establishment of rural sociology as an applied branch of agricultural sciences was, of course, not unique to the Netherlands. However, the difference with most other countries was that rural sociology was considered relevant to the study of both so-called 'western' *and* 'non-western' societies. The ensemble of sociologists focusing on different parts of the world provided a potentially rich environment within which to develop cross-cultural comparisons and to cross-fertilize sociological and anthropological theories and methods. Even though the two 'worlds' – 'western' and 'non-western' – remained institutionally separate until only recently, which inhibited close collaboration, the present situation of an 'undivided sociology' facilitates the rediscovery and consolidation of networks (mostly informal) that cross-cut the two research groups. As this volume clearly shows, the prospects for such a re-unification process are high, due to the considerable overlap of interests and theoretical orientations.

Of course, the socio-political and academic environment in which rural development sociology at Wageningen came to maturity could have imposed major obstacles for creative and critical academic work. Being related to the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and surrounded by predominantly 'non-human' sciences, sociology and anthropology could have been reduced to a kind of sociological empiricism marooned from mainstream social science. Several commentators have, for example, accused American rural sociologists attached to the US Land Grant Universities of uncritically producing 'hard facts' in order to define themselves as 'equals' in an academic milieu dominated by 'positivistic' disciplines commanding high public status. Theoretical reflection and critical distantiation, or strong identification with academic sociology, was seen to threaten their positions *vis-à-vis* their colleagues in the agro-technical and economic sciences.

In contrast, Wageningen sociology has largely escaped from this sort of deferential stance. Its minority position within the agrarian disciplines in

the university seems to have worked in the opposite direction. Social researchers have always strongly emphasized the fundamental role of their discipline in studying agricultural practices and rural development; and several have taken up the gauntlet to become front-stage participants in political debates about the future of the countryside in the Netherlands, the role of agricultural science in development, and Dutch aid policies for the Third World. However, their research agendas have not been primarily defined by political or policy issues, nor have they been simple responses to the demands of technological or organizational research. As several chapters in this volume illustrate, Wageningen sociologists have been more concerned with the development of a systematic critique of technological 'solutions,' intervention ideologies and organizational practice, and with the advancement of new theoretical and conceptual tools for analyzing the multiple realities and contestation of values in the processes of rural social change. In this way Wageningen sociology has turned its institutional context to advantage.

On the other hand, active cooperation with academic colleagues in the agronomic, ecological and technical sciences has enriched our understanding of the multi-dimensional nature of rural development and agricultural practice, and has contributed to an increased awareness of the social dynamics that underpin material, biological and technical processes. Moreover, critical social analysis and reflection by Wageningen sociologists have directly and indirectly permeated the official arenas of policy debate, decision making and implementation, both within national and international government and non-governmental circles. We must also note the widespread interest and prominence accorded to certain developments in theory and research at Wageningen, as evidenced, for example, by the 'actor-oriented perspective' on rural development spearheaded by Norman Long, and the 'styles of farming' approach developed by Jan Douwe van der Ploeg. Both have reached out to an international audience and have influenced the research and theoretical orientations of a wide circle of academics, as well as development practitioners.

Wageningen sociology, then, has managed to survive for more than half a century and is buoyed up to enter the twenty-first century as a well-respected and recognized 'School.'

Images and Realities of Rural Life

The title we have chosen for this book aims to capture the main lines of research and debate that characterize present-day sociology at Wageningen. Throughout the individual chapters, rural social life is portrayed as a multi-dimensional and contested reality. This holds whether the particular focus is on contrasting interpretations of rural development policy and practice, diverse forms of rural living and experience, differentiated

institutional and power domains, or local and regional patterns of agriculture, ecology and enterprise. The various contributions raise the central issue of how different social actors conceptualize and respond to this diversity, and engage in a contestation of images and discourses on the meanings of rurality. The images evoked relate to actors' perceptions of globalization, their orientations towards commoditization, their conceptions of 'rights' , 'entitlements,' and 'responsibilities,' their visions of the 'state,' 'rural society,' and 'nature,' and their representations of the history and cultural construction of 'rural' modes of living and enterprise. Such images are generated not only among different local groups but also within the administrative-cum-political domains of policy makers and field-level workers, as well as within the networks of many other actors such as traders, tourists and consumers. Many of the chapters are concerned with analyzing how these images are actively mobilized, constructed, reproduced, and reconstructed in everyday social life, and in the struggles that take place at the interface with intervening or competing parties. Some chapters also explore the ways in which ordering or regulating discourses and strategies shape the contests that arise and their outcomes, thus reinforcing existing or creating new loci of authority and/or networks of power relations.

In an attempt to construct meaningful and convincing analytical narratives of the complex and often disconcerting 'realities' of rural life and development, the researcher must likewise engage with various actors' images, representations and social practices. He can only achieve this, of course, if he himself also frames his investigation and analysis through the deployment of specific images, metaphors and concepts. It is at this point that one enters the epistemologically tricky terrain of precisely whose images and concepts should take precedence in the understanding of social and cultural phenomena.

The matter is further compounded by the fact that we face not only differences between 'scientific' and 'folk' perceptions and representations of 'reality' but also the co-existence and contestation of varying everyday versions of 'reality.' The same goes for political and scientific discourses developed within specific 'epistemic communities,' wherein we find disagreements over interpretations of the 'world.' In short, we are forced to acknowledge and develop ways of analyzing multiple images of reality and how they shape, and are shaped by, power relations and differential access to material and cultural resources. Indeed, the study of development intervention and the interplay between continuity and change in rural life entails a close analysis of the confrontations between contrasting configurations of knowledge, authority and claims to 'truth.' While none of the chapters of the present book can claim to fully resolve these theoretical and methodological issues, many new insights and perspectives are offered for tackling the issue of the changing meanings

and practices implicated in rural livelihoods and rural transformations more generally.

Organization and Themes of the Book

Although all contributors address questions of rural development, their discussions cover a wide variety of problems and great geographical scope. The chapters include examples that range from fruit production in Chile and maize fields in Kenya, through kinship in the eastern Netherlands and social movements in the Philippines, to small enterprises in Mexico and the marketing of rural images in the Netherlands. The contributions are grouped into four parts, which broadly reflect the current interests of Wageningen sociology staff.

Part One provides an overview of some central theoretical and empirical issues currently characterizing work at the Centre of Rural Development Sociology. It opens with an account by Norman Long of the characteristics and strengths of an actor-oriented perspective on rural development. He argues that this approach goes beyond generalized theories or models of agrarian transformation based upon the centrality of market integration, institutional incorporation, and state or international intervention. In contrast, an actor-oriented approach addresses the ways in which 'rural development' is socially and discursively constructed. The chapter discusses a number of key theoretical and methodological issues, especially those relating to the interplay of global/local relationships and representations, and of how to apply actor analysis to situations of de-territorialized social life. It ends with a brief review of research on globalization currently in progress at Wageningen.

Jan den Ouden's chapter takes a retrospective view of development anthropology. He describes how Wageningen sociologists are firmly rooted in the anthropological fieldwork tradition and the analysis of culture. His chapter highlights the contribution that anthropology has made to the understanding of processes of social change and development, but stresses the in-built epistemological and personal problems involved in carrying out anthropological fieldwork. On the basis of this, he examines the usefulness and limitations of anthropological work for the purposes of the policy maker and development practitioner. He shows how Wageningen sociologists are not only involved in problem-oriented and applied research, but also in the study of the practices of development intervention itself.

The final chapter in Part One by Jan Douwe van der Ploeg provides an extensive discussion of processes of European rural development. He offers new openings into burning theoretical and political problems, while never ignoring the livelihoods of rural people and the complexities of rural

policy making. Van der Ploeg's chapter is built around his notion of 'rurality.' He does not reintroduce the urban–rural continuum, as some might think, but actually posits a rural–urban divide. Rurality – as the co-production between man and nature – is characterized by certain elements of social organization and craftsmanship, and is associated with a ruralized physical environment. From his conception of rurality, van der Ploeg is able to put the discourse on the rural, including its idealization or rejection by urbanity, into a new perspective.

Part Two, on governance, intervention and social movements, represents an important line of ongoing research in Wageningen. The four chapters in this part, although very different in scope and nature, all examine forms of regulation and intervention in rural development. Jaap Frouws provides a critique of current regulation and micro-oriented theories. He argues for the use of *governance* as a concept for analyzing recent transformations in the relationship between agriculture, food consumption, the environment and non-agricultural claims on the rural landscape. Here the notion of governance refers to the complex interdependencies between the role of the market, the state and 'civil society.' A governance approach is not limited to analyzing the role of the state, focussing instead on the totality of principles regulating agriculture. Drawing upon the analytical achievements of economic, political and environmental sociology, Frouws places rural sociology at the cross-road of different sociological sub-disciplines.

Drawing upon' fieldwork in the Atlantic zone of Costa Rica, Pieter de Vries offers an appraisal of the role of the state in development programmes, highlighting the intervention ideologies that policy makers and front-line workers deploy in their relationships with 'beneficiaries.' This points to the multiple and contradictory effects of intervention practice, and provides grounds for a critique of the assumption that bureaucratic activity is underpinned by a logic of state penetration or social control. His analysis centres on how development administrators and front-line bureaucrats construct views about farmers as being 'lazy,' 'unreliable,' and therefore 'undeserving.' His argument also runs counter to post-structuralist interpretations of the quasi-conspiratorial nature of the state which, de Vries argues, adds little to our understanding of the contingencies of localized struggles between bureaucrats and their 'unruly' clients.

Ad Nooij compares two contrasting paradigms of regional development (the 'modern' and the 'endogenous'), both strongly endowed with normative assumptions. Both of these paradigms are represented as complex knowledge-intervention networks, characterized by different theories, methods of research, assumptions about the aim and strategy of development, and with different relations to state and local authorities. By placing these paradigms in their socio-political contexts, Nooij provides a

model for analyzing the decline and maturing of politically-oriented research and practice.

Finally, Thea Hilhorst discusses several theories concerning so-called 'new' social movements and concludes that the most promising analytical approach is that which focuses on discourse formation as a negotiated processes. On the basis of this, she provides a fascinating account of the struggle surrounding Philippine government plans to build several dams in the Chico river. She then describes, with a sense for detail and empathy, how local villagers are able to mobilize both 'traditional' and national resources and cultural repertoires, and how the discourse slowly shifts away from local conflicts to more general issues of 'indigenous rights.' Hilhorst's contribution raises interesting questions of comparative research into regional autonomy and regional identity in general.

Part Three presents four papers on the significance of local actors and actor networks in a context of commoditization and globalization. Commoditization and globalization are at the heart of rural transformation processes in every part of the world. From different perspectives the authors of Part Three argue that it would be wrong to draw the conclusion that the lives of people in the countryside have been hijacked by global capitalist enterprise, or that the transnational movement of people and commodities is simply a function of a reorganized international division of labour. Nor are people simply swamped by global images and media, thus losing their own sense of a rural identity and the ability to appropriate and transform external messages. Indeed, as these chapters clearly show, another side of this human drama involving the flow of commodities, people and ideas, is the intricate and creative ways in which people and their families struggle to solve their own livelihood problems and give new meanings to global messages and processes.

Henk de Haan argues that globalization is a scientific construct. He introduces the concept of 'deglobalization' to clarify the concrete character of local–global encounters and how globality is integrated into existing social structure and culture. He illustrates this with the experience of rural restructuring in a Dutch and a French village. In showing how this process is mediated by pre-existing rules governing access to property he underlines the idea that actors are embedded in a locally defined and perceived field of action, which conditions their position *vis-à-vis* processes of globalization and commoditization.

From a different angle and illustrated with various fascinating examples, Alberto Arce comes to similar conclusions concerning the local deconstruction of globality. His central argument is that global processes need to be translated by local actors in order to acquire material and social significance. Using the case of fresh fruit and vegetable, he explores how global patterns of consumption interact with local production systems and are mediated, adapted or managed within the life experiences and under-

standings of local entrepreneurs. However, he stands back from a simple analysis of translation processes to demonstrate how such local actors are able to creatively engage with and to some degree retransform global consumption tastes.

Paul Hebinck and Jan Douwe van der Ploeg summarize the methodological and theoretical contours of the 'styles of farming' concept. Styles of farming, they argue, are actively created forms of heterogeneity, epitomizing farmers' room for choice and interpretation. They give much emphasis to 'cultural repertoires' – the multi-coloured cognitive and symbolic universe which mediates farmers' reactions to technological change and the market. They illustrate their argument with empirical examples, focussing on the huge variety in maize yields in Kenya, and criticizing the prevailing 'iron laws' in political and scientific models of rural development. Hebinck and van der Ploeg's chapter combines, in an interesting way, the analysis of detailed field data with firm political and social critique.

In his chapter, Norman Long offers a new perspective on commoditization that focuses upon how 'social value' is constructed through the ongoing processes and social encounters of everyday life. He develops his argument by reference to the restructuring of agrarian relations under neoliberal policies, emphasizing that analysis of these transformations must centre upon an understanding of how commoditization processes are forged through contests over social values. This entails a close-up study of how values are socially defined, allocated and fixed. It also implies analysis of how actors develop organizing and discursive strategies for dealing with changing livelihood and normative conditions.

Gerard Verschoor's contribution calls for a rethinking of notions of 'globalization' in relation to small firm development. Drawing upon actor-network theory, he characterizes small firms as essentially ongoing, contingent projects involving a heterogeneous mix of social and material elements. This has implications for policies aimed at promoting small firms, which often view economic enterprises as self-contained islands of organization operating within given frameworks of constraint. Instead, small firms, he argues, should be seen as composed of materially heterogeneous networks of actors engaged in production, dissemination and consumption of specific goods and services.

Part Four presents examples of recent and current work on newly emerging claims on the meaning of rurality. The countryside is portrayed as contested territory, where different, often opposing claims struggle for recognition. Until recently, rural areas were basically considered in terms of agricultural land use and a place of residence for people who are associated with agriculture, rural industries and other sectors of the rural economy. Although there have been long-term processes of counter-urbanization, rural tourism and rural–urban relations, the physical, social and

economic transformation of the countryside was mainly patterned by economic interests, especially productionist agricultural policy and rural industrialization. Rural planning was not considered a hot political item beyond the direct interests of the rural population and agricultural interests. Although rural sociologists in Wageningen had an early interest in environmental problems, nature conservation, tourism and rural living conditions, it is only recently that these themes figure prominently on the research agenda. The papers presented in this Part not only pose and describe opposing claims on the countryside. Most attention is given to a theoretical understanding of motivations, ideologies, principles and concepts. These chapters all argue for a broad rural sociology, cross-fertilized by general social theory and informed by social processes at large.

Jaap Frouws and Arthur Mol use the theory of 'ecological moderniz-ation' – a concept borrowed from environmental sociology – to analyse the process of reembedding of ecology. This process should result in the institutionalization of 'ecology' in the social practices and institutions of production and consumption. They describe and analyse the emergence of an ecological rationality in industrial production and compare their findings with agriculture.

Kris van Koppen's chapter begins with a description of current debates in the Netherlands on the relation between agriculture and nature. Central to his argument is a critical investigation of the conservation movement's views and representations of nature. Tracing the Arcadian origins of their thinking, he concludes that these are deeply rooted in Dutch culture and practice, and cannot therefore be dismissed.

René van der Duim views tourism as a process of material and symbolic transformation of resources as a result of interventions by producers and consumers. For him these transformation processes are central to an understanding of what is implied by sustainable tourism. He provides an extensive assessment of views on sustainability and considers their usefulness for international tourism.

Jaap Lengkeek, Jan Willem te Kloeze and Renze Brouwer offer a theoretical framework for understanding the 'tourist gaze.' How are travelling and exploring the countryside related to the everyday experience of modernity, and what is the correspondence between the images produced by the tourist industry and the visions held by tourists? They introduce, from a phenomenological perspective, the concept of 'other realities,' referring to the tensions between the rationality of everyday life and 'the tourist experience.' They illustrate the relevance of their perspective with empirical examples on the 'thematization of the countryside,' agritourism and the issue of rural identities. This chapter clearly illustrates how the rural has acquired a significance which goes far beyond any notion of production and space. Rurality is a cultural notion with powerful capacities to transform rural realities.

Part One

Current Work and New Approaches

1 Agency and Constraint, Perceptions and Practice. A Theoretical Position

Norman Long

Introduction

Over the past fifteen years, sociologists and anthropologists at Wageningen have undertaken a wide range of empirical projects using methods of social research that centre upon an actor-oriented and interface analysis of rural development. The following dimensions have been at the forefront of this actor-oriented endeavour: the elucidation of actors' differential perceptions and practices; the interlocking of emergent forms of social agency and constraint; processes of political negotiation, accommodation and institutional regulation; a rethinking of issues of commoditization and the social attribution of 'value'; the analysis of models and practices of intervention; exploration of issues of power and authority; and the interface between science-based knowledge and technology, and forms of local knowledge (Long and Long 1992). We are presently applying similar theoretical and methodological concerns to the study of globalization and localization in contrasting rural contexts (Long 1996).

Such an approach is founded upon a sociology of rural development that aims to go beyond generalized theories or models of agrarian transformation propelled by market integration, institutional incorporation, and state or international intervention. While the shortcomings of these earlier generic models – especially their failure to explain adequately the sources and dynamics of heterogeneity in agrarian structures – are now widely recognized by political economists and sociologists alike, much research in fact remains focused on how national and international institutional and economic orders and discourses *condition* the parameters and possibilities of rural development, rather than on an analysis of the complex interplay of global/local relationships and representations in the making of rural development. For example, globalization theories addressing the 'declining coherence of national (agricultural and food) economies and national regulatory states' (Buttel 1994, p. 14), situate analytically the restructuring of rural areas within the framework of globalized capitalist 'regimes of accumulation' and 'modes of regulation.'[1] Although such analysis treats modes of regulation as essentially the product of past and present social struggles (Jessop 1988, p. 151) – and thus to a degree acknowledges the

role of human agency – the principal protagonists of these struggles are depicted as macro-actors in the form of state systems and transnational corporations.

Such macro formulations narrow the focus to privilege analytically the politico-economic institutional structures of agro-food systems, rather than starting from the problematic of producing, making a living, consuming, and maintaining and transforming networks of social relations and cultural identities, both within and beyond the countryside. That is, we must address the problems of how, in differing historical and cultural contexts, rural development interventions and livelihoods are materialized and socially constructed through the interplay, contestation and negotiation of values and interests within specific domains and arenas of social action. Fundamental to this is the view that rural development is composed of a complex series of interlocking practices that are forged through the encounters, struggles and negotiations of different social actors – local farmers, traders, government officials and front-line workers, transnational company managers, politicians, agricultural scientists, and others, who people the networks and normative orders of particular regimes of accumulation and modes of regulation. Each actor (individual or collective) commands different types and scales of resources, interests, values and institutional capacities. Hence the field of rural development is constituted of social meanings and practices that are negotiated in the encounters that take place. Such practices and their outcomes are not predetermined by local cultural, ecological or organizational endowments, nor by wider economic, political, and institutional forces.

Rural development is, then, a heterogeneous process involving multiple levels, values and 'realities' – ranging from diverse local patterns of organization and management of resources, to regional economic, political and cultural phenomena, intervening state and non-state institutions, development programmes and representations, and global market, political and cultural scenarios. At the core lie central issues concerning livelihoods, organizational capacities and discourses, and intervention practice and ideology. In short, it is a complex drama about human needs and desires, organizing capabilities, power relations, skills and knowledge, authoritative discourses and institutions, and the clash of different ways of ordering and transforming the world.

The challenge of this perspective on rural development is to develop a methodology and analytical framework[2] that allows us to elucidate and analyse the construction of these complex discursive and social forms. A major focus of my own work since the early 1980s has been concerned with developing an actor-oriented framework for looking at these complexities. This chapter continues this task, first, by laying out in summary points the main features of the approach; second, by discussing a number of analytical concepts and issues that require further elucidation and clarification; and finally, by providing a brief account of two types of

research currently being undertaken in Wageningen from an actor perspective aimed at exploring the implications of global/local processes among rural populations.

Cornerstones of an Actor-oriented Approach

An actor-oriented approach entails:
1 basing investigations and analysis on actor-defined issues or 'critical events';
2 identifying the actors[3] relevant to the specific arenas of action and contestation;
3 documenting ethnographically the situated social practices of actors and the ways in which their actions are materialized in the deployment of technologies, resources, discourses and texts (e.g., in the form of formal documents, decisions, or normative frames);
4 giving attention to the social networks, distributions of meanings and social constructions of value generated in the different arenas/situations;
5 focusing upon the organizing and ordering processes relevant to different arenas and institutional domains;
6 delineating the critical interfaces[4] that depict the points of contradiction or discontinuity between different (and often incompatible) actors' lifeworlds, including here not only so-called 'local' or 'target' groups but also 'intervening' institutional actors and other stakeholders;
7 elucidating the processes of knowledge/power construction entailed in these arenas and interfaces of contestation and negotiation, giving specific attention to the reconfiguration of relationships and values;
8 considering how matters of scale and complexity[5] relate to differential definitions of problematic situations and critical events and how these definitions shape specific organizing strategies of the parties involved;
9 identifying analytically the discursive and practical underpinnings of newly emergent social forms and connectivities.

Actors' Perceptions and Representations

The approach begins with actor-defined issues or critical events, in this case relevant to the field of development, whether defined by policy makers, researchers, intervening private or public agents or local actors, and whatever the spatial, cultural, institutional and power domains and arenas implicated. Such issues or events are, of course, often perceived, and their implications interpreted, very differently by the various parties/actors involved. Hence, from the outset one faces the dilemma of

how to represent problematic situations when there are multiple voices and contested 'realities.' A field of development is of course discursively constructed and delimited practically by the language use and strategic actions of the various actors. How far consensus is achieved over the definition of such a field or arena of contestation requires empirical evidence. One should not assume a shared vision. Actors must work towards such a common interpretation and there are always possibilities for dissenting from it.[6]

It is assumed that all actors work – mostly implicitly rather than explicitly – with beliefs about agency, that is, they articulate notions about relevant acting units and the kinds of knowledgeability and capability they have *vis-à-vis* the world they live in. This raises the question of how people's perceptions of the actions and agency of others shape their own behaviour. For example, local farmers may have reified views about 'the state' or 'the market' as actors, which, irrespective of their dealings with individual government officials or market traders, may influence their expectations of the outcomes of particular interventions. The same applies to the attribution of motives to local actors, such as political bosses and village authorities. The issue is how actors struggle to give meaning to their experiences through an array of representations, images, cognitive understandings, and emotional responses. Though the repertoire of 'sense-making' filters and antennae will vary considerably, such processes are to a degree framed by 'shared' cultural perceptions, which are subject to reconstitution or transformation. Locally situated cultures are always, as it were, 'put to the test' as they encounter the less familiar or the strange. An actor analysis must therefore address itself to the intricacies and dynamics of relations between differing lifeworlds and to processes of cultural construction. In this way one aims to understand the production of heterogeneous cultural phenomena and the outcomes of interaction between different representational and discursive domains, thus mapping out what we might describe as a cartography of cultural difference, power and authority.

But, since social life is composed of multiple realities, which are, as it were, constructed and confirmed primarily through experience, this interest in culture must be grounded methodologically in the detailed study of everyday life, in which actors seek to grapple cognitively and organizationally with the problematic situations they face. Hence social perceptions, values and classifications must be analysed in relation to interlocking experiences and social practices, not at the level of general cultural schema or value abstractions. For example, the production of commodities for global markets implies a whole range of value transformations, not only in regard to the commodity chain itself (i.e., the analysis of 'added value' at the points of product transformation, commercialization and consumption) but also in terms of how such commoditization impacts on the social values attributed to other goods, relationships,

livelihood activities, and forms of knowledge. In this way involvement in commodity chains may set off (but not determine) a number of significant cultural transformations.

In order to analyse these dimensions we must reject a homogeneous or unitary concept of 'culture' (often implied when labelling certain behaviour and sentiments as 'tradition') and embrace theoretically the central issues of cultural repertoires, heterogeneity and 'hybridity.' The concept of cultural repertoire points to the ways in which various cultural ingredients (value notions, types and fragments of discourses, organizational ideas, symbols and ritualized procedures) are used and recombined in social practice, consciously or otherwise; heterogeneity points to the generation and co-existence of multiple social forms within the same context or same scenario of problem solving which offer alternative solutions to similar problems, thus underlining that living cultures are necessarily multiple in the way in which they are enacted (cf. the concept of polymorphic structures in the biological sciences[7]); and hybridity to the mixed end-products that arise out of the combining of different cultural ingredients and repertoires. Of course there are certain inherent difficulties in the use of the term 'hybridity' to characterize contemporary patterns of change since, like *bricolage*, it suggests the sticking together or strategic combining of cultural fragments rather than the active self-transforming nature of socio-cultural practice. In a recent, deliberately provocative, paper Arce and I have suggested instead the term 'social mutation' for such internally generated and transforming processes (Arce and Long 1995).

Social Domains and Arenas: The Question of Constraints

In order to get to grips with encounters between lifeworlds, we need to develop a methodological approach to the study of domains and arenas in which contestation over values and resources takes place. Here I use 'domains' to identify areas of social life that are organized by reference to a series of interlocking practices and values which, even if they are not perceived in exactly the same way by everybody, are nevertheless recognized as a locus of certain 'rules,' norms and values implying degrees of social commitment, often with some spatial markers (see Villarreal 1994, pp. 58-63, 221). Examples include the domains of family, market, state, community, production and consumption, although, depending upon the situation, particular domains will differ in their prominence, pervasiveness or social significance. In this way 'domains' are central to understanding how social ordering works, and to analyzing how social and symbolic boundaries are created and defended. The values and interests associated with particular domains become especially visible and defined at points where domains are seen to impinge on each other or come into conflict.

Hence, domains together with the notion of arena – and how they are bounded – give us an analytical handle on the kinds of constraints and enabling elements that shape actors' choices and room for manoeuvre. Domains should *not* be conceptualized *a priori* as cultural givens but as produced and transformed through the experiences shared and the struggles that take place between actors of various sorts. Like the notion of 'symbolic boundaries' enunciated by Cohen (1987, p. 16) domains represent for people some shared values that 'absolves them from the need to explain themselves to each other – [but] leaves them free to attach their own meanings to them.'

'Arenas' are social encounters or a series of situations in which contests over issues, resources, values, and representations take place. That is, they are social and spatial locations where actors confront each other, mobilize social relations and deploy discursive and cultural means for the attainment of specific ends, including that of perhaps simply remaining in the game. In the process actors may draw on particular domains to support their interests, aims and dispositions. Arenas therefore are either spaces in which contestation associated with different practices and values of different domains takes place or they are spaces within a single domain where attempts are made to resolve discrepancies in value interpretations and incompatibilities between actor interests.

The concept of arena is especially important for identifying the actors and mapping out the issues, resources and discourses entailed in particular situations of disagreement or dispute. While the idea of 'arena' has an affinity to that of 'forum,' the latter carries with it the implication that the rules for debate are, in a sense, already agreed upon, whereas contestation in an arena usually denotes discontinuities of values, norms and practices. Arena is an especially useful notion when analyzing development projects and programmes since intervention processes consist of a complex set of interlocking arenas of struggle, each characterized by specific constraints and possibilities of manoeuvre (see Elwert and Bierschenk 1988).

While in general parlance the idea of an arena conjures up the picture of a fight or struggle taking place in some clearly demarcated and localized setting, we should not, on this basis, assume that an actor analysis is primarily interested in face-to face confrontations or interactions or only in local situations, interests, values and contests. Quite the opposite, since we are also interested in exploring how 'external' or geographically distant actors, contexts and institutional frames shape social processes, strategies and actions in localized settings. Moreover, local situations, struggles or networks are often stretched out or projected spatially as well as temporally to connect up with other distant, unknown – and sometimes unknowable – social worlds. Very few social arenas in fact are self-contained and separate from other arenas. Here the impact of modern communication and information technologies has been crucial, since these

allow for spontaneous, technology-mediated interactions of global proportions, thereby underlining the importance of developing analyses of interlocking arenas that go beyond earlier territorialized conceptions of social space based, for example, on 'rural–urban,' 'centre–periphery,' or 'nation–international order' dichotomies.

From Social Drama to Critical Event Analysis

We are currently working on extending these ideas of domain and arena to the study of critical events and issues. A useful forerunner of critical event analysis, which involves the understanding of complex interlocking arenas, is the early work of Turner on 'social dramas.' Turner first developed the notion of social drama for the analysis of social conflict and dispute settlement in African village politics. Later it was applied to a wide range of other types of dramatic situations, from struggles between trade unions and mine management to clashes between town and village lifestyles and values, to larger scale disruptions in socio-political arrangements. And it can also fruitfully be applied to the understanding of critical events entailed in so-called 'natural' and 'man-made' disasters.

A central aspect of Turner's original use of social drama is the disruption of an existing set of social relations or breach of norms which occasions efforts to repair the damage and restore social order or institute some new, negotiated social arrangements. As Turner graphically puts it, focusing upon social dramas makes transparent 'the crucial principles of social structure in their operation, and their relative dominance at successive points in time.' (Turner 1957, p. 93). This enables one to analyse the realignments in power relations consequent upon the struggles that take place between specific individuals and groups. (ibid, p. 131). Adopting an *interactionist methodology*, he focuses upon studying the set of ongoing relationships and situations involving the actors involved in the conflict and its mode of resolution. In his way he limits his study to localized issues pertaining to contests over 'traditional' village headmanship and does not feel the need to explore much the broader implications.

The study of social dramas that are more complex in scale and ramifications can best be looked at using a similar approach, but one which must necessarily go beyond the scope of an interactionist methodology.[8] This is evident, for example, when we attempt to analyse social dramas such as the 1994 Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Southern Mexico, and its aftermath, where information technology such as E-mail and Skylink were used to propagate Zapatista views, to win wider national and international support and to influence the negotiations taking place between Zapatista leaders and government spokesmen. This drama, which is now in its fourth year, also generated a series of other dramas involving struggles in other social sectors of the Mexican population for better political represen-

tation, or aimed at countering the detrimental effects of neoliberal policies[9]. The use of the Internet links together many spatially dispersed actors through the mediation of computer technology. They may never meet face-to-face but they constitute 'virtual communities' that clearly exert influence on their members and play an increasingly crucial role in the definition, representation and symbolization of critical events. International news correspondents, who immediately descended upon Chiapas, and their network of colleagues via portable satellite connections throughout the world, played an important role in profiling the conflict, and developed ploys to keep the story on the front pages. One intriguing case of this was the craze for Zapatista paraphernalia that erupted: They began writing about Zapatista dolls, pens, T-shirts and other souvenirs. It is said that it was the correspondent for the Spanish daily *La Vanguardia* who had suggested to an Indian street hawker selling traditionally dressed dolls to produce special Zapatista dolls. Two days later the hawker turned up with the new merchandise, complete with black ski masks like the Zapatista guerrillas themselves! (Oppenheimer 1996, pp. 29–30). Soon the wearing of the black mask itself took on a wider comico-political significance throughout Mexico as a general, unspoken symbol of protest against government.

Another instructive critical event concerns the explosion at the Union Carbide chemical plant in Bhopal, India, in 1984, which affected many thousands of people who had nothing to do with the industry or the Union Carbide company directly, and who received none of the industry's benefits. The explosion and what followed over the short and longer term enrolled a whole range of actors – spanning local, national and international arenas around several normative and moral domains and issues that the disaster brought to the fore, such as concerns over the rights of the local labour force, environmental effects, quality control standards, the freedom of transnationals to flout national and international agreements, the allocation of blame and accountability, rights and levels of compensation for affected workers and town and village residents, and a host of political ramifications that put the Indian state, regional government, international bodies, Union Carbide, and the legal profession all, as it were, 'on trial.' In an interesting analysis of the Bhopal disaster, Das (1995) highlights the dynamic interplay of bureaucratic, scientific and judicial discourses and images around the symbolization of pain, victimization, healing and compensation.

As Das argues, this type of social drama can be described as a 'critical event' because people were seriously confronted with the limitations of the set of existing institutions and practices available for dealing with the many problems it raised. Such events are often the result of institutional breakdowns, administrative impotence and/or a lack of political will to manage problematic or critical situations such as famine, rapid degrada-

tion of resources, and political conflicts that result in the dismantling of the state and civil orders.

The Issue of 'Collective Actors'

Starting with actors' problematic or critical livelihood situations leads to a consideration of the ways in which they develop social strategies to cope with them. These situated practices involve the management and coordination of sets of social relations that carry with them various normative expectations and commitments, as well as the deployment of technologies, resources, discourses, and texts in the form of documents that likewise embody wider sets of meanings and social relations.[10] Also, as I indicated earlier, they frequently draw upon certain so-called 'collective' resources and symbols.

The designation 'collective actor' covers three distinct connotations, each relevant to the understanding of social practice. The first sense is that of a coalition of actors who, at least at a given moment, share some common definition of the situation, or goals, interests, or values, and who agree, tacitly or explicitly, to pursue certain courses of social action. Such a social actor or entity (e.g., networks of actors or some sort of enterprise) can meaningfully be attributed with the power of agency, that is the capacity to process experience, make decisions and to act upon them. These collective actors may be informally or formally constituted and spontaneously or strategically organized. Furthermore, as Adams (1975) has argued, such operating units fall, broadly speaking, under one of two contrasting forms: those that are characterized by a *coordinate* pattern of relations as against those that are *centralized*. In the former, there is no central figure of authority, since the individuals grant reciprocal rights to each other, while retaining the prerogative to withdraw from the particular exchange relationships at their will. Here networks are more symmetrical in form but often have ambiguous and shifting boundaries. On the other hand, in the centralized case, there are imbalances in the exchanges, differences in access to strategic resources, and a degree of centralized control and decision making exercised by a central body or persons (and sometimes backed by 'higher' authorities) who claim to 'represent' the collectivity in its dealings with external actors.

The second sense of collective actor (or rather *collectif*) is that of an assemblage of human, social, material, technological and textual elements that make up what Latour (1994), Callon and Law (1995) designate a heterogeneous 'actor-network.' This usage attempts to dissolve the 'commonsense' distinction between 'things' and 'people' by arguing that 'purposeful action and intentionality are not properties of objects, but neither are they properties of human actors. Rather, they are properties of institutions, of *collectifs*' (Verschoor 1997, p. 27). That is, they are emergent effects generated by the interaction of both human and non-human compo-

nents, not a group of individuals who decide to join together in some common organization. Hence attempts to define collective social action without acknowledging the constitutive role played by materials, texts and technologies fall short analytically because they assume that collective social arrangements are simply the aggregated outcome of the effective agencies and interests of the participating individuals. The merit of this second interpretation of collective, then, is twofold: it stresses the heterogeneous make-up of organizing practices founded upon enrolment strategies; and it warns against individualist/reductionist interpretations of collective forms.

The third meaning of collective actor recognizes that social life is replete with images, representations and categorizations of things, people and institutions that are assumed or pictured as somehow constituting a unitary whole. For example, earlier I drew attention to ways in which entities such as the state, the market and the community are often endowed with generalized (or collective) modes of agency, and thus shape actors' orientations and actions. But it would be wrong analytically to adopt particular actors' representations of these institutional entities as a primary grid for analyzing their interactions with these so-called collective 'others.' The principal reason for this is that representations and categorizations may form part of an understanding of social practice – namely its discursive and pictorial dimensions – but they should not be disconnected from the pragmatics and semiotics of everyday life within which they are embedded and acquire their social significance. Indeed, a major advantage of actor-oriented analysis is that it aims to problematize such conceptions and interpretations through an ethnographic study of how specific actors deal organizationally and cognitively with the problematic situations they encounter.

All three kinds of collective actor – notwithstanding the probable epistemological objections and reservations of Latour – have, I believe, a place in actor-oriented analysis.

Organizing Processes and Livelihoods

Inter-individual action encompasses interaction in both face-to-face and more 'distanced' relationships. The types of social relationships range from inter-personal links based upon dyadic ties (such as patron–client relations and involvement in certain types of transactions – buyer-seller, producer-money lender, and client-ritual specialist, farmer-extensionist etc.) to social and exchange networks of various kinds, to more formally constituted groups and organizations (such as farmers' organizations, cooperatives, village councils, churches etc.) where dimensions concerning legal prescriptions, bureaucratic legitimacy and authority, and defined membership criteria assume greater significance.

Central to the idea of inter-individual networks and organizing practices is the concept of 'livelihood.' Livelihood best expresses the idea of individuals and groups striving to make a living, attempting to meet their various consumption and economic necessities, coping with uncertainties, responding to new opportunities, and choosing between different value positions. Studying livelihoods also entails identifying the relevant social units and fields of activity: one should not prejudge the issue, as many studies do, by fixing upon the more conventional anchorage points for an analysis of economic life such as 'the household,' 'the local community,' 'the production sector' or 'commodity chain.' Indeed in many situations confederations of households and wide-ranging interpersonal networks embracing a wide variety of activities and cross-cutting so-called 'rural' and 'urban' contexts, as well as national frontiers, constitute the social fabric upon which livelihoods and commodity flows are woven. In addition, we need to take account of the normative and cultural dimensions of livelihoods, that is we need to explore the issue of lifestyles and the factors that shape them.

In this regard, Wallman (in her studies of households in Wandsworth, London) makes an interesting contribution when she writes:

'Livelihood is never just a matter of finding or making shelter, transacting money, getting food to put on the family table or to exchange on the market place. It is equally a matter of ownership and circulation of information, the management of skills and relationships, and the affirmation of personal significance [involving issues of self-esteem] and group identity. The tasks of meeting obligations, of security, identity and status, and organizing time are as crucial to livelihood as bread and shelter.' (Wallman 1984).

Wallman does not focus solely then on material or economic resources but also on less materially tangible dimensions which include perceptions, skills, symbolic forms and organizational strategies. Hence she adds to the three conventional categories of material resources, labour and capital, three additional critical elements, namely 'time,' 'information' and 'identity.' The emphasis on the latter brings us to an important, often neglected element, namely, the identity-constructing processes inherent in the pursuit of livelihoods. This is especially relevant since livelihood strategies entail the building of relationships with others whose lifeworlds and status may differ markedly.

Livelihood therefore implies more than just making a living (i.e., economic strategies at household or inter-household levels). It encompasses ways and styles of life/living. It also includes therefore value choice, status, a sense of identity *vis-à-vis* other modes and types of social persons. It implies both a synchronic pattern of relationships existing among a delimited number of persons for solving livelihood problems or sustaining certain types of livelihoods, as well as diachronic processes. The latter

cover actors' livelihood trajectories during their life times, the types of choices they identify and take, and the switches they make between livelihood options.

Livelihoods are both individually and jointly constructed and represent patterns of inter-dependencies between the needs, interests and values of particular sets of individuals. Analysis of the types of inter-dependencies that exist has led, for example, to what Smith (1984) terms 'confederations of households.' The latter consist of a network of ties between a number of residentially discrete households based upon and sustained by a pattern of exchanges and complimentarities of livelihood. These confederations may manifest coordinate or centralized networks of social relations (or both); and are likely to change over time due to divergence of interests and activities. Some will decompose and regroup, and new memberships and configurations will emerge. This is a promising field of work that merits further research.

Network Configurations

Social networks are composed of sets of direct and indirect relationships and exchanges. The points in a network may be individuals or organized groups, for example business firms. Their morphological characteristics are related to content and structure; that is, the individual relationships can be depicted in terms of their normative contents and frequency of interaction which shape specific exchanges, while the overall configuration of connecting links can be characterized in terms of span and density. Networks evolve and transform themselves over time, and different types of networks are crucial for pursuing particular ends and engaging in certain forms of action. For example, information and resource mobilization networks are more effective when they are open ended and span a large universe of options, whereas networks required for carrying out specific collective actions (such as mounting strikes, demonstrations, and maintaining terraces or irrigation works) are usually close-knit with high levels of shared interests and norms.

The analysis of formally constituted groups and legally recognized organizations raises issues concerning institutional frameworks, hierarchies of authority, and mechanisms of control and regulation. As mentioned above, rural development scenarios involve a diverse range of institutional forms. While much organizational analysis focuses on formal rules and administrative procedures, highlighting for example the ways in which state, company and development agency rules and regulations shape the workings of organizations, an actor perspective concentrates, among other things, on delineating everyday organizing and symbolizing practises and the interlocking of actors' projects. This difference reflects a concern for emergent forms of interaction, practical strategies and types of discourse

and cultural construction, rather than for administrative models and ideal-typical constructions.

It becomes useful, in analyzing different types of social arrangements within organizations, to identify various ordering principles (see Law 1994). The latter should not, however, be seen as fixed institutional or normative criteria but rather as flexible or contestable interpretive modes for giving some order to the flux of social life. Organizational networks entail overlapping domains and fuzzy boundaries. Thus ordering processes are, as Law suggests, built upon strategic interests and representations of self and other. Self reflexivity and strategic action relate, of course, to both internal and external 'others.'

These various social and organizational practices function as a nexus of micro and macro relations and representations, and often involve the development of 'interlocking actor projects' that signals the emergence of a situation wherein self-reflexive strategies mesh to produce a measure of accommodation between the actors concerned. Interlocking projects are therefore crucial for understanding the articulation and management of actor interests and lifeworlds, as well as for the resolution of conflicts. They constitute, that is, a 'new' or 'reestablished' field of enablement, constraints and mutual sanctioning within which new embodiments of agency and social action take shape (for further discussion of the concept of interlocking projects and practices, see Long and van der Ploeg (1994, 1995).

The Analytical Challenge of Globalization

In this final part of the chapter I provide short profiles of recent ongoing research in Wageningen that focus on local/global issues in which actor concepts are central to an understanding of the social processes involved. The themes – 'global commodity networks,' and 'rural livelihoods and transnational migration' – are highly pertinent to the changing nature of the countryside, and raise the need for a reconceptualization of 'rural' problems in a context where livelihoods are now deeply embedded in globalization processes and where the willingness and ability of the state to intervene is lacking. An actor-oriented perspective is eminently suitable for researching these issues since it stresses actor-defined problems, looks closely at organizing processes and networks of social relations, explores the social meanings invested in new and old experiences, and throws theoretical light on the interrelations of meanings, practices and outcomes.

*The Construction and Transformation of Values in New Global
Commodity Networks*[11]

New highly differentiated forms of consumption associated with commod-
ities, such as fruit and vegetables, coffee, cocoa, cooking oils, wines, honey
and flowers, are nowadays central to the choices and tastes of the con-
sumer. Access to these and their delivery entail a set of linkages between
producers, distributors, retailers and consumers. The 'value' of such
commodities is, of course, not determined simply at the farm gate. In what
is commonly known as 'adding value,' commodities go through a
complex and diverse set of reconstituting processes organized in various
geographically localized sites. Land-based production, while crucial, is
only the start of a long and differentially managed transformation process.
Proportionally, agricultural production represents only a minor part of the
total value of the product in economic terms, while in social terms a large
proportion of symbolic and socially constructed value is added at the
processing, distribution, and retail stages. The research in progress devel-
ops an analysis of these processes of value construction, contestation and
transformation in respect to specific commodities.

New food and other products demanded by consumers often entail new
environmental pressures, the reorganization of labour conditions, the
introduction of new technologies *vis-à-vis* both production, processing and
transportation, new standards of quality assurance, and new notions of
what is 'natural' and what is 'artificial.' Such changes have contributed
to the segmentation of the market and to the creation of diverse styles of
consumption. By means of this process, different linkages and interactions
are emerging between commodities, consumers, producers, marketing
organizations, the state and regional economic trade blocks (such as the
European Union and NAFTA). These linkages generate different networks
of commodity circulation and create uneven socio-economic spaces at the
global, national, regional and local levels.

Recent studies conducted across Europe, Latin America and Africa point
to the changing pressures being exerted on rural producers by European
and American supermarket conglomerates, retailers and small-scale oper-
ators searching for 'quality' products. Consumer demands for these
products put considerable burdens on the capacity of 'sourcing' areas to
deliver goods at the volumes required and to certify their quality. In
addition, producers are confronted by complex investment strategies,
marketing arrangements and regulation policies. This conjuncture of
factors may have the effect of displacing or reestablishing specific local
institutional forms and configurations of interest (as illustrated, for
example, by changes in production units, household livelihoods and
family networks). A related issue concerns how far market relations and
institutional regulations (implemented by the state or international bodies)
dictate the patterns of production and investment at local level and how

social and natural resources are utilized. Here, it is important to explore systematically the room for manoeuvre that opens up for local groups and types of farming practice, and farm and commercial enterprises. It cannot be assumed that such 'external' pressures will always succeed in enrolling local producers and other actors in producing for global markets. Several case studies, for example, demonstrate how local actors reject or transform these global demands.

Producers and agricultural workers sometimes fear that if they become too heavily involved in these processes then other livelihood activities and their welfare interests could be threatened or marginalized. A related dimension is the commitment that people may have to existing lifestyles, and to the defence of their locally situated knowledge. On the other hand, if intervening parties, such as multinational firms, the state or retail organizations, fail to take seriously the ways in which people mobilize and use resources through existing social networks and cultural commitments, then they run the risk of being rejected by, or distantiated from, the life experiences and priorities of local producers. Hence, it is important to study how local organizing practices and networks facilitate or constrain the production of high-quality commodities and how external market demands are internalized or modified by local populations.

Although our research aims to focus especially on the dynamics of value creation and transformation at the level of local producer popula- tions, the analysis of commodity flows and linkages necessitates following the passage of commodities into the arenas of processing, marketing, retailing and consumption. For example, the organization of marketing and retailing is, as mentioned above, not simply a process of adding value to the commodity. Rather it constitutes a series of interlocking arenas of struggle in which various parties may contest notions of 'quality,' 'convenience' and 'price.' These contestations and negotiations usually entail the mobilization of arguments about what constitutes consumer preference, the availability and advantages of particular technologies, and issues relating to the material presentation of the commodity to its relevant audiences (i.e., the supermarkets, small retailers, 'alternative' food shop owners, and an array of different consumer interests). It is in this way that commodities emerge as 'mobilizers' of resources, thus contributing to the construction and reconstruction of markets and of particular consumer lifestyles in contemporary society. Such a commodity approach aims therefore to identify how new bridges are built between producers, dis- tributors, retailers and consumers.

Following commodities in this way permits us to analyse how social resources and cultural repertoires are mobilized and how 'old' and 'new' forms of social value are distributed among the different social actors. This has implications for defining the types and degrees of author- ity and power exercised by the different parties at the different stages in the circulation of commodities – a matter for critical reevaluation given the

rather simple notions of value creation and appropriation found in much of the current literature.

Undertaking a commodity flow analysis, which gives attention to the organizing properties of commodities and people (what Appadurai 1986 calls 'the social life of commodities'), opens up a related line of enquiry which has so far been neglected, namely an exploration of the processes by which people and their 'objects of desire' generate certain cultural identifications that segment markets and reorganize physical and social space around meanings and practice. Methodologically this means examining the contestation of value in different domains and arenas of social action: for example, at the level of producers' associations in which they debate production strategies and deal with external interventions; at the points of purchasing, packaging and transporting the commodity during which conflicts often arise between the producers, lorry drivers, entrepreneurs, trading companies and the workers in the packing plants or at docks; and at the receiving end when disagreements may arise between importers, retailers and consumer associations over issues of quality, shape, taste and price. An additional important element that shapes the nature and possible outcomes of these contestations concerns the deployment of specific language strategies and discourses that represent the 'political' positioning of the different actors in the networks and arenas concerned. Such language practices help to identify the nature of actors' differential expectations and how they justify their choices and actions. Clashes of language and representations in respect to consumption priorities can be illustrated by the present often heated debates surrounding food and notions of a 'healthy' diet, nutritional 'needs,' and 'environmental pollution.'

Migration, Globalization, and Transnational Networks[12]

Previous studies of migration have tended to represent the flow of people to new locations in terms of the adaptation or adjustment of new migrants to their 'host' societies, or they have offered a dualistic analysis of the interrelations of peripheral places of origin and central places of destination. More recently, migration flows have been reinterpreted as an integral feature of the global economy, giving rise to new types of 'nomadic' peoples and transnational communities. Hence an essential aspect of the social life of 'global nomads' or international migrants is the fact that their networks ('real' and 'imagined') reach out into the wider realm of transnational space linking them not only to their places of origin but also to compatriots living in widely dispersed locations. These networks of persons and places are bound together through 'collective' memories and images of a common place of origin and a network of places of migration.

Though it has been commonplace in much of the literature to depict these migrant flows in terms of the emergence of new international divi-

sions of labour, a more interesting facet concerns the nature and development of particular transnational networks of people and places. This entails detailed research on the interlocking of 'localized,' 'transnational,' 'nomadic' and 'hybrid' cultures and identities. So far research has accorded only minor attention to these inter-cultural processes and their consequences.

This involves an understanding of the significance of the emergence of a globalized culture characterized by a continuous flow of ideas, information, values and tastes mediated through mobile individuals, symbolic tokens and often electronic simulations (Waters 1995). Such flows take place in culturally constructed social fields and spaces that make possible new 'imagined communities' (Anderson 1983) that are increasingly detached from fixed locations or territories. This phenomenon indeed constitutes a major challenge for actor-oriented research since it throws into question the implicit assumptions of some formulations that domains and social arenas coincide with delimited spatial and territorialized settings.

In the case of global migrants and refugees, their social lives are still tied to particular notions of 'place' and 'home community,' but these are reworked to include a wide network of individuals and institutions physically located in very different places (e.g., localities in Europe and the USA, in city neighbourhoods and villages, as well as in the community of origin). The precise constituency and salience of the particular 'imagined communities' to which people belong, will, of course, vary according to the geographical locations of the groups and individuals involved, the relevant issues at hand, members' accessibility in terms of communication media, their visions of the future etc. Also family members back in the home setting, may themselves participate in these practices of constructing 'imagined communities.'

A similar type of reasoning leads Appadurai (1990) to suggest the mapping of human activity in a globalized world in terms of flows of people (tourists, migrants, refugees), capital, information, political ideas and values within particular ethnoscapes, finanscapes, technoscapes and ideoscapes. Clearly these elements are central to understanding the lifeworlds and orientations of international migrants and refugees, but equally they are relevant for returnees and for those who choose not to migrate, since the latter too are exposed via interpersonal ties and media to such global forms. The flows of 'home-destined' goods (such as taped music, garments, furniture styles, house decorations, 'exotic' posters, foreign mementos, family photographs, etc.) carry with them specific meanings and values associated with the migrants' 'global' lifeworld. This global space, we argue, is indeed a critical area for defining or crystallizing new notions of 'community' and 'belonging' that are now emerging within rural localities of many parts of the world.

Another way in which migration is linked to globalization is the diminished capacity of nation states to control the flow of people and goods across their borders. Here it is important to take account of the fact that migrant lifeworlds include encounters or avoidance of contact with various agencies of migration control that seek to define eligibility in terms of national citizenship and to regulate the movement of 'aliens' in and out of national territories. Hence, research on this topic should include a study of those agencies involved in managing (controlling) the in-flow of migrants and refugees seen from an organizational, legal-normative, brokerage, and cultural point of view. Linked to this is the exploration of how precisely migrants enter national spaces illegally and how they find a place to live, find work and establish themselves within an acceptable social environment with which they can to some extent identify.

This has led to an interest in analyzing the emergence of so-called transnational migrant communities, and the associated practices of transnationalism (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988; Gupta 1992; Kearney 1991; Rouse 1991; Basch, Glick Schille and Szanton Blanc 1992). Transnationalism, however, should not imply that the nation state has ceased to be an important referent in the imagination of space or in the situated practices of migrants, returnees and villagers. Instead, as Gupta (1992, p. 63) argues, the inscription of space in representations of the nation state now occurs in a deterritorialized way. Hence notions of belonging and 'citizenship' become harnessed less to the idea of a particular national political system than to ethnic identities that transcend borders and to imagined notions of place and home (such as a specific village or Andean valley); and they often take shape under the influence of global debates (launched by new social and ethnic movements).

The role of ethnicity and bonds of common origin among migrants has been acknowledged by various writers as an important cultural resource in the building of social networks and associational forms essential to migrants' livelihoods and identities (see, for instance, Altamirano 1980; Kearney 1988). Yet, on the other side of the equation, one must also recognize the rapid communication of new cultural values through letters, phone calls, the sending of family photos and videos, and the ease of modern travel for visits, and how they can shape the visions, aspirations and expectations of those remaining in the home community. In this way, relatives and friends can share in the discovery of new ethnic commitments and 'community' identities based upon globalized discourses and images, stressing, for example, the need for so-called indigenous peoples to fight for habitat rights and manage their own environmental resources.

The other face of contemporary population movements is the displacement of people due to socio-political violence and the consequent dislocation of economic life and livelihood patterns. In the aftermath of violent conflict, many elements are reconfigured: relations of power, techniques of government, modes of organization, livelihoods, identities and collective

memories, and the relations between people and places. Displaced groups are often reluctant to return to their villages and regions of origin after the cessation of hostilities, and if they do they often reconstruct their lives on the basis of new values, desires and organizational assets or deficits. Frequently they continue to depend on support networks and patterns of aid and resources assembled during their period of exile; and some returnees never in fact fully return. Instead they live within 'multiple realities' where, if they have the necessary strategic skills and knowledge, they can access a wide range of livelihood options, which continue to tie them to both their places of origin and of exile. Other less fortunate individuals or households, of course, may become trapped cognitively and emotionally in the traumas of violence and displacement and be unable effectively to rebuild their social lives and livelihoods.

Seen from another point of view, such former conflict-ridden areas become frontiers where new battles are fought out between the engaging parties involved in the reconstruction process, represented by the state, international development agencies, political groupings and various local actors and families. A characteristic of these situations is the emergence of unstable tactical alliances and the continuous clash and transformation of interests, priorities and world views. If solutions are to be negotiated between the opposing parties then careful analysis is required to reveal the rhythm and dynamics of the various social, cultural and political recon-figurations that take place.

Given the increasing vulnerabilities of many rural populations in the face of global economic change and political violence, the analysis of differing scenarios and outcomes of global commodity networks, trans-national migration and the movement of displaced persons will continue for the foreseeable future to be major topics for research. These processes raise critical issues concerning the viability of certain types of livelihoods and modes of organization, and address fundamental questions about changes in cultural identity and social relations in what looks like being an increasingly transnational and deterritorialized 'rural' world.

Notes

1 Regimes of accumulation and modes of regulation in the global economy can be illus-trated by what are called 'food systems' or 'food regimes' (see Marsden and Little 1990; Friedmann 1993) in the literature on agricultural development. Regimes of accumula-tion are empirically defined phases of capital accumulation and social reproduction. New regimes are generated when internal contradictions or technological developments can no longer be contained by the mode of regulation (i.e., the regulatory mechanisms pertaining to fiscal control, taxation, labour relations, wage systems, commercial practices and external relations), leading to the establishment of a new type of regime. For a detailed critical assessment of this type of analysis *vis-à-vis* an actor perspective, see Lockie (1996, pp. 31–55). In line with the argument of this chapter, Lockie (1996, p. 25) suggests that the

debate should be recast 'in terms of historically contingent social arrangements and relations of production developed through the social practices of *all* those involved.'

2 As I have documented elsewhere (Long 1992, pp. 20–22), actor-oriented analysis as applied to development processes builds upon earlier anthropological work focusing upon strategic action and social practice (e.g., Bailey 1969, Barth's collected essays 1981, Kapferer 1976, and Bourdieu 1977; see also Ortner 1984 for a critical synopsis).

3 It goes without saying that the concept of 'social actor' applies not only to single individual actors but also to other entities (e.g., coalitions or networks of actors) that can meaningfully be attributed with the power of agency, that is they possess the capacity to process experience and to act upon it. Agency is composed of social relations and how the latter are represented and can only become effective through them. One obviously still unresolved theoretical issue concerns how far one can regard non-human entities as actors and how to analyse man-machine relations.

4 'The concept functions as a metaphor for depicting areas of structural discontinuity inherent in social life generally but especially salient in 'intervention' situations. In other words, it sensitizes the researcher to the importance of exploring how discrepancies of social interest, cultural interpretation, knowledge and power are mediated and perpetuated or transformed at critical points of linkage or confrontation.' (Long 1989, p. 221).

5 It is often erroneously assumed that that 'complexity' is to be located towards the 'large' end of the continuum of scale, thus implying that modern societies, whose scale of social relations is said to be large, are *ipso facto* 'more complex.' Rather, as Strathern (1995) has insisted, we should consider complexity not as a property of some kind of ontologically real world but as the product of human, culturally specific perceptions. Hence we need to put aside simple dichotomized notions such as simple/complex, micro/macro, and work towards an understanding of how actors process their experiences and develop practical strategies for dealing with them. On the basis of this, we will be able to reveal the contents of both the meanings and relationships of social practice, and to establish how far they are extended organizationally or prosthetically through the use of technology to embrace actors and institutional domains that are geographically, but probably not culturally or perceptually, remote.

6 See Mongbo 1995 for an analysis of this process in a programme of agricultural development in Benin.

7 In biology, polymorphism denotes situations in which two or more variants of a species co-exist. An intriguing example is that of the African *Papilio dardanus* butterfly, whose females mimic in colour and wing patterning several other species. This heterogeneity protects them from certain predators who mistake them for other, nasty-tasting butterflies, giving them a better chance of survival.

8 In fairness to Turner, we should note that he applies a more wide-ranging and historical approach to the analysis of social dramas in his later studies of political and religious movements (see Turner 1974; also Moore 1986).

9 The uprising was timed to coincide with the inauguration of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between the United States and Mexico, which was the linchpin of the new package of neoliberal measures introduced by the Salinas government.

10 Thus, as both Latour (1987) and Appadurai (1986) argue – though from different theoretical standpoints – a sociology of social action necessitates also a sociology and epistemology of things (see also Miller 1987).

11 This theme is being explored by a team of researchers that includes Alberto Arce, Magdalena Villarreal, Magdalena Barros Nock and myself.

12 A project on this theme is presently being undertaken in respect to the central highlands of Peru under the coordination of myself and Pieter de Vries (Wageningen), Teofilo Altamirano (Catholic University, Lima, Peru), and Moshe Shokeid (Tel-Aviv University, Israel).

2 Some Reflections on Anthropology in Development Studies

Jan H.B. den Ouden

This chapter will first take a look at the 'difficult' but necessary science of cultural and social anthropology.[1] There follows a brief section on the concept of 'development' in anthropology. The chapter then discusses the problems and prospects of applied and problem-oriented anthropology and its realization in Wageningen. And finally it sheds light on the Wageningen anthropological agenda as well as some specific themes in anthropology and ethnographic research. Throughout the chapter I provide information on the anthropological work carried out by the staff and research fellows of the Sociology of Rural Development group. It will become clear from the discussion that the division between anthropology and sociology is not clear-cut within this group: in fact we consider the sociology of development to be a marriage between anthropology and sociology. The 'we' here refers primarily to anthropologists working in development studies, who are more or less equivalent to the 'we' in Wageningen.

Anthropology: The Impossible Mission

In explaining the role of anthropology within Wageningen development sociology, I start with a discussion of some of the main limitations or factors that inhibit anthropologists in doing their job 'properly.'

Anthropologists are not only supposed to study the behaviour of people from the outside, in a detached way, but should also understand societies or social contexts from within, by putting themselves in the place of the people they study. We are dedicated to this emic view, however difficult: this means using the mental categories and assumptions of local people rather than our own (Ferraro *et al.* 1994, p. 41).

Moreover, societies and phenomena should be studied in a holistic way: that is, the economic, political, and social fields have to be combined with the cultural sphere comprising cognitive orientations, secular and theological ideologies, values, norms, and attitudes. We are against compartmentalization, even though we recognize that this holism has a functionalist flavour.

We cannot simply accept the answers to our questions and then take this as some kind of 'truth.'[2] Of course we are interested in what people say, but more as the beginning of an analysis: why do they talk in this way rather than another? We know that we must be careful with questioning, not only because a culture may make people averse to questions and questioning (compare Zanen 1996, p. 156), but also because there is the risk that we ask questions on topics about which people do not normally reflect. An Indian landless labourer once told me that he could work in the fields for forty-eight hours without sleeping but became exhausted by half an hour of my questioning! A better way of obtaining information can be in discussion with people about topics, experiences and opinions, rather than attacking them with questions and questionnaires. One cannot obtain 'truth' from answers about particular topics since people may, for example, hide behind a 'cult of poverty,' or respectful behaviour which may dictate the answers. In many cultures, if you ask a woman who takes certain decisions in the house, she will name her husband even if the reality in her particular case, and in general, is quite different. Men, of course, will (absurdly) exaggerate their domestic responsibilities and contributions.

Anthropologists are 'distrustful' because what people think, say and do in a similar context may be quite different and we therefore try to circle around our people and subjects; we endlessly check and counter-check people's remarks, experiences and opinions. We need and indeed like gossiping, and are in difficulty if a culture hinders people from telling things about others. The construction of life and career histories, for example, is not just a question of a long talk with the person we want to know better. It means endless conversations, or casual questioning during conversations about other things, with family members, other people who know the person, people who work(ed) for him/her and so on. And all this, in what is perhaps a rather 'secret' way, is geared to not arousing the suspicion of the man or woman who is our object of study. Indeed, in constructing the career histories of people who had failed to realize their economic projects and to accumulate through farming, commerce or transport, I almost never spoke with these people about their problems (den Ouden 1990, 1991).

This means that we most significantly implement our work through participant observation and situational analysis (case analysis), which is prone to considerable differences among researchers, depending on their training, disposition and interpersonal abilities. We are rightly accused of *Fingerspitzengefühl*, or depending too much on our intuition. Anthropological field research is thus difficult. 'Situational analysis' or 'case analysis' does not mean outlining a static situation and just giving an illustration of something. A 'good' case study should explain the operation of a process: we test particular theories by confronting them with the com-

plexity of empirical reality, which may lead to the elaborating or changing of theoretical principles (see de Vries 1992, pp. 68–69).

We, with our 'foreign faces,' are often working in unfamiliar situations without sufficient knowledge of the local language. I am not only referring here to research in culturally and linguistically very different environments. Even in the Netherlands, 'strangeness' and unfamiliarity with people's ways of thinking and speaking should not be underestimated. Culture shocks can be considerable in 'your own country!'

This brings us to 'the misery' of using interpreters and assistants. It is often not enough to simply have a language interpreter. One needs an assistant, perhaps a man and/or a woman, who is from the same milieu as the people with whom you are working, who is sensitive to the culture and can find things out for themselves when your 'white face' and 'exalted' position prevents people from speaking normally, or telling you what they think is the reality. As one is mostly dealing with 'adult' topics, the assistant must be accepted as an adult by adults in the particular community or situation, and be able to make good and easy contacts with people in high and low positions. Not only should they speak the languages of the people (here I think of 'my' Indian situation where Tamil and Telugu were a pre-requisitie), but also be literate in the language used by the researcher. Much more could be said about the problems of working with interpreters/assistants, but I will leave it at this.

Having just mentioned people in 'high' and 'low' positions leads me to point out the normally strong bias in our work in favour of the lower classes. They often accept our dealings with them more easily, probably in the hope of receiving some sort of benefit, either immediately or in the near future, or simply because they do not dare to refuse. The anthropologist can nevertheless be confronted with embarrassing remarks. De Vries was questioned, for instance, about the purpose of his research by a radical peasant leader in Costa Rica as follows (1992, p. 62): 'Look, you people from developed countries have not only caused our underdevelopment but nowadays you are using us as guinea pigs in order to carry out experiments on us. What is the practical outcome of your research for us; how are you going to contribute to the cause of poor peasants in this country?'

We were wont to shun the economic elites because we considered them to be exploiters, but now that we want to incorporate them into our research, it appears that they are often quite unapproachable, and completely uninterested in our work. In my own research on problems of material accumulation, apart from some courtesy visits, I had to restrict myself to the poorer members of families and people who had worked or were working for big merchants, transporters or functionaries (e.g., den Ouden 1991).

'Generalization from small samples' is called anthropology's biggest sin. If we want to understand sections of societies from within, then we

have to know a number of our 'target group' more or less personally. This means that we cannot handle large numbers of people. Of course we may think that we can generalize for whole regions or ethnic groups, but that is an illusion. After publishing an article on the management of labour in three Adja villages, Bénin (1995), I carried out further research in 1996 on one a few kilometres distance from the original three. I was quite shocked at the differences in the mobilization and management of labour (den Ouden 1996). Could sociological and economic surveys with quick problem identification have given better information about the situation in a broad region? I am convinced they could not, both because of the shallowness of such research and the rather touchy nature of this topic. During my research in southern India, in the Bamiléké region of Cameroon, and in Adja villages of Bénin, I was always struck by the differences between villages or chiefdoms. Although 'old' diversity may in some respects fade, 'new' situations are always the result of interaction between 'what was,' the internal dynamism and the penetration of external forces of change, which means that diversity in many spheres somehow continues, and indeed comes into existence. All this is again complicated by the radical transformations we find in all societies today: we are studying what are sometimes called 'hybrid societies,' in economic, political and social terms as well as in cultural patterns. In the Netherlands, for instance, regional styles of farming increasingly give way to new divisions of those styles (van der Ploeg 1992).

A recently acknowledged problem in the ongoing account of anthropologists' difficulties, is that we used to analyse (sections) of societies, and cultures as bounded units of particular regions. However, culture is now also transmitted through telephones, radio and television, books, newspapers and magazines, fax machines, and so on, not only through face-to-face interaction (cf. Milton 1996, p. 163, 218). Our understanding and interpretation of situations and of change will then be less grounded in empirical observation. However, in studying smaller units, 'local' religious or secular movements, changes in agriculture, or women's efforts to change their situation, account must be taken of the interactions, flows of information, exchange of ideas, and the outline of policy and strategies through contemporary communications technology.

This brief overview of problems has already indicated that research and writing texts are activities that are neither neutral nor objective, and that the presence of an anthropologist in the field is not without consequences for the behaviour and statements of the people studied. The anthropologist's observations and conclusions are filtered through the 'glasses' of his/her education, school of thought and psychological condition. In writing articles and books, s/he may simplify complexity and heterogeneity in order to produce 'clear' and 'straightforward' pictures and statements. We do not want just ethnographic descriptions (as if they could present 'reality'); we want to position them within a theoretical

debate or indicate new approaches towards the analysis of situations and processes (cf. de Vries 1992b, pp. 80–81). There is a clear danger of stretching 'reality' in order to participate in these theoretical debates.

Our conclusion is nonetheless, 'We all know it is difficult, but let's do something anyway.' We go on because there is simply no conclusive way to unravel and understand 'reality(-ies).' We obviously have to be conscious of the problems and limitations of our research and the texts we write and try to check and correct ourselves. But the degree of *Verstehen* is certainly curtailed when research is only carried out through surveys or other 'quick research,' often by others, rather than the researcher him/herself.

Anthropology and Development

If we interpret development as evolution, then we are dealing with one of the main pillars on which anthropology was originally based as a discipline. One of the main reasons nineteenth-century scientists such as Tylor practised anthropology was to study 'contemporary forefathers' in order better to understand European culture and society and the laws of historic evolution. Anthropology then was closely linked to palaeontology, Darwinian theories of biological evolution, and a strong belief in the cultural superiority of the European upper classes. These evolutionary theories were also well suited to legitimizing colonial rule, or, at least, fitted with the colonial *Zeitgeist*. After a long intermezzo during which evolutionist thinking was associated with Marxist doctrine and therefore objectionable, White dared in 1943 to speak of the evolution of specific societies (see Kloos 1981, p. 34). In Service's *Law of Evolutionary Potential*, and Romein's *Law of the Braking Lead* (1954, pp. 56–7), the measurement of evolution is more or less explicitly connected to society's energy production and its efficient use, and the idea that newly developing societies would not be hampered by historically grown structures and investments. These neo-evolutionists no longer talked of 'progress' in the sense of moving from 'lower' to 'higher' cultural values and institutions. The same is true of Naroll (1956) when he succeeds in indexing the complexity of societies according to the indicators P (number of inhabitants of the biggest settlement), T (team types, the number of levels of decision making), and C (craft specialization). Naroll's point of growing complexity is, somehow, again reflected in modernization theory. This approach is expressed for instance by Smelser (1971), and is still of great importance to several development economists (Rostow, for example), as well as to those 'development practitioners' who still recognize a difference between 'low' and 'high,' 'good' and 'bad,' 'traditional' and 'modern,' in the sense of 'progress.'

Modernization theory and (neo-)Marxist theories, centre-periphery theory included, follow 'some broadly determined development path, signposted by 'stages of development' or by the succession of 'dominant modes of production'' (Long 1992, p. 19), and are therefore evolutionary in nature. But by the 1990s, we no longer care for such terms as 'evolution' and 'progress,' nor do we like modernization and Marxist paradigms and terminologies. Such theories and terminologies are too simple, too Eurocentric, too structuralist; social actors are disembodied like robots and, furthermore, such theories hardly explain differential responses to change. Evolutionary thinking, nonetheless, continues in many circles of anthropologists and development sociologists. See for example the structuralist approaches to 'globalization' that stress global unifying tendencies, processes of homogenization and scientification, and the disappearance of specificity. All are 'determined by 'iron laws' or 'normative frames' – be they located in the market, political or cultural domains – embedded in the present situation' (Long and van der Ploeg 1995, p. 67).

By discussing the continuation of evolutionary paradigms and approaches, we have more or less left the 'anthropological field' and have briefly looked at broad structuralist models of particular development sociologists and economists. But a large number of anthropologists were and are supporters of such theories which, of course, colour their anthropological analyses. Here we think, for instance, of the studies of French (neo)Marxist anthropologists such as Rey, Meillassoux and Godelier. In contrast, in the Wageningen anthroplogical scene, development is translated in a relatively neutral way as a process of social transformation.

Applied and Problem-oriented Anthropology

Returning to the 'normal' difficulties of anthropology in adopting an emic and holistic view, and in undertaking participatory observation and case analysis, it becomes clear that anthropologists must likewise have great problems with applied anthropology and attempts at social engineering, if by this we mean policy-oriented research which must quickly produce results in terms of practical recommendations. Anthropologists have doubts about the efficacy of results achieved through rapid policy-oriented research and problem identification, and are inclined to label this type of research and its results as naive. It is mainly departments of extension studies within the agricultural sciences which, for understandable reasons, have favoured and promoted such research techniques as Rapid Rural Appraisal. In Wageningen, this has sometimes occasioned rather heated discussions between sociologists and extension practitioners. A few weeks' research by a multi-disciplinary team let loose on a local

population for several hours a day to carry out interviews (often also group interviews) and observation, can easily result in insufficient information about the situation and ongoing processes, with the result that researchers are too easily persuaded of the significance of the 'problems' ventilated by informants. This is illustrated by the following example.

In March 1996 a multi-disciplinary team using Rapid Rural Appraisal came to the conclusion that one of the most pressing problems in a village of Mono province, Bénin, was the unemployment of young men, usually farmers' sons with a modicum of education. Working alongside this team in 1996, and also talking with landless labourers in some neighbouring villages, I found that this was not strictly the case. There was in fact sufficient work for a considerable number of wage labourers, since farmers often hired wage labour when they were unable to mobilize non-commoditized family labour. However, the so-called 'young unemployed' (and 'schooled'), disliked farm work and were often only willing to do it in order to keep up their payments to rotating credit associations. Hard working young farmer's sons, starting their own farms, for instance as sharecroppers, were very rare. This was quite a different story from that of many young men in neighbouring villages, belonging to another ethnic sub-group, who found and readily combined work as wage labourers in the morning with work as 'independent' share-croppers in the afternoon (den Ouden 1996).

Another difficulty with rapid appraisal studies is that local communities and their problems are seen too much in isolation from the wider political economy and migratory context. People's migratory histories, contacts with migrants and the latters' influence on local decision making are often important (see Alderson Smith 1984; Laite 1984). Given their research instruments and distrust of what people say, anthropologists try to place the items to be investigated in their broader cultural, socio-economic and political contexts, and to do so they need time. Hence, their work frequently results in broad explorative studies with 'information overkill' and with the identification of factors which are not so easy to manipulate by development practitioners (Speckmann 1994, p. 10).

On the other hand, anthropologists – afflicted by the holistic approach – are not so able alone to sum up the technical, economic, political and financial aspects of development, which, almost by definition, are multi-disciplinary. This means that, despite their broad view, the reliability of their advice is restricted and must be combined with the results of other kinds of research that fall outside the social and cultural field. Sole reliance on anthropology, or putting anthropologists in charge of a development project, could then be a great mistake, the more so since even anthropologists can be naive disciples of their 'home society' (see the results of the Vicos experiment in directed culture change in Peru (Beals and Hoijer 1971, pp. 613–14).

The picture changes of course if anthropologists are asked to illuminate questions that are limited in scope and territory, such as 'How do people of a particular area and/or ethnic group think about forests and trees, and what cultural categories do they use in this process?'; 'How are rights of control over land differentiated and what changes are taking place?' Or, as the question put to Speckmann by a chief engineer in Senegal: 'What are the drinking and ablution customs of these people?' (Speckmann 1994, pp. 7–8). It is probably not difficult to discover that socio-economic stratification, gender, age grades, ethnic differences, or affiliation to different national political parties, can inhibit participatory approaches in which everybody is assumed to have an equal say in identifying problems and in the various stages of a development project. But what solution can the anthropologist supply when the donor or those responsible for a project want to stick to a participation model regardless of its inherent constraints and complexities?

Problem-oriented research resulting in a sound picture of cultural, socio-economic and political situations and of the changes taking place can be achieved in a delimited area, providing the anthropologist is given a period of, say, at least three months. As every social scientist and field practitioner knows, in the end an analysis of a particular situation is a prerequisite for success in attaining the goals of a policy or intervention strategy.

The discipline of anthropology has a long tradition in policy-oriented research. During the colonial period, colonial officers in charge of tribal areas were not only asked to define which genealogical 'fathers' or kinsmen merited leave for an employee in the case of death; they were also asked to analyze situations for pacification and/or conquest. For example, officer-anthropologists, such as Snouck Hurgronje and Rattray, were employed respectively, in this capacity, to help in the Dutch Atjeh war and the British wars with the Ashanti in the Gold Coast. The role played by anthropology in the colonial period led Lévi-Strauss to depict the anthropology of that time as 'the daughter of this era of violence' (1966, p. 126). Anthropologists were also used during the Second World War and the Cold War for military and counter-insurgency purposes (Kloos 1981, pp. 169–170). Project Camelot, a research project funded by the US army to study the causes of civil violence in Latin America and other regions of the world, resulted in heated debates and led to attempts to establish codes of conduct, in 1971 by the American Anthropological Association and in 1975, by the Society for Applied Anthropology (Ferraro 1994, p. 46).

Anthropological research by Wageningen development sociologists, as part or on behalf of development projects aimed at providing answers to direct development questions, (either) has been relatively rare. Van Lier's research on the Afar Settlement Project in Ethiopia for the FAO (van Lier 1972), de Zeeuw's analysis of land tenure in an area of Burkina Faso as

part of his normal duties within a Dutch development project (de Zeeuw 1995), and Seur's studies of drinking water projects for German development organizations, are rather exceptional and, even then, often do not provide clear recommendations. One could also include here Spijkers' work (1983) as a FAO associate expert for the international agricultural research institute (CIAT) in Cali, Colombia, which encompasses a number of anthropological aspects.

Far more anthropological research has been done in problem-oriented fields.[3] In 1981, the Directorate General for International Cooperation of the Netherlands (DGIS) asked the then Wageningen Department of Rural Sociology of the Tropics and Sub-Tropics to take on a research project concerning the potential role of social scientists on agricultural research stations. As a consequence, research programmes were begun in two different kinds of agricultural institutes in two different locations: at the Centro de Desarrollo Agropecuario, Zone Norte, in the Dominican Republic from 1981 to 1985; and at the International Rice Research Institute, in the Philippines from 1982 to 1986 (Box and van Dusseldorp 1992, pp. 1–2). It was crucial, in these cases, to make actual assessments of the social impact of new crop varieties and techniques, and to explore how social scientists might function as intermediaries between cultivators and agronomists at the research stations. The term 'sociologist' was used in a broad sense in this research to include anthropologists (van Dusseldorp and Box 1990): and Polak, the Philippines' project leader, was in fact a well-known cultural anthropologist. Although the directors of these projects, Box and van Dusseldorp, used the term 'social agronomy' (the discipline which describes, analyses and predicts socio-cultural phenomena in crop cultivation), they also emphasized that 'the requirements of [cultural] 'understanding' were paramount' in the case studies and the analysis of adaptive trials (Box and van Dusseldorp 1992, p. 2). The Dominican Republic and Philippines research certainly included in-depth anthropological analysis of the styles and strategies of farmers, of the interfaces between farmers, extensionists, merchants and researchers, and of the socio-cultural acceptability of new technologies by both men and women. It was influenced by a growing interest in farming systems research during the 1980s, in which 'attention [was] being given to the way in which farmers themselves [were] experimenting on their plots, and to developing a dialogue between the experimenting farmers and experimenting scientists' (Box and van Dusseldorp 1992, p. 3).

The research project 'Sociological and Administrative Dimensions of the Planned Development Process' at the local level in rural areas of Sri Lanka, which focused on local participation in planned development, took place in this same period (1981–85) and was also partly financed by DGIS. Likewise, the emphasis lay on 'qualitative research methods applied to the in-depth study of cases' (Frerks 1991, p. 2).

It is impossible to discuss all the bigger research projects, mono- and multidisciplinary, of the past and present, but many publications and MSc and PhD theses are closely connected with these projects. Here, I simply wish to recall some of the projects directed by staff of the department of Rural Development Sociology with important anthropological components.

- 'Rice development within irrigated areas of Malaysia,' 1981–84, directed by Kalshoven, which had a strong interdisciplinary character (see Kalshoven and Daane 1984). The project was funded by the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research, and WAU.
- The Bénin 'farming systems' project (1985–92), which carried out research on changes in the rural environment of the Adja plateau of south-west Bénin), was based on cooperation between WAU and the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of UNB, Bénin, and was funded by the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education, and WAU. The anthropological publications of Fanou (1992), Mongbo (1995), den Ouden (1995) and others were a result of this project (also Daane *et al.* 1997).
- 'Irrigation organization, actor strategies and planned intervention in western Mexico,' 1987–91, was directed by Long and financed by the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research and the Ford Foundation also had a strong anthropological perspective. Of the many studies, I recall the work of Arce (1993) and Villarreal (1994).
- 'Zimbabwe: Women, Extension, Sociology and Irrigation, ZIMWESI,' started in 1992, is chaired by Long, and funded by the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education, and the Directorate General of International Cooperation. In 1997 this project will produce at least three PhDs in the anthropological domain.

Many of the MSc, PhD studies and other publications connected with these and other research projects are of a more fundamental academic character and are not immediately problem-oriented, though aiming at 'a better integration of theoretical understanding and practical concerns' (Long and Villarreal 1993, p. 140). This work is anthropological due to the fact that in-depth ethnographic studies are emphasized – but avoiding 'ethnographic particularism – which integrate micro-interactional processes and institutional structures (Long 1989, p. 227).

As I discuss below, more work has to be directed towards improving our research techniques, given 'the growing need to identify a set of appropriate analytical concepts and a methodology for exploring intervention processes that would prove useful not only to the researcher but also to the field practitioner' (Long and Villarreal 1993, p. 141).

The Wageningen Anthropological Agenda

The Wageningen agenda may be arbitrarily divided into four parts: (i) problem-oriented research; (ii) anthropological studies of the development fabric; (iv) the study of globalization and localization, and (v) the analysis of culture.

Problem-Oriented Research

Understanding a particular situation and processes of change is important for specific interventions in rural areas by the state, international organizations and NGOs, certainly if projects aim to change people's behaviour, activities and organization. Anthropologists should be able to produce background material, make impact studies and answer specific questions. This means that special attention has to be given to 'policy-oriented research,' which can nonetheless produce sound in-depth analysis.

An actor-oriented approach can help the researcher quickly to identify the social actors implicated in the intervention 'game,' their differences in power, access to resources, organization, values, priorities, attitudes, and language/discourse; as well as the interfaces between those actors and the conflicts, negotiations, goal displacements, (non)flows of information, and modes of 'structural ignorance' taking place in these contact fields. An actor-oriented approach could also be seen as a necessity for understanding the process of policy preparation and the directions and signals given by the organizing authorities during the implementation and evaluation phases.

Analysis of the 'lifeworlds' and 'livelihoods' of actors, both quite central to the actor-oriented approach, is far more time consuming. Lifeworlds comprise influences on actors from their environment, from the networks in which they operate. Livelihood emphasizes the way actors organize their lives, and the actions they take in order to survive or improve their positions. Complex organizing principles are used and manipulated by social actors: these include ethnic, familial, friendship, territorial, class, and religious principles.

A genealogical approach can be used as a 'quick method' when studying, for example, changes in agricultural patterns and in the use and mobilization of labour, occupational structures, the role of migration and contacts with migrants, and patterns of (intra-familial) inequality (den Ouden 1980; 1989a,b, 1995).[4] Starting with a small selection of male 'elders,' I traced back to their deceased fathers and paternal grandfathers and then looked at all their male descendants and the women with whom they were or are married. Abbreviations and modifications to this approach are, of course, possible. Van der Schenk (1988) started with an adult woman and extended backwards to her living mother and maternal grandmother in order to study female economic activities and problems

of access to land in Bénin. During a few weeks' research in 1996 I had time only to work with the male descendants and their wives of the deceased fathers of the selected elders (den Ouden 1996). It is important to emphasize that the genealogical approach is more than just a general way of talking with people about various topics; one must analyse situations and processes of change in relation to real people, living or deceased, migrated or not, who make up the often elaborate genealogies.

It would be useful to cooperate with experts of the department of Communication and Extension Studies at WAU to see whether existing 'quick' research methods could be 'improved' in certain fields so as to make them more acceptable from an anthropological/ethnographic point of view. The challenge would also be for sections of development planning to produce 'action research' methods leading to both useful 'knowledge for action' and an anthropological understanding of events. It is, however, quite likely that anthropologists, when trying to answer questions about situations and processes in changing societies as part of their scientific work, will produce analyses that are considered too complicated for development practitioners. Could anthropologists water down their wine somewhat, without becoming too naive or losing their credibility? Perhaps. But it is the anthropologist's primary task to alert practitioners to the heterogeneity in cultural styles and group and individual strategies which permeate present-day 'hybrid,' as well as more 'stable' societal situations.

The Analysis of Development Intervention

In discussing anthropological inputs into the study of the fabric of development, I follow Olivier de Sardan (1995) in defining development as 'all social processes introduced by intentional operations to transform a social environment, conducted by institutions or actors exterior to this environment but trying to mobilize that environment, and based on an attempt to graft resources and/or techniques and/or knowledge.' (p. 7, my translation). Olivier de Sardan uses the term *configuration développementiste* for that whole, largely cosmopolitan universe of experts, bureaucrats, NGO employees, researchers, technicians, project leaders, and field officers, who somehow live from the development of others and who mobilize or manage for that purpose considerable material and symbolic resources (1995, p. 7). The 'developmentist configuration' defines the very existence of development from this perspective. This opens the way for in-depth anthropological analysis of the interactions between the multiple social actors involved in or influenced by the policy and projects designed to transform other people's ways of life. The interfaces between the various social actors in the process which brings about a particular development policy and its concomitant ideas/ideology[5] and language/discourse should also be included in such an analysis.

Long's thinking on the analysis of induced change (deconstructing planned intervention) is very much in line with Olivier de Sardan's approach. Intervention is taken as 'an ongoing, socially constructed and negotiated process' (Long 1992, p. 35), 'an ongoing transformational process that is constantly reshaped by its own internal organizational and political dynamic and by the specific conditions it encounters or itself creates, including the responses and strategies of local and regional groups who may struggle to define and defend their own social spaces, cultural boundaries and positions within the wider power field.' (1992, p. 37). We have to understand wider 'structural phenomena' when studying the processes of policy preparation and implementation because many of the choices and strategies pursued by the social actors involved have been shaped by processes outside the immediate arenas of interaction. We also have to keep in mind that induced change cannot be disconnected from the study of local dynamics, endogenous, 'informal' processes of change, and social change in general (Olivier de Sardan 1995, p. 6).

Much excellent in-depth anthropological analysis of development interventions, understood as 'an ongoing, socially constructed and negotiated process' has recently been done.[6] Here one might mention the Wageningen work of Frerks (1991), Seur (1992), van der Zaag (1992), de Vries (1992a), Arce (1993), van Donge (1993), Villarreal (1994), and Mongbo (1995) and several others.

Let me briefly highlight one topic from this anthropological analysis of development intervention as a transformational process, namely, what happens in the interfaces between 'developers' and the 'to be developed,' and, in particular, how differences in ideologies, cultural codes and languages are bridged, if at all. There must clearly be a battery of mediators between the local population and the interventionists in order to achieve some kind of understanding, goodwill, indulgence, or acceptance. Olivier de Sardan (1995, p. 153) distinguishes two types of mediators with a central function: the field officers (*les agents de développement de terrain*) and the brokers (*courtiers*). Arce and Long (1987) give an example of the dilemmas and role conflicts of field officers in the problems of a *tècnico* in a Mexican region who tries to bridge the gap between the interests of peasant producers and administrators. Such officers have a 'mission,' they have to defend and implement certain goals, they should follow certain methods of extension and animation but, in fact, their bridging role is full of pitfalls which they often cannot discuss openly (see Olivier de Sardan 1995, pp. 154–59). As a mouthpiece between techno-scientific knowledge and popular knowledge, the officer has, somehow, to know them both, including the languages. He or she not only has to translate concepts such as 'fertilizer,' 'diarrhoea' or 'investment,' but also concepts from development language such as 'development,' 'self-development,' 'sustainable development,' 'participation,' and 'resource protection.'

The problems associated with participatory ideology are clear from a Niger example where the local population compares the present participatory approach with earlier projects: 'The former project was like a stranger who offered a stick to an old and tired man so that he could get up. The present project is like a stranger who does not hand the stick but throws it on the ground, asking the old man to make an effort to pick it up.' (Olivier de Sardan 1995, p. 167, my translation)

Similarly, there are various categories of brokers, of go-betweens within the local population, who play strategic roles. These intermediaries try to channel external resources to the local arena, and their activities take place on the interface between the local population and the development institutions and their representatives. 'Traditional' chiefs or lineage/family elders are not the most obvious intermediaries: they can often neither speak nor read the language of the developers, nor are they well-acquainted with the (urban and often 'white') development world. Well-educated migrants often act as go-betweens on behalf of their village/region, and sometimes even have their 'own' NGOs to recruit followers in their 'homeland': state officials, university staff, and merchants. These 'highly' placed migrants may well need local brokers, just as field officers do. At the local level, what Olivier de Sardan (1995, p. 163) calls *courtiers aux pieds nus*, 'brokers on bare feet,' may be local state officials, but are not necessarily so. The population must be convinced that particular persons are good at attracting resources from (specific) outside agencies. These may include, for instance, a local priest, a school teacher, the elected or nominated village chief, a big farmer with knowledge of and contacts in the outside world, and local people who were formerly employed by state agencies or NGOs. These local intermediaries do not always occupy high positions in the village, nor are they always esteemed and trusted by many people: they can be quite marginal in the local communities or 'suffer' from status inconsistencies. Anthropological research makes it clear that there might be different intermediaries for different outside development agencies or private 'benefactors' at the local level. It would, in fact, be a mistake to suppose that these intermediaries are always important local leaders in many domains. Mongbo's (1995, pp. 196–97) example of Aloka, a former white collar worker who still does not wish to dirty his hands with farm work, has a rather marginal and unclear position in this Béninese village. Though used for contacts with (and by) development agencies – 'You are the one who knows these people. How do you think we should introduce our case to make sure that we win it?' – , outside the development arenas he does not have much social status and recognition and is considered lazy and irresponsible.

The Study of Globalization and (Re)localization

Earlier anthropological studies mostly emphasized the deterministic nature of the commercialization of agriculture, and the incorporation of rural populations into the state and national and world-markets as irreversible processes of change which 'happened' to rather passive recipients. A few of these older studies do pay attention to the local 'patterns of interpersonal relationships and their dynamics within several local institutions and spheres of activity' (Verrips 1975, p. 118) and to the differential reactions of local actors (e.g., Verrips 1975, pp. 114–15). I do not want to play down the importance of certain general effects of particular external forces: radical changes are taking place in the micro situations we analyse and we must try to indicate general tendencies. It would be nonsense to reject all studies where the focus was not explicitly directed at internal change and the growth of new local forms of heterogeneity, or at the differential actions and reactions of social actors to the external influences. An actor-oriented approach should not become stuck in ethnographic particularism, thus disguising general tendencies which transcend the peculiarities of social actors,' individuals' and groups' actions and reactions. A bottom-up perspective should 'assist us in forging a theoretical middleground between so-called 'micro' and 'macro' theories of agrarian change' through the analysis of the heterogeneous reality (Long 1989, p. 231).

However, much more precise ethnographic analysis is needed in order to study current social transformations. Globalization needs close attention today, together with the heterogeneity that it entails in the rural areas throughout the world. 'Indeed much of what we now witness is essentially global in scope, entailing the accelerated flows of various commodities, people, capital, technologies, communications, images and knowledge across national frontiers' (Long 1996, p. 37).

Milton, discussing environmentalism, makes a connection with culture, but acknowledges that globalization discourses cross the boundaries of what we normally think of as cultures, and in this respect speaks of transcultural perspectives and discourses (1996, p. 218). She uses the term 'discourse' because: 'The movement of cultural things in the global arena is essentially a product of communication.' These cultural things 'lose their ties to particular societies and groups' (p. 217). Here culture is seen as 'consisting of everything we know, think and feel about the world, regardless of the processes through which it is acquired' (p. 215).

Van der Ploeg (1992, pp. 21–25) writes of the 'production of disconnections' for the agricultural field in which, for instance, agriculture is disconnected from the local ecosystem, the quality of craftsmanship is expropriated, tasks are delegated to external institutions, and parameters for organizing time and space are externally established. The process of globalization does not, however, imply that farmers lose all room for manoeuvre: they relate their farming activities in different ways to markets

and technology, to the recommendations of extension services, in order to overcome their particular problems and because of their own styles, strategies and priorities (van der Ploeg 1992, pp. 26–34). 'Shifts in consumer tastes, technology development and transnational or supermarket strategies set off a whole series of repercussions that can significantly affect farm decision-making' (Long 1996, p. 53), forcing farmers to make choices (Marsden and Arce 1993; also van der Ploeg 1992, p. 37).

Long (1996, p. 46) stresses 'the complex inter-dynamics of globalizing and localizing processes that generate new modes of economic organization and livelihood, new identities, alliances and struggles for space and power, and new cultural and knowledge repertoires.' The different actors involved (such as simple commodity producers, commercial farmers, transnational companies, agricultural bureaucrats, credit banks, various agrarian organizations, supermarket chains, national governments, the European Union) struggle to advance their own particular interests, resulting in negotiated outcomes insofar as this is possible. Local/regional situations are transformed by becoming part of wider 'global' arenas and processes, while 'global' dimensions are made meaningful in relation to specific 'local' conditions and through the understandings and strategies of local' actors (Long 1996, p. 47).[7]

It is clear that much in-depth anthropological analysis is needed in this field in order to understand changes in rural areas, the nature of globalization, and the actors and interfaces between them. This research can also elucidate the room for manoeuvre of specific categories of people – men, women and young people – involved in farm, off-farm and other economic activities.

The Analysis of Culture

Here I focus on 'culture' as a more independent property of groups and societies. We are concerned with cultural representations and codes, cognitive orientations, secular and religious ideologies, styles of thinking and doing, the giving of meaning, cultural categories of verbal and non-verbal communication, and common knowledge. We can elaborate this theme by taking into consideration ethnic and kinship identities, solidarities and obligations as part of the 'cultural order.' This 'cultural order' or 'symbolic order' can perhaps best be understood as the way in which the world of singularities is arranged into several manageable classes (cf. Kopytoff 1986, p. 70). Here I leave aside the debate about the opposition between 'utilitarianism' and a 'cultural account.' That is, as Sahlins (1976, p. 55) puts it, 'whether the cultural order is to be conceived as the codification of man's actual purposeful and pragmatic action; or whether, conversely, human action in the world is to be understood as mediated by the cultural design, which gives order at once to practical experience, customary practice, and the relationship between the two.'

I use the concepts of 'cultural order' or 'symbolic order' with much hesitation, since these terms and paradigms again land us in the middle of a debate. Rosaldo speaks about (1989, p. 94) 'an unresolved tension about whether to describe cultures as loosely tied bundles of informal practices, or as well-formed systems regulated by control mechanisms, or as the interplay of both.' Order, or even 'non-order'? (1989, p. 102).

Here I limit myself to the remark that culture is both man-made and changed by man. It is a social construction in which a synthesis is never fully realized. To quote Olivier de Sardan (1995, p. 11) 'la 'culture' est un construit, soumis à d'incessants processus syncrétiques et objet de luttes symboliques.' Emic representations, the way of thinking and living, do not change from one moment to the next and this hampers the possibilities to change society (Zanen 1996, p. 14). Long recognizes this 'treacly' nature of culture and emphasizes the need to examine how individual choices are shaped by larger frames of meaning and actions, by cultural dispositions (Long 1992, p. 21).

It is clear that with interventions in the field of anti-degradation/erosion programmes, water supply, health care, or 'improving' the situation of women (to name but a few of the interventions discussed by Zanen for a Dutch project in the Mossi region of Burkina Faso, 1996, pp. 136–43), one has to find out how people think about these matters, their cultural meaning and, of course, the cultural changes taking place. Or, to indicate some other topics: What are the 'emic definitions of survival, self-achievement, and well-being?' (to use the heading of a section of the study of Mongbo (1995, p. 172). What about 'democracy' and 'participation'? What are the attitudes of men and women *vis-à-vis* interrogation, asking questions, also questions about other people? (Fiske 1985, in Zanen 1996, p. 156). When Zanen (1996, pp. 134–35) finds out that, in Mossi society, irrigated rice cultivation, horticulture, animal husbandry and commerce are far less subject to cultural restrictions and ritual activities than the cultivation of millet and sorghum, and that, therefore, women and young men have much freedom in starting those 'free' activities, this is of great importance for specific development interventions.

Although it is obvious that knowing and understanding the cultural order(s) and processes of acculturation (or even hybridization) are important for analysis of planned and non-planned transformations, it remains amazing that the study of cultural components was underplayed for so long in the Wageningen tradition of development sociology, and is still often forgotten or ignored as too thorny. Here also I have to confess a *mea culpa*. There is now a growing attention to the study of discourse, especially in the situational analysis of interfaces between social actors, for instance between 'developers' and the 'to be developed' (Arce, Villarreal and de Vries 1994; Mongbo 1995). The cultural element also sneaks in, implicitly or even explicitly, when discussing 'the way of. . .' or 'styles of . . .' (van der Ploeg 1994, pp. 18–19; den Ouden 1995, p. 3).

It is clear that in an actor-oriented approach both the lifeworlds and livelihood of actors are very much influenced by cultural patterns. But still the cultural order of societies is often considered more a Leiden affair than a Wageningen interest. Perhaps the Wageningen emphasis on class and power relations, on economic, political and social relations and interactions *tout court*, is responsible for this neglect of the field of cultural. The important work of de Haan (1994) on the cultural ideas and meanings of farm families in the eastern Netherlands, pointing to the endurance of inheritance ideologies, remains quite exceptional for the Wageningen scene.

Notes

1 I am grateful to Norman Long, Henk de Haan, Alberto Arce and Monique Nuijten for reading and commenting on earlier drafts of this chapter.
2 In this section I appear to be suggesting that sociologists only make their inquiries with structured questionnaires and surveys, shun observation and favour quantitative research and analysis. That, of course, is not strictly true. Many sociologists will argue that there is nothing special about the so-called anthropological way of doing fieldwork and will claim that it is also part and parcel of sociology. On the other hand, if I suggest that anthropologists shun quantitative research, it would likewise be an exaggeration: anthropologists count and quantify a number of facts, do significance tests and use various computer programmes in their work, for example in network studies.
3 The contributions of anthropological research to the drafting of regional development plans in the sixties and seventies, directed by van Dusseldorp, are not always clear. Here we recall contributions to the Euphrates project in Syria in the mid-1960s, to the regional plan for Trengganu, Malaysia, at the end of the 1960s, to the regional plan for the First Division of Sarawak, Malaysia, in the early 1970s and to the regional plan for the south-west region of Saoudi Arabia in the mid-1970s.
4 Compare working with cognatic genealogies by Gabayet (1983) and Hüsken (1991).
5 Olivier de Sardan (1995, p. 53): 'Codes culturels qui servent à évaluer les actions proposées.'
6 Also outside Wageningen much work has been carried out in this field. I have mentioned the work of Olivier de Sardan (1995), several times, but we might also refer to that of Bierschenk (1988), and Crehan and von Oppen (1988).
7 In his discussion of global and local networks of small-scale entrepreneurs in Mexico, Verschoor (1997) uses a quite different perspective. He sees entrepreneurs as constantly trying to set up a global network of actors who will provide resources in exchange for an expected product or service. With the aid of these resources, entrepreneurs then create the necessary room for manoeuvre to organize a local network in which the product or service expected by actors in the global network can be advanced.

3 On Rurality, Rural Development and Rural Sociology

Jan Douwe van der Ploeg

Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss the concept of rurality. This is not only of scientific interest: the search for a proper definition of rurality that goes beyond former and increasingly inadequate conceptualizations is also of social and political interest. 'Rural development' is acquiring an increasingly prominent position on EU[1] and national agendas.[2] Meanwhile, growing cities, the urbanization of the countryside, an agricultural sector burdened with problems and the ever present and burning issue of 'areas lagging behind in development' constitute a complex of urgent problems within Europe as a whole. The urgency of these problems and the introduction of the concept of rural development into political discourse[3] raises several questions which are far from simple. What, in fact, is the rural? What is the rural we want to develop? And how is the countryside to be moulded given the new claims being articulated by the cities?

In several arenas where Wageningen rural sociologists work[4] these questions and issues emerge as key-issues on larger agendas. Roughly synthesized it is possible to suggest that the rural today represents a misunderstood, if not an *unknown reality*. There is, as Marsden *et al.* (1990, p. 12) argued, 'a conceptual hiatus.'[5] It is not clear what we should understand as the rural or what it ought to be. The rural appears to be void as a concept and consequently is a vigorously debated empirical reality. Some argue, for example, that there is no longer any countryside[6] in the Netherlands and maintain, despite opposition,[7] that rurality belongs to the past.

Underlying these questions and issues it is possible to discern a second level of complexities: will there be any room in the future for what we currently understand as the rural when nearly every corner of the world is affected and reshaped by processes of globalization? Is it possible, in an epoch of globalization, to shape the rural along politically inspired lines?

Searching for Ingredients and Their Common Denominator

In this chapter I will try to outline some of the ingredients that I believe are essential to the concept of rurality. None of these ingredients is, in itself, decisive to the demarcation of a sharp boundary between the rural and the urban. In combination, however, they constitute gradations that make up the differences between the two. This combination is not a random phenomenon, it is a central denominator. Consequently, I will first discuss the ingredients that, taken together, form the basis for a concept of rurality that bridges past, present and future. Although rurality has many location-specific expressions, which become particularly clear when we use a comparative method (Hofstee 1985b), rurality is above all, as I will argue, *a constant through time*.

Subsequently, I will examine the *basic misunderstanding* of changing rurality, a misunderstanding with specific (urban as well as rural) causes and backgrounds. Finally, I will tackle the most elusive and nebulous of discussions: the issue of rural development in the near future.

It is obvious that any debate on rurality and rural development will involve an assessment of the *raison d'être* of rural sociology. Or to put it in another way, it is through the redefinition of rurality and rural development that the relevance of several elements of the work of Wageningen sociology becomes clear.[8] In this chapter I therefore comment on some of the work being carried out by the 'Wageningen School.' Thus, this chapter can also be read as a critical review of the 'state-of-the art' of Wageningen rural sociology.

On Rurality as Co-production of Man and Nature

Rurality was once a self-evident notion (Duby 1984, p. 7). Today it is increasingly accompanied by a question-mark. In public debate, the 'rural' is primarily associated with transiency and remoteness. If it ever existed, it is to be located in times far removed from modernity. And if it 'still' exists then it is in some peripheral location, far away. Rurality is where tourists go to discover the counter-image of the city from which they long to escape. Rurality is 'paradise lost': Macondo (Garcia Marquez 1972) or Jorwerd, the village forgotten by God (Mak 1996).

The intriguing aspect is that concerns about the disappearance of villages, the demise of the rural economy and the restructuring of agriculture are not only present-day obsessions. One could return to almost any time-space location and find oneself embroiled in exactly the same discussion. The *disappearance* of the rural or, to be more precise, *fear* of disappearing rurality, seems to be a *constant factor* in recent history. One could also argue that the *persistence* or *reemergence* of the rural is an equally

constant factor. If this were not so, the threat of rural fade-out could not be regretted time-and-again.

Contrary to current trends in the literature, I will not try to situate the specificity of the rural in population density, the relative importance of agriculture, the relative lack of services and facilities or other 'objectified' categories (Huillet 1994; Hoggart *et al.* 1995).[9] Working with such categories can only produce an image of a disappearing countryside.[10] Equally, such categories frequently frustrate comparative analysis and therefore obscure any basic understanding of the essence of the rural. More importantly, the use of such statistics is at odds with the essence of the question: the way rurality is continually being constructed and reconstructed. Rurality, as I will argue, is the continuously changing result of a many-sided and highly complex social process that is critically dependant on certain specific mechanisms.

What, Then, Is the Essence of Rurality?

The debate as to what constitutes urban and rural identities is probably as old as civilization itself. The continuously changing, opposing, yet combined, constellations known as city and countryside are both products of the process of civilization. Curiously enough, recent scientific and social debate has reduced the discussion of rurality to a one-sided equation in which the rural and the urban become mirror images. As a result, more urbanization cannot but be interpreted as less rurality.

What is missing in today's debates is an awareness that both the rural and the urban are understood as being intrinsically interwoven (albeit differentiated) aspects of civilization. Hence, the rural is not to be defined simply as the opposite of the urban – it is also to be defined in relation to the opposite of civilization, that is, 'wilderness.' The quest for the rural cannot be grounded in one equation alone. Such a quest involves the discussion of two boundaries: the boundary between the urban and the rural, and the boundary between the rural and the non-civilized.

Nature movements in western Europe (especially those in the Netherlands)[11] are making us increasingly aware of this latter boundary. Through their claim for a nature unaffected by man (heard most frequently from the more radical sections of the nature movements), the notion of rurality is becoming increasingly embedded in (and defined by) two equations.

It is the transformation wrought by mankind that distinguishes the rural from wilderness. In 'pure' nature there are no people. 'Pure' nature is nature unaffected by man, history or society. This is precisely where it differs from the rural. In the countryside we feel, taste, see and hear man's presence. The rural cannot be conceived of, experienced, or constructed without the presence of man.[12] The rural, then, is the locus *where the co-production*[13] *of man and nature is located.* Consequently, rurality as such is both the result and expression of this co-production.

The second boundary, that between the rural and the urban, can now be defined as the next logical step. The urban is the locus where the co-production of man and nature stops. While there may well be 'green elements' in the city, the co-production of man and nature is not essential to cities. This difference might be sharpened if we introduce the notion of a 'living' versus a 'dead' nature. Cities – including amongst other things their associated industries – may well derive resources such as cotton, iron ore, coal and uranium from nature. But they derive these products in the first place as dead material and, secondly, they do not reproduce the nature concerned.

The realm of the rural, by contrast, constantly uses and reproduces 'living nature' (eco-systems, bio-diversity) or, more specifically, cows, fields, woods, crops and dung. This reproduction in particular, appears to be a crucial difference.

Rurality is the ongoing co-production of man[14] and nature. Consequently, the rural does not contain 'pure' nature.[15] The nature embedded in the rural is a co-product, resulting from the interaction and co-evolution of man and nature. It is both the enriched outcome of co-production and the substance for further co-production. The same is true for 'man.' The rural does not contain an abstract society or any society as such. It involves and is built upon a society[16] that is moulded to deal with co-production. In the context of co-production, nature is not purely natural, nor is society purely 'social.' The two are 'contingent' and 'heterogeneous' (Bijker and Law 1992, pp. 8–10). They constitute each other mutually. The one cannot be understood without the other and *vice versa*.

In as far as nature is absent in the urban, the city can definitely be said to differ from the countryside. The urban is society moulded according to organizing principles developed by mankind itself. The need to deal with nature is not present in the urban. Hence, the typical arrangements associated with the co-production of the human and the natural are also absent in the cities.

As far as the rural is concerned, I am using the term co-production in the broadest possible sense of the word. In the first place *co-production* refers to the interaction between man and living nature, that is the process of production in which 'nature' is converted into goods and services for human consumption. Agricultural production is evidently one of the basic components of such co-production. Co-production is, however, not limited to this alone. Man's needs are not limited to food. The notion of co-production refers to a double boundedness: not only does mankind condition co-production, nature also conditions the same co-production. Nature is not, to paraphrase a well-known expression from the school of social-constructivism, as malleable as clay. Nature, especially living nature, imposes its own rules. Just as society does. It is precisely the encounter between the two, nature and mankind, that makes for co-production.

The co-production of man and nature not only involves the immediate process of production, that is the production of goods and services to be consumed. Co-production necessarily implies a strong unity of both production and reproduction (Sevilla Guzman and Gonzalez Molina 1990). Through co-production, the *physical* conditions for the very continuity of the process of production (that is, its reproduction over time) are to be secured. When using a field, the reproduction of soil fertility should be secured, in order to be able to use the field in the next cycle. One has to be sure that a cow has a calf both to secure next year's milk supply and as a replacement for the cow herself if she becomes 'dry.'

Not only must the physical conditions for continuity be secured, the required *social* relations must also be maintained. Hence, co-production as allocated in the rural also implies the reproduction of specific social relations of production. Through this set of relations, not only does the social become organized in a specific way but also nature is moulded into specific forms and patterns. In short, specific social relations (interwoven with the fabric of society at large, but with their own uniqueness) are the main ingredients, if not the central vehicles of rurality.

The Rural: Not Exclusively Agricultural

Rurality is not limited to agriculture alone; it often goes far beyond it. This can be illustrated at various levels. First, one can refer to 'materialized' rurality of, for example, the wide range of landscapes (Meeus *et al.* 1988), and embedded in the natural and cultural values produced through the encounter between society and nature in earlier centuries. The imprint of rurality is omnipresent in at least 80 percent of our territories, if not directly then through the chains that link the present to the past. Then there is culture: the ongoing encounter between man and nature produced (and was supported by) a particular culture in which the prerequisites, the mechanisms as well as the outcomes of co-production are specified and highlighted. Although the concrete expressions of such a culture differ considerably according to their location in time and space, there seem to be some general traits, often misunderstood, but which reappear time and again. Here we might mention, for example, the family as an organizing principle (bridging inter-generational reproduction), continuity, self-sufficiency, self-employment and autonomy, sacrifice, hardship and hard work, as well as the notion of 'doing a proper job.'

Secondly, we have to take into account that the encounter with nature is also basic to such activities as hunting, fishing, forest management, countryside recreation and to living in the countryside. Many colleagues (see for example, Kayser 1990, 1995; Brunori 1994) have documented *repeuplement* or *contro-urbanizzazione*. They made it crystal clear that the movement from town to countryside is directly inspired by the specific values encountered in the rural. Rurality is an interest of society as a

whole. Such an interest evidently is not a residue from the past, but rather becomes more strongly expressed as cities grow and society becomes more urbanized (that is, more distantiated from the rural).

Rephrasing this point in more general terms, one could argue that agriculture (but not only agriculture) produces and also consumes rurality (in as far as farmers use nature, live in the countryside, and so on). However, the *consumption* of rurality (which is evidently related to a positive valuation of rurality) increasingly extends beyond agriculture. *Rurality is equally reproduced* through the *repeuplement* of the countryside, through agro-tourism, through hunting and fishing, and through the consumption of region-specific agricultural produce. At the same time, it is clear that the consumption of rurality is only possible if rurality is also actively produced: the consumption of fossils is something quite different to the consumption of rurality.[17]

Thirdly, the basic ingredients of co-production (such as, for example, craft and a certain distantiation from markets) often extend far beyond agriculture. In fact, they move back and fore, often resulting in highly complex if not contradictory constellations. In the 1960s and early 1970s, South American colleagues described the *ruralizacion* of cities – a phenomenon that was rooted in the large *barriadas* that emerged from the rural exodus and where food production for self consumption became a typical feature. However, craft and distantiation from markets (a phenomenon I will analyse later under the heading of 'petty commodity production') were not limited to 'city-gardens.' They overflowed, as it were, into what we now know as the informal sector. We could just as easily draw parallels here with Russia of the 1990s, for example, where it is absolutely unclear whether some 80 percent of the population should be characterized as small peasants or as members of the urban population.

A similar confusion exists in western Europe. Later in this chapter I will discuss such phenomena as part-time farming and the creation of new, non-agricultural small and medium enterprises out of existing agricultural enterprises. Without going further into details, it does not seem to be too risky to hypothesize that rurality is indeed reduced to agriculture alone (and probably even further reduced within the agricultural sector itself) in certain political, economic and ideological conjunctures, whilst under other circumstances the rural is much more extensive in scope. More specifically, one could argue that current processes of rural development, such as we are witnessing throughout Europe today, do in fact imply an expansion of rurality. I will return to this point later.

Dealing with Co-production: Some Specific Ingredients of Rurality

In this section I will analyse some of the elements or ingredients involved in the production and reproduction of rurality. The elements to be dis-

cussed are all related in one way or another to the rural as co-production of the social and the natural. None of these elements are decisive in themselves. Rather the combination and synergy of this whole gamut of features forms the stuff of rurality. It is the differences in the emerging combinations that constitute the dazzling variety of the rural as a concrete expression bounded by time and space.

The Centrality of Craft

Since the co-production of man and nature basically concerns the trans-formation and reproduction of *living nature* (Toledo 1992), one of its central, although frequently disputed ingredients is *craft*. Specific parts of the eco-systems and the bio-diversity contained in it are transformed (into specific use and/or exchange values) and simultaneously reproduced in and through farming. Hence, diversity, variability and a certain degree of unpredictability are intrinsic to the elements that enter farming as labour objects. During the farm labour process itself, these features are enlarged further – in every cycle of production but also as far as the accumulation of successive cycles of production, that is agrarian history, are concerned. In this respect it is telling that in agriculture, technological development did not narrow the scope of diversity, variability and unpredictability. Rather it enlarged it (van der Ploeg 1990).

The way to cope with diversity, variability and unpredictability intrinsic to the objects of labour is through craft. Through craftsmanship these potentially threatening features are converted into foundations for the production of progress.

The labour process in agriculture is essentially artisanal: it is not and cannot be completely industrialized. Neither can it be completely sub-sumed to the logic of capital accumulation. The transformation of 'living' nature into specific 'end-products' (milk, honey, potatoes, and so forth) is a process which cannot be wholly forecasted, let alone completely programmed and standardized. The more so since this transformation does not take place in the isolation of a laboratory. Rather it interacts in all sorts of ways with the 'surrounding' and often unpredictable nature. Techni-cally speaking, this implies that *during* the labour process the transform-ation itself (that is the evolving co-production) should be observed con-tinuously, in order to be interpreted, to be corrected and to be observed again. To put it bluntly: there is *no general rule* for cattle feeding or for fertilizing the land. How a cow is fed depends critically on the *performance* of the particular animal and on the *interrelated* performance of the farmer (that is, on the objectives of the farmer who is feeding her as well as on his interpretation of her reactions). The same applies to a plot of land. Through many years experience the farmer accumulates the knowledge he needs in order to be able to fertilize a *particular* plot of land in the best possible way.

Whilst in industry mental and manual labour have been separated to a considerable degree (Braverman 1974), in agriculture the two remain highly intertwined: the one is nearly impossible without the other. Dealing with nature, in the context of co-production, requires a direct and organic unity of mental and manual labour. Nature is a 'moving target.' The object of labour is continuously changing, developing and becoming more differentiated. It is impossible to ban the associated variance since it would represent a major step backwards in the evolution of co-production. For, in agriculture, knowledge, governance and conscious creation of further variance are crucial to progress.[18]

Craftsmanship (the concrete form into which the unity of mental and manual labour is condensed) attributes a specific superiority to the agricultural process of production. That is the capacity to realize, under *ceteris paribus* conditions, better productive results; to avoid unnecessary losses; and to maintain the basis for ongoing endogenous improvements (van der Ploeg and Long 1994; van der Ploeg and van Dijk 1995). This same superiority, together with the capacity to use non-commoditized circuits, which I will discuss later, serves to explain the dominance of the family farm and the artisanal production embedded in it, in most parts of the world. It is only in *loci* defined by sharp political, economic and social inequalities ('imperfections in the markets' as the economists argue), where industrialized forms of agriculture, based on wage labour relations and consequently on a separation of mental and manual labour, are to be found and/or are reemerging.

It is of course possible to introduce organizational schemes, based on a separation of mental and manual labour, into agricultural production. This is the undeniable story of the *haciendas*, the plantations, the capitalist farms (*herenboerderijen*) of the past and 'mammoth-farms' (*mammoetbedrijven*) of today. Three observations are, however, relevant here. Firstly, worldwide comparative data show that under equivalent conditions, peasant and farmers' production are both technically and economically superior to large-scale, capitalist agriculture.[19] Secondly, it is telling that in European agriculture in particular family farming (or petty commodity production) has emerged as the dominant form. Thirdly, craft continually reemerges even in places where it had disappeared for a time.

Craft, as well as the artisanal structure of the labour process in which it is embedded, evinces an almost infinite range of concrete manifestations and is highly variable as far as time and space are concerned. This richness in form is not only due to the encounter with a changing nature. It is also the result of social interests, perspectives and experiences, in short, of the strategies of the actors involved.

Being a highly differentiated capacity, one understands that through craft nature is elaborated into an ever expanding richness. Within the context of co-production, man not only moulds nature into new forms – he or she also moulds nature into a highly differentiated phenomenon that

contains an increased biodiversity. Through a specific organization of space and time, soil productivity for instance is redistributed in such a way that some fields become rich and others become poor (as was the case with the *baldios* in Tras-os-Montes, and the *blue grass fields* and *heather lands* in the Netherlands). As a consequence, new elements were added to the flora and fauna and landscapes were made into highly specific and mutually contrasting constellations.

The same occurred through the continuous reproduction of animals and crops. Over the centuries, cattle selection resulted in a dazzling range of different cows (as is illustrated, for example, in Felius' beautiful encyclopedia of cattle breeds).[20] But within each breed there emerges also a relevant heterogeneity. As is illustrated in Groen *et al.* (1993), the cow-as-she-is (including specific genetic features and values) is always the outcome of co-production: she is moulded and therefore made into what she is by the strategic decisions of the farmer. This farmer, of course, does not act as an isolated individual. He or she is linked to specific groups that carry common experiences, insights and knowledge (see Beaudeau 1994)). Those farmers who aim, for instance, at 'a production that is as high as possible with as little labour input as possible' (known in the Netherlands as 'machine men') create different cows to those created by the typical 'cowmen' or 'double goalers.'[21] This is reflected in the genetic potential for milk production, in the behaviour of the animals, in the strength of the legs, in muscularity and so forth.

Probably one of the most telling illustrations of how nature is moulded and reshaped is to be found in the complex interaction between differentiated breeds and differentiated farming strategies. Dutch fields are stocked by so-called 'red-and-whites' and 'black-and-whites,' animals that represent specific values to the farmers concerned (Maso 1986). The 'blacks' (*zwartbonten*) are the typical milking cows, whilst the 'reds' (or MRY cattle) are a dual purpose breed: apart from milk, they render a considerable quantity of high quality meat. In addition to the livestock there are the farmers themselves, amongst whom we might distinguish for example the typical 'cowmen' from 'double goalers.' The latter orient their farming activities to both milk and meat production, while for the former, only milk production matters. They want to 'see as much milk as possible from every animal in the milking glasses' (see Roep *et al.* 1991).

The distribution of 'reds' and 'blacks' on the one hand, and of 'cowmen' and 'double goalers' on the other, is for historical reasons not parallel. Some cowmen work with 'reds' and some double goalers do have to operate with 'blacks,' which is, at first sight, a somewhat unhappy marriage. Table 1 (derived from Groen *et al.* 1993; see also van der Ploeg 1994a) provides us with some insight into the outcome of this complex encounter between different strategies and different breeds.

Table 1 The Differentiated Development of Milk Type and Dual Purpose Cows within Different Farming Styles

|	Development of milk cows		Development of muscles	
	M	D	M	D
Double goalers	96,2	98,6	104,3	102,6
Cowmen	99,4	99,8	101,8	100,7

All values in the columns are significantly different (P<0.001, chi square test; M stands for milk type cattle, D for dual purpose cattle

As the table shows: cowmen build their cattle (even when these are dual purpose cattle) into good milking cows. The overall score for 'development of milking cows' amongst cowmen is significantly higher than the one realized by the double goalers. However, these double goalers rebuild their cattle (through interlinked breeding decisions over time) into good dual purpose cattle, even if they have to do this with 'blacks.' Whatever the genotype (M or D), they realize the highest breeding values for muscularity. This implies that it is not the genetic potential as such, but the interaction between cattle and breeders, in other words co-production, that makes cows into what they are.

Through the ongoing moulding and remoulding of their fields, their cattle, and so on, farmers create, through their craft, entire productive systems characterized by specific interrelations, regularities, potentials and limitations. Productive systems cannot be understood as the more or less progressive unfolding of 'nature' (and/or of the biological, physical and chemical 'laws' this entails). Productive systems as a whole are also the outcome of co-production and of a highly *differentiated* co-production at that. This important point can be supported with an analysis of input /output relations as contained in processes of production. This is summarized in the four-diagram representation (Figure 1). The first diagram (left/below) refers to the conversion of nutrients into fodder, that is: to grassland production. The second diagram refers to the interrelations between farm and feed market: it shows the extent to which the fodder, as produced on the own farm, is supplemented with feed and fodder bought on the market. The third represents the byre and relates to the conversion of the total amount of feed and fodder available into milk and meat.

In the interlinked diagrams two sets of lines (representing specific input/output relations) are introduced. These lines refer to the 'regularities' created by cowmen (C) and machine men (M). Taken together the I/O ratios of the cowmen comprise a specific productive system. The same goes for the I/O ratios created by the machine men (see for further details: NRLO 1994).

Figure 1 A Four-Diagram Representation of the Practices of Cowmen and Machinemen (Source: NRLO 1994)
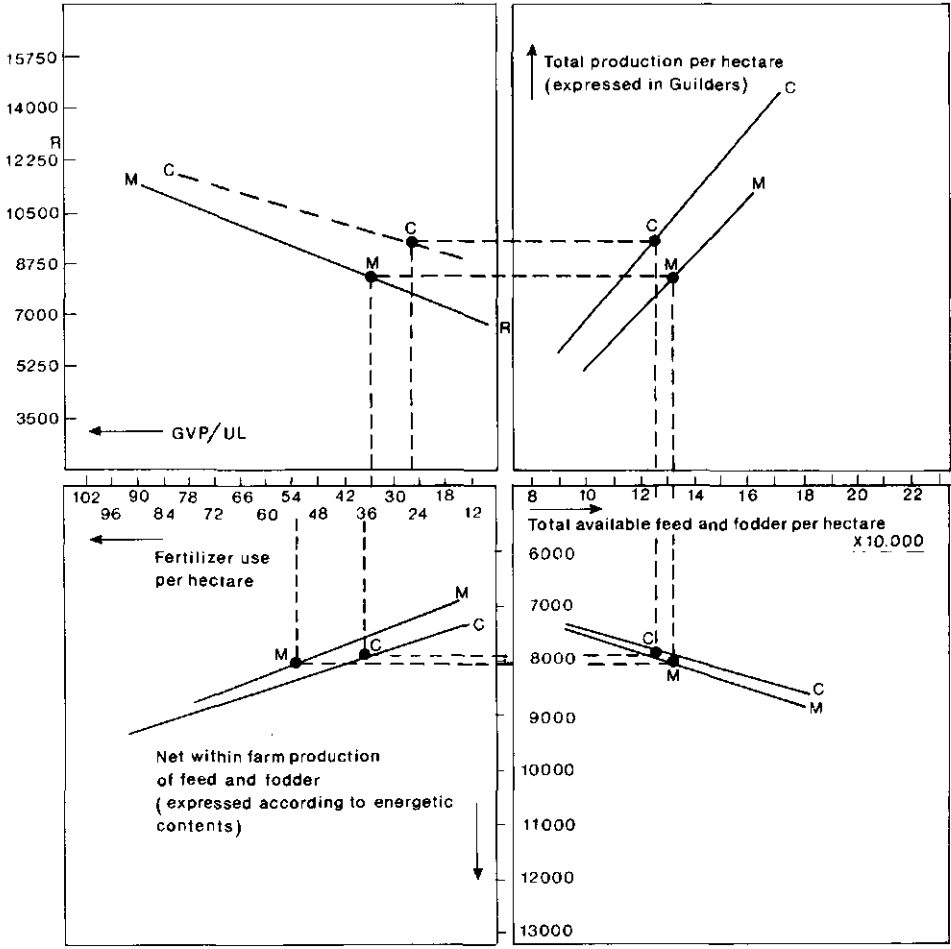
All over the world, agriculture is characterized by different 'farming systems.' Even within a quite limited space, one can often encounter an impressive variety. As Figure 1 illustrates, this heterogeneity at the material level (at the level of fields, yields, nutrient-inputs, animals, I/O ratios, and so on) is the *co-product* of the strategically organized labour processes of farmers, who through their specific and diversified crafts make agricultural 'systems' into what they are. Through co-production and craft, farmers (and through farmers the societies in which they are embedded) *materialize*, as it were, into the hard core of the rural: in fields, in landscapes, in cattle, in productive systems, in I/O ratios, in differentiated levels of pollution (Schuthof, *et al.* 1994; Roep and Roex 1992), and in specific products (Pohlman 1993; Roep *et al.* 1995). Rurality is to be understood not only at a symbolic level as an outcome of co-production, the rural is also the material (co-)product of this highly differentiated and complex co-production.

Figure 1 is also telling in another respect. One might wonder why the group of farmers who are defining themselves as 'machine men' (M) realize partial and overall I/O ratios that are considerably below those realized by their collages (C). They know quite well how cowmen organize their practices, the details are no secret. The answer emerges as soon as the specific strategy of these machine men is projected into the fourth diagram (left/upper). Whilst cowmen consider the surplus per milking cow to be the most important indicator in analyzing and evaluating their own performance as well as the performance of others, machine men are much less interested in such indicators. For them the associated practices represent a waste of time: 'You loose time because you dedicate too much of it to an individual cow.' They are more interested in large volumes. Central to their strategy is the production of as much as possible with as little labour input as possible ('without loosing time'). Hence the total Gross Value of Production (GVP) per unit of labour (UL) emerges as the central indicator. If this criterium is now introduced into the fourth diagram, it shows that precisely through their specific practices in the fields, markets and byres, they realize a score on GVP/UL that is considerably higher than that of the cowmen. If we were to introduce 'surplus per milking cow' as the main criterium, then the picture would be entirely different. Once again: farmers mould 'the material' (here a farming system as a whole) in such a way that it is reshaped according to their insights, experiences, needs and perspectives.[22] They get what they want, although not directly. In between the 'aims' and 'the results' is the material, the 'non-human.' Neither the 'human' nor the 'non-human' can be understood here in isolation. *It is the co-production in which the two are engaged and through which they are interlinked, that attributes identity, specificity and significance to both the 'human' and the 'non-human.'*

In agricultural science in general, attention is focused exclusively on the 'non-human.' In so doing, considerable parts of the rural (even a con-

siderable part, if not all of the empirically existing productive systems *in sensu stricto*) are converted into 'unknown realities,' if not straightaway into *unknowable realities*. Without, for example, the fourth diagram (that condenses the goal-oriented behaviour of the farmers concerned) the other three diagrams are converted into a world inhabited by lunatics, laggards, traditionalists or God knows what. Without the 'fourth diagram,' one does not understand why in the fields and byres of machine men (M) I/O ratios are realized which, as such and taken in isolation, are 'too low.'

The same is also true of social sciences as applied to agriculture and the countryside. Generally speaking, they focus only on the 'human' part of the co-production equation. This makes the described ('partial') realities and the institutions and cultural patterns they contain seem somewhat 'strange' to say the least.

I would argue that in Wageningen Sociology, the two – the 'human' and the 'non-human' – are systematically combined, explored and analysed. Hence our 'obsession' with yields, fields, cows and manure (see Bolhuis and van der Ploeg 1985; Hofstee 1985a; Groen *et al.* 1993; Schuthof *et al.* 1994). Our 'obsession' is shared by many of our colleagues from what one might call the 'non-human' departments of our university (Almekinders, Fresco and Struik 1995; Steenhuisen Piters 1995; Beaudeau 1994; Ubels and Horst 1993). It is an 'obsession' reflecting a basic understanding of, and a far-reaching interest in, the co-production of man and nature. As such, it is an expression *avant la lettre* of what is now emerging as social constructivism (Knorr-Cetina 1996; Latour 1994; Callon 1986). Simultaneously, it must be said that at this particular juncture our weakness also becomes clear. Others, including Knorr-Cetina, Latour and Callon were required to understand the full scope and significance of the work we were and are doing in Wageningen.

Extending Craft to Other Domains
Two additional considerations are needed here. The first is that craft-dependent superiority as contained in farming is often extended to non-agricultural domains. Sometimes there are direct interlinkages, as Bagnasco (1988) describes for the Italian *mezzadri* who used their craftsmanship, entrepreneurship and capacity to enrol in actor-networks, to build what is now recognized as the vital small and medium industry in Emiglia Romagna and Tuscany. The organic unity of mental and manual labour and associated capabilities are transferred to other economic domains (such as ceramics, metal and machine industries, clothing, transport, and food processing), in order to reestablish, in a different setting, the superiority stemming from craft.

The second observation is that the relevance of craft sometimes extends far beyond the rural as such. The rural is linked to the urban through the provisioning of food, for example. Food is not just a commodity that is simply interchangeable with any other commodity. It is not only price that

governs the flow of this particular commodity called food. Consumers expect safety, quality and/or specificity. Hence, the flow of food is embedded in expectations, norms, symbols, knowledge and ignorance. As Ventura and van der Meulen (1994) have demonstrated, this makes for particular *food chains*: circuits characterized by specific interfaces, where processes of information and feedback, in short, processes of knowledge-sharing link production and consumption.

The artisanal production of food increasingly represents an urban interest. It is associated with food produced in a genuine way. It represents the opposite of industrially transformed food. And the more industrially manipulated food becomes entangled in the one food scandal after the other, the more this urban interest becomes one of the foundations for reinforcing the typical rurality we are discussing here.

Is *craft* to disappear (Reuvekamp 1997)? And is the artisanal organization of the agricultural labour process as one of the strategic vehicles of rurality to disappear as well? I do not think so. What is expressed in and through *craft* is precisely *human capital*. Agriculture today, especially in western Europe, is a knowledge-intensive branch *par excellence*. It is therefore extremely dependent on human capital, that is the capacity to master co-production.

When this human capital becomes valorized through the new markets that are emerging because of an increased social interest in the rural (as, for example, the markets for high-quality produce, and for nature and landscape preservation), it is highly probable that we will see a revival of craft and consequently a strengthening of rurality (see also Brunori 1994).

On the Family Farm, Self-Employment and Freedom

All labour processes are embedded in and constituted by particular social relations of production. The artisanal organization of farming is rooted in a particular set of social relations of production, that is in small-scale family farms or in more analytical terms in petty commodity production.[23] *Essential to petty commodity production (PCP) is that it is linked to the markets as well as distantiated from them.* It is precisely this combination that allows for the realization of craft. Hence, the family farm is, just as craft, an essential mechanism through which rurality is produced. The association of the rural and the family farm is so close, that the latter even emerges as one of the essential traits of the former.

Craft presumes a certain autonomy: the interrelations within the process of production as well as the elements constituting it are to be ordered, combined, structured and developed further according to the insights, needs and perspectives of the actors involved. Here one might include 'living nature' as one of concerned 'actors': soil fertility, animals, and biodiversity also have to be reproduced over time and sustainability must be secured. This can only be done by following the intrinsic rationale of

co-production itself. The organization of the labour process, both in the short and in the long term, is to be distantiated from the logic dominant in the market.

Through PCP, that is through the actively created distantiation of farming *vis-à-vis* the markets (both the input and output markets), a direct submission of farming to and, consequently, a structuring of the process of production according to the logic of the markets, can be avoided (Friedmann 1980, 1986). As has been shown in a range of studies (Bolhuis and van der Ploeg 1985; Long *et al.* 1986; Benvenuti *et al.* 1989; Wiskerke 1997; Leeuwis 1989; van der Ploeg 1987, 1990; de Haan 1994), western European farming is indeed actively distanced from these markets. As far as the markets for land, machine services, capital, cattle, feed and fodder, labour and plant material, for example, are concerned, European farming embodies only a *partial* market dependency. A complete commoditization of all factors of production and non-factor inputs is actively avoided albeit in a variable way.

Wherever possible, the same is true as far as the interrelation between farming and output markets is concerned (Kerkhove 1994; Wiskerke 1997). Commodity relations as entailed in the markets do not therefore penetrate into the heart of the production process. They are, as it were, kept away from the domains of production and reproduction. In this way, farmers create the room for manoeuvre (Long 1984) which allows them to organize farming according to their own strategies, thus make rurality into a phenomenon that not only reflects market conditions but also a much wider (and more complicated) array of driving forces. They create, to put it succinctly, room for craft.

Analytically speaking, PCP and the family farm are not identical. In the rural economy, as an empirical phenomenon, the two generally overlap. The family farm is the dominant 'carrier' of PCP. The stability of the family farm not only rests in the superiority to be derived from the craft it entails and reproduces. It is also firmly embedded in a particular cultural context, in 'rural culture,' that stresses the need to encapsulate property in the family (in the *domus)* and regulates the use of labour according to a specific 'moral economy' (see Friedmann 1986; de Haan 1994, but also the older work of Arensberg and Kimball 1948). If there is any Achilles heel as far as rurality is concerned, it can probably be located in this specific cultural context.

Many contemporary discussions highlight the relative decline of agriculture within the *rural* economy and this is subsequently represented as indicative of deruralization.[24] One important question is, of course, whether the rural economy can be equated with agrarian economy and, on a more empirical level, whether agriculture ever has been the only economic activity in the countryside. Even more important is the question of whether or not certain intersectoral changes in the rural economy refer to a qualitative transformation that allows for a conclusion in terms of

definitive deruralization. Through a myopic fixation on the *number* of farms, the most central issue is overlooked. For despite all quantitative changes, the *structure* of the rural economy, as defined by PCP, remains basically the same. It is certainly remarkable that within some fifty years nearly 50 percent of all farms have disappeared. However, it is equally remarkable that the remaining enterprises are structured according to the same principles that have characterized the rural areas for many centuries! Probably it is even more telling that all kinds of *new* activities (such as ecological farming, agro-tourism and small non-agricultural enterprises), involving a range of *new* actors, incorporate the same principles. Hence, it is also in and through the search for self-employment that the family farm and PCP are continually being recreated.

Between 1850 and 1957 the level of employment in Dutch agriculture rose from some 300,000 full-time labour equivalents to more than 670,000. This period coincides with the big boom in Dutch agriculture. This continuous increase in both the quantity and quality (craft) of labour expressed itself in an ongoing intensification of agricultural production (Bieleman 1992).[25] The number of farms expanded more than employment data suggest. From 1957 onwards, the level of agrarian employment began to decrease reaching about 250,000 by the mid-1990s. From the 1970s onwards, it is significant that the number of farms decreased faster than total agrarian employment.

In short, tendencies change and will continue to change. It is telling that today the possibility of reaugmenting agrarian employment is again being discussed seriously (see van Depoele 1996; van der Ploeg and van Dijk 1995; Saraceno 1996b). What remains constant, despite the tidal waves that roll over the countryside, is a basic organizational principle: the unity of the family farm and PCP.

In many analyses, petty commodity production (PCP) is represented as a remnant of the past (see, for example, Bernstein 1977). This is, I believe, an incorrect representation. One cannot deny the fact that the 'family enterprise' is a social construction that emerged from a long historical process of emancipation and socio-political struggle. If one goes back to the first farm accountancy records available – in the Netherlands these date from the late sixteenth century – one notes the extreme dependency of the farm on external markets both on the input and at the output side of the enterprise (van der Ploeg 1995a). 'Own resources' were scarce and so were possibilities to control them. The family farm as we know it today eventually emerged as the result of a long historical process: that is a farm mainly, though not exclusively, built on resources owned, used and controlled by the farming family itself. This process accelerated in the period 1880–1930, taking the form of 'repeasantization.'

Slicher van Bath (1978), the well-known agrarian historian, identified important keys to the analysis of this long-term process. Among these, the notion of 'freedom' is strategic in the history of farming. Slicher van Bath

distinguishes between what he calls 'freedom from' and 'freedom to.' 'Freedom from' refers to the absence of (political, economic, class and market) relations that harness and drain the family farm economy. Heavy dependency on external markets – especially as far as the factor and non-factor input markets are concerned – can have an asphyxiating effect here. A certain autonomy can be gained through the creation of one's own resource set (cf. van der Ploeg 1995a). Once established, such a set of resources allows a certain 'freedom from' which, in turn entails a 'freedom to': it becomes possible to operate in a way that closely corresponds with the interests, insights and prospects of the actors involved.

In current economic theories, the farm enterprise is essentially represented as the meeting point of technologies and markets. Taken together, markets and technology *determine* the way of farming. Farmers might deviate from the 'optimum' as entailed in (and defined by) current market relations and technologies, but if they do they cannot avoid marginalization in the long run.

One of the important contributions of Wageningen rural sociology is its theoretical and practical critique of this deterministic paradigm and the subsequent elaboration of petty commodity production as a socially reproduced phenomenon crucial for the rural. The strategic mechanisms through which rurality is produced and reproduced, have been brought to the fore, analysed and highlighted. Farm enterprises are actively *distantiated* from markets by, for example; the creation of a set of *own* resources, whose mobilization, use and reproduction is *not* governed by commodity relations. If this were not the case Dutch agriculture as a whole would be materially impossible.[26] At the same time it has been shown that farm enterprises are actively *reoriented* at other markets (Kerkhove 1994; Broekhuizen and Renting 1994; Wiskerke 1997; Broekhuizen *et al.* 1997). And as far as technology is concerned, a range of contributions show that it is constantly being deconstructed, remoulded and recombined with internal elements (van Bentum 1995; Leeuwis 1993; Vijverberg 1996). Empirical studies realized along these lines, almost inevitably centre on agency, strategies, and networks.

Markets and the supply of new technologies constitute important frames of reference for farmers. But it is through the knowledgeable and goal-oriented creation and reproduction of petty commodity production that farmers create the room for manoeuvre required for the co-production in which they are involved. Consequently, different positions *vis-à-vis* the markets and the supply of technologies are created. In the Wageningen research tradition these different positions are understood as different farming styles.[27]

Cultural repertoire is decisive for the elaboration and materialization of such farming styles. Inspired by Hofstee (1946, 1985a), an important part of the Wageningen research tradition focuses on this cultural repertoire and its role in agriculture. Excellent overviews of the development of this

tradition have been elaborated by de Haan and Nooij (1985), and more recently by Nooij (1996). De Haan's (1994) analysis of cultural repertoire as regulating the intergenerational reproduction of farms and farming families, de Bruin's (1997) analysis of the complex interface between farming and agricultural policy, and Wiskerke's (1997) analysis of different development trajectories in arable farming demonstrate, in my view, the relevance of culture especially in *today's agriculture*.

The Sack of Potatoes Reconsidered

From local cultural repertoires to Karl Marx might appear, at first sight, a gigantic step. Nonetheless, Marx was evidently right when he characterized peasants as a 'sack of potatoes.' Unfortunately, the 'dialectics' of this statement were subsequently misunderstood. Attention has focused on the 'potatoes,' the image of the peasantry as an unorganized mass of atomized individuals, whilst 'the sack' or the interlinking and uniting element has been neglected. All peasant societies, and the same goes for farmers' communities, involve a balance of autonomy and dependency. Both the 'potatoes' and the 'sack' are present.

Petty Commodity Production implies relations of cooperation and competition. That can be seen in big 'international commodity complexes' (Friedmann 1980); in 'systems in which technical and manufactured inputs are incorporated into a labour process in which commodities are produced, processed and marketed in distinctive industrial structures' (Buttel and Goodman 1989, p. 87); it is also the case in the Peruvian Highlands (Bolhuis and van der Ploeg 1985), and in horticultural production in Dutch glasshouses (Vijverberg 1996). In short, the different forms and expressions of PCP are always interlinked – albeit through different mechanisms. The local cultural repertoire, specifying such crucial notions as trust, progress, and the value of work, is evidently one of these mechanisms. Observers such as Iacoponi have incorporated these mechanisms into their work, but extend the analysis simultaneously to other mechanisms as well. All these unifying mechanisms together constitute what Iacoponi (1996) and others, including Saccomandi (1991) and Brunori (1994), refer to as 'rural districts.'

The phenomenon of 'rural districts' is especially interesting because it also refers to interlinkages that go beyond the farm enterprises as such. They make visible all those interrelations that were forgotten when 'study of the agricultural became divorced from the rural' (Marsden, Lowe and Whatmore 1990, p. 6). Within these 'districts,' farms are linked to a range of other economic units, not only with other agrarian units but also to non-agricultural forms of PCP. Consequently, many of the indicated interrelations are embedded in frames of reference that go beyond immediate market relations.[28]

Another set of interlinkages is found in the well-known phenomenon of pluri-activity: when farming people engage in more than one, some-

times even in a multitude, of activities. An estimated 30 percent of all farm families in the Netherlands derive their income from agricultural activities alone. In the remaining 70 percent the husband or wife generates income from extra-agricultural activities (de Vries 1995). This extra farm income amounts to an average of more than 20,000 guilders per year on dairy farms and can be compared to the average farming income of 60,000 guilders.

Three additional observations are relevant in this respect. First, we should note that pluri-activity often represents a consciously constructed *nexus* that allows the continuation of farming, on the one hand, and the reproduction of other economic activities on the other hand, which would be impossible if they had to be grounded on stable and full-time employment relations. The post-Fordist type of industrialization in particular is, in many areas, dependent on the typical features of the countryside (Marsden *et al.* 1990). Second, farm families increasingly develop new kinds of pluri-activity located *on* the farm. The development of agro-tourism, farmers' interest in landscape and nature conservation, the on-farm transformation of raw material into high quality products, or the revival of off-farm commercialization (see, for a recent overview, Broekhuizen *et al.* 1997), can all be seen as new activities linked to and located on the farm which allow for a broadening and diversification of economic activity. These are, we might say, newly constructed forms of pluri-activity. Currently, farming women are emerging as a particularly strong force in these new types of pluri-activity (de Rooij, Brouwer and Broekhuizen 1995).

In the third place pluri-activity is likely to become even more significant in the near future. Expected changes in the EU Common Agrarian Policy, the increased influence of farming women in decision making concerning farm development, and the emergence of new rural markets all point in this direction (Saraceno 1996b). 'New sacks' are being found for old, and often misunderstood 'potatoes.'

Petty commodity production, artisanal labour process and cultural repertoire, constitute some of the decisive mechanisms through which the rural is produced and reproduced. These are mechanisms that imply *agency*. They are also mechanisms that constitute some of the decisive links between the local and the global. Farmers obtain a certain control ('a freedom to,' as Slicher van Bath would argue) over the process of production through PCP. This relative control over the process of production and the resources used in it, allows for the development of craft. Through PCP and craft, the process of production can be manipulated according to the (variable) needs, insights, interests, prospects and knowledge of the actors involved. PCP and craft enable the organization of the fields, market relations and the byre (see again Figure 1), according to the 'fourth diagram.' Consequently, it is inherent to PCP and craft as well as to the implied cultural repertoire, that there *are different ways to*

construct the rural (Jollivet 1988; Marsden *et al.* 1992; Roep *et al.* 1991; Leeuwis 1993). Heterogeneity (as expressed in a range of farming styles) is, therefore, not an additional phenomenon. Heterogeneity is intrinsic to rurality.

Heterogeneity is quite often managed by farmers and peasants as an element of the cultural capital of the countryside. The conscious creation of heterogeneity is not only found at the level of fields, cows and accountancy records (and consequently observed, interpreted and used for the production of progress); it is also entailed in and expressed by wide range of different farming styles. This (empirical) range is used increasingly (through comparative analysis) to explore ways out of the problems confronting the farming sector. In this way issues such as employment in farming, income levels, the role of women, innovativeness, the reduction of ammonia emission, landscape preservation and so on, have been addressed (van der Ploeg 1994b).

Finally, I should like to stress that PCP – and the control over the process of production embedded in it – is not simply an analytical model. In everyday life, it is closely bound to a particular culture. It represents, for the actors involved, a 'line of defence' that allows a (re)modelling of economic activities corresponding, at least potentially, with own interests. It is also a pattern that allows for the creation and the maintenance of self-employment. If this were not the case, it would be impossible to understand why the 'small farm enterprise' not only persists but also reemerges time and again all over the world.

On Agency, Locality, Globalization and Relocalization

Following Long (1996), it can be argued that there is little new in the notion of globalization in as far as it refers to the internationalized flow of commodities, ideas, images and people. This is not only true for the Dutch cities that once constituted centres of imperialism – it is equally true for dominated or 'peripheral' zones. The first available farm accountancy records in the Netherlands were made by Hemmema and date from 1569–1573 (see Slicher van Bath 1958 and van der Ploeg 1995a). These records provide information about commodity flows entering and leaving the farm, and show that there were contacts with regions in eastern Europe and the Far East. Grain came from eastern Europe, and cattle from a variety of European countries. Labour was recruited beyond the boundaries of the country. The output, consisting of a wide variety of products, was exported everywhere. Hemmema's farm can only be understood in terms of the *international* context in which it was enmeshed. This enmeshment entered also into the 'poetry' of life: Hemmema and his contempories used medicinal herbs from the Mediterranean and we still owe a beautiful part of our flora to it – the *stinzenplantenflora*: the plants that grow in the gardens of old country houses, abbeys and farms.

Relatively speaking, these commodity flows were very important and the notion of the free-floating commodity – whether it was hay, manure, cows, land, capital or labour – was far more generalized than it is today. It may be argued that some commodity flows have increased relatively. And it may be true that the rhythm, and the sometimes dizzy speed with which goods, services, and people move around the globe, have also increased enormously. However, it is difficult to understand how these relative shifts could ever constitute a major qualitative shift towards a 'globalized' world that is definitely different from the 'previous one' (as Bonnano *et al.* 1994 have suggested, for example).

Globalization does exist, but I would suggest that it is found at another level of complexity: that is, in the construction and amplification of expert systems which are fundamentally and completely *disconnected* from place and time. Let me first illustrate my argument and then try to link it to the discussion on rurality.

The example, derived from van Dinten (1996), concerns two local cooperative banks, one in Schagen, a small village in North Holland, the other in Venlo, a 'small town in the South. 'The banking enterprise underwent,' so van Dinten argues, 'far-reaching changes.' The introduction and the use of systems is by far the most important one. Systems do not differentiate according to place and time. As soon as banks start to express themselves through systems, the difference between the autonomous local bank in Schagen and the autonomous local bank in Venlo fades away. If these banks are willing to articulate their differences, then they have to offer what the people in Schagen and Venlo recognize as belonging to them, what they see as typical for their own place. But as soon as a bank defines itself in terms of systems '. . . a local bank is nothing more than another place where customer and system are coupled' (pp. 100–101; my translation).

Systems are constructed sets of representations, rules, arrangements and procedures. Systems render solutions. Systems are formalized, the rules and procedures are explicit. Systems have their own language: system language. Above all, systems are disconnected from specific situations: they are generalized sets of rules, representations and procedures. The creation and use of these 'system[s] of technical accomplishment [and] professional expertise that organize large areas of the material and social environments in which we live today' (Giddens 1990, p. 27) has far-reaching consequences: *one implication is an adieu to locality.* On the intellectual level, the indicated expert-systems imply an *Aufhebung* (a 'dialectical annihilation') of place and time; on the material level, they make place and time as specific notions totally irrelevant. Agency is also eliminated, or at the best delegated to a second level of importance. Whether you ask for a loan in Schagen or in Venlo, the conditions will be the same. There is no room for negotiation either in Venlo or in Schagen: systematized rules are the same wherever the banking system operates.

Agriculture as a range of interlinked social practices has become increasingly 'systemized,' as a series of Wageningen studies have argued (Benvenuti 1982, 1990; van der Ploeg 1987).[29] That is the real 'globalization,' although it has been demonstrated that this same 'systematization' of the world also provokes counter tendencies: that is, new trends towards relocalization (van der Ploeg 1992).

Relocalization is found everywhere: PCP, craft and districts are used as *lines of defence* (Darré 1985; Dupré 1991).[30] They are not only the outcome of the encounter between globalizing tendencies and the rural, they are also used to recreate space to deal in a more adequate way with co-production. At stake here is the already discussed 'superiority' of the rural, which now includes such new dimensions as the number of black-tailed godwits per square kilometre, as well as the ever-present struggle between town and countryside over the (re)distribution of wealth produced in the countryside.

By running the world according to designed systems, we increasingly reshape it according to those systems. The question is, of course, whether the 'real lifeworld' will accept and/or endure this. It might seriously be asked, echoing Polanyi (1957), whether 'systemizing' the world according to universal rules and procedures, which make time-and-space-locations completely interchangeable, would not be 'tantamount to annihilating the world.'

Seen historically, the emergence of the 'family farm' or PCP, represents a process of relocalization opposed but nevertheless linked to tendencies towards globalization. Farming (and other rural activities) could only be continued and strengthened through the localized control and use of local resources[31] (of. whatever kind). Or, to put it more bluntly, it is through actively constructed relocalization that a strong position in globalized markets can be gained and materialized.[32] *Hence, rurality is a constellation in which agency matters* and probably in a decisive way. The rural is certainly a locus that 'allows' for agency and this is part of its attractiveness.

Whatever definition of rurality we use, the specificity of time and place and hence of the actors involved must be stressed. Van Dinten (1996) quotes the Austrian social geographer Brugger: *Heim is dort wo man Ursache von etwas ist.* This beautiful, almost untranslatable expression clearly refers to both the specificity of space and the centrality of agency.

One cannot of course say that agency is irrelevant in the cities. But, as I have argued throughout this chapter, *rurality is constructed and reconstructed in such a way that agency matters.* This is so, not for any teleological or ontological reason, but because trends towards annihilating the specificities of time and place, especially in the countryside, produce strong responses to relocalize. The countryside, especially today, is the meeting point of two opposing tendencies. A new rurality will emerge from the complex interactions and conflicts between globalizing systems

and the particularity of the rural. Or perhaps we should say: a range of new ruralities yet to be discovered.

Times are A'Changing

The countryside, as a socio-economic constellation as well as physical space, is continually changing. Rurality, however, is a *constant* through time. One could argue that change is an intrinsic aspect of co-production. As both the outcome and the 'substance' of co-production, the countryside is subjected to a triple dynamic. First, society changes and therefore rurality as the co-production of society and nature changes. Second, nature changes and therefore the rural also changes. And third, the mechanisms, scope and reach of co-production itself change continuously, leading therefore to both new social arrangements and new nature, in short, to changes in the rural.

Perceptions of the rural are also changing. The same goes for the criteria to assess whether there is 'progress' or 'regression.' It is telling, for instance, that a decrease in the rural and more especially of the farming population, has for centuries been seen as an indication of crisis (see Slicher van Bath 1960), whilst after the second world war, a similar decrease was regarded as a precondition for progress.

The mid-1950s mark the beginning of an epoch in which, at least in Europe, a far-reaching project for the 'modernization' of the rural was developed.[33] For many of the actors involved, this modernization project implied a definite end to rurality: the countryside was to be aligned to the cities. The urban–rural continuum would fade away. The notion of the rural was, indeed, adapted and readapted, as Mathieu (1990) demonstrates in his interesting review. 'Parity' became the rule as far as income levels in town and countryside were concerned and, probably even more important, with the calculation of income levels came the definitive abstraction of PCP reality. The agricultural entrepreneur (the farmer understood as a definitive step beyond the peasant of the past) was supposed, in the process, to become equal to urban entrepreneurs, able to dispose of the same balance between work and leisure (Eizner 1985), having the same attitudes towards risks, credit and the management of an enterprise, and behaving in daily life in the same way as every other citizen.[34] Craft, as one of the central mechanisms and capacities characterizing the rural economy, was to make way for new technologies allowing for an accelerated 'industrialization' of the agricultural process of production. 'Management by exception' would become the new rule. The same applied to the basic organizational arrangement, the family farm (de Haan 1993). New arrangements, such as the GAEC (cooperation between farmers) announced in the Mansholt Plan, would dominate.

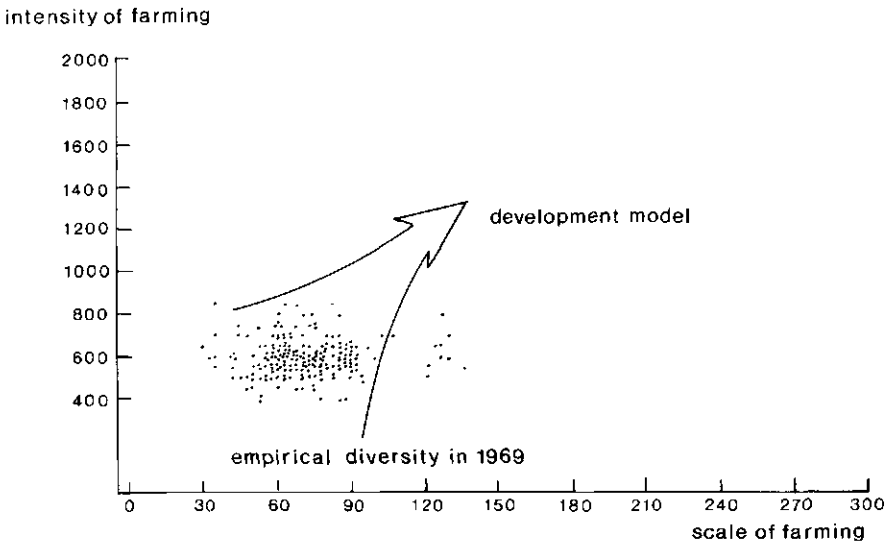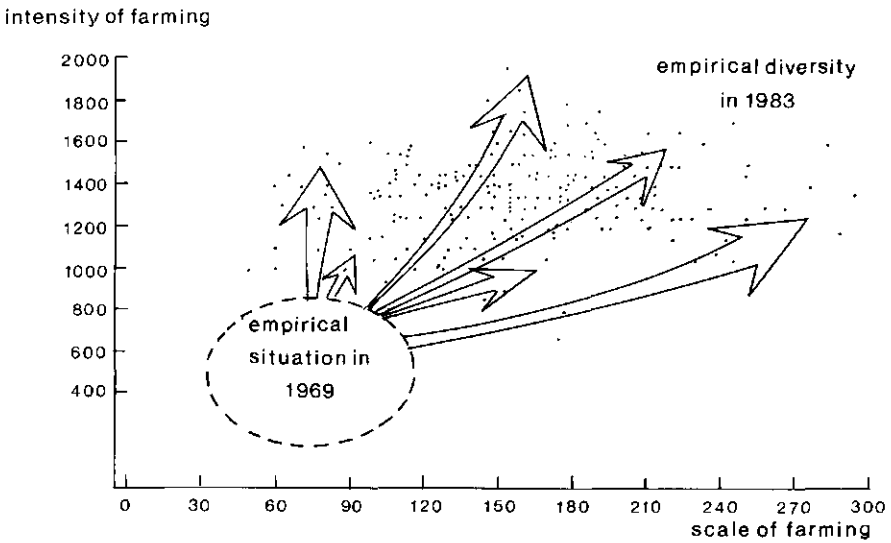Figure 2 The Modernization Project as Perceived in the 1960s

intensity of farming

Figure 3 Modernization as an Historical Process (1969-1983)

intensity of farming

The countryside was, in short, to be 'deruralized.' Apparently 'sacred' elements, such as the strong links between a farming family and its land, were to be eliminated. Farming was to become, in short, an integral part of the *systems* called economy and technology. Consequently, the impressive diversity of locally based farming styles (that were documented and analysed by my predecessor, Hofstee, with a scientific *rigour* that still amazes) would disappear and make way for one farming system oriented to and defined by the parameters reigning in the domains of market and technology. The confusing, highly diversified reality of the rural 'still' at a distance from the forces shaping modernity, would therefore be replaced by a new, more homogeneous reality, reflecting the reorientation of farming to the optima entailed in markets and technology.

From a more analytical point of view we can understand the 'deruralization' implied by the modernization project as bringing about a range of mutually interlinked *disconnections*. In the first place, the very nature of co-production was redebated and, to a considerable degree, thrown into disequilibrium. Farming was increasingly disconnected from the local eco-system, with which it had interacted for so many centuries. The far-reaching reorganization of time and space was intended to artificialize and to globalize farming and, consequently, nature too. Second, the modernization project contained (and sometimes openly preached) a 'degradation of craft'.[35] Whilst agriculture, had been understood since Columella as the 'art of farming,' the modernization project clearly aimed at an increasing *disconnection* between farming and craft. Third, modernization implied an *adieu* to PCP and therefore to the farm family as one of the decisive centres of decision making. Fourth, the disconnections between agriculture and the local eco-system, craft, the farming family and the patterns of cooperation in which it was embedded, also implied an increased distance, if not a complete disconnection between the agricultural process of production and the food produced. The proverbial sprouts might just as well come from a factory (Reuvekamp 1997).

Figure 2 synthesizes some of the technical dimensions of the modernization project. According to the dominant notions of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, the process of modernization was seen as a large and well-coordinated movement through time, that is, as a 'jump' from the past to the future (Rambaud 1983). Agriculture was to be intensified and the scale of farming was to be increased simultaneously.[36] Agriculture was 'to move' towards the optimum as entailed in markets and technology. At the same time, locally inspired diversity (such as that expressed in initial differences in intensity and scale) would be banished through convergence produced through reorientation along global parameters. Variety could not be anything other than a remnant of the past.

The modernization project, which increasingly informed and penetrated all dimensions of agricultural policy, deeply affected both agriculture and the countryside. The two were literally reshaped: time and space as

organizational dimensions of the rural obtained a completely new look. *Nonetheless, the rural as such did not disappear.* Instead, rurality as co-production as well as the central mechanisms in which co-production is grounded, were reproduced if not strengthened. One way to illustrate this is to analyse, in retrospect, empirical farm development patterns as realized between the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1980s (see Figure 3).

Figure 3[37] makes it clear that farmers *deconstructed* in practice the homogenizing tendencies of the modernization project to a considerable degree. A process of increased differentiation emerged (see Long and van der Ploeg 1989, for a theoretical elaboration of this phenomenon) from the encounter between an increasingly centralized and prescriptive policy, uniformed markets and a standardized supply of technologies, on the one hand, and different farming strategies, on the other. The room for manoeuvre (see PCP) created by farmers and their craft, that is, the capacity to mould the process of production and technologies in specific and mutually differentiated ways was crucial to this process.

It is, in retrospect, clear that the creation of the 'disconnections' discussed earlier, has been only partially successful. The rural proved to be more 'stubborn' than many social scientists of those times had assumed. On the one hand, one can conclude that those farming styles embodying a high degree of disconnectedness hardly function any better technically or economically than the those containing a high degree of 'localness' (being linked to local resources, such as the local eco-system, labour, specific end-products and/or the local cultural repertoire). On the other hand, society as a whole is reacting: the more food-production becomes 'industrialized' – that is disconnected from craft and local eco-systems – the more widespread the demand for *genuine* food. The more landscapes (and the embedded natural values) are literally 'removed' to make room for industrialized agriculture, the more there is a generalized demand for nature- and landscape preservation. And one could continue discussing all the interrelations linking the rural and the urban.

The socio-political movement towards more *democracy* that deeply affected western Europe in this period has had far-reaching consequences for the increased differentiation illustrated in Figure 3. Although we have scarcely begun to inquire into the possible interlinkages between the two, it is quite clear that they are interrelated in several ways. One very important interlinkage is farmers' struggle for local self-regulation (Hees *et al.* 1994), which gave birth to a new arrangement, nowadays known as the environmental cooperative. Another interlinkage, which I will briefly discuss here, concerns the gender dimension.

Rural women have played an important role in constituting the heterogeneity we currently witness in agriculture. As the studies of de Rooij (1992) and de Rooij, Brouwer and Broekhuizen (1995) make clear, an increased involvement of women in work and decision making results in

quite different farming styles. The same has been demonstrated by van der Plas and Fonte (1994) for Europe as a whole. In research by Bock (forthcoming), this feature has again been emphasized in relation to women's role in new processes and forms of rural development. As she demonstrates, it is the more emancipated women who make the difference.

The same interrelation between democratization and gender equality, on the one hand, and rural development, on the other, can be seen at the international level. Widespread land reforms in Latin America gave rise to a massive and self-conscious *campesinado*. The collapse of state socialism in eastern Europe made visible the *MIR reality* that had supposedly been swept away by the eradication of the peasant. Massive repeasantization has been triggered off in some parts of eastern Europe. Rural development and democratization are, in short, intimately interwoven; not only in the period analysed by Slicher van Bath (1978), but also today (Mamdani 1987; Matlhape and Munz 1991).

The Ongoing Misunderstanding of the Rural

There is no single set of relations that links the urban and the rural. Athens and Greek civilization produced petty commodity production, whilst Rome gave the world large-scale, slave-based agriculture and much later *l'arte dell'agricoltura*: the art of farming (Columella 1977). Each location and each epoch produces its own town–country interrelationship, reflecting both the imprint of the past and containing specific prospects and perspectives for the future. The *complaints and lamentations*, sometimes misunderstood and seen as a kind of fatalism inherent in peasant culture, reveal in my opinion what are felt to be *blocked* prospects and perspectives. The complaints, therefore, often contain the seeds of change. The *mezzadro* from Bertolucci's *Novecento* who, in front of the landlord, cuts off his own ear is not just lamenting, he is criticizing. It is a dramatic, down-to-earth, and consequently very rural form of protest and critique. The man uses his own body, the last resource, we might say, to express this critique; and precisely because he uses his 'own body,' a way out can be created as well. This happens in a later scene when the same old and ugly *mezzadro* takes a flute to inspire the others, just as in *Grapes of Wrath* a tired and worn-out mother, who has just lost her child, offers her breast to one of the starving men, in an attempt to help him survive (Steinbeck 1991). It is an *archetype* for the rural, in which exploitation, sacrifice, resistance and revival are intimately linked.

One of the most beautiful illustrations of blocked prospects and perspectives is found in Cobbett's *Rural Rides* (1973, p. 32), in which the author relates an encounter with a farmer returning home after a hard day's work in the fields. The man was asked how things were going. 'Very bad,' he replies, 'the weather is very bad.' Confronted with the

fact that the weather had been beautiful and the harvest plentiful, the farmer continues: 'Yes, that is exactly the reason, because *they* [that is: the others, jd] turn all that into something very bad for the poor!'

Town and countryside, the rural and the urban are not only linked, that is combined and opposed, at the material level but also at the symbolic level. Although the frames of reference seem at first sight to describe the other side of the town–countryside equation, it is exactly the other way around at a deeper level of analysis. Through images used to describe the countryside, urban culture provides information about itself. When the towns are felt to be ugly places, the rural is 'pastoralized,' if not reified. And when the town is seen as a fountain of change, progress and dynamism, the countryside is depicted as a place of stagnation and the peasant or farmer as a laggard.

Times are a'changing and so the rural goes on changing too. Another change occurs in the ways in which the 'urban' knows the rural. If we focus on recent decades, some major changes can be identified. Some forty years ago, nearly everybody in the cities – at least in northwestern Europe – was linked through kinship relations to farming families. Many people had spent holidays on some farm during their youth and, with passing years, this spot had been transformed into an idyll. When memory becomes the vehicle for knowing the rural, the reencounter with the concrete manifestations of rurality cannot but produce an image of '*Paradise lost*.' Compare any document describing agriculture as it was several decades ago,[38] with current impressions and it will inevitably appear that the rural has indeed changed drastically. Or that, as is increasingly concluded, 'the rural is disappearing.'

Any such conclusion is, of course, superficially right but essentially wrong. It is a conclusion based on *changing outlook*, not on the essence of rurality. It reflects the city's *malheur* with its own inconveniences and its associated longing for something totally different, that is, 'pure nature.' It is telling that the wish to rebalance the rural as a co-production of man and nature in favour of 'nature,' stems from the cities.

The 'city' (understood as a metaphor referring to a range of typical urban interests) is increasingly unable to understand the rural. This is basically due to the fact that the city knows the countryside through the 'past' or through the 'future.'[39] Hence, the images associated with the rural 'as it used to be,' and/or with the rural 'as it ought to be,' are central to the urban-inspired representation of the rural. Consequently, the rural *as it is* emerges as a denial, or an ugly deviation, from one of two opposite poles.[40]

The images of the rural as-it-was and of the rural as-it-needs-to-be are not outside history, but rather coterminous with the rural itself. The more the rural moves (and changes), the more the development of these two counter-images of the rural also accelerate. The changing rural and the

consequent misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the rural are, therefore, two sides of the same coin.

Why is it that the rural-as-it-is, cannot be understood from the city? This is basically due to a relative lack of the mechanisms through which rurality is produced, not absolutely, but relatively, in the urban context. Since the city is unfamiliar with these mechanisms (the urban was constituted through their *denial*), it can never come at to grips with the rural as-it-is. 'East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet.'

The Future of Rural Development

The more our world becomes urbanized, the greater the need for rurality will be (Simmons 1996). It therefore comes as no surprise that the issue of 'rural development' is on the agenda again. It is even less surprising that this issue is discussed in terms of strengthening an important part of our cultural capital (Delors 1994; Saraceno 1996a).

The drive towards deruralization as reflected, for example, in the modernization project of recent years, has run aground on the boundaries and problems created by that project itself. Consequently, society as a whole articulates towards the rural a range of needs and expectations that were once self-evident, but which have become increasingly marginalized in the course of the modernization trajectory. Simultaneously, parts of the rural increasingly address these needs – even before such a redress appeared on various political agendas. The associated rural development practices *avant la lettre* reflect the many testimonies to agency as embedded in the countryside.

In the years to come we will probably notice a *reruralization*: a reemergence of the rural as an indispensable part of our civilization. Human capital, that is the capacity to handle craft and PCP to address societies' new needs,[41] will be decisive in this respect. Changing values in the political culture of agriculture (Nooij 1993) underpin this possibility (van Aartsen 1995). It is even possible that this same reruralization will bring about some basic changes in tendencies such as the ongoing decrease in agrarian employment levels. As we have discussed elsewhere, an increase in quantity and quality of farmers' labour is not beyond the realms of possibility. Whether this will ultimately occur depends on agency as entailed in the rural itself. Even if rurality is a constant through time, its concrete future remains unsure. The specifics of rurality remain largely unknown as does the form it can be expected to take in the future. Perhaps that is one of the charms of rurality.

Notes

1 The recent Cork Conference on Rural development was especially interesting. See Cork Declaration (1996), Fischler (1996), Mannion (1996), Saraceno (1996a) and Simmons (1996). The discussions and conclusions of the Cork Conference are evidently rooted in previous debates. See, in that respect, Delors (1994) and van Depoele (1996).

2 As far as the Netherlands are concerned, we can refer to the Policy Statement of the Minister of Agriculture, Nature Conservation and Fisheries known as *Dynamiek en Vernieuwing* (Dynamics and innovation) See van Aartsen (1995).

3 The emergence of the 'rural development' option at the EU level is evidently related to the crisis of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), with the negotiations that are to take place in the second GATT round, as well as with the discussions over the integration of an increasing number of central and eastern European countries into the Common Market. The discussion on 'rural development,' however, goes well beyond the practicalities of the indicated fields of interests.

4 For a modest and far from complete overview, we might refer to the EU debate on 'rural development,' organized by the former EU president Jacques Delors (see Delors 1994); to the Cork conference on 'Rural Development' in the preparation of which staff members played a role (see note 1); to the development of *milieu-cooperaties* (environmental cooperatives) in the Netherlands (Hees, Renting and de Rooy 1994), to the practical involvement in the elaboration of solutions for acute conflicts in the countryside (van Egmond, Koopmans and van der Ploeg 1996; Nijhoff, van der Ploeg and Zijlstra 1996); to involvement in the national debate on agro-environmental problems and conflicts (Frouws 1994); to the debate on the role of traditions (de Haan 1996), and to the involvement in the National Debate on Agriculture that was organized in 1994 and 1995 (van der Ploeg *et al.* 1994; Ettema *et al.* 1994, 1995; and, in more general terms: Broekhuizen and van der Ploeg 1995). This involvement is not to be understood as a random phenomenon – it is instead one of the central methodological principles of the Wageningen approach. Special mention is to be made of a recent NRLO study (NRLO 1997), that highlights the contribution and impact of Wageningen sociology to the general debate on rural development.

5 Whilst in the prewar period agriculture was definitely the main economic pillar of the rural economy (other economic activities were often highly dependent upon agriculture), from the 1950s onwards, agriculture looses this central position. Many back- and forward linkages are reallocated in the cities and the rural economy is increasingly reorientated to other markets. This 'divorce' of the agricultural and the rural was not matched at the conceptual level: the equation of the rural and the agricultural (an identity that reflected prewar realities) was maintained for too long. When it was finally realized (see also Mormont 1990) that this conceptual identity was increasingly at odds with reality, the first and immediate reaction was and still is to abandon entirely the notion of the rural. Hence, the conceptual hiatus. It was insufficiently recognized that the rural had in the meantime obtained a new essence which, at conceptual level, can easily be reflected and recombined with the agricultural. Further on in this text I will try to develop such a general notion.

6 See, for instance, Strijker (1997). The reader is also referred to Huigen (1996), who takes a similar stand. Internationally, this position has already been articulated earlier, for example, by Goodman and Redclift (1986), who portray (according to Marsden, Lowe and Whatmore 1990, p. 11) 'farming as an economically residual, if not archaic category.'

7 A recent Dutch Governmental policy document on spatial planning in the coming century notes that 'throughout the country people fear the loss of contrasts between city and countryside, which could result in a 'grey' nation' (VROM 1996, p. 8).

8 During the 1970s and 1980s rural sociology experienced a worldwide crisis and loss of identity. This was strongly related to what was then already felt as the 'disappearance of the rural.' Long (1985) argued: 'rural sociology has . . . lost the grounds for claiming to be a distinctive discipline with its *own special object* of investigation and mode of

explanation' (p. 721 italics added). The lack of a theoretically grounded delineation of the object of rural sociology ('what is the specificity of agriculture and the countryside') had a prominent place in Long's critique: 'Whereas the early tradition had assumed that there was something especially distinctive about rural locations which made them socially and culturally different from urban forms of social life, researchers increasingly took the view that rural locations were merely empirical or geographical entities in which one worked. Being 'rural' carried no special theoretical or methodological implications for the research' (ibid, p. 720). The inability to link the 'own field of research' to the 'more general theoretical debates' was considered part of the crisis of rural sociology (ibid, 1985b, p. 720; Newby 1980, 1981; Newby and Buttel 1980). De Haan and Nooij developed a similar critique in Wageningen, noting at the same time that 'the crisis and stagnation . . . in rural sociology in the seventies' could be interpreted as a 'side-effect of the important process of reconceptualization taking place within various branches of the field' (1985, p. 51). As I have noted elsewhere (van der Ploeg 1995b), rural sociology in the 1990s is going beyond the impasse of the 1970s and 1980s. This is particularly true of the Wageningen branch of rural sociology. There have been important 'reconceptualiz-ations' within the discipline itself. Rural sociological research has regained its own well-recognized place on the research agendas relating to agriculture and the countryside – both within the Netherlands and at European level. The theoretical contributions of rural sociology to social science in general, as well as to agricultural sciences, are now seen as self-evident (see Buttel 1994; Goodman and Watts 1994; and Portela 1994). All this, I would argue, is related to the rediscovery of rurality.

9 The problem with the 'objectified categories' indicated is that they create endless contradictions when applied in a dynamic analysis. If people are attracted by rurality and decide to live in the countryside, than the countryside stops being rural because a certain demographic level is breached. The same goes for comparative analysis: bringing rural Java and Scotland into one and the same comparative analysis creates Gordian knots that are impossible to untie. More generally, I am trying to go beyond both the 'functionalist approach' to rurality, in which population density remains the defining cornerstone (e.g., Cloke and Park 1985, p. 13) and the 'pragmatic approach,' in which the countryside is simply identical to the non-urban (e.g., Cloke and Thrift 1994). What I propose, then, is a constructivist approach.

10 The countryside is becoming increasingly populated by people who work(ed) in the cities but prefer to live in the countryside. Kayser (1990, 1995), a French rural sociologist, terms this *repeuplement.* Several observers interpret this same phenomenon as indicating an irreversible 'urbanization' of the countryside. I guess that such an interpretation is wrong. This 'urban exodus,' to paraphrase a well-known expression, is not to be understood as the simple expansion of the city. It is exactly the opposite: it is *adieu* to the city as a locus of consumption. It represents a positive choice for the countryside as a place for housing, living, relating to others and relaxing. It is, in short, the attractiveness of the rural that makes for this demographic shift. It would be ludicrous to conclude from the resulting increase in demographic density, that the loci concerned stop being rural. The difficulties produced by such criteria in any comparative approach have been convincingly documented by Kulczar *et al.* (1996), who showed that by applying OECD criteria to Hungary, the whole country emerged as 'rural.' The same lunacy occurs in the exclusive reference to decreasing numbers of agricultural enterprises. Although the green space continues to be used mainly by agriculture, a decrease in the *number* of farms is for observers, such as Strijker, reason to observe a 'deruralization' and/or a 'deagrarionization.' It remains absolutely unclear why such a tendency could not be observed in the 1950s or, for example, during the Great Depression when the plague ravaged the countryside. Apart from that, Strijker *e tutti quanti* absolutely miss the dominant feature: the interwovenness of urban and rural economies which strengthens the specificity of the rural. The absolute apex is reached when the quantitative distribution of services over the territory is used as an indicator for rurality. As somebody once

commented: 'as long as they keep shitting in barrels, it is rural, but as soon as they change to water-closets their world undergoes a paradigm shift.'

11 It is remarkable that nature movements in Europe as a whole identify very much with nature and landscapes produced by farming communities, stressing the cultural history and frequently liasing with farmers unions. The tendency in the Netherlands goes partly in the opposite direction: the more 'radical' part of the nature movement explicitly denies the (potential) value of the rural. Strict and exclusive preference is given to 'nature unaffected by man.' This point of view implies indeed that the rural is to be expropriated in order to create room for nature or wilderness. This can only provoke strong resistance, as we have been witnessing in the Netherlands. Apart from that, the radical wing's understanding of nature is quite idyllic, that is, poor and a-historical.

12 This is underpinned by negative experiences related to the marginalization of farming in vulnerable areas. Wherever this phenomenon occurred in Europe, there emerged a definitive loss of rurality as well as a degradation of nature, according to the current social definitions of nature. Wilderness is also out of the reach of these social definitions; nature entails biodiversity. It is embedded in beautiful landscapes, accessible in order to be admired. That is, nature as it is socially defined, is definitely part of the rural. Only in the definition of ecologists is wilderness reconceptualized as 'nature.'

13 The concept of 'co-production' is derived from the vocabulary developed in the school of social constructivism. The term co-evolution is also frequently used. See Bijker (1993, p. 125); Callon (1986, p. 20); (Latour 1991, p. 22); Latour (1994, p. 64) and Lente (1994, p. 178). Interesting applications within the realm of rural sociology and economy are found in the work of Sevilla Guzman and Gonzalez (1990), Iacoponi (1996) and Brunori (1994).

14 I am using 'man' here as a metaphor for society, especially for that part of society that is involved in the indicated co-production. It goes without saying that this latter part is equally effected and conditioned by the larger society to which it belongs.

15 This contradiction between the rural and 'pure nature' is reflected in the growing pressure from nature movements (as Natuurmonumenten, World Life Fund, some of the provincial Landscape Unions, etc.) to expropriate *de facto* the rural in order to convert it into 'pure nature.' On the other hand it is increasingly recognized in society at large that interest in nature as articulated by different social groups implies nature-as-result of co-production rather than the stone age fiction expressed by the nature movements concerned.

16 Of course, this notion has never been absent in writings and reflections on agriculture. Carena for instance, in his beautiful introduction to the 1977 edition of the *Columella* notes that 'il mondo della campagna contiene gia molte, se non tutte le contradizioni della societa o, piu in generale, *del rapporto dell'uomo con l'ambiente*' (1977, p. ix; italics added). Carena also refers to Huggett (1975, pp. 154–156) who observed that the notion of co-production emerged ('blossomed') especially when the distance between town and countryside was enlarged.

17 It is telling that in some of the 'hot spots' within the Netherlands (e.g., Gaasterland and de Peel), it is precisely the rural dwellers who oppose the conversion of the rural into what they perceive as 'wilderness.' In de Peel, for instance, farmers reluctantly agreed to a conversion of their lands into *hoogveen*, (due mainly to the very high compensation they were offered), but then rural dwellers did not accept the proposed conversion at all. One telling comment was: 'I choose to live here because there are cows in the meadows, there is activity and life . . . I definitely do not want to live in a world of dead peat.' Rurality, understood as co-production, represents a definite value for rural dwellers.

18 The genetic selection and improvement of plant varieties and/or of cattle depends critically on the availability of variation and on the capacity to 'master' it. Farmers have been doing this for centuries. Dutch farmers' study groups and the widespread use of farm accountancy records for comparative use, are recent examples of this mechanism. See Knorr-Cetina (1996), Leeuwis (1993) and Vijverberg (1996) for a discussion.

19 Not only from a productivist point of view, or as far as the economy of the individual enterprises is concerned. It also applies to the sectoral and the macro levels. It obviously depends on conjunctural reasoning whether a high employment level in agriculture is perceived as a positive or as a negative phenomenon. Nonetheless, in today's world, in which the West, the Third World and the former Soviet bloc are all confronted with the urgent need to create more employment, one could argue that peasant and farmers' agriculture is superior to capitalist farming. The latter however is rapidly expanding, especially within the Third World, where western enterprises find the 'room' to do so.

20 It is telling and intriguing that *artists* such as Felius (1996) and van Zomeren (1995), are needed to express the beauty entailed in co-production.

21 These folk-concepts refer to particular farming styles in the dairy farming sector in the Netherlands; see de Bruin (1997), Kerkhove (1994) Leeuwis (1989), Long and van der Ploeg (1994), Roep *et al.* (1991) and Wiskerke (1997). The similarity with 'management styles' as documented in other parts of the world is striking, as can be derived from a comparison with the work of Bennett (1981), Barlett (1993) and Manolescu (1987). There is, however, a difference between these works and the Dutch studies on farming styles. The latter pay much attention to the differentiated technicalities of farming, that is, to the 'non-human' in its association and interaction with the 'human.'

22 The story can of course also be told the other way around: the fields, cows, buildings and machinery of the 'machine men' are moulded and combined in such a way that they only allow for practices characteristic of this farming style. A 'cowman' could hardly operate in his preferred way on such a farm.

23 Essential to SCP is the conversion of commodities (obtained on input markets) into other commodities (to be sold on the output markets) using labour force which is non-commoditized. Applied to farming, this implies that family labour is the labour characteristic for the 'family farm.' The other resources are mobilized on the markets. In contrast, PCP involves not only labour, but also (a considerable part, if not all of) land, capital and 'non-factor inputs' are owned and controlled by the farming family (or community). Not only labour, but most or all relevant resources are *non-commoditized* and hence used and regulated with *non-commodity mechanisms and circuits* (see Friedmann 1980, 1981, 1986). A relatively autonomous and historically guaranteed reproduction is, therefore, crucial (see, for a further discussion, Long *et al.* 1986; van der Ploeg 1990 and, especially, Saccomandi 1991). In most literature PCP is associated with the past and/or with remoteness (see Bernstein 1977). PCP should be typical for the peasant, whilst SCP, it is assumed, is the typical condition for the farmer. The transformation from PCP to SCP, then, is understood as being typical for the transition from a (partly) natural economy to a 'fully commoditized economy' (Bernstein 1977; see also MacEwan-Scott 1986). This assumption (or representation) is, I believe, basically wrong. It does not help us to understand current peasant and farmers' struggles, nor does it allow for the elaboration of any practical contribution to these struggles. Finally, it might be useful to refer to the difference between SCP and PCP, on the one hand, and Capitalist Commodity Production (CCP) on the other. The more so, since CCP remains an important phenomenon, especially in South American agriculture. CCP is production oriented at the creation of surplus-value. Only those commodities are produced that entail surplus-value (for the one controlling the process of production). This can only be done by using labour force as a commodity. Hence, in CCP all resources enter the process of production as commodities. In SCP the same applies with one important exception: that is, the labour force. In PCP it is not only labour, but also a range of other resources that enter the process of production as non-commodities.

24 Strijker, for instance, refers to the relatively modest contribution of agriculture to the rural economy as far as investments, employment and income are concerned. According to his analysis, agriculture accounts at most for some 25 percent of the indicated aspects. Beyond that, he analysed some five small villages, indicating that only a minority of all inhabitants had some relation with agricultural activities. The problem with this analysis is that these

data are very much taken at face value. It is not clear whether or not they represent a relative or absolute decline. But even when we assume that they are indicative of an absolute and a relative decline, the question remains whether these quantitative changes refer to any qualitative transformation whatsoever.

25 This labour-driven intensification contrasts strongly with the technology-driven intensification that characterizes agriculture from the 1960s onwards. Part of the latter model is the increasing dependence on inputs that embody productivity rises. See, for a further discussion, van der Ploeg (1987) and for a critique Vijverberg (1996).

26 Technically speaking, the Dutch agricultural sector has had a negative net profit over the years (a negative *netto bedrijfsresultaat*).

27 Currently we define a farming style on different, but interlinked levels. A farming style, is, in the first place, an interlinked set of values, norms and experiences that concern the way farming is to be organized; in that sense it contains cultural repertoire. This repertoire is actively shared and further developed within specific networks. Second, a farming style contains a specific practice, a specific organization of fields, byre, machinery and especially of the labour process. This specific practice (and all the technicalities and inter-relations that are relevant to it) is informed by the strategic notions or cultural repertoire already mentioned. Hence, a farming style also represents a specific unity of 'mental' and 'manual labour.' Third, a farming style also entails the specific interrelations between the farm unit and the surrounding markets and technology supply: that is, those relations needed to realize the specific practice which is at the core of every style. Hence, a farming style not only concerns 'internal' relations, it also involves a (deliberately structured) set of 'external relations.' In the fourth place, we can refer to the fact that markets and technology are not disembodied entities. They are crucial dimensions through which a considerable part of agrarian policy is effectuated. Hence, different positions defined within the room for manoeuvre created by markets and technology, can be understood as well as many positions *vis-à-vis* (or responses to) agrarian policy.

28 The newly emerging tradition of neo-institutional economics in particular has made all kinds of mechanisms that govern non-commodity circuits visible and transparent. The key concept in this approach is 'transaction costs.' See, for a further discussion and application, van der Ploeg and Saccomandi (1995).

29 A significant difference is that in Wageningen research reference is made to *empirical* constellations. Consequently, the notions of *systemness* and *relative autonomy* (Gouldner 1970) emerge as key issues: to what degree does the real world function as a system?

30 This also explains why so many intervention strategies produce unintended consequences. See, for a further discussion, Knorr-Cetina (1981), and Long and van der Ploeg (1989).

31 Lowe *et al.* (1995) rightly stress the centrality of the control issue.

32 See Vacca (1989), for a similar reasoning regarding the industrial sector. The methodologi-cal framework developed by Knorr-Cetina (1981) remains a useful tool for understanding the complex interrelations of the global and the local (see for a brilliant discussion: Brunori 1994). A more substantial approach (that builds on the work of Knorr-Cetina as well as on new empirical insights in the complex and contradictory nature of the encounter between the global and the local), is presented in Long and van der Ploeg (1994).

33 The intellectual roots of this project go back probably to the 1930s, when agriculture was reconceptualized from being a specific encounter between man and nature, into the 'unfolding of the laws' that govern nature as understood by biologists, chemists, and physicians. See, for a further discussion, van der Ploeg (1987), Leeuwis (1993) and Vijverberg (1996).

34 The number of visits to a Chinese restaurant became one of the indicators by which to measure the 'modernity' of farmers.

35 I am paraphrasing here the subtitle of Harry Braverman's well known work, *Labour and Monopoly Capital: the Degradation of Work.*

36 It was also assumed that farms would further specialize and be completely integrated in agro-industrial chains. It was assumed that the farmer (there was no 'she' in those days) would become an 'early innovator' as well as a 'good entrepreneur.'

37 Based on LEI farm accountancy data. See also van der Ploeg (1987) and de Bruin (1997).

38 There are, indeed, beautiful illustrations such as those by Uilkema (1995), Magi (1982), van den Driest (1983), the pencil-drawings by van Gogh (see Hulsker 1978); but also written documents, such as those by Mak (1996).

39 Particularly those more specific urban interests directly linked to agriculture and the countryside, such as agribusiness and agrarian sciences, articulate the 'future': an image of the rural as it ought to be. That evidently relates to the issue of control and the associated struggle about the (re)distribution of the wealth produced in the countryside.

40 An intriguing difference between these two opposite images is that the notion of agriculture-as-it-ought-to-be is very often used (at least in Europe) to refer to US agriculture as a guiding image and a fountain for inspiration. The image of agriculture-as-it-used-to-be reference, by contrast, refers to the same location some decades ago.

41 Such as the need for high quality; region specific produce; agro-touristic facilities (Te Kloeze 1990; Lengkeek 1994) and landscape preservation and nature management (van Koppen 1995).

Part Two

Regulation, Intervention and Social Movements

4 The Changing Parameters of Social Regulation and Governance in Agriculture

Jaap Frouws

Introduction

Dutch farmers are frequently called *rural entrepreneurs* to denote the great variety of socio-economic activities for which the notion of farmer nowadays stands. These activities vary from primary agricultural production to processing and retailing, from nature conservation to offering recreational facilities, and from managing a number of geographically dispersed but economically interlinked agricultural holdings, to combining on-farm work with off-farm employment. The socio-economic differentiation of farming parallels the construction of new social identities and thereby challenges established rural sociological typologies. The same process of redefinition applies to the countryside where the privileged position of agriculture has given way to a panoply of competing claims and conflicting social images with respect to rural space.

Rural sociology is set to the task of a revised understanding of the processes and structures through which access to and use of rural resources are constructed. I shall argue that rural sociological analysis has to engage with mainstream social science, especially in the fields of economic, political and environmental sociology, in order to investigate this 'quintessentially *social science* question' (Marsden *et al.* 1993, p. 4).

We begin by presenting recent changes in the economic and political organization of agriculture which a social theory of rural change will have to address. These changes mainly originate in the 'global' economic, political and technological transformation processes which many capitalist economies experienced in the 1970s and 1980s, often referred to by social scientists as processes of *restructuring* (Marsden *et al.* 1990). The critical social scientific perspectives evolving during the 1980s to account for the mechanisms of *economic* restructuring can all be more or less subsumed under the rubric of the *regulationist* approach. Regulation theory opposed both the neo-classical economists' preoccupation with the market-driven tendency towards general equilibrium and the structuralist account of the quasi-automatic self-reproduction of a given mode of production (Jessop 1995, p. 309). Regulation theory is essentially an account of economic dynamics in the sense of socially regularized economic relations and

activities. The regulationist approach emphasizes the socially embedded and socially regulated character of economic activities.

The ensemble of critical social scientific perspectives on mechanisms of *political* restructuring, belongs to the field of *governance* studies dealing with the resolution of political problems (in the sense of the realization of collective purposes). These, too, have often emerged in reaction to perceived inadequacies in earlier theoretical paradigms. The various recent approaches to governance generally reject the rigid conceptual distinction of market–state–civil society and emphasize their complex interdependence instead (Jessop 1995).

Both the regulationist perspective and the governance approach seem to offer promising theoretical frameworks to understand the economic and political restructuring of agriculture respectively. It appears from our brief exploration of their initial application to the rural and agrarian world, however, that much work remains to be done, especially in the case of the regulationist approach, to elaborate the middle level theoretical concepts needed to underpin the concrete analysis of rural change.

The conclusion of this chapter deals with the theoretical and empirical challenges to rural sociology that are implied by the elaboration of the regulationist and governance perspectives. Although much of what is advanced in this essay on the rural sociological analysis of the recent economic and political turbulences related to farming and the countryside applies to rural sociology in general, it was the state of the art of rural sociology in the Netherlands which I had in mind in particular when I formulated these challenges.

Changes in the Economic and Political Organization of Agriculture

Issues like the mad cow disease, the use of BST-hormone and the application of genetically modified crops clearly illustrate the great public concern for matters of food safety and food quality. This concern inevitably includes the process of primary agricultural production. People are not only afraid of the risks to human health but also concerned about the supposed damage to ecological and environmental qualities and to animal welfare.

Public issues like these impinge upon great economic and political interests. They constitute an important competitive factor on consumer markets and they are a source of permanent political pressure. Hence, food processors and retailers are being urged to tailor agricultural production to the requirements of safety, health and ecology and to make it transparent and accountable. These claims converge with the increasingly competitive concerns of product differentiation in food markets, which also imply additional demands on the primary agricultural producers. European food markets developed from 'sellers' markets' into 'buyers'

markets' from the 1970s onwards (van Dijk 1989). Retailing concentrated in huge companies steering food markets on behalf of their 'critical' consumers, demanding variety, special qualities, fast and easy preparation, healthiness and so on. 'Good and cheap' products did not sell themselves any longer in the saturated, critical and internationalized food markets. It became of vital importance to food processors and retailers continually to anticipate, take advantage of or even organize market requirements. This increasing market orientation implies stricter demands on the conditions of primary production, storage and transport. As a consequence, integration in chains of production is gaining dominance in the economic organization of agriculture. Cooperative agribusiness firms share this trend notwithstanding their 'original' functioning as a buffer between farmers and the market. Even the members of the agrarian cooperatives can no longer claim a delivery right, they have to 'deserve' or even buy this right. This threat to the security of remunerative agricultural outlets can be considered, at a more general level, to be the consequence of the growing internationalization of agribusiness due to technological (concerning preservation, transport, biologically or chemically induced product qualities), economic (internationalization of consumer preferences, global competition) and political (trade liberalization and enlarging trade blocs) developments.

Farmers' delivery insecurity and their more direct liability to the ever changing market demands tend to increase their dependency upon the 'downstream' economic actors in the food chain. There are farmers, however, who have managed to capitalize on their specific knowledge, craftsmanship and professional qualities, thus preserving their relative autonomy in the chain of agricultural and food production. Some of them have formed producer groups for collective product innovation, marketing initiatives or contract negotiations. 'Cooperative entrepreneurship' of farmers is gaining renewed interest. The differentiation of farmers' relations in the agri-food chain might allow for an interesting typology of their 'vertical' autonomy.

The economic organization of agriculture is also changing along 'horizontal' lines producing yet another typification of farmers as rural entrepreneurs. They are exploiting 'rural resources' through service and commercial activities which involve changed socio-economic relations to customers, public bodies (for producing 'amenity goods') and often also hired employees.

Finally, the significance, value and composition of farmers' assets are changing too, contributing to changes in farmers' socio-economic position. Increasing land values due to growing societal demands enhance the investment capacities of farming proprietors while at the same time rendering more difficult the reproduction of farming capital. The commoditization of production and pollution rights (milk quota, sugar quota, manure quota, ammonia quota) creates new sources of revenue as well as

additional financial needs. Agricultural and rural capital are gaining in importance and mobility, leading once more to new types of agricultural entrepreneurship as exemplified by the 'accumulation' of farm holdings and 'partial emigration.'

Considerable change can also be observed in the political organization of agriculture. Framed in rather general terms, the isolated and protected status of farming has come to an end and the social significance and recognition of both the food producing and nature conserving functions of farmers have been considerably reduced. Charges to the public budget for agricultural overproduction were heavy, and nature and the environment adversely affected. As a result, quite a new chapter of national agri-environmental legislation was introduced, supplemented by a host of European directives. This new chapter inevitably involves the increasing importance of *local* government as the implementation of much of the agri-environmental regulations is bound to the local level. Policies with respect to farming take on an interventionist character as direct income subsidies and quota regulations are grafted onto the existing system of price support and structure policies, which hitherto did not hinge upon individual farming practices. The emphasis in the governance of agriculture shifted from the expansion of agricultural production towards issues of public health, environmental protection, trade liberalization, budgetary restrictions, rural welfare and interests of consumption (landscape, nature, recreation, private rural housing). This shift of socio-political priorities produced a split in the longstanding relationship between 'farmers and the state.' As a result, both the representation of farmers' interests and the legitimacy of all policies addressing farming conditions became a matter of far more political salience than before.

The Social Regulation of Agriculture

Changes to the economic organization of agriculture all revolve around the integration of primary agricultural producers in the multiple networks of the socio-economic actors surrounding them. This is the only context in which farmers' economic action can be understood. It is the material and discursive practices of the myriad social actors involved – in this case agribusiness firms, trading companies, food retailers, consumer associations, farmers and their organizations, and so on – that generate, and are in turn conditioned by, the social and political institutions which secure the regularization or normalization of the agri-food system (Painter and Goodwin 1995).

The concept of social regulation is thus concerned with the complex ensemble of market relations, contract forms, trade agreements, social norms and habits, customs, rules of conduct and laws which 'regulate' the evolution of value production, profits and investments (i.e., the process

of accumulation) in the food industry. Regulation theory tends to focus on the continual processes of renegotiation and reinterpretation that produce and reproduce the institutional complexes of market conditions and competition that structure and regularize economic life in agriculture and the related agribusiness. The concept of social regulation thus offers a macroscopic perspective on the dynamics of the agricultural relations of production. However, unless one examines the mediation of regulation in and through specific social practices and forces, regulation will either go unexplained or will be explained in terms of 'speculative' structuralist categories (Jessop 1990, p. 24).

Unfortunately, the regulationist account of the 'globalization' of agricultural production, food processing, trading, retailing and food consumption is seldom pursued through this kind of concrete analysis (Marsden *et al*. 1993, p. 37). That is why there still remains a conceptual gap between global trends and local changes. The scope locally based actors have to resist or influence the regulatory powers conditioning their behaviour is not well analysed. The regulationist approach usually fails to grasp the differential integration of agriculture and farm labour into the off-farm agri-food system and the global economy (Munton 1992; Buttel 1994). Social regulation theory needs to be complemented by some middle level concepts related to power configurations and social networks in order to examine the significance and interrelatedness of actors' strategies that contribute to the restructuring of agricultural production and rural areas. Agribusiness' power to tailor primary agricultural production to its market strategies and farmers' autonomy in pursuing their 'style of farming' condition each other and only obtain sociological meaning if their interrelation is taken into account.

If the regulationist approach can be said to suffer from 'top-down myopia,' then rural sociological analysis that is characterized by a pre-dominantly actor-oriented approach may be considered to suffer from the opposite. The farmer is treated as a knowledgeable actor translating the effects of economic and institutional relations to the farm level. The essence of farm labour is the coordination of the demands stemming from the 'domains' of production, reproduction, family and community with the domain of market and institutional relations, according to his own 'logic of farming.' It is the farmer who mediates the 'external' influences as a conscious actor (van der Ploeg 1990, p. 126).

The interplay between the farmer and his economic and institutional environment is a crucial factor here: what is the farmers' room for manoeuvre, in which ways does he adapt to or exploit these relations, which balance of autonomy and dependence is realized? The more elements of the farm labour process are commoditized, the more' the organization and the running of the farm will be permeated by external, industrial and scientific logics. It mainly is the purposeful acting by the farmer which the actor-oriented rural sociology examines to explain the

outcomes of these processes of commoditization, industrialization and scientification. Even in a system of agricultural production which is as fully commoditized and rationalized such as the Netherlands, great diversity seems to be found in each sector and every region where 'styles of farming' are examined (van der Ploeg and Roep 1990; Roep *et al.* 1991; de Bruin *et al.* 1991; Spaan and van der Ploeg 1992; Wiskerke *et al.* 1994). The differences in farmers' actions are studied meticulously through a kind of social scientific magnifying glass applied at farm level. This documentation of the diversity of farming practices represents a very valuable empirical enrichment of rural sociology.

This empirical infusion should be followed, however, by additional research and explanatory theorizing more explicitly setting primary agricultural production in its economic and institutional environment. There is a multitude of messages, guidelines, norms and requirements passing the farm gate: these include the appropriate technologies to apply, necessary product quality standards, delivery conditions to be met, information flows to be understood and produced, and the financial criteria. It is essential to grasp the interests, codes and rationalities that go into these messages in order to comprehend their receipt and the effects of these messages. Or to put it differently: the insights generated by actor-oriented rural sociology should be combined with concrete analyses inspired by the regulationist approach to come to a fuller understanding of farmers' strategies in context, that is, of the process of agricultural restructuring. Bringing in such a relational perspective may rule out both the endogenous and exogenous myopias that either overstate the explanatory power of farmers' 'room for manoeuvre,' or the structuring effects of externally imposed technological and market requirements.

Governance and Agriculture

The studies of governance that emerged since the 1970s expressed growing dissatisfaction with the rigid public–private distinction in state-centred analyses of politics (Jessop 1995, p. 310). The narrow concern with *government* shifted to a broad concern with a range of political *governance* mechanisms not necessarily anchored in the exercise of state power. Studies of governance have rather varied theoretical roots and it is not difficult to find several distinct meanings of 'governance.' There is a strong systems-theoretical influence in most studies of governance, however, which allows for identifying some 'basic' shared characteristics that define the common ground of the governance perspective (see Rhodes 1996, p. 660). These concern, *inter alia*, a strong interest in self-organizing, inter-organizational networks; shifting boundaries between public, private and voluntary organizations, characterized by interdependence and interactions regulated by rules of the game that are negotiated and agreed by

network participants; and indirect and imperfect external 'steering' by the state. The concern with self-organization and self-reproduction of complex systems implies that the very process of governance constitutes the objects which come to be governed. This emphasis on mutual adjustment, self-governance and resistance to central guidance demonstrates that governance studies do share an analytic focus on retaining the necessary space for the agency of political actors.

Research on corporatism can be seen as an early product of governance studies, since it turned interest to the state's 'ordered retreat' and the concomitant authorizing of paragovernmental representative actors to produce rules by continually balancing through due process and negotiation (Offe 1996, p. 69).

Given the wide realm of governance concerned with the resolution of political problems through specific configurations of governmental (hierarchical) and extra-governmental (non-hierarchical) institutions, organizations and practices, it is confusing and redundant, in our view, to use the concept of *real* regulation to refer to variation in *legal, political* and *ideological* 'regulatory' practices as Moran *et al.* (1996) do. Another use of the notion 'real regulation' is meant to conceptualize regulation as a contestable social practice (see Pritchard 1996). In this case it mainly serves to indicate a certain degree of concreteness and to emphasize the empirical dimension. There are, however, other ways to solve this matter of research methodology. Research always moves between the abstract and the concrete and it is quite feasible, methodologically, to study 'actually existing' regulation as processes constituted through social practices in particular historical and geographical contexts (Painter and Goodwin 1995, pp. 350–351).

In terms of their theoretical background, the differences between analyses of regulation and governance partially coincide with the contrast – and potential complementarity – , distinguished by Lowe *et al.* (1994), between the political economy tradition and the sociological tradition of institutional analysis. It was research on corporatism and the related concepts of policy communities and networks in the analysis of agricultural policy making in liberal-democratic states, which constituted the backbone of governance studies in agriculture (Keeler 1987; Cox *et al.* 1986; Just 1994; Heinze 1981, 1992; Mormont and van Doninck 1992; Frouws and Hoetjes 1992; Smith 1990). As most postwar governments in these states were strongly committed to agricultural support, they had to resolve the problem of how to intervene extensively but indirectly in a sector made up of myriad small producers under diverse conditions. To that end, leading agricultural interest organizations were treated as partners to ensure the responsive formulation and sensitive implementation of agricultural policies. The corresponding flow of information between producers and the state, to a large extent mediated by farmers' representatives and

intermediary organizations, obviously contained the regulatory imperatives of agricultural modernization and productivism (Koning 1986).

Corporatist steering certainly stimulated expansionist entrepreneurship of primary producers (Benvenuti 1975). However, governance of agriculture also aimed at social welfare, 'parity' of agricultural incomes and rural employment. The flow of information was two-way, moreover, always expressing farmers' preferences concerning their living and working conditions, professional identity and autonomy of farming, however filtered and mediated they might be. Agrarian corporatism generated relatively closed policy communities (Smith 1990).

These corporatist arrangements in agriculture were broken during the 1980s by growing external pressures emerging from structural overproduction spilling over into budgetary problems, and from the increasing political concern with agri-environmental pollution. Agrarian corporatism, with its exclusive political access to producer groups and its focus on production and distribution issues, was prized open to be supplemented by the politics of collective consumption concerned with a pleasant environment, amenities, human health, animal welfare and drinking water quality. This reorientation of agricultural policies resulted in an enormous growth in the number of rules concerning the process of primary production. Indirect guidance through market policies and price support gave way to direct steering to make the mass of heterogeneous agricultural holdings farm differently and produce less, while at the same time assuring certain income levels. In this era of neo-liberalism and 'deregulation,' agriculture is thus subjected to increasing governance, be it through governmental authorities or through forms of 'self-regulation.' The growing pluri-formity of governance is conducive to the elaboration of governance typologies, which represent a methodological advance on the 'classical' comparative studies of sectoral and national 'corporatisms' (Lehmbruch 1996).

The rise in governance involves a multiplication of norms, guidelines and messages impinging on farming practices, concerning their sustainability, compassion for nature, expediency to scenic beauty, recreational attractiveness and social acceptability. Classical and undisputed government objectives with respect to agriculture, such as protecting farmers' incomes, guaranteeing food supplies and regulating consumer prices, have been supplemented or even supplanted by additional collective purposes. This change brought about a repoliticization of the *agrarian question* as the use of the land is more severely contested than ever before. Now that the insulating political protection of agrarian corporatism has largely disappeared, the *social contract* of farmers with society is being reconsidered. For an understanding of the legitimacy of governance in agriculture it is essential to analyse how the different social actors participating in this contract contribute to the (partial) redefinition of both farming as a profession and rural space. The concluding section addresses these and other

research implications for rural sociology emerging from the changing modes of regulation and governance in agriculture.

Conclusion: Redefining the Research Agenda of Rural Sociology

The economic, political and socio-cultural relationships between the primary agricultural sector and 'society' (related sectors of the economy, non-agricultural rural dwellers and interest groups, political parties, government) should be made explicit objects of systematic inquiry, rather than serving mainly as a frame of reference. The consequence of this shift of social scientific focus would be a broadening of the domain of rural sociological research.

Interests, practices and ideas of non-agricultural social actors concerning farming, food production, landscape, nature and rural amenity should be focused upon *sui generis*, and not only as 'background' variables to explain farmers' responses. The object of rural sociological research thus includes the way society deals with its natural resources in the country-side, studying the interests, notions and political developments involved. A vital step in this research approach is to document the complex forma-tion of 'new' social relations in the various categories of countryside (under varying degrees of socio-economic pressure, see Driessen *et al.* 1995), 'whether their driving dynamic lies in rural production or con-sumption or both' (Miller 1996, p. 111).

The quality of the environment and ecological systems has evolved into a self-evident criterion in social and political debates on the use of 'rural' areas for agriculture, nature conservation, leisure, infrastructure, resi-dences, business complexes or drinking water supply. Rural areas, repre-senting the 'green lung' of highly urbanized societies, are the most obvious regions to administer in a sustainable way. The environment in this sense has become the vocabulary of 'the socio-political reconceptual-ization of the rural' (Mormont 1996, p. 173). It might even be supposed that it is primarily due to the environmental question that the rural has been put at the political and scientific agendas (*le retour du rural par l'environnement*, Jollivet 1997), not only in the Netherlands, but also in Belgium (Mormont 1997), Britain (Buller 1997) and Germany (Bruckmeier 1997).

The broadening of rural sociological research perspectives can avert the marginalization of the discipline that is sometimes feared (Miller 1995, 1996) or proclaimed (Grignon and Weber 1992). More provocatively put, we thus can prevent that 'registering the narratives of farmers' (van der Ploeg 1993), documenting the existing diversity in agriculture, turns into the swan song of rural sociology, disappearing with those very farmers who are transforming into rural entrepreneurs, food processors and retailers, ecological producers or agro-industrial managers.

Amendment to the research agenda for rural sociology meant here is threefold. First, the programme for an *economic sociology* of agriculture, already advocated by Benvenuti in 1985 (Benvenuti and Mommaas 1985), still awaits elaboration. The hypotheses then advanced concerning the 'technological administrative task environment' (TATE) of farming have either been disregarded as too monolithic, or accepted unquestioningly as a frame of reference. In both cases, the TATE hypotheses have not been taken up as they were intended, that is as a research programme into the social relations of agricultural production. Change in the economic organization of agriculture implies changing roles for the economic actors involved, and also entails change in the meaning and sense of farm labour, 'produced' through the interlocking strategies and intentionalities of these actors (food manufacturers, input suppliers, farmers, retail corporations, finance and assurance companies) and the administrative rules that define the modalities of 'responsible,' 'good,' 'valuable,' 'sustainable' agricultural practice. It is through the economic sociology of agriculture – including the sociology of farm labour – in the first place that social regulation theory may contribute to rural sociological analyses.

Second, the *political sociology* of agriculture needs further development. The institutional analysis of agrarian neo-corporatism (Frouws 1994) and public administration (Bekke *et al*. 1994; Hoetjes 1993; Termeer 1993), studies of agricultural interest intermediation (Frouws and Hoetjes 1992; Ettema and Frouws 1993; Ettema *et al*. 1993; Hees 1995; Frouws 1996), analyses of responses to government intervention (Frouws *et al*. 1996; de Bruin 1997), and accounts of various initiatives towards self regulation in agriculture (Hees *et al*. 1995; Horlings 1996), have accomplished the initial development of this domain of governance studies. However, these studies have generally been characterized by an agricultural or rural bias. The primary focus was the strategies of farmers, agricultural interest organizations and government instances most closely involved, in finding political, administrative and institutional responses to the demands of society on agriculture and the countryside. The nature and the content of these demands, their coming into being, the notions, interests, power relations and policy networks mixed up with these societal demands, remained however, largely unexplored. The recent study by Michael Winter of rural politics in Britain makes a promising start with this kind of 'contextualization' (Winter 1996).

The study of *local governance*, moreover, still is an underdeveloped field in rural sociology. Sociological investigations of the social interests, representations and power configurations related to rural planning and local agri-environmental politics have been few. Notable exceptions are the growing interest in the local land development process in Britain (see Marsden *et al*. 1993), and studies of 'region-oriented' or 'region-specific' policies in the Netherlands (see van Tatenhove 1993, 1996; Glasbergen *et al*. 1993). The relevance of local governance studies clearly ensues from

the growing importance of 'consumer interests' in rural areas, leading to increasing interference by local authorities and regional or local associations. It also is at the local level that interlocutors are to be found for the *subsidiarity* of the European Union, 'still looking for its partners and its rules of the game' (Mormont 1996, p. 176). Villages, municipalities or sub-regional entities become players in socio-political or socio-economic games revolving around the valorization of their potentialities and their cultural, social and amenity-based heritage (idem, p. 172). Local actors are crucial participants in the current debate on the use of the heavily contested rural space in the Netherlands, already ominously dubbed the civil war of planning (Hofland 1996). The politico-sociologically inspired research agenda should address such matters as the 'politics of place' (Marsden *et al.* 1993, p. 26), the social construction of the 'will of the (local) people' (Offe 1996, p. 92), ideologies and images concerning the countryside (Driessen *et al.* 1995; Frouws 1997), and the institutional mechanisms involved in social coordination and 'steering' (van Tatenhove and van den Aarsen 1996).

The third avenue of inquiry to insert into rural sociological research is bound up with the interrelatedness of the agrarian and the environmental questions as referred to earlier, making it desirable to include – or to reintegrate as some would have it (see Buttel 1996) – the perspective of *environmental sociology* into rural sociological analysis. Lowe and Buttel are the main rural sociologists to have initiated such a synthetic approach (Lowe 1992; see also Clark and Lowe 1992; Lowe and Ward 1996; and Buttel 1992, 1996). Ecological sustainability has come to equal the relevance of economic and social durability in politics with regard to agriculture and the countryside. Agriculture in the Netherlands is being submitted to a permanent process of environmental auditing. Environmental sociological analysis is therefore an essential key with which to explore the relationships between society, agriculture and rural areas. It will add to the indispensable understanding of the social definition of agri-environmental issues and the social determination of the risks modern agriculture is supposed to carry with it with respect to the quality and safety of drinking water and food. Other issues yet to be addressed largely by the environmental sociological perspective include the appliance of the 'general' principles of environmental politics to the specificities of the agricultural sector, and the 'reconstruction' of agricultural practice according to ecological criteria (implying norms of transparency, the application of ecological-science principles to farming, concepts of 'natural systems' and notions of moral behaviour).

The environmental sociological analysis in fact transverses the fields of the economic and the political sociology of agriculture alike, as the handling of natural resources represents an essential aspect of both the ecological modernization of the agro-industry (Mol 1995), and the environmental reorientation of the socio-political governance of agriculture. The interre-

lations between rural and environmental sociology are dealt with more thoroughly in the chapter by Frouws and Mol in this volume.

The broadening and deepening of rural sociology's research agenda, to do justice to the changing parameters of social regulation and governance in agriculture, should not merely add three more partial representations of reality to existing ones. The drawing upon the analytical achievements of economic, political and environmental sociology is meant, instead, to contribute to a 'grand theory' of rural change and restructuring that relates global trends to local changes, permits a synthesis of analyses of micro- and macro-processes, and draws the study of rural areas and issues into the mainstream of social science.

5 Towards Responsibility. On Development Administrators' Fantasies and Field-Level Workers' Anxieties[1]

Pieter de Vries

This chapter is concerned with the multiple and contradictory effects of state development programmes. Special reference is made to the implementation of an Integrated Rural Development Programme in the Atlantic zone of Costa Rica. It is argued that development intervention entails the production, transformation and appropriation of particular models of intervention, by which state functionaries conceive of their role as representatives of the state and as agents of development. The view is adopted that, rather than taking the rhetorics of planned development at face value, we have to study in detail how bureaucratic actors deploy discourses of intervention in social situations in which differing interests, views and commitments are at stake. In so doing, the various ways in which government officials devise and deploy views about farmers as lazy and unreliable, in short labelling them undeserving, will be analysed and presented. It is also argued that labelling is the result of the need of state officials to deal with complex situations arising out of the contradictory character of state intervention.[2]

In developing the argument, reference is made to recent works which are highly critical of the role of the state in development programmes, highlighting the 'hidden' agendas of state bureaucrats and the instrumental role of state intervention in establishing effective modes of social control. However, while agreeing with the critical thrust of such works, this chapter criticises their implicit assumption that bureaucratic activity is underpinned by a specific logic of state penetration or social control. By adopting an actor-oriented approach, the analysis centres on how bureaucratic actors hold onto ideologies of intervention in order to deal with the conflictive and contradictory character of state intervention. It is argued that such ideologies are not grand mental schemes or manifestations of false consciousness, but rather loose sets of beliefs and practices geared to resolving very practical problems in very mundane administrative contexts. This dismissal of 'externalist' explanations is important since it enables us to tackle the issue of responsibility for the deleterious effects that state intervention often has for large groups of beneficiaries.

The Critique of Development Intervention

The practice and discourse of planned development intervention has recently been the subject of a thorough demythologization in the fields of development sociology and administration. Thus Long and van der Ploeg (1989) argue that the discourse of 'development' conceals a number of interested practices by administrators and academics which have little to do with the theories they put forward. In their view, planned intervention should best be viewed as an ongoing process of social construction in which bureaucrats, beneficiaries and third parties are involved. Although highly critical of the administrative models by means of which development programmes and projects are prepared and evaluated, they retain a belief in the capacity of social science to improve the practice of development intervention. Thus, in the conclusion of their article they argue for new kinds of impact studies which take into account the contrasting – and often conflicting – interests of the different actors involved.[3]

Authors such as Apthorpe (1986), Schaffer (1984, 1986) and Wood (1986) are highly critical of the role of development intervention in upholding old and new modes of political hegemony, and they draw upon post-structuralist (and, in the case of Wood, perhaps also on Habermasian) insights in their concern for how policy languages, techno-administrative rationalities and administrative access systems are shaped by alliances between bureaucratic systems and scientific knowledge. They argue that development intervention is accompanied by forms of labelling which stigmatize people – as 'poor,' 'resourceless' and 'dependent' – and hence reduce their capacity to engage in local forms of organization. In their view, the administrative project model mainly serves to legitimize state intervention while concealing the interests of the state in imposing a bureaucratic order. Thus, bestowal of an identity as 'clients' on entire categories of people obscures the 'hidden agendas' of planned state intervention. This is apparent when individuals are forced as 'clients' to adopt the discourse of bureaucrats in order to express their needs. The science of development administration, then, cannot be viewed as external to the problem of 'development' but is itself constitutive of it. It has indeed been argued that it has a significant function in depoliticizing the relationship between people and the state.[4]

Others have gone further in their application of poststructuralist themes to development thinking by conceptualizing the power of the development bureaucracy in terms of techniques of subjection and 'normalization,' by which poor people are transformed into state-subjects and eventually transmuted into docile bodies, or passive agents (Escobar 1992; Ferguson 1990). Such a perspective is, I think, highly suggestive since it teaches us to be suspicious about development discourse, with its tendency to make invisible what are in fact ways of deploying power invisible. However, my view is that the claims of poststructuralist theories are formulated at such

a general level that they become an obstacle to detailed analysis of complex social relations between different sets of actors. Here I shall discuss critically one example (Ferguson 1990) of such work.

Ferguson, in his study of a World-Bank funded Integrated Rural Development Programme in Lesotho, sets out to demonstrate that deployment of current development discourse, produces a particular representation of the 'development problematic,' is produced which has nothing to do with the 'reality' of Lesotho, and even blatantly contradicts mainstream academic discourse. Yet, as he argues, this simplified understanding of the 'development problematic' is not accidental since it underpins actual practices of intervention, as in the case of the IRD Programme he studied. Such projects, he argues, have distinctive 'instrument-effects' in practice, namely the expansion of state power and the depoliticization of planned intervention.

Ferguson borrows the notion of 'instrument-effect' from Foucault's discussion of prison reform to account for the paradox that development failures are so readily replicated.[5] An 'instrument-effect,' as he defines it, is the *unintended, yet strategically coherent effect* of planned intervention which comes about through the deployment of what he calls 'the development apparatus.' He concludes that it is not accidental that planned intervention so often leads to failure. Indeed, failure is a logical concomitant of planned state intervention, which he graphically depicts as an 'anti-politics machine.'[6]

Despite its conceptual innovativeness, Ferguson's perspective has, in my view, serious limitations since it presents us with a basically linear model of state intervention It will be argued below that the uncritical adoption of poststructuralist views in which state intervention is conceptualized in a quasi-conspiratorial way, as the source of all evil, is an analytical strategy which adds little to our understanding of the contingencies of localized struggles between bureaucrats and beneficiaries. Another point of criticism is that it obscures a number of issues pertaining to the issue of responsibility, and thus of agency.

I elaborate my critique by concentrating on an Integrated Rural Development Programme – the 034 Programme – as a case study of a colonization and banana plantation area in the Atlantic Zone of Costa Rica. The gist of the argument is that, in addition to conceptualizing intervention in terms of sets of (discursive) practices of governability geared to converting rural people into bureaucratic subjects (the poststructuralist argument), it is important to study what intervention comes to mean to different actors in particular power contexts. Labelling devices, it is argued, reveal their limitations when officials encounter villagers in non-bureaucratic settings.This, in short, implies developing a notion of intervention as ideology.

The 034 Programme

The Failure of the 034 Programme

The 034 IRD Programme was designed and funded by the United States Agency for International Development, USAID. It was intended to be a response by the Costa Rican state to a highly disturbing set of events: the invasion by militant leftist peasant unions of a number of large cattle ranches – often belonging to the banana plantations – at a time when the revolutionary aspirations of radical political sectors were at their height, owing to the seizure of state power by the Sandinistas in the neighbouring country of Nicaragua. These invasions, which took place in 1978, were the last in a series of sometimes very explosive land occupations during the '70s. Bananas being Costa Rica's major export commodity, it is not surprising that these peasant mobilizations were seen as a threat to the economic and political interests of the state, the (foreign) plantation owners and the US state department.

The major goal of the 034 Programme was 'to develop lower cost, more effective mechanisms for establishing productive, profitable, and environmentally sound *campesino* farms on former *latifundios*.' Its major components were 1) the establishment of three model settlements on the 'invaded' haciendas, and 2) the strengthening of overall administration of the Land Development Institute, IDA, through the introduction of a computerized data management system and a cadastre. Here I concentrate on the first and largest component, the establishment of 'model settlements,' and particularly on the oldest and most conflictive settlement, Neguev. It must be stressed, however, that the establishment of settlements was part of a wider, unspoken, goal of rationalizing the workings of the Land Development Agency by eradicating clientelistic relations – and thus politics – from its functioning.

To cut a long story short, the 034 Programme was a failure. By the time it finished in 1987, most settlers/beneficiaries were deeply in debt while many others had been compelled to sell their plots. Moreover, only a small minority of the farmers could live off their farm while the large majority depended on off-farm work (for a detailed description of the programme see de Vries 1997). The outcome of the programme was not only disastrous for the farmers, but also left an imprint on the way in which administrators and extensionists conceived of the 'agrarian question' in the Atlantic Zone, and especially on their views regarding the capacity of settlers to become entrepreneurial farmers. Furthermore, the implementation of the 034 Programme went together with a series of bureaucratic practices by which settlers were labelled recalcitrant, uncooperative and opportunistic, if not outright lazy and parasitic.

The way in which the 034 IRD Programme was executed could certainly be analyzed in terms of Ferguson's notion of 'instrument-effect,' as

being geared to 1) the expansion of the state-bureaucracy in order to ensure a degree of control over the settler population, and 2) the depoliticization of the relationship between peasants and the state with a view to debilitating the role of independent peasant unions. Programme failure in this view was simply a financial cost of bringing about these 'instrument effects.'

Ferguson's analysis is, as argued, powerful for its clarity and conciseness. It also has strong political and policy implications. Interestingly, it coincides with the analysis of radical settlers and peasant leaders who argued that the 034 Programme had been intended, from its inception, to create a pool of poor and indebted settlers in order to force them to sell the land to city speculators. In this way the social basis of independent peasant organisations would be disarticulated, while the power of the state bureaucracy was strengthened.

Although there is no doubt that the 034 Programme was directed to depoliticizing the relationship between peasants and the state, and that it led to an enhancement of the power of the bureaucracy, it is in my view simplistic to argue that these were 'unconscious' effects. The issue is not only theoretical but has also political importance since it touches on the attribution of responsibility concerning the failure of the 034 Programme. To begin with, there is, in my view, something wrong in assigning responsibility to some impersonal 'development apparatus.' Blaming some abstract 'anti-politics machine' for the marginalization of the settlers absolves a number of actors who might, rather consciously indeed, have been in favour of such an outcome, and others who did not care very much about its consequences. The policymakers, planners and front-line workers involved in the design and execution of the programme were not naive since they were aware of the political character of intervention, and the necessity to control a 'difficult' social situation. Failure did not occur beyond the powers of human agency. As Schaffer (1984) argues, there is nothing inevitable in policy. Things could have happened differently.

Second, blaming the 'anti-politics machine' for the failures of state intervention unnecessarily reduces the options of peasant organisations to two possible alternatives: that of engaging in political action against the state by forming organisations ready to confront it; and that of submitting to it. This, in fact, is not the political strategy that radical peasant unions in the Atlantic zone follow, as they are always ready to negotiate with some state agencies while attacking others. The radicalism of peasant unions had its limits, and for good reasons. State intervention through the 034 Programme had been massive and highly repressive and the peasant union which organized the invasion, UPAGRA (the union of Small Producers of the Atlantic zone), came to the conclusion that confronting the state head-on was too painful. As a result UPAGRA changed its strategy and decided to spend much effort on establishing connections with nation-

al and international NGOs as well as with some state agencies. There was some room for manoeuvre left, indeed.

Concerning the issue of attribution of responsibility for the failure of the 034 Programme, it must be noted that other explanations were offered, both by the settlers and the bureaucracy. Some settlers, who had been able to establish a preferential relationship with the state, were ready to share the responsibility with the bureaucrats dismissing the radicals' arguments as communist propaganda. In defense of the bureaucrats, the following arguments could be put forward. Technical errors were made in the process of implementation; there was a lack of training of the extensionists; there was little knowledge of agronomic and economic conditions; the programme managers were pressed to spend the funds in a short period of time; there was major opposition to the Programme from conservative sections at the Land Development Agency. However, these contingencies do not absolve those who were in charge, for the simple reason that even when they knew that the programme was heading for disaster they did not take steps to stop it. In the case of the policymakers not only were their reputations at stake, since they also saw the Programme as a stepping stone in their professional careers. The 034 Programme, in becoming an arena of struggle between different institutional factions, acquired an importance that was far removed from the objects of development, the settlers. Furthermore, those responsible for the programme did not want to partake in failure and, indeed, those in charge never admitted that it was a failure. As evidence for this viewpoint, they adduced that it had had positive 'learning' effects. It is not surprising, then, that critical evaluations concerning credit recovery and production levels were concealed or even destroyed.

The issue of attribution of responsibility is, I think, important. Not because it might change the behaviour of bureaucrats, since I think that they had strong reasons for acting as they did, but because it might help us to identify a series of beliefs and practices underpinning state intervention, which might have very deleterious effects for peasants. Thus, instead of viewing bureaucratic actors as determined by external forces, I am intent on inquiring how they shape, adapt and transform particular administrative models with a view to making them fit their own socio-institutional activities and commitments. I call such a set of beliefs and practices an ideology of intervention.

But before continuing I want to add a caveat. Ideology is not used here in the sense of 'false consciousness.' Yet it is conceptualized in terms of an illusion which makes it possible for us to accomplish a multitude of mundane activities. In other words, 'knowing' that our actions do not correspond with our ideals does not necessarily stop us from continuing to engage in the same kinds of social practices. We may come to the conclusion that our views are false, but it is much more difficult to discover what is false in our practices, since this requires that we should

recognize that these are structured by ideology. Or, as Eagleton (1991) drawing upon Zizek (1989) puts it,

'One traditional form of ideology critique assumes that social practices are real, but that the beliefs used to justify them are false or illusory. But this opposition . . . can be reversed. For if ideology is illusion, then it is an illusion which structures our social practices; and to this extent 'falsity' lies on the side of what we do, not necessarily of what we say. Ideology, in other words, is not just a matter of what I think about a situation; it is somehow inscribed in that situation itself' (p. 40).

This was exactly the paradox of the large majority of policymakers, administrators and front-line workers involved in the 034 Programme. Although they knew that their actions contradicted a number of views which were dear to them, such as that of improving the lot of poor peasants, they continued drawing upon the same ideological beliefs and practices by which a great diversity of farmers with different backgrounds, aspirations and commitments were labelled traditional, dependent and incompetent. Intervention was not ideological because the bureaucrats were unable to distinguish between the truth and the falsity of the discourses they deployed, but rather because it structured their intervention practices. Next, I want to analyse the ideological fantasy which structured these practices.

The remainder of the chapter is organized as follows. First, the administrative context wherein practices of labelling are sustained is examined. Second, the genealogy of a particular model of the ideal farmer – as a client who has the right to state services and goods in return for his commitment to, and active participation in his transformation into an entrepreneurial farmer – is presented. It is shown that this model stems from Programme planners' attempts to depoliticize institution-client relations. Finally, it is argued that the model is transformed by front-line workers into a protective device for dealing with unruly beneficiaries.

The Local and Administrative Context

Neguev, before becoming a settlement, was a *hacienda* devoted mainly to beef cattle breeding and fattening, and was of the largest ranches in the Atlantic zone. The hacienda was invaded in 1978, and a year later UPAGRA and the IDA reached an agreement to purchase the *hacienda*. In 1980, when the 034 Programme started, the IDA's presence became widespread all over the settlement. The IDA's intervention was massive and, as argued, was directed towards converting the settlement into a demonstration project.

The Neguev administrative office is located in the Neguev settlement which comprises a total area of 5,340 ha Later, in 1987, it became a

regional office covering five settlements with a total area of 12,724 ha and 1,294 settlers.

Activities in the administrative office basically consisted in the following: 1) promotion of agricultural development via the supply of credit and the provision of extension, and 2) achievement of effective control in the settlement through the regulation of access to land. This, it must be noted, was a generally accepted, though not openly admitted objective of the 034 Programme. It was never explicitly stated in IDA or 034 Programme documents. However the IDA's and USAID policy makers made no secret of the fact that the Programme was also directed to the normalization of social relations between squatters and the state in conflictive areas such as Neguev.

For reasons which I cannot explain here but which had much to do with the contradictions of state intervention at the local level, the administrative process in the Neguev office was characterized by little work motivation.[7] Work activities were little structured and front-line workers were allowed considerable freedom to carry out their tasks as they liked. This resulted in a situation characterized by few work incentives and no reward system. Accordingly, one recurrent field of dissatisfaction in the Neguev office concerned what was perceived as 'the arbitrary character of policy.' As one extensionist put it,

> 'at Neguev there is no stimulus. If you get promoted it is because of your political connections, not because of your capabilities. Successes at the technical level are always claimed by the chief. For example, when presentations have to be made about the goals achieved by the administrative office it is always the chief who does it. There is anyway no acknowledgement of your role.'

Yet this provided the context within which a large number of important decisions were taken, including who would and who would not receive credit and how problems over land-adjudication would be resolved. The way such decisions were taken appears to have been quite arbitrary since there were no clear criteria, for example, for allocating credit. What is interesting, then, is that issues of service delivery were dealt with within an administrative context of generalized distrust. It is not surprising that front-line workers showed little inclination to reflect on the reasons why the 034 Programme resulted in increased poverty among the settler population. In fact, when discussing problems of individual settlers, they drew upon an impersonal and bureaucratic language by which the settlers were transformed in administrative cases. In this way front-line workers were insulated from the contradictory and contingent character of state intervention.

Indeed, it struck me when talking with front-line workers that reference was always made to a particular, very negative, set of views of the farmer: he was seen as an individual who was not commercially minded, not

entrepreneurial, and incapable of running a farm. Indeed, in spite of their divergences and dissatisfactions, and the feeling that their work was not much valued, they all shared this way of talking about the beneficiary when dealing with everyday service delivery issues, in what was basically a form of labelling.

Next, I contend that labelling was not a local invention, but that it was a local adaptation of the USAID planners' model of the 'client' by front-line workers and administrators. To that end I shall describe how the model of the 'client' was fabricated by USAID planners as a result of their problematization of prevailing institution–client relations in the IDA, and how it was appropriated by bureaucrats at regional and local levels.

The Genealogy of the Model of the 'Client'

As already argued, one of the two components of the 034 Programme was the strengthening of the operational capacity of the IDA. The USAID advisor to the 034 Programme argued that political clientelism was a fundamental problem in Costa Rica since it generated patterns of transactions between politicians who used state institutions in order to obtain electoral support from groups of beneficiaries. In his view, the political use of institutional resources thwarted their effective utilization for development purposes. This emphasis on institutional efficiency and administrative reform, it must be noted, was coupled with the view by USAID planners that some mode of social control in rural areas, directed against organisations such as UPAGRA, was required.

In a context of increasing land scarcity and budgetary constraints in the IDA, the agrarian problematic came increasingly to be perceived, under the influence of USAID, as a problem of effective institutional intervention, in which administrative reform was viewed as central to a 'modern' approach to land reform. This entailed that the solution to the problem of landlessness and rural unrest was conceived by the USAID programme designers in terms of the 'depoliticization' of institutional developmental activities, rather than in terms of the need to accommodate oppositional political groupings within the mainstream political system.

It is not surprising, then, that the agrarian problem in Costa Rica was conceptualized in 034 Programme documents in terms of the effectivity of particular types of institution-client relations. Thus it is argued that in the past IDA-client relations were permeated by 'paternalist and clientelist practices.' We see, in effect, that the farmer is referred to as a 'client' in the project document of the 034 Programme which, prior to the 034 Programme, had not been the case. We also see that the term 'client' appears in different forms: when a classification of the clientele is made, a description of the 'total client pool' is given, or when reference is made to particular types of institution–client relationships. Paternalism is men-

tioned as a danger which has to be combatted through the 'rational choice of a clientele.'[8]

The problem, then, was conceptualized by USAID planners as that of how to establish a type of institution–client relationship which would eschew the customary patterns of political clientelism while maintaining a certain capacity to exert social control on particular populations, such as politically motivated squatters. The answer was to institute a mode of institution–client relations in which the beneficiary was viewed as an individual with certain rights, but also with distinctive obligations towards the state. In contrast to the practice of political clientelism, these rights and obligations did not entail a political transaction, but a commitment to a particular pattern of smallholder 'development.' Thus central to this model of the 'client' was the conferment of a distinctive institutional, as against a political, significance on the relationship between the institution and the beneficiary. The client was treated as an individual who had the right to state services and goods in return for his commitment to, and active participation in his own transformation into an entrepreneurial farmer.

The essence of the model of the 'client' was that s/he established a relationship with the IDA as an individual, not as a member of a larger group. This was a very different policy for the IDA from the previous one of engaging in negotiations with organised pressure groups. Hence, by allocating resources such as credit to individuals only, and refusing to engage in negotiations with groups, the power of organisations such as UPAGRA was undermined.

As for the 034 IRD Programme, the individualization of the relationship between the IDA and its clients was reflected in the following sets of activities.

1 A beneficiary selection system geared to choosing potentially entrepreneurial farmers.
2 A system of guided extension by which the beneficiary received credit on an individual basis.
3 A focus on individual farm development plans.

In effect, through these individualization practices all kinds of negotiations with independent peasant organizations could be avoided.

In the remainder of the chapter, I argue that this model of the 'client' worked out in a rather special way during the process of implementation. The model was endowed with a different, 'local' meaning by front-line workers and administrators, with the result that it became an element in a local ideology of intervention. The view of the 'undeserving client' was, in effect, employed by the Settlement Head in order to force settlers to comply with the IDA policy. For front-line workers, the view of the 'undeserving client' became a tool for explaining the contradictions of state intervention as well as a 'labelling device.' The transformed view

of the '(undeserving) client,' then, became an instrument of social control at the local level.

The Ten Commandments of the 'Real Entrepreneurial Farmer'

The model of the client reflected the various ways in which front line workers differentiated between good and bad farmers. The independent, entrepreneurial yeoman of the central plateau came to funcion in practice as a standard measure. Deviations from this model were seen as pathological and originating in a deleterious way of life. Thus, it became common to explain the problems of the 034 Programme in the settlement by arguing that alcoholism, lack of commitment and indiscipline were major problems among settlers. Extensive conversations with front-line workers about how an entrepreneurial farmer should be, enabled me to discern the following rules:[9]

- He should live on the farm, and not engage in off-farm work outside Neguev.
- He should not grow traditional crops such as maize.
- He should show the devotion and commitment of a 'real farmer.'
- He should show respect for IDA officials.
- He should follow the advice of the extension staff.
- He should be imaginative and able to improvise.
- He should not be an ex-plantation worker.
- He should not drink.
- He should not participate in activities organised by leftist groups.
- He should not be an evangelical (because evangelicals spend too much time in church).

These ten 'commandments,' to be followed in order to conform to front-line workers' views of what a 'real' entrepreneurial farmer was, in fact composed a powerful labelling device. Given the failure of agricultural development programmes in Neguev, and the fact that no more than 10 percent of the farmers were able to derive a sufficient income from their farms without engaging in off-farm work on some banana plantation or other farm, it was quite impossible for farmers to conform to the model. Moreover, the only three settler families in Neguev who did conform to this model according to the front-line workers, and who could thus be considered real entrepreneurial farmers, had never received IDA credit or extension.[10] On the other hand, those settlers who were viewed as the best in Neguev did not conform to this model either; of the three, one was an ex-plantation worker, one an occasional alcoholic, and the third a Jehovah's Witness.

Ironically, the integrated rural development programme had, instead of creating wealthy smallholders, created a pool of poor, indebted and

dependent clients. Settlers, then, were labelled, virtually by definition, non-entrepreneurial or traditional farmers; and in this way they got the blame for the failure of the 034 Programme. But labelling also had a more practical function as it became a device for excluding 'troublesome' settlers or *problemáticos*. Indeed, labelling a settler as a *problemático* signified that it would be difficult for him to gain access to credit.

The Model of the Client Transformed into a Labelling Device

The question to be addressed now is 'how is this mode of labelling related to the model of the 'client' which was introduced by USAID'? This latter model, which was employed by top level officials and programme designers, conceived of the settler/beneficiary as a client who had to be provided with the necessary conditions – land, credit and an appropriate technological package – to become an entrepreneurial farmer. As argued below, this model became transformed at the level of implementation into a labelling device through which the client was viewed as undeserving. Thus, the model of the 'client,' which was originally meant to depoliticize institution–client relations, became an instrument in the hands of the local administrators for fighting 'undeserving clients.' And since, as we have argued, most farmers were seen in one way or another as troublesome – since they did not conform to the ten commandments of the ideal farmer – the view of the 'undeserving client,' became a central element within the local official's discourse and imagery.

   As we noted, the 034 Programme had two main goals: that of providing settlers with the necessary conditions for becoming commercially minded and that of overcoming what was perceived as a politically delicate situation in Neguev. Indeed, it can be argued that one of the 034 Programme's major contradiction lay in the fact that it was designed to confront a very conflictive situation in the Atlantic zone, by combining a policy of careful beneficiary selection with an approach geared to transforming settlers into entrepreneurial farmers, in order to fight the influence of leftist organisations such as UPAGRA. At the same time, a large number of UPAGRA sympathisers passed the beneficiary selection system. This produced a major problem for front-line administrators, which can be formulated as follows: 'how could unruly clients, such as UPAGRA followers, be transformed into entrepreneurial farmers'? We will see next that the Settlement Head viewed this as a contradiction in terms.

The Model of the Client as Transformed by the Settlement Head

The Settlement Head had a distinctive theory of how a peasant should look. This conception of the beneficiary was not unique to him, though,

and I later learned that it was quite characteristic for many administrators in the area. He once confided to me:

> 'If you want to tell a real farmer from someone who is not, look straight into his eyes. A farmer will lower his sight, and become shy, for he is not accustomed to dealing with people from the city; they are humble and speak with respect. A banana worker is something else, direct in his conduct, insolent. That is the result of the plantation culture and the ideology of the unions, which always stresses the negative aspects of everything.'

According to the Settlement Head, union leaders on the plantations would tell the plantation workers that they were poor because others were rich, that they were stupid because others were intelligent, and that they were ugly because others were beautiful. In his view plantation workers developed an inferiority complex which expressed itself through envy. And he warned me:

> 'If you meet them they will try to mislead you and tell you stories about their extreme poverty. But the truth is that they are ex-banana workers, people who cannot manage a farm autonomously. They are accustomed to receiving everything from the boss, a cheque every month, a house with water and electricity. They dress well and drink and do terrible things to their wives and children. It is really awful. In return they work a few hours, from 6 to 11 in the morning. They have a lot of free time. They become conceited, rebellious, have no respect for authority. Instead a real farmer works the entire day. And if necessary also at night. If the cow is sick he will not sleep at all.'

This 'cultural problem' had played a central role in the 034 Programme, according to the Settlement Head. He commented that the squatters had received beautiful schools and meeting centres, excellent roads, even a housing programme had been initiated. Yet they had never shown any gratitude. Hence he complained that 'unfortunately that is the human material we have to work with in the settlements.' At the same time, he had a clear theory, with a strong social Darwinist bent, of a settlement's growth and development in terms of stages,. Once he explained to me:

> 'You see in Neguev, like in so many other settlements, that after the political situation has been normalized, a mechanism of natural selection sets in. Settlers who are not real farmers are forced to sell out because they accumulate debts. Although they receive credit and extension, many of them, maybe a majority, do not have the ability to develop the enterprise. So they are forced to sell out. Others take their place, often people with more resources. They are obliged to take on the debts their predecessors incurred. So they are better motivated to develop the farm. In fact they have a more entrepreneurial outlook. The result is that after some years a majority of the original population will have disappeared.

Only then will the conditions for achieving the objectives of the institu-
tion be fulfilled. This process is irreversible, it is a law of nature. The
only thing we can do is to alleviate the lot of those who suffer most.'

According to the Settlement Head, the problem was that peasant unions
such as UPAGRA targeted particular type of individual who, due to his
plantation mentality, was unable to become an entrepreneurial farmer and
therefore prone to enter into clientelistic relationships with radical
organisations and eventually with the IDA. The question of 'how to
transform unruly clients into model beneficiaries' was viewed by him as
a contradiction in terms. Such 'human material' was not fit to become
entrepreneurial farmers. In fact, we see in the case of the Settlement Head
that he sustained a genetic conception of the farmer which, it must be
emphasized, was not shared by front-line workers.

The upshot, then, was that for the Settlement Head the model of the
'client' was transformed into a core element in an ideology of interven-
tion which was meant to confront 'unruly clients.' In effect, the model
of the 'client' was transformed by front-line administrators from a device
for depolitizicing institution–client relations into an essentially political
instrument for marginalizing 'troublesome' beneficiaries.

Next, I want to show that the view of the 'undeserving client' was
more than a cognitive construct intended to marginalize radical settlers.
My argument is that this view was part of an ideology of intervention
which also included practices of labelling. It is expedient now to provide
a definition of what I understand by an ideology of intervention.

An ideology of intervention can be seen as an action-oriented set of
beliefs associated with specific practices of social control (labelling,
legitimization), rather than as a coherent normative framework. Ideologies
are pragmatic insofar as they serve to shape an understanding of the
world: that is useful within particular social contexts, in the case of front-
line workers, that of implementation. An ideology of intervention is not
so much false in that it obscures the complex reality of the farmer, but is
rather an interested simplification of the conflictive nature of state inter-
vention. That becomes clear to the front-line worker him/herself when
confronted with the contradictions of implementation, compelling him/her
to develop an operational style for dealing with conflicting social and
moral commitments. The force of the ideology of intervention, then, is that
it is able to produce useful interpretations for the ongoing problems of
implementation, as well as practical ways to handle them, without being
able to mask the power relations underlying such problems.

Next I discuss the workings of this ideology of intervention as manifest
in the front-line workers' dealings with beneficiaries' within the adminis-
trative domain.

The Model of the 'Client' as Transformed by the Técnicos

The 'client' model played an important 'protective,' role with respect to radical leftist settlers. It should be noted that interaction between officials and radical settlers was rare and, when it did take place, was for the most part in the fields. Indeed, the *técnicos* or extensionists in charge of agricultural development programmes had evident difficulties in coming to terms with the peasant union UPAGRA, and displayed a curious ambiguity toward them.

The *técnicos* would stress that they respected and even admired the role of UPAGRA as a peasant union in its efforts to defend farmers' interests, and that they found it totally legitimate and even necessary that such an organization existed, although they recognized that the IDA's interests were not necessarily those of the settlers. At the same time, they argued that they did not agree with UPAGRA's means and intransigent position, indeed, they were highly critical of their mode of operation. As one extensionist put it:

> 'UPAGRA has its own ways of dealing with *técnicos*. When you visit them they receive you in a very polite manner, and by telling you a lot about themselves they try to get information out of you. They are aware that you might write a bad report on them. However, they do not seem to mind. When they attend meetings they are surprisingly friendly, while seeking ways to critizice all the institute's ideas. They hope that the official will lose his temper in order to create a conflict, so that they can transform the character of the meeting into one of a tribunal against the institute.'

They were remarkably negative when referring to individual activists. Thus they would account for the 'negative attitudes' of the UPAGRA leaders by referring to personality failures, like drinking habits and smoking marijuana. This view of UPAGRA leaders and sympathizers as irresponsible settlers was general among the *técnicos*. Settlers who indulged in collective actions like marches and blockades could not be good farmers: they were almost never at their farms, and thus there was little sense in visiting them. UPAGRA, in their view, channelled the feelings of frustration and dissatisfaction of settlers arising from their personal inabilities. The extensionists, then, would select unproblematic settlers and not UPAGRA followers.

It must be stressed that this fear of UPAGRA on the part of most *técnicos* was not so much a political stance as a result of an attempt to keep delicate political issues out of their direct relationship with settlers. The *técnicos* were perfectly able to consider general explanations of settlers' life conditions in terms of a wider political framework. Yet, these explanations were of little use within the implementation context. Although officials would, outside the administrative domain, readily recognize the

general validity of 'radical' claims, such views were experienced as annoying within the day-to-day context of service delivery.

Summary and Conclusions

It has been shown how a model of the 'client' – or the model of the farmer as a client who has to be serviced and provided with a package in order to encourage him to become an entrepreneurial farmer – was used by different groups of actors in differing ways. For USAID it was an element in a strategy of depolitizicing the functioning of the IDA and eradicating client and paternalistic politics. The model of the 'client' was used by front-line administrators for combating the influence of leftist organisations such as UPAGRA. And finally, when the programme proved to be a disaster, this view of the *'undeserving* client' served as a 'rationalization' for failure, and a way of shifting the blame onto the farmer.

The model of the client, then, changes from being a core element of an attempt by planners to change the current pattern of client–institution relations into an element of an intervention ideology serving to conceal the contradictory and conflictive character of state intervention, which was reflected in major errors made in design and implementation, and the impossibility of denying the political character of state intervention in a plantation area such as the Atlantic zone of Costa Rica, where resources such as land and capital are monopolized by the banana transnationals and state intervention serves as an instrument for social control.

Thus the failure of the 034 Programme was ascribed to the fact that the settlers were not entrepreneurial farmers. In this way, it was unnecessary to inquire into the major errors in programme planning, implementation and technology transfer.

It has also been argued that the administrative process consisted of an intrinsically fragmented and conflictive reality in which a host of petty struggles took place. Yet it is important to stress that it is precisely within this administrative reality, and in response to the daily problems and conflicts in which front-line workers are engaged, that an intervention ideology is sustained.

It is important to emphasize that the ideology of intervention was not imposed from the top upon the thinking of the front-line workers and administrators responsible for programme implementation. It did, however, bring together different worlds of experience and forms of socio-political commitment: of front-line workers, administrators and institutional managers. In effect, it provided various actors operating within institutional worlds a common language for talking about and assessing intervention problems.

An ideology of intervention, then, is not false in the sense that it clouds the thinking of the actors drawing upon it. It derives its power from its

usefulness for accomplishing particular bureaucratic tasks, even when the actors themselves are constantly confronted with the fact that they are simplifications, if not caricatures, of a more complex reality.[11]

It has also been argued that the ideology of intervention in Neguev encompassed a particular view of the '(undeserving) client,' and practices of labelling. The world of the 'clients,' amongst other things, was kept apart from that of administrative life, through the intervention ideology. This was because settlers were seen as clients who had to be serviced, and not as individuals who often shared the same local preoccupations as the officials. But the ideology of intervention was also instrumental in achieving quite practical effects, such as protecting front-line workers from 'troublesome' settlers. It also served as a guide for selecting cooperative beneficiaries. We can, then, identify five different ways in which the ideology of intervention worked:

1　In achieving a neat separation between the administrative and the field domains. In this way front-line workers were insulated from the conflicts in the 'field.'
2　In concealing the contradictions of state intervention by providing easy explanations for current and ongoing problems concerning programme implementation.
3　As a way of rationalizing programme failure. Thus it was argued that the 034 Programme failed because of the lack of an entrepreneurial mentality on the part of the settlers. Major factors in the programme failure, such as errors during implementation and the use of credit as an instrument of social control, were concealed.
4　As a way of protecting front-line workers from 'troublesome' settlers, such as *Upagristas* who were out to politicize what the front-line workers viewed as 'technical issues.'
5　As a way of selecting 'cooperative beneficiaries.'

A final conclusion is that conceptualizing state activity in terms of bureaucratic logic may obscure the issue of responsibility. This chapter has pinpointed the ideological illusions by which bureaucratic actors deceive themselves when carrying out their duties which, though contradicting their views, are instrumental for carrying out very mundane tasks. Paying attention to these ideological fantasies points to the fact that development intervention is, by definition, a contested domain of activity. In other words, it is an ongoing process of social construction.

Notes

1　This is a slightly revised version of a paper published in *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, number 36, 1996, Special Issue.
2　In other articles (de Vries 1992b, 1995) emphasis is placed on the strategies farmers develop in order to delegitimize the discourses of state intervention.

3   A number of recent articles argue that everyday encounters between bureaucrats and villagers play a significant role in shaping popular representations and notions of corruption, and of people's rights and obligations (Gupta 1995; Orlove 1991; for a theoretical rationale for such an approach from an actor-oriented perspective, see Long 1989).

4   Thus Schaffer (1986) argues that scarcities are constructed through discourses of development along with social practices of administration, and that they lead to a specific mode of social control and legitimacy.

5   As Ferguson puts it, Foucault (1979) argues that the instrument-effect of the prison, as a correctional institution, lies in the fact that it does not lead to the rehabilitation of transgressors but, on the contrary, to the constitution of delinquency as a mode of subjectivity disconnected from its social origins. Prison reform, then, appears to be an element within a set of techniques of exercising social control, a part of a strategy for 'taming 'popular illegalities' and transforming the political fact of illegality into the quasi-medical one of pathological 'delinquency'' (p. 19).

6   Thus he argues, '. . . because 'failed' development projects can so successfully help to accomplish important tasks behind the backs of the most sincere participants, it does become less mysterious why 'failed' development projects should end up being replicated again and again. It is perhaps reasonable to suggest that it may even be because development projects turn out to have such uses, even if they are in some sense unforeseen, that they continue to attract so much interest and support' (p. 256).

7   For lack of space I cannot go into the institutional struggles which had a marked effect on the administrative process in Neguev and which led to a sharp division among the frontline workers along ethnic, residential and functional lines. Elsewhere (de Vries 1997) I argue that these divisions were an expression of the contradictions of state intervention at the level of implementation.

8   This 'project paper' was published in 1980 as an unclassified document. It provides a description and appraisal of the project as well as detailed project analyses (see project paper 'Agrarian Settlement and Productivity in the Atlantic zone of Costa Rica).

9   A female in the front-line workers' view was not capable of running a farm. Women who did not have grown-up sons who could take care of the farm had difficulties obtaining title to land.

10 I do not want to go into the analysis of why the programme ended a failure. It suffices to mention that to a large extent the soils in Neguev were not suited for agriculture. In addition major errors were made concerning extension and technology transfer.

11 As Zizek (1989) puts it, 'the illusion of [ideology] is not on the side of knowledge, it is already on the side of reality itself, of what the people are doing. What they do not know is that their social reality itself, their activity, is guided by an illusion, by a fetishistic inversion. What they overlook, what they misrecognize, is not the reality but the illusion which is structuring their reality, their real social activity. They know very well how things really are, but still they are doing it as if they did not know' (p. 32). 'The fundamental level of ideology, [then], is not of an illusion masking the real state of things but that of an (unconscious) fantasy structuring our social reality itself' (p. 33). In fact, what I have designated the ideology of intervention functions as Zizek's ideological fantasy.

6 Modern and Endogenous Development. Civilization and Empowerment

Ad Nooij

Introduction

Regional development is a concept with a wide variety of connotations. For historians it goes without saying that development refers to a process in time. Historians therefore tend to make comparisons in time when analyzing the development of a specific region. Sociologists and economists will not deny that regional development has a time perspective, but usually that is not their main focus in research. They tend to define regional development from the perspective of unequal distribution. Regional disparity in the distribution of resources and life chances provokes the vivid interest not only of economists and sociologists, but also of policy makers. Whereas historians are inclined to take a distanced and 'academic' view towards processes of regional development, economists and sociologists can hardly forgo to participate in political debates as well. That is a main reason why the concept of regional development lacks a clear definition. The intertwinement of academic with political debates gives rise to very divergent conceptualizations. A second reason is that regional development programmes are highly dependent on actual structural conditions. In sparsely populated areas regional development may have primarily a demographic meaning, whereas in a densely populated country like the Netherlands the competition between agricultural, environmental, and recreational organizations is prominent.

A simple proof of the great variety in connotations of regional development is the huge and most diverse list of publications one gets when doing a simple literature search with 'regional development' or 'rural development' as catchwords. Under this heading one may find studies about personal characteristics of regional entrepreneurs, about promotion of regional products, about touristic attractions, about the networking of regional authorities and interest groups, and about modernizing, socializing and/or ecologizing agriculture. There is not only a wide variety in topics, but in disciplines and perspectives as well.

In this contribution I will try to present and compare two conceptions of regional development with paradigmatic features: Modern Regional Development, and Endogenous Rural Development. In both models, we

assert, regional development is conceived as a normative category with equity as a common notion. Modern Regional Development is part of a civilization process, whereas Endogenous Rural Development is focused rather on empowerment. Sociological research is framed in concepts that reflect the moral load of the developmental model concerned.

Regional Development as an Analytical and as a Normative Concept

From a broad historical perspective, the rise and fall of states is strongly connected with rising and declining prosperity of regions. A growing concentration and political consolidation of power may find its origin in a regional abundance of resources. Tributes and taxation are instrumental to a further concentration of wealth and power, whereas territorial expansion of the political system may result in a further concentration of resources in the original region. In this way, political action may contribute to regional disparities in welfare. A well-known example from Dutch history is the blocking of Antwerpen harbour by the rebellious Dutch republic in 1585. This blockade strongly favoured the prosperity of Amsterdam, and only came to an end during the Napoleontic occupation, more than three hundred years later. The way policy may affect regional development has been an object of research, not only by historians but by sociologists and economists as well. Notably, the effect of colonialism and economic dependency on development potentials has received much attention.

Not only political actions but also the development of new technologies may affect the prosperity of regions, both in a positive and a negative sense. In the late medieval period new technologies made it possible to replace the traditional trading route from Italy to Flanders by an overseas connection, making Brugge a main port of Western Europe. With the rise of modernity, technological progress became an even more significant resource for economic development and therefore as a factor of regional prosperity. The regional disparities in the process of industrialization during the nineteenth century strongly affected regional prosperity or marginality. In the last decades a radical transition took place from the so-called heavy industry based on iron and charcoal to the new industrial processes in which information technology plays a major role. And again, radical shifts in regional welfare are the result.

The development of new technologies is not a coincidence, but a response to institutional frictions. Modernity has as an implication that nature is not accepted just as fate. But occasionally technology fails. The French silk industry, which made a considerable contribution to the prosperity of regions in southern France, collapsed at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. Despite intensive scientific efforts, in which Louis Pasteur was personally involved, it

appeared impossible to combat the disease in the plants that served as host for the silk-worm. Technological advance in the artificial silk industry completed the process of decline. Huge, old, empty factory buildings in small Southern French villages are the silent witnesses to former regional prosperity.

Historical processes of growth and decline in regional prosperity, whether caused by political, technological or natural factors, always resulted in migration by often large numbers of people (Castles and Miller 1993). Migration has been generally accepted as a strategy to survive when local and regional resources failed. It had a crucial function in the process of industrialization, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and its concomitant regional shifts. Migration has been significant not only at an inter-regional level, but also on an international scale. The misery of the European countryside made a considerable contribution to the growth of the American population.

The general attitude towards migration has changed, however, in particular with regard to long-distance migration. There is a growing refusal in our society to accept migration as a proper answer to regional poverty. In the first half of the twentieth century, immigration countries tried to curb international migration by means of quota. This policy was adopted in order to reserve the modest but growing benefits of the welfare state for its own, established citizens. However, racial considerations became a more prominent motive to the extent that migration became part of a globalization process. This change of attitude towards migration can be described as a growing egoistic solidarity. But another type of more altruistic solidarity plays a role as well, albeit a very modest one. The growing involvement of state bureaucracies with migration produced a more detailed classification of migrants. Apart from permanent settlers, the classical type of migrants, a distinction is made between labour or economic migrants, family members, refugees, and of course, illegal migrants. Admission criteria are attuned to this classification, and indicate that the reluctance to admit migrants may be mitigated by economic, but also by humanitarian motives. It is an indication of at least some formal solidarity at the level of national as well as international political institutions.

Declining possibilities for migration at a global level make regional development a more urgent problem. Regional development has an acknowledged place on national and international political agenda's. Regional disparities in prosperity and employment are also no longer accepted as historical fate, but in various European states in the second half of the twentieth century, defined as imbalances to be restored by political action. Regional development is becoming a normative concept based on the notion of *equity*. The legitimate application of this notion of equity is part of a process in which the state is attributed a growing responsibility for the welfare of its citizens. This process not only made equity an integral element of regional development, but also enlarged its

scope. Equity, or the rejection of regional disparity, is no longer restricted to employment, but also comprises access to the benefits of the welfare-state.

The growing significance of equity as notion behind policies of regional development marks a change in the relations between state and region. The formation of the European state during the last centuries went along with enduring conflicts with regional populations which, from the state's perspective, were described as regional minorities. Suppression of regional identity was one of distinguishing marks of the modern, centralized state. Equity-based regional policies, as they came into being in the second half on the 20th century, are clearly different from earlier suppression policies. But also regional development based on the notion of equity can be experienced and even rejected by regional actors as an exogenous policy, with too much interference by external authorities in internal regional affairs.

As we shall see later, this notion of equity is supplemented by other notions, dependent on the particular model of regional or rural development involved.

Structuration of a Paradigm

Discussions in communication science go far beyond the simple notion that new ideas originate and are further developed and researched in the academic world, before application in the 'real' world is feasible (Leeuwis and Arkesteyn 1991; Leeuwis 1993). Actors in this 'real' world develop their own demand for knowledge, challenging academic researchers. But usually the relationship between theory and action is more complex.

Academic researchers and policy makers are not living in separate worlds. They take part in common discourses about actual shortcomings and future desirabilities in the social system. These discourses may give rise to the formulation of new ideas and the framing of new concepts. The process of structuration implies that these concepts get a place in a structure of related concepts, a conceptual network. When this conceptual network is the outcome of a structuration process in which both academics and practioners participate, then it is obvious that these concepts are not neutral descriptive ones, but also have a moral connotation. The new concepts reflect and affect both the actual and the desired world view. The conceptual network then becomes a socio-political paradigm.

Once this paradigm has got some support, the structuration process tends to a further consolidation. Empirical evidence about the paradigm is growing, as a result of the fact that research proposals that make use of the paradigm's key-concepts are more likely to get a favourable response when applying for funds. Empirical evidence contributes to the paradigm's scientific legitimation. Political legitimation is likewise growing as

politicians make use of these concepts in defining their position and the actions they want to be taken. The whole process of structuration is much broader than just a coining of new concepts. The gradual formation of a new body of knowledge, new openings and career opportunities for academics and politicians in their respective systems, the formulation of new policies, all these aspects are elements in the process of structuration, the formation of a new socio-political paradigm. In the end the paradigm really 'works.' The politician has proved to be sensitive to new ideas, the academic researcher has shown concern with pressing social problems. It looks like a game without loosers. However, the positive effects of a good partnership between scientific and political actors should not blind us for the possible loss in critical stance by the professional, academic researcher.

In the following sections I will describe two well elaborated paradigms of regional development: Modern Regional Development (MRD) and Endogenous Rural Development (ERD). One should however not conclude that these are the only models of regional or rural development that have become operative during the last decennia. Concrete regional policies may not only result from compromises between the two paradigms mentioned, but are also strongly affected by specific regional features, such as population density, patterns of employment and settlement, relative prosperity, the structure of agriculture (peasantry, capitalistic farming, landed gentry), structure of property rights in land, tourism potential, and environmental pressure. For a classification with ideal type features see Flynn and Lowe (1993). A description of European regional policies with more emphasis on variety is offered by Bryden and McHenry (1997).

Modern Regional Development

All European countries initiated agricultural policies in the course of the twentieth century. Most of the funds were used for price support, but after the second world war the amelioration of the agricultural structure grew in significance. Both the urgency and the success of these structural policies were demonstrated by regional statistics. The region, however, was only used as a statistical category; agricultural policies were not aimed at strengthening the integration of agriculture in the regional economy or the regional social fabric. One of the main issues in these policies, at least in the Netherlands, was the detraditionalization of agriculture, meaning a depreciation of existing regional styles of farming. The agro-industrial complex was the intended integrative network, rather than the region. This is a major reason to designate these policies as exogenous.

Although these agricultural policies as such were not much disputed in the Netherlands, awareness of their negative effects on regional prosperity, and in particular on employment, grew during the 1950s. Mechanization and scale enlargement resulted in a reduction in farm labour, with the

expectation of even greater reduction. With industrial activities in the western part of the country rapidly expanding in the same period, both push and pull factors for migration became operative. Social research on migration at the time did not, however, demonstrate much concern about its possible negative effects on local communities. Migration was seen – and silently welcomed – as a functional adaptive process. Migration research was not focused on community effects, but rather on the relative willingness of people to migrate. A second topic in migration research was the way migrants adapted to their new world (In 't Veld-Langeveld 1957; *Bedreigd Bestaan* 1960; Bruyne and Radema 1960). Reading these studies now, one cannot avoid concluding that sociological research of those days shared the general optimistic mood that characterized the modernization process. Modernization was not only conceived as unevitable, but also desirable. Unlike a neutral concept like social change, development was seen as a further step in a process of civilization.

The moral justification of regional development in the Netherlands was clearly not based on a negative evaluation of migration. Remoteness is only comparative in a small country. Furthermore, the phenomenon of dwindling small villages, although noticed, did not play a role in public debate. Concentration of people and services in larger villages was seen as an efficient and progressive solution for a declining rural population. Concern about regional development was based on other considerations. One was the general idea of equity: regions with declining employment were also supposed to benefit of the blessings of modernization.

The policy comprised much more than just creating jobs by investment subsidies for industrial plants. Subsidies and facilities were also related to schools, libraries, medical care, extension for housewives. This policy was a modernization project. For academic researchers, policy makers, workers in the field (practioners) and local people addressed, this policy was a project to give people from remote and 'backward' regions access to the benefits of the modern welfare state. Regional populations were given the opportunity to become full-fledged citizens of the modern state. Modern Regional Development (MRD) was in essence a civilizing project.

As civilizing project it stood in a long tradition. As states in Europe developed into nation-states, middle class values became increasingly prominent in society's normative structure. Educational programmes were initiated on the basis of these values, both by the state and by private organizations, to 'emancipate' people in backward positions. Trade unions have played a significant role in transmitting middle class values to their members during the 20th century and farmers' unions have had a similar civilizing function. MRD in the 1950s was a last manifestation of this civilizing project. In the same way that working-class people and farmers developed from members of distinct classes into varieties of a broad category of citizenry, so too were regions to develop into geographical areas within the broad nation state.

The regional development policy of the 1950s should be typified as an exogenous model, not because resources were mainly coming from outside, but because of its implicit assumption that regionality was an irrelevant parameter.

There was also a second motivation in the Dutch version of MRD. Regional development was seen as an element in the modernization of Dutch society, but regional development was also seen as a means to prevent or at least to slow down the further concentration of economic development in the western part of the country, resulting in the possible growth of a metropolitan area. The rise of a metropolis, a typical product of modernization, was rejected, which shows that modernization ideals bear the imprint of national political culture.

A systematic analysis of the transition to modernity is presented in a report from 1960 about the sociological aspects of regional development (van Doorn 1960). This research was initiated by the Ministry of Social Welfare, indicating that regional development was much more broadly defined than simply the creation of additional jobs.

For the purposes of the present contribution, it is significant that the report mentions the declining significance of the region as a frame for social integration, as a first characteristic of the modernization process (idem, p. 70). The report even speaks of 'liberation': strong regional identification means social isolation, with a negative effect on socio-economic development, to be overcome by educational policies, welfare work, and social support. The decline of traditional frames of integration provided opportunities for further development; the regional social structure required adaptation to the standards of a modern industrial society. Value-structures of the regional population were judged according to their functionality for new developments. More precisely, the civilization process of rural people aimed at detradionalization, mental urbanization and identification with the nation state rather than with the region.

Sociological vocabulary together with empirical research were paired with a political programme. Together they constituted the paradigm of MRD.

Hofstee, the founding father of rural sociology in the Netherlands, published an article in 1962 with a strong plea in favour of MRD. Some key concepts in this publication are the inevitability of current developments, uncertainty and tension among rural people, urban society as a reference group, disappearance of small villages, traditional rural values and practices, and change as the only unchanging factor in the future.

Hofstee was an academic sociologist with a strong commitment to the then current developments in society, as is clear from many of his publications. He certainly would have admitted the political relevance of the concepts he used in analyzing historical trends. He would, however, never have conceded that sociology was ideology in disguise. Nevertheless, looking back on history, it can hardly be denied that the MRD model not

only described actual and supposedly inevitable, but also desired, developments. Nor can it be denied that the ideological connotations of the vocabulary used in this approach had a strong impact on designing empirical research and on rural sociology in general.

Endogenous Rural Development

MRD gradually lost its significance in the Netherlands during the 1970s, not because the underlying ideas were considered obsolete, but because of the growing physical mobility of the population. The direction of migration reversed. Many city-dwellers preferred family houses in smaller towns. The countryside gained, however, not only a new residential function: recreation and nature conservation also put their claims. Rural areas in a densely populated country such as the Netherlands became an arena of fiercely competing interests. Regional policy from the 1970s onward is primarily focused on conciliating these conflicting interests.

MRD has been critizised on other grounds in less densely populated countries elsewhere in Europe. Policies appeared to be unsuccessful in many cases, and even counterproductive in others. Ongoing modernization of agriculture, an essential element of MRD, was feared to have a devastating effect on existing economic and social structures. The implant of new industries by outside firms was welcomed, but the unforeseen closure of these same industries during economic depression contributed to the regional population's feelings of dependency. A new model for regional development gradually emerged: Endogenous Rural Development (van der Ploeg and Long 1994; van der Ploeg and van Dijk 1995). This model has presently attained a popularity similar to MRD in previous times. Endogenous Rural Development (ERD) has likewise become a paradigm; social scientists, policy makers and practioners make use of an identical vocabulary in describing phenomena and in their evaluation of policies. Differences in vocabulary are, by the way, not always matched by differences in actual policies (Slee 1994). Lowe *et al.* (1995), in an excellent comparison of exogenous and endogenous models of development, also show that the contrast is far from absolute.

MRD was typified as an exogenous development strategy, exactly because regionality was considered an irrelevant parameter; development meant adaptation. A first characteristic of ERD is that regional specificity has regained its relevance, notwithstanding the fact that the adjective 'regional' has been replaced by 'rural.' This substitution is not coincidental; the notion of 'rurality,' as an idealized set of values (Starosta 1994), plays a significant role in ERD. Regional typicality, in the vocabulary of ERD, is quite strikingly claimed as a manifestation not of its urban but of its rural characteristics. The meaning of the concept 'rural' is therefore stretched in such a way as to include small towns. In contrast to

the high esteem in which mental urbanization was held in MRD, the rural is considered a basic element of the region in ERD. The rural domain in this model is not a place forgotten in the process of urbanization and civilization, but defined as a treasury of culture and a cradle for cultural renewal. This perspective is reflected in actual policies of ERD, such as the key issue of the reconstruction of the regional heritage. In a narrow definition of regional heritage, this concept is related to historical buildings and landscapes; in a broader definition, it comprises all kinds of specific regional products, such as traditional food, handicrafts, trades and buildings. Reconstruction of the regional heritage means that these objects and actions are restored, reconstructed or reinvented in such a way that they can serve as symbols of identification for local inhabitants, as well as sign of recognition for visiting tourists. At first sight these two functions seem to be identical, as indeed they sometimes are. But a touristic reconstruction may well have an alienating effect on local actors when the touristic system invades their daily lifeworld.

Rurality is not a new invention of ERD. It stands in a long tradition of resistance by regional populations – occasionally with a self-definition of ethnic or linguistic groups – against the centralizing and homologizing policies of modern states with their urban elites, irrespective whether adaptation and loss of identity was brought about by brute suppression or by gentle civilization. Rurality received an additional impetus with the rise of the European Union which, together with the globalization of market-economy, is a next step in the process of centralization. Rurality was certainly not absent during the high-days of MRD. Arguments derived from rurality played a role in public discussions, rather a weak one in the Netherlands, but more vigourous in, for example, Austria, Germany and Norway. What really changed, however, was its relative acceptance. 'Rurality' in ERD is a highly esteemed, common perspective of social scientists, policy makers and practioners, whereas in MRD it was rejected as populism.

Compared with MRD, a significant reappraisal of values can be observed in ERD: regional identification instead of, or at least alongside, identification with the state and with supernational political structures; ruralization instead of mental urbanization; preservering and restoring the cultural heritage instead of detraditionalization.

There are other differences as well. When dealing with MRD, we observed that emancipation of local people was conceived as civilizing process. In ERD, emancipation is explicitly defined in terms of power. People should have control over their own lives. Empowerment of under-privileged groups is a second essential aspect of the underlying ideology of ERD. While civilization and empowerment are not antithetic concepts, there is a clear difference between them. Civilization may strengthen a subject's position, but that position is part of the social structure of those who have initiated the civilizing process. Empowerment aims at giving

subjects a more powerful position without their own social structure being overruled.

The distinction between civilization and empowerment also becomes manifest in the proclaimed attitude towards nature. Civilization means adaptation, or even control; the attitude towards nature in MRD was therefore essentially anthropocentric. ERD as a project of empowerment of underprivileged categories, both human and natural, also takes another stance toward nature. In the same way that rural people are considered underprivileged in the process of centralization and homologization, and women are considered underprivileged in gender relations, so nature is considered underprivileged as a result of anthropocentric practices of control and domestication.

Differences between the two paradigms also pertain to policy concepts and research methodology. From the distinction between civilization and empowerment it follows that, as far as the state is involved in regional development, a participatory steering concept often referred to as a bottom-up approach, is strongly favoured in ERD (van Tatenhove 1996; van Tatenhove and van Aarsen 1996). Concrete policy goals are not autonomously formulated by a central government, but are the result of a negotiation process in which local actors are strongly represented.

As to research methodology, an unconcealed preference for the actor approach can be observed (Long 1992). This methodology is promising in that it gives due recognition to the individual actor's room for manoeuvre. This perspective coincides with the notion of empowerment; the methodological device fits well with the theoretical perspective. But exactly this connection with the notion of empowerment may tempt a researcher to overestimate the individual's room for manoeuvre, and to underestimate the structural constraints (Munters 1996). The risk of ideological bias is even greater with a participatory research methodology (Engel 1995). A common characteristic of a participatory research methodology with other qualitative methods, like participant observation, is that these methods focus on more intimate knowledge of actors' everyday life perspectives. But a participatory research methodology has an additional feature; the actor's problem definition is taken as the point of departure, and researcher and actor together look for possible solutions. The methodology indeed recommends itself to practioners, however an academic researcher should at least combine this approach with a more distanced position.

Since the MRD-phase in the 1950s, regional policy in the Netherlands, has been mainly characterized by the competing interests of agriculture, housing, recreation, and nature conservation in an already rather densely populated countryside. ERD did not really evolve because of population pressure or the absence of 'remoteness.' Nevertheless some of the ideological aspects of ERD gained a firm footing in both rural sociology and rural policy, more particularly a postproductivist orientation in agriculture

with due concern for ecological side-effects. Rurality, in the sense of an idealized set of values, also plays a significant role. The rural area is considered primarily as the farmers' domain, with recreation and particularly nature conservation as enlargements of farmers' occupational role. This enlargement has even been designated as a specific form of professionalization (Horlings 1996), which is rather at odds with current definitions of professionalization. A specific political perspective on the rural arena with its competing interests is implied by embracing this version of ERD.

Conclusion and Discussion

Social scientists and politicians, or practioners in general, do not live in separate worlds. As has been stated in an earlier section, their mutual interdependence becomes manifest in the structuration of new paradigms. Changing idioms in social science are to some extent the result of the maturation process of science itself. So one could hypothesize that EDR represents a more valid and accurate description of regional processes and policies than could be achieved with MRD, due to the growth of our knowledge. Changing idioms, however, are related not only to the process of maturing science, but are also to be explained by the changing social context of science.

Social conditions for regional development did indeed change in many respects during the last decennia. Technology affected the structures of agriculture, mobility and transport, employment, and information. These kind of changes can easily be grasped through statistics. However, not only were objective social conditions changing, but also actors' perspectives on these changing conditions. That indeed is why social sciences are contextual sciences. The changing social context, both in its objective and perceptive dimension, is a highly relevant parameter in sociological analysis.

Changing perspectives on changing conditions are most important for understanding changes in regional development policies. The gradual acceptance of MRD in the 1950s was indeed a change of perspective. Instead of simply subsidizing investments by private entrepreneurs, a new vision of the rural future was shaped. Its vocabulary was coined by sociologists, but easily copied and elaborated by social workers and policy makers. The new future that was constructed for rural areas, was considered not only inevitable, but also desirable. At the same time, it was seen as the government's task to accommodate the processes of adaptation by procuring information, education, social guidance and community organization. The cooperation between social scientists and practioners, and their use of a common vocabulary, made MRD a real paradigm.

This cooperation faded away during the 1970s. Rural sociologists developed a different idiom in which farmers and rural people were no longer depicted as targets of civilization projects, but rather as victims in class conflict. Policy makers were reluctant to accept this new idiom. Disagreement between social scientists and policy makers contributed to a self-definition of *critical science* adopted by many rural sociologists.

During the 1980s ERD gradually became structured as a new paradigm, with the same gradual construction of a common vocabulary by social scientists and practioners. The declaration published after the Cork-conference of October 1996, where EC-politicians and rural scientists met, is a clear manifestation of this new cooperation (Plumb 1996).

What are the time perspectives for this cooperation? How long will it last? A historical perspective suggests a relativistic stance through the awareness that conditions may change. A historical perspective makes us more aware that both MRD and ERD are social constructs. This does not mean that we are dealing with ephemeral or fictitious phenomena. In the rather detached language of postmodernism, the social constructivist approach may function as a methodological device to play down the virtual significance of socio-historical phenomena. Social constructs are the real products of real actors who actively participate in real processes of structuration. But at the same time constructs are transient in nature.

It is not beyond the realms of the imagination that the present close cooperation between social scientists and policy makers within the paradigmatic framework of ERD will gradually fade away, as happened with MRD. There is no harm in social scientists having an eye for this possibility. One could imagine that in some cases government will derive arguments from the participatory steering concept to refrain from taking political responsibility. It is not inconceivable that the present public support for regional development will be replaced by policies focusing on urban renewal in the next decade. Possible changes in policy makers' attitudes, should not, however, prompt social scientists to look hastily for a new paradigm. Similarly, social scientists should not shrink from making use of normative definitions of regional development. However, under the present circumstances, it would be commendable for analytical aspects of regional development to be given due attention as well. In addition to continuous evaluation of successes and failures in regional development projects which are necessary under ever-changing political and economic conditions, systematic analysis of these evaluation studies is also required.

Pertinent analytical questions include the extent to which regional development should be focused on rural aspects. Should the present ruralist bias be rebalanced by paying more attention to urban-rural connections? To what is extent is the ever-growing range of region specific products in balance with a realistic estimation of the demand? Which qualities of region specific products contribute to successful sales?

Similar questions could be formulated with respect to the regions' supply of touristic attractions. To what extent are rurality, regionality and tradition used to construct a new rural environment that does not meet the requirements of the local population, being at odds with their own development perspectives?

The most difficult question goes to the heart of ERD: to what extent and under which circumstances is the maxim that each and every region should have or obtain the resources for sustainable prosperity, too optimistic?

It is extremely important, as far as the prospects of ERD are concerned, that it retains the basic elements of current ideas about modernity in its philosophy. ERD will soon loose its political impact if a ruralist bias were to serve as a conservative or even an anti-modernising factor. That is not to say, however, that ruralist values should be abandoned.

There are, in this respect, lessons to be learned from the history of environmental debates during the last twenty years. Environmental problems were defined during the 1970s as unintended, negative effects of the dominant industrial mode of production. Therefore environmental concern was structured as a protest against industrialism and acquired features of a demodernization movement. By the 1980s it had become apparent that only by relinquishing this demodernizing orientation, would environmental organizations gain real influence on industrial production processes. Demodernization theory was replaced by a theory of ecological modernization (Mol 1995, 1996; Spaargaren 1997). The notion of sustainability, as a normative concept, is given proper attention in production processes in ecological modernization. Application of advanced technologies is believed to enable industry to meet the conditions of sustainability. Although sustainability is a normative concept, its incorporation in decision-making processes does not detract from the rationality of these processes. Many other normative concepts are incorporated in production processes as well, such as rules about safety, avoiding risks, proper pay, and sickness remuneration. Reflexive modernization has as an implication that social norms become built-in elements of rational production processes.

Similarly, the introduction of normative concepts in regional development does not make the paradigm irrational. Equity, empowerment of local people, concern about the cultural heritage, and alertness for sustainable production methods, all these normative concepts may find a place in the ERD-paradigm without detracting from its rationality.

A number of pitfalls can nevertheless be discerned. One is that the positive evaluation of rurality could turn into a plea for of demodernization. The consequence would be that ERD misses the connection with basic trends which point to a further application of advanced technologies in production and communication processes in our society. Rurality is one of the elements people use in constructing their world view and as such it

cannot be denied. Moreover, rurality can consciously be used by rural people as a resource. Identification with the own, traditional culture may provide a firm basis for entering into a version of modernity that is consistent with local conditions (de Haan 1996). Rurality may also function as an instrumental value, used by recreational entrepreneurs in constructing tourist attractions. In each of these examples, rurality can be more or less objectivized in scientific research. That is different from incorporating rurality as a motivational value in scientific arguments or research itself. The introduction of normative concepts in research can, I repeat, be quite appropriate because it may enlarge the researcher's perspective. Use of normative concepts obtain ideological features when the researcher becomes a true believer, unable to keep a relativist stance. In that case, these normative concepts narrow down the researcher's perspective.

A second pitfall, related to the first, could be the application of participatory research methods that are very vulnerable to ideological bias. Participatory methodology should not be confused with qualitative methods in general. One of the acknowledged risks of a qualitative methodology is that the researcher's identification with the people whose behaviour he is studying, becomes so strong, that any attempt at a more or less objective analysis of research data is frustrated in advance. The researcher is going native, as British anthropologists from colonial times used to say. In a participatory research methodology the researcher is going native by design. The researcher need not necessarily resort to a positivist epistemology to avoid this pitfall. Normative concepts may take their proper place in the theoretical perspective. Moreover, contextuality both in its objective and constructivist aspects, is an essential parameter in sociological research.

7 Discourse Formation in Social Movements. Issues of Collective Action[1]

Dorothea Hilhorst

In 1973, the Philippine government started a project to build a series of hydro-electric dams in the Chico River of the Cordillera, a region inhabited by the so-called indigenous Igorots. There was immediate opposition in those villages where exploration work for the dams started. Villagers tore down the camps of the exploration teams, and sought the help of local priests to write petitions to President Marcos asking him to relocate the dams in another area. This localized protest turned out to be the beginning of a social movement for regional autonomy.

This chapter aims to trace how the social movement that emerged from resistance to the Chico dams acquired its shape. How did it transcend local opposition, and why did it become a movement towards regional autonomy rather than blend into the national movement against the Marcos dictatorship that simultaneously swept over the country?

The discussion will address key issues pertinent to social movement theory. It will focus, in particular, on processes of discourse formation, or 'framing,' in the Cordillera movement. How did a problem that confronted certain villages in the Cordillera come to be defined as a regional, 'indigenous' issue to which a large number of people committed themselves, even though the problem did not affect them directly? In exploring this question, I contend that collective action discourses are not products in the sense of engineered montages. Literally 'un-authorized,' they are knowledge constructions that emerge from negotiation processes involving different groups of actors. As the first part of the chapter shows, this leads to a more dynamic treatment of the distinction that most social movement theory maintains between different categories of actors, such as 'insiders' and 'outsiders,' or 'movement entrepreneurs' and 'participants.'

In the second place, I want to show how discourse formation is inextricably linked to issues of power and control. Action frames are sometimes understood as functional devices. They define an issue in a way that people can identify with, and contain possibilities for action for which people can mobilize. However, if framing processes are understood as negotiated processes, this opens the door to analyzing how the contestation of frames is linked to power struggles. The stakes in struggles

over definitions are not formed by the definitions themselves, but by their implications for issues of leadership, control and representation. Although they may emerge without a specific author, action frames do lend themselves to contests of authorization. The question then is not merely who can enrol most support for a particular definition, but also who 'owns' the history of the social movement. These issues of control played a role throughout the entire history of the Cordillera movement, but became particularly clear when the movement broke into factions in 1986, when it entered negotiations with the new national government of Corazón Aquino over regional autonomy. This will be the focus of the latter part of the chapter.

My conceptualization of discourse formation as negotiated processes fits within a constructivist perspective of social movements. Before discussing the issue of discourse formation, let me first give an overview of strands of social movement theory that have emerged since the 1960s and elaborate on the constructed character of movements.

Social Movements: Theoretical Perspectives

New theories of social movements (and theories of new social movements), began to flourish by the end of the 1960s. The abundant rise of social movements in Europe and the United States, most prominently among students and blacks, did not seem to fit the restricted place they were allotted in prevailing paradigms. Two strands are usually distinguished in theories of social movements that evolved in the 1970s. One strand, associated with the new social movement theories, sought to understand *why* movements rose in the context of postindustrial societies and emphasized their cultural components. The other, referred to as resource mobilization theories, focused on the question of *how* social movements came about, and how obstacles to collective action were overcome, in particular Olson's 'free-rider' problem. The centre of gravity of the new social movement theories was found in Europe, of the resource mobilization theories in the United States.

New Social Movement Theories

New social movement theories were associated with student and later peace, women's and environmental movements in Europe and the US. The new social movements were different from their forerunners, particularly the labour movement. These differences were largely a matter of the movement's constituency (which was based in new middle classes with remarkable participation by women rather, cultural character, loose organizational structure and aversion to traditional party politics, emphasis on lifestyle and values instead of material demands, anti-modernistic stance,

and their unconventional action forms (Alan Scott 1988, pp. 16–19, Klandermans 1988, p. 7). New social movements have mainly been defined in the context of Europe and the US, but the concept has also been applied in some parts of the southern hemisphere, mainly in Latin America. There, social movements, such as urban, women's, indigenous, and peasant movements, have been considered to share many of the above-mentioned characteristics, with the notable exception that their main constituency is found among poor people, not the middle classes, and that their demands are partly material (see, for example, Escobar 1992).

The label of 'newness' attached to recent social movements provoked endless debates about whether one could truly speak of new movements or whether they shared much *in practice* with older movements. The other side of the argument was that 'old' movements, in their initial stages, shared many of the properties of the new ones, until doomed to bureaucratize according to Michels' 'iron law of oligarchy.' Melucci, a one-time pupil of Touraine and one of the first proponents of the 'novelty camp,' pointed out in his later writings that the debate centred on a false problem. According to Melucci, both sides in the debate suffered from the same flaw, namely perceiving social movements as unitary, empirical objects, a point to which I shall return later (Melucci 1988, p. 336).

The novelty claim, apart from being based on the phenomenological characteristics of the movements, found a theoretical base in the 'new historical stage' that societies in the North were supposed to have entered, namely post-industrialism, regulated primarily by high-tech, knowledge-centred processes. The most renowned theorist that situated the 'new' social movements in relation to post-industrialism was Touraine. This Marxist-bred scholar broke away from structural theories by reversing the connection between social structure and social action, and promoting a sociology of action rather than of society. The social system, he proposed, is created by social action, instead of action being the result of some meta-social principle. The goal that Touraine defined for social movements is the control of *historicity*: the set of cultural models a society uses to produce its norms in the domains of knowledge, production and ethics (Touraine 1984, 1995). This notion made Touraine's social movements both a social conflict and a cultural project: 'its goal is always the realization of cultural values as well as the victory over a social adversary' (Touraine 1995, p. 240).

Despite Touraine's overtly anti-structuralist stance, critics have pointed to a certain continuity in his work of exactly those theories he so strongly opposed. He abandoned the central contradiction of capitalism as the driving force of social action, but seemed to put the central social conflict over historicity in its place. He equated social movements with classes, albeit classes for themselves and not in themselves, and asserted that 'there is only one social movement for each class in each type of society' (Touraine 1983, cited in Scott 1990, p. 68). As one critic stated, Touraine,

and other new social movement theorists of the 1970s, including Habermas, 'searched for a substitute for the working class, and a new focus of opposition to society in its totality' (Scott 1990, p. 80).

Resource Mobilization Theories

The other strand of social movement thinking since the 1970s was formed by resource mobilization theories. These originated with Olson, who coined the concept of 'free-rider problem' to point out that people tend not to commit resources to struggles for collective benefits, since they enjoy the fruits of collective action regardless of their individual participation. Olson's position was extensively criticized for relying on an economic model of rational decision making at the individual level. It lacked explanatory power since although it made non-participation understandable, his theory failed to explain why people *do* so often participate in collective action, sometimes at great personal risk. In Olson's line of thinking people's needs and goals were treated as given, it ignored the social processes through which people's motivation becomes shaped (Scott 1990, pp. 109–131). Moreover, the individualistic basis of Olson's decision-making model was discredited when others, including Melucci and Kreisi, showed the importance of social networks within movements as localities for processes of identification and mobilization (Tarrow 1994, p. 21).

Later resource mobilization theories started to address the question that remained unsolved by early exponents of this strand, namely in what circumstances discontent leads to collective action. Discontent does not automatically result in resistance, nor does resistance automatically result in collective action, as has been demonstrated by Scott (1985). One of the themes of resource mobilization theories, then, became the search for the conditions under which collective action actually emerges. The argument was advanced that collective action does not come about in response to deprivation, but in response to changes in political opportunity structures (Tarrow 1994). Another important element in the development of social movements was found in the role of 'sympathetic third parties' (Klandermans 1988, pp. 4–7).

Resource mobilization theories thus moved a long way from Olson's original thesis and became increasingly finely tuned to the volatile practices and dilemmas involved in collective action. On the other hand, this body of theories was still criticized for over-emphasizing the '*how*' of social movements, with a penchant for behaviourism, at the expense of looking at the content and socio-political context of specific social movements (Klandermans 1988; p. 4, Scott 1990, p. 129).

Towards a Constructivist Perspective on Social Movements

The two strands of new social movements and resource mobilization theories, seem to converge in recent literature on social movements. Several contributions to the field explicitly aim to combine the strengths of both (Klandermans 1988; Scott 1990; Escobar 1992). What makes these contributions remarkable, in my view, is not so much the wrapping up of debates by synthesizing approaches, but the way that they mark the advent of a more constructivist perspective on social movements. All of these works evince the constructed character of social movements, to varying degrees. Melucci, however, seems the most consistent in thinking through the implications of this insight.

According to Melucci, many of the earlier debates on social movements treated collective action as a unitary empirical datum, rather than as processes in which actors produce meanings, communicate, negotiate, and make decisions. Once the notion of relatively unitary actors is abandoned, or taken as a product rather than a given, the question of how a 'collective' actor is formed and maintains itself becomes a problem of analysis (Melucci 1988, p. 331). Rather than synthesizing, Melucci distances himself from both new social movement and resource mobilization theories.

> 'The explanation founded on the common structural condition of the actors takes for granted their capacity to perceive, evaluate and decide what they have in common; it ignores, in other words, the very processes that enable the actors to define (or prevent them from defining) the situation as susceptible of common action. On the other hand, individual differences and motivations never suffice to explain how certain individuals come to recognize themselves in and become part of a more or less integrated 'we'.' (Melucci 1988, p. 332)

According to Melucci, actors produce collective action because 'they are able to define themselves and to define their relationship with the environment (other actors, available resources, opportunities and obstacles).' In the world of Melucci, then, identity formation is accorded central importance: any theory of action that includes actors' expectations, (relating the actors to the external world), implies an underlying theory of identity. 'For only if an actor can perceive his consistency and his continuity will he be able to construct his own script of the social reality and compare expectations and realizations' (ibid, p. 340).

This claim calls into question several issues.[2] What, then, is (collective) identity? And, this is where I would disagree with Melucci, is a person's perception of 'his consistency and continuity' indeed a *sine qua non* for his/her decision to participate in collective action? By introducing this condition, does he not re-impose continuity and consistency, via a backdoor, on collective action and social movements?

Identity or Identification?

Identity is considered an important aspect of social movements: through processes of identity formation, the 'we' is supposed to get constructed that engages in collective action. Identity used to be perceived as an innate quality, a stable property possessed by a person. From this position it has recently been launched on a soaring career. As Tilly has summarized it, concepts of public identities have increasingly become relational, cultural, historical, and contingent:

> 'The emerging view is relational in the sense that it locates identities in connections among individuals and groups, rather than in the minds of particular persons or whole populations. It is *cultural* in insisting that social identities rest on shared understandings and their representations. It is *historical* in calling attention to the path dependent accretion of memories, understandings and means of action within particular identities. Finally, it is *contingent* in that it regards each assertion of identity as a strategic interaction liable to failure or misfiring rather than as a straightforward expression of an actor's attributes.' (Tilly 1995, p. 5)

'Indigenousness' is a particular kind of identity. It is a form of ethnic identity in which groups define themselves in relation to other groups. Differences are not only perceived as cultural, and expressed in fields varying from the regulation of interpersonal or intercommunity relations to agricultural practices; the indigenous people are also perceived as being overpowered by these others and deprived of their original rights to resources and governance over a particular area. Since indigenousness is linked to a physical area, its emergence is closely related to the formation processes of the wider nation in which it is situated. The nation state seems not only the natural antagonist of indigenous peoples, but also the entity on which indigenous identity is imposingly or oppositionally bred.

In the case of the Cordillera, Finin has demonstrated that in as much as a 'regional identity' (he carefully avoids references to ethnic or indigenous identity) had come about prior to the Chico Dams and related struggles, this was the product of the administrative grids imposed by the Americans during their colonial rule in the first half of this century. Basing his argument on Anderson (1991), he traces the prospects of an 'imagined community' emerging in the Cordillera to the protective policies that the Americans under Dean Worcester extended to the 'tribes' in an area they demarcated as the Cordillera. The Cordillera gained further 'reality' through amongst other things, the introduction of segregated workforces in the mines, and separate education institutes for Cordillera residents. These processes fostered an occasionally expressed experience of difference with outside areas among Cordillera residents and, even more unlikely at the turn of the century, a sense of commonality within (Finin 1991). This perception, embryonic as it may have been at the time, seems partly to

account for the particular shape the social movement in the Cordillera took when the opposition against the Chico dams started.

However, although certain seeds of an 'indigenous identity' facilitated the particular shape the Cordillera movement took, it cannot account for the discourses that emerged, nor for the broad composition of the movement. The discourse of the movement came to centre on the vital value of land in indigenous culture. However, as will become clear, this cannot be taken as a property of indigenous identity. Everyday practices in the Cordillera showed a range of values accorded to land, varying from an inalienable, sacred expression of life itself to a commodity that could be put up for sale (Prill Brett 1993). The question of how, in the course of the struggle, people started to *identify with* land as synonymous to life then emerges as one of the most important to explain, rather than be treated as a given.

Indigenous identity can also not account for the composition of the movement. As will be elaborated, the movement attracted many advocates who were by no means 'indigenous,' varying from national politicians, a range of anti-dictatorship activists, an organization for national liberation, and international advocates. Indeed, like all movements, this was not a unitary entity. Rather than artificially separating the constituents of the movement from 'third parties,' I think these diverse groups should be included as part of the movement. This further calls into question the idea of identity towards an issue as a condition for participation in a social movement. What the 'advocates' shared was not an indigenous identity, but rather a sense of *identification* with the movement. A great number of people started to make the concerns of this movement of 'others' into their own, at considerable risk to themselves.

Following Norman Long (1997), I think, then, it is more appropriate to speak of processes of *identification* with an issue or movement. Identification, according to Long, 'allows one to consider a wide range of self definitions, some more fixed and continuous, others more fleeting and highly situational. How people make and attribute identification to themselves and others offers a key for understanding cultural and socio-political orientations and commitments.'

Discourse Formation in Social Movements

Collective action and social movements partly depend on how people define a situation and how they assess their possibilities for action. The formation of discourses is therefore a key aspect of social movement theories. In new social movement theories that position social movements in post-industrial societies, there is basically only room for one guiding discourse. If, as Touraine claimed, there is only one social movement for each class in each type of society, it follows that there is also only one

'correct' discourse of action. In other words, the discourse gets built into the definition of social movements.

Resource mobilization theories, in their search for conditions for collective action to occur, have done more to problematize the discourses of social movements. In these theories the discourses of collective action have been labelled 'collective action frames.' In a recent contribution to social movement theories, Tarrow deals extensively with the framing processes that lead to action frames. As he explains:

> 'Out of a toolkit of possible symbols, movement entrepreneurs choose those that they hope will mediate among the cultural underpinnings of the groups they appeal to, the sources of official culture and the militants of their movement – and still reflect their own beliefs and aspirations. To relate text to context, grammar to semantics, we need a concept more suited to the interactive nature of social movements and their societies. A contemporary group of scholars offers such a concept in their idea of collective action frames.' (Tarrow 1994, p. 122)

The concept of framing to which Tarrow refers stems from Snow and companions, who contend that movements function in part as signifying agents that carry, transmit, mobilize and produce meaning for participants, antagonists and observers. Adopting the concept from Goffman, they call this 'signifying work framing' (Snow 1988, p. 198). The emerging collective action frames have a mobilizing appeal and serve to 'dignify and justify' the movement (Tarrow 1994, p. 99)

Notwithstanding the valuable insight that actors' experiences need to be linked to prospects for action in order for (collective) action to occur, Tarrow's position is highly problematic. In the first place, he presents collective action frames as carefully plotted and produced by entrepreneurs. By separating the entrepreneurs from the constituency of movements, he seems to deny agency to non-entrepreneurs, and forecloses them from an active role in the processes of framing. Although this picture may reflect certain moments of certain movements, for example when an established movement launches a campaign to expand its constituency, it does not capture those moments of a movement when framing is 'everybody's' business and concern.

This brings me to the second objection. Not unlike Touraine, Tarrow's presentation implies that each social movement has one discourse, and moreover, that this discourse originates before the movement 'takes off.' In his model, the entrepreneurs and their objectives are given outside of and prior to the collective action. By so doing, he reifies social movements. One of the implications is that he misses the contestations that may occur in the formation of collective action frames as well as in the power struggles that accompany these contestations.

The problems inherent in Tarrow's approach can be met, I believe, by adopting a more constructivist view of what he calls 'framing processes,'

and what I refer to as discourse formation. Consistent with a perception of social movements as constructed processes, instead of unitary phenomena, I propose to view discourse formation as negotiated. Non-linear, multi-polar and not necessarily consistent, they are emergent properties that evolve out of the practice of collective action.

Seen as a negotiated process also allows for inclusion of the role of 'non-entrepreneurs' in discourse formation. In this respect, I think it makes sense to take a look at Scott's concept of hidden transcripts. The concept is derived from public transcripts: open interaction between subordinates and superiors. 'Hidden transcripts are discourses that take place 'off-stage': they consist of those speeches, gestures, and practices that confirm, contradict, or inflect what appears in the public transcript' (Scott 1990, p. 4). Discussed in private, whispered about in public, hinted at through jokes, these are narratives shaped among peers to contextualize their situation. Hidden transcripts play a role in what Scott terms infrapolitics: 'the circumspect struggles waged daily by subordinated groups that is, like infrared rays, beyond the visible end of the spectrum' (ibid, p. 183). Scott's contention is that there is an analogy between infrapolitics and the infrastructure that, for example, enables commerce: 'Infrapolitics provides much of the cultural and structural underpinning of the more visible political action on which our attention has generally been focused.' (ibid, p. 184)

Although Scott's hidden transcripts sometimes appear to be odd characters, like ready-made products working in the dark, waiting for the right provocation to burst out of their hiding places, his contribution appears to be very relevant to the discussion of framing social movements. The production of hidden transcripts could, to my mind, be understood as processes of discourse formation in people's everyday life. Discourse formation as people's everyday occupation should, I believe, complement the concept of framing as the craft of the entrepreneur.[3] Discourse formation, then, should be viewed as a negotiating process in which the distinction between entrepreneurs and constituency are not preordained but get constructed in the process.

The following narrative, on the social movement in the Cordillera, exemplifies this perspective on discourse formation. The first part will focus on processes of discourse formation in the relation between educated, political 'entrepreneurs' and villagers, and the second on the contests between different groups of 'entrepreneurs' who started to compete for leadership of the movement.

The Chico River Struggle

The Chico river is the longest and most elaborate river in the Gran Cordillera mountain range, flowing through Kalinga and Mountain Prov-

inces. The first proposals to construct dams in the Chico river stem from
the 1960s, when the Philippine government started to explore means of
generating electricity locally in the face of increasing urbanization and
industrialization. The initial plans, however, were shelved because they
were not considered feasible in either economic or political terms. This
situation changed drastically in the early 1970s. World prices for crude oil
increased sharply and, with the declaration of Martial Law, President
Marcos concentrated such considerable power under his authority that
firm implementation of the project could be expected. A German contract
firm conducted a Worldbank financed pre-feasibility study in 1973, and
came up with a proposal to build four dams in the Chico river, simply
named Chico I, II, III and IV. According to the study, the best way to
proceed was to start with Chico II in Sadanga, Mountain Province. Follow-
ing the study, the National Power Corporation (NPC), was charged with
continuing survey work. The actual construction of Chico II was scheduled
to start in 1978, and to be completed in 1982 (Cariño 1980, p. 3).

The people along the Chico only became aware of the plans when
survey teams entered their areas. It did not take long for them to recognize
the threat to their communities embodied in the projects, and the survey
team's first two camps in Basao were soon torn down by the villagers. In
a third effort to erect a surveyors' camp, the NPC personnel was backed
up by a military escort. The escorting unit of the Philippine Constabulary
began by intimidating the villagers, which involved amongst other things
to force local boys to join a William Tell game, and shooting coconuts off
their heads (Anti-Slavery Society 1983, p. 103).

The villagers, alarmed by the behaviour of the Constabulary and the
material damage done by surveyors to crops and fruit trees, began to seek
the intervention of the President. They brought six petitions to the Presi-
dent in the course of 1974, hoping that President Marcos would withdraw
the project once he realized its impact on local residents. Each petition, the
costs of which were born by the community and church support, was
taken by a delegation of village elders to the Presidential Palace, but none
of them got the chance of actually meeting Marcos. A letter by the Presi-
dent in response to the first delegation labelled their arguments as 'senti-
mental' and called upon them to 'sacrifice themselves for the sake of the
nation' (ibid).

Until this time, opposition to the dams had been localized. Local,
village-based resistance to intrusions, such as in this case the dams, were
a typical response in the region's history. The Cordillera had been little
integrated in the country's colonial history with Spain, and stands there-
fore to a certain extent apart from the lowlands. Being apart from the
lowlands did not, of course, automatically mean that it formed a region in
any political, cultural or social sense. No less than seven mutually unintel-
ligible languages were spoken in the 'region.' Until the turn of this
century, the principal level of social and political organization was concen-

trated in villages, although there were larger constellations loosely referred to as 'tribes.' For outside observers, Cordillerans were all tied up in traditional institutions and practices, which earned them the common label of 'Igorots.' Seen from within, however, cultural diversity and inter-village competition were major characteristics of this 'region.' Only in the twentieth century, under American colonial rule, did the contours of a region apart from but integrated into the Philippine nation start to take shape. Notwithstanding a certain degree of regionalization brought about by the Americans, the Cordillera in the early 1970s remained predominant-ly an area of 'village societies' (see Prill Brett 1989). In Bontok and Kalinga, competition seems to have been the main element in everyday village relations, regularly developing into intervillage warfare. Although some mechanisms had been created to regulate this competition, to which I shall return later, these same mechanisms underlined the division between the *ilis* (villages).

It is therefore not surprising that the villages affected by the dam did not initially coordinate or unite much beyond village level. One of the early petitions to the President, for example, actually expressed support for the dam, as long as it would be built in the area of another village (Berg 1996, p. 50). Later petitions were signed by more villages, and took a completely oppositionist stand against the dams. With the enrolment of church people, the struggle started to appeal to outsiders.

Contours of a Movement

In April 1975, the Catholic Bishop Francisco Claver, of Bontok origin, aligned himself with the Chico basin residents in an open letter to the President. I shall quote at length from this letter, since it draws on several themes that came to be central in the opposition to the dam:

'Mr. President,

I came here because I was summoned by my people. . . . They do not accept your decree – if decree it is. They will not accept it. This is the message they want me to convey to you, with respect, yes, but with firmness, too. Deep down in their guts they know damming the Chico is a *decree of death for them as a people*. This they cannot, will not accept. . . . My people are giving serious thought to armed violence and they are asking whom they should approach for arms. Mr. President, when a Bontok has to turn to a people not his own for help, this only means he has tried his supreme best to solve his problem by himself, and he realizes his powerlessness in the face of overwhelming odds. In short, he is desperate. *Armed violence is the only answer, and he knows his spear and head-axe are no match for your guns* . . . It is my prayer that their message will get through to you and you will grant them the least of their requests: a hearing, a real hearing at some future date. This is all

they ask – for the moment.' (cited in Anti-Slavery Society 1983, p. 104, emphasis added)

The Bishop's phrase that the dams meant the death of a people, expresses the vital symbolic meaning of land. Land, as a central element in the ancestral worship of people in the Chico Valley, became a focal point in oppositionist discourse. As one of the later advocate papers explained:

'All the many ancestor and spirit gods are associated, in the people's minds, with the land of the home region. The remains of all who die, even those who may die many miles away, are brought home. The home region – the land and all its improvements [a reference to the rice terraces constructed in the area over centuries, D.H.] – as it appears today, is largely the accumulation of the collective efforts of deceased ancestors, of generations of cooperation between the spirits and the living. The living are the guardians of this inheritance and, therefore, have the strong responsibility for the care of the land and the dead. The ancestral spirits will hold the living accountable for any neglect in this awesome responsibility.' (Cariño 1980, p. 5)

The 'land is life' theme was to become the most pronounced in the course of the struggle. This does not mean that it had been from the start, or that it was equally shared by everybody. Around 1977, for example, twenty families from the village of Tanglag accepted the government's offer to relocate. They came back, however, after some months, because the government had not delivered what it promised (Berg 1996, p. 58).

The other implicit element in Bishop Claver's letter was the threat of violent resistance. By mentioning the spear and the head-axe he evoked the formally eradicated head-hunting days that continued to linger – if not in practice, certainly in the local memory and in lowland conceptions of Cordillerans. While the image of fierce head-hunting warriors exacting retribution for the desecration of their lands hovers over the letter, their capacity and preparedness to play according to the rules of the game of 'modern,' lowland politics is clear in the conventional and non-violent demand for a hearing with the President. The threat of violence remains, while at the same time the Bishop makes it clear that these are not a 'horde of savages' ready to attack Malacañang, but 'reasonable people' to be taken seriously in the negotiations concerning the dams. This two-faced representation is typical for the repertoire of contention (Tarrow 1994, p. 19, based on Tilly) that was to emerge during the struggle: founded in traditional elements of warfare, but following 'modern' tactics to confront the national government.

The Multi-Lateral Peace Pact

The increasingly integrated opposition movement, consisting of multiple villages in the area as well as 'outsiders,' became institutionalized in 1975 through the creation of a multi-lateral peace pact. This instrument was developed during a church sponsored conference in Manila that brought 150 village people from the Chico valley to the capital.

The peace pact, called *Vochong* or *Bodong* among the Kalingas and *Pechen* among the Bontoks is a traditional institution regulating relations between two villages. Although there are many variations, essential elements of such peace pacts are that each village assures the safety of residents of the other village when they come within its boundaries, and that the peace pact holders take responsibility for violence or crimes committed by one of their people against somebody from the other village. One of the implications of village responsibility is that violence can be avenged against any person from the other village (see Benedito 1994; Dozier 1966, pp. 197–239; Barton 1949, pp. 167–208).

The peace pact made at the conference differed in two respects from these traditional ones. First, the signatories of the pact consisted of a great number of parties, not just two villages, and included outsiders who extended their solidarity to the struggle. Second, the content of the pact accommodated the needs of the particular struggle at hand, and aimed to unite villages against the government. The pact stipulated, for example, sanctions against anyone who cooperated with the National Power Corporation. In order to avoid conflicts between villages, two sections of the *Pagta ti Bodong* were included to place struggle related violence outside the jurisdiction of the existing peace pacts among villages:

'2. Should a Kalinga or Bontok from the dam areas be killed while working on the dam project, the peace pact villages opposed to the dam will not be held responsible, nor will they have to answer for the victim.

6. A peace pact already existing between two *barrios* will not be affected in any way when one of the members of a peace pact village dies or is killed as a consequence of his working with the NPC. Relatives will claim his body quietly but are prohibited from taking revenge.' (cited in Anti-Slavery Society 1983, p. 105)

These sections thus made exceptions to the practice of village responsibility for violence committed in their area. The conference peace pact, then, laid down and regulated the intervillage character that had developed in the oppositionist struggle. I will later elaborate on how this peace pact, both in its conceptualization and in its enforcement partly depended on the intervention of the New People's Army.

Government Strategies: Divide and Rule

Several weeks after the conference, Marcos abruptly ordered the NPC to cease all operations and to withdraw from the area. No explanation was offered, but it was believed that his government, in the light of the Muslim war in the South of the country, wanted to avoid a second front of open rebellion in the North (Anti-Slavery Society 1983, p. 106).

The relief at the suspension of the operation was, however, short-lived. By October 1975 it became clear that the government wanted to pursue the activity, and that the project had started work on another site, in Tomiangan, Kalinga, where Chico IV was planned. Tomiangan is a settlement of twenty-six households along the shore of the river. Chico IV would submerge six other barrios, with a total number of 670 to 1,000 families, according to different estimations (Cariño 1980, p. 4). The national government apparently believed that it could divert the opposition, by choosing another site. This turned out to be a miscalculation. Those villages in Mountain province that were no longer directly affected by the project continued their involvement with the opposition in cooperation with the Kalinga villages.

In order to break the opposition, and in particular the intervillage cooperation, the government now brought the Presidential Assistant on National Minorities (PANAMIN) onto the scene. The head of PANAMIN was Manuel Elizalde, a scion of one of the richest families of the Philippines. Elizalde arrived in Kalinga in November 1975, accompanied by a convoy of four freight trucks, three buses, a helicopter and eight other vehicles. His entourage of sixty people included fully armed soldiers, doctors, lawyers, cinema operators, 'hospitality girls,' and two magicians (Rocamora 1979).

Apart from trying to impress people by handing out money, rice, and other items, PANAMIN's policies to 'pacify' the Kalingas were based on divide and rule tactics. This included the intensification of a local conflict by supplying arms to a village at 'war' with two of the oppositionist villages. Through a combination of tricks, bribery, and promises for development projects, Elizalde was able to enrol a number of community leaders to support the dam project (Winnacker 1979). In his own way, Elizalde thus also built his strategies on cultural heritage and practices in the area, namely intervillage competition and feuds that until recently had dominated relations between villages. While the opposition maximized the regulating mechanism of the peace pact, he tried to exploit the underlying competition between villages.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the rather crude interference of PANAMIN, local resistance against the NPC continued. The villagers in Kalinga responded in similar ways to the people in Bontok: by physically obstructing the surveying work and by petitioning the President. While villagers tried to stop the NPC from constructing buildings, the govern-

ment responded with increasing military intervention. During one of the villagers' raids on the camps, around one hundred villagers, mainly women, were detained and taken to an unknown military camp. The search for detainees took several months, during which villagers' networks in Manila vastly expanded. They enroled the assistance of several NGOs and senators, amongst others.

The struggle got an impetus at the local level when some people from the New People's Army, of the underground Communist Party of the Philippines, arrived and offered to assist villagers in fighting the dams. The villagers readily accepted the offer. As one of them explained during my fieldwork:

'We had a strong opposition. First, we took a clear position to stop the dams. So, we don't allow any materials or constructions into the area. Later, we were outnumbered by the military, so we wrote petitions. But the president of the organization who went to Malacañang was tempted by Elizalde's offer and changed position. A next president was also bribed, so we began to get frustrated. Then the NPA came. We didn't know what to do any more by ourselves, so we thought maybe the armed group could help us further.' (fieldnotes, February, 1996)

Entry of the New People's Army

The New People's Army was established in 1969 as the armed branch of the Communist Party of the Philippines which had been formed one year earlier. After the imposition of Martial Law, when many legal opposition groups were forced underground, the CPP/NPA expanded to become the National Democratic Front with a total of twelve organizations. Following the Chinese example, they envisaged a revolution that was waged from the countryside. From the outset, the Cordillera provinces were considered very suitable for expansion, because of the strategic advantages of a mountainous area. As early as 1971, a first NPA group was established in Ifugao and in 1972 a Montañosa Party Branch was formed. (Castro 1987, p. 27)

Although these first NPAs did not get involved with the Chico struggle, their experiences shed light on later developments in the organization and will thus be considered briefly. The NPA leadership in the Cordillera consisted of cadres originating from the region, but educated in Manila. They were primarily involved as activists in the nationalist movement. During the 1970s, however, they became increasingly influenced by a revival of interest in indigenous culture and values, which was partly triggered by a publication by the historian William Scott, who represented the history of the Cordillera as one of a string of episodes of united resistance against outside forces (Scott 1993, 1972, see also Finin 1991). His rather romantic representation of the cultural heritage of the area[4] pro-

vided activists with a historic foundation for emerging Cordilleran discourses of a united 'we.'

Interest in Cordillera culture on the part of the NPA cadres was further increased through everyday experiences in the villages they organized. Their (renewed) exposure to Cordillera life led them to initiate debates within the Communist Party on how the local situation should be viewed, and what approach would be appropriate for the CPP/NPA in the area. According to a 1974 assessment, the cadres experienced a 'people's generally cold attitude towards the NPA,' and found that Ifugao could not identify with the NPA and 'did not see themselves as part of the larger Filipino nation' (Castro 1987, p. 27). Moreover, the NPA found specific conditions in the area that made it difficult to apply the general guidelines laid down in the *Philippine Society and Revolution* (Guerrero 1979/1970). According to this handbook, national minorities' right to self determination had to be recognized, but 'the correct policy toward all the national minorities is to take a proletarian standpoint and make the necessary class analysis' (ibid, p. 274). The NPA had tried to follow this approach, but after some time came to believe that it was not suitable for the Cordillera. They made a proposal to the Central Committee to change the Party's style of work in the Cordillera and to form a separate army named the Igorot Liberation Army (ILA). This proposal was turned down by the central leadership of the Party. The controversy led to a temporary suspension of village based work in Ifugao, until 1976 (Castro 1987).

In the meantime, an NPA unit from Isabela Province had to retreat under military pressure to the neighbouring province of Kalinga and took the initiative to start organizing there. They stayed in the area for some time and gained acceptance there, especially after their leader, Ka Sungar, married a Kalinga woman. As opposition to the dams grew, the unit of seven NPA cadre decided to move to Tinglayan and offer their help (Finin 1991, p. 435). The NPA gained much popularity when they started to ambush the Battalions based in the Chico area. Yet, the initial numerical involvement of the NPA remained modest. The NPA cadre in Kalinga had grown to thirty-three by 1979, but then more and more local men, and women, started to join (ibid, p. 453). This often took the form of village delegations, with all villages of the Chico line sending representations to join the NPA.

NPA involvement coincided with an increasing military presence in the area. Faced with growing opposition to the dam the government withdrew PANAMIN, which had hardly been successful in 'pacifying' the Kalingas, and started to send in more military troops. In the years that followed, the NPA took responsibility for armed aspects of the struggle, although strongly supported by the population. The NPA, who sat down with the villagers as equals and whose lifestyle and discipline generally formed a strong positive contrast to the behaviour of government troops, remained very popular. Apart from the many Kalingas who actually joined

the NPA, most villagers were involved in one way or another, as messengers and by providing food for the NPA cadres.

With intensifying military operations in the area and the involvement of the NPA, the anti-dam opposition set into a kind of rhythm. Villagers' everyday routines got framed on the one hand by harsh policies from the military side, including for example curfews that placed strong restrictions on people attending to their agricultural work; and on the other hand, by the need to provide daily food for the cadres. This routine was dotted by regular military operations, ambushes, dialogues and other legal forms of struggle. The estimated death toll related to the struggle was one hundred by 1980, with the majority on the side of government troops, collaborators, and NPC personnel (Cariño 1980, p. 14).

The CPP/NPA's Role in Formation of the Oppositionist Discourse

Although the regional struggle attracted the support of many regional, national and international institutions and support networks, I will focus on the role of the CPP/NPA. Their role was, I believe, crucial among the 'outsiders' for several reasons. The CPP/NPA was directly involved in the struggle at the local level. Apart from the military support that the NPA provided the opposition, they devoted much of their time to educative work. The educative work concentrated on links between the local struggle and the national situation.

The NPA was also strongly involved in the organization of the movement. They assisted with the formation of local organizations and in planning the tactics to be employed in the legal areas. The idea, for example, of making a multilateral peace pact originated from NPA cadres. Another important element was that the NPA could enforce the inter-village cooperation laid down in this peace pact. Military informers were liquidated by the NPA, and the NPA cadres intervened in village conflicts that threatened to disrupt the unity of the opposition.

The other important ally to the villagers were the churches. The churches provided much institutional support and their respectability enabled the enrolment of wide support networks among groups with different political orientations (Berg 1996). However, inasmuch as the churches gave direction to the opposition, this was usually congruent with the national democratic politics of the CPP/NPA. The churches did not of course officially condone the national democratic movement, but many of its members and staff did. One of the largest groups within the National Democratic Front was formed by the Christians for National Liberation. Church people were thus not just influenced by the national democratic movement, but to a large extent formed this movement. Hence, although the influence of the churches was substantial, it largely coincided with the political direction of the CPP/NPA during these years. The same went for

many of the regional and national organizations that supported the oppo-
sition, and those that were later formed as part of the regional movement.

Local oppositionist discourse gradually changed under the influence of
the national democratic politics that were propounded by the NPA and
other organizations. This discourse remained close to the issue of the
dams, but became increasingly outspoken with themes that pointed to a
'broader analysis.'

Window on the Emerging Discourse of the Movement

In 1980, a group of Kalinga village leaders had a dialogue with the Presi-
dent of the National Power Corporation (NPC), Itchon. The meeting,
transcribed by observers from the Montañosa Social Action Center
(MSAC), provides a window on emerging opposition discourse. By this
time, early themes had become more elaborated and explicit, while new
themes lifted the struggle beyond the immediate environment of the
villages. The following excerpts are partly transcribed and partly summar-
ized from the MASC transcription (appendixed to Cariño, 1980.)

The meeting took place in an open space in Binga, Benguet, in the
presence of Itchon and six other NPC officials. Immediately after the
opening, Itchon invited the Kalingas to speak, and the first to approach the
microphone was Maclïing Dulag, the most renowned leader of the opposi-
tion. He said:

'I have only one thing to state here: your project proposal of building
dams along our rivers will mean the destruction of all our properties on
which our very life depends. We Kalingas were once known for our
well-kept place, but your dam project has brought only trouble among
us. We, therefore, ask you: forget your dams, we don't want them.'

A second village elder, Balucnit, added:

'I have travelled through the lowlands and noted that people there
could perhaps own pieces of land from two to five hectares. But they
can get hungry, as they depend only on the production of rice from
these few hectares. This is not so with us in Kalinga. We don't go
hungry. We have whole mountain sides for other crops besides our rice
. . . The electricity that you produce here . . . where does it go but to
factories and the houses of the wealthy?'

The statements of Maclïing Dulag and Balucnit reiterated the 'land is
life' theme, and the implication of death resulting from the dams. By this
time, however, the argument was couched in a comparative way. The
Kalinga 'way of life' was compared, favourably, to that of the lowlands.
If development meant following the path of the lowlands, they were not
interested in it. In questioning the purpose of the dams, for (predominant-
ly foreign-owned) factories and the houses of the wealthy, their denounce-

ment had become partly incorporated into nationalist and class-based arguments.

After another seven statements by Kalingas, Itchon explained, in a mixture of Ilokano and Tagalog, why they had to pursue with the dams, pointing to the energy crisis that threatened the nation. He ended his speech by saying: 'I hope you can understand the answer to your question: we have no choice but to go ahead with it.' The first Kalinga to reply to Itchon brought up another theme that had emerged, namely that of discrimination against indigenous peoples: '. . . If you decide in favour of dam construction, are we not in this way being considered non-Filipinos? Or are we third class?'

In the discussion that followed, Itchon challenged the Kalingas' representation of the value they attach to their lifestyle and land. He argued that because of a growing population, their way of life was jeopardized anyway: 'This was your problem too, long before the NPC went there.' Furthermore, he referred to the many Kalingas who already left the area to make a living elsewhere and added:

> 'God gave us brains, not just hands. And so it is not true that when you move out of your places to go elsewhere, you will die there. We use our brains to work out our way to live.'

To this a Kalinga responded: 'God gave us our brains in Kalinga. God gave you yours in Manila. Keep to yours!' In no clearer way could he have indicated that by now an 'ethnic identity' had come about among local participants in the struggle. Lowlanders (in particular Manila people) are here presented as not just different species of God's creation (the notion of God remains as the only shared understanding), but completely incongruous to Kalingas. Anticipating the next section of this chapter, it is perhaps equally interesting to note that the categories being compared are lowlanders versus Kalingas, non-lowlanders versus 'Cordillerans.'

Maccliing added to their defence:

> 'While it is true, as you said, that people who have moved to other places may have been able to survive, such people voluntarily left their original barrios in search of land. But for any of us to be moved forcibly away from our homegrounds . . . this is quite a different matter.'

Maccliing here explains the prominence of the 'land is life' theme in the struggle. He acknowledges that out-migration and/or selling of land, is an accepted and often adhered to part of Kalinga practices. However, he points out the crucial difference between voluntarily leaving with the option of coming back or at least being buried in the 'homegrounds,' and being forced to leave and completely losing the 'homegrounds' to inundation. In discussing peasant resistance in Peru, Smith described a similar process. He showed how in times of conflict, peasants were able

to pose a common front without, however, forgetting their heterogeneity. In the course of the conflict,

> 'heightened discourse engaged people intensely in the 'production of culture' and in so far as membership and meaning were not just abstract notions vaguely linked to identity but rather were essential to the continuation of livelihood, participants were intensely committed to the outcome of this debate.' (Smith 1989, p. 26)

In the case of Kalinga, the sacred value of land was part of local concepts prior to the struggle, albeit amongst more varied practices and values in relation to land. However, once faced with the threat of completely losing the land, the equation of land to life and something worth dying for became the dominant public transcript of villagers.

Two-Way Influences: Debates Within the Vanguard

Although the influence of the CPP/NPA on the development of opposition discourse and the organization of the movement was substantial, it should not be overestimated in relation to the role of the village elders and the local people. In organizing the movement, the NPA built on existing village networks and practices and, as the discussion above demonstrates, village leaders left an unmistakable imprint on processes of framing. Besides, with the expansion of the NPA, it became an increasingly local force. The vast majority of NPA cadres came from the region, and 'civilian' villagers took a lion's share of the risks and responsibilities to maintain the struggle.

Moreover, the ideological influence worked both ways. The experiences of NPA cadres in Kalinga also led to debates within the Communist Party. As in the preceding years in Ifugao, the CPP/NPA leaders deployed in the region began to review the relation of the struggle in the Cordillera with the national revolution. In 1979, the NPA chapter in Kalinga made a proposal for the establishment of an Anti-Dam Democratic Alliance (ADDA, meaning 'there is') which would comprise a broad coalition of anti-dam activists, with the NPA as its army. The perceptions underlying the proposal were more or less similar to those of the ILA proposal that had come earlier from Ifugao NPAs. The proponents of ADDA thought the issue of the dam was a more important key-link than feudalism and wanted to incorporate indigenous concepts in organizing work. (Castro 1987, p. 29)

History was, however, repeated when the Regional Secretariat of the CPP, turned the proposal down. The Secretariat was concerned that the proposed changes would eventually lead to a replacement of the Party by ADDA. Moreover, it considered the proposal ideologically flawed. According to the Secretariat, the issue of the dam was in fact a manifestation of feudalism, albeit with the government as landlord (ibid). This ideological

discussion was far from semantic or academic, and was considered to have far reaching implications. If the dams controversy was a regional issue, the movement would be primarily in the interest of a national minority. Logically, then, there would be no need for leadership beyond the regional level. If, on the other hand, the dams were an expression of feudalism, the class basis would be of primary importance, subsuming the minority question. This would legitimize the integration of the regional opposition into a nationwide and centrally coordinated resistance movement. Although ADDA did not push through, debates within the NPA continued to simmer beneath the surface until eventually, in 1986, one group would break away from the CPP/NPA to form its own regional movement.

Clearly, then, discursive influences during the struggle were two-way processes. The CPP/NPA strongly influenced local opposition discourse, but at the same time got engrossed in debates concerning their own 'project' through the experience in the region. The key to understanding this two-way process is the changing conceptions of NPA leaders. Although deployed in the region as agents of the national Communist Party, many of them were personally attached to the region, either through birth or, in the case of Ka Sungar, through marriage. Their attachment increased through their exposure to the villages and, before long, they changed from 'outsiders' to 'brokers,' whose identification with the national revolution was in competition with their equally strong identification with the region.

Although seeds of conflict were soon to erupt, it seems that the double identification of the CPP/NPA leaders for some time contributed to the coherence that characterized the protest movement until 1986. Visitors and observers during these days were impressed, according to many enthusiastic testimonies in the press, by a movement which was carried both by educated, Manila-bred participants as well as the local population; a close cooperation between above ground and underground structures and, above all, a movement full of vibrancy.

Movement for Regional Autonomy

The protest movement grew significantly all over the Cordillera in the period from 1980 to 1986. Apart from the Chico Dams controversy, another hotbed of resistance had emerged in the Province of Abra, against a government sponsored wood company. From the two centres of resistance, the movement spread to other places, increasingly acquiring a regional character. During these years, the regional movement also expanded vastly through legal organizations, both at local and regional levels. In 1984, the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA) was formed. An initial membership of twenty-five organizations doubled within a year. The CPA embodied the village organizations, as well as NGOs and other support groups such

as human rights, media, and anti-dictatorship groups, which had been formed.

The CPA was dedicated to greater Cordillera unity and self-determination. One of the CPA activities was to coordinate the growing international support networks which the regional struggles had attracted. Lobby work by international advocates, amongst others, led the Worldbank to suspend its financial support for the Chico river dams, which all but meant the end of the project. Some time later, under the Aquino administration, the project was officially cancelled. Another effect of international work was that it enlarged the exposure of Cordillera activists to international discourses on indigenous rights, as developed, among other places, at indigenous people's gatherings of the United Nations. The international links served to strengthen the regional movement's emphasis on its 'difference' from the lowlands. The oppositionist agenda in the region became increasingly formulated in terms of indigenous people's rights.

The formation of CPA announced the change that had taken place of a movement against particular government interventions towards a movement for regional autonomy. The movement had changed from 'protest to proposal' (Fals Borda 1992, p. 305). Moreover, through the experience of struggle at local level, exacerbated by international developments, the 'proposal' concerned the region and focused on indigenous rights, rather than the nation state. This transformation meant that the movement's activities became more centred in Baguio City and were more dominated by educated people.

Political opportunities opened up in 1986 to enter negotiations with the national government. When Corazón Aquino replaced Marcos, a new Constitution was formulated and CPA successfully lobbied for a provision on regional autonomy. A tedious negotiation process developed in the years that followed. The stakes in the process were the authorities mandated to the regional level. In the process it became clear that the national government was trying to maintain as much control as possible over the region's natural resources and military and financial matters. As it turned out, the proposal for an autonomous region resulting from the negotiations vested little power at the regional level more resembling an administrative than an autonomous region. Moreover, autonomy was not realized because the proposal was turned down in a plebiscite, which led to an as yet unresolved impasse in the process towards autonomy.

One of the reasons why the autonomous region was not realized, is that the autonomy movement had lost its external coherence. Three factions emerged within the movement during the negotiation process, the resulting groups devoted much of their energy to struggling with each other in the autonomy negotiation arena. Fierce competition arose over matters of representation in the negotiations, and the role that different factions would have in the public organs to be created in the autonomous region. A complicated game evolved in which each group tried to gain the upper

hand in the negotiations. The different parties employed a range of tactics, including lobbying government representatives, withdrawing from panels believed to be dominated by others, criticizing negotiations in which they were not included as undemocratic, and so on. Each faction's tactics reflected on the one hand their assessment of the intentions and policies of the national government, and on the other their own estimated strength *vis-à-vis* the competing groups.

Leaving aside the further dynamics of this process, I want to discuss briefly the factions that emerged in the regional movement during the negotiations. With the emergence of different factions, debates concerning the movement's discourses intensified.

Factions Within the Movement for Autonomy

One group remained the faction aligned to the national democratic movement: the underground CPP/NPA, and the legal CPA. In their analysis, the struggle for autonomy could 'only be successfully waged in conjunction with the overall Filipino struggle for national freedom and democracy' (CPA 1989). The CPA's bid for representation of the Cordillera people was based on its formal membership of people's organizations. In 1987, they claimed to have 124 member organizations, representing an estimated 25,000 individuals (Cariño 1987, p. 169). The CPP/NPA, although never formally involved in the negotiations for autonomy, nonetheless maintained a presence in the process by, amongst others, releasing statements through the press. They claimed their status on the basis of their involvement in the regional struggles:

'The people themselves will tell you that they could not have organized massive and sustained resistance against the Chico River Dam project,· the Cellophil Resources Corporation, logging and mining concessions, land grabbing, graft and corruption and militarization if not for the Communist Party's painstaking and unremitting efforts to foster unity among the various tribes and lead the struggle against the common enemy' ('Ka Benjie,' in an interview with Malaya, May 1986, cited in Finin 1991, p. 571)

A second faction emerged when, in 1986, an NPA group headed by a rebel-priest, Conrado Balweg, bolted and formed its own 'Cordillera People's Liberation Army' (CPLA). The CPLA was a result of ongoing debates within the regional CPP/NPA. The major grievance of the CPLA, according to press releases, was the 'Party's failure to understand and accommodate the differences between the Cordillera and lowland society.' The CPLA envisaged an autonomous region, governed through extended traditional peace pact structures. Their claim to represent the Cordillera people was based on their grounding in the regional culture.

> 'We call [the CPLA] the legitimate army of the Cordillera based on its
> history. And if we recall, the NPA only entered the Cordillera . . .
> (when was that?) . . . that was 1970, no? 1972. And the CPLA, although
> it is not yet called CPLA at that time, it is already there. When I say the
> CPLA is already established, I say it in the fact that during our, even
> before the Spanish came to the Philippines our tribal warriors, or I
> mean clan, are already there. Although it is not yet throughout the
> whole Cordillera . . . So, the history of the CPLA begins with the devel-
> opments also of this tribal society . . .' (Mailed Molina, during a Press
> conference in March, 1986, cited in Finin 1991, p. 778)

The national democratic camp and the CPLA soon became each other's
arch enemies, with their competition even extending to ambushes against
each other's leaders. Both factions maintained an underground, armed
component. An increasing number of advocates for regional autonomy
could not, however, identify with the 'infights,' or distanced themselves
from armed struggle altogether which they deemed unnecessary after
democracy was formally restored under Aquino. These people came to
form a third faction when they organized the Cordillera Broad Coalition
(CBC). Many of its members were professionals, or local government
officials in the Cordillera' (Rood 1987, p. x), and its core was associated
with one of the earlier indigenous lobby organizations in the region
(Casambre 1991, p. 61; Finin 1991, pp. 260–8).

The CBC, more than other groups, emphasized the diversity of the
region, which they represented as 'unity in plurality.' By their own
claim, they wanted to represent the voice of the 'silent majority,' and
thus placed a strong emphasis on democratic procedures:

> 'There are varied and equally legitimate voices of the Cordilleras.
> These voices speak a 'host of tongues' and articulate a greater range
> of issues and concerns. In any 'peace talks' for the Cordilleras, the
> silent majority cannot and should not be ignored. This is the challenge
> to and of the Cordillera Broad Coalition.' (From CBC statement pres-
> ented in Rood 1987, p. 163)

The three factions that emerged thus all had a different action discourse,
with varying assessments of the regional situation and correspondingly
diverging proposals for collective action. However, these were not merely
competing analyses. Underlying the struggles over the proper way of
handling the situation were struggles over representation, leadership and
control of the movement. This becomes particularly clear from those
elements in the discourses that deal with the history of the struggle. Once
the conflicts had erupted, each of the factions reconstructed a past that
gave them particular credit for the struggle and the people's 'victory'
against the dams. The National Democrats maintained that their contribu-
tion to the struggle lent them the status of representing the people, and the

CPLA wanted to derive its status from its cultural embeddedness. The CBC, on the other hand, challenged the singular representation of both other groups, by maintaining that a plurality of voices should be heard and credited, a plurality that they moreover claimed to represent. The struggle for control over the movement was thus not limited to competing discourses about the action at hand, but also focused on a question of 'who owns the history of the struggle?'

Before concluding the chapter, let me return to the question of the relation between movement 'entrepreneurs' and villagers in processes of discourse formation during the years of autonomy negotiations. Although villagers remained involved, the influence of the educated leaders with a base in the city increased. A gap clearly emerged between discourses formed within organizations at the regional level, and villagers. This was particularly clear for the CPA and the CPLA, since these two groups had an outspoken vision of the region, and both maintained a popular base in the villages to whom they were one way or another accountable.

The Missing Link: From Local to Regional Identification

Despite their differences, the CPA and the CPLA had several themes in common. Above all, they both condoned the idea of the Cordillera as an appropriate unit for an autonomous region. Both the CPLA and the CPA formulated a vision to bring the diversity in the Cordillera under one regional denominator. Both encountered objections from their popular base organizations in the provinces of the Cordillera.

The CPLA based its regional vision on the institution of the *bodong*. It wanted to transform the *bodong* into an extralocal and even regional institution. The *bodong* was not, however, practised all over the Cordillera. Moreover, in those areas where peace pacts were part of the local institutions, they operated under different names. *Bodong* only referred to peace pacts in the Kalinga vernacular. The proposed promotion of the *bodong* to a central regional institution provoked a fear among people outside *bodong* areas, that CPLA proposals meant that the Kalingas would 'take over' the region (PIA 1989; Rood 1994, p. 11, see also Prill Brett 1989).

The CPA, on the other hand, introduced the concept of *Kaigorotan*. *Kaigorotan* was represented as a kind of tribe encompassing all 'tribes' in the Cordillera. It was CPA's proposed expression of the Cordillera people as one population with a common identity. However, the CPA had to abandon the concept when they found during their congresses that many highlanders could not identify with the label of Igorot (Loste n.d., Casambre 1991, p. 58).[5]

One could thus say that in both CPLA and CPA efforts to 'translate' the localized discourses that guided struggles against the dams in the Chico River and other government projects in the region, the necessary link through which people in the provinces could identify with the newly

designed discourse got lost. Part of the responses against these discourses by villagers suggest that their 'identification' reached beyond the local level, but did not surpass the areas where their vernacular was spoken. The fact that the Cordillera knows seven different vernaculars, must have been one of the problems in coming to define the Cordillerans as one kind of 'we.'

One indication of this is the eruption of internal conflicts in Kalinga in the 1980s, that is, at the height of the anti-dams struggle. The province of Kalinga partly consists of mountains and partly of wide, low valleys. Since the 1960s, the plane of Tabuk (the capital of the Province) had become an immigration area of people from the neighbouring Mountain Province. Although the area was malaria-infested, its fertile soils attracted a great number of settlers who bought land in the valley. Conflicts erupted between Kalingas and the settlers in the 1980s, when Kalingas started to reclaim the area. A large number of settlers were forced to return to Mountain Province, under such pressure as cattle rustling and violence directed against persons. The Kalingas justified their actions by claiming that the area formed their ancestral land. On that basis, they now dismissed the deeds of purchase of the Mountain Province settlers to whom they had earlier sold the land. In this case, apparently, the oppositionist discourse centred around land, had escaped the confines of its application in the conflict with central government, and been redirected to 'legitimize' conflicts between different groups in the Cordillera.

These conflicts clearly point to a dilemma of the 'indigenous movement' in the Cordillera. The movement acquired its regional character in response to the government's treatment of the region as a resource base for national development. This common ground of opposition against the central government did not, however, replace or exceed the differences within the region. Although a regional 'we' emerged, it remained fluid. Rather than a regional identity, it was an identification with the region that appeared in the common defense against national government impositions.

The conflicts over the discourses of both the CPA and CPLA also show that although, after 1986, discourse formation became mainly an entrepreneurial craft, villagers still influenced the process through their responses. The CPA, for one, retracted the concept of *Kaigorotan*, but was unable to come up with a new concept that would appeal to all vernacular groups within the region.

Conclusion

When the Philippine government started exploration work for dams in the Chico River of the Cordillera in 1973, initial protest was localized. It was almost unimaginable, at the time, that the opposition to the dams would

lead to a region-wide autonomy movement whose radiation affected the entire country and whose mobilization networks reached United Nations' headquarters as well as numerous countries in the North. Yet, this was exactly what happened.

This chapter has aimed to explain how this movement got its particular shape, which led to the discussion of discourse formation in collective action. In current social movement theory, collective action discourses are sometimes understood as prefabricated by movement entrepreneurs. The case of the Chico dams struggle revealed, however, how discourses emerge in the practice of collective action. The discourses are actor constructed. They arise from the practice of everyday resistance in complex processes of negotiation involving different groups of actors.

Central to the collective action discourse that emerged in the Cordillera was the theme of 'land is life.' This theme was not a new invention. Prior to the struggle, the meaning of land as the inalienable heritage of ancestors and the residence of ancestors' spirits, was one of several cultural repertoires related to land. However, in response to the immediate threat posed by the dams, which were to inundate land to be lost forever, this particular repertoire became dominant and land attained, for that moment, an absolute value worth dying for.

In the course of the struggle, the 'land is life' theme became elaborated and the collective action discourse started to contain class-based and nationalist themes. These changes can be traced partly to the influence of the Communist Party of the Philippines, whose military wing, the New People's Army became a vanguard in the organization of the struggle. The CPP/NPA had entered the arena of struggle against the dams as a way to incorporate regional resistance into a nation wide revolutionary movement. However, through the experiences of the NPA cadres in the struggle and their exposure to Cordillera people and practices, some NPAs became increasingly convinced that the Cordillera could not be subsumed under a national revolution but should have a status apart, both because of different conditions that prevailed in the area and in order to allow space to traditional practices in the struggle. As a result, the newly emerging collective action discourse not only incorporated nationalist elements, but also regional themes that explicitly distinguished the Cordillera from lowland Philippines and addressed issues of discrimination against indigenous peoples. These regional elements were further reinforced when Cordillera representatives started regularly attending United Nations' gatherings on indigenous peoples.

The particular ways in which the collective action discourse evolved, thus reflected the interaction between the nationalist NPA and local villagers (as well as other actors not further elaborated on). The NPA imprinted nationalist themes on the local discourses through their educational and organizing work, while they raised debates within the CPP/NPA to accommodate the regional particularities in the national

revolutionary movement under the influence of the local villagers. The emerging property of years of struggle and debates was a movement for regional autonomy.

Rather than being fabricated by movement entrepreneurs, then, discourses of collective action are produced through continuous iteration between entrepreneurs and participants, engineering and spontaneity, myth and 'reality.' In the Cordillera case, these tension-ridden tendencies met at some junction halfway through the 1980s, producing a moment when the movement attained its most irresistible or, depending on the observer, its most terrifying vibrancy.

However, when in 1986 political opportunities for negotiating regional autonomy opened up, the conflicts underlying the particular direction the struggle had taken burst into the open and the movement split into different factions. Each of the factions favoured a different definition of the situation at that moment. Moreover, each of them recreated the history of the movement in such a way as to claim 'ownership' over this history and attain a status to represent the Cordillera people *vis-à-vis* the national government. Another problem that came to the surface during this period was the increasing gap between discourses that defined the Cordillera as a unit of indigenous people, and local villagers' lack of identification with this region. Villagers' identification remained with smaller areas that did not exceed the socio-linguistic groups to which they belonged. As a combined result of repressive policies by the national government, and these conflicts and tensions within the movement, the autonomous region envisaged did not materialize.

The infights that evolved between the factions point to the importance of discourse in informing power struggles. Collective action discourses are not free floating constructions, but emerge out of, and are limited by, concrete experiences in a historically specific struggle. Moreover, conflicts over discourse are not merely debates regarding the appropriate interpretation of a situation. As Arce *et al.* have stated, 'it is in the domain of discourse that interaction between knowledge and power accords validity to images of reality' (1995, p. 156). The material presented in this chapter underscores the point that issues of power and control are at the heart of conflicts over discourse. Collective action discourses emerge out of concrete experiences, and contestation of discourses is a form of power struggle that can significantly reshape the relations between groups of actors.

Notes

1 I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Norman Long and Pieter Hilhorst for their valuable comments and suggestions in the preparation of this chapter.
2 Another question is whether identification is accessible to the observer, in other words, how to measure or observe consciousness? In dealing with this dilemma, Anthony Marx

proposes to rely on elite pronouncements and evidence of collective actions as indicators of identity formation, 'cognizant of the limits of this approach' (Marx 1995, p. 165). So will I. It would be useful, however, to bear in mind the nature of the 'elite' brought forward in the ensuing narrative of the Cordillera movement, especially when village leaders are concerned. Although maybe more affluent and influential than their co-villagers, these people were fully engaged in everyday village life, usually non- or semi-literate, whose pronouncements have been transcribed by movement advocates or recorded during my fieldwork.

3 On the other hand, it seems social movements may also feed people's hidden transcripts. During my fieldwork in the Cordillera, for example, passing references were sometimes made to ideas I recognized as products of the anti-dams struggle, even among people never actively engaged in it.

4 Florendo, for example, in discussing Cordillera involvement in the Philippine revolution of the end of the nineteenth century, concludes that: 'An ideology that transcended tribal boundaries was definitely not in accord with the conditions in the Cordillera at the outbreak of the Revolution. The *tribus independientes* were reacting to the crisis because of the need to ward off threat to their tribal integrity' (Florendo 1994, p. 88).

5 Interestingly enough, debates about regional autonomy were mainly concerned with the way highlanders related to each other. The question of how lowlanders living in the Cordillera, estimated to comprise almost half of the Cordillera population, would be integrated in the autonomous region played only a minor role, unlike the Mindanao autonomy movement where the relation between Muslims and Christians was a central area of contestation (Rood 1988, 1994, p. 16; Finin 1991, p. 672).

Part Three

Local Responses to Globalization and Commoditization

8 Locality, Identity and the Reshaping of Modernity. An Analysis of Cultural Confrontations in Two Villages

Henk de Haan

Introduction

Much sociological and anthropological theory and research is concerned with how concrete social practice and events are connected with the 'wider context' or represent broader empirical categories. This partly results from a limitation inherent to all social science research: it is mostly based on a relatively small number of observations, drawn from specific places at specific times. These observations must therefore be contextualized within wider social and historical patterns and submitted to questions of representativeness. A representative sample, a telling case study, well-chosen examples, or a characteristic community are all methodological devices aimed at legitimating the step from partial observation to an aggregate empirical level. Theory plays an important role in bridging this gap between the specific and the general. It guides empirical research and provides clues for interpretation and knowledge about general social processes, which may be used as a background for analyzing specific data. With theory, partial empirical observations may be put into a wider concrete and abstract contexts and thus enrich our knowledge of society in general.

Although the relationship between research and theory is far more complex, I will limit myself here to the problems associated with research that focuses on the significance of the 'local level'. It is clear that much sociological research does not belong to this category. Survey results, for instance, reveal nothing about an individual's lifeworld and how, for that reason, attitudes and behaviour are socially formed and culturally meaningful. The local character of data is dissolved into aggregate categories and thus decontextualized. Even if the local context is taken into account, it is often seen as basically structured by general processes, which deprive the local of its singular character. Lifting individual and group behaviour out of their context and integrating them into an imaginary mass society, or demonstrating the penetration of mass society and culture into the smallest micro worlds are but two extremes of a general tendency in sociology to disregard the specificity of locality. The local is either used as a source for sampling data, or seen as a spatial expression of general

tendencies, without a history and an identity of its own. Although it is true that developments in rural areas are increasingly determined by transnational processes and structures, we also need to analyse how the general and the abstract are transformed into concrete local practices by the distinctiveness of local social structure and culture.

This chapter first describes the decline of local studies in rural sociology and argues the case for revitalizing the local perspective. This might seem illogical when current debates are dominated by such concepts as globalization and the international food system. I will show, however, that knowledge about general developments can only be collected (and theoretically constructed) by analyzing local realities. The main part of the chapter consists of a comparative analysis of agricultural modernization in two villages. By using the concepts of locality and identity, I will try to show how generalized developments are recontextualized locally, and how this colours people's views of history.

The Decline of Community Studies

The general disregard of locality in rural sociological studies can partly be explained as a reaction to the believed failure of community studies to acknowledge the disintegration of community life and its dependence on the wider context. According to Day and Murdoch (1993), community 'was generally agreed to be a confused and chaotic concept, impossible to define clearly, and carrying all sorts of dangerous and unacknowledged cargo' (p. 295). Despite anthropological reconceptualizations of community studies (see Boissevain and Friedl 1975), and the introduction of fresh concepts (Cohen 1982, 1986), rural sociologists themselves turned to macro-political-economic processes, thus disregarding the situatedness of practice.

Pahl's (1966), and later Newby's (1980) profound attacks on the old legacy, which included the rural–urban continuum, resulted in a radical reformulation of rural sociology (see also Lobao 1996). According to Miller (1996, p. 95), the rural world 'was no longer to be regarded as *sociologically distinct*, nor would it be *conceptually defined* antithetically to the city, but instead would fall within a more theoretically informed and holistic focus where the notions of change, class and social conflict eclipsed those of continuity, community and social cohesion'. The 'new rural sociology' mainly focused on agriculture and class relations and derived its theoretical inspiration from neo-marxist political economy. Rural space was conceptualized as the site of primary production and its development was mainly coupled with national and international movements of capital and labour. This emphasis on the embeddedness of local agricultural systems in 'advanced capitalism' limited the focus on human agency and the impact of local social structure and culture. With the decision that rural is synonymous with agriculture, and that agriculture is being transformed

by forces far beyond its local setting, the concrete and differentiated concept of place was replaced by the much more abstract and homogenizing idea of a collection of related spaces, created, reproduced, and transformed by the uneven impact of capitalism.

According to Day and Murdoch, this direction of rural studies left a 'considerable vacuum'. Although there have been frequent attempts (Marsden *et al.* 1993; Murdoch and Marsden 1994; Marsden, Lowe and Whatmore 1992) to restore the balance, subsequent waves of new theoretical perspectives, such as globalization and regulation theories, have left rural sociology with a weak insight into local socio-cultural life. Locality studies are consequently very much on the defensive for charges of particularism and naivety. Recent studies of the significance of locality are very valuable (see, for instance, Gray and Philips 1996 and Salamon 1992), but I think that there are even more promising lines along which they can be developed.

First, the concept of locality should be emancipated from its 'big brother' of globality. It sometimes seems as if locality is somehow only tolerated as a concept if it is clearly indicated that it is in fact a variety of globality. Any suggestion of local specificity must immediately be nuanced by referring to the all-encompassing presence of globality. It may be time to examine globalization studies more carefully, and challenge their assumptions from a local perspective.

Second, locality studies are too much focused on political issues, the farm labour process and the use of natural resources. These approaches sometimes underestimate the socio-cultural components of locality, especially in its capacity to encompass politics, economics and other aspects of daily life in mutually inclusive, non-separable terms. The concept locality focuses exactly on the wholeness of social life, not on individuals or group interests.

Third, locality-based research permits standard social science explanations to be juxtaposed with explanations given by local actors (see Boyer 1990; Gudeman 1986). How local people perceive and explain local events is of great importance for understanding how they confront global forces. According to Pred and Watts (1992), the articulation between local and extralocal through new economic linkages involves 'cultural articulations,' including ' . . . some form of symbolic discontent, some form of cultural contestation, some form of struggle over meaning deriving from the . . . experience of the 'modern' shockingly displacing the 'traditional'' (p. xiii). The local discourses and practices through which capitalism and modernism are experienced, interpreted, and contested may not result from a 'correct' class analysis, but are instead couched in already existing social relations and forms of consciousness. Analyzing these forms of 'local theory' may help us in understanding why much of the agricultural revolution was in fact a 'quiet revolution'.

How the Global Becomes Local and the Local Becomes Global

Human behaviour is situated in different, overlapping contexts, ranging from concrete face-to-face relationships to abstract 'systems,' and cannot therefore be understood without examining different modes of embeddedness. There is a whole array of sociological concepts to acknowledge this reality. The most familiar is probably the opposition between micro and macro. Other concepts used are internal–external, lifeworld–system, horizontal–vertical, small scale–large scale, particular–general, part–whole, and so on. The implicit assumption is that observed behaviour and events at one 'level' should be connected with a sort of aggregate, often abstract encompassing level. Concepts such as 'integration,' 'articulation' and 'dependency' are used to express the relation between the specific and the general, the micro and macro world.

What all these linkage concepts have in common is the idea that the 'real world' is made up of people living in specific places, but that their lives are subject to invisible, external forces. This opposition between a concrete and an abstract world is coupled with a topological idiom (space, scale), suggesting distanced levels of reality. However, the topological reference is often dissolved theoretically in contrasting the empirical reality of the local with more encompassing 'units' or systems, which are somewhere 'out there'. Thus, the 'global' turns out to be a constructed theoretical model, based on observing regularities in local-level developments. This model is in turn objectified and reified as something tangible beyond its local manifestations. These scientific constructs may be useful as theories for explaining and describing general trends, but should not distract us from the fact that 'global' or 'macro' forces are generalizations based on observing real encounters between actors representing specific interests.

To illustrate the complexity of local–global relations, it may be instructive to contrast two ways of approaching the process of agricultural restructuring of recent decades. Everywhere in Europe this involved a drastic decline in the number of farms, a reduction of the agricultural labour force and a concentration of land in bigger farms. This process is generally attributed to macro-economic, political and technological developments, leading to the integration of agriculture in commodity markets and exposure of farms to global trends. Each local study can serve as an example of this general trend, which is conceptualized in terms of delocalization, integration and externalization or other concepts describing the dissolution of farming as an activity mainly structured by local factors.

The picture emerging from this sort of description is of course not completely wrong, but it is one-sided, ignoring the significance of local social and cultural conditions, and how this process is experienced by farm families themselves. It may therefore be interesting to turn the perspective upside-down and look at agricultural restructuring as a local process. The

questions that then emerge are of a quite different order. It is not the process differentiation itself which needs to be explained, but the way in which it was actually structured and locally perceived. At local level, the differentiation process involves a struggle over access to limited natural resources and thus over property relations. The central issue is not how the local is integrated into the global system and how farming is becoming delocalized, but how global trends are integrated and internalized locally and thereby deglobalized. Does the transformation of the farm context fundamentally change the rules governing access to resources, or is it incorporated into existing patterns of resource management and transmission?

Seen in this way, local developments are not mere expressions of global trends, but complex, hybrid forms, reflecting the assimilation of globality (see Picon 1986; Rogers 1991). Furthermore, this contradicts any simple opposition between local and global, because the 'global' only exists to the extent that it becomes an integral element in patterns of farm reproduction, and is as such adopted as an element in local strategies. Only by comparing the process of differentiation in many rural communities, can the general character of the process be depicted; however, such an abstraction does not necessarily make sense if our focus is not on the general but on the specific.

In addition, local perception of the global is very much personalized and familiarized, demonstrating the concrete character of connectedness between localities. Salazar (1996), in his study of farmers in County Clare, convincingly argues that 'capitalism' and the 'food system' are associated with specific places and practices. Farmers 'meet' capitalism at the local cattle market, where they negotiate prices with cattle traders. Cattle traders epitomize profit maximizers and, although farmers understand that those traders act in a wider market, the association of capitalism with concrete actors, places and principles diverges from a perspective which relates local cattle prices with an internationally structured food system.

Papadopoulos (1997) has demonstrated that EU regulation in Greece is not an anonymous force to which farmers adapt their strategies and through which they become part of extra-local processes. EU regulation measures are quickly internalized and transformed into a resource that can be locally manipulated and used. The application of the rules is integrated into existing social relations, not least because the bureaucrat deciding about subsidies and development plans adopts local criteria for his judgements. The money channelled to the most remote rural areas thus strengthened local processes, rather than provoking externally induced change.

The 'local' character of 'globality' can be further demonstrated by carefully deconstructing the concept of globality itself. Globality can be used in a number of different senses. Sometimes it refers to 'interconnectedness,' implying that local processes are mutually related by some

· overarching force with a global impact. At the political level it points to the decline of the state as an agent of regulation. Globalization is also used to indicate the generalization of cultural patterns, from very localized lifestyles to global identities and uniform taste. What all these meanings have in common is the idea that the scale at which social practices and events should be interpreted is unlimited, because there are no cultural, social, economic and political boundaries. As such globality and globalization are purely analytical, abstract concepts, which should not be confused with the nature of empirical reality itself.

If globality exists, it can only be shown by demonstrating that what happens locally is in some way connected to the same general process. But that does not mean of course that the same transformative forces at the local level produce the same results, or have the same meaning locally. It is necessary, in other words, to analyse the place-specific way in which general trends are integrated, or how abstract principles are translated into a multiplicity of concrete forms and meanings.

Such research is sometimes dismissed as being an interesting academic exercise without any relevance for understanding how the regulation of social life really works. Hoggart, Buller and Black (1995), for instance, admit that local processes are important, but weaken their admission by asserting that they have no major causal effect on wider national and European contexts. Viewed in this way, the importance of locality is measured by assessing its capacity to structure international trends. This seems an unfair approach, because locality is by nature specific and characterized by heterogeneity, and does not seem capable of restructuring globality. However, the idea that global developments are in fact hybrid models originating from numerous local processes is certainly worthwhile considering.

Take the following example of how national economic processes indeed reflect local factors, from Greece. It was expected that exposure to Common Market principles and special government intervention would reform Greek agriculture in accordance with specific technological and market standards. However, the effort to transform the peasantry in line with the approved model for agricultural development has so far failed. According to Damianakos (1997, p. 206), 'it is as though the peasantry . . . has managed to establish wise compromises with room for change while preserving what is essential . . . Wide open to change, the Greek peasantry accepts being closely integrated into global society, only if this integration does not, as certain forms of modernity tend to do, break up elementary social structures'.

Fascinating in the Greek experience is not only the place-specific resistance by the peasantry to modernity, but also the capacity of local culture to impose its interpretation of modernity at national level. Locality, in its diverse manifestations, has become a major factor in shaping Greek society as a whole, thus recreating its own conditions of existence.

Pushing the argument a bit further, we might ask whether global trends are anything other than the 'macro effect' of numerous micro-level developments. And do most global phenomena not originate from specific local contexts, from which they manage to 'escape,' become decontextualized and reembedded elsewhere? (see Clark and Murdoch 1997). These processes produce only superficial connections between localities, because seemingly similar material and social changes may camouflage completely different experiences and forms of local integration.

Usages of Locality

The first meaning of locality is purely descriptive. It refers to a geographical or administrative unit, for instance a region or a village. Depending on the approach, the boundaries may vary. If an administrative unit is taken as a starting point, its characteristics may not be limited to that region. If, however, a regional unit is defined on the basis of common features, like economic structure, population density or landscape and ecological aspects, locality acquires the meaning of territorial uniqueness. In practice, both meanings of locality are used. For social scientists studying social processes at the local level, locality is considered as the background setting; whether or not some local characteristics are part of a broader regional pattern is not significant. If, however, research is focused on explaining the typicalities of a region, location variables are very important. Locality is then no longer a descriptive category, but an analytical one, connected with local development. In this sense, locality became an especially popular concept during the 1980s. Regional development was interpreted as the result of capitalist restructuring. In search of space to expand its domination, capital allocates different functions to different regions, resulting in uneven development (Massey 1984; Bradley and Lowe 1984). Locality, thus conceived, is the concrete, place-specific outcome of economic processes.

The second way in which the concept of locality is used is as 'local social system' (Crow and Allen 1994). Local social system refers to the spatial coordinates of social relations and social processes. Locality in this sense arises out of the fact that people live together, sharing the same physical space. Physical proximity is not in itself a sufficient condition for the development of a local social system. Physical space must be transformed into social space, and this only happens through prolonged face-to-face interaction, shared experience, shared practices and dependence on local resources. This implies that not all people living in the same locality belong to a local social system (see Mayerfeld Bell 1994).

The local social system is relevant in two complementary ways. First, as a significant frame of reference, a microcosmic world of meaning and reflection. This subjective connotation of locality implies that identity,

status, reputation and power are shaped in and through local social relations. It means that the concrete sense of power and subjection, of being male or female, having land or not are shaped by local experiences (Cohen 1987) The second sense in which the local social system is relevant, especially in farming communities, concerns interdependencies through kinship, neighbourhood, property and labour relations. This practical side of locality implies that people's dependence on place is rooted in social relationships giving access to material and human resources. The interconnectedness of social relationships is often expressed in terms of a 'moral economy' (Popkin 1979), paternalism (Newby and Bell 1987) or clientism (Campbell 1964).

It is clear that simply sharing the same place of residence and even participation in local social life has nothing to do with locality. Locality is primarily a frame of reference and a network of social relations that can be mobilized for practical purposes. The local social system may well be internally divided into classes or other types of groups. In most cases there is a clear-cut social hierarchy, which is commonly based on land and associated criteria for social placement in farming communities. But it is the actor's subjective point of view that determines the 'boundaries' of the social system, something which is best described by Elias and Scotson's (1965) 'established' and 'outsiders,' or Strathern's (1981) 'real' and 'not real' villagers. Even if local networks become less important for practical purposes, the local social system may still keep its importance as a 'symbolic community'.

The social aspects of locality overlap with the cultural meaning. Locality as a local social system is unthinkable without a specific local culture. Local culture and society are inseparable elements of shared experience and place; ideas about what is valuable and how it should be achieved, the whole realm of normative ideas is expressed in and through social structure. Practice is embedded in culture and through practice social structure is reproduced.

Since the 'great transformation,' local culture has been conceptualized as a disappearing phenomenon. The view expressed is that local culture has lost its integrity as a result of the breakdown of self-contained village societies (Weber 1976; Williams 1973; Gross 1992). This is only true if culture is understood as 'folklore'. Folklore, as expressed in all kinds of ritual and traditional wisdom, can easily lose its significance with the advance of science, education and economic development. This view of local culture not only ignores continuity in the ideological sphere, but also overlooks the fact that local culture may change, while retaining its own specificities (see, on different aspects of 'tradition,' de Haan 1996; Heelas, Lash and Morris 1996). Analytically local culture can be seen as a means of orientation in local *and* global society, and as such its significance is more important then ever. It not only colours the interpretation of what happens locally, but also translates 'modernity' in a locally specific

direction. In other words, the multiplicity of 'authentic' traditions has not been removed by one form of modernity, but by a new mosaic of modernities. One important aspect of this orientation of local culture is that it is becoming more reflexive, with important implications for both self-identity and social identity. This brings us to the association of locality with 'otherness' and 'sameness,' of the experience of belonging to a local social system and to a larger society.

In association with locality, identity has a variety of related connotations. It refers, in the first instance, to all kinds of attributes ascribed to a person (or a family) in the local social context. A local identity is as much as a person's reputation, measured and valued by local social and cultural standards. Some of these attributes are ascribed, such as belonging to a certain family. Others may be achieved, for instance being locally known as 'a good farmer'. Personal identities are closely connected with local history and face-to-face interaction, and have therefore hardly any significance outside the local context. Thus, the local concept of a 'good' farmer, may not correspond with the standards used by the agricultural extension service. And the 'big' local landowner may be an insignificant character in regional aristocratic circles.

Apart from the placement of individuals in a local social system, local identity may also refer to a feeling of belonging to or identification with a place and its people. This self-identity is particularly relevant when people are confronted with 'other' cultural and social systems. Within local society, reference to 'we' may be used to defend behaviour that is challenged; elsewhere, in contact with 'outsiders,' self-presentation may be framed in terms of belonging. This 'we' feeling is rooted in shared cultural ideas and history and only arises if people are conscious of 'they,' who are different, and sometimes threatening. Local identity as identification not only exists at the individual level, it can also manifest itself as a collective feeling, for instance when the social context within which people experience locality is threatened.

Contrasting Communities

This section presents two farming communities, one in the Netherlands and one in France. Both experienced major changes in the course of agricultural development from the 1960s onwards. In that respect they do not differ from thousands of other places in Europe, although there was variety in the timing and intensity of change. The French village Saint-André Goule d'Oie is located in the central, hilly part of the Vendée, in the West of France; the Dutch village, Geesteren, is in the eastern province of Overijssel. Historical research and fieldwork were done at the end of the 1970s (French village, de Haan 1981) and at the end of the 1980s (Dutch village, de Haan 1989, 1994).

The two communities show striking similarities in the pattern of farming. Both are traditionally directed towards mixed farming, with dairy products and meat as the main market products. Some land was used to grow commercial crops, but most of it was devoted to fodder crops for farm animals. Farms in both communities were small, with widely scattered plots, although in Geesteren there was a group of larger farmers with land concentrated around the farm. Within their national contexts, agriculture was considered traditional and backward (see Renard 1975; Maris *et al.* 1951). Farm mechanization in Saint-André only started in the 1960s, when oxen and horses were gradually replaced by tractors. The post-1960s period was characterized by the well-known pattern of modernization: fewer and larger farms, higher production, fewer people working on the land and a generally higher dependence on industrial inputs.

There are, however, also remarkable differences between the two farming communities. While in the Dutch community practically all farmers owned their land, property relations in the French community were far more complex. Very few farmers owned all their land; most rented, in addition to land they owned, often from several different owners. In contrast to the Dutch community, where 'owner-occupier' has been practically synonymous with 'farmer' since the early nineteenth century, the French farmers have always relied heavily on renting land and a very dispersed pattern of land-ownership.

In both communities the modernization process involved considerable, and on-going, concentration of land in fewer farms. It did not, however, significantly affect the general pattern of landownership. Farmers in Geesteren invariably own all the land they farm, while the prevailing pattern in Saint-André is the dispersed ownership of farmland. Expanding farmers in Geesteren were obviously buying land, while in Saint-André farm enlargement was facilitated by renting an increasing amount of land. The transfer of land depended on farmers who gave up farming, selling land on the local land market in Geesteren, and owners withdrawing land from tenants in Saint André (thereby forcing them to withdraw from farming) and distributing it to other farmers, thus increasing their chances of survival.

The mechanisms underlying these processes were not simply based on the principle that land automatically moved to farmers endowed with substantial capital and entrepreneurial capacities. The reality was far more complex, revealing the significance of local social structure and culture in structuring the modernization process. In Geesteren, for instance, the large farmers from the 1950s showed little interest in enlarging their enterprise or in intensifying the farm according to the latest technological and scientific principles. Farmers showing the highest activity on the land market and the most dynamic entrepreneurial strategy emerged out of a group of smallholders. In Saint-André, where differences in farm size were not very significant, a small group of farmers managed to acquire most of the land

at the cost of their neighbours, and developed into a category of large, modern farmers.

Furthermore, these developments came as no surprise to local people. They were actually perceived as fundamentally local processes, corresponding with long-standing patterns regulating access to resources. In the following sections I will further explore how locality channels general processes into historically embedded structures, and how a local idiom develops to explain and legitimate these.

Kinship, Identity and the Reproduction of Property Relations

Property relations and rules governing access to land in the two communities were embedded in two contrasting types of rural social structure and culture, in much the same way that Augustins (1977, 1979, 1989) has observed in other European localities. In the French village, land and access to land were associated with extensive bilateral kingroups, nuclear families and partible inheritance. Land was owned by numerous resident- and non-resident families and mostly not attached to a specific farm. Farms were loosely organized units, composed of scattered parcels, and constantly being composed and decomposed. In the Dutch community, land was connected with narrowly defined lines of descent, multiple family households and impartible inheritance. Farms were very stable units, composed of a fixed amount of inherited land. There was a rigorous correspondence between landed property, the farm and household residence.

The Significance of the Wider Kingroup

The traditional rural community in Saint-André contained two different categories of families, each with a different relation to the land. The 'upper' stratum consisted of several kingroups, each with a substantial amount of land. Such a group was composed of mutually related individual families, with a core group living in the same or neighbouring hamlets. At the time of my fieldwork, people could easily indicate twenty to twenty-five families to which they were somehow related by kinship or marriage and which they identified as belonging to the same group. Individual families within such a kingroup could own different amounts of land, ranging from a couple of hectares to forty or fifty hectares. In Saint André I could identify five of these *parentèles* (Augustins 1989), each with a clear social and territorial identity and status (c.f. Segalen 1985).

This 'elite' group reproduced its status and kept property within the same family group by endogamous marriages. Although marriage between kin was in no way prescribed (and often not done consciously), it was the ultimate result of a type of spouse selection which prioritized setting up

an independent household endowed with a solid material basis. This was so because the inheritance of land was strictly egalitarian. All children received equal shares in kind and financial arrangements for buying out inheritors were out of the question. As no children were excluded from land, there was an in-built tendency for the fragmentation of property over an ever increasing number of owners. Spouse selection was principally based on proximity and property, uniting inheritors from the same kingroup and thus avoiding the fragmentation of property outside the boundaries of the kingroup. Marriage resulted mostly in the immediate setting up of an independent farm household.

Farms among these property-owning family groups were ill-defined units, which could change during the domestic cycle, and were eventually broken up on the death of the parental couple. Land could be added in the course of the life cycle by receiving inheritances from unmarried relatives, or by renting land from relatives who had moved out of the community, retired, or did not themselves farm. Thus there were constant rearrangements of property and tenure relations within the kingroup associated with migration, life-cycle events, marriage and death. Although it was quite possible that a farmer only owned a tiny piece of land, his status and identity were determined by belonging to a specific kingroup.

It is significant that these groups owned more land than they could actually farm until after the second world war. Farm size was limited because small domestic groups formed both the basis of the workforce and the unit of consumption. Moreover, not all offspring set up a farm. This not only resulted in ever-changing tenure relations between families within this larger kingroup, but also in leasing out land on a temporary basis to landless or near-landless farmers in the same hamlet. In fact, many small farmers depended almost completely on land originating from these property-owning kin groups.

The second group in Saint-André traditional rural society consisted of much more individualized and mobile small-property owning and landless farmers. Although their farm size often barely differed from householders belonging to the elite group, they were excluded from intermarriage with this group and much more volatile, dependent and insecure about being able to continue farming the same land the next year. They were much less attached to the community and the land, easily moving away to other villages in search for favourable tenure relations.

This group's survival as farmers mostly depended on renting land from farmers and non-farmers belonging to the elite groups. This was never on a stable basis. From one year to the next they might have to give up the land and start farming somewhere else, or leave farming altogether. Short-term decision making was often the result of being dependent on 'surplus land' and knowing that this land was actually reserved for distributing within the established kingroups. During the 1970s, when many these farmers were still present, none of them had any investment

or improvement plans. Although their position improved because of more secure tenure relations, they knew that their land was going to be withdrawn soon. Succession was therefore always ruled out, and they were simply waiting for early retirement on farms that did not differ much from their grandfathers' time.

Access to land was thus clearly defined by kinship and marriage, on the one hand, while the less well-off group depended on 'surplus land'. It is clear that status and identity here were not measured on the basis of farm size. Farms did not differ much in size. The social hierarchy was much more based on priority access to inherited land, associated with kinship. Identity and status were ascribed on the basis of belonging to a group, rather than on individual or family characteristics. Status maintenance depended on kinship strategies and alliances.

Patrimonial Strategies and the Domestic Group

The situation in the Dutch community of Geesteren was entirely different. The rural stratification system was not based on belonging to an extended kingroup, but on the historically defined position of the household. Landed property was an important asset in the local hierarchy, but closely connected with how this property was acquired and which role it played in patrimonial and economic strategies. On the basis of these criteria, three groups of farmers can be distinguished.

First there was a group of 'established farmers,' the original settlers of the community, who lived there long before the division of the common lands in the mid-nineteenth century. Before the enclosure of the commons, they held a privileged position as 'shareholders,' which implied access to the common fields and political power over their management. When the commons were divided they became full owners of very considerable properties. Their political and legal status was translated into material wealth, which gave them substantial power over the course of rural development.

However necessary, ownership of land was only one element defining membership of this group. Equally important was the cultural performance of these farmers, in particular with respect to defending the honour of the family. It was not property as such that was important, but the successful application of a model of patrimonial management (c.f. Bourdieu 1962; Rogers 1991; Zink 1993). Through historical research I discovered that the reproduction of this group followed a pattern of lineal succession, maintaining the unity between the domestic group and the land. Inheritance was strictly impartible, favouring only one of the children as successor to the farm and patriarch of the domestic group. Most of the original settlers from the nineteenth century managed to reproduce the 'house' (see, on this concept, Lévi-Strauss 1983; Chiva 1987; Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995) in an unbroken sequence to the

present day. Their land and place of residence were practically identical with some 200 years ago. High status was derived here from belonging to a household that could trace its origins along direct lines of succession, and status maintenance depended on the successful transfer of property and domestic responsibilities to one member of the next generation and the exclusion of non-heirs. The greatest threat to this group has always been the breakup of the 'house' as a result of internal conflict. But fragmentation of the original landed estate was carefully prevented.

These farmers nonetheless provided new farmers with continuous access to land throughout the nineteenth century and until the second world war. This did not contradict patrimonial policy since it concerned uncultivated land that had been acquired after the division of the commons, which was clearly distinguished from ancestral land belonging to the domestic group. Practically all this land was gradually sold to mostly landless settlers, who took great pains in bringing it under cultivation.

This experience has certainly marked the people living in the community. It created the image of an elite group that was not primarily interested in land as a material asset, to be exploited for profit and expansion. From the perspective of lineal reproduction and maintenance of a core patrimony, they were also uninterested in setting up more than one of their own children. However, by selling land to enterprising small farmers, they certainly contributed to the growth of a new group of rural producers, who were not concerned with patrimonial strategies and family status, but mainly motivated by the desire to create a subsistence base and escape a proletarian existence. The emergence of this group (the third in our schema, to which I return below), with its mentality of independence, used to struggling for survival with a purely materialist perception of land, proved to be an important element in the postwar modernization process.

The second group of farmers were the small owner-occupiers. These farmers were already present in the community before the division of the commons, but they had no rights or privileges. They benefitted from the land division, but received only small portions of arable land and some wasteland, which they gradually reclaimed. Although endowed with sufficient land to survive, they did not try very hard to enlarge their farms by buying additional land on the land market. And even if they had tried, they would probably not have been very successful.

It became clear from a reconstruction of the small owner-occupiers' properties that these were very stable, not significantly adding or losing land. In fact, they copied the model of the elite farmers by rigorously maintaining the integrity of the 'house'. They clearly sought to achieve the same goals and thus identified strongly with the elite group. They shared the same symbols, mentality and patrimonial preferences, although they never managed to achieve the same status. It is likely that the elite group deliberately excluded families from this group from buying their surplus land, thus preventing them from upward mobility into the

enchanted circle of the traditional elite. Conversely, the former landless farmers, who actually acquired most of the land, explicitly excluded themselves from this local frame of reference and were therefore not seen as possible intruders into the relatively closed world of local 'aristocrats'

It is certain that, by the twentieth century, these property owners had become a relatively comfortable group with medium-sized farms. In the 1850s they still belonged to the marginal farmers with no historical rights in the community and minuscule farms. With the division of the commons they were endowed with a resource for upward mobility from which they fully benefitted. All their energy was focused on gradually incorporating the wasteland into the farm, and by the 1940s their farms were mostly in excess of 10 ha. During this period numerous new farmers settled on much smaller acreages, thus constituting a new class of smallholders, with a much lower status.

The third group of farmers, already mentioned, were very active on the land market throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, thus contributing to an increase in the number of farmers and the growth of a new lower class. Their attitude to land was unlike that of the 'older' farmers. They were not devoted to a patrimonial 'house' and its associated form of reproduction. The way in which they reproduced themselves was more erratic, not following any preestablished line of succession. Farms were split up, dissolved and recomposed, new people entering the farming scene and others leaving the community. They had a reputation for being hard-working pioneers, mostly starting with nothing and mainly motivated by self-sufficiency and independence. Land was seen as a material resource, as a source of income and, if possible, a source of profit and expansion. Many of them combined the farm with off-farm work and small crafts. This category of farmers defined life as a struggle for survival in which they could not rely on their own resources to achieve an independent livelihood. This explains their activity on the land market, and also their greater ability to step out of farming when comparable conditions for making a living emerged in some other sector.

Reconfiguring Locality or Reworking Globality?

Having described the two contrasting local systems of how access to productive resources is embedded into local structure and culture, we now come to the question of how these sedimented forms channelled the immense changes in the farm economy after the second world war. Was farming indeed disembedded from its local context and did global forces impose new rules on the transfer and management of property? Could farmers escape from local constraints and historically shaped mentalities and identities and simply become independent actors operating in a wider

economy? Or was the disposition to benefit from new technologies and expanding markets marked by local forces? Was the global deglobalized?

Mobilizing Kin Networks and Reproducing Status in a New Context

Agricultural modernization was in full swing during my fieldwork in Saint-André. New farmhouses with high-tech kitchens and white-washed walls were abutted on old stone-built houses with tiled roofs and clay floors. Modern milking parlours could be seen in operation next to a farmer's wife struggling with buckets in an old cow shed. Big herds of Frisian cows consuming industrial products faced the sturdy dark brown local race freely grazing in an adjoining pasture. Huge tractors were ploughing through the fields, while at the same time horses and left-over jeeps from the second world war transported fresh loads of sugar beet.

These contrasts clearly showed two sides of the modernization process: the decline of traditional practices and the growth of mechanized, industrial agriculture. This process was coupled with the gradual disappearance of small farmers and the emergence of *grands agriculteurs*. Although many small farmers were still active, they had no illusions about the future. Most of them were waiting to be of an age when they could apply for an early retirement scheme and the definitive handing over of the land to a neighbouring farmer. Their children had already given up hope of ever becoming farmers, increasingly finding employment in expanding local industrial enterprises.

The general attitude among the villagers was positive. The overwhelming feeling was that the process of modernization was chosen, channelled and initiated locally. There was a great desire to transform old farmhouses and embrace new patterns of consumption. Technological innovation, agricultural markets and government policies were hardly problematized or understood. These were taken-for-granted and considered as challenges to set into motion a process that was highly regulated by local factors. Markets and technology were, moreover, not considered anonymous forces but experienced concretely by what the local grain dealer offered for their grain, what the dairy cooperative paid for their milk, and what local tractor dealers and extension agents had on offer. That agricultural restructuring was a European phenomenon, regulated by distant political centres, and financial interests was irrelevant.

What struck me most was that I could not discover any feeling of discontinuity or uncertainty. People seemed to be able to predict what was going to happen and each family anticipated accordingly an almost premediated future. Why was the transformation of farming perceived in terms of historical continuity? Why did farmers understand the process of differentiation not in terms of the unequal access to productive resources, but in terms of traditional status attributes and privileges? In fact, the opportunities offered by 'modern' agriculture were translated into terms

of the local social system and culture. Although from a distance the process of agricultural differentiation may appear to have been the classical outcome of global processes, it was locally perceived as a unique event, embedded in community time and place.

As mentioned before, rural society had long been characterized by two groups, which had reproduced themselves over a long time-span in a sort of symbiotic way. The families who controlled most of the land, systematically began to withdraw it from their tenants, making it available to a small number of farmers who were considered the best representatives of the kingroup. These families thus had abundant access to valuable resources when agricultural modernization offered the chance to farm more land and to earn more income. The pattern of farm concentration thus simply resulted from established patterns of resource endowment, and was therefore not seen as a result of rising competition, or as an effect of unequal chances in a market economy; it was personalized and localized. The large families had always seen land as something to be farmed primarily by their own kin. New opportunities were simply translated into well-established patterns of support, favouritism and solidarity.

For the well-off families, taking advantage of the new opportunities was not just a matter of professional preference or economic gain. They were expected and were respected for doing so. Having a dynamic farm and being 'big,' giving your sons an agricultural education and sending your daughters to college, were new ways of expressing distinction, thus replacing the old clientist and paternalist displays from the past.

This sense of local self reliance also revealed itself in the sphere of industrial development. People in the parish relied completely on agricultural employment and small crafts until the 1960s. Out-migration was the typical strategy for young people who were unable to become a farmer or craftsman. These people mostly moved permanently to not too distant urban centres. This trend was gradually reversed when, in the 1960s, major industrial firms settled in the region. The new industries were not located in urban agglomerations, but in small towns and villages that had been previously non-industrialized.

When I first visited the site of one of these firms, I thought I recognized the pattern of industrial location then becoming common in peripheral rural areas with an abundant, cheap and submissive labour force. However, it soon became clear that the complex of buildings near the village I studied was developed by a local farmer's son, who had invested all his savings and later profits in setting up his enterprise.

Apart from providing employment to a growing number of mostly unskilled labourers, the industry also initiated important innovations in the farm economy. This firm, a chicken slaughterhouse, started as a one-man enterprise collecting farmyard chicken all over the village for delivery to larger middlemen. With his knowledge of the local farm economy, combined with the foresight that the market for prepacked slaughtered

chicken would expand quickly, this farmer's soon began to process the chicken for mass consumption markets. At the local level he mobilized farmers to produce chicken on a larger scale, offering them contracts which included the delivery of chicken fodder. At the same time he established contacts with supermarket chains all over France and in other European countries. It was a great success. At the time of my fieldwork, practically all farmers were engaged in chicken farming as a side line, and some as their main line of production.

The effect on the local economy was twofold. On the one hand, the declining farm population could find employment without moving away from the home village, while on the other, numerous farmers had found an extra on-farm income, which they combined with dairy farming. The character of this export-oriented industry was firmly embedded in local society. The raw material was produced by farmers in the immediate environment of the farm, and processing was in the hands of local managers and employers. People often drew my attention to the fact that production relations in a way replicated traditional divisions of labour as they existed when the smallest farmers and their children used to work for bigger farmers as agricultural labourers and domestic servants. The analogy to industrial wage labour while engaged in processing local farm products was clearly felt, and this again strengthened the feeling that even industrial development was built upon preexisting patterns of stratification and power relations. The blossoming chicken industry was not seen as being connected with global changes in food consumption, or with the logic of industrial location in an environment where the farm population is declining and farmers are eager to expand production on a non-land basis. Even though the contracts were demanding, working conditions in the slaughterhouse disagreeable and wages low, the chicken firm was seen as a product of and a blessing for local society.

The Historical Character of Status and Mentality

In Geesteren, the period after 1950 differed substantially from the previous periods. The possibilities for enlarging farm size or creating new farms by bringing new land under cultivation were exhausted. While land was becoming scarce, changing economic and technological conditions increasingly pressed farmers to reconsider the now obsolete concept of viability. Rising living standards outside agriculture and growing possibilities for achieving a decent livelihood in other sectors drove many potential successors to opt for a living away from the farm. Those who remained in farming could only realize an acceptable income by considerably raising output. Farmers with only a few hectares of land were at an obvious disadvantage. They either had to buy more land, or be prepared to invest heavily in intensive livestock rearing in order to guarantee the viability of the farm. Lack of capital often excluded these farmers from any of those

possibilities. Farmers with a large acreage were in a better position. The use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides and the introduction of high-yielding grass and corn allowed them to multiply the number of cows. Labour input could simultaneously be reduced by mechanizing most of the work in the fields and milking parlour.

This process was, however, far from self-evident. Statistics on the number of farms and the number of people working in agriculture reveal that the effects of agricultural modernization were only becoming visible by the 1960s. Many small farmers were clearly reluctant to give up their source of livelihood, especially if they derived extra income from outside agriculture. Since most of them had no successor there was no point in realizing any significant investment. These small farmers simply survived and were only really motivated to retire when the state introduced a general old-age pension scheme in 1958. Furthermore, the reintroduction of a free land market in 1963, which boosted land prices, must have been an incentive for ageing farmers to sell their land. Although it took about a decade before the repercussions of modernization became visible in the structure of agriculture, the foundations of agricultural restructuring were laid much earlier.

All the long-established large landowning families from the early nineteenth century were still present in the mid-1980s. The majority was characterized by a long, uninterrupted, single line of succession, maintaining the core of the property linked to the original farm unit, with only occasional changes in farm size, evincing a very relaxed style of farming, unmarked by accumulation policies. Residential continuity combined with single succession was the dominant model of reproduction, not threatened by the dispersal of family land.

That one specific group among the farming population had managed to reproduce itself according to a set of essentially unchanging principles is quite extraordinary. After the second world war, when agriculture incorporated all kinds of commodity circuits, these families somehow managed to avoid commoditizing land and required no additional resources to maintain a viable lifestyle.

The smaller landowners, who had achieved a respectable status by carefully consolidating property in a single family line, acted in the same way as the large owners. These farmers were generally much less endowed with land, but what they had was clearly a solid base for developing a viable farm into the 1980s.

The development of these two types of landowners was the very picture of stability. Most seemed to be content with what he had, and was far removed from the prototype entrepreneur with an active interest in accumulating land. They simply restructured their farm technically and economically, but always without significantly expanding property and farm size. Land, as before, seemed to be defined as a stable resource, supporting

family values, in contrast with its meaning as an object of speculation or accumulation.

How can this non-speculative attitude towards land be explained? Why was land considered primarily a resource invested with tradition and symbolic meaning, rather than suitable for financial adventuring or exploitation for profit maximization? The fact that land was cautiously kept outside the sphere of commodity transactions (via closed inheritance), and that they did not buy additional land suggests, I believe, a conception of land as a family asset, to be protected and safeguarded. Such a primarily patrimonial view seemed to contradict accumulation strategies directed at maximizing land as an economic and financial resource. It is as if a patrimony accumulated through purchased land was conceived as 'contaminated'.

Additional reasons may be advanced for the rather relaxed style of enterprise development among these families. The postwar generation on these farms entered their career as farm operators under relatively easy conditions. Having been in a position to take over a farm without the burden of enormous bank loans, they were not confronted with a real break in farm development and the need to boost their income capacity. Generational change was hardly uprooting: the son simply acquired a different status and brought his wife into the household (for her this *was* an upsetting experience). But his father, mother and brothers and sisters were very likely to continue to live with or close by him. Work on the farm did not really change and the available labour force was abundant. This lack of cyclical change and development certainly imposed a sense of continuity and stability.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that the large farmers in particular had traditionally derived their status from the size of inherited land and the reputation of the family. Having a substantial amount of land provided the basis for a rather comfortable lifestyle. Hard toil, working every inch of land was seen as the fate of the new smallholders settling on uncultivated land. With such a socio-cultural background, it is not surprising that the entrepreneurial spirit among these landowners was not particularly strong. Even when the postwar generation took over of the farm, they continued to rely on good stewardship, not launching themselves into risky financial transactions and entrepreneurial endeavours. Although this patrimonial style of managing the land resulted in a considerable loss of status *compared with* farmers who defined their land primarily as a source of profit, many descendants of the large owners are still relying on traditional status attributes.

This description of the 'settled' farmers is, of course, necessarily simplistic. Even though they did not buy land, they certainly intensified the enterprise and made, in most cases and especially among smaller landowners, the necessary investments for modernizing the farm. But even here their efforts were modest: having a substantial amount of land, they

limited themselves to quite traditional forms of dairy farming, not exploit-
ing all the technical possibilities of intensification. Their economic strat-
egies of farm development and maintaining viability were thus reflections
of patrimonial goals. Although of course farm viability was necessary to
sustain a household, the amount of land owned by large farmers meant
that an entrepreneurial strategy was not really necessary needed to achieve
the continuity of the house as a cultural edifice.

The smaller owner occupiers basically followed the same pattern of
consolidation. But the fact that they had less land meant that patrimonial
goals needed to be underpinned by a stronger entrepreneurial strategy.
Since the early nineteenth century they had intensified land use as a
matter of necessity, and this had proven to be highly successful. Each
succeeding generation could thus comply with changing living standards.
And each generation could do this by mobilizing private resources. Their
position was, however, more vulnerable after the second world war.
Safeguarding continuity meant that they were obliged to continue the path
of intensification. It is remarkable that most of them indeed succeeded in
transforming the farm to such an extent that they could survive into the
1980s. Maintaining an undivided farm at the change of generations was
certainly an important cultural ideal, but it had become an economic
necessity for them as well.

If these groups of farmers maintained and stabilized their resources,
then who were the farmers who disappeared massively during the
postwar period, and who benefitted from the land they released? It is
obvious that great changes took place within the category of 'new'
settlers, mainly among those who acquired land in the first half of the
twentieth century. These farmers mainly bought the wasteland alienated
by the large landowners. Most of their farms were established between
1900 and 1940, when the amount of land necessary for sustaining a family
was extremely small. Most of these tiny farms disappeared between 1950
and 1980, unable to cope with economic constraints. There was no ques-
tion of continuity of any sort for them, and the peasantization of the
prewar period was followed by rapid proletarianization in the period of
agricultural modernization.

But not all these recent settlers lost their land. Some were better
equipped to face the postwar process of modernization because, for
instance, they had already successfully accumulated land in the prewar
period, although most increased the farm from the 1960s onwards. Some
even developed into the most entrepreneurial farmers of the community.
These farmers initially started buying small acreages, settling on virgin
land, mostly dispersed outside the main settlements. Since they did not
dispose of the reservoir of wasteland as did the established farmers, their
only way to guarantee continuity was by being very active on the land
market. Having initially bought the land, they started without any patri-
monial or family history. Their land was not invested with symbolic

meaning, and not the result of meticulously designed inheritance strategies. These characteristics clearly marked them as a distinctive group. These farmers do not appear to have been handling their property as a fixed asset, with a specific ancestral identity. They were both socially and spatially excluded from locally defined modes of identity formation and reproduction. Their house and land had been built and acquired within living memory and not bestowed on them in a highly regulative social and cultural environment.

Land for the new settlers was primarily a resource enabling an independent livelihood, an economic asset used to employ and feed a family. Successive generations had clearly not been brought up in a family tradition that elevated the patrimony into an untouchable domain. Used to this type of detached attitude to land, it was as quickly given up as it had been acquired one generation earlier, especially if the same cultural ideals could be realized in forms of self-employment outside farming. There was, however another category among these recent farmers, basically sharing the same attitude to land, who developed into real accumulators, increasing farm size from around 5 to 10 ha to well over 20 and sometimes 30 ha. Among these farmers there was a discernible entrepreneurial spirit, exemplified by huge land transactions and investments in farm development. Some of these farmers now rank among the most technologically advanced entrepreneurs. The two different strategies were seemingly based on the same entrepreneurial spirit, a market-oriented mentality, and a deeply seated conviction that everything is possible by working very hard and taking risks. Given the restricted availability of land, these attitudes could only be made to materialize in farming by a relatively small group. The ones who opted out of agriculture very often set up small businesses in trade, the building industry or agricultural equipment.

There is objective evidence of change in many aspects of local society, and people are clearly conscious of it. Change is most noticeable in farm management. Older people experienced the period after the 1960s as a great metamorphosis, while the younger generation of farmers has grown up with the idea that farming means continuous adjustment to new technology, policy measures and market forces. The collapse of agrarian society probably constitutes the greatest change ever experienced by the farming population. Immediately after the second world war, 75 percent of the total population was still dependent on agriculture, and almost 90 percent was born in their place of residence. Farmers gradually lost their leading position and became just an important minority. This transformation has been accompanied by a drastic change in the built environment. While farms dominated the hamlets in the 1950s and 1960s, they are now sentinels of the past in the midst of endless housing estates.

It is unnecessary to compile an exhaustive catalogue of the changes that have affected people's lives. More to the point is how farmers have managed to keep their bearings, retain their identity and maintain control

over their lives, in the midst of all this. The answer lies in the fact that people have not basically changed their ideas about property, family and kinship and, what is more important, that these ideas are still fully operative in managing the family patrimony. These cultural traditions are not simply survivals from another era, carried around like relics by elderly people. They are, on the contrary, basically shared by younger generations. Although the organization of domestic space has been adapted and the farm has become more central in estate continuity, certain cultural notions have retained their vitality as reference points for people in the stream of changing circumstances.

Enduring commitment to the family patrimony has not only proved an effective weapon against the potentially disintegrative forces of agricultural restructuring, it also guaranteed an enduring link between the farming and the non-farming communities. All those people who grew up in a farmhouse, but left to set up a non-agrarian household, still identify with their parental house. Their role in sanctioning the reproduction of this house should not be underestimated. The sense of continuity among the farming population is fostered by the fact that they did not really experience a cultural shock: people's conventional ways of doing and thinking did not suddenly become obsolete, nor were they obliged radically to revise their ideas or lose control over their own lives. Although aware of the contradictions, with some rejection of familialism altogether, people are capable of structuring their lives to such an extent that changing circumstances are a challenge rather than a threat.

The sense of continuity was nurtured by the fact that agricultural modernization could easily be incorporated without upsetting local cultural principles and identities. That section of the farming population among which the differentiation process was most felt, was traditionally seen as a vulnerable, dynamic and turbulent one. Their appearance and disappearance took place within living memory of most of the population. It was more or less predictable that exactly there the wave of agricultural modernization would have its deepest impact. This capacity to couch general events in local, often personal categories is one aspect of deglobalizing these events.

Conclusion

Accounts of rural social and economic change were quite gloomy during the 1960s and 1970s. They anticipated a deserted countryside dominated by a few big agro-industrial firms and envisaged not only the destruction of the peasantry, but also the end of rural society and culture (Mendras 1967; Gervais, Servolin and Weil 1965, for the Netherlands, see de Haan 1993b). Later on, several theories were advanced about the 'survival' of family farmers and the ways in which capital indirectly subjects them to

its logic (see, for instance, Whatmore *et al.* 1987a,b). More recent approaches have emphasized that farmers are not defenseless victims of modernization, but use all kinds of strategies to retain substantial degrees of freedom from markets (van der Ploeg 1994; de Haan 1993a, 1995). The emphasis in these different perspectives is either on the fate of disappearing farmers (the losers), or on surviving farmers, whether uniformly subordinated to capital or having relative degrees of freedom *vis-à-vis* markets and technology. My perspective in this chapter is somewhat different.

This chapter is concerned with how the process of differentiation is actually structured at local level, which implies taking the whole process of selection into account, including both survivors and non-survivors. In this respect, capitalism only sets the general conditions, the translation of which at local level is relatively independent from these forces. My focus has been not on individual farm families' degrees of freedom *vis-à-vis* the wider context, but on locally structured survival chance *per se*. These chances are distributed by locally defined criteria, and individual farm families are differentially endowed by local factors to take advantage of them. Degrees of freedom and room for manoeuvre for individual families must therefore be studied both as 'internally' and 'externally' defined parameters. Access to productive resources, as I have demonstrated in this chapter, is based on the ability to mobilize local cultural principles and social networks and on historically embedded identities. Global developments are thus mediated locally, resulting in specific, deglobalized patterns of development.

Although the same processes were taking place in both communities, how they occurred, and the schemes of interpretation through which they were experienced, cannot be explained from a global perspective. Agricultural modernization in itself introduced new parameters for land use and farm size, but how farmers coped with these new constraints at local level was not determined by market forces, competition, or any other patterns of accumulation derived from the capitalist market. Access to natural resources was structured by mechanisms originating far back in time, which had always regulated the distribution of land. The fundamental structure of property and land-use relations was based on inheritance, marriage and other kinship strategies. This basically explains why people did not experience agricultural modernization and differentiation as a real break with the past. The implications at the local level followed well-trodden paths, which people could fully understand.

This chapter has emphasized the significance of the concept of locality for analyzing how global trends are translated into place-specific processes. My empirical examples were drawn from rural contexts where identity and class are associated with kinship and property. Moreover, I have only analysed globalization and globality in terms of a generalized exposure to radically changing market forces. It may well be that agricul-

ture occupies such a special place that conclusions on globality and locality cannot be generalized from it. Conversely, this chapter has shown that studies of globalization in other domains of life cannot ignore the case of agriculture.

9 Globalization and Food Objects[1]

Alberto Arce

Introduction

Most contemporary researchers agree that conceptualizing the many versions of global theorizing and analysis is an extremely difficult enterprise. This chapter critically examines Robertson's (1992) notion of global consciousness, suggesting that it is important to consider the 'reality' of the world through the way in which global objects – in this case food – are incorporated into people's everyday life. This chapter focuses on the issue of people's consumption of objects. It begins with a brief review of some of the more interesting current work in the field of consumption, objects, taste and identity. This review provides a set of conceptual and methodological principles linking consumers and globalization. An analysis of the case of fresh fruit and vegetable consumption follows, exploring how global food is internalized by the active consumer, who support the globalization of agriculture through his/her purchasing power. Next we examine the differential responses of actors engaged in the supply of fruit in Chile. Finally, we argue that global processes need to be translated by local actors in order to materialize. Although we should not personify globalization in the agency of local actors, we need to find which experiences and relations animate a person's global consciousness. In other words, we need to document how global processes are mediated, adapted or managed by the life experience of people. The chapter concludes by presenting key methodological issues arising from an actor-oriented perspective. These can contribute to the development of a research agenda in which internal and external relations are not seen as creating different orders, but rather as reconstituting fragments and parts, which constantly modify social life.

Consciousness and Globalization

Robertson argues that the concept of globalization refers to a 'modern' compression of the world, coupled with an intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole (1992, pp. 1–15). I take this as a point of depar-

ture, but my emphasis differs. I would stress that the consciousness of only some actors has been intensified, and these agents are able to populate the world as a whole. One of the main problems here is what is actually meant by consciousness. From Robertson's discussion one can infer that consciousness is no more than being aware of cultures other than one's own, and the sense of global interdependence (Robertson 1992, pp. 8–9).

This characterization is highly problematic if we accept Berger and Luckmann's (1987) position that consciousness is always intentional in relation to objects, and that we are only 'conscious of something or other': 'this is so regardless of whether the object^2 of consciousness is experienced as belonging to an external physical world or apprehended as an element of an inward subjective reality.' In other words, the significance of the notion of consciousness in discussions of globalization may constitute an attempt to find experiences and meanings in the process of compressing of the world. In brief, the common intentional character of consciousness can assist us in illuminating the manner in which global elements are incorporated into people's everyday life. This may help us to avoid the highly abstract perception of the world as a global entity: 'the world being for-itself' (Berger and Luckmann 1987, p. 183). I would argue that abstract entities are not significant in the way that humanity's agenda is thematized; what is significant is the ability of actors' to represent their emergent capacities and to imagine themselves as communities parallel and comparable to other communities. This in my view, is the contribution of Anderson, when he analyses the new world republican independence movement in the last quarter of the eighteenth century (Anderson 1991, p. 192).

Anderson's argument is that the formation of the nation state in Latin America involved a rupture with the 'existing world,' and spread new meanings to Europe. According to my understanding, this trope generated partial connections with European nationalism and languages, and created parallel and comparable globalities (one of these experiences was the self-conscious *indigenismo* that arose in south America – Anderson 1991, p. 198). Returning to Robertson, and in contrast to his perspective, our notion of consciousness is a central connection between the understanding of globalization processes and how different 'objects' present themselves in the lifeworld of individuals as constituents of 'different spheres of reality' (Berger and Luckmann 1987, p. 35). In accordance with Robertson, our notion of consciousness is part and parcel of a world people's experience unfolding globally, that is taken for granted. Hence, our concept of global consciousness is defined much more from the position of the actors than from the position of the researcher.

Everyday life in a period of globalization, as in any other period, is experienced as an ordered reality that is shared with others and often presented and perceived as 'objective'.^{3} In the popular view, everyday

life presents itself as apparently independent from the will of actors, being prearranged through cultural norms and institutional patterns. In this view, reality appears to be governed by global objects that determine human actions and behaviour (for example, Toyotas from Japan, Coca Cola from the US). This is the normative way that people are held to make sense of global 'reality.'

Following Schutz (1962), we could suggest that global consciousness, as a form of knowledge, is organized, valued and used in social practices forming the lifeworld (the here and now) of individual social actors. The social individual is located at the centre of this organization of knowledge and consciousness; through his/her social practices, space and time are compressed into zones[4] with different degrees of relevance and meaning. In this construction of 'order,' the social practices of actors are enclosed within parallel planes which cut perpendicularly to the axis of globalization in order to organize everyday life, generating representations of how commodities, capital, ideas, values and social relationships rotate in the world. This generates a pragmatic view that can apprehend the 'instrumental reality' of the modern world but this does not exhaust the individual actor's capacity for making sense of others in remote areas of the globe. Having said this, an actor's interest in the far zones of this reality is less intense and can be seen to constitute a typification of global reality *par excellence*. In this vein, an approach that analyses the lifeworld of social actors should not be based on modelling the factors that constitute 'the global human condition' or the 'general features of life in recent history' (see Robertson 1992, pp. 26–27). Perhaps, instead, we should study the processes through which individuals' mediate and organize the often conflicting information they receive, and the manner in which they rework this information through their social practices.

To take an example, agricultural producers in Third World countries today encounter a 'new style' of export agriculture. They are confronted by different representations of quality, diverse delivery access points, and complex processes that attribute economic value to their products. These trends expose the transformation of agriculture: from the production of standardized commodities, to the ability of producers to use agricultural knowledge to add value, simultaneously maintaining their own zones of reality and segmented knowledge about the way global markets operate. This knowledge is a far cry from the view of modernization as the diffusion of agricultural techniques or the improvement in communication between different groups of people.

A recent competition organized by the Dutch airline KLM (Bridging the World) invited a group of women flower producers from the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania to the Netherlands to observe and learn about the flower commercialization process.[5] They reached Schiphol to await the arrival of their flowers and followed them to the auction. They observed the auction room in action, how the 'anti-clock commodity indicators'

and dealers' computers were associated in a set of 'objective' practices to satisfy the demand of flower consumers in different world-wide markets.

The Tanzanian producers experimented with computers and even briefly learned how to be flower auctioneers. But the most important lesson, according to one observer, was that women finally understood the importance of quality in marketing flowers. The women had in Tanzania been unable to understand why some flowers were destroyed. It was difficult for them to grasp the notion that only certain flowers with some specific quality characteristics could achieve a 'good price' on the market. The market, as constructed in the Netherlands, was remote and inaccessible to them, and they were unable to manipulate it. In the auction room, however, women could follow and make sense of the technical explanations and the importance of flower quality. They engaged in a deliberate, although by no means easy, effort to internalize the value of flowers. A good price was a matter of adding 'quality value' to the Tanzanian flowers. This attribution of value was authorized by Dutch flower auctions and those 'unfamiliar' everyday practices taking place in the 'reality' of the auction room.

This global place (locale) of value construction and representation was the one that finally allowed or denied the right of passage to some flowers. Computers, anti-clock auction indicators, numbers, lights, sounds and dealers' practices were all assembled to make flowers not just flowers, but visible objects of desire. These flowers were made into objects allowing consumers to realize their desires for 'quality flowers.' This quality could then be consumed, transmitted and rotated globally.

According to this account, the women finally understood that the administrator running their flower cooperative in Kilimanjaro was not pocketing their money. They remembered the occasions when she had explained that the Kilamanjaro flowers had been destroyed in Europe due to saturation of the market. This information made no sense whatsoever to the producers in terms of the everyday world of Kilimanjaro. They did not share their 'reality' with the administrator and were unable to believe her, suspecting her to be dishonest.

Before coming to the Netherlands, the women producers could not make sense of Dutch market rationality. What was the point of searching for a 'source' of flowers miles away from Europe in which no one had pleasure? They loved flowers as producers, considering themselves the best because of their pleasure in and knowledge of their flowers. Producing flowers was about enjoying their freshness, colour, texture, shape and size as far as they were concerned. They learned from the Dutch auction that quality was a set of physical and 'objective' conditions attributed to each flower. Dutch market flower classification did not include producers' enjoyment as a criterion of quality adjudication. The women were more

surprised than disappointed to discover this variability of meaning at work.

The paramount reality of the daily flower market in the Netherlands, and their own experience of producing flowers, transported women to a transitional zone between globalities. This zone has its own meanings and different orders, which is indifferently connected to those of everyday life among Kilimanjaro producers or the valuation of flowers in Holland. Like African everyday objects which, outside their functional context, became pieces of art with an extra-value, Tanzanian flowers were incorporated into a process of adding value to flowers. This means that those flowers which do not come up to quality standards have to be sacrificed in order to add value to the global quality stock of flowers.

The Tanzanian women learned that having the local knowledge to produce flowers and gaining pleasure from this activity was not enough in terms of adding commercial value to flowers. The women returned to Tanzania with a five year supply of improved seed and the promise of an annual visit to their cooperative by a seed company to provide technical assistance and monitor their quality commodity progression.

This illustration suggests that globalization as a process does not have a homogeneous impact in each place or for each actor or group of actors. It is commonplace in the globalization debate to say that distant localities are linked in such a way that local events are cast by processes occurring many miles away. This organizational assumption concerning how societies and nation-states operate says very little about how, for example, actors interpret and translate new globally oriented economic ventures. While we need to question the social implications of time–space compression in contemporary social life, we cannot assume a direct and unproblematic link between information/communication technologies and institutional reflexivity. As the above illustration indicates, actors' internalize and process information in different ways while generating a variety of reflexive practices.

Given the clearly uneven, fragile and heterogeneous nature of linkages in contemporary social change, people living in different zones have come to realize that the world and their zones are not unified systems. These zones cannot be controlled and administered by stationary technologies, the conservation and protection of classical styles of organization, the domestic shelter of economic activities, the regulation of transformation in the international markets, and the use of new large-scale mediation policies among international, national and regional contexts.

In their attempts at interpreting these world-globalities social scientists, also need to recognize a whole new range of conditions, uncertainties and socio-political responses. And in this manner, 'states,' 'transnationals,' 'markets,' 'technologies' and 'global entities' themselves enter (deterritorialize and territorialize) actors' zones, where reordering processes are taking place. As a researcher, I recognize the complexity of conflicts taking

place in Third World countries. This reality is quite different from the reports and newspaper descriptions of Third World conflicts on television (Richards 1996). Hence, these parallel sets of global representations of people, conflicts and 'realities' introduce a high degree of tension into my 'global consciousness' and sense of 'one world reality.'

Objects, People, and Contested Realities

The study of objects can contribute to an analysis of how people see (or not) themselves as part of global processes. The circulation of commodities and the secular character of money appear as some of the measurable dimensions in which the universal character of globalization is expressed and recognized as the social materialization of communication. The present condition of capitalism is intimately bound up with the modern technical compression of the world; for certain authors (Harvey 1989) the development of the financial aspects of capitalist organization, and the role that credit plays in global markets, has managed to provide a degree of stability to the present regime of accumulation. These kinds of transformations raise the questions of whether the financial nature of capitalism implies new ways of differentiating objects, of how people associate with one another, and how objects appear in individual lifeworlds.

The rotation of objects contributes to an everyday 'reality' that is shared and partially internalized by individuals. This 'reality' is perceived as objective because objects are consumed in prearranged cultural forms and according to cultural patterns by people. The consumption process is organized around the individual's practices of necessity and desire. Objects become valuable through exchange transactions. The movements of these objects, furthermore, creates 'trails' between social relationships, organizational linkages and networks of values. These trails, interests and networks become trajectories in the course of time, constructing diverse pragmatic views of the world which orient people's consumption practices. These views of the world establish processes of social differentiation and taste which, in their turn, can become signs and symbols with which to interpret the social order (see Veblen 1957; Bourdieu 1984). It is through the social practice of consumption that Bourdieu's 'habitus' helps us to identify 'high' and 'popular' culture, as well as 'common' conceptions of classes. However, Bourdieu does not examine what people make or do with the objects they consume.

The social bases of how people interact with objects arranging and rearranging them in their lifeworld (appropriating, or reappropriating it – see de Certeau 1984), is something Bourdieu's analysis cannot encompass within the consumer categories of 'fan,' 'supporter' or 'middle class.' Bourdieu's work highlights the importance of consumption in processes of social differentiation (du Gay 1996, pp. 75–95), but he

is unable to show the differences in consumption between and among different middle class consumers. Miller's (1987) analysis takes a parallel, although rather different point of departure with regard to the 'projection of identity' (Thomas 1991, p. 26). Millers' argument concerning the objectification of collective identity through the consumption of objects is presented as singularly differentiated processes of active appropriation of different objects' attributes. The problem with this approach is that it implies a one-to-one relationship between objects and the consumers' feelings of belonging or difference (Thomas 1991, p. 25). Furthermore, it may reduce the complexity of the process to a 'chain of objectification and sublimation' (Thomas 1991, p. 26). I agree with Thomas when he suggests that we have to avoid 'any constrictive typology of object-meaning in an abstracted domain of man, subject, and object' (p. 26). We need to focus on the varieties of connections and linkages that social actors have with objects in the conflictive, global context of the contemporary world.

It is important to identify differentiated practices of consumption in order to study the differential manifestation of global consciousness inside consumer groups. Studied together with actors' alternative and sometimes conflictive arrangement and rearrangement of objects, these differentiated practices may explain how people enclose themselves within parallel zones that are created by social divisions. Through this process of enclosure, people are able to position themselves at right angles to the axis of globalization. These differential consumption practices are important if we want to understand how particular interactions between people and objects can lead to differential power relations among the consumer groups that populate the globe. We cannot assume that all consumers' global cognitive maps are the same for each individual. The contested reality of consumers, as well as their communication and exchanges, are extremely important for identifying global linkages and networks among consumers and other global social actors.

Paraphrasing Thomas, I would suggest that we need to produce a disjunction in our frame of reference, in order to analyse globalization processes, instead of dividing the components of globalization into a formalistic typology; we need to generate new forms of representing globally contested realities, objects and people.

Globalization of Agriculture, Consumers and Food Objects

The foregoing analyses of people, consciousness and objects provides a basis for discussing the globalization of agriculture. There is an increasing globalization of agriculture and food in the rural context. The forms of food consumption associated with delivery, access, and the role of food in the reproduction of everyday life are becoming increasingly differentiated.

Food objects go through a complex and diverse set of reconstituting processes organized from the local to global scales.

Agricultural land-based production, while crucial, is just the start of a long and diverse process. Proportionally, it generates only a minor part of the total value of the product in economic terms. In social terms, a large proportion of symbolic and constructed value is added at the processing, distribution, and retail stages. These stages not only regulate the flow and direction of agricultural products, they also actively reconstruct them into objects according to different and increasingly subtle time-quality episodes.

Agricultural firms have managed to gain control not only over land-based sectors, but also to package, extend, and redirect production time and manipulate the quality and content of the product. This allows for the specific regulation of time and value. Food is purchased from producers through electronic demand systems to maintain prices, supply and demand in balance. The use of contracts before food is produced guarantees specific forms and styles of produce cultivation and care, with the principal aim of ensuring quality, freshness and naturalness in the food objects. In the case of fresh fruit and vegetables, there has been significant technological development in the improvement of the supply side of the agricultural trade.

Various phases of food maturation take place during transportation and distribution under strict controlled conditions whilst genetic and biological innovations aid the reconstruction of, for example, food freshness, colour, and acceptable shape and size. The management of production time and the source and supply of a wider range of food products now represent much more significant elements in the food supply network than was previously the case.

The European and American consumer of agricultural produce has been characterized as an active enterprising actor, positioned at the quality centre of the global agricultural market. What are considered necessary features in this agricultural market are judged by reference to the needs, desires and preferences of the consumer.

Global food objects are supplied worldwide to the 'enterprising' consumer as if they were recently harvested goods. Supermarkets, agricultural transnational companies, transformed state regulations and the individual activities of entrepreneurs each play a part in translating and organizing what we may designate as the food consumer culture.

This culture has promoted the image of a social actor who can organize his/her lives through their purchasing power. This archetypal consumer makes sense of his/her existence and reality by exercising the capacity to demand and consume food objects from a global market. At the same time, the consumer portrays him or herself through the organization of an individual lifestyle which starts with the choice of food objects placed on the supermarket shelf.

A report on fresh fruits and vegetables in England, suggested that people have decreased their consumption of 'traditional' fresh vegetables by 20 percent over the last ten years (Market Review 1981–1991). Potatoes, carrots and tomatoes have been affected by frozen and chilled ready meals and washed, exotic mixed salad leaves. The need to consume convenient vegetables increased the consumption of lettuce, cucumber and mixed salad leaf packs by 36 percent between 1981–1991. Mushrooms were one of the success stories during this period, their production increasing by 80 percent during the decade. Similarly, exotic vegetables, such as mangetout, asparagus and aubergines have increased their market by 40 percent. The market share of imported fresh fruit has increased by 1.2 percent, now accounting for approximately 81 percent of the total share of the market. The high level of imported fresh fruit, reflects consumers, choice for more *friendly fruits* such as apples and bananas, and *easy-peeling* oranges, such as satsumas and clementines. It seems, then, that consumers' choices in the British agricultural market have had an influence on the sales of global food objects during the last decade.

The consumption of 'traditional' vegetables, such as cabbages, sprouts and root vegetables have plummeted in the United Kingdom, mainly because their cooking time is considered too long and the smell too strong for the modern dwellings. This in turn has transformed the traditional 'meat and two veg' style of eating in the United Kingdom. Supermarkets, probably the most significant market places for contemporary consumers, have materialized these preferences by creating alternatives. The creation of ready-mixed salad packs and the constant supply of exotic fresh fruit and vegetables to high-street shelves has reconstructed the aesthetic of traditional greengrocers and, in so doing, made a public display of people' lifestyles.

The vital role of the consumer in the globalization of agriculture is bound up with new trends, and underpinned by the desire to maximize the quality of life. The consumer tendency toward healthier and lighter eating reinvented the character and arrangement of food objects in the lifeworld of consumers. The representation of food objects as 'convenient' for consumers is part of a language of measurement that has been moulded by the market. This language attempts to encapsulate people's perceptions and expectations, their 'ephemeral' fashions (*modus*) and particular life rhythms, and as such it has become a reality that has displaced producers from their privileged position in the market. In this way, consumer notions such as convenience have become a central element in transforming the agricultural market.

By situating the market for food in a larger ensemble of social actors and practices, which includes the active character of the consumer, the retailers' reconstruction of the 'managerial discourse of excellence' (Gay 1996, p. 119), the refashioning of the daily practices of fruit and vegetable provisioning, and also the incorporation of the 'new' available technol-

ogy, I seek to present a description of how consumers, retailers and producers have actively engaged in actualizing global flows of food objects whilst creating a multiplicity of interconnections that are shaping the environment and the organization of rural social life in the far production zones of the globe.

The global demand for food may be decisive in determining how rural producers respond to changing agricultural and economic circumstances. I shall next turn my attention to this issue, sketching some of the transformations that have taken place among certain export countries. Although the examples are from Latin America (Chile), they raise key issues in relation to the wider research agenda on the globalization of agriculture and the production of food objects.

Globalization, Producers, and Fresh Fruit: Illustrations from Chile

The production of fruit in Chile was, until the 1970s, mainly oriented to the national market with practically no competitive advantage for the international market. Between 1959 and 1964, Chile exported 18,000 metric tonnes per year, which had increased to 27,000 tonnes by the mid 1960s (FAO 1959–1965). Average exports of fruit between 1971 and 1973 were not more than 46,000 per annum. This figure increased to 290,000 tonnes between 1980–1982, and to 415,000 tonnes between 1983–1985. The quantity of fruit exported continued to increase: to 590,000 tonnes by 1986, 880,000 tonnes by 1990 and 920,000 by 1991.

One of the issues to be explained here is how the constant increase in fruit exports was achieved. According to Contreras and Escobar (1995), private fruit producers were able to identify market opportunities for their produce from 1974 onwards, due to favourable global conditions. The neoliberal economic model established in the country from 1974, brought dramatic transformations in the national fruit sector. The opening of international markets, the freedom of economic agents to make investments, and the subsidiary role of the state in promoting a free market model constituted a set of conditions that were used by fruit exporters to satisfy the demand of international markets.

The Chilean fruit exporters' international strategy was to become members of local commercialization systems in the destination countries. This gave fruit exporters easier access to consumers long before their cargoes arrived in the places of destiny. Strong global competition in fresh fruits allowed Chilean producers to use the differential opportunities as they arose day by day in different markets. The development of communications made it possible for them to use the atomized way that fruit was transacted and distributed on the international market in their favour, while incorporating flexibility and dynamism into their commercial behaviour.

The correctness of the fruit commercialization strategy constitutes an important topic in the debate about the future of the Chilean agro-export sector (Contreras and Escobar 1995, p. 160). On the other hand, several commentators, such as Jarvis, Montero and Hidalgo (1993), have emphasized the technological factor as the main reason for the successes of the fresh fruit sector. In their view, the introduction of technological innovation between 1975 and 1990 significantly improved processes of fruit production, packing and distribution. If we take technological innovation in the production process, the relocation, design and management of orchards could be mentioned, as well as the introduction of integrated irrigation systems, harvesting, and the incorporation of certified genetic material. Technological innovations, such as the introduction of wooden 'pallets' at the beginning of the 1970s and the standardization of export fruit boxes replete with bar coded information, transformed the fruit storage and distribution process. For instance, technological improvement in precooling diminished the time required for the fruit to be cooled and stored, whilst maintaining its colour and quality for months. This was no small achievement if we consider that some of the main Chilean markets are at distances of at least fifteen days away in the northern hemisphere.

Developments such as those described above constituted a frame of action in which Chilean fruit could be located globally, as singular commodities. In other words, this fruit became food objects, populating – at the right moment, efficiently and with reduced costs – people's desire to consume fresh fruit. These processes led to a process of fragmentation in the international space for fresh fruit transactions. This was mainly transformed by the global demand of consumers. For instance, the success of the Thompson Seedless grape on the American market generated economies of scale and further technological improvements at the levels of production, processing and distribution. This leads me to suggest that the reorganization of the global fresh fruit trade was made possible through the reintegration of local spaces into the generation of new linkages in the transfer of food. Networks of European sourcing agents, retailers and producers of fresh fruit, generated 'new' market places for the fresh fruit trade. This was possible partly because of technological development which enabled actors in the trade to make sense of and to manipulate factors previously seen as external to international processes of economic revitalization: namely, the manipulation of time and space. This has ultimately generated significant 'compression' of the world in the case of the fresh fruit trade.

Global market compression of the fresh fruit trade world meant that Chileans represented the fruit trade in terms of competition with South Africa and New Zealand producers. According to the Chilean discourse, these countries owed their position on the world market to their ability to supply consumers with high quality produce. The Chileans did not opt to commercialize fruit production through a national marketing board, as did

both South Africa and New Zealand; consequently they could not compete with the long established national board institutions which enabled South Africa and New Zealand to operate and protect their trade in the consumer countries, using past cultural relations, language and contingent politics. However, whilst these national board institutions could reduce risk and uncertainty, they were relatively immobile and inflexible as far as responding to or predicting daily opportunities on international fresh fruit markets. Chilean producers also saw their chance of competing in terms of quality with other producing fruit locations, however they knew that fruit quality was not enough and that they needed to generate an added value for the consumer. This added value was found in the production and marketing of fruit that was mainly adapted to different consumers' taste, aesthetic and sense of convenience.

Chileans are concentrating on penetrating the main European, Japanese and American supermarket chains in their bid to achieve a high international competitiveness. Nevertheless, the central issue was how to persuade an audience of potential consumers to buy your produce. The Chileans matching publicity with the quality of the fresh fruit saw as providing the 'edge' over their competitors. This they did by directing publicity to the preferred consumers in each country that Chile has the capacity to supply efficiently and at low cost (*Times Supplement*, Chile, 14–10–96).

As an example, I want to reproduce a text from the 1993 period to demonstrate the sense of global market awareness in the country in relation to publicity and the nature of the products that traders needed to offer:

'In this publicity we need to accentuate the colour of the fruit, if this constitutes one of the factors influencing consumers when they purchase. Examples are the red varieties of apple in Italy, or certain varieties, such as the Golden Delicious: or the fashion for bicolour varieties of apples in most of Europe; or the Ribier type of grape in Italy, Benelux and France; or the preference for sweet and sour apples in Germany and the United Kingdom' (Errazuriz 1993, pp. 4–10; my translation).

The colour of the fruit, its taste, and fashion are the main elements constituting the cultural perceptions of Chilean traders in this text. Fresh fruit, as world commodities, are reconstructed as singular food objects on the global fruit market. This process of constructing an image associated with the food object was linked to consumers' notions of fruit aesthetics and the attribution of fashion and convenience to a previously generalized commodities. The internalization of consumers' desires by Chilean producers played a part in turning domestic fruit into global food objects which were marketable and competitive because of their images and the

reorganization of the properties that constituted the shared reality of the fresh fruit trade.

When Chilean traders represented the global fruit market as open to challenge and competition, their notion of flexibility was not restricted to economic calculations. It was their acceptance of consumers' attitudes, and their authority to legitimize a mode of consumption, which made them able to compete and flourish on global markets. It should be said that the fresh fruit market was highly volatile and reached the point of saturation during the 1970s. The Chilean case demonstrates that insertion into international markets was possible because of the combination and use of technology, as well as the ability to predict the food objects that consumers would demand.

In this sense, Chilean exporters translated the needs and desires of the world-wide consumer enterprise culture. Chilean fresh fruits, as singular food objects were able to display and embody local social relations miles away from their production localities, they were capable of representing consumers, consumption styles, as well as their notions of aesthetics and quality of life. The singularity of Chilean fresh fruit was thus its transform- ation into a food object in every sense global in scope, whilst technically strong enough to survive as a commodity with an added consumer's value on the international market.

The growing recognition of globalization processes of social rearrange- ment raises important methodological issues. Among these is the signifi- cance of consciousness in locating and giving meaning to actions. The contextualization of social processes by different actors can contribute to the construction of projects in a specific way; this may provide actors with different degrees of freedom to reorganize their shared 'reality' accord- ing to the possibilities or restrictions that may exist at local level. In the case of global processes, we need to explain how homogeneous interna- tional spaces fracture themselves and generate global – production and market – places in which reorganization of international markets and consumer demands can occur. For instance, people working for the Dole multinational company have good economic and social conditions. In Chile, in 1994, I observed that they received transport and food from the company, and when I enquired about the management costs of these conditions, the manager said:

'We are not interested in making marginal savings in a company like ours, we want a labour force which performs well in the quality control and packing of fruit. We do not want them to organize a trade union here. So, if we want the workers to be part of our company, we need to provide them with good working conditions. There are companies which do not pay workers a just salary, which means that the workers do not control the fruit according to the quality requirements. They fill the boxes with too few bunches of grapes, or they pass empty boxes as being full of apples. These practices can do immense damage to our

name on the international market. So, to avoid these problems, we prefer to give our workers good working conditions. We believe that Chilean workers do not need a lot of training, but they do need to be kept apart from politics. Labour is expensive in Chile and this is one of the reasons why we are investing in current technology but, at the end of the day, we depend on the knowledge and care of the workers with the fruit. We maintain a computer data bank here with information about our workers, and those who are extremely good are recruited by the company year after year.' (Rancagua, fieldwork, notes, July 1994).

It is clear from this interview that a good relationship between the multinational and its workers derives from an understanding of places and markets far away from the area of production. The association between workers, international markets and achieving quality standards for distant markets, takes on a local form in the multinational's managerial decision not to oppose workers but to enrol them socially in the global process of constructing quality. Workers, in turn, may or may not incorporate these sets of knowledge and practice into their lifeworlds. We need to study the relationship between global social processes and actors' actions in order to identify diverse fields of global connecting activities. We need to develop in the assessment of the importance of actors' practices in the establishment of 'new' global 'realities' at local level.

Global 'realities' may then be seen as external processes which are locally internalized by actors in order to reconstruct commodities, producers' processes of organization and retailers' publicity (objectification). This local 'reality' is then shared, as an echo resonating somewhere else in the world, existing as a series of related courses of action potentially able to mobilize resources and generate value, shaping and reorganizing the world of commodity exchange. Resonances (Marsden and Arce 1995) between some sets of actions, for instance, the policies of the national board organizations intersect partially only with consumers' interests, and these dissonances were used by Chilean fresh fruit traders to position themselves in the global markets.

Resonances and dissonances not only suggest the metaphorical importance of communication in global processes, but also bring out the issue of how far local social actors are able to shape or mediate global processes through their local action. This is an important point in the debate about understanding how global consciousness is constructed. In the following interview, collected in Chile in 1994, an agro-exporter said:

'We have been in this activity for years. We started during the 1960s, when we had a lot of regulations, and I remember that only five or six companies used to export fruits and this was largely to the American market. We even exported during the socialist government of Salvador Allende. During that period, the state controlled the quality of the fruit and the export licences, which were used politically by bureaucrats to

control us. Our property came under attack and the agrarian reform agency wanted to expropriate the land and distribute it among the peasants. But my father defended our properties and we managed to survive. With the arrival of the junta [at the back of his desk there was still a picture of General Pinochet], the overseas (*ultramar*) market opened to us. My father reorganized this enterprise around the family and each of us (three brothers and two sisters) took responsibility for a section of the agro-export operations. Our fruit was supervised by a family member from the field to the final destination. Today, we have a good reputation in Europe and America, our fruit is of good quality. Rotterdam or Milan are not strange places to us, we visit them at least two or three times a year. Our best business years are usually those which in Europe or America cannot produce enough quality fruit, for some climatic reason. Those are the years when we have to save for when our agro-exports will be affected by regulations or by international competition. During the good years of agro-export, a lot of Chileans – cowboys, mavericks – exported fruit and did much damage to the quality of Chilean produce on the market. Those people were not interested in constructing a reliable market, but rather in pocketing a lot of money in a single operation. Agro-export activities are not as profitable today as they were in the 1980s.' Agro-export is a highly risky economic activity. Sometimes the international buyers do not pay the price they promised you or they may argue that a consignment of fruit arrived 'not in good condition,' so that they had to sell it at a lower price. We learned from experience how to solve these problems. In the beginning, we travelled and examined the consignment in situ. Some of our Italian partners were surprised by our reaction to their complaints. Several times they said: 'the problem was not a problem. Little by little, we started to develop relationships based upon trust rather than an opportunistic way of using the market or the desire to obtain extra profits. More recently, we have started agencies to check our consignments of fruit in Amsterdam, and later in the places of destination. This was to avoid misunderstanding with our European counterparts. These agencies are organized by European and Chilean staff' (Rancagua, field notes, 1994).

This interview shows the importance that the agro-exporter attributed to the historical political past of the country, as well as to the family defence of their landed property. This political memory is coupled with processes of reorganization of the enterprise along the lines of the family. Knowledge of international market places, as part of his everyday life, is another interesting dimension in his narrative as a fresh fruit exporter. These places are, in his discourse, centres of fresh fruit consumption that provide legitimation to his business. Physical carriers such as planes and ships made the transport of these food objects possible under particular social

and economic global conditions. New types of agricultural export production rely on technological advances and the adoption of biotechnologies, packing and transport techniques. But important processes of adaptation, which include political memories and the mediation of family relations for the success of agro-export operations, are very much part of the exporter's narrative. In this respect it seems that the globalization process is carried out by local social actors able to represent the demands of the international market, who introduce new courses of action to build international linkages between and among places. Diverse factors, such as those present in the history of the enterprise, were somehow put together by local actors so that their enterprise became part of a global network of fruit trade. The local actors have knowledge of the existence of other actors, as active distributors and consumers, as well as knowledge of different, individualized lifestyles.

At this point, perhaps it is necessary to suggest that global processes must have an actual process of translation at local level. This means that global processes are not merely imposed on local populations, they are actively internalized and acted upon. Global processes are constantly being translated by actors; these translations differ. If the conditions of local mediation and adaptation take place, the global process will produce deterritorialization and territorialization of food objects. The relevance of this process is given by the potential to relocate action and space into 'new' places of consumption and production.

The next issue concerns the conditions that local translators' need to translate global processes. With my next illustration I want to argue that to make the globalization process work, there must be local actors able to build new encounters, plateaus (through their biographies, life experiences, and political relations) which our technological modernity and organizational skills can reassemble in food objects (commoditization, aesthetic, taste, colour, consumers' desires etc.). The individual entrepreneurial experience of some actors has evolved by generating streams and flows of actions through the market, personal circumstances, and trajectories of culture and communication. In this respect, individual experiences can be likened to the spread of a patch of oil, decentring homogeneity as the pattern of social change, and exposing diversity as the arborescent feature of the globalization processes. The multiplicity of nodes, which are not tied up with one single centre of production or consumption, present us with an important aspect of how actors' inscribe their practices and individual perceptions within their singular life experiences in a global era.

In Chile, in 1994, Don Guillermo Perez told me his life experiences as an entrepreneur, and I recall this interview as one of my best windows onto the anima of globalization. Don Guillermo's life is the performance of an actor's actions onto the a cartography that locates globalization processes in a given personal dimension, but this itself becomes a multi-

plicity of actions that constitute a clue to how local actors have incorporated the issue of flexibility into their weaving of global processes. Don Guillermo's narrative should not be seen as an exercise to increase the reflexivity of our modernity whilst discursively normalizing local capitalism and excluding its 'other' representations of the Chilean agro-export sector. That is, generating the massive expulsion of peasants, the exclusion of agricultural labourers from the places where they used to live, and the creation of a country's proletarian labourers constantly searching for employment (Arce and Marsden 1993).

The Narrative of Don Guillermo Perez[6]

Don Guillermo Perez was born on the 15th of August 1914. He did part of his secondary school studies at night in the *Liceo* of Rancagua combining them with part-time jobs. Don Guillermo had worked since he was fourteen years old. First, as a sales attendant working in a drapery store and then at a 'gentleman's out-fitters.' Later he took a course to become a tailor. Before he established his tailor's shop, he spent five years working in the copper mines in Rancagua.

He went there to administer a shop that was not producing very good results. According to him, this was a challenge; the mine held a captive market. The workers did not have their families with them and they could not spend their money on alcohol because the mine was considered a 'dry zone' (*zona seca*) by the government. Don Guillermo found it incomprehensible that the shop could not make profit. After some observation he identified a market in heavy shoes for the miners. He organized the supply of 5,000 pairs of shoes, which was an achievement in itself, since very few factories in Chile could deal with the size of this order at that time. He managed to obtain a substantial discount and organized the completion of the order in stages. A system of repayment by cheque every twenty-five days allowed him to recover some of the money invested before each new delivery.

He discovered that practically every night the workers went in large numbers to the pictures. This was one of the few spare time activities in the mine. Don Guillermo made some slides and bought time in the miners' local cinema, to communicate with the potential buyers. He was able to advertise without any problem for a period of twenty to thirty minutes each night. He emphasized the qualities of the shoes and their price, which was competitive with the prices in Rancagua and Santiago. From this venture he came back to Rancagua with a substantial profit that eventually allowed him to establish his tailor shop.

Don Guillermo remembered Rancagua during the 1930s (a provincial city which, during the 1940s, was approximately four hours, during the 1960s two hours, and during the 1980s one hour from Santiago, the capital

city). People were always formal in their mode of dressing, but there was a popular conception that a suit was a set of clothes only to be used on formal public or private occasions, such as the country's Independence day or at funerals.

Don Guillermo worked eight years setting up his business to change this popular conception of the suit. First he established the confection of suits using patterns and making series. New machines, financial support and new trade partners helped him to start with the construction of a credible discourse. He needed to make people believe that a suit was an object belonging to people's everyday life. Matching his words with action, Don Guillermo created a credit system, whereby people could pay an instalment of the total cost of their suit every week. He organized a raffle every Friday for the people who were not in arrears with their payments, and would personally hand over a suit as a prize. The winner of the suit was usually interviewed by the local radio, his picture published in the newspaper and Don Guillermo exhibited his picture for a week in the main window of his tailor's shop. The success of the raffle was such that on the day people waited in front of his shop for the result; traffic was interrupted and people witnessed and enjoyed the public spectacle in large numbers.

By the second year of his tailoring activities Don Guillermo had made people believe that a suit was part of their everyday life. He demonstrated that he had the ability to make people act in relation to an object. The suit started to incarnate part of people's reality in relation to luck, their sense of play, individual publicity and a system of payment affordable for the average *à la mode* city individual . Don Guillermo had accredited himself and increased the production of suits from ten per month in 1941, to more than thirty-five per month by the end of 1948.

Listening to this story, it is possible to suggest that people believed what they assumed to be real in the suit trade, however this 'reality' was constructed by Don Guillermo on the basis of individual consumer behaviour; as a tailor he generated a set of actions which were inscribed by the market. For eight years he accumulated corporeal capital in the form of bodies, which he fitted with clothes while convincing people that their practices satisfied their desires in the 'real market.'

Don Guillermo became briefly involved in regional politics in 1941. He bought his first agricultural orchard in 1943. He found the fruit trees difficult to maintain because the property did not have an irrigation system. Using his imagination and bending the law, he managed to solve this problem and sold the property in 1948. He then invested in two motor car garages in Rancagua, and sold his tailor shop in 1948 to became involved with two other people in a metalwork factory in Santiago. This venture lasted until 1958, when a fire burned the factory to the ground and he found that the insurance was not valid because one of his partners

had forgotten to renew it. He was forced to sell a couple of houses and his garages to raise funds and restart his businesses once again.

Don Guilliermo decided to work in agriculture. He bought 290 hectares of land on the 15th of March 1966. With the property came an administrator and thirty-eight labourers who were living and working there. The first thing was to invest in roads and a bridge in order to open up the commercial possibilities of the farm. He concentrated on dairy production, although the little equipment he had was out of date. He collected the milk at four o'clock in the morning to take it to Rancagua. It was on one such trip in 1967, that his pick-up collided with a lorry. The accident left him between life and death for four months, and he took more than a year to recover his health.

He managed to survive economically thanks to his friendship with the director general of one of the regional banks in Rancagua. The bank facilitated some fresh capital for investment needed on the farm. In 1968 the labourers working on the farm asked for the implementation of agrarian reform (Frei government), and as a result of this he was left with the house and 80 hectares of irrigated land. After a long period of legal battles, he recovered most of his property on the grounds that he was working his farm efficiently.

In 1973/4, Don Guillermo planted his first 30 hectares of apple trees. This was the period, he recalled, when Chile began to export fresh fruits to international markets. He starting working under a three-year contract with the main national fruit exporter, David del Curto, from whom he received technical assistance. He had to wait seven years before receiving any benefit from his apple trees. Don Guillermo realized quite soon that one of the bottle-necks in the agro-export business was the lack of local refrigerator capacity to store the fruit. In 1978 he invested in the construction of three refrigerators with a capacity of 11,500 tonnes. This capacity was the largest in the region in private hands. He rented this cool capacity to David del Curto who was by then exporting fruit under the name of Don Guillermo to international markets.

Don Guillermo wanted to expand his refrigeration capacity; unfortunately the bank would not allow him to increase his debts, so that he was only able to build six new refrigerators. The export of fruit was excellent during the 1980s and there was not enough refrigeration capacity in the region, so that, as one of the few private owners of refrigeration capacity, he was able to make a good profit.

The decision to invest in refrigeration capacity was based on an analysis of the advances in technology. Whereas previously he had needed two or three days to reduce the temperature of the fruit from 28°C to 6°C, and then another day to reduce it to 3°C, in order to start with the process of freezing, new refrigerators with a new system for extracting the oxygen could reduce the temperature of the fruit in hours from 28°C to 3°C. According to Don Guillermo, the new system increased the store capacity

of the fruit in months. He saw the possibilities of these new refrigerators and decided to invest in another four. Don Guillermo realized that European Community protection policies were going to create problems, sooner or later, for the Chilean fruit exporters, and that they were going to need places where their fruit could be kept in good condition if they wanted to sell it at good prices in Europe.

Don Guillermo assessed the advantages of the Chilean fruit on the international market as contingencies that could rapidly change. One of these was the significant decrease in maritime transport costs. Chilean liberalization of sea-trade legislation and commercial trade intensification with Japan, brought about a situation where merchant ships bringing cargo to Chile started to compete with each other because they did not want to return with an empty hold to their ports. This situation was used successfully by some Chilean exporters to reduce their transport costs. The other advantage was the price of the Chilean labour force. However, Don Guillermo thought that these two elements, which certainly increased Chilean competitiveness on the international markets, needed to be followed with investment in technology. His other considerations were, as he put it, his age and the difficulties that the agro-export sector started to suffer during the 1980s.

Don Guillermo said that because of his age and lack of time, he could not secure these international markets for his fruit. He therefore needed to rely on intermediaries (national and international) for the sale of his produce. He was unhappy with the lack of transparency in relation to fruit prices and repayments of the existing system of fruit consignment. Furthermore, the problem with the financial crisis of the private banks during the 1980s left him in debt to the central bank for the next twelve years. He laughed and added. 'This was a very good deal. The probabilities are that I will be dead before I finish cancelling my debts' (he was eighty years old at the time of the interview).

Don Guillermo was mainly concerned with how he was going to pass control of his agro-export venture to the next generation. He did not want to keep growing as an agro-export business. He wanted to protect his investment by keeping his family united. Don Guillermo associated the future prospects of his business very much with the problem of succession and how to convince his professional sons and daughters that they could manage the business in partnership if wanted to.

A Brief Comment on the Narrative

Don Guillermo is the represents of a local translator of the globalization process. Navigating through his life experiences, it is possible to realize that the notion of flexibility was incarnated not just in his process of decision making, but also in the way he was able to generate connections

between market opportunities, technologies and commodities. This arborescent pattern of organization is very much part of the life experiences of Don Guillermo. Perhaps I could argue that in the life experiences of Don Guillermo we can find the organizing principles of his business activities. Nevertheless, Don Guillermo as a person is not part of a global entity, therefore he cannot as an actor be simply conceptualized as a global individual (cosmopolitan) with local relationships. On the other hand, we should not just personify globalization in the agency of Don Guillermo. If we think again, what we see in the life experiences of Don Guillermo is our own image of globalization through the interpretation and performance of an actor. As an actor he is constantly ensuring what people think about him. In the oscillation between an actor conceived as operating in national and regional markets, and an actor operating in international markets, we can find the relationships, at once internal and external, which constitute the consciousness of a global actor. This in my view is the significance and relevance of Don Guillermo's case since it points to the experiences and relations that animate a person's global consciousness. We can conclude from this case that whatever makes a Chilean agro-export business actor socially and economically, also constitutes the practice which arranges the global production and circulation of objects as commodities.

If we take the case of Don Guillermo seriously, we can suggest that there is a problem with some analyses of globalization more specifically, with those studies which keep trying to put the parts together, for the sake of having universal vision of humanity to restore, or for the benefit of having a world system to conceptualize. This can only amount to a sense of old-fashioned sentimental and arrogant intellectualism, that perceives internal and external relations creating different orders, rather than reconstituting fragments and parts that constantly modify social life. In this sense, if we take cases such as Don Guillermo's away from the process of globalization, globalization will not endure in social science as a significant concept.

Conclusion

We have tried to look at the significance of global consciousness within the concept of globalization. Conceptualizing globalization we confront a paradoxical problem. Do we privilege a spatial over the temporal mode of analysis, or the shift from 'industrial society to an informational world'? Yet many commentators would admit that the main challenge is to develop interpretations which are relevant to the different processes taking place in the world. In particular, those processes that enable them to share this reality with those who cannot spontaneously be considered as global. One of the few safe observations that can perhaps be made is that people

combine partial social practices and experiences, and order reality, in a way they can share with others. Individuals usually mediate and organize the often conflicting information they receive and rework it through their social practices. In short, the globalization concept should not provide us with a systematic and holistic vision; instead, the global image should generate diverse personal visions of the world.

This is obviously problematic and the study of globalization raises at least two important questions which, we should be aware, although methodologically different, have the same epistemological root. The point concerns the status of the concept of globalization: can globalization as a concept endure in rural sociology? Can it do more than simply communicate the feelings that something is rather different in the world? Will globalization simply be used as a vehicle to perpetuate a systemic view of world processes?

We may go part of the way by taking on the task of analyzing people's contemporary practices and elaborating an interpretation of how modernity is put to work. We somehow need to stress that globalization as a process does not have a homogeneous impact on every place in the world or for each actor or group of actors. In this respect, the chapter has suggested that one objective of globalization studies should be to abandon some of the more popular assumptions concerning how societies, nation states and actors operate, since these assumptions say very little about actors translate new globally oriented economic ventures into practices which may have as a reference the axis of globalization.

We may overcome the notion of modernist homogenization if we start assuming that time-space compression in contemporary social life is an extremely problematic process, and that the link between actors' everyday lives and information and communication technology in a variety of forms, generates a variety of reflexive practices, some of them very pessimistic ones.

However, the existence of a field of conditions generated by actors' social practices may help to explain the lack of correspondence which is usually presupposed between the image of global coherence perceived and built by the observer, and the inconsistency that can be discerned in the way local actors' organize and order their everyday reality using objects which are global in their commodity character but mundane enough to be incorporated in different ways by people in their everyday life reality. This chapter has tried to describe the social field of consumption of food objects, as an example, that emphasizes processes of objectification among the consumers.

The issue of the global transformation of agriculture appears as a significant phenomena in achieving the above aim. In this sense, the chapter argues that the main element constructing the social, technical and economic 'reality' of fresh vegetables and fruit consumption should be sought in the way consumers, retailers and producers have engaged

actively in actualizing the global flows of these commodities whilst creating a multiplicity of interconnections that are shaping patterns of consumption, the environment and the organization of social life in different zones of the globe.

The chapter illustrates, using the case of Chile, how these global processes are transforming the local production of fresh fruit. Commercial strategies, technologies and personal experiences are presented as part of the process of globalization in Chile. The chapter has taken the significance of global consciousness seriously, and it has explored three actors interacting within globalization. The first derives from a multinational (Dole) avoiding confrontation with the local labour force; the second is a case of a family enterprise experiencing a global fresh fruit demand; the third is the case of a local entrepreneur who has incorporated the notion of flexibility into his life experiences, showing us how to organize credible discourses to compress the market. This actor, linking different zones of the world, spatializes his own actions to portray the human dimension of global processes.

These illustrations are admittedly not universal social principles of a global taxonomy. However, I could suggest that these actors' experience might appeal to the existence of a shared global consciousness which can be recognized by all actors' engaged in these sort of processes, and therefore constitute a picture of the variety of ways in which actors' practices and experiences not only populate the world, but are actually socializing globalization processes.

Notes

1   I would like to thank Sabine Willems for the information in relation to Tanzanian flower cultivation and the Kilamanjaro women's visit to the Netherlands. A video of these women and their activities in Europe is quite interesting in terms of how the process of globalization operates. This chapter is part of a project with Eleanor Fisher on global/local socio-cultural perceptions to explore issues pertaining to value construction, contestation and transformations in 'new' commodity markets. This project comes under the umbrella of the Centre for Resource Studies for Human Development (CERES) in the Netherlands. A first version of this chapter was presented at the CERES Globalization Cluster research seminar, 'Globalization and Contemporary Social Science,' Wageningen 24–25 October 1966.

2   Food objects are the singularization of commodities in a specific period according to something other than commercial value: for instance, aesthetic, taste, fashion, and size. These elements, which can be seen as constituting the object, are part of the shared objectivity of consumers and part of the cognitive map of how consumers interact with these objects in their everyday lives. This notion follows closely the commoditization debate of Long (1986) and Bernstein (1981) in the mid-1980s, and the pioneering work of Appadurai (1986) on the political contest of commodities in the market. Thomas (1991) follows a stimulating line of analysis in relation to objects and colonialism.

3   The term 'objective' is understood to be the individual process of internalizing 'concrete significant others' and a 'generality of others' that takes place within society. This produces an actor's identity, roles and attitudes and phases of socialization.

'Society, identity and reality are subjectively crystallized in the same process of internalization' (Berger and Luckmann 1987, p. 153). 'What is real 'outside' corresponds to what is real 'within.' It is important to add that: '(l)anguage constitutes both the most important content and the most important instrument of socialization' (p. 153).

4 Zones are understood to be a range of 'specific' possibilities that are distinguished as significant and meaningful events in the life trajectory of an actor.

5 This information was provided by Sabine Willems, personal correspondence 1996.

6 I want to thank Don Omar Arce Vasquez for making contacts and introducing me to Don Guillermo. The interview was done in the summer of 1994 in Rancagua, Chile.

10 Dynamics of Agricultural Production. An Analysis of Micro–Macro Linkages

Paul Hebinck and Jan Douwe van der Ploeg

Introduction

This chapter aims to set out a theoretical and methodological framework for analyzing the specificities of agricultural and rural development. Coming to grips with these specificities is essential for understanding the social and cultural dynamics of contemporary agricultural production. Specific for agriculture is its multiform and heterogeneous character, closely associated with the fact that it is practised by actors who embody different interests, are part of diverse networks and share particular cultural repertoires. Furthermore, land forms the basis of production. Hence, the encounter with nature is also specific for agriculture.

These specificities are crucial for understanding the morphology of today's agricultural sector and its intrinsic heterogeneity. Farms and farmers' practices are located in different domains of activities: those of production, reproduction, family and community, institutional and regulatory settings. Farmers' practices are also affected by the interests, cultural repertoires and networks indicated. These different influences and domains are, as it were, glued together in and through the labour process in such a way that various, internally consistent styles of farming emerge in dynamic and constantly changing ways, varying in time and in place.

This way of characterizing agriculture is born out of three different, but partly overlapping theoretical strands concerning agrarian change. These strands will be summarized to clarify the position we take in this chapter in order to understand heterogeneity in agriculture. The notion of styles of farming is a central concept for such an analysis. In addition, we will deal with the methodological repercussions of this notion. Lastly, we will look at the relevance and implications of this concept for research in the field of agricultural and rural development by reflecting on the huge variety in maize yields in Kenya, and on the prevailing iron laws which are assumed to be operating in agriculture.

This chapter draws mainly on our experiences and research in Third World agriculture, and most of the illustrations are derived from such contexts. We are, however, convinced that the theoretical and methodological approach presented here is equally relevant for understanding rural

and agricultural change in Europe. This does not imply that regionally specific cultural contexts are understood as being irrelevant here. Indeed, we locate such contexts at the heart of our analysis.

Throughout the text we will use the term *farmers*, despite the fact that is does not adequately reflect rural reality. Farmers denote actors engaged in agriculture only, while farmers' livelihoods increasingly entail migratory work, petty trade, and other forms of off-farm and on-farm non-agricultural activities. The term *peasant* in its turn is also inaccurate in assuming that agricultural production is solely for subsistence, and that production is hardly integrated into commodity circuits. The term *rural producers* is another alternative, but again does not cover the fact that rural people are also consumers. The term farmer is used here in the sense of someone engaged both in agricultural and non-agricultural activities.

Setting and Rephrasing the Debate

The debate on agrarian change is an old one in social sciences. It is not our intention to summarize that debate in detail here, but to highlight three theoretical approaches which have informed the development of the styles of farming notion.
1   the anthropological focus on the cultural basis of agricultural production (sometimes referred to as agricultural anthropology); within this tradition, the actor-oriented methodology, as elaborated by Long, has proved highly useful in getting to grips with the specificities of agricultural practices.
2   the structural analysis of agrarian change, which focuses on processes such as market incorporation, commoditization, institutionalization and externalization, and
3   the labour process approach, initially developed in the sociology of industry, but has proved extremely useful in the analysis of agrarian production and development.
After briefly characterizing these strands, we will try to formulate a synthesis. In so doing, we will not propose some kind of unhappy and eclectic marriage, but aim to redefine the concept of structure from an actor-oriented perspective. Central to this synthesis is the concept of farming as the outcome of actors' projects, thus, agriculture is conceptualized as a social construction. It is obvious that not only the projects of the farmers involved matter. We will argue that it is especially the interaction between these projects and those of others, such as planners, politicians, implementers, bankers and traders that is significant. Crucial to both the development and the materialization of these projects is the encounter with, and subsequent interpretation and translation of, the 'realities' reigning in different markets, together with the rules, regulations and institutions in which farming is embedded. This interpretation,

and the related translation into action, are structured according to the prevailing cultural repertoires (Long and van der Ploeg 1994).

Anthropology and the Cultural Basis of Agriculture

The study of the cultural basis of agricultural production focuses on the people who practice agriculture. It aims to understand farmers, their agricultural practices and relationships 'within the context in which they live' (Rhoades 1984, pp. 40–41). The starting point for the analysis is a cultural approach to gain insight in the perceptions and images of actors in relation to *rurality* (see also van der Ploeg in this volume), and how culture 'articulates social life with the material conditions of their habitat' (Rhoades 1984, p. 43; see also Den Ouden in this volume). The notions about farming and agricultural practices emerging through time are locally specific and strongly embedded in, and shaped, by the various knowledge repertoires of farmers, including their perceptions of land use, nature, cropping patterns, tools and technology. Mendras (1970) refers to this as *l'art de la localité,* meaning that agriculture is locally specific and involves a diversified knowledge of ecological, technological, economic and cultural conditions, which is constantly being enriched through processes of mutual exchange and communication.

Culture and cultural repertoires are studied from the perspective that 'real' and 'ideal' patterns exist, indeed recognizing that what actors say or believe may bear little relationship on what they actually do. A second element is that manifestations of human behaviour are interrelated parts of cultural repertoires. Agricultural practices are referred to by farmers as not simply made up of maize, potatoes and cattle in isolation from each other. Furthermore, a great deal of culture is expressed in non-verbal ways (such as use of land and space, dietary patterns, religious practices), and people's cultural repertoires are diverse, dynamic and adaptive rather than monolithic and static, as well as based upon past experiences.

Structural Analysis

Farming implies an encounter with markets, whether for the mobilization of the resources required and/or for the distribution of the products produced. Farming also involves a specific procedure (and the corresponding artefacts) for the transformation of resources into these products; hence, farming entails a specific technology. In structuralist approaches, farming as practice is understood and explained as determined by these markets and technologies. When we talk about structural analysis, however, we reject such a notion. 'Our' structural analysis focuses essentially on:

1 how specific interrelations are established between farm enterprises and communities, on the one hand, and markets, market agencies and the processes of technology development and transfer on the other.
2 Structural analysis also focuses on the question of how these relationships, once established, affect and remould the farm practices concerned (including the underlying strategies).
3 Finally, structural analysis studies how the relationships involved might be changed over time.

In other words, the *a priori* assumptions of structuralist analysis are changed into a set of research questions within structural analysis.

Hence, structural analysis studies how agrarian change and farmers' practices are shaped by processes associated with market incorporation and technology development. At the same time, it studies how commodity circuits are affected by social behaviour and embedded in cultural frameworks. Market incorporation and commoditization are not understood, as is frequently the case in structuralist traditions, as unilinear processes, inevitably leading to destruction, impoverishment and class formation. Special attention is given to external mechanisms and institutions (for example, the state, farmers' cooperatives) which mediate such processes.

Central in structural approaches are the concepts of simple commodity production and capitalist production, each of which specifies particular sets of interrelations between (farming as) productive activity and the set of commodity relations in which it is embedded. The latter are sometimes expanding; at other moments commodity relations are reduced and/or distanced from the respective processes of production. For some authors, simple or petty commodity production represents a distinct social form of production with its own logic (for example, Friedmann 1980). Others have claimed that contemporary relations of production are the outcome of a transition to capitalism which, in Third World countries, started during colonial rule. Petty commodity production is treated conceptually as being generic to capitalism (for example, Bernstein 1979, 1988; Gibbon and Neocosmos 1985). These positions were criticized by Long *et al.* (1986) as laying too much stress on external determination and unilinear interpretations of social change. It is, for instance, unlikely that 'peasant' forms of production will disappear and that the pattern of socio-economic differentiation will consolidate itself in a firmly established class structure.[1] In addition, these positions fail to consider how commodity exchange affects the everyday life of farmers and to incorporate analytically the concrete nature of the intermediate structures and networks linking farmers to the wider economic and political environment. They overlook, furthermore, that producers are strategizing and attempting to resist the impact of commodity relations by actively and purposefully seeking to maintain and defend non-commoditized relationships. In the same way, processes of 'self-commoditization' or farmer initiatives (Ranger 1978) have not received the attention they deserve. Hence, little attention has been given

either to the active role played by farmers or to explaining 'structural variance' or heterogeneity in agricultural development processes. Long has emphasized the need to go beyond teleological interpretations of agrarian change (see also Booth 1985, 1994).

An important contribution from the actor-oriented perspective consists in the notion of markets and technology as entailing specific room for manoeuvre, which is actively created by the actors involved through processes of negotiation and redesigning. Rural producers have their own reference points, insights and interests (such as the family, community, cultural notions) for developing their farm. These insights are often used to counterbalance and/or to mediate the 'logic' reigning in the markets (that is, the 'logic' as represented and articulated by market agencies), as well as to develop responses *vis-à-vis* the designs entailed in the development of new technologies. For farmers, markets and technology provide room for negotiation; they allow for differential 'positions.' Thus, agricultural development can be perceived as an arena of struggle, as a complex, heterogeneous and often contradictory process of change, to which farmers respond in a highly differentiated way.

The Labour Process Approach

The labour process approach is the third strand forming the theoretical backbone of our analytical framework. The labour process approach is particularly relevant since it reveals exactly what remains hidden in most social scientific analyses of agricultural development: that is how culture, and economic, institutional and technological developments as mediated by cultural repertoires, are materializing in specific practices. Labour process analysis highlights the way in which styles of farming and the components contained in it, are actively moulded. Therefore, labour process analysis focuses on the farmer as actor, on farming as a social construction and on the relationships in which farmers' work and life are embedded. Hence, this approach opens up the possibilities to look at practices resulting from goal-oriented actions and negotiations.[2] We will do this from a threefold perspective.

In the first place, we define the labour process as a goal-oriented activity; it is a purposeful action on the part of the actors involved in converting various resources into commodities. As such, the labour process is embedded in cultural repertoires, husbandry practices, and *l'art de la localité*. It involves, and implies at the same time, the creation and maintenance of feedback and communication mechanisms and networks to ensure production and reproduction.

In the second place, the labour process is conceptualized as a socially constructed farming practice in which the landscape, history, crops, husbandry practices, and forms of land and labour use appear as artefacts. The way in which farmers cultivate the land, have a detailed knowledge

about their eco-system, labour supply and demand, cannot be seen as disconnected from the labour process.

In the third place, the labour process is understood as a relationship between people and artefacts as well as among people. Hence the organization of the labour process reflects specific social relations of production.

Synthesis: Styles of Farming

The synthesis of these three strands of theories of agrarian change and agricultural development amounts to the notion of *styles of farming*. A style of farming comprises three interrelated and mutually dependent levels. These are, in the first place, a specific cultural repertoire composed of shared experiences, knowledge, insight, interests, prospects and interpretations of the context in which farmers operate. Taken together, these specify the way farming ought to be organized. Second, a style of farming is an integrated set of practices and artefacts. Fields, crop varieties, instruments, cattle, cropping schemes, and so on are combined in such a way that they constitute a rational and internally consistent constellation. It goes without saying that this constellation is informed by and structured along the central parameters of the relevant cultural repertoire. Third, a style of farming comprises a specific ordering of the interrelationships between the farming unit, on the one hand, and markets, technology and institutions on the other. More specifically, those interrelations allow for the reproduction of the practices indicated at the second level. These interrelations may range from distantiation to integration (Saccomandi 1995). Typical, then, for styles of farming is that these three levels are wrought into one consistent whole, which specifies and embraces the different domains in which farming as a many-sided activity is evolving.

The three approaches discussed above concern different aspects or levels of styles of farming. Taken together, and using *praxis* as the integrating moment, they allow for the adequate analysis of agrarian development processes. They also allow for the correct analysis of the social relations of production, which are those relations that constitute the labour process, and therefore the process of production as well (Poulantzas 1975).

The styles of farming concept nearly always implies that we are talking about highly differentiated practices which are due to different and strategically chosen 'positions' of farmers as far as family, cultural repertoires, markets, technological developments, relations with agribusiness companies and extentionists are concerned. The concept also expresses the idea that farming is not just an activity based upon the application of a single 'blue print' or 'iron laws' provided by markets and technology-developing agencies. Despite the growing 'grip' of markets and technology on the organization of the production process, these provide room for manoeuvre for farmers, that is, they allow for differential positions.

In more general terms, styles of farming are to be interpreted as the result of goal-oriented actions and related strategies, and thus as actors' projects carried out in particular historical contexts and arenas. The whole gamut of styles which empirical reality unfolds, represents in fact differently constructed farmers' projects and constitutes a repertoire composed of a wide range of potential responses to trends and changes in markets, technology, agrarian sciences, and policy. But farmers' projects are not simply reactions to those that are imposed by more powerful 'external' actors. They are actively managed (and constructed) differential responses to the strategies and conditions generated by others, which are modified, transformed, adopted and/or counteracted by farmers. In this way farmers are able to create room for manoeuvre for themselves and their families. For instance, by linking up with particular commodity circuits and agencies or by distancing themselves from them, farmers are able to accommodate such relationships to fit their conditions of livelihood and locally institutionalized perceptions of how to farm. It is obvious, but still necessary to underline, that the emergence of these actor projects is time and location specific. They are not to be seen as static or stagnating projects which only require outside assistance for their further development. A theoretical advantage of such a conceptualization is that it allows 'structure' to be understood as 'the product of ongoing interlocking, interplay, distantiation and mutual transformation of different actors' projects' (Long and van der Ploeg 1994, p. 81).

The approach discussed so far can be summarized in an analytical framework illustrated in Figure 1. The framework deserves several comments on its layout. The three different strands discussed can be positioned at different 'places' in the scheme. The anthropological perspective is incorporated to study the social relations of production as defined by the domain of the family, community and cultural repertoires. The 'structural' analysis in its redefined form plays a role in studying the social relations of production moulded and reproduced by the economic and institutional environment. The labour process approach comes in when production and reproduction at the level of the farm enterprise are analysed.

Central to the analytical framework is the farm enterprise (1). It is understood as the point where ('macro') relations as entailed in commoditized and non-commoditized circuits meet and converge. It is also the point from which the general relations in which farming is embedded are translated into action, that is, into a particular style of farming. In practice, the farm enterprise is not always an easily demarcated entity. In various regions of Africa, 'farm enterprises' are composed of different fields for husbands and wives, for uncles and aunts, and so on. In the Peruvian Andes, potato fields are scattered over the slopes of the mountains. Furthermore, communal lands form an essential part of the grazing and feeding regimes for cattle farmers and pastoralists in Africa.

Figure 1 Analytical Framework
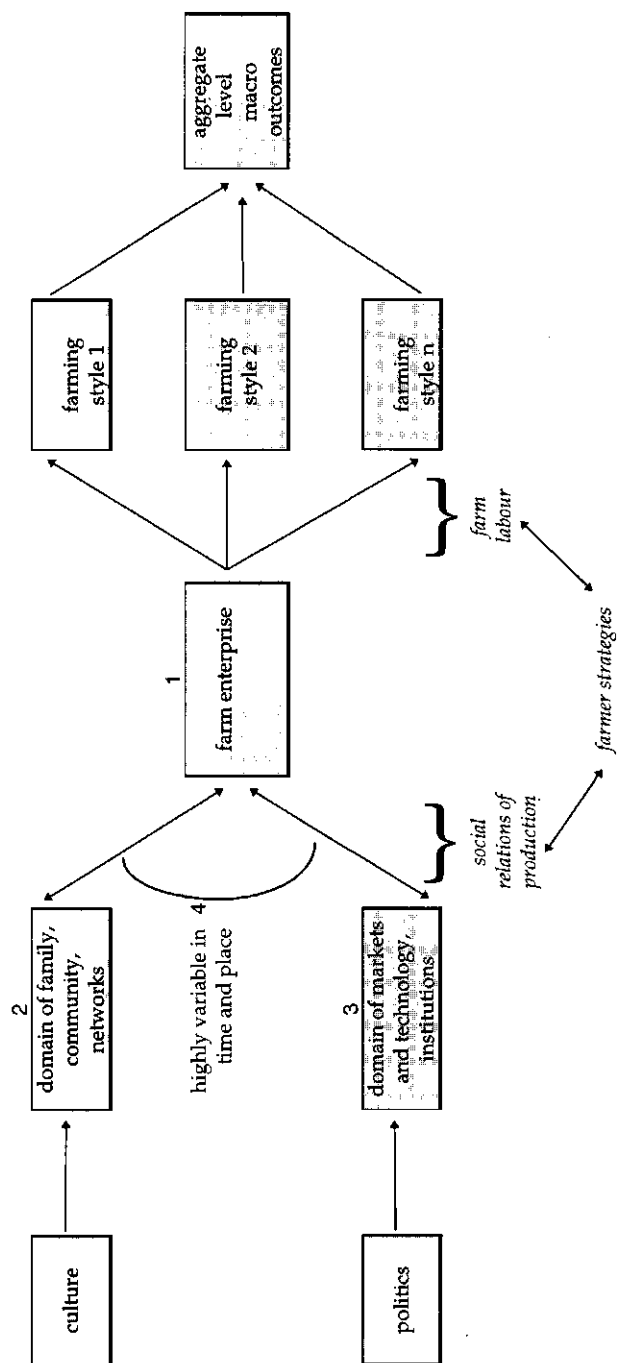
N.B.: Italic characters refer to analytical concepts; the normal formatted characters represent empirically observable practices and relationships. The numbers refer to explanations in the text below.

The farm enterprise is also understood as a complex set of activities where artefacts, labour, soil, cattle, and crops interact. The interaction is, however, such that it only exists through and in the labour process, for example as practices carried out by the direct producers. The interpretation of the meanings of the artefacts, labour, soils, cattle and crops are known to the direct producers and their concrete meanings only emerge in the labour process. Soils, crops and so on interact in a meaningful way only through the active role and knowledge of the direct producers. Soils as such do not have any meaning at all. Farm labour (or local knowledge) is here the central analytical concept and is an essential condition for the labour process. Farmer knowledge is not only utilized and reproduced in the labour process, but also enriched, exchanged, renewed and corrected. Knowledge and farm labour are inseparable from each other. 'Manual' and 'mental' labour which are usually seen as different entities, are, in farm labour, very closely related and overlapping.

Farm labour as an analytical concept and the empirically observed practices at farm enterprise or field level are, on their turn, being shaped – and not determined – by two social domains: that of the family, community and culture (2) and that of markets and technology (3).

The domain of farm, family and culture is an essential context and precondition for agricultural production. Some of the relevant social relations of production are situated in this domain and need to be reproduced in an active way. These relationships are not static, but rather dynamic and subject to transformation or change. It is in this domain that particular practices and ideas emerge, and are being contested and (re)negotiated. Farming is highly symbolic, coded and material and immaterial at the same time, and it derives much of its meaning from the cultural repertoires involved. A few examples will illustrate this.

Labour is generally recruited at community and/or family and household level. Rice polders in Guinea Bissau cannot be maintained without the organization of such labour groups. Chayanov (1966) emphasized the precarious balance between labour power and consumers within a farm household as a major regulatory device for agricultural production. Rituals and religious practices such as *chisi* and rain dances in Zimbabwe provide an important frame of reference for the particular way the Shona people organize their labour process. *Chisi* is a day sacred to the guardian spirits of the land, on which the soil should not be tilled in any way (Bourdillon 1987, p 70). Working on the land on such days disturbs the spirits and make them feel unhappy; periods of drought may be the outcome. Such religiously informed practices have the effect that on *chisi* days the soil is not tilled. However, observing *chisi* is not static and has changed considerably over the years – from six days in the past to four nowadays. Furthermore, *chisi* is not shared by all community members and is in fact heavily contested by quite a large number of farmers and businessmen.[3]

In rather similar ways among the Luo in west Kenya, the time of sowing by sons, is increasingly regulated by their fathers. Due to land scarcity and little room for sons to establish their own compound and fields, they remain as along as possible on their father's compound and are thereby subject to the practices of their fathers and his decision to plant. Furthermore, gender differentiated interests at 'household' and/or family level also shape the observed practices at field and farm enterprise level.

In Kenya, for instance, a programme to boost the commoditization of milk introduced zero-grazing as a new technology. This involves procuring quality fodder by production on the farm itself by the planting, cutting and feeding of napier grass to cows. One of the consequences is that in west Kenya, where land is limited, farmers increasingly decide to allocate land which was previously planted with food crops to napier. This shift in land use produced the effect that food consumption is increasingly dependent on market relations. Known cases indicate that such decisions are usually taken by men and not always shared by their women who uproot the napier to make room for food (Mango 1995).

The reappearance of drought resistant crops, such as cassava and sweet potatoes, in the agricultural landscape of western Kenya can be interpreted in a similar way. Granaries in the Gusii region, Kenya, once a dominant part of the landscape, are now loosing their meaning because food is now being stored in the farmhouse for security and social reasons. The context within which this is happening is the gradual emergence of a livelihood crisis in that part of Kenya.

In the Peruvian Andes, farmers identify their fields in a bipolar way as 'cold' and 'warm' fields (van der Ploeg 1995). The meaning of such a distinction is not related to temperature but to exhausted and rich soils. The meaning of such terminology is not always clear and demarcated, and not vested in the words *per se*. The words derive their meaning in and through the labour process in which theory is combined with practice (Darré 1985). These processes of change, meanings, negotiations and struggles can only be understood by taking into account rural people' cultural domains and the dynamic changes that take place there.

Moreover, such domains are often associated with non-commoditized spheres and circuits of exchange through which farmers mobilize resources outside market spheres. These non-commoditized circuits and the social relationships in which they are embedded are not to be seen as leftovers of previous conjunctures. Instead, they are essential and dynamic parts of agricultural production, and form part of a strategic line of defence against the influence of markets and technology. On the other hand, the commodity–non-commodity balance is central to the strategy of farmers to regulate and arrange production and reproduction according to their interests, opportunities and perceptions. The degrees of commoditization are all reflections of certain rationalizations and strategic choices farmers make

in order to produce and to safeguard – or at least attempt to protect – the reproduction of farm and family (van der Ploeg 1990). Long (1984, 1986) stresses that farming or livelihood strategies contain a wide range of possibilities:

> 'although integration into markets and external institutional structures may reduce the range of economic alternatives available to the farmers, the availability of non-wage household/family labour and resources, coupled with the maintenance of local networks based on kinship, friendship or patronage, allow farmers to continue to resolve certain of their livelihood and consumption problems outside the market.' (Long 1986, p. 19).

Hence, farmers' strategies vary considerably in the way they maintain locally specific, socio-culturally defined relations. What follows automatically from this is that agricultural production and development needs to be conceptualized as a certain balance between commoditized and non-commoditized relationships and circuits. Farmers devise certain strategies to maintain and defend such a balance.

On the other hand, the domain of markets and technology and institutions represents the interlocking of agricultural practices through and in the labour process with commodity circuits. Historically, different kinds of agricultural institutions (TATE, an acronym for Technological Administrative Task Environment) – often labelled as agribusiness – have emerged around the labour process (Benvenuti 1985). The relationships between these institutions and the labour process were intensified as farmers decided to reallocate crucial farm tasks to such agencies. These agencies create specific ideas and images about agricultural production and aim to consolidate specific social relations of production in the agricultural sector. These agencies do not, however, command such power that agricultural development proceeds in the directions promoted by them. In practice, considerable room for manoeuvre is created in the space composed of markets and technology, through negotiations and adaptations in and through the labour process and by farmers' active involvement. The matrix of relations between the institutions and the agricultural population shows considerable variance.

Different relations are created between the farm enterprise and the surrounding world (2 and 3 in Figure 1) . The nature, weight and impact of these relations depends as much on the farmers concerned as on the entities that compose this 'surrounding' world. It is difficult, for instance, to go against widely shared norms within the village or farming community. Farmers who are doing so will be categorized, as Moerman (1968) demonstrated in his study of a Thai village, as 'a son of a bitch.' However, if the same farmer joins a new group of Seventh Day Adventists (that is, when he changes one cultural framework for another), he might well

be able to deviate from the dominant norms (see also Long 1968, Seur 1993, Magadlela and Hebinck 1995).

The same goes for the relationships with markets. Some farms will be strongly affected by a general rise in interest rates. Others, who financed farming with own savings and/or with income obtained from migratory labour, will hardly be affected. A dramatic drop in coffee prices will have far-reaching, if not destructive effects on specialized farms, whilst the impact will be different in highly diversified farms. In central province Kenya, for instance, specialized coffee farmers responded to a drop in coffee prices relative to food prices by changing their cropping pattern from coffee in pure stands into coffee inter-cropped with maize (Cowen 1983). In synthesis, the relations between markets, communities and farms are neither unilinear nor uniform. They are twofold as well as highly differentiated relations.

It is also important to stress that there is no generalized tendency from (2) to (3), that is from an agriculture only partly integrated in markets towards a fully commoditized economy. As a matter of fact, the balance (4) between non-commoditized (2) and commoditized (3) relations is historically variable and highly differentiated. The *couleur local* of agricultural and rural development may at some stage be defined and informed by strengthening relationships with markets and technology; at a later stage, the domain of community and family and non-commoditized relationships may be predominant in achieving progress. The particular balance (4) between commoditized and non-commoditized relationships is, in other words, locally specific and diverse. This implies that it requires time and moreover a research programme to establish what exactly operates in a particular situation as social relations of production.

Making Sense Out of Chaotic Diversity

Variety is an essential and often telling characteristic of agricultural systems throughout the Third World. It needs, however, proper unravelling in order to come to grips with its relevance. We will illustrate this with some comments regarding maize production in a region in Kenya, in which new Green Revolution technologies have been introduced and distributed in a massive way (Hebinck 1990, 1995).

The area of research, Nandi District, may be portrayed as one in which commodity production gradually became widespread and commodity relations deeply rooted. It was not, however, a linear process since people's practices and the economy were founded neither upon a fully fledged circulation of commodities, nor were their livelihoods based upon agricultural production alone.

Figure 2 Pathdiagram
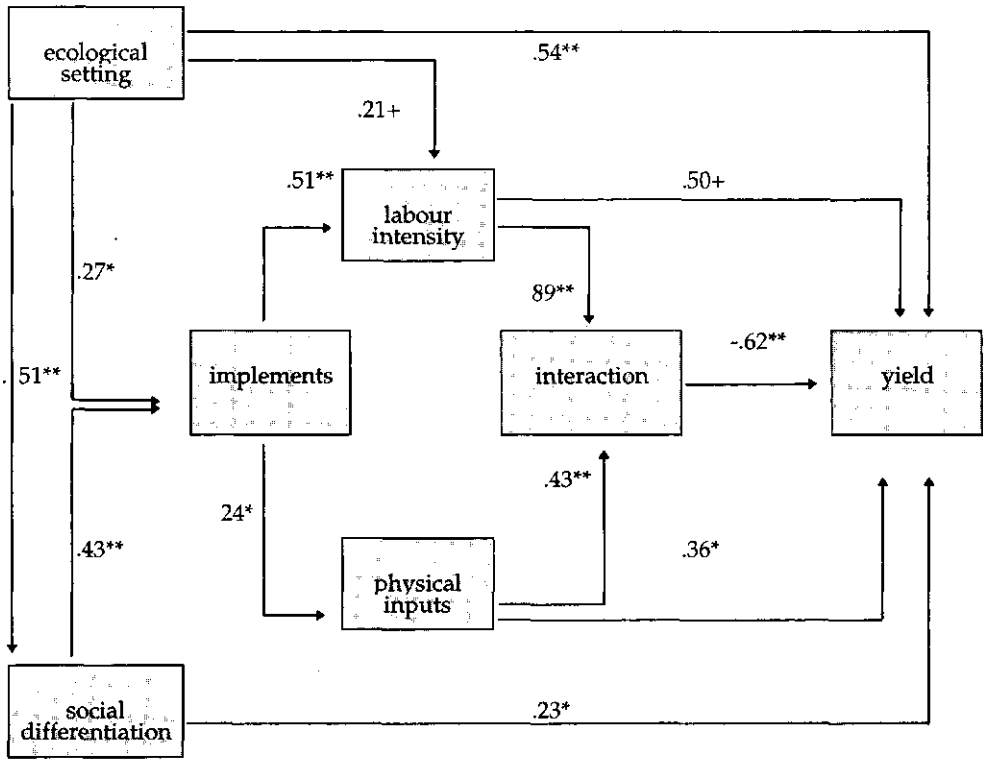
N.B.:   **   = significant at the level of Sig T=0.00)
          *   = significant at the level of 0.00 >Sig T<0.05
          +   = significant at the level of 0.05>Sig T<0.06

Source: Hebinck (1990)

Data on maize yields present a very chaotic picture at first sight. The variation is enormous, with an average of 40.8 bags (of 90 kg) per ha and a standard deviation of 23.5 bags per ha. One might initially expect to find an explanation in the particular linkages with markets and institutions, the degree to which farmers internalized the hybrid maize package, and the socio-economic conditions of maize farming (see Griffin 1979). However, one is still confronted by variations in yields realized by farmers working under roughly the same circumstances (governed by the access to production factors like land, labour, capital), which require further explanation. With the analytical framework in mind, the search for relevant relationships and interactions between people and artefacts concentrated on the wide variety of farming practices. These practices are in their turn shaped by farmers' different strategies. The analysis brings us to the specific ways in which farmers have organized their labour process. The puzzle of diversity may be explained by a multiplicity of labour processes which have emerged through time, each having its own characteristics and dynamics. In the Nandi context, the labour process appears to be strongly associated with farmers' choices concerning instruments, labour input, quantities of seed and fertilizer application, and the ecological conditions for farming (here understood as the interaction between altitude, rainfall, and soil quality). So partly, the answer is embedded in the various, but locally specific agronomic husbandry practices of farmers (such as planting distances, seed and fertilizer applied, mode of land preparation, sowing and weeding), as well as in the strategies devised by farmers to secure a certain livelihood for themselves and their families. But the answer also lies partly in the differential access to resources and the nature of the relationships with the institutional environment. Figure 2, showing the various (statistical) interactions between the elements of the labour process and social conditions for farming, illustrates this in detail.

The quantitative and qualitative data point to two main, but mutually exclusive labour processes which reflect different, but relevant social realities and social relations of production. One of the labour processes is based on the intensification of basically family labour and land. The second is basically founded on the recommended application of the Green Revolution package (referred to in Figure 2 as 'physical inputs'), and the input of hired labour. Hence, two strategies emerge here for the intensification of maize production. The first hinges, technically speaking, on increased labour input, which is expressed in planting densities, manual (with the hoe or oxen) ploughing and sowing, and intensive to very intensive and laborious weeding practices. This strategy is oriented towards *protecting the means of production and consumption* and shaped by, and embedded in, the domain of the family and cultural repertoires. The second strategy is not labour driven, but technology driven, that is mechanized farming. It is founded upon *expansion and accumulation*, and primarily moulded by the predominant market and technology relationships. The

first strategy and its associated agricultural practices finds its dynamic basis in minimizing and distancing themselves from commoditized relationships. The second strategy is founded upon the active creation and intensification of commodity relations and a clear interlocking (also in the political sense) with the predominant market and technology agencies in the district. Furthermore, both strategies are for most of the farmers mediated by 'straddling' a livelihood in agriculture with other economic activities, albeit for different objectives.

Surprisingly, what is missing is a combination of a high labour input with the recommended use of hybrid seed, fertilizers and agro-chemicals that compose the Green Revolution package. Technically speaking, such a combination could be very promising. In practice, however, when such a combination occurs, it results in a completely different outcome (see the interaction-term in the path diagram), with a negative effect upon yields. The explanation is simple: the physical inputs are not disembodied or neutral artefacts. They carry specific social relations of production (as for example an increased degree of commoditization). They do not therefore go together with an increased labour input. They are used, instead, to *replace* labour.

A further interesting element in the analysis is that the physical landscape of Nandi District in Kenya is, in its turn, shaped by socially regulated practices and strategies, and power relations. A crucial characteristic of agricultural and rural development in Nandi District is related to variation in natural agro-ecological resources, which are unequally distributed over the region. The northern part of the district is generally the area endowed with suitable soils and climatological conditions for maize and other crop production, and farming is much more organized on a large scale and labour extensive. The southern part is less well off and agricultural production is land and labour intensive. Maize yields are on average higher in the North than in the South. This is partly because of the natural factors involved, and partly due to specific socio-economic, institutional and cultural factors. It may or may not be coincidental, but it is striking that such a social distinction has emerged through time.[4]

What has been made clear with reference to the conceptual and analytical framework is, in the first place, that the seemingly chaotic diversity is not coincidental, but rather emerges from the strategic actions of actors. The first strategy with its associated agricultural practices, is clearly shaped by the domain of family and community and the interests expressed at that level. The second strategy is clearly informed by market institutions. In the second place, meaningful patterns of agricultural development have emerged through time.

Furthermore, the data and the analysis raise an important *development issue*: how, and by which mechanisms and relationships, can one strengthen the dynamics represented in the domain of family and culture? Two discussions relate to this issue. The first concerns the debate about the

pros and cons of small-scale versus large-scale farming (see also McC.Netting 1993). The field data indicate that the farm labour processes and strategies deeply embedded in the domain governed by family relationships and cultural repertoires, are exactly those that rely on intensive labour inputs, and hence rural employment is actively created in and through production. Moreover, the data point out that such labour processes are as productive as those in which labour input is replaced by technology. The empirical dimensions of scale and intensity of farming appear as relevant horizons with practical implications for rural development.

The second discussion relates to the relevance of agricultural research agendas for agricultural development. The maize research agenda has for decades (roughly since the beginning of the 1960s) been dominated by the breeding of hybrid maize varieties suitable for the Kenyan situation. These programmes and the dissemination of the produced innovations were glorified by the World Bank, and evaluated as very successful. Reference is made to the fast uptake of the hybrid maize innovation by small and large-scale farmers in the country. This points at an integration of farmers' projects with TATE projects. The statistical interrelations in the path diagram in Figure 2 show that the – direct and indirect – contribution of hybrid maize to a general increase in productivity is modest and relatively small as compared with the contribution of the factor labour, particularly in intensive labour driven labour processes (see, for more detail, Hebinck 1990, pp. 169–205).

It is not surprising therefore that farmers in different parts of Kenya reject the application of hybrid maize packages. Some do so after they have applied it for some time, while others have never applied it since its introduction.[5] Farmers are now engaged, as they been engaged for some time, in searching for new, but locally produced and reproduced maize varieties. Such efforts by farmers are positioned, in terms of our conceptual framework, in the non-commoditized circuits shaped by the domain of family, community and local culture. They involve processes of distancing themselves from TATE or technology-driven projects. Moreover, their efforts – theoretically and practically – boil down to (re)strengthening such domains, which involves distancing themselves from TATE-driven social relations of production. An important question, then, is how such efforts (re)mould the relationships between farmers and TATE institutions, and how such an experience forms the parameters for another type of agricultural research agenda in Kenya.[6]

Demoulding Iron Laws

At the aggregate level (see Figure 1), the many and sometimes contradictory development processes entailed in different styles of farming flow

together in particular outcomes, regularities and/or discontinuities. An average maize yield, as discussed above, is an example of such an outcome. The same example makes it clear that such an outcome cannot be taken as indicative for the many micro situations from which it is emerging (see also Steenhuysen de Piters 1995, van der Ploeg 1990, Almekinders *et al.* 1995). The same goes for particular regularities, such as a decrease in agrarian employment levels. Especially when such regularities are noted in different time-space locations, there is a strong tendency to consider them as 'iron laws' which govern the development processes concerned. This is not only the case within agrarian sciences, but also in the fields of policy and planning.

We believe that the concept of 'iron laws,' which in its turn is frequently associated with notions of unavoidability, indisputability and universality, is one of the awkward characteristics of structuralist approaches. This is especially the case since these 'iron laws' are directly grounded in relations, patterns and processes encountered in the domain of markets, technologies and institutions. It is assumed that the processes located in the latter domain lead *inevitably* to the kind of regularities that are noted at the macro level of aggregate outcomes. Just as water runs from the Swiss mountains to the Dutch delta (and not the other way around), rural development goes in one direction only, according to the 'iron laws.'

There is a nice collection of 'iron laws' in rural development processes. Take for instance the widely shared notion that rural and/or agrarian development can only proceed with a simultaneous reduction of rural (and/or agrarian) employment levels. Growth on the one hand and expulsion of labour on the other are, according to this 'law,' two sides of the same coin. Development cannot occur without such an expulsion. The two are forged together in one equation that depends, in its turn, on the 'basic economic laws governing our societies' (or, for that matter, 'governing capitalism'). Another well-known 'iron law' implies that 'monetization' of the rural economy is a crucial prerequisite for the 'development of the agrarian sector.' Again, these are just two sides of the same coin. Third, farmers will only be able to 'survive' if they operate as entrepreneurs: those who do not 'follow the logic of the market' will inevitably become marginalized. The same goes for technological development. It is not only an unavoidable ('autonomous') process; its implementation is equally understood as being unavoidable, since those who do not 'innovate' in time will sooner or later become marginalized. The 'law of diminishing returns' is yet another example.

Although the bouquet of 'iron laws' could easily be enlarged, we will not do that in this chapter. We want to stress here, in the first place, that these 'iron laws,' which are produced and reproduced (albeit sometimes also contested) within the domain of (agrarian) science, have a deep and far-reaching impact in the domains of policy and planning. These 'laws'

are currently highly institutionalized – to such a degree that they have become self evident. They reflect, so it is assumed, the world as it is. Hence, any attempt to run counter to these basic or iron 'laws' represents something ludicrous.

On the other hand, one could argue that the same basic laws are 'social constructions,' underpinned by the regularities that are produced precisely by and through these constructions. 'Iron laws' inform policy and planning: they compose the coordinates that define, delineate and separate the world of the possible and the world of the impossible, about which only lunatics dream. Hence, policy proposals are in line with the iron laws – the latter inform the former. Consequently, practice is shaped and reshaped according to the 'laws': policy and planning become, above all, self-fulfilling prophecies. It is only the world thought as possible (that is: within the boundaries as defined by the iron laws) that is being constructed. So finally the regularities produced indeed seem to confirm the basic 'laws' as indisputable.

We do not share the (post)modernist view that society is as malleable as clay, nor do we reject the notion that people operate in a world characterized by different degrees of freedom and coercion. We are also convinced that there are regularities and patterns that cannot be evaporated by the simple application of postmodern rhetoric. We do, however, strongly reject the notion of 'iron laws.' Consequently there follows a 'programme' that can be summarized in the following points:

1 Wherever specific regularities emerge (giving rise to deterministic interpretations geared around 'iron laws'), the production and reproduction of these regularities is to be investigated repeatedly.
2 At the same time, the possible 'deviations' from the iron laws indicated become extremely interesting. Representing at best anomalies within the paradigms based on iron laws, these 'deviations' might very well be starting points for interesting developments, both at practical and theoretical levels, within alternative approaches.
3 The application of the analytical framework (Figure 1) is, we believe, an important tool for doing so. This we will illustrate with reference to an 'iron law' that seems to govern land reform processes throughout the world.

The Iron Laws of Land-Reform: An Excursion into Empirically Underpinned Self-Evidences

A central concept in every planned land reform process is the 'economic holding.' This refers to the particular man/land ratio to be introduced into the agricultural sector through the reform process. The central assumption governing these reform processes is that only through the application of the 'economic holding' can viable enterprises be created.

The required 'economic holding' is basically calculated on the basis of the price levels expected in the markets and the world market in particular. It also takes into account the (expected) process of technology development. Markets and technology are important arenas in which agriculture is exposed to general and particular processes of accumulation. Thus whilst existing agricultural organization – including the empirical, average man/land ratio – is considered as being at odds with the (new) requirements as entailed in markets and technology, the newly calculated 'economic holding'[7] and the organizational solutions associated with it are seen as representing a new and more effective balance between the two sides.

If we analyse the historical development of the 'economic holding' and compare it to existing, empirical man/land ratios, the contradictory nature of the relation between agriculture and the development of markets and technology becomes clear. In the early 1950s, Egypt underwent land reform. The calculated 'economic holding' of 2.6 acres per man was some 44 percent higher than the empirical man/land ratio for the time. Thus, in Warriner's phrase 'some displacement was necessary' (1969, p. 413). The economic holding calculated a decade latter for Iran was 80 percent higher than the average man/land ratio. There are other figures: in Tunisia in 1964 the economic holding calculated by World Bank specialists for the new cooperatives was 166 percent above the average man/land ratio of the area; in Chile in the 1965–1970 period, the Frei reform had a newly realized man/land ratio that was 260 percent above the existing man/land ratio; in Peru, 1969, the economic holding envisaged in the new land reform and calculated by the *Iowa Mission*, was more than 400 percent above the average man/land relationship, and finally in South Africa, World Bank specialists have recently calculated a provisional economic holding that will probably be more than 1,000 percent above average man/land ratios. These data have been summarized in Figure 3.

The growing distance[8] between the average man/land ratio and the economic holding as introduced by state controlled[9] land reforms reflects the *acceleration* and *non-simultaneity* implied by the global processes of accumulation. Both these processes were articulated towards and imposed upon the sectors concerned through the recommended calculation of the economic holding. These recommendations reflect, from a technical point of view, the dominance of labour-saving technological designs and the deterioration of exchange relations both at the international level[10] and between agriculture and industry. They function as non-negotiable parameters in the standard procedures for calculating the economic holding, and through them[11], the dynamics, requirements and contradictions of global accumulation processes are 'translated' directly to field level.

Consequently, state controlled land reform processes are resulting in an increasing marginalization of both the farmers and rural wage labourers. We could refer to this tendency as being one of the 'iron laws' that seem to govern rural development processes: in order to (re)mould agriculture

to the changing requirements of the process of accumulation, a massive and rapid *dispossession* of the rural population must take place. Agricultural development brought in line with accumulation (through the design and implementation of land reform schemes) becomes a major mechanism for creating overpopulation. Figure 3 demonstrates the seeming inevitability of such a 'law,' which is also reflected in the title of Thiessen-huisen's discussion of land reform processes: *Broken Promises*.

It may well be the case that land reforms were meant to contain and 'resolve' an agrarian question that blocked processes of accumulation and presented an immanent political threat to existing regimes. This was undoubtedly the case in Peru, for example. But, as history has shown, the remoulding of agriculture to fit the new political and economic requirements of a particular accumulation regime does not 'solve' the agrarian question. Instead, the agrarian question is reproduced if not deepened. This is another 'iron law' governing land reform processes: more often than not they produce new turmoil: those sections of the rural population who see their aspirations being frustrated ('land to the tiller'), and the dispossessed, will try to regain access to land. Their movements may bring down governments, as was the case in Peru in 1975.

Meanwhile, the 'reformed' sector will frequently have problems in managing these new large-scale agricultural production units characterized as they are by their increased man/land ratio. This is particularly so because banks, trading houses and state institutions will be unwilling and/or unable to create the conditions necessary for a proper functioning of these new units, whether they are large family farms or state controlled cooperatives. As a result production will remain fixed at levels often lower that those of the prereform period. This is, we would argue, a third 'iron law,' which is equally supported by the available documentation: often inspired by the need to increase production, most reform processes do ravage instead the levels of production.

Is There a Way Out?

Several observations concerning these 'iron laws,' and especially the one contained and illustrated in Figure 3, can be made using the analytical scheme (see Figure 1). Indeed, as long as the 'economic holding' is derived from the evolving economic tendencies at world market level the marginalization indicated is inevitable. But then, there is no need to ground the required man/land ratio in a unilinear way to external economic parameters only. Farming *interacts* with the market, it is not *determined* by it. The balance between market dependency and relative autonomy might well be changed. This has been shown in a range of empirical studies (van der Ploeg 1990; Hebinck 1990). But probably even more important is that such a balance can be changed, precisely in and during land reform processes.

Figure 3 Man-Land Ratios in Models for Land Reform
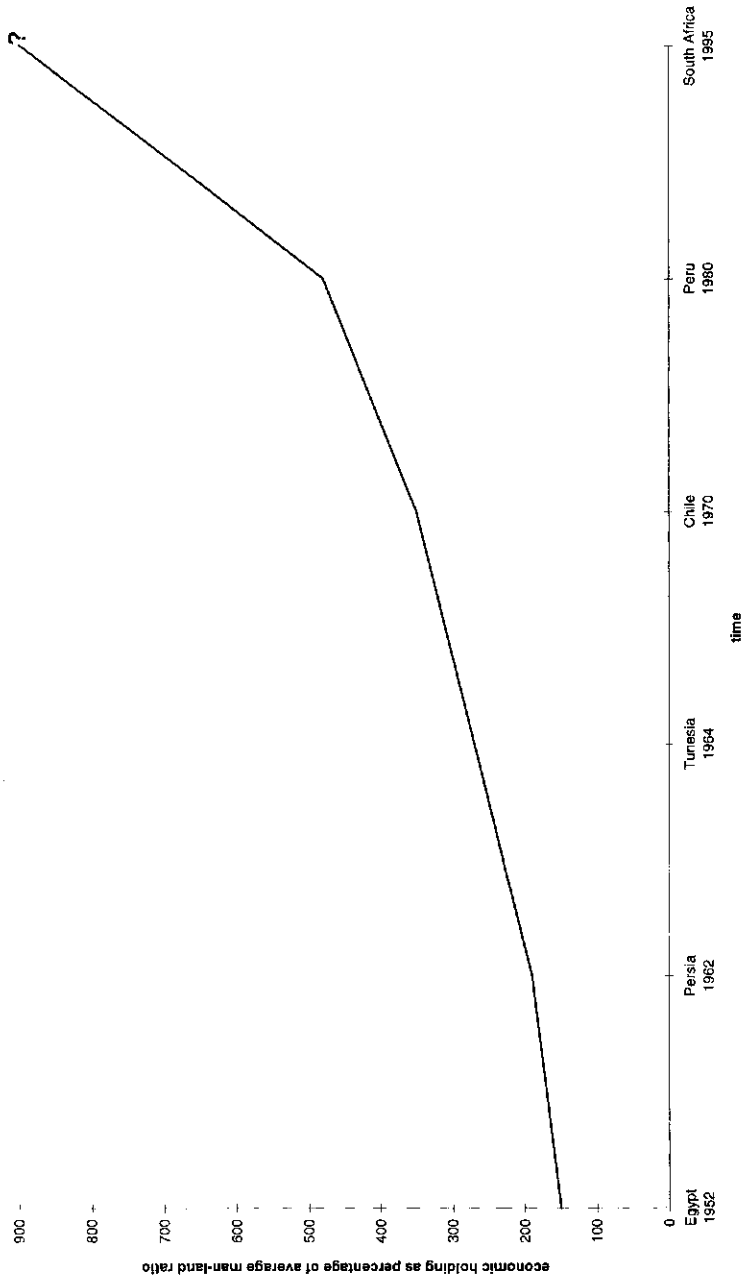
Second, it is during land-reform processes that the intensity of farming may be changed in a substantial and self-contained way. These two observations lead to the already discussed 'anomalies.' In the Peruvian land-reform process, for instance, such phenomena emerged in several locations, leading consequently to a new man/land ratio that differed markedly from the one entailed in the state controlled reform process (in Bajo Piura 1:1.5 versus 1:7, see van der Ploeg 1977; and in Alto Piura 1:3 versus 1:10, see Bolhuis and van der Ploeg 1985).

Practice shows, if only at the level of the 'anomalies'[12], that the so-called 'iron laws' can be negated if not modified. It is time that the room required at the level of theory for understanding this 'bending of iron' is created.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter we have argued that heterogeneity is of strategic importance for any analysis that deals with agrarian and rural develop-ment processes in Third World countries. The same goes for the proper understanding of micro–macro linkages. Heterogeneity is grounded in the construction and reproduction of a highly differentiated set of micro–macro linkages amongst other things. We have shown that the diversity (in for example maize yields), which at first sight seems to represent a chaotic variance, is the outcome of different actors' projects, which also reflect the construction of different interrelations with macro phenomena such as the introduction of Green Revolution technologies. We have also shown that certain regularities (or 'iron laws') that emerge at the aggregate level may very well be deconstructed by going backwards from the macro level towards the micro level where contrasting trends can be encountered.

In synthesis, we believe it to be extremely important that heterogeneity, at any level, is taken seriously. Heterogeneity often brings the researcher to a reservoir of highly interesting and mutually contrasting (potential) responses to the processes of change and problems that are characteristic for Third World agriculture. In addition, by taking heterogeneity seriously and understanding the different responses to change, the possibility of identifying potentially relevant and dynamic endogenous development patterns in the countryside emerges, on the basis of which a meaningful contribution can be made to the policy debate about the directions of agricultural development.

We believe that we have provided a relevant analytical and conceptual framework for coming to grips with heterogeneity in its different forms. What has been left open is the kind of field research methodologies required for such an analysis. This chapter has hinted at least that there is scope for a fruitful combination of qualitative (for example, ethnographic)

and quantitative (for example, statistical) approaches. Such approaches assist us in meaningful analyses of the different development patterns in the countryside.

Notes

1   This is not to deny the recognition of processes of rural differentiation. Classes are important but their membership is ambiguous, insecure and liable to considerable fluctuation.

2   Furthermore, what needs to be stressed is that theoretically as well as empirically, different labour processes emerged through time. Marx (Capital, Vol III) was one of the first to draw our attention to the heterogeneity of production processes and co-existence of various labour processes. Within the historically specific situation in eighteenth-century rural England, he distinguished between labour processes linked to specific commodity circuits and those founded upon a complete circulation of commodities. Extending this argument towards (Third World) agricultural systems, we may propose that every labour process in agriculture, whether on a capitalist farm enterprise or on a family farm, can be characterized in terms of a maintenance of a certain balance between use value and exchange value, between commoditized and non-commoditized forms of production and reproduction. The connotation 'degree of commoditization' and the extent of externalization is used (see van der Ploeg 1986, 1990) to reflect this strategic balance.

3   See Magadlela and Hebinck (1995) for a more detailed analysis.

4   Historically, it is in fact not a coincidence as land settlement patterns in Nandi were such that the first landholdings to be pegged and claimed, and later registered and privatized after the 1945, were the ones owned by the elite who managed to control relatively large holdings in such a way. At a later stage, in the early 1950s particularly in the southern part, quite a lot of land was subdivided and subsequently sold to neighbouring people (such as the Luhya). The outcome of such settlement patterns is that the landscape in the northern part is predominantly large scale with land and labour extensive agriculture, and the southern part predominantly small scale with land and labour intensive agriculture.

5   The processes of distancing and/or rejection are usually coined by TATE actors in terms of non-adoption or disadoption of innovations. The empirical evidence for such process is, however, still not conclusive. The information has become available through research projects conducted by Omosa in Kisii District, Mango and van Kessel in Siaya District, and by Jansen in the southern region of Nandi District. It appears so far that there is a variety and complex set of reasons to explain these phenomena which are associated with ecological issues (soil degradation), a livelihood crisis, collapsing institutions in the aftermath of structural adjustment, and missing and failing markets.

6   A research project to look at processes of distancing and to identify the consequences for agricultural research agendas, is in the process of formulation. The partners in the research will be the Centre for Rural Development Sociology, KARI (Kenya Agricultural Research Institute) and CIMMYT (International Centre for the Improvement of Maize and Wheat).

7   It is mostly US agencies (including 'missions' of US universities) and/or the World Bank that are making the required calculations.

8   The same tendency can be found in countries such as Mexico and India where land reform processes took several decades. In Mexico, for instance, the realized economic holding averaged 9.7 ha/man in the period 1916–1934. This increased from 22.3 ha/man in the period 1935–1940, to 41.3 ha/man in the period 1941–1956 (Maddox 1965, pp. 373–398).

9   There are the notable and significant exceptions: the land reform realized in the mid 1950s in Bolivia was a peasant-managed land reform that occurred during and in the aftermath

of the *Violencia*. It resulted in an 'economic holding' that was nearly identical to the average man/land ratio (Burke 1967). Similar 'deviations' from the general trend emerged in Peru wherever peasant movements, notably the peasant communities, managed to gain direct control over a land reform process that was initially controlled by the state and managed as a military campaign (van der Ploeg 1977).

10 It is telling that for the Lambwe area of Nyanza Province, Kenya, it was reported 'that some years ago, that is in period 1951–1954, the economic holding required to obtain a minimum income level for a farming family was according to all calculations above 100 acres. Currently, however [1955] the required unit has decreased to 25 acres and it will probably fall even further' (HMSO 1955, p. 28).

11 The malleability of the interrelations between farming and markets is strategically denied in these calculations; a total integration and submission is assumed in an *a priori* way.

12 But then again the reader is reminded that it is the dominant paradigm which divides the world into anomalies and normalities.

11 Agrarian Change, Neoliberalism and Commoditization. A Perspective on Social Value[1]

Norman Long

Setting the Scene: Mexico as an Instructive Case

Like most other countries, the agrarian sector of Mexico is presently undergoing massive economic and organizational restructuring following the adoption of neoliberal policies aimed at reducing the role of the state in favour of the market in promoting agricultural development. The implementation of such policies has entailed a number of measures that have bitten deeply into the fabric of agrarian life. These measures include: the dismantling of protectionist legislation designed to open up the economy to foreign investment and to force Mexican producers and entrepreneurs to compete on the basis of 'comparative advantage' in international markets; the negotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) aimed at stimulating the 'free' flow of commodities and investments within the new trade zone, leading to closer integration of the Mexican and US/Canadian economies; the withdrawal of government subsidies on agricultural products and of support for government agencies involved in the provision of agricultural inputs (particularly credit) and in the processing and marketing of products; and, last but not least, the privatization of *ejido* indigenous community land which has necessitated the redrafting of Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution, making it possible now for the first time for *ejido* and *comunidad* plots to be granted private titles and to be bought and sold.

Such policy shifts are, as many recent studies show, having a major impact on the livelihoods and life circumstances of rural populations. In fact, the changes taking place represent some of the most radical agrarian transformations that Mexico has witnessed since the initial implementation of the Agrarian Reform in the 1930s and 1940s.

We should not, however, overlook the continuities with the past. Hence what looks like a profound change in agrarian property rights turns out to be much less dramatic when we consider its antecedents. In 1992, the Salinas government passed the amendment to the Constitution in order to privatize the *ejido* sector, but in doing so gave a legitimacy and legal status to various, already commonplace, renting and selling practices. Another example concerns the cross-border flow of commodities (including migrant

labour) which, though often technically illegal, has been a regular feature of south-north trade for decades, and one actively supported by both US and Mexican interests. Thus the freeing of import/export restrictions through NAFTA does not initiate many entirely new processes; rather it reinforces and expands the already well-established social and spatial networks linking Mexican producers, consumers and households with their counterparts in the frontier towns and the US hinterland. The opening up of new markets, new types and sites of production, new trading arrangements, and new economic relations does not therefore imply the forging of completely new modes of organization, regulation and cultural encounter.

This mixing of 'new' and 'old' is compounded by the discrepancies that exist in different social arenas between the discourse of neoliberal policy, different actors' interpretations of its contents and consequences, and actual social practice: in the policy-making arena where debates among politicians, policy makers and economic advisers take place; at the frontline where policies are implemented and where government officials exercise discretion as to how precisely to interpret and apply particular measures; and at the level of rural producers and other economic actors such as traders and agricultural workers, who struggle to come to terms – cognitively and organizationally – with the new economic ideology and changing livelihood conditions.

Such complexities underline the need to explore how 'economic liberalization' and 'privatization' values (based for example on notions of the 'power of the market' and the 'efficiency' of private enterprise) are fortified, transformed, or subsumed by other values (such as those associated with notions of 'community interest,' 'family solidarity,' or 'social entitlement'). We need to analyse, that is, how different discourses and value frames intersect in the shaping of everyday life. Although neoliberal ideas may carry a certain clout – because they are promoted vigorously by 'authoritative' bodies – they can never fully override other value commitments. Indeed it is the very interplay and accommodation *vis-à-vis* 'counterposing' discourses, beliefs and social practice that provides the basis for the 'internalization' of neoliberalism in a variety of social contexts, although a good deal more research is required to establish how far such neoliberal notions have actively permeated particular lifeworlds.

Of course, in Mexico the interpenetration of distinctive discourses and ideologies has a long history. The advent of neoliberalism has simply heightened the process. For example, long-standing strands of populist and participatory ideology – deeply embedded in discussions of the 'agrarian question' and issues of 'social equity' – have once again come to the fore, not only in the struggles launched by local groups complaining about and challenging neoliberal measures and social conditions (of which

the Chiapas uprising has been the most dramatic), but also within the discourses articulated by politicians and various government agencies.

This was clearly illustrated in the implementation of the special presidential National Solidarity Programme (*PRONASOL* or *solidaridad*), which consisted of an assortment of subprogrammes dealing with social welfare, production, regional development and investment projects. As many commentators have concluded, the primary aim of *PRONASOL* seemed to be 'to repair the tattered social safety net' brought by the economic crisis and austerity measures of the de la Madrid period and then aggravated by economic liberalization and privatization (Cornelius, Craig and Fox 1994, pp. 3-26). The ideology of the programme appealed to populist and community self-help sentiments with a view to promoting 'partnership' or 'co-responsibility' projects between local groups and government. These projects were designed to alleviate the marginalization of the 'weaker' economic actors whose livelihoods were undermined or threatened. In this way, liberalizing and privatizing efforts were tempered by the realization of the social costs entailed and by the need to comply with, and capitalize upon, deeply ingrained Mexican discourses (arising partly out of the experience, gains, and symbols of the Mexican Revolution) concerning social equity and the political rights of civil society. The result was what Salinas labelled '*social* liberalism,'

These opening remarks are intended to provide a brief orientation to the types of empirical and analytical issues central to understanding agrarian change in Mexico. In common with most other agrarian situations, the future of rural Mexico continues to be bound up with neoliberal thinking that gives theoretical credence to the 'workings of the market' as a way of allocating resources more efficiently and improving economic and institutional performance.[2]

An understanding of the restructuring of agrarian life and of rural livelihoods under neoliberalism must centre, then, upon an analysis of how commoditization processes impinge upon, or are presumed to shape, the everyday lives and strategies of various economic actors.[3] The Mexican case not only provides an interesting empirical setting for the study of commodity relations and values, but also invites one to open up new analytical perspectives on this issue. The core of this chapter therefore is devoted to the exposition of a number of erstwhile neglected analytical aspects of commoditization. But first, I must sketch the general theoretical path I intend to follow.

General Theoretical Groundings

Underpinning the argument is my concern to advance an actor-oriented and social constructivist approach to the study of agrarian change. Such

an approach contests structuralist perspectives founded upon notions of 'modernization' or 'political economy,' as well as more recent neo-Weberian or post-Marxist formulations that attempt to avoid the pitfalls of essentialism and teleology characteristic of earlier structural theories of change (Booth 1994, pp. 11-13).

In contrast to structural perspectives, an actor-oriented analysis seeks to uncover the interactive processes by which social life is constructed, reproduced and transformed. It finds no place for the notion of 'structure' as a set of external forces or conditions that delimit or regulate specific modes of action. Instead it focuses on how so-called 'externalities' are mediated by the strategies, understandings and commitments of different actors and actor-networks, thereby generating a variegated pattern of social forms that represent differential responses to similar 'problematic' circumstances (Long and van der Ploeg 1994). Actor-oriented analysis addresses itself primarily to three issues: the explanation of heterogeneity and its social significance; the analysis of 'interface' situations wherein actors' lifeworlds interlock, accommodate, or collide with each other; and the delineation of the capacities of particular organizing practices for effecting change.

An actor-oriented approach, I contend, affords a more grounded understanding of the dynamics of social change and intervention – in this case, of certain patterns of agrarian development – while at the same time continuing to recognize the significance of 'global' technological, institutional, politico-economic and cultural change for local populations (Long 1994).

Developing an Actor Perspective on Agrarian Issues

Unlike recent populist writings that attempt to rescue the peasantry or other 'subordinate' classes from the obscurity of history by according them an active role in the making of agrarian change (see Calagione, Francis and Nugent 1992), a more thorough-going actor-oriented analysis offers a 'view from below' that embraces also the interlocking strategies, dilemmas and images of change experienced and promoted by non-peasant, non-subaltern actors. The range of actors involved might include government functionaries, export-company entrepreneurs, irrigation officials, village-level leaders, political bosses, private landowners, smallholder peasants, groups of village women, agricultural workers, traders, as well as a host of non-present actors such as policy makers, development 'experts,' and media creators and communicators who shape the conduct of others through 'action at a distance,' often through the mediation of non-human elements such as policy documents, technological packages, and material 'conditionalities.'[4]

An actor-oriented approach, then, sheds important light on the social construction of agrarian life and livelihoods.[5] It does this by identifying the

social practices and cultural interpretations developed by the different actors for dealing with the problems they face. These processes involve struggles over access to productive resources, over inputs such as credit, labour and technology, over opportunities for investment or accumulation, and over the creation of space for the pursuit of specific individual or group initiatives. They also entail the encounter and mutual accommodation or negotiation of differing bodies of knowledge, discourse and cultural practice. In each 'problematic' situation, the respective actors draw, explicitly or implicitly, on previous experiences and understandings, and commit whatever material, symbolic or social resources they can muster for resolving the problems as they perceive them. This process, of course, would hold for agricultural day-labourers as much as for company entrepreneurs, state bureaucrats, or political bosses.

While most scholars would readily agree that an understanding of agrarian change would be sadly deficient if an appreciation of the interests and strategies of the key actors were missing, few have yet grasped the full significance of introducing into the analysis such an actor-oriented perspective. For example, it is often simply assumed that the outcomes of struggles between agrarian actors are primarily determined by those who 'possess' power or have leverage over the 'weaker parties,' who thereby become the losers. This image comes close to a zero-sum conception of politics, which fails to address, as populist writers have convincingly shown, the complex and subtle manipulative ways in which the weak may shape the negotiations that take place, thus extracting certain significant benefits for themselves (Scott 1985). And sometimes they may even hoodwink the more 'powerful' actors into unwittingly agreeing to terms that later turn out to be highly unfavourable to them. Extending this line of argument, one can also claim that any effective imposition, for example, of state laws or programmes of development, or of measures aimed at promoting the 'logic of the market,' must necessarily depend upon whether or not, and to what degree, the various actors involved in these processes come to accept these interventions as legitimate or at least not worth contesting.

Viewed in this way, even large-scale interventions aimed at transforming existing forms of agriculture, such as state-organized irrigation schemes (backed by international funding and expertise), can only effectively come into operation if there is some measure of agreement or co-responsibility amongst the various actors involved. They cannot simply be imposed and steered in strict accordance with some ready-made, externally devised plan. While it may be true that small-scale cultivators, petty traders and landless workers are by and large excluded from the critical decisions relating to the allocation of resources (e.g., of plots of land or credit) and from the design of systems of land tenure and production, it would not be valid to visualize them as having no significant part to play in the implementation or modification of such plans; nor would it be

justifiable to assume that these 'less influential' actors have no room for manoeuvre and no possibilities for pursuing their own 'projects' within the framework of these schemes.

Indeed, as van der Zaag (1992, pp. 135-158) has meticulously documented in a study of irrigation practice in a government-managed scheme in western Mexico, the annual irrigation plan drawn up by the agricultural engineers, which determines the land areas to be devoted to particular crops, the amounts of water allocated to them, and the level of water fees to be charged, was not in any sense regarded as a binding charter by either senior management staff, water guards or farmers. In fact everybody knew that the critical decisions relating to crops and water distribution were not taken in the making of the plan, but rather were negotiated in other arenas and at other times. Hence, whatever the plan detailed, decisions about sugar allocation were in fact made behind closed doors between the senior irrigation staff, the sugar mill manager and his technicians, and farmers' representatives; and water scheduling was negotiated directly at the interface between individual farmers and the water guard responsible for the particular irrigation block. The irrigation plan had something of a 'scientific image about it,' with the mass of quantitative data, graphs and calculations that went into producing it, but the practicalities of operating the irrigation scheme were different. The plan served well for demonstrating to higher level officials from the Ministry of Agriculture that district staff were professionally competent and had everything under control, but badly for predicting or understanding the dynamics of social behaviour within the scheme.

As this example highlights, an actor-oriented perspective views state intervention and the 'modernization' of agriculture as a set of ongoing socially constructed and negotiated processes involving specific actors. They are not disembodied structural transformations but entail interaction, competition, conflict and negotiation between persons and groups of differing origins, ideology and resources. In short, they consist of a complex series of social encounters and interfaces involving persons belonging to contrasting, and sometimes even seemingly incompatible, lifeworlds.

In order, therefore, to delve beneath the generalities and so-called 'central' tendencies of agrarian change, we need to pay close attention to the interlocking, distantiation, and mutual transformation of different lifeworlds, and to the interplay of actors' strategies, interests and cultural representations. Actors' 'projects' are not, as it were, simply embedded in structural settings defined by commodity circuits or state-organized development programmes. Rather, 'it is through the ways in which they interlock that they create, reproduce and transform particular 'structures'' (Long and van der Ploeg 1994, p. 82). Only in this way can we come to a full theoretical and empirical appreciation of the differentiated nature of agrarian life and change.

All this implies a quite new conceptualization of agrarian processes and change: one that distances itself from simple techno-agricultural and political-economic models of agrarian structure. The latter offer very limited visions of agrarian systems and fail to grasp the need to view agrarian and market structures as 'in-the-making' socially and symbolically, that is, as emergent, socially constructed forms whose meanings are attributed and negotiated by the various actors implicated in their construction, reproduction and transformation. As I mentioned earlier, such actors of course may or may not be physically present in specific agrarian locales: indeed important actors such as state officials, development donors, bank directors, politicians, food retailers and consumers are often far removed from the struggles of farmers, farm households and other rural inhabitants. Furthermore, technologies and policies are attributed with agency (i.e., they are conferred with the capacity to influence certain outcomes such as increased production levels or more effective social organization)[6] by those who create them (scientists and planners), by those who introduce them (agricultural extension workers or land reform officials), and by various categories of users (such as male and female farmers, labourers, engineers and politicians).

The range and complexity of analytical issues that this approach raises are enormous. In theoretical terms it calls for a major rethinking of certain critical concepts and processes such as 'agrarian development,' 'state intervention,' 'commoditization,' 'scientification,' 'agricultural knowledge,' 'globalization' and 'agrarian movements,' Commoditization, in particular, occupies a key place in both modernization and political economy theories and is, of course, the central theoretical pivot to contemporary neoliberal thinking. It is thus a highly relevant topic for exploring new theoretical terrain. The next part of this chapter, then, lays the foundations for an actor-oriented perspective on commoditization processes.

The Commoditization Debate

Some ten years ago we published a collection of papers entitled *The Commoditization Debate* (Long et al. 1986). The main purpose of this volume was to challenge existing structural analyses of commoditization,[7] giving particular attention to works that attempted to interpret the transformation of peasantries within a simple commodity model (Bernstein 1977, 1979 and 1986; see also Friedmann 1981 and Goodman and Redclift 1985). The theme of the collection, however, extended to consider more generally the shortcomings of political economy perspectives and to argue the case for an actor-oriented approach.

One unresolved issue concerned how far these contrasting theoretical schema might be reconciled to produce a more rounded analysis of the complexity and heterogeneity of commoditization and of market

phenomena more generally. The debate brought to light the inherent epistemological and theoretical incompatibilities of structural versus actor explanations; and pointed to the need for a new theorization of 'commodity' relations and social value that would give proper attention to the analysis of the 'globalizing' tendencies of commoditization, whilst at the same time allowing for an understanding of how commodity notions and relations are 'mediated and translated by the specific strategies and understandings of the actors involved' (Long and van der Ploeg 1989, p. 238).

Yet, despite the various attempts to take up this challenge, we are still it seems far from achieving a satisfactory theoretical synthesis. Indeed, in hindsight, one might conclude that the effort was doomed to failure from the start precisely because, even though we took a strong actor/social constructivist position, we assumed like other scholars that the transformation of economic life and the meaning of goods (both material and symbolic) could be reduced, following Marx's theory of value, to an analysis of the interplay of 'commodity' (exchange) and 'non-commodity' (use) values and relations.

The problem with this formulation is, in the first place, that it posits implicitly the existence of two distinctive modes of value and practice: that dependent upon market rationalities and the conversion of 'use' into 'exchange' value and that governed by non-market principles and social reciprocities. Of course, as a caveat, most writers would acknowledge that reality is considerably more messy and that this distinction is drawn solely for heuristic reasons. Nevertheless casting the analysis primarily in terms of commodity versus non-commodity forms – which clearly owes a lot to anthropological discussions of 'exchange' relations versus 'gift-giving' (Gregory 1982; Strathern 1988) – shifts attention away from the more intriguing problems of how, when and by whom commodity values, over and against other types of value, are judged to be central to the definition of particular social relationships and to the status of specific goods.

While much has since been written on this issue, only recently have discussions achieved a degree of theoretical sophistication through, for example, the analysis of the significance of trust and other types of social commitment in the development and reproduction of commodity relations and economic contracts (see Granovetter 1985; Alexander 1992 and Perri 6 1994 for interesting contributions). It has also been persuasively demonstrated that many relationships involving the movement of goods between social actors are best understood as prestations or 'recursive works that juxtapose and valorize' the different social entities involved, not strictly as 'transactions' expressing the relation between the things exchanged (Thomas 1991, p. 32, and Strathern 1988). A third area of new research concerns the question of how contrasting discourses – dealing for instance with 'the community,' 'the state,' 'nature' and

'the moral order' – intersect in the processes by which commodity relations are formed and valorized. Somewhat paradoxically, but not surprisingly, these non-market dimensions have emerged as critically important in an era of neoliberal discourse, where increasingly it has become evident that the 'advancement of the market' and the 'logic of free enterprise' depend crucially upon certain non-market relations, beliefs and commitments.

An Actor Perspective on Commodities and Value

What was needed in 1986 – and remains a central issue in 1997 – is a more thorough-going treatment of the processes by which commodity and other social values enter the agrarian scene and shape social practice. The field of agricultural development and food systems offers an especially interesting area of enquiry because it inherently throws up a complex mixture of social values – some based upon notions of 'modernized' farming, family and farm property commitments, or the centrality of cost-benefit calculations, and others on questions of taste, cultural habits and the idea of simply clinging to 'what we know' or on the issue of the purity of organically as against chemically produced food, and yet others representing the political struggles that occur between different interest groups within the food chain (e.g., consumers, supermarkets, transnational companies, governments, private entrepreneurs, and agricultural producers and labourers).

As a self-critique, then, one might argue that *The Commoditization Debate* clung too closely to established categories of analysis – mainly those of political economy and peasant studies – and sought to create space from within for actor and cultural perspectives. Instead it should perhaps have adopted a more robust actor-oriented position, arguing for an analysis that addressed itself more directly to the social construction of economic life. This would have allowed for the exploration of a number of critical issues, which we later took up in *The Battlefields of Knowledge* (1992), concerning the interlocking of actor 'projects,' multiple discourses, and power and knowledge domains (see especially the chapters dealing with commodity issues by Andrew Long and Verschoor). This would have led to a better appreciation of the ways in which commodity relations and values are generated, and challenged, through the active strategizing, network building and knowledge construction of particular producers, retailers, consumers and other relevant actors.

Such a perspective underlines the important point that 'commoditization' is driven, defined or contested by the actions of specific actors. It is not a disembodied process with its own 'laws of motion,' nor can it be reduced to some abstract notion of 'market forces' that propel people into gainful economic action or impoverish them. Rather, commoditiza-

tion processes take shape through the actions of a diverse set of inter-
linked social actors and are composed of specific constellations of
interests, values and resources. Commoditization has no given and
necessary trajectory, except that negotiated by the parties involved, and
as a process it is never 'complete,' It constitutes a label we apply to
ongoing processes that involve social and discursive struggles over
livelihoods, economic values and images of 'the market,' In fact it is
more a way of looking at things than a clearly defined special category of
things. As Kopytoff (1986) and Appadurai (1986) have insightfully
observed, like people, things have biographies composed of diverse sets
of circumstances, wherein at some points or in some arenas they are
accorded the status of commodities (i.e., attributed with exchange value,
either potential or realized), whilst in other contexts they are not. In this
way things are seen to move in and out of the status of being considered
a commodity or are viewed by the same or different persons as simulta-
neously embodying both commodity and non-commodity values. Also,
within any given social context, the interpretation and significance of
'exchange' value as against other kinds of value will vary or be con-
tested. Thus, while present policy discourse mostly accords a positive
image of market mechanisms, free enterprise and commodity forms, the
argument can quickly be turned around. For example, as Taussig (1980)
has demonstrated in his analysis of proletarianization processes among
peasants in the Andes, the notion of commoditization may also form the
basis for a critique by local actors of capitalist relations, in a similar
manner to Marx's own exposure of the mystification and 'evils' of
commodity fetishism.

So far the argument has mostly concentrated on the 'commodity' end
of the spectrum of values, but similar issues arise when so-called 'non-
commoditized' goods or relationships are contested by certain actors
who wish for strategic reasons to demonstrate the 'added value' of
treating them as commodities. Being enshrined in modern state law and
economic practice, the commodity form – so it is argued – is likely to
carry greater clout and legitimacy. Yet how far market language and
institutions undermine the discursive and moral basis of non-commodity
values and commitments remains to be seen. For example, market
arguments for the privatization of *ejido* land (state-owned peasant
holdings) in Mexico have met with some resistance, due mainly to the
existence of peasant solidarities of one kind or another that aim to
promote a sense of community and egalitarianism. It is easy enough to
declare the privatization of community resources but it is another thing
to persuade peasants to put aside community or *ejido* interests and values
in favour of neoliberal attitudes. On the other hand, certain groups of
ejidatarios and *comuneros* (community members) may welcome
privatization and increased market involvement as a way of helping

them to consolidate their entrepreneurial ambitions; and there will be yet others who will no doubt hedge their bets.[8]

Commodity and non-commodity issues then are matters of contention: they involve actors' differential interpretations of the social significance of particular people, things and relationships. Hence we must recognize the multiplicity of social values held by actors and the existence of many different and competing 'theories' of social value. An actor-oriented approach focuses therefore on the elucidation of alternative actor theories of social value and how they interrelate, rather than on the search for a single 'new' theory of value. From this point of view we can never have a single theory of social value – whether Marxist or non-Marxist; we can only have actor-generated value notions that form part of the 'mental' and 'moral' maps of individual and collective actors, and which crystallize within the encounters that take place between them.

Exploring Social Value

On the basis of this, a number of critical issues arise which constitute the central concern of a number of monographs on agrarian change and planned intervention produced by social researchers at Wageningen over recent years.[9] How are social values negotiated, when evidently there exists a multiplicity of values attached to particular goods and relationships? How do particular people/interest groups promote their points of view, their valorizations? How do certain discourses gain preeminence and enrol others? What are the situational components that shape the negotiation process? How do the qualities (intrinsic and extrinsic) of particular products affect the meanings that people give to them? Is the fixing of value predominantly related to production, exchange or consumption? What is the relative weighing of the various sets of interests involved?

Whereas neoclassical theories give priority to consumers in the fixing of value (through their demand for particular qualities and quantities of products), Marxist theory stresses the role of production, in particular the way in which the input of labour time generates value which is then converted from use value into exchange value through the market; environmentalist 'green' theory stresses the importance of the retention of stocks of natural resources or 'capital' (i.e., 'sustainable' resources) in the attribution of value; and community and family interests propound other values such as the importance of making prestations for consolidating social relations and guaranteeing reciprocal help in times of distress. Even inputs such as paid labour may not be evaluated simply in terms of commoditized value since they may not be given with the intention of receiving benefits of a material or cash kind, but rather in order to

reproduce certain social arrangements regarded as essential for the well-being of the group or community as a whole.

The latter point is neatly illustrated in a study of an Indian community in highland Peru by Lund Skar (1984). Having described the network of non-wage labour exchanges that reinforces village solidarity and the strongly held attitudes against offering wages or claiming wage benefits for working in the maize fields with neighbours or kinsmen, she goes on to address the question of the occasional instance when labour is in fact hired for a daily cash wage. Yet even here it seems that the money paid over functions principally to oblige the worker to reciprocate at a later date: 'In reality the same money, bills and coins, are often paid back and forth, and it seems that the money is rather kept as a security than as a currency for buying and selling' (Skar 1982, p. 215). Continuing for a moment with the same ethnographic context, one might also note that coins figure prominently in Andean marriage ritual and are often believed to give off a powerful vapour which derives from mysterious buried treasures called *waris*. The newly-wed couple is advised to keep these coins safely as a guarantee of prosperity (Isbell 1978, p. 121-122).

These examples bring out the co-existence of several, seemingly incompatible interpretations of social value within the same set of social relations which people nevertheless quite easily live with, until of course certain events precipitate the need to clear up the ambiguities in order to negotiate an agreed point of view or simply to agree to differ. This concern for the fixing of value occurs, for example, at junctures in certain political processes where value incompatibilities and social discontinuities – often reflected in the emergence of markedly divergent lifestyles – reach a peak and begin to generate schisms within the group or network of relations. At this point explicit struggles may occur over the attribution of social meanings and value, access to resources, and in relation to issues and differences of social identity. This process is a regular feature of the ways in which class or status divisions become consolidated or are disputed within a community or social group. Religious fiestas in Latin America, for example, often become

> 'the organizational vehicles [and public occasions] for reaffirming, reconstituting or reordering social relationships and networks. This process is intimately tied to the expression and possible reformulation of the symbolic and material value of certain relationships and groupings . . . Yet, [fiestas] do more than this, they constitute arenas within which new patterns..of differentiation and opposition or cooperation/collaboration are generated. They do not merely mirror wider structural processes, they too have generative power. They may 'bring to the surface' the facts of social differentiation and class struggle. Participating in a fiesta may, thus, increase the consciousness of structural change and thereby promote it (e.g., increasing integration into wider fields of relationships spanning rural and urban

scenarios which connect the village to the mine or city)' (Laite and Long 1987, p. 28).

In other words, the study of fiestas and other public rituals offer interesting insights into the processes of value affirmation, confrontation and reconfiguration. This is especially true during periods of major social change when values and attitudes may become more polarized and at the same time increasingly slippery and ambiguous.[10]

Struggles and apparent inconsistencies over social values – in this case relating to job status – can further be illustrated by an incident that occurred within a Mexican tomato company producing for the US market (see Torres 1994, pp. 144-173). The incident concerned the relative value of local skills and knowledge versus professionalized expertise. It involved the demotion and subsequent loss of salary of a long-serving skilled worker, who had acquired an immense amount of practical know-how on the job and had risen to take charge of the greenhouse where the tomato seedlings were matured into plants. He was replaced by a recent graduate in agronomy who, before completing her university training, had worked as a secretary for the company manager.

The dismissal had been partly provoked by the worker's resistance to implementing cultivation measures that he considered ill-advised, and partly by the manager's commitment to 'modernizing' the organization of the company. However, after three catastrophic agricultural seasons – attributed in some way to the ineptness of the new agronomist – the skilled worker was recalled to take over the running of the greenhouse. For his part, the worker made it a condition of his reinstatement that he receive the same salary as that of the agronomist! After negotiations, the company had no option but to accede to his demand. In this way the worker's widely acclaimed status as a 'knowledgeable' tomato worker led to a reevaluation of his worth in the eyes of the company manager, resulting in his receiving the status and salary of a formally trained agronomist.

Although at one point the manager attempted to reinforce the worker's dependent position in the hierarchy of farm tasks and responsibilities, stressing that his original contract defined the working conditions and level of remuneration that he could expect, in the end they agreed that the price (or value) placed upon his skills should be set at a level much above that commanded by his formal qualifications.

This example brings out the importance of examining the sets of social relations and discursive strategies involved in attempts to fix certain shared values and develop modes of accommodation between opposing moralities or interests.

A further dimension that needs analysis concerns how actors' diverging values and interests are knitted together to construct workable social arrangements. As Callon and Law (1986) have shown, this involves both

an appeal to 'higher' authorities and the use of discursive and practical strategies for enrolling others and thus mobilizing support from a wider network of actors. According to them, enrolment entails translating roles, values and resources in such a way as to draw actors' interests together in the resolution of a 'problematic' situation. The actor-network that results is composed of ongoing chains of commitments and understand-ings made up of actors, things and representations, and lasts only so long as the arrangements remain unchallenged by members of the network.

This image of an 'actor-network' captures well the dynamics of enrolment processes but it is difficult to apply to large-scale and highly heterogeneous forms of social organization. For example, 'translating' the values and interests of all those involved in a particular food chain – encompassing peasant producers, large landowners, agricultural middle-men, agro-export companies, supermarkets and other retail outlets, and the primary consumers – into some coherent whole would seem a mammoth task for any set or coalition of actors to attempt and success-fully accomplish. While food chains are often it seems assumed to generate unproblematically an international system of linkages geared to the production, processing and marketing of a specific product or products, and thus to define a common interest in a single type of product or range of products with a given value or values, this global picture obscures a much more complicated and ambiguous set of relations and values. For example, bananas grown and exported by the United Fruit Company in Central America contain within them a host of different qualities, as perceived and defined by the various actors involved, and thus function as a repository of values and conflicting interests associated with modern plantation production. It would be quite wrong to treat this network of production, commercialization and consumption relations as an integrated and coherent chain or system built upon a common framework of values and objectives.

Contests of Value: Agency, Organizing Practices and Globalization

This leads us to consider the organizing practices associated with commoditization. Here we are interested in the processes by which organizing strategies and discursive means are used to define and allocate value; or, to put it more concretely, how actors attempt to adapt to changing livelihood and normative conditions.

People are driven by images and symbols as much as by the search for material or instrumental gains. Indeed, as Verschoor (1997) argues in his study of small-scale *mezcal* entrepreneurs in Mexico, the expansion of distribution networks (including the large population of migrant consumers in the US) entails 'identity-constructing' processes whereby entrepreneurs develop representations (i.e., images and normative

schemata) of the social and economic world in which they operate and use them to ensure the commitments of producers and consumers.

Central to the study is an understanding of the difficulties faced by middlemen in establishing and organizing a loyal network of consumers. To achieve this, on each trip middlemen engage in a number of interface situations involving both their *mezcal* suppliers and their potential customers. What is at stake in these interfaces is the identity of consumers and producers of *mezcal* (as well, of course, their own identity). Does a consumer know the price range of *mezcal*? Does he know the differences in quality? Middlemen negotiate these and other questions *in situ*. At the interface with consumers, for instance, they bring a number of production elements to bear on the situation: the type and origin of *agaves* that are utilized for a specific *mezcal*, the character of the competitor's product, the 'oiliness' of the liquor, the material from which the bottles are made, the quality of the barrels in which *mezcal* is aged, and so on. The effect of these negotiations is a temporary definition of the identity of the consumer through the definition of the identity of the producer. Both identities are inscribed in the form of a bottle of *mezcal* passing hands, and which in some situations can lead a consumer to buy a bottle of 'inferior quality' *mezcal* for an astronomical price.

Likewise, at the interface between producers and middlemen negotiations go on as to the disposition of the producer: is he willing to expand his production? Does he know the preferences of clients? Will he give a larger credit margin on the next trip? Middlemen translate these and other questions by mobilizing different elements from the 'consumer' domain such as the preference for the taste of specific types of *agaves* coming from specific localities, choice from among competing suppliers, consumer perception that good *mezcal* (like whisky) should be 'oily,' consumers' preference for certain kinds of bottles or stickers, disapproval of the taste of *mezcal* aged in oak barrels, and so on. The effect of this translation is that if a producer accepts the identity attributed to him by the middleman, then he in turn will have to take on board the characterization of the different consumers. Thus taste, colour and presentation of a *mezcal* bottle, reflects, in effect, the identities of both producer and consumer: in the end, the social and technical organization of the production process is also inscribed in a bottle of *mezcal*.

Running an enterprise, then, entails entering or creating arenas of struggle that involve not only resources, markets and information but also concessions over social benefits and moral principles. In this way relationships shaped by notions of commodity – which are themselves often ambiguous and conflictive in terms of the specific rights and obligations implied – become hedged around by many other social and symbolic elements.

In order therefore to talk about contests of value, we must go beyond the elucidation of the moral and cultural underpinnings of different value

positions to isolate the particular organizing strategies employed to accommodate to, dispute or ignore other actors' interests, desires and interpretations. This leads us into a detailed exploration of issues of 'agency'; that is, how actors acquire and sustain appropriate forms of 'knowledgeability' and 'capability' in carrying out their social actions; and how they enrol others in the 'projects' they develop. And this, of course, brings us to the heart of a genuinely sociological view of commoditization processes.

At this juncture it is important to emphasize that when we talk about agency we mean more than merely the capacity of particular individual actors to monitor, evaluate and come to grips cognitively with their social worlds. The capacity to act also involves the willingness of others to support, comply with, or at least to go along with particular modes of action. Hence agency entails a complex set of social relationships, such as Callon and Latour's (1986) 'actor-networks,' made up not only of face-to-face participants but also of distant 'acting' components that include individual and organizational actors, relevant technologies, financial and material resources, and media-generated discourses and symbols. Organizing capacity – whether at the level of the individual peasant or frontline development worker, or in terms of the coordinated actions carried out by a consortium of transnationals – necessarily involves these disparate elements. How they are cemented together is what in the end counts.

As I implied above, many of the key actors are spatially and culturally remote, yet they have a significant impact through global networks of communication and information. This is an element of considerable importance for understanding how large-scale agricultural production and food systems are developed and reproduced. Indeed the spread of modern technology, new consumer demands relating to diverse and 'wholesome' products, and the promotion of an ideology of 'competition' and 'comparative advantage' – all targetted to specific production zones – owe much to developments in communication and information technology. In this manner, certain symbols and images transmitted by communication media (especially TV and videos) become central to transformations taking place in contemporary cultural reper-toires throughout the world, including the constantly changing represen-tations of the nature and value of particular commodities.

How these messages are received and processed by particular audiences dispersed in time and space throughout the world varies considerably, since local understandings and knowledge have a filtering effect on externally generated communication. Yet, nevertheless, new communication technology creates and reinforces new types of 'techni-cally mediated ' social relations which link individuals to various 'imagined communities' throughout the world (Anderson 1989; Thompson 1990). As Lash and Urry (1994, p. 307) comment, these

'imagined worlds' are made up of 'historically situated imaginations
of persons and groups spread across the globe . . . [and] are fluid and
irregularly shaped,' To be a member of an imagined world is of course
to belong to a world inhabited by non-existent persons, in the sense that
there are no persons that exactly match the qualities or profiles of those
who are conceived of as being members. This does not, however, reduce
the impact (or agency) of such imagined worlds: consider, for example,
the enormous influence that the imagined worlds of commodity markets
– and how they work – have on agricultural producers, consumers and
financiers. Underlying these phenomena are a complex set of interlocking
processes which involve the strategic interests, alliances and lobbying
capabilities of the various actors. This, once again, challenges us to
develop further our theoretical understanding of agency. We have
become accustomed to visualize organizing practices in terms of the
establishment of formal organizations or the operation of interpersonal
social networks, but, as this example shows, organized response occurs
not only *vis-à-vis* identifiable persons, via the named representatives of
organizations, or collectively when, for instance, peasant producers come
together to take action against some local landlord or the personnel of a
state agency. It may also happen in response to more diffuse influences
such as rumours of growing resistance to neoliberal measures and
critiques, developed through the 'anonymous' media, of mounting
environmental problems.

Concluding Remarks

Each of the dimensions explored above raises critical issues as to the
ways in which certain events, goods and relationships are valorized by
the social actors involved. They also draw attention to how commodity
values are mediated, appropriated or contested by the various actors.

Given the complexities involved, should we not, then, leave aside the
whole problem of value? If by this we mean the formulation of a general
theory of social value – whether based on neoliberal, Marxist, or the
newer 'green' versions – then I believe we should. But, as I have
argued above, contests over social values are central to a better analysis
of economic change, and essential for the development of a new agenda
of research on commoditization. In developing this agenda we should no
longer feel trapped by the constraining categories of political economy,
neoliberalism or the new institutional varieties of neo-classical economics.

Instead we should forge a new path of research which accords due
emphasis to what Thomas (1991, p. 9) has called 'the appropriation and
recontextualization' of 'culturally specific forms of value and
objectification,' In other words, we need to explore the ways in which
'external' notions and 'conditionalities' are translated into localized

meanings and action. This challenges belief in the universality and uniformity of 'commodity' values, whatever their cultural context, offering instead an analysis of the interweaving of social values, power and agency.

In addition to the importance of the local embedding of commodity values, we also need to address ourselves to the wider institutional framework within which commoditization takes place. Here we must give thought to how we might develop a more thorough analysis of the 'externalization' of agricultural tasks and of 'scientification' processes in agriculture[11] (see Benvenuti 1975; van der Ploeg 1990). Such a task could, I believe, provide new insights into the nature and functioning of larger institutional structures which so far have tended to elude actor-oriented types of analysis.

Finally, I wish to underline that the main focus of this chapter – namely a reconsideration of commoditization processes – lies at the very heart of grappling with and understanding contemporary change. Commodity values constitute the bedrock upon which neoliberal philosophy has been founded and remain the main thrust of present-day development policy.

Notes

1 This chapter is a revised version of a keynote lecture given at the XVI Colloquium on 'Las Disputas por el México Rural: Transformaciones de Practicas, Identidades y Proyectos' of the Colegio de Michoacán, Mexico, 16-18th November 1994.
2 Neoliberalism of course builds upon earlier neoclassical formulations that 'regard consumer satisfaction both as the analytical source of market prices and as the moral justification for allocating resources through the mechanism of markets.' This view contrasts with the 'Marxist' – or more strictly 'Ricardian' – producer-based theory of value that stresses how value is bestowed on things through the process of production itself rather than through exchange relations *per se* (see Goodin 1992, pp. 22-26, who compares neoclassical and Marxist versions with a 'green' or 'environmentalist' theory of value).
3 As will become evident later in this chapter, my treatment of commoditization focuses upon the social struggles entailed in the fixing or negotiation of value and not on the measurement of types and degrees of so-called commodity relations.
4 Recent work has built upon Foucault's notion of 'technologies of government' to analyse the indirect mechanisms that link the conduct of individuals and organizations to the political projects of others at a distance (see Miller and Rose 1990).
5 Here I am using 'livelihood' broadly to cover a range of issues relating to socio-economic alternatives and constraints. In this sense, I apply the concept equally to the problems faced by landless labourers and peasant producers as to large-scale land-owners, entrepreneurs or state officials.
6 See Villarreal (1994, pp. 216-221) for an analysis of how agency is attributed to institutional bodies and non-human components of social life, as well as to certain social categories, and thus shape the possibilities for social action.
7 By 'commoditization' we mean the processes by which the notion of 'exchange value' – not necessarily at the expense of 'use value' – comes to assume an increasingly important evaluative and normative role in the discourse and economic life of a

given social unit (e.g., household, village, region or national economy). Unlike the notion of commercialization, which addresses itself to the processes by which products acquire exchange value through market relations, commoditization is broader in scope since it applies to all the different phases of production and reproduction. Hence commoditization covers not only the processes by which goods are valued in the market, but also how commodity values and relations shape consumption, production, distribution, exchange, circulation and investment patterns, values and behaviour. For an analytical appraisal of the commercialization perspective (based on modernization theory) and the commoditization model (based on a political economy/simple commodity model), see Vandergeest (1988) and Long and van der Ploeg (1988).

8   For a fuller theoretical and empirical treatment of the contradictory dynamics of the domains of family/kinship and the market, see de Haan's (1994) analysis of the intersection and cultural management of commodity and non-commodity values on Dutch family farms.

9   See van der Zaag's (1992) interpretation of irrigation organization in western Mexico as a negotiated outcome of conflicting social interests and economic values; de Vries' (1992) interface analysis of the clash of lifeworlds and livelihood commitments between Costa Rican land reform officials and their 'unruly' peasant clients; Arce's (1993) similar study of the entanglements of Mexican agricultural bureaucrats and local peasants, in which he highlights critical encounters between external 'scientific' models of agricultural development and local people's knowledge and practice; Torres' (1994) depiction of the strategic use of irony and other 'subversive' devices by Mexican tomato workers for challenging company notions of 'efficiency' and 'expert knowledge' in the production of commodities for the US market; and Villarreal's (1994) analysis of struggles among a group of women involved in a government-initiated beekeeping enterprise over its economic and personal value to them as individuals and as a group – did it help them to create a little more personal space within their households and the *ejido*, supplement their household income, provide an opportunity for entrepreneurship and profit, or was it simply an excuse to socialize with friends?

10 For a discussion of the 'double-edged' nature of discourse and practice on 'peasant cooperation' and 'collective action,' which serves not only to promote sentiments of local solidarity but also to advance the interests of private entrepreneurs and an interventionist state, see Long and Roberts 1978, pp. 297-328.

11 The 'externalization' of agricultural tasks entails the increasing role of external institutions (e.g., credit banks and agencies of technical assistance and extension) and private enterprises (such as transnational companies) in shaping the farm production process. 'Scientification' refers to the process by which modern science and technology is increasingly used in agriculture.

12 Entrepreneurship, Projects and Actor-Networks. Reconceptualizing Small Firms

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Right from the start – fifty years ago – Rural Development Sociology in Wageningen has been distinguished by its inclination to mix practical and theoretical concerns in the study of rural transformation processes. For more than half a century now, Rural Development Sociology has taken its mandate – the study of agrarian development – broadly, and has focused on the wider technical, economic, political and social issues involved.

One of these issues concerns the role of rural, small-scale enterprise in the development of so-called Third World countries. Indeed, during the past five decades the study of small firms and of entrepreneurial behaviour have come to form one of the foundations of a 'Wageningen sociology.' All the way from van Lier's *Frontier society* (originally published in 1949), through Long's *Miners, peasants and entrepreneurs* (1984; together with Roberts), van der Ploeg's *Labour, markets and agricultural production* (1990), to my own, recent work (1992, 1997), small firms have played a fundamental role in giving shape to a unique agenda.

Perhaps one of the main reasons that small-scale enterprise figures so prominently in Rural Development Sociology at Wageningen is that their study permits one to address head-on the challenge of bringing together theory and practice. Indeed, for many years now, Wageningen sociologists maintain that any practice devoid of theoretical assumptions is simply unthinkable and that, by the same token, the *practice* of theorizing is as practical as any other activity. This position is splendidly exemplified in the case of the role that is attributed by policy makers and scholars alike to small firms in development. Thus, on the 'practical' side, policy makers invariably break their heads as to the appropriate measures to be taken in order to enhance (or diminish) small firms' share in the development process. But these measures (whatever their form) inevitably reflect moral, ethical, and ideological presuppositions that are hard to imagine in the absence of theoretical judgements. Likewise, on the 'theoretical' side, the academic community is often busy devising new explanations as to the way small firms should be understood, and prescriptions as to how they should be helped or hindered (a very practical activity indeed!). In turn, the explanations and prescriptions become stepping stones for policy formulation, and so on – *ad infinitum*.

Small Firms: A Slippery Category

As suggested in the introduction, small firms and their role in develop-
ment have been – and, presumably, will continue to be for the next
millennium – a central issue in the discourse of policy makers. More
recently, this interest has been spurred by data on the remarkable import-
ance of small firms' employment share in Third World countries, as well
as by success stories about the ability of small firms to adapt to crisis
situations in advanced economies.[1] Indeed, national and international
agencies now dedicate a growing part of their resources to catapulting the
new key units of economic development: 'small firms' and 'the region'.
Thus new policy initiatives and programs promoting small enterprises in
a regional setting now saturate government agendas almost everywhere.

The interest in small firms and their role in development has been
paralleled in the disciplines of development economics and the sociology
of rural development. Within these disciplines, studies of small-scale
enterprises can be broadly assigned to one of two camps: those that are
theoretically driven, and those that are more policy oriented. Common to
both is the problem of 'the small': what counts as small-scale enterprise
and what does not? And how should they be classified? Thus, for
example, concepts such as 'small firms,' the 'informal sector,' or 'sub-
sectors' abound. Although it is true, as Douglas (1992, p. 2) comments,
that a field of enquiry can only advance by deciding what is relevant and
what is extraneous to it, I argue that there are several reasons for objecting
to ethic types of classification. The main reason is that such definitions and
classificatory schemes often hide more than that they actually clarify. And,
worse, these classificatory schemata often go hand in hand with
epistemological absolutism – an absolutism, I argue, which characterizes
both policy oriented as well as theoretically driven research on small-scale
enterprise.

In the case of policy-oriented research, this absolutism entails that there
is only *one* way of knowing, namely the instrumental one that is geared to
act upon the known. It is an epistemology that produces a discourse *on* the
economic which, in Foucault's (1979) terms, attempts to construct and
domesticate the identities of economic subjects. It is a discourse that is
normally identified with the state, corporate agencies, NGO's and a range
of other participants in (rural) development. A second, and arguably more
important, effect is that categories and identities of economic subjects are
thereby constructed. These are later used to intervene – to control the
economy 'at a distance' (Latour 1987) – through tax legislation, specific
accounting techniques, or structural adjustment programmes that impinge
upon micro- and small-scale firms. But this absolutist epistemology is not
only a way of knowing that shapes its object in order to be able to act on
it. As Law (1991, p. 3) suggests in the context of studies of science and
technology, it is also an epistemology that tells us – sometimes descriptive-

ly, more often prescriptively – how to go about gathering knowledge. This, in effect, implies taking on board normative .' . . 'tool boxes' consisting of frameworks for classifying data, procedures for conducting oneself in the field, and methodological instruments for data analysis that are not linked to crucial research questions and theoretical concerns' (Long 1992, footnote page 15). The danger of some kind of methodological empiricism looms large, then, in policy-oriented studies of small-scale enterprise.

In the same fashion, most theoretically informed research on small-scale economic activity takes the side of the knower – though for different reasons. Here, methodological canons flow from the epistemological need to accord primacy to the 'external' forces that are seen to constitute the context within which small-scale enterprise develops. Generally, this takes the form of conceptualizing 'capitalism', 'industrialization', 'globalization' and the like as the driving forces, whilst small-scale enterprises are portrayed as being the driven and only able to 'fine-tune' to local intricacies. Clearly, within this view, small-scale economic activities only matter in so far they are connected, related, and translated in terms of their importance for supporting or refuting the 'laws' of grand narratives. And, like the epistemology of the policy-oriented camp, it tells us what the rules of method should be: the question of how, empirically, small-scale entrepreneurs shape, and are shaped by their socio-technical environment is abandoned or, at best, relegated to a secondary level of analysis.

What is needed, then, is another mode of understanding small firms, a vocabulary that brings forward that which remains hidden by slippery ethic concepts and absolutist epistemological precepts. An idiom that does justice to the *heterogeneity* of firms. A language that gives priority to the way in which this heterogeneity is constructed, and which involves manifold struggles, negotiations and accommodations over a broad range of issues that are crucial for the operation of firms. In short, a vocabulary of problem-solving that is willing to tackle head-on the challenge of understanding the *organizing practices* that arise from actors' wills to bring about desired changes in the running of their enterprises (Long and van der Ploeg 1994).

Small Firms and Development: Old Ways of Talking

Reconceptualizing the dynamics of small firms entails contesting a number of received notions about the role accorded to small firms in development. Historically speaking, explanations for this role diverge, depending on the specific model of the actor that is espoused. Basically, sociologists and anthropologists saw the role of small firms from the vantage point of *homo sociologicus* – the actor whose behaviour is norm – or rule-guided and thus, in principle, embedded in the daily flow of social relations (Granovetter

1985). This position entailed that economy and society evolved from local, existing relations of reciprocity and redistribution. These relations were seen to form the basis for the operation of small firms, and provided them with decisive advantages in situations of structural instability and erratic market conditions – a characteristic of Third World economies. Thus by the mid-1950s, strong arguments in favour of small enterprises had already been confirmed; these included labour intensiveness, adaptability, advantageous utilization of local production factors, reduced dependence on imports, and their role in providing a seed-bed for indigenous entrepreneurial development (Schumpeter 1934).

Economists, for their part, explained the role of small firms in development by adhering to the assumption from classical economics of the existence of *homo economicus* – the rational, atomized, self-interested individual who is minimally affected by social relations in his/her market competitive behaviour. This assumption led to the view that the market was separate and autonomous from social conditioning. This position – which has been labelled as the 'market paradigm' – entailed that the market was the dominant form of social behaviour, and that in fact social life was itself a subproduct of market interaction (Mingione 1991, p. 5). This in turn meant that any form of economic activity which was defined by social obligations was sub-optimal, and thus only a temporary stage on the way to a 'natural' state of affairs in which economic transactions were governed by the rational calculations of individual actors pursuing their own gain.

In the context of theories of economic development, especially in Third World regions, the force of this analytic model based on the market paradigm proved formidable, paving the way for the discursive construction of so-called 'underdeveloped economies.'[2] Indeed, the model was pivotal for the division of a country's economy and social life into two sectors: one *modern*, the other *traditional*. From this point of view, development consisted of the progressive encroachment of the modern upon the traditional. According to this understanding, rapid modernization and a 'take-off' (Rostow 1963) into self-sustained growth could only be achieved by a strategy of accelerated industrialization based on large, capital-intensive, enterprises that utilized modern technology. This image soon found its way into national governments, the United Nations, the ILO, the World Bank and the IMF.

The effects of this conception were immense since tradition was equated with economic backwardness. As a consequence, the 'traditional' sector was at best seen as playing a transitory role leading towards a higher stage of development – and thus only needed in countries that were passing through an early phase of industrialization. It was expected, or hoped, that in the course of economic maturation, small firms would gradually decline in favour of large-scale businesses. At worst (Lewis 1954, quoted in Escobar 1995), the so-called 'traditional' sector was thought to

make no contribution whatsoever to the process of development and should, therefore, be obliterated as soon as possible if economic growth was to occur.

By the early 1970s it became evident, however, that something was wrong with the prediction that development based upon the moderniz4-ation model would bring about equity and progress for all. Vast and growing discrepancies in real-term incomes both within but also between countries became more apparent. Together with this trend, a large increase in the number of small-scale economic activities co-existing alongside large enterprises could be observed. This of course posed an insurmountable problem to proponents of the market paradigm (Mingione 1991). Indeed, for a large and growing part of Third World populations it was only the fact that market relations were deeply embedded in relations of reciprocity and redistribution that made life minimally bearable. This evidence brought about the collapse of the model of atomized, individual competitive behaviour as independent from the moral, ethical, and religious principles inherent in local social institutions. As it turned out, the very idea (and idealist position) that an analytic concept such as *homo economicus* could control or grasp an object situated 'out there' in 'The Economy' was doomed to failure. Consequently, new theories were designed, tested, overhauled, provided with fashionable *neo-* or *post-*prefixes, or simply abandoned to their fate on the 'garbage heap of history.'

Today, when opening the file on theories of small firms, one can characterize three different positions. A first line of (policy-oriented) research stresses the dynamic and sheltered potential for economic expansion and employment inherent in small firms. Indeed, at the beginning of the 1970s, there was an increasing awareness that most developing economies could not incorporate the growing urban labour force into the labour market – despite the fact that some countries were achieving prolonged periods of high growth rates. This realization was accompanied by a reemergence of the issue of the role of small firms in the development process. The increased attention to small-scale economic activities reached a climax with the concept of the 'informal sector,' promoted by the ILO's Kenya report (1972),[3] and referring to those small-scale economic activities characterized by 'family ownership, small scale of operations, use of labour-intensive production methods and adapted technology, reliance on indigenous resources, unprotected labour, ease of entry and unregulated and competitive markets' (ILO 1972, p. 6).

Alternatively, a second line of (theoretical) research emphasizes the explanation and/or understanding of small-scale economic activities in relation to capitalist and traditional modes of production; as well as the structural position of small firms in regimes of accumulation and regulation – both in the First and the Third World. This approach replaces the formal/informal dichotomy with a model conforming to the variable

articulation of capitalist and non-capitalist forms and modes of production within the context of concrete social formations (Prattis 1987, p. 31).[4] The main argument here is that petty or small-scale enterprises cannot reproduce themselves without some involvement in commodity circuits, and that the general 'logic' governing economic life and livelihood strategies is that of capitalism (Long 1986, pp. 12–13). This insight appeared to be corroborated by a wide body of evidence stemming from the patterns of uneven growth that characterized the Third World in the 1960s and early 1970s, and which had produced an expansion and diversification of different forms of small-scale enterprise which could not be interpreted as transitional or residual (MacEwen-Scott 1986, p. 3). The major achievement of this approach is that it contradicted the prediction that small-scale, non-capitalist enterprises would in the long run wither away in the face of capitalist expansion.

A third, and more recent line of research on small firms is that advocated by proponents of the flexible specialization paradigm who take a middle-of-the-road position between practical and theoretical concerns. The model of flexible specialization was originally advanced by Piore and Sabel (1984), who contrasted it with the model of industrialization based on a Fordist type of production organization. These authors argue that deteriorating industrial performance in a number of Western countries results from the limits of rigid, mass production systems, in which mass goods are produced using standardized machinery and unskilled workers. As an alternative, Piore and Sabel propose the flexible specialization model. In particular, they emphasize the decentralization of big factory chains and redeployment of productive forces into small units that can take advantage of flexible technologies. This, they argue, would enable crisis-ridden economies to react to ceaseless changes by introducing manufacturing systems capable of making specialized goods using multi-purpose, flexible machinery and skilled labour (Hirst and Zeitlin 1991, p. 2). Despite its Western genealogy, the application of the flexible specialization model for the Third World has been explicitly discussed by Schmitz (1990) and a number of colleagues (Pedersen 1989, Späth 1993; Sverrisson 1993).[5]

Some Shortcomings in the Theoretical Discourse on Small Firms and Development: Essentialism, Dualism, Reductionism

In spite of the advances booked in the theoretical understanding of the role of small firms in development, a number of epistemological assumptions made by the different positions have been too easily overlooked and consequently escaped systematic scrutiny. In fact, the three new theories dealing with small firms discussed above are, to a greater or lesser extent, based on the same triad of assumptions that were made by the moderniz-

ation model they criticize. The first assumption is often referred to as *essentialism*. As Woolgar (1988, p. 55) contends, essentialism underlies the metaphor of scientific discovery,

> ' . . the idea of dis-covering, [which is] precisely that of uncovering and revealing something which had been there all along. One removes the covers and thereby exposes the thing for what it is; one pulls back the curtains on the facts. The image derives in part from the notion of geographical discovery. One travels to a distant place and finds (comes upon or otherwise stumbles over) what was already there. The crucial part is the prior existence of the discovered object.'

A case in point is the discourse that has constructed the notion of 'under-developed areas'. For example – and following classical economics – development economists assumed that 'Progress' was an attribute of 'Nature.' In other words, progress was seen as a natural state of affairs.[6] This essentialist idea in turn prescribed the task of science as that of 'discovering' the pattern in which 'progress' unfolded, and recommending policies that would hasten its inevitable attainment (Greenfield *et al.* 1979, p. 6). Note, however, what this entails. Linearity is built into the analysis by equating economic progress with Nature; this linearity has the effect of bringing about a lack of fit between economic discourse *on* the economic subjects, and the practices *of* these subjects themselves. Indeed, flesh-and-blood social actors always present essentialist discourses with a significant surplus of meaning which cannot be explained away by elegant theoretical models.

Crude essentialism, however, is not the exclusive right of theories of economic modernization. The articulationist school could just as well be taken to task. Authors such as Meillassoux (1981) – who tries to explain the survival of pre- and non-capitalist relations of production as a structured feature of capitalism – make the essentialist assumption that something like 'capitalist' and 'precapitalist' relations of production actually exist, independent of the scientific gaze. In more or less the same fashion, studies of the informal sector and flexibly specialized firms make the essentialist assumption that formal and informal sectors, Fordist and post-Fordist production regimes exist, and that it is their task to discover and document their changes and transformations. Yet what does not dawn on proponents of such models is the possibility that 'essences' such as 'capitalism,' 'formal sectors' or 'post-Fordism' only reflect their classificatory practices, rather than the 'actual' or 'objective' character of the phenomena they wish to explain. After all, before one can meaningfully start talking about such essences as 'the economy,' one needs to make visible the invisible world of exchanges. As Latour (1990, p. 38) argues, 'the economy' is plainly invisible as long as cohorts of inquirers and inspectors have not filled in long questionnaires, as long as answers have not been punched onto cards, treated by computers, and analyzed by

economists. It is only at the end of all this that an aggregate hybrid called 'the economy' emerges from the piles of charts and lists. Existence, then, is prior the essence: before 'capitalism,' 'Fordism' or 'informal sectors' become essences, they need to be constructed.

A second – and related – assumption often made in theories about the role of small firms in economic development is that two different types of economies exist within one single spatial configuration. This is usually called *dualism*. Clear-cut examples include explanations that locate small-scale economic activities within the realm of 'the traditional' (Boeke 1953), the 'bazaar economy' (Geertz 1963) or the 'informal sector' (ILO 1972), while large firms are seen to be located in the so-called 'modern' or 'formal' sectors. Common in these dualist theories is the idea that each segment of the economy is homogeneous and possesses its own principles for the organization of production, distribution and exchange. The case of the articulationist school[7] goes someway in sidestepping the pitfalls of crude dualism by treating capitalist and non-capitalist relations of production as *relational* categories. Nevertheless, the perspective remains dualist by taking capitalist and non-capitalist relations as a point of departure – no matter how relational its treatment thereof. Likewise, the flexible specialization model is essentially dualist in its aim to demonstrate the displacement of mass production by flexible specialization as the dominant technological paradigm. This, as Sayer and Walker (1992, p. 199, quoted in Murdoch 1995, p. 741) argue, hinders recognition of the fact that .' . . industry has always combined flexibilities and inflexibilities' and that such combinations 'cannot be grasped by inflexible dualistic frameworks which counterpose the old as the inflexible to the new as flexible.' Here, indeed, we find one more instance in which economic subjects (industry; firms) confront theoretical models with a surplus of meaning.

It would certainly be fruitless to negate the impact that dualistic conceptualizations have had on social relations at a global level. Indeed, the divides are painstakingly enforced by international organizations, economists, bureaucrats and even the police. But the point is this: the divides created by dualist theories do not represent any natural boundaries. They may be useful for teaching or intervening in one form or another, but they certainly do not provide any explanation. On the contrary: these divides are themselves the very things to be explained (Latour 1990, p. 20).

Next to essentialism and dualism, another common assumption in need of demystification is that of *reductionism*. Reductionism is closely related to the modern–traditional dichotomy in the sense that, by splitting one pole from the other, one of them (often the traditional) is made remote or reduced.[8] However, as Law (1994, p. 12) stresses, one should note what is entailed in reductionism:

'First, you need to draw a line between two classes of phenomena by distinguishing those that drive from those that are driven. And second

you claim that the behaviour of the latter is explained – often you say caused – by the actions of the former. So the danger is this: that you . . . [drive] a wedge between those that are doing the driving and the rest. And (this is the real problem) the former get described differently, or not at all. So reductionism often, perhaps usually, makes distinctions that may come to look strangely like dualisms.'

Reductionism becomes apparent in the flexible specialization model and in most studies of the informal sector. In the case of the former, the 'driver' takes the specific form of the political, economic and institutional environment which has been constructed by large private or public enterprises, and which is rarely supportive and often discriminatory (e.g., Späth 1994). Here the institutional environment is already identified as the driver, and the internal organization of the firm thus automatically becomes the driven. Similarly, most informal sector studies see informality as dependent and subordinate – or indeed a response to – the formal sector. Here, again, a wedge is placed between the driver (conditions in the formal sector) and the driven (economic behaviour in the so-called informal sector). In the same vein, within the articulationist school it is argued that market forces – in the form of commoditized relations – increasingly shape individual economic decisions (e.g., Bernstein 1986; Hart 1982). Once again, a lever is forced between the driver (market forces) and the driven (decision making). This is not inconsequential since such an assumption deals inadequately with the non-commoditized side of the equation, introducing an asymmetry into the analysis which, in the end, leads to an unwarrantably linear view of change. A related consequence of conceiving of commoditization as the motor of change and decision making is that the sphere of production is prioritized over and above the work and the networks needed to sustain and reproduce household and/or enterprise labour, the social organization of consumption, or the importance of gender relations in the actual structuring of the labour process (MacEwen-Scott 1986; Pahl 1985; Whatmore 1988, p. 248). Another effect entailed in reducing individual decision making to 'market forces' is that much of the cultural and ideological dimension of petty commodity production, distribution and exchange is made invisible. Moreover, if commoditization is seen as the driving force, and actors are assumed to be no more than passive mediators in the process of commoditization itself, one can never bring into the picture what the commoditization of the different moments of production, exchange and consumption might mean for the enterprising practices of the actors concerned (Long 1986). Blindness to these issues leads to the unqualified conclusion that market integration opens the road to the individualization and atomization of the social environment of small-scale entrepreneurs who, consequently, only maintain commoditized extra-household relations. In this case, reductionism prevents one from taking into account inter-household

cooperative strategies, or the way in which actors help one another in organizing their respective enterprises, often through non-commoditized relationships.

Towards a Reconceptualization of Small Firms: *Collectifs* and the Fluidity of Context and Content

To summarize the previous sections: in order to reconceptualize small firms, it is necessary to sidestep two crucial problems inherent in both economic and sociological approaches. The first problem concerns the debate between formalists, who maintain a preeminence for *homo oeconomicus*, and substantivists, who persist in championing the salience of *homo sociologicus*. This dualistic debate, which runs like a thread through the discussion of the role of small firms in development, needs to be replaced by a perspective that favours the continuity between the economic, social, political *and*, in addition, the technical domains. These domains or spheres need to be analytically brought together in order to open up new theoretical gateways. What this means is that it is not enough to look at the *social* (economic, political, religious) features that tie people together, but that we must also look at the *technical* aspects that hold together the social.

To go beyond this first problem – the separation between the 'social' and the 'non-social' – one needs to acknowledge that this division is first of all in the minds of analysts – analysts who, instead of following entrepreneurs as they weave their way through a disorderly horde of human and non-human allies, prefer to make up a double register where, on one side, humans are paired with humans and, on the other, all the non-human elements of the strategies they have to explain are lumped together. To get rid of this fixed ontology which is spanned, on the one hand, by people and, on the other, by things, I advocate a body of work developed in the context of the sociology of science: actor-network theory. Following Bijker and Law (1992, pp. 12–13), this theory represents an attempt to find a neutral vocabulary to describe and explain the actions of what Law (1987) dubs 'heterogeneous engineers.' The main idea is that these 'heterogeneous engineers,' such as small-scale entrepreneurs, build disorderly networks composed of social, economic, political and technical elements,[9] and that it makes little sense to separate *a priori* the human from the non-human elements of these networks.

Actor-network theory, then, helps to avoid making the commonsense assumption that people (entrepreneurs) and things are naturally occurring categories – the first endowed with agency, the second devoid of it. Thus, as Latour (1994, p. 46) proposes, purposeful action and intentionality are not properties of objects, but neither are they properties of human actors. Rather, they are the properties of institutions, of *collectifs*.[10]

To argue for the incorporation of non-humans into the analysis of *collectifs*, however, poses its own obstacles. Witness, for example, the debate between sociologists and economists on issues that have to do with the relationship between technology and society. This debate, driven by proponents of 'technological determinism'[11] and 'social determinism,'[12] can go on forever as long as the common assumption is made that both society and technology exist independently of each other. Similarly, there is a fierce battle underway between British and French sociologists in the sociology of science[13] over the issue of where to place the exact divide between humans and non-humans.[14] If one assumes – with the French – that no two different ontological categories (people and things) exist but that, rather, humans and non-humans are fused in *collectifs*, then surely 'traditional' definitions of collectives or of institutions (such as small firms) are of little help for the simple reason that they cannot accommodate the constitutive role of non-humans.

The second problem one should address when reconceptualizing small firms is that of the triad of assumptions usually made: essentialism, dualism, and reductionism. Here, too, actor-network theory may offer useful insights. For example, it avoids making essentialist assumptions about a backdrop of social, economic or technical factors: it says that the backdrop is something that is itself built in the course of building a network. Likewise, it suggests that it is misconceived to think that entrepreneurs operate in a world given by naturally occurring (dual) categories or essences such as 'content' or 'context.' Also, it says that it is too simple to argue that context is shaped by, or influences, content (and vice versa).[15]

As I argued above, the danger of essentialism (the existence of a context and a content that set the stage for entrepreneurial activities and which can be known *a priori*) is that it easily develops into reductionism of one form or another. Thus context 'drives' content (agents can only make local adjustments in a context established long ago), or content 'steers' context (interacting agents continuously create unplanned events which cannot be explained by virtue of what happened before or what occurs elsewhere). To counter the danger of reductionism, I suggest that one treats small firms as 'balancing acts' in which social and technical elements both from 'within' and from 'without' the firm are placed side by side.

Bridging the Gap: Global Networks, Local Networks, and Obligatory Points of Passage

As stated above, the idea that one can follow small firms or entrepreneurial projects as they unfold in a given context that is separate from the content of the projects themselves is problematic. The strategies of firms

often, if not always, turn first around the creation of a distinction between inside and outside, and second upon ensuring that whatever is inside becomes indispensable for those on the outside in a way that is analogous to one of the main findings of the history and sociology of science (Bijker and Law 1992, p. 304). What is needed is thus an analytical tool that allows for a description of the interrelatedness of the trajectories of firms and the co-evolution of their socio-technical context and content. Below, I develop a network metaphor to understand these processes.

According to Law and Callon (1992, p. 46), the trajectories of projects can be seen as a function of three interrelated factors. The first function is the ability of a project to construct and preserve a *global network* that is intended to contribute resources to the project. These resources may be of various kinds: money, permits, political support, machinery and so on. The global network provides these resources because it expects a return. When a global network is successfully put together, the entrepreneur obtains room for manoeuvre (a negotiation space) in which he or she can experiment at will – as long as the possibility of a return remains present.

The *second* function is the capacity of the project to assemble a *local network* by mobilizing the means contributed by the global network.[16] Again, the purpose of using these resources is to be able to reciprocate to actors from the global network (this may generally take the form of some sort of material or economic return, but need not necessarily be so: cultural objects of symbolic value may also flow from the local to the global network). If successfully constructed, a local network thus allows its originator(s) to experiment with and control the means provided by the global network, with the ultimate goal of offering a return of some kind to the different actors composing the global network.

The *third* factor is the degree to which an entrepreneurial project succeeds in imposing itself as an *obligatory point of passage* between the global and the local network. This means that, if successful, the project should first have the ability to shape and mobilize the local network and that, second, the project is able to exercise control over all exchanges between the local and the global network. In other words, if actors from the global network count on or have an interest in a promised final return, then the producers of this return (and the material, economic, or cultural return itself) become an obligatory point of passage. If unsuccessful, that is, if unable to impose itself as an obligatory point of passage, an entrepreneurial project cannot profit from the local network, and nor does it have command over the use and mobilization of resources from the global network (which may ultimately be withdrawn).

Apart of their theoretical relevance, the notions of global and local networks and obligatory points of passage are also of practical importance for they permit an evaluation of the viability of specific firms or networks of firms. More precisely, these terms offer the advantage of avoiding observer-defined accounts of viability. Thus one can sidestep economists'

definitions of viability which refer to a break-even point, or sociologists' cherished notions – difficult to operationalize – of 'social security' or the 'potential' of firms to reproduce themselves in time. Nor does one have to deal with tortuous definitions of 'sustainability' – as is usual within 'green' circles. In addition, the notions of obligatory points of passage and global and local networks allow viability to be conceived of as a temporal condition: whenever support by a global or a local network is withdrawn a firm ceases to act as an obligatory point of passage, and looses viability.

Morphology of *Collectifs*: Convergence and Momentum

Global and local networks – *collectifs* – may stand in a specific relationship with one another, that is, they may be differently articulated. Another way of putting this is to say that *collectifs* may have multiple morphologies. Thus the entities making up these *collectifs* may converge or diverge, be more or less standardized, and their relationships may be long- or short-lived to different degrees.

A useful concept for estimating the morphology of a *collectif* is that of *convergence*[17] or the degree of integration of a *collectif*. In a situation of convergence, for example, the activities of all actors from the global and the local networks can easily be linked to each other and each actor can in principle mobilize other actors. In other words, any actor belonging to the *collectif*, whatever her position within it,

'. . . can at any time mobilize all the network's skills without having to get involved with costly adaptations, translations or decoding. The [*collectif*] as a whole is behind any one of the actors who make it up.' (Callon 1992b, p. 223)

Convergence within a *collectif*, of course, does not mean that actors consciously work towards a common objective. Rather, it means that actors have sufficiently fine-tuned their activities so as to make them compatible with those of other actors from the same *collectif*. This, of course, need not always be the case. In such a situation, then, it would be more meaningful to speak of divergence: cooperation between actors is unlikely or limited. This latter situation – divergence – can be illustrated through the example of the street food vendor in Mexico (see Verschoor 1997). After having eaten at a stall, a client develops intestinal disorder and complains to the food stall vendor. Here the vendor has a choice between three modes of action. First, he may take responsibility for the damaged intestines by acknowledging the cause of the complaint. A second mode of action – the one followed most often – is for the vendor to contest the accusation: what makes his client so sure that the vendor's food is responsible for the disorder? Could it not have been something else? Did the client wash her

hands before eating? In this (second) case, the clients' definition of the vendor as the responsible party is contested, and does not converge with the definition of the problem according to the vendor. The translation is thus incomplete. The third alternative is for the vendor to accept the charge – for example because more customers have come to him with the same complaints – but delegate responsibility to others within the *collectif*. For example, the vendor can take the complaint to the abattoir. There, the criticism can only be translated into a solvable problem if there is a management system that allows for tracking down the origin of the meat sold to food stall vendors. Since this is not usually the case, turning the complaint into a solvable problem is ruled out, and the client's accusation simply does not find a target. Here the interdefinitions of the actors involved conflict with one another: the actors participate in a dispersed network. As a consequence, cooperation between them may be unlikely or limited.

Small firms, then, participate to varying degrees in *collectifs*, which may have different degrees of convergence. In order to gauge these degrees of convergence, one can use the related concepts of *translation* and *coordination* (Callon 1991, 1992). By translation is meant the process whereby global and local networks are composed and obligatory points of passage created – in other words, the process that creates a shared space that was absent before the initiation of a project.

The process of translation can, for analytical reasons, be separated into four moments (Callon 1986): *problematization, interessement, enrolment* and *mobilization*. Problematization is the process by which a project becomes indispensable to global actors by defining the nature and the problems of the latter, and then suggesting that these can be resolved by following the path of action suggested by the project. The next step, interessement, are those methods by which the project attempts to impose and stabilize the identity of the global actors defined in the problematization. In other words, interessement is the process of translating the images and concerns of a project into that of a global network, and then trying to discipline or control that translation in order to stabilize an actor-network (Star 1991, p. 33). As already stated, these actor-networks include people, the built environment, machines, signs and symbols, inscriptions, and so on. Interessement, however, does not necessarily lead to alliances, that is, to actual enrolment. Interessement achieves enrolment if it is successful. Describing enrolment is thus to describe the group of multilateral negotiations, trials of strength and tricks that accompany the interessements and enable them to succeed. Enrolment, in other words, is the successful distribution of roles as proposed (and most probably changed) by the project in the initial problematization. Finally, if interessement is successful, that is, if enrolment has been achieved, then one can speak of the mobilization of the network of entities involved. Put somewhat differently, mobilization means the successful translation of a network of entities: a

global network provides resources for an expected return, a local network is created that allows some room for manoeuvre for the project to supply this expected return, and the project itself becomes an obligatory point of passage, that is, it is able to exercise control over all exchanges between the local and the global networks. Translation, then, involves all those methods by which a specific definition of a problematic situation – its character, cause and probable solution – is construed and made indispensable for others to follow.

Next to translation, a second concept that is useful to measure the degree of convergence of a *collectif* is what Callon (1991, 1992) terms *forms of coordination* or *translation regimes*. This refers to the existing set of rules and regulations that have been produced in past interaction, and which impinge on the character of any *collectif*. So, for example, who or what counts as an actor, or who or what may speak on behalf of others, is normally laid down in a series of rules and conventions that range from formal law to tacit and culturally specific practices. Some of these rules and conventions are of a general character. Examples could be the passing of a Federal Health Law, the requirements to obtain a loan from a bank, or the conditions of payment for merchandise specified in a contract. Yet other rules and norms are of a more 'local' character, that is, they lose their validity outside the *collectif* that produced them. Examples could be agreements between producers of specific commodities about pricing policy; the creation of local organizational forms such as associations or cooperatives; or the technical norms concerning the production of particular goods.

The distinction between general and local rules and conventions is important because it helps one to discern the specific form of coordination of a *collectif*. So, for example, Callon (1992, p. 87) suggests using the term *weak coordination* to 'characterize a network which has not added on any local rules and procedures to conventions generally followed at any given moment.' Inversely, the term *strong coordination* can be used to denote a *collectif* shaped both by local and general rules.

It should be clear from the above that a combination of the concepts of translation and translation regimes can be helpful devices for 'measuring' the degree of convergence of a given network. Indeed, the stronger the translation and the form of coordination of a given *collectif*,

> '. . . the more the actors composing it *work together in a common enterprise*, without their status as actors being under constant challenge. This does not mean that everyone does the same thing. Rather it quite simply means that any one actor's activities fit in easily with those of the other actors, despite their heterogeneity.' (Callon 1992, p. 87; emphasis added).

Next to convergence, a concept that is of central importance to gauge the morphology of a network is that of *momentum*. This concept refers back to

that of translation, and suggests that the latter has been 'locked into place'. According to Callon (1991, pp. 140–50), the momentum (which he terms 'irreversibility') of a translation depends on two factors: (a) the extent to which it is subsequently impossible to go back to a point where the translation was only one amongst others; and (b) the extent to which it shapes and determines subsequent translations.

To exemplify the notion of momentum, let us take the example of a producer of a specific good who opens a credit line at a bank. Once the operation is legally sanctioned by some form or document, it becomes difficult if not outright impossible for the parties to withdraw from the agreement and go back to the beginning of the transaction – when multiple alternatives for obtaining credit may have been open for the producer. At the same time, the credit line may shape future decisions: specific goals that were impossible to achieve without credit can now be pursued.[18]

In a sense, then, momentum denotes the way in which the past engages the future.[19] More generally, *momentum* has to do with the evolutionary process in which a project passes from a stage of uncertainty to a stage in which certain trajectories stabilize. Put differently: it is how heterogeneity makes place for homogeneity. This is often the case when a project is successful, that is, able to present a result: when ideas (which are debatable) make way for finished objects (which are less debatable).

Prime Movers, Distributed Action and Black-Boxed Actors

So far, I have argued that the notions of global and local networks and obligatory points of passage can help one to illuminate issues to do with the dynamics of small entrepreneurial projects without having to resort to externalist explanations. One important additional point is that it is not necessarily people, but also *things* that could be the obligatory points of passage between a global and local network. This point can be generalized through the notion of *intermediary*. As the etymology of the word implies, inter-mediaries mediate between two or more parties, thereby constructing a whole, a common space, a network or a *collectif*.

The notion of intermediary is useful because it brings together the poles of Economy and Society (the separation of which, I argued, inhibits rather than illuminates the practices of small firms). How is this possible? Callon (1991) suggests that this can be achieved by juxtaposing the insights of economists and sociologists. 'The Economy,' for example, as defined by economists, is that domain in which people are brought into relationship with one another through the exchange of *things*. Translated into my analytical framework, a project often relates a local and a global network via a product. According to Callon (1991, p. 134), this situation can be generalized by means of the notion of an *intermediary*, which '*is anything*

passing between actors which defines the relationship between them.' Examples of intermediaries abound: texts, skills, money, and all sorts of technical artifacts. The list is endless.

Contrary to economics, in sociological theory 'Society' (the behaviour of actors) can only be understood when it is set in a context that has been built by the actors themselves. Thus sociologists speak of roles and functional prerequisites, agents and fields. In fact, or so these disparate sociological theories suggest, no actor can be isolated from the relationships in which he or she is implicated. What does this mean in terms of creating a common space between Economy and Society? Here Callon (1991, p. 135) presses the point to its logical conclusion:[20]

> 'Economists teach us that interaction involves the circulation of intermediaries. Sociologists teach us that actors can only be defined in terms of their relationships. But these are two parts of the same puzzle, and if we fit them together we find the solution. This is that *actors define one another in interaction – in the intermediaries that they put into circulation.'*[21]

When successfully translated, actors are able to communicate through the intermediaries that circulate between them and which define both of them simultaneously. For example, any product passing hands between a vendor and his client simultaneously defines the identity of both in that encounter: the vendor as the seller of a service, the client as the buyer of it. In this case, the degree of convergence is strong because the translations (both by the vendor and by the client) are relatively similar. Of course, successful translation need not always take place, or may only be weak in character. Taking the same example, this would be the case when the client doubts the quality or the value of the product and refuses to buy it.

To summarize: entrepreneurial projects try to construct and set in motion local and global networks, and they may become obligatory points of passage between the two networks through the circulation of intermediaries. This, however, leaves one with the problem of who or what is the prime mover of the *collectif*. Asking who the prime mover of action is, however, is a matter of convention, and depends on who or what one chooses to follow. Indeed, authorship of action can in principle be attributed to different entities. Action, I suggest, is a polycentric process. Likewise, within our framework the notion of 'actor' does not refer back to some fixed essence (such as, for example, the capacity to 'have' agency). Rather the identity of an actor is relational, and refers back to notions of sociality *and* materiality. Indeed, as Latour (1994, p. 33) suggests, neither subject nor object are fixed entities. Both change their properties when they become a gathering, a *collectif*, a hybrid actor made up of people-and-things.[22] Responsibility for action is, in other words, distributed, and not caused by a human (or by a non-human, for that matter). Action is rather a composition of relations between associated entities. As Latour (1994, p. 35) succinctly puts it:

'The attribution to one actor of the role of prime mover in no way weakens the necessity of a *composition* of forces to explain the action. It is by mistake, or unfairness, that our headlines read, 'Man flies,' 'Woman goes into space.' Flying is a property of the whole association of entities that includes airports and planes, launch pads and ticket counters. B-52s do not fly, the U.S. Air Force flies. Action is simply not a property of humans but of an association of actants. . .'

But how come we do not see these compositions for what they are, that is, impure hybrids of the social, the technical, the political, the economic and all the rest? Why is it so difficult to talk in terms of these *collectifs*? How is it that we prefer to make reference to punctualized actions, to black-boxes, instead of describing the complexities that are part and parcel of *collectifs*? Following Law (1992) this is because, in practice, network patterns may become routines. For example, not all elements involved in an exchange between a producer and a consumer need to be defined all over again in each routinized exchange encounter. The exchange can (and is) simplified, black-boxed. All that matters is that the exchange works. Once simplified, the exchange (the actor-network) can be *assumed* to act as a disengaged block – a punctualization that enables a language of 'prime movers', of 'causes' and 'effects'. Apparently simple elements thus in fact masquerade as the *collectif* of which they are an effect.[23]

How can we open up these punctualized compositions, these black-boxed *collectifs*? Our answer is: through *de-scription*, through the opening up, the exposition, of the *trajectories* of networks that end up being punctualized. This means that one has to follow entrepreneurs, politicians and so on, in their work of defining the characteristics of their objects (such as products or laws). It means that we have to follow actors' hypotheses about the entities that make up the world into which their objects are to be inserted. Indeed, a large part of the work of entrepreneurs is that of *inscribing* their vision about the world in the intermediaries they bring into circulation. Following Akrich (1992), the end product of this work can be termed a 'script' or 'scenario.' It may, of course, be that in practice actors do not wish to perform the roles set out for them by the entrepreneur, since they may define their roles differently. If this is the case, then the envisaged intermediaries never become real. So the point is to ascertain whether entrepreneurial projects become real or remain unreal. This problem can be approached by following the negotiations between entrepreneurs and potential users, and studying how the results of such negotiations are translated and inscribed or concretized into different materials (laws, products, skills). For practical purposes, this means that one needs to do the opposite of what the actors (inventors, entrepreneurs, manufacturers and so on) do: namely, to de-scribe inscriptions. To de-scribe is, as the verb suggests, to deconstruct what has formerly been constructed – that is, to follow the work of inscription.

To summarize, I argue for the use of a different analytical language. A language of heterogeneous networks. A language that seeks to find *regularities* in these networks. A language that tries to identify the *practices* that engender relatively strong, durable (or feeble, fleeting) enterprises, and the heterogeneous networks these practices *de-scribe*. A language that avoids asymmetrical and reductionist accounts. Favouring such a vocabulary, I suggest, has the definite advantage of offering a conception of process that takes account of contingency. Consequently, the explanations of small firms that emerge are necessarily of a 'one-off' character, and do not seek 'patterns', 'trends' or 'general laws.'

Conclusion

Small firms are undoubtedly important because in most areas of the so-called Third World they are thriving and provide employment for the largest part of the population. Their potential for sustained economic growth and welfare provision is now realized as never before. Indeed, reevaluations of small firms' contribution to development are presently high on the diverse agendas of development. Never before, then, has the task of understanding small firms – how they are shaped and how they shape development – been so urgent. The argument developed in this chapter represents one more step in addressing this urgent task. In stressing the heterogenous nature of small-scale entrepreneurial projects, this chapter redirects attention to an often forgotten dimension of the debate on the role of small firms in development – namely that the technical or economic questions small firms confront are never narrowly technical or economic, just as the social or political problems they face are never narrowly social or political.

A first general recommendation flowing from this chapter, then, is the not always obvious insight that it is difficult to formulate policies to support small-scale business through social, political, economic or technical incentives alone. Indeed, the more one ventures into actors' behaviour, the more one is confronted with complex relationships, and the less obvious it becomes to index action in specifically social, political, technical or economic terms. Hence, policies towards small firms should address the multidimensional character of action. Related to this, a second general recommendation is that schemes promoting small firms need to go beyond treating small-scale entrepreneurial projects as isolated, self-contained entities. Instead, they should be geared to the *collectif* of actors engaged in the production, dissemination, and consumption of specific goods and services. This is not without its problems, for one cannot generalize about *collectifs*: each one represents a specific and unique configuration of actors.

Considering *collectifs* as loci for policy formulation thus calls for a different way of 'measuring' small firms. In 'measuring' the dynamics

and viability of small firms, I advanced a number of conceptual tools which may have policy implications. So, for example, could the tool kit used in this chapter be used to address such questions as: which small firms should be helped and how? These questions are not, however, neutral and hence the conceptual apparatus of actor-network theory is a double-edged weapon. Actor-network theory can show which enterprise forms are successful and thus worthy of political support, technical assistance, credit programs, and so on. Such an interpretation would however pay lip service to liberal policies and supply-side economics. Symmetrically, the tool kit used in this thesis offers the possibility of detecting those enterprise forms which are unsuccessful, and thus aiding populist policies and demand-side economics in arguing for the protection and promotion of these firms, which are clearly not a part of the micro-entrepreneurial elite that knows how to take care of itself. The policy implications of actor-network theory thus vary because these implications may mean different things to different policy makers, and involve a range of political, ethical and moral choices which cannot be resolved by means of any theoretical framework whatsoever.

Notes

1 See especially the flexible specialization literature on the Terza Italia (Becattini 1989; Brusco 1986), Baden Würtemberg (Haüsler 1992) and Scandinavia (Asheim 1992; Håkansson 1989).

2 Much has already been written on the way in which this object was constructed, and I will not repeat the argument here. See Escobar (1995) for an excellent (though to an extent generalizing) study of the depoliticized construction of the duo 'development' and 'underdevelopment'. For more modest, ethnographically based examples, see Ferguson (1990) on Lesotho and de Vries (1997) on Costa Rica.

3 The term 'informal sector' was introduced by Hart a year before the publication of the ILO report. See Hart (1973) for a fuller elaboration of the term.

4 Subsequent fine-tuning of the model introduced the category of 'simple' or 'petty' commodity production. See MacEwen-Scott (1986, pp. 98–99) for a discussion of the difference between these concepts.

5 Methodologically, the flexible specialization approach is very appealing because its general argument is that the strength of small-scale enterprise cannot be comprehended by examining individual firms. Rather, these firms are seen as organizations interacting within highly volatile, sometimes chaotic, but nevertheless identifiable networks. As Pedersen *et al.* argue (1994, p. 15), in these networks entrepreneurs associate with workers, traders and other participants in utilizing available and adaptable techniques, thus forming a collective production unit or 'meta-enterprise'.

6 This essentialist idea underlies the writings of such disparate contemporary authors and institutions such as Schumpeter (1934), Rostow (1963), and the World Bank (1991).

7 For the sake of brevity, I consider the commoditization thesis under this conceptual model.

8 For important exceptions, see the work of Schumpeter (1934) and Polanyi *et al.* (1957). For more contemporary exceptions (of a social reductionist kind), see Granovetter (1985).

9 In a sense, actor-network theory has much in common with some versions of systems theory (Hughes 1983). However, unlike systems theory, actor-network theory stresses that

the elements (including the entrepreneurs) bound together in networks are, at the same time, constituted and shaped in those networks.

10 The notion of *collectif* as developed by Callon and Law (1995, p. 487) differs from that of *collective* or *collectivity* in that the former is not an assembly of people who have decided to join some form of common organization. Rather, a *collectif* is an emergent effect created by the interaction of the heterogeneous parts that make it up. In other words, it is the *relations* – and their heterogeneity – that are important, and not the things in themselves. The notion of *collectif* also retains the main idea of Callon's concept of *techno economic network,* which he defines as a 'coordinated set of heterogeneous actors . . . who participate collectively in the conception, development, production and distribution or diffusion of goods and services, some of which give rise to market transactions.' (1992, p. 73).

11 Technological determinism is 'the theory that technology is indeed an independent factor, and that changes in technology cause social changes. In its strongest version, the theory claims that change in technology is the most important cause of change in society.' (MacKenzie and Wajcman (1985, p. 4).

12 The position that technology is socially determined (e.g., Braverman 1974).

13 See the articles in the volume edited by Pickering (1991) for a presentation and discussion of these.

14 As Star (1991, p. 30) summarizes this battle, the British sociologists argue that there is, and should be, a moral divide between people and things, and that attempts to subvert this divide are dehumanizing. This position, of course, returns one to a primitive realism of the sort we had before science studies. The French, on the other hand, focus against 'great divides', and seek a heuristic flattening of the differences between humans and non-humans in order to understand the way things work together.

15 This line of thought, which is currently *en vogue* in much sociological writing, finds expression in Giddens' structuration theory. From an actor-network perspective, this theory is essentialist on two counts. First, the relations that are said to structure action, and which in turn are structured, are of a *social* character. This contradicts empirical evidence, which shows instead that every lengthening of a network in space and in time not only incorporates more and more humans, but also more and more non-humans. We may all be closely linked with Chilean kiwi producers, Japanese environmentalists or the struggle of Zapatista rebels. But take away the ships, the newspapers or the internet and time-space decompresses immediately. The second point is that Giddens' theory of structuration takes actors and structure to be given. This is basically an essentialist position – and a tautological one at that.

16 'Global' does not necessarily mean geographically distant, and 'local' does not necessarily mean geographically close.

17 And, in its absence, that of *divergence.*

18 The courses of action that emerge from the issuance of a credit line cannot of course be determined *a priori,* but can only be decided by following the producer in his actual practice.

19 It is important to note, however, that momentum is a relational characteristic: its outcome depends on the strategies that different actors may bring into play.

20 Callon's attempt to bridge the gap between economics and sociology is certainly not the only one. See for example Vanberg (1994), who tries to associate the notion of norm- or rule-guided behaviour *(homo sociologicus)* on the one side, and that of rational, self-interested choice *(homo oeconomicus)* on the other. In this example, the very absence of things or intermediaries in the definition of behaviour takes Vanberg into a completely different direction.

21 Callon is quick to state that his solution for bridging economics and sociology is different from the notion of 'embeddedness' reactivated by Granovetter (1985), who sees networks as associations between humans only.

22 A parallel of this position can be found in Daly (1991) who refers to the concept of *radical relationalism.* Radical relationalism advances the idea that 'nothing can be defined

independently, or outside a set of differential articulations.' To take the example of the identity of commodities, this would entail starting from the assumption that goods do not have an intrinsic, or essential, value (either in use or exchange terms), but that value is socially created in and through interactions (e.g., situations of exchange) involving different calculative domains (and this includes important *interfaces* between socially, politically and/or economically differentiated actors). The identity of any good will thus fully depend on how it is articulated with a set of categories and practices within a given situation. It is important to note that Daly connects the concept of relationalism with that of *non-closure*. By non-closure she suggests that the *identity* of any thing (or, for that matter, of any practice), 'can never be limited, or closed'; it can always be rearticulated within an alternative system of relational order. Thus for example the category of 'debt' may be constructed differently in a relational sequence involving *compadre*, 'brother', 'friend', and so on than within a loosely aligned network that draws together banks, wholesale markets, anonymous buyers at a supermarket etc.

23 Thus a seemingly 'simple' exchange encounter *may* disguise, blur, render invisible complex sets of relations – collective agents – made up of humans and non-humans. Here I emphasize '*may*' because, at any moment, the relationships between the different elements making up the collective may be problematized, questioned – thus opening up all the complexities involved and calling for new rounds of translation.

Part Four

**Rural Encounters: Agriculture, Nature, Tourism
and the Environment**

13 Ecological Modernization Theory and Agricultural Reform

Jaap Frouws and Arthur P.J. Mol

Introduction

In his comparison between rural sociology and environmental sociology, Buttel (1996) shows that environmental sociology finds its roots in rural sociology but has slowly 'emancipated' into a full, relatively independent, subdiscipline. In its maturation, environmental sociology has profited from rural sociology due to the similarities in their objects: the material and biophysical underpinnings, the 'materiality,' of social structures and social life. Buttel claims that, notwithstanding the growing apart of both subdisciplines, rural sociology will continue to play its formative role in the development of environmental sociology. While this may be true for the American tradition with which Buttel is concerned, it is less so for western Europe. Notwithstanding their common origin, the two subdisciplines show a remarkably low level of cross-fertilization in western Europe. Theories, concepts and 'story lines' recently developed in rural sociology hardly influence environmental sociology. More interestingly, and in a similar way, recent developments in environmental sociology, as portrayed by Buttel among others, hardly inspire its 'founding father' rural sociology. This is especially remarkable since one of the central axes of rural transformation in Europe at the moment centres around 'the environmental question.' It is the environmental problem that challenges the long-standing institutions that have characterized postwar European agriculture. While numerous contributions in rural sociology have analysed (often in great detail) various aspects of these transformation processes, a more general perspective or interpretative scheme of environmentally induced social transformation in agriculture seems scarce or absent. In this contribution we therefore reverse Buttel's claim of rural sociology being a formative power in the development of environmental sociology, by examining the value of one of the more elaborated theories in environmental sociology – the ecological modernization theory – for understanding the processes of environmentally induced transformation in agriculture.

The notion of ecological modernization has become rather popular lately in the social sciences and beyond. Different authors – social scientists,

environmental activists, political parties and managers – frequently use the notion of ecological modernization, although not all in the same way. This notion of ecological modernization has appeared in distinct contexts, which has led to some confusion as to its exact meaning. For our purposes, it is clarifying to distinguish between ecological modernization as a *theory* of social continuity and transformation and ecological modernization as a *political program* for change, that is, environmentally inspired reform or ecological restructuring of contemporary industrial society. The two denotations are interdependent, but should be separated analytically. Authors like Simonis (1989), Weale (1992) and Andersen (1994) have each made significant contributions to the definition and promotion of a political program of ecological modernization as the new agenda for western European environmental politics.[1] Environmental sociologists, on the other hand, have constructed a social theory labelled ecological modernization (cf. Huber 1982; Spaargaren and Mol 1992; Wehling 1992; Jänicke 1993; Hajer 1993; Mol 1995). Starting from an analysis of changing social practices of production and consumption, environmental politics and environmental discourses, the latter have constructed a theoretical approach to generate a sociological understanding of transformations in contemporary industrial societies when dealing with ecological challenges. In this contribution we are especially interested in the latter connotation of ecological modernization.

In assessing the value of ecological modernization theory for understanding processes of environmental reform in agriculture, we start by locating ecological modernization theory within the broad range of so-called modernization theories. After outlining the analytical innovations of ecological modernization theory, its conceptual framework is substantiated by clarifying the kind of institutional transformations that can be expected and that have been found *in statu nascendi* in the sphere of industrial production. The ecological restructuring of agriculture is subsequently analysed with respect to the 'impact' of the environment on technological development, market features, politico-administrative characteristics and its relationship to (non-agricultural) social movements.

Modernization Theory and the Environment

The process of modernization out of the phase of premodernity has been analysed by Polanyi (1957) and Giddens (1990, 1991), among others, as a process of 'disembedding.' Social relations are lifted out of their local and traditional structures and contexts and are rearranged across (world)wide time-space distances. As Polanyi describes in *The Great Transformation*, the process of disembedding by which traditional premodern society was transformed into the modern capitalist economy of the nineteenth century, can be interpreted as the differentiation of society into

an economic sphere, a political sphere and the lifeworld. Economic processes, for instance, grew increasingly independent from traditional structures such as religion, family and kinship relations and began to follow a specific economic rationality. One of the consequences of the growing independence of especially the economic sphere and the emergence of economic rationality has been the deterioration of nature, as Polanyi and others have indicated.

A kind of 'reembedding' should take place, according to ecological modernization theorists, to restore the balance between nature and modern society. But modern social relations and practices cannot be reembedded in traditional and local structures and contexts. Criticizing demodernization and deindustrialization theorists such as Ullrich (1979) and Sarkar (1990), the ecological modernization theory states that reembedding contemporary economic practices with the aim of respecting ecological limits cannot be a reversal of the historical disembedding process. Contemporary economic practices are firmly rooted in modernity, characterized by a high level of time-space distancing and a relatively independent economic rationality, and connected with modern scientific-technological and state institutions. Consequently, the ecological modernization theory analyses possibilities for a process of 'reembedding' economic practices – in view of their ecological dimension – *within* (the institutions of) modernity. This modern 'reembedding' process should result in the institutionalization of 'ecology' in the social practices and institutions of production and consumption. The institutionalization of ecological interests in production and consumption processes, and thus the redirection of these basically economic practices into more ecologically sound ones, involves an 'emancipation' or differentiation of ecology. The differentiation of an ecological rationality and an ecological sphere, both becoming relatively independent from their economic counterparts, is the logical theoretical step.

The process of an ecological transformation of our modern economy can be interpreted as the differentiation of an ecological sphere. Needless to say that these 'spheres' should not be interpreted as distinct areas in society that can be empirically identified. The object is to draw an *analytical* distinction, pointing out the possibility, necessity and value of considering contemporary institutions and social practices from a specifically ecological 'point of view.' Making conceptual space for a relatively autonomous ecological sphere enables us to study the extent to which ecologically rational action is institutionalized in the central institutions of modernity. The process of differentiating the ecological sphere from the socio-ideological and political spheres had already started, in most industrial societies, in the 1970s. Since then, the ecological sphere has become relatively independent from the political and socio-ideological spheres, and is becoming increasingly independent from the economic sphere. Since the growing independence of the economic sphere and rationality in the process of disembedding proved especially significant for 'the ecological

question,' the crucial phase in the process of reembedding ecology will be related to this economic dimension. The result will be that economic processes of production and consumption will be increasingly analysed, interpreted and judged as well as designed from an economic *and* an ecological point of view. This process of emancipation from the economic sphere, and the subsequent reembedding of ecology in the institutions of economy, is seen as vital in ecological modernization theory, resulting in a balance between two (increasingly equal) interests and rationalities.

The emergence of an ecological rationality parallel to economic rationality is at the heart of this emancipation process. By putting the ecological sphere analytically on a par with the economic, political and socio-ideological spheres, the status of an ecological rationale becomes equal to that of the economic rationale, among others. In modernity, different social domains can be rationalized in terms of very different values and goals, and what is rational from one point of view or in one domain may be irrational in another. Political rationalities are bound to prevail in the political domain, although economic rationalities will never be absent. In the same way, production and consumption processes are primarily part of the economic domain; as a consequence, they have been traditionally dominated by economic rationality. Although economic rationality should still be analysed as the dominant rationality in contemporary processes of production and consumption in western societies, other rationalities have imposed limits on a purely economically rational production and consumption. Such constraints on economic rationality have been imposed via social struggles, conflicts and disputes, such as those over the exploitation of labour. The ecological rationality which has been gaining ground during the last quarter of the twentieth century aims to impose similar constraints on economic processes. Ecological rationality focuses on (re)directing these economic processes and developments according to ecological criteria and towards ecological goals. Ecological restructuring can be interpreted as a process whereby ecological rationality is catching up with the long-standing dominance of economic rationality.

By making conceptual space for a relatively autonomous ecological sphere and rationality, ecological modernization theory brings the environment (back) into the centre of social theory. The environment can no longer be depicted as external to the institutional developments and social practices of modernity, and in this sense ecological modernization theory parallels the idea of reflexive modernization. The environment is no longer analysed as being 'passively' brutalized by a monstrous, all-pervasive technosystem as the demodernization theorists did. Ecological modernization theory (as well as the theory of reflexive modernization) is diametrically opposed to this view: it emphasizes and analyses the active and reflexive (re)design of central institutions of modernity in dealing with the ecological crisis and on the basis of environmental criteria.

The Contingent Nature of Ecological Modernization

Analytical refinements as developed above may be conceived as both the product of and the condition for the material and discursive practices in which social actors are engaged. This is of course all the more true in an era that is often labelled as that of reflexive modernization, in which institutions and social practices are constantly reexamined and reshaped and the idea that social and natural environments would become increasingly subjected to rational ordering has ended. This is the sociological way of saying that things may always evolve differently and that the rather 'straightforward' conceptual analysis of the differentiation of an ecological sphere and rationality drawn above is not meant to suggest any evolutionary or deterministic development. Nor does the notion of 'modernization' imply any evolutionary perspective, as if the institutional developments referred to would automatically result in more 'modern' institutions than the 'traditional' ones.[2] What is 'modern' to ecological modernization is the 'emancipation' of ecological rationality – or 'sustainability' – in relation to other social and economic rationalities.

As sociologists we should remain aware that even the 'material' systems and phenomena which are referred to by the term 'ecological' are socially determined and defined in permanently evolving (scientific, political, 'ethical') discourses in society. This does not mean to say that ecological modernization is just one storyline among a dozen others, as discourse analysts and strong social constructivists sometimes want us to believe. There is a 'material' basis behind these social constructions and interpretations: a changing interaction between society and its natural environment. But the institutional transformations related to these changing interactions between society and nature – to be elaborated upon in the following sections – are to some extent contingent and their future character is difficult to predict. Substantial institutional transformations following these analytical concepts of ecological modernization theory are not thought to be a regular, automatic and one-way process.

Having said this, the idea of a relative (and growing) autonomy of the ecological sphere facilitates the analysis of *institutionalization* processes of the ensuing (that is, environmentally induced) reforms regarding technology, markets, state interventions and social movements. This can be seen as the second, less abstract or 'middle range,' level of ecological modernization theory, involving the analysis of substantial institutional reforms. It is exactly the above four categories that take a central position in theories of environmental restructuring in environmental sociology, and the – second level – analysis of ecological modernization theory of their institutional reforms differs to some extent from competing theoretical perspectives.

Ecological Modernization Theory and Institutional Reform

'Middle-level' analysis of ecological modernization deals primarily with the institutions of modern technology, (market) economy and state intervention, according to Zimmerman *et al.* (1990), Huber (1991), Spaargaren and Mol (1992) and Jänicke (1993), among others. This analysis has been developed and refined in continuous debate with other social theories of environmental reform, such as Risk Society theory, so-called postmodernist theories (cf. Bauman 1993; Gare 1995), neo-Marxism and counter-productivity theories.[3] In outlining this ecological modernization perspective we shall pay attention to the dominant role of science and technology, the importance of market actors and dynamics, changing state intervention, and the contribution of new social movements.

Science and Technology

Ecological modernization theory identifies modern science and technology as central institutions for ecological reform (not least as the culprits of ecological and social disruption). The idea that science and technology are essential institutions in environmental reform is summarized in the notion of *ecologizing economy*. In the era of reflexive modernity and in confrontation with the ecological crisis, scientific and technological trajectories are changing in two ways. First, 'normal' scientific and technological developments are increasingly triggered by ecological motivations. And second, the use of science and technology for 'ecologizing the economy' provides proof of a more sophisticated and advanced kind of 'environmental technology' than that dominant in the 1970s. The simple end-of-pipe technological regimes, which were so strongly criticized in the 1970s (e.g., Jänicke 1979), are being increasingly replaced by more advanced environmental technologies that not only redirect production processes and products into environmentally sounder ones, but are also starting to engage in the selective contraction of large technological systems that can no longer meet stringent ecological requirements. In this way, technological measures within ecological modernization are not limited to 'just another artefact'; and technological-fix criticism – so often addressed to ecological modernization theory (cf. Hannigan 1995, p. 184) – is therefore hardly adequate.

The motivations for industrial enterprises to move in the direction of more advanced, environmentally sound, technological trajectories are diverse and it is often difficult to identify a simple cause – effect relationship. Motivations include the enforcement of (increasingly stringent) environmental policies by state agencies; public relations and public pressure by environmental NGOs and consumer organizations; economic motivations, such as the danger of losing the market share to more environmentally progressive competitors; requirements from customers backed

by liability law; requirements from insurance companies; cost reductions following the polluter pays principle; and possibilities to open up new markets. 'Internal' motivations include, for instance, environmentally concerned employees, environmental coordinators, R&D sections or managers. These motivations and factors inducing environmental innovations differ, of course, between different kind of industries, according to size and branch. Those who most confront the environmental impact they provoke are generally at the forefront in changing technological trajectories (for example, the chemical industry and the metal industry). Smaller, environmentally backward industries are usually forced by the state, while larger industries also find economic mechanisms among the triggers for environmental reform. The latter are also more responsive to public opinion and pressures, while small innovative ones are eager to look for new niche markets.

Economic and Market Dynamics

Ecological modernization theory also stresses the increasing importance of economic and market dynamics in ecological reform. In this it follows the Brundtland concept of sustainable development (cf. WCED 1987) in rejecting the fundamental opposition between economy and ecology. Economic development and ecological quality are interdependent and not antipodal or incompatible in a simple monocausal way, as was proclaimed in the 1970s. Environmental improvement can be paired with economic development through a process disconnecting economic growth from natural resource inputs and outputs of emissions and waste. However, in order to do so, the nature, content, pace and geographical allocation of this economic growth would have to alter fundamentally. Modern economic institutions and mechanisms can be, and to an increasing extent are, reformed according to criteria of ecological rationality. Similar lines of argument challenge social theories of environmentally informed legitimation crises in capitalist economies. The theory of ecological modernization points to the fact that the conflict between legitimated state action on the environment and related mass loyalty, on the one hand, and the imperative of capitalist accumulation, on the other, is not as fundamental as once thought (cf. Weale 1992, p. 89). The internalization of external effects via *economizing ecology* is one of the mechanisms put forward within the project of ecological modernization (cf. Andersen 1994).

Nature is integrated into economic decision making to a certain extent by the economic valuation of the third – and long forgotten – production factor. In addition to these market dynamics ecological modernization stresses the role of market parties such as innovators, entrepreneurs, customers/consumers and other economic agents in bringing about ecological reform. Environmental 'standards' are articulated in economic processes by insurance companies, credit institutions, (industrial) cus-

tomers/consumers, certification organizations, branch associations, an so on. This emergence of economic actors and mechanisms is not so much instead of, but rather in addition to, the activities of state agencies and new social movements in protecting the environment, although the role of the latter two changes significantly (see below).

The forces that induce ecological reform are also found increasingly in the market sector. Customers articulate environmental criteria, in addition to traditional economic criteria of price and quality, because of liability and insurance regulation. Some branch associations try to set the environmental agenda, keep direct state regulation at some distance and fortify their position within the economic network. This is done by taking up environmental tasks, such as environmental interest representation towards the state, stimulation of and assistance with environmental management systems, the monitoring of environmental impacts, formulation of branch-wide environmental performance standards and the certification of environmentally sound products and productions units. Their room for manoeuvre is of course severely restricted by conservative members. While in some industrial sectors these associations shadow the large member industries, in others they manage to take a more independent position *vis-à-vis* their members, although the resources for enforcing environmental measures on their members remain limited. In other industrial sectors, branch associations have a more conservative stance, adopting the environmental outlook of members lagging behind.

Certification turned out to function as an important market dynamic. Initially, it was believed to provide the certified enterprises with competitive advantages (which still holds for ecolabels on industrial products), whereas it now appears that not having a certificate (for example, on EMAS) means a severe disadvantage within a few years. Some – often smaller – enterprises try to occupy an environmental niche market, backed by certification systems and strategic niche management by the state (cf. Schot *et al.* 1995).

Political Modernization

A third feature of ecological modernization theory, especially in distinction to other social theories of environmental reform, relates to the state. Following the discussions on state failure in, among other things, environmental policy (cf. Jänicke 1986) ecological modernization restores the traditional central role of the state in environmental reform. Although ecological modernization is critical of the role of a strong bureaucratic state in the redirection of processes of production and consumption,[4] it does not deny the state's indispensability in environmental management, as some of the theory's critics would have it. Rather, the role of the state in environmental policy (will have to) change(s) from curative and reactive to preventive; from 'closed' policy making to participative policy mak-

ing, from centralized to decentralized, and from dirigistic to contextually 'steering.' Moreover, some tasks, responsibilities and incentives for environmental restructuring are shifting from the state to the market. Private economic actors become involved in environmental reform, for instance through the certification of products and processes, by asking for environmental audits, and by environmental performance competition and the creation of niche markets. By leaving less – albeit essential – elements of environmental policy making for the central state, and by changing the interrelation between state and society/economy, the state is prevented from becoming an environmental Leviathan (cf. Paehlke and Torgerson 1990). In response to his earlier analysis of state failure, Jänicke (1993) has strongly emphasized this changing role of the state in environmental policy making by presenting the process of political modernization along the lines mentioned above, as part of a process of ecological moderniz-ation. Others have referred to similar tendencies in using the concept of reflexive governance (cf. Le Blansch 1996).

Evidence for this new state approach is found in Dutch environmental policy with respect to industrial production, the emergence of the 'target group approach,' the increasing use of voluntary agreements,[5] environ-mental management and audit systems, ecolabelling, and the integrated region-oriented approach towards, for instance, the industrial areas of Rijnmond and Sas van Gent-Terneuzen. And this approach is not limited to the Netherlands (Mol *et al.* 1996). This does not mean that the tradi-tional command and control approach have completely been set aside. It still functions as an important stick in those situations in which this new consensual policy style fails. Besides, industrial representatives themselves often ask for legal formalization of these more voluntary agreements and approaches after some time, to limit the possibility of free riding.

'New' Social Movements

The reorientation of state and market in ecological modernization theory also modifies the position and role of social movements in the process of ecological transformation. The initial role of environmental organizations, as the prime initiators and carriers of proposals for ecological restructuring in the 1970s, was to put the environment on the public and political agendas and to question the limited rationality of techno-economic devel-opments. With incipient institutionalization of the environmental question in state, market and scientific-technological developments (as set out above), the role of the environmental movement has slowly shifted from that of a critical commentator at the margin of societal processes to that of a critical – and still independent – participant in developments aimed at an ecological transformation. The movement's ability and power to generate (alternative and innovative) ideas, mobilize consumers and organize public support or disapproval is increasingly used to support and

cooperate with those societal forces that aim at an ecological reconstruction of modern society. This parallels an ideological and, for some radical northern and southern environmental activists, controversial (cf. Sarkar 1990) transformation of the main environmental NGOs in industrialized countries. Whereas in the early 1980s the Dutch sociologist Tellegen (1984) saw the idea of demodernization or anti-modernity as the central common denominator of environmental movements throughout the world, this characterization is no longer valid for the major environmental organizations in industrialized countries by the early 1990s.

Ecological Modernization and Agriculture

A First Look at the Ecological Restructuring of Agriculture

If there is any sphere of production that is a predestined place for the 'emancipation' of ecological rationality, agriculture would be the most likely candidate. Invested with the custody of much of our natural resources it is engaged in maintaining the physical base of our existence. In the highly intensive agricultural production system of the Netherlands, the need to constrain the dominant economic rationality in favour of an 'ecological rationale' imposes itself on pain of environmental cataclysm. Alarming developments related to plant and animal diseases, the pollution of drinking water by nitrates and pesticides, decreasing bio-diversity and dehydration of soils, really urge the ecological restructuring of agriculture.

Recent changes in Dutch agriculture seem at first sight to constitute ecological modernization and its corresponding institutional reforms. Since the mid-1980s, the bulk of national agricultural policy making is bound to be agro-*environmental*. Government has concluded environmental agreements with representative agricultural interest organizations and constantly emphasizes the importance of farmers' support for the efforts to make Dutch agriculture 'clean' or 'sustainable.' The national Board of Agriculture, comprising all representative farmers' organizations, even launched an 'integral environmental action plan' at the end of the 1980s, which embraced the whole of the agricultural sector and proposed an impressive range of short and long term measures, mainly of a technological character, to realize an environmentally friendly agriculture in due course (Landbouwschap 1989). New environmentally benign technologies indeed now abound, ranging from energy saving and biological plant protection methods in glasshouse horticulture to animal housing systems and manure spreading machinery that considerably reduce ammonia emission. Agro-environmental, green and eco-labels are becoming prevalent in supermarkets; retailers are forcing up their environmental accountability requirements, and the environmental aspect is becoming an integral part of all projects meant to guarantee the quality of food prod-

ucts. Following the mainstream environmental organizations, even the radical wing of Dutch environmental movement recently publicly renounced its oppositional attitude and adopted a strategy of cooperation with the farming community.[6]

So recent developments in state policies, science and technology, agricultural markets and environmental organizations seem indeed to reflect the emergence of an ecological rationality parallel to and relatively autonomous from economic rationality. It is not too difficult, however, to point to some 'counter-factual' developments in these institutional domains that undermine such a facile and unambiguous conclusion on the ecological modernization of agriculture. The manure policy process is a case in point (Frouws 1997). It is characterized by endless delays and postponements, lack of legitimacy, both among farmers and in society at large, a large amount of bureaucratic interventionism and a failure to match European standards. We might also refer to the other stumbling block of Dutch agro-environmental policies, which is the issue of pesticides. Evaluating the results of the long-term agreement on crop protection with the farmers' organizations, the Minister of Agriculture recently threatened to revert to measures of command and control, stating that no substantial reduction of pesticide pollution of surface waters had occurred and that there had been no fundamental change to technologies reducing dependence on chemical plant protection products.[7]

So the question is whether the ecological restructuring of agriculture is really taking place at all, that can be understood in terms of ecological modernization theory. To answer that question, we will start by examining the specific characteristics of the 'central institutions' in agriculture, which represent the key elements of the 'middle-level' analysis of ecological modernization (that is, technology, markets, state interventions and social movements). This enables a subsequent reinterpretation of the superficial 'first sight' of the ecological modernization of agriculture, as presented above.

Science and Technology

It is clearly beyond the financial and organizational capacity of most individual agricultural holdings to set up their own scientific research projects. The importance of scientific research that is collectively organized by groups of farmers, or farmers' unions generally, is rather modest too. So the bulk of technologies applied at farm level (taking the form of inputs, machineries, farm buildings and so on) is developed off the farm. This involves a complex technology transfer as an external logic, comprising premises of specialization, standardization, scientification and 'industrialization' enters the world of agricultural practice, with its dependence upon 'natural' processes and its great diversity of physical, economic and social conditions. The externally designed methods and technologies

contain prescriptions, norms and codes of conduct, which are to be inserted at farm level under highly variable circumstances related to soil characteristics, climate, labour qualifications, the set up of the farm, the structure of plots and so on (van der Ploeg 1987). The outcome of technological innovation is thus very dependent upon the interrelations between farmers (who are going to apply the technology) and researchers (who are developing the technology), and upon the farmers' capacities to 'fit in' the technology at farm level. If these interrelations are well organized, based upon a two-way flow of information and supported by a network of interested and 'knowledgeable' farmers, scientification and technology transfer may be smooth and successful processes, as Vijverberg (1996) has demonstrated in the case of glasshouse horticulture. However, in other sectors of agriculture, less 'market oriented,' less well organized and unsuited to 'industrialization' and 'artificialization' on the scale of the glasshouse industry, scientific and technological developments may produce frictions, alienation and marginalization of farmers' expertise and craftsmanship. These complexities of technology transfer in agriculture have to be taken into account in considering the *ecologizing* of agricultural production. Referring to the horticultural sector once more, clear market incentives (such as German retailers' requirements) and strict state directives (concerning for example, energy prices, investment subsidies and the banning of soil disinfectants and pesticides), combined with the flexible and ramified knowledge system in the glasshouse industry and the 'market sensitivity' of the growers, proved to be rather conducive to the development of energy saving and alternative pest control technologies. The impact of the market is less direct and more ambiguous in the livestock industry, on the other hand. Governmental steering of research priorities and ecological yard-sticks are characterized by indeterminacies related to the conflict-ridden process of manure policy making. And the knowledge system does not share the interactive network features of the glasshouse industry. As a result, the development and introduction of environmentally benign techniques is a much more painful and even frustrating process, which does not fit with farmers' possibilities and endowments concerning ecological knowledge, experience, perceptivity, record-keeping and financing.

Economic and Market Dynamics

The relation of primary agricultural production to the final (consumer) markets passes characteristically through one or more trading or processing links. In many branches of agriculture farmers hardly had to bother about marketing, if at all, as their rights of delivery were guaranteed. In case of protected products like milk, meat, sugarbeet and cereals, these were even accompanied by price guarantees. It was up to the traders and processors, in the first place, to comply with the demands of customers;

the farmers 'only' had to stick to basic requirements of hygiene and food safety. However, consumers' interests have become of considerable importance, especially during the last decade or so. This has resulted in more and stricter requirements with respect to the wholesomeness of agricultural produce, the sustainability, naturalness and animal friendliness of its methods of production and additional qualities related to consumers' tastes and lifestyles. In this sense, market dynamics in agriculture may indeed be considered to stimulate the 'ecologizing' of the economy. These dynamics, which are strongly influenced by leading retailing companies, necessitate the interdependence, coordination and control of all links in the chain of production, ranging from primary production to retailing. This process of chain integration entails a reorientation and rearrangement of the relations of agricultural and food production. Some individual producers have captured their 'own' niche of quality produce. Others have done so collectively by setting up producers' associations. For many agricultural producers these 'chain dynamics' are a matter of economic power relations, involving the determination of farming methods and the distribution of revenues, and thus touching upon their autonomy as a farmer.

The Omnipresent State and Political Modernization

Agriculture is a classic example of massive state interference with its markets and its external conditions of production. In contrast to labour unions and industrial workers, farmers' unions and farmers are traditionally strongly oriented toward the state. The relationship between farmers and the state has generally resulted in corporatist arrangements. These followed from the commitment of most northwest European governments to extensive but indirect agricultural supports. Intermediate organizations, representing farmers at the national level, were given the key role managing the complex two-way flow of information between producers and the state. These organizations were to legitimate the policies agreed upon with respect to their constituency, and to ensure the responsive implementation of agricultural policy. The omnipresence of the central state in agricultural policy making is thus typically combined with considerable involvement of private actors (that is, farmers' representatives).

State intervention in agriculture and the related public-private partnership of agrarian corporatism has been legitimized, rather paradoxically, with a strong ideology of entrepreneurship. The agricultural 'entrepreneurs' ran the risks of agricultural modernization, namely growing financial burdens and elimination of the 'losers,' in exchange for massive state support. This support was not perceived as a constraint on farmers' freedom and independence, however, as it was mostly centrally supplied in a uniform manner to provide all agricultural producers with equal opportunities and competitive conditions. Price protection, extension

services, investment subsidies, financial compensations and so on, did not directly interfere with farming practices. All agricultural 'entrepreneurs' were expected to respond alike, *grosso modo*, to government policies. They were assumed to develop their holdings according to a uniliniar model of specialization, intensification and farm enlargement (dubbed the 'frontrunner model,' see van der Ploeg 1985). In contrast to the support- ive and stimulative policies that represented the mainstay of agricultural policy during the last decades until the beginning of the 1980s, much current agro-environmental policy actually targets farm practices. This makes its results heavily dependent upon individual farmers' activities and cooperation at farm level. Farmers' acceptance of these measures is of vital importance, so that centrally imposed, uniform regulations which do not take into account regional diversities and farming styles and preferences, may well be rejected by farmers as constraining, rigid and inefficient (Frouws *et al.* 1996). The agro-environmental question became such a bone of contention between the state and the representative farmers' organizations that the latter could no longer fulfil their inter- mediary and legitimizing role. The ensuing erosion of agrarian corporatism reinvested the state with the sole and central responsibility for agro-environmental policy making. This partial ('consensual' policy making continued in some policy fields) shift from corporatist to etatist regulation certainly produced results in those cases where straightforward rules of command and control were feasible, and where financial or 'persuasive' policy instruments could be effective. However, many strands of agro-environmental regulation produced little more than an accumulation of rules caught in its own intricacies and running up against much reluctance and opposition from the agricultural producers.

   A new mode of conditioned self-regulation, characterized by less elitism and more engagement by the farmers concerned, seems to be the only way out of the impasse of agro-environmental regulation.

Social Movements

Given the existence of a rather insulated corporatist Agricultural Policy Community, non-agricultural interest groups and social movements were hardly interested, if at all, in agricultural matters and politics. This was the *terra incognita* of agricultural specialists and experts running their own business. As long as this business produced wealth and foreign currency, it was left alone, except for some recurrent conflicts about local projects of land reclamation or land consolidation. This attitude of relative indiffer- ence on the part of the environmental movement only really changed during the 1980s. Awareness of the adverse environmental effects of modern agriculture grew rapidly during these years. The ensuing attacks by environmental organizations caused fierce struggles, fostered by mutual ignorance of respective social backgrounds, motivations and positions, due

to the traditional isolation of agrarian corporatism. The realization that farmers treated nature, the primary source of their wealth, in an 'irresponsible' manner, came as a shock to environmentalists. Stigmatization as polluters, without any understanding of the economic pressure that forced them to intensify their production, aroused farmers' indignation, in turn.

There were early attempts to remedy this polarization and to harmonize agricultural and environmental interests. The Centre for Agriculture and Environment (CLM), founded in 1986 and composed of a coalition of scientists and progressive farmers exploring *practical* ways of combining economy and ecology, was one such attempt. The CLM gradually gained influence and authority, both in the farming community and in agricultural politics.

Whilst agro-environmental policies were being developed and the Agricultural Policy Community was being prized open, institutionalized environmental organizations like the Dutch Foundation of Nature and Environment and provincial environmental associations came to be engaged, albeit often with great difficulty and reluctance, in agro-environmental policy making. This process of gradual 'inclusion' (Termeer 1993) has resulted in regular contacts between agricultural and environmental organizations.

The environmental social movement thus became engaged in regional plans for development and environmental protection, projects for nature management by farmers, agreements with local authorities on the provision of environmental permits to farmers, a covenant with producers' organizations on the reduction of pesticide use, and so on.

The overall participation of the environmental movement in an alleged 'ecological transformation' of agriculture still is of marginal importance, however. Polarization still looms large. The continuing problems of manure surpluses and pesticide pollution of surface water may well alienate agricultural producers and the environmental movement once again. There is, in some respects, still a considerable gap between the social representation of an ecologically sound mode of agricultural production in 'green' and 'rural' surroundings nurtured by many environmentalists, on the one hand, and the social representation of a technologically advanced, clean and controlled 'modern' agribusiness system on the other.

The Ecological Restructuring of Agriculture Reconsidered

Having examined the institutions which are seen as primordial domains of the environmentally induced transformation of agriculture, we now return to our initial question of whether current institutional reforms can be interpreted as a process of ecological restructuring along lines of the ecological modernization theory.

The ecological 'imperative' has considerably influenced the development of science and technology related to agricultural production. The 'ecologizing' of farming practices and techniques, nevertheless, appears to be a tardy and as yet far from complete process due to the complexities of technology transfer in agriculture. Clearly, ecological restructuring is not a predetermined process following a predestined path. Messages concerning the required quality and degree of 'sustainability,' ecological soundness or 'naturalness' mediated to the farmers through science and technology, are divergent, ambivalent and sometimes even contradictory. The precarious and strongly context-related interaction between technological design and farmers' practice implies that the feasibility of ecologizing of agricultural production depends crucially on the 'co-production' of technological development by farmers and researchers.

Despite its inherent dynamics, the existing economic structure of agriculture (size of holdings, property rights, capital need, financial structure, management capacity) may evolve, in due course, to become a barrier to *ecological* restructuring, which may arouse growing pressure towards a parallel process of economic restructuring. Both 'biological' production, needing large areas of land and relatively much labour, and 'cleaning' agricultural production with help of capital-intensive technologies, demand investments and more particularly entail takeover costs that render the reproduction of farmers' ownership increasingly difficult. A separation of capital ownership and management may be the outcome to which both 'green' investment funds and elements of the agribusiness chain would be able to contribute. Farmers' associations may represent another strand of economic restructuring by putting together the required amounts of land, capital and labour. As far as such horizontal integration, as well as the vertical integration in agribusiness chains referred to earlier, are inspired by ecological imperatives, the 'ecologization' of the agricultural economy can be considered as a factor contributing to the elimination of the (one man) family farm as the dominant form of agricultural production.

Erosion of the 'traditional' corporatist partnership between the state and intermediate organizations in agriculture and the simultaneous increase of interventionist agro-environmental rule making, has resulted in a form of 'political demodernization,' as the shift towards etatist regulation can be denoted. However, agro-environmental politics has also been a favourite playground for experiments in political modernization, which surely represent a (partial) response to the deadlock of the etatist route. Both ministries concerned, Agriculture and Environment, have, since the beginning of the 1990s, made a concerted effort to develop a new way of 'steering' that offers more room for the initiatives and creativity of the different actors engaged in the agro-environmental problematic, thereby placing the state in a far less hierarchical position (MANMF 1994). Attempts at conditioned self regulation are thus given a chance, notwith-

standing the tenacious bureaucratic propensity to dos and don'ts, control and surveillance which tend to prevail on the 'big issues' of manure surpluses and pesticide pollution. Environmental cooperatives have been stimulated to present plans for tackling the local agro-environmental problems in an integrated way,[8] and have been granted subsidies and exemption from existing regulations in return. Similarly, local farmers' groups (of about twenty members) have entered into contracts with provincial authorities for establishing 'integrated collective environment licenses' that also address the protection of environmental quality, scenic beauty and biodiversity. Local state agencies, environmental associations and agricultural organizations are implementing regional plans, which have been rewarded and subsidized by government, aiming at farm development, environmentally benign agriculture and nature conservation. Finally, so-called mineral contracts are being initiated, whereby farmers' unions, environmental organizations and provincial authorities establish mutual agreements to reduce the production of manure phosphate in exchange for investment subsidies; the farmers' unions have assumed the responsibility for a forced reduction of animal numbers in case the livestock holders fail to meet their obligations.

These and other experiments of self-regulation, including private arrangements of product certification, environmental liability and insurance, may evolve into more structural arrangements of institutionalized learning and consensual steering. However, there still is a long way to go to bridge the gap between bureaucratic culture, with its needs for quantifying, controlling and routinizing, and farmers' preferences for autonomy and flexibility. The political modernization of agro-environmental policy making is also dependent, moreover, on new forms of local representation of farmers' interests, alternative strategies of negotiation and agreement between farmers' associations and state agencies, and additional modes of democratic legitimation of this kind of public-private 'co-production.'

Great public concern with food and environmental quality makes the social legitimation of agriculture's shift towards ecological soundness a matter of vital importance. In essence, ecologically modernizing agriculture is tantamount to redefining the *social contract* between agriculture and society (social movements, individual citizens, consumers). However, this redefinition process is infested with a multitude of ideological arguments and conflicting interests. Ecological rationality *per se* is not only an 'essentially contested concept' (Connolly 1983, cited in Tromp 1995); many more rationalities and sub-rationalities are entering the renewal of this social contract, as is exemplified by concern over animal welfare, resistance to full-fledged technologizing of agricultural production (as, for example, in the opposition to genetic engineering), emphasis on the 'spatial quality' of rural areas, and preoccupations with nutrient depletion and food supply in developing countries.

From the foregoing analysis, we may conclude that current changes in agriculture can well be investigated from the perspective of ecological modernization theory. Environmental sociology seems, in this respect, indeed capable of being a 'formative power' in the development of rural sociology. Its contribution is especially valuable to clarify the all-embracing impact of the environmental question on the technological and institutional reconstruction of agriculture, and to address its social, political and economic implications. Concerning these implications, this brief exploration also revealed, between the lines, the socio-political contestability and indeterminate outcome of ecological modernization as a *political program* for agricultural change in the Netherlands.

Notes

1 The ideological vanguard of especially Dutch and German environmental organizations and political parties has contributed on a more practical level to the political acceptance of the idea of ecological modernization. See, for instance: Schöne (1987), Fisher (1991), Friends of the Earth Netherlands (1991) and van Driel *et al.* (1993).

2 As if, for example, covenants or other forms of 'consensual steering' were more modern than state regulations. First, most voluntary policy arrangements are backed by firm juridical means to be applied in case of non-compliance. Second, the alleged modernity is bound to be superseded as soon as 'new' regulatory alternatives occur, like the certification of production processes, rules of liability and risk insurance, the statutory obligation to keep environmental accounts and the like.

3 The different schools of thought in environmental sociology from the late 1960s onward, have been analysed in Mol (1995, pp. 7–26).

4 The bureaucratic state environmental policy of the 1970s and 1980s is regarded as inflexible, economically inefficient and unjust, slowing down rather than propelling technological innovation, unable to control the billions of material and energy transmutations each day, and incapable of stimulating progressive environmental behaviour by companies (e.g., Jänicke 1986; Huber 1991).

5 In the period 1985 to 1995, over one hundred environmental covenants were signed between industry and the state.

6 *Boerderij*, 82 (17), January 21, 1997.

7 Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, Letter to the Second Chamber of Parliament, DL 964642, December 20, 1996.

8 These plans encompass, among other things, a mineral account system to monitor and reduce nitrate and phosphate losses, reorganization schemes implying a reduction of ammonia emission at regional level, manure processing at farm level, purification of waste waters, and the conservation of nature and landscape by farmers.

14 Claims of Culture. Social Representations of Nature and Their Consequences for Agriculture

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Emerging Claims of Nature Conservation

All over the world, the countryside is under pressure, but the causes of pressure differ. In many countries of the South, rural areas face the challenge of increasing agricultural production in order to feed and sustain the income of a growing population. Meanwhile, the salient question in peripheral rural areas of advanced economies is how to maintain agriculture and other means of employment in order to prevent depopulation and physical degradation of the region. Finally, in rural areas adjoining urban metropoles where industrial and financial activities accumulate, competition for rural space is the dominant problem. Agriculture, as the major form of land use but of declining economic significance, faces competing claims for using available land: these include residential use, transport, environmental protection and nature conservation.

This chapter is concerned with the last type of problem and focuses on the claims of nature conservation and their consequences for agriculture. I foresee that nature conservation – or rather, nature management, since current claims go much further than just preserving existing natural values – will emerge as a key factor in the development of metropolitan rural areas. Moreover, I believe that the emergence of nature management should not be analysed by rural sociology as a threat to be averted, but as a consequence of modern, highly industrialized society that cannot be dismissed and, more optimistically, might offer opportunities for agricultural craftsmanship to survive in renewed forms. This does not mean, however, that all nature management claims should be accepted at face value. Indeed, the major aim of the argument that is developed hereafter is a critical investigation of the conservation movement's views. The main part of this argument is a sociological analysis of the representations of nature at the heart of the nature conservation claims. I will then discuss the consequences of these representations for the relation between agriculture and nature management. The problem analysis presented here is relevant for many parts of Europe as well as North America. The empirical scope of my contribution, though not limited to the Netherlands, will nonetheless be mainly directed to the Dutch situation, which provides an

illustration *par excellence* of competing land-use claims. As a background to the analysis, I begin with a brief sketch of the historical relation between nature conservation and agriculture.

Nature Conservation and Agriculture in the Netherlands: From Coexistence to Conflict

The geography of the Netherlands combines high population density, intensive industrial and commercial activity, with a highly productive agricultural sector. From the outset, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the conservation movement had to compete with other forms of land use in establishing nature reserves. For about half a century, however, there was no fundamental conflict between the nature conservation movement and the agricultural sector.[1]

The main Dutch non-governmental nature conservation organization, the *Vereniging tot Behoud van Natuurmonumenten* (Society for the Conservation of Nature Monuments), was officially founded in 1906. Its principal activity was the establishment of nature reserves by purchasing endangered natural areas, especially forest, lake and heath land, and including several former estates. In most of these areas the existing forms of exploitation, such as sheep herding, reed cutting and timber production, were maintained if only for financial reasons. In fact, the main source of income for the young society was the economic exploitation of their reserves.

The national government soon began to play an important role in conservation. From 1908 onward *Staatsbosbeheer* (National Forestry Service), whose director was also a committee member of the *Vereniging tot Behoud van Natuurmonumenten*, started to appoint parts of the state-owned wilderness areas as State Nature Reserves. Cooperation between the nature conservation movement and government was good, not least because of many personal connections. Since the nature conservation movement focused on a limited number of areas, which were generally of little agricultural interest, conflicts with farmers or agricultural representatives were incidental. The *Vereniging tot Behoud van Natuurmonumenten* was not hostile to land reclamation and its first committee included several members of the main Dutch reclamation society.

A somewhat more confrontational situation developed in the 1930s, by which time the cultivation of wilderness areas had assumed large proportions and land consolidation was taking off. Natuurmonumenten joined forces with a number of other, mostly naturalist and tourist organizations in the *Contact Commissie voor Natuurbehoud* (Contact Committee for Nature Conservation). The confrontation between nature conservation and agriculture resulted in a policy compromise. Priority was given to conservation on sites of major 'scientific' interest; on other sites – including valuable cultural landscapes – conservation objectives were balanced against econ-

omic demands. 'Scientific' interest denoted in this context the presence of rare plant species and plant communities as well as endangered species of animals. Even if the agricultural cultivation of wilderness areas was now regarded as a threat, there was no major controversy, as may be illustrated by the fact that two representatives of reclamation societies were admitted to the *Contact Commissie voor Natuurbehoud*.

It was only in the 1950s that a serious conflict developed between nature conservation and the agricultural sector. The main arena for this conflict were the numerous consolidation projects, which were then rapidly changing the face of the Dutch countryside. Against the background of this development the atmosphere of cooperation, which had prevailed after the second world war, gave way to heated debates between nature conservationists on the one hand and farmers and agricultural officials on the other. The main issue in these debates, which became known as the 'struggle for the hectares,' concerned the size and location of areas to be designated as nature reserves. In this struggle nature conservationists were clearly on the defensive, since agricultural modernization was an important governmental goal. The nature conservation movement, which had been quite successful in establishing nature reserves by private or state acquisition, now lacked the means of influencing this new development.

Segregation Versus Integration

Two developments changed the picture in the late 1960s and early 1970s. On the side of nature conservation there was the spectacular emergence of the environmental movement. The 'Green Wave' meant substantial support for nature conservation, if only by rapidly increasing the membership of the *Vereniging tot Behoud van Natuurmonumenten* and other, often new conservation organizations. Several of the new pollution issues that rose to the top of the political agenda under pressure from environmental organizations, such as pesticide accumulation, eutrophication, and acid rain, directly bore on nature conservation. Notwithstanding the many links between the new environmental movement and the conservation movement, major differences remained. For instance, the radical stance of most environmental organizations contrasted with the continuing lobby strategy of the 'classical' nature conservation organizations, as they were called now.

On the agricultural side, the Mansholt Plan made it clear that the next stage of agricultural modernization would combine a further increase of productivity with checks on production volumes and a consequently drastic reduction of the labour force. This also implied that not all agricultural areas were still needed for production. Agricultural policy became interested in casting off areas which, in terms of rationalization, were 'marginal.' And so the contours of a new settlement between nature

conservation and agriculture seemed to emerge, implying a separation between highly productive, unconditionally modernized agricultural areas and 'marginal' areas, where conservation of nature and landscape was a main objective. However, this strategy of segregation had also major drawbacks. For farmers it meant an unequivocal commitment to rationaliz-ation in some regions and marginalization in the others. For nature conservationists it meant giving up a substantial part of the Dutch coun-tryside and suspending their criticism of agricultural intensification, just when the large-scale environmental impacts of intensive agriculture were becoming apparent. There were groups, both on the agricultural and the conservation sides, which advocated a policy of integrating agricultural, natural and recreational functions. Several of these groups initiated cooper-ative projects between farmers and conservationists aimed at nature management on farms, such as the protection of meadow birds' nests, or maintenance of trees and hedgerows. The question of 'segregation or integration' was a recurrent theme in physical planning debates of the 1970s and 1980s. The actual practice of physical planning fostered a combination of both. An important regulation facilitating integration was introduced by the *Relatienota,* a government memorandum that made it possible for farmers in designated areas to enter into a management contract with state authorities for taking specified conservation measures in exchange of payment.

Nature Conservation on the Offensive

Since the end of the 1980s the political tide has changed in favour of the nature conservation movement. The government's Nature Policy Plan (1990) laid down a framework for the conservation of nature. The core of this framework was the *Ecologische Hoofdstructuur* (National Ecological Network), a network of interconnected nature reserves, estates, forests and cultural landscapes with high natural values. At the same time, nature conservation concepts were shifted by the upsurge of a new strategy of 'nature development.' 'Nature development' was a departure from the classical concepts of nature conservation, in that it did not aim at preserv-ing existing natural values, but rather at creating new areas of wild nature. In these new areas human intervention would be limited to the design and initial preparation of the site; the area would develop into a 'real' natural state, without any human interference, through natural processes involving wind, water, and grazing by large herbivores. This concept of nature obviously leaves no room for agricultural practice. The strategy of nature development, put forward by a group of nature conservationists and government officials and strongly supported by the Dutch branch of the WWF for Nature, is now being realized in several projects, especially in areas alongside the rivers Rhine and Meuse. In all these projects, areas are withdrawn from agricultural use and 'given back to nature,' as it is

phrased. Often these projects meet with resistance from local residents and farmers. On a national level, however, there appears to be massive and increasing public support for nature conservation, as far as one may judge so from the renewed and substantial growth of the membership of the major nature conservation organizations during the 1990s.

Agricultural policy in the 1990s, which is characterized by an increasing emphasis on world market competition, pursues the goals of productivity growth and labour expulsion. Apart from that, farmers confront a tightening net of regulations and prescriptions aimed at reducing the environmental effects of agriculture, which often result from the rationalization and specialization processes of the past decennia. These environmental problems both affect the economic situation of farmers, and the public image of the agricultural sector, as well as consumers' product preferences. Together, these developments place most Dutch farmers under heavy pressure. Some representatives of the agricultural sector advocate a policy of segregation again, in order to cope with this pressure. This would mean intensified and rationalized agriculture in certain areas free from nature conservation requirements on one side; and nature conservation, in accordance to the new principle of nature development, in areas free from agricultural practices on the other side (Maréchal 1994). Other representatives, however, advocate an integration of functions in rural areas. They point to the growing interest among farmers in broader concepts of agriculture, which include aspects of nature management (Dekker and van Leeuwen 1995). Whereas nature management bore negative connotations of marginalization in the 1980s, a more recent survey indicates that a majority of farmers regard integration of nature management as a positive development in relation to their own farms (Ettema *et al.* 1994). Moreover, several groups of farmers have started promising projects aimed at nature management on the farm (Hees *et al.* 1994).

These new developments bring the 'struggle for the hectares' and the 'segregation or integration' controversies to a new and perhaps decisive stage. As in the 1970s and 1980s, the lines of controversy lie not only between agriculture and nature conservation, but also within both camps. Unlike the 1970s and 1980s, there is a much broader variety of concrete projects by farmers and conservationists. Another difference is that the nature conservation movement has developed into a political factor capable of challenging the agricultural sector.

The Role of Nature Concepts

It is not yet possible to draw up a balance between the different and sometimes conflicting developments that govern current relations between agriculture and nature conservation. As the overview shows, this relation

is strongly influenced by political and economic power shifts. However, future strategies are also dependent on the way nature is conceptualized and valued. Proponents of a segregation of agriculture and nature tend to downplay the natural value of cultural landscapes. In agreement with the advocates of nature development, they maintain that nature is by definition incompatible with agricultural practices. Thus, the president of the Dutch WWF branch recently referred to the meadow landscape of Holland as a 'desert of cows.' And one of the leading biologists advocating nature development dubbed the black-tailed godwit, one of the best-known meadow birds, a 'meadow cockatoo,' because of its dependence on human cultivation. Proponents of integration, on the other hand, underline the values of pluriformity in nature (Dekker and van Leeuwen 1995) and the beauty of the farmed landscape (Achterhuis 1997).

My argument aims to illuminate the concepts of nature that are embedded in nature conservation claims. I will analyse these nature concepts as social representations, in a sense that is close to that defined by Moscovici (1984, see also Halfacree 1996). Social representations are cognitive constructs that guide us towards what is real and visible. They consist of both concrete images and abstract concepts. Social representations provide descriptions of the material world, but not in a neutral or passive way: they organize the objects and events of the world perceived and relate them to other social structures. In short, they mediate the structuration of the phenomenal world. Social representations may give highly stylized and symbolic depictions of the world, as we shall see, but they may also be adaptable to specific social contexts and receptive to concrete sensual experiences.

In the following sections I will explore the social representations of nature that emerged in the history of nature conservation, and which are at the heart of today's claims on the countryside. I will go on to draw some inferences from these explorations for the integration of agriculture and nature conservation, and for two closely related issues: the role of nature in the marketing of agricultural products, and the compatibility of nature management and farmers' craftsmanship.

Intrinsic and Instrumental Values

A first step in investigating the conceptual roots of nature conservation is to assess the type of nature values that motivate the nature conservation movement. Nature conservation can be motivated by a wide variety of values, but most authors distinguish two main categories: instrumental values and non-instrumental or intrinsic values. Instrumental values are attributed to nature in so far as it is a means for realizing other values that are not primarily related to nature itself but to human utilization. Examples include the supply of natural resources for production and

consumption, removal and decomposition of emissions and waste by natural processes, and provision of a decorative space for residence and recreational activities in natural areas. Instrumental values could also be referred to as resource values. Intrinsic values are attributed to nature because of properties that directly relate to nature itself and, though they may add to human well-being, are not primarily based on their utility for human purposes. Examples include sympathy with animal suffering, admiration of the beauty of landscapes and organisms, acknowledgment of the rights of living beings to existence, or reverence for nature on religious grounds. They are mostly summarized as moral and aesthetic values. Aesthetic value means, in this context, that natural beauty is valued beyond decoration and personal taste.[2]

In rural and environmental sociology studies, environmental issues and nature conservation issues are often bracketed together, with the main emphasis on resource values (van Koppen 1997). Buttel (1992) for example, does this when he discusses the environmental symbolism of rural space in the case of the Buffalo Commons plan. This proposal – unlikely to be realized but very similar to the smaller-scale Dutch nature development plans – aims at depopulating of parts of the Great Plains and reintroducing the bison. 'What,' Buttel asks, 'will be the future of rural America if it becomes defined in strong symbolic terms as . . . forest acreages needed to curb the greenhouse effect, as pristine ecosystems to ensure clean water for urban use . . .? While I agree with Buttel on the process of symbolizing rural space, I doubt whether the instrumental values of curbing the greenhouse effect and safeguarding the water supply constitute the central motivation for these kinds of nature conservation plans. Nature conservation, as distinct from the environmental problems of pollution and depletion of raw material and fuel, is primarily motivated by aesthetic and moral values. This may be argued both from contemporary surveys and from the historical development of the nature conservation movement.[3] Here, I will concentrate on the latter.

Many studies of the history of nature valuation stress the importance of morality, aesthetics and cultural identity, as, for example, does Simon Schama's beautiful book, *Landscape and Memory*.[4] Hargrove (1989), among others, explicitly points out that even if instrumental motives may dominate part of the policy debates and public campaigns, it is the intrinsic valuation of nature that is central to the development of nature conservation. In his historical study of Dutch nature conservation, van der Windt (1995) typifies the emergence of the conservation movement as the rise of an 'arcadian' style of thinking. The term 'arcadian' is borrowed from Worster (1985), who uses it to indicate the view of nature that is devoted to discovering and preserving its intrinsic values. Following Worster and van der Windt, I will use the term 'arcadian tradition' for the line of thought in Western culture that conceptualizes nature not as a resource to

be exploited for human purposes, but as something intrinsically valuable that should be admired and protected.

Some considerations on the subject of intrinsic values should be added to avoid misunderstanding. Many policy documents on nature conservation issues, such as the Dutch Nature Policy Plan (1990) or the Rio Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) refer to the intrinsic value of animals, plants and ecosystems. This concept is, however, very controversial in social theory. Some radical proponents interpret intrinsic value in an absolute way, as if it were set apart from human interpretation and cultural mediation. Opponents of the concept, on the other hand, tend to interpret all moral and aesthetic valuation of nature as arbitrary and capricious, and therefore unfit as a foundation for nature conservation. Both interpretations do little justice, however, to the history of the arcadian stance. Intrinsic values are thoroughly cultural in that they are mediated by social representations of arcadian nature. And these social representations or, in the evocative phrasing of Simon Schama, these 'inherited landscape myths and memories' are characterized by 'their surprising endurance through the centuries and their power to shape institutions that we still live with' (Schama 1995, p. 15). Perhaps the most typical of those institutions is nature conservation. An analysis of the arcadian tradition may therefore offer us a better understanding of contemporary nature conservation claims.

The Social Representation of Nature in the Arcadian Tradition

The arcadian view builds on forms of nature appreciation – enjoyment of beautiful landscapes, animals and plants, sympathy with animals, reverence for nature on religious grounds – that can be witnessed throughout human history. There is no single moment in history marking the beginning of the arcadian tradition. In historical studies of the Western conceptualization of nature, the take-off point of the arcadian tradition is usually located in the Italian Renaissance, when the admiration for the natural landscape and the idealization of rural life was *en vogue* among the court nobility, the clergy and urban patricians. In literature the arcadian view was expressed in pastoral and rural novels, plays and poems, fashioned after the famous examples of Virgil and Horace. *Arcadia*, by the Italian writer Sannazaro, was widely read at the time: in prose and verses it describes how a gentleman found peace and happiness among simple shepherds after a sad love affair (Beening 1963). Landscape painting was even more important for the social representation of arcadian nature. Visual images of arcadian nature were provided by the sixteenth and seventeenth-century landscape painters of the Italian and Dutch schools, such as Rosa, Poussin, Ruijsdael and Cuyp.

It is not difficult to trace the continuity of these arcadian representations to our time. In literature we might point, as Thomas does, to 'the enduring popularity of those self-consciously 'rural' writers, from Izaak Walton in the seventeenth century to James Herriot in the twentieth, (who) have sustained the myth of a country arcadia.' (Thomas 1984, p. 14). In landscape painting, the tradition of the Italian and Dutch schools was taken up with even greater ardor by the nineteenth-century Romantic painters. In addition to a continued idealization of the cultivated rural landscape expressed, for instance, in the paintings of Constable, the Romantics developed a high appreciation of wilderness. Drawing on the European tradition, American literature and painting became a particularly abundant source of wilderness representation, as for instance in Bierstadt's landscape paintings. The emphasis in these images of wilderness moved from the picturesque to the panoramic and sublime. Nevertheless, as Hargrove (1989, pp. 81–86) and Schama (1995, p. 525) point out, the arcadia of the rural idyll and the arcadia of the wild are a mutually sustaining rather than in opposition. When we look at the photographs in contemporary nature magazines, both rural idyll and wilderness are there, represented in a way that is strikingly similar to the arcadian landscapes of painters like Rosa, Ruijsdael, Constable, or Bierstadt. The idyllic and the wild arcadia provide, in close relation to one another, reference points for the nature conservation movement when it tries to preserve cultural landscapes, estates and wild (or, supposedly wild) nature areas.

Social Bases

The social origins of the arcadian view, as is often observed, lie in the urban upper and middle classes. It was in the town and the court that the beauty of rural nature was idealized, at a distance from the countryside. And the groups who paid for its idealization were typically not involved in rural practices, but in government, commerce or industry. This confers a highly ambiguous character upon arcadian nature. It is celebrated for its difference from the urbanized, political and commercial life and used to criticize urbanism and industrialism. However, few of these celebrators and critics would seriously consider living by arcadian standards for longer than a weekend or a holiday. Often, as Thomas observes, 'the educated tastes of the aesthetes had themselves been paid for by the developments which they affected to deplore' (Thomas 1984, p. 287). I have already mentioned the good personal relations between the Dutch nature conservation movement, government and land reclamation societies. Its good contacts with the financial world were also very helpful in establishing the first nature reserves. To understand the arcadian tradition, we must realize that the social categories directing the conquest of nature and those directing its preservation are largely identical. Or, as Schama epitomizes: 'It was quite possible . . . for industrial capitalism and

forest veneration to co-exist within the same personality.' (Schama 1995, p. 207)

Against this social background is not surprising that the arcadian images of rural idyll and wilderness, at least in their *ideal-typical* form, are marked by a highly stylized and symbolical character and are quite far removed from the countryside and the rural practices that they proclaim to depict. Let us now take a closer look at these ideal-types of nature, which continue to act as models for the social representation of arcadian nature. Three aspects will be reviewed: externality, iconization, and complementarity.

Externality

The sense of externality is best illustrated by statements such as D.H. Lawrence's: 'The country is so lovely, the man-made England is so vile' (quoted in Thomas 1984, p. 250). Nature, as it appears in the arcadian ideal-types, is considered to be external to human society. The fact that the landscapes of the countryside – and even many of the wilderness areas – have been shaped by human action is overlooked or ignored. The meadows, the waters, the forest edges, the sheep are simply there, products of earth, rain and sun and of God's providence, but without any group of society purposefully helping to shape or manage them. Concomitantly, the social classes that are actually involved in shaping the landscape are locked up in this external nature. As Moscovici says: 'nature was their place, representing, in effect, the non-humanity, instead of these classes themselves.'[5] In the rural idyll, the practices of shepherds and farmers were 'naturalized,' that is, they were constructed as natural processes instead of social action. In the ideal-type of wilderness, the American Indians, African nomads and other 'nature-people' are constructed as elements of nature (Peluso 1996; Fisher 1996). In many cases of nature conservation, some social practices are included in external nature as being 'traditional' or 'natural,' so becoming invisible as a social practice, in contrast to other, 'technological' practices. The majority of the 'nature monuments' that the classical Dutch nature conservation organization sought to preserve were actually cultivated landscapes. They needed forms of rural exploitation for their maintenance, such as the felling of timber, cutting of hay and reed, or the pasturing of sheep and cows. The concept of 'nature monument' however, abstracted from these social practices. In highly industrialized societies, where the chains between the production and the use of products have become long and opaque, distance from social practices of nature transformation is a commonplace for all social categories. Many products are made attractive by appealing on arcadian nature. As in all instances of external nature, actual social practices of production have little to do with the image of nature in which they are enveloped.

Iconization

A second aspect of the arcadian ideal-types of nature is the 'iconic' character of its nature representation. By this I mean that the image of nature is shaped after more or less stereotyped models that are fixed in time. As already was mentioned, our contemporary image of natural beauty is greatly influenced by the model of the picturesque and the romantic, which materialized in historic landscape painting traditions. Photographers and film makers have taken over the iconization of nature in the twentieth century. Arcadian icons not only represent a typical image of nature, they also symbolize purity, innocence, beauty and timeless quality; these symbolic meanings are widely used in advertising. Although the icons of arcadian nature are remarkably stable, there is also development. While the traditional arcadian icons of nature became popular among a broadening audience, naturalists and aesthetes discovered new images, further removed from the urbanized and industrialized world. On the frontier of the arcadian tradition the reference model of nature has shifted away from rural countryside to wilderness; and within wilderness, to primordial nature. Once they were part of the arcadian tradition, all these images, whether a meadow landscape, a wild forest or an African plain, became icons. Most people only know what they regard as the most genuine forms of nature – the primordial wilderness of the rainforest or the African plains – as icons.

Complementarity

A third aspect of arcadian representation is its complementarity to urban and industrial practice. Arcadian nature is constructed as the opposite of society and with the development of society, arcadian nature also changes its appearance. Since the eighteenth century, the aesthetic appreciation of rural landscape has been increasingly set against the disfiguring effects of urbanization and industrialization. The spread of the wilderness as an ideal-type of arcadian nature not only resulted from processes of social distinction, but also from a growing sensitivity to all activities reminiscent of the industrial civilization, including the rationalization of agriculture. Notwithstanding this aversion to signs of human intervention, the appreciation of nature's spontaneity usually paralleled its actual domestication. The myth of the noble savages went hand in hand with their pacification (Lemaire 1988, p. 269). And it was only when malaria was extinguished and the boar shut out of the market garden, that meres and woods could become objects of sheer admiration. This, too, is an aspect of arcadian nature's complementarity to modern, industrialized society.

Arcadian Representations and Social Practices in Dealing with Nature

The previous observations make clear, I hope, that the ideal-types of arcadian nature have a highly stylized and symbolic character. They certainly spring from painters', poets' and naturalists' experiences of nature; but once they become part of the arcadian tradition, they are reproduced as artful constructions, rather than shared experiences. It may also be clear, that these symbolic constructions are continuously present today. Remains the question, how social representations of arcadian nature could be so influential in contemporary debates. The answer is, that they would not have been so powerful, had they not been incorporated in the social practices of an ever-widening group of people. To understand the meaning of the arcadian tradition, therefore, it is also essential to investigate the way that these ideal-types relate to the development of social practices of dealing with nature.

To begin with, we should realize that the arcadian tradition, as mentioned earlier, builds on deeply rooted traditions of sensibility and respect for nature, such as the enjoyment of nature's beauty, and sympathy for animals. The popularity of the arcadian representation of nature, in its turn, has undoubtedly contributed to the further articulation and social acceptance of these sensibilities.

Moreover, the arcadian ideal-types of nature have been instrumental in engendering new social practices of dealing with nature. The most obvious of these is *nature recreation*, which has changed from an elite sport into a common and frequently practised activity. Guided by the images of picturesque and romantic nature, multitudes of people, from all walks of life, are entering upon some kind of interaction with nature for the sake of enjoyment. These recreative interactions, which may vary from a walk in the park to a hike in a nature reserve, contribute to embedding arcadian representations in people's lifeworld.

Another social practice, which developed alongside nature recreation, was the *naturalist investigation of nature*. The pursuit of amateur natural history was one of the most characteristic eighteenth century middle-class recreations. The static tableau of species diversity, rendered by the Linnaean classification of the natural kingdom, matched the fixed image of nature, fostered by the arcadian view. Rousseau's *Fifth Walk* is a typical illustration of this alliance between arcadian sentiment and the practice of botany. While methodological progress in natural history was mainly made by professional scientists, amateur naturalists contributed substantially to the growth of biological knowledge. Even today, a major part of bird and insect inventories in the Netherlands is provided by amateurs.

A third type of social practice, related to the arcadian view, was the practice of *nature management* itself. In the first decennia of their existence the Dutch nature reserves were largely managed by continuing the old practices of agricultural exploitation, forestry and game management.

However, many of these management forms became inadequate or too expensive in the course of time. As a consequence, nature conservation organizations and their government counterparts found themselves forced to create knowledge and skills dedicated to conservation. The development of this new practice is still underway and profoundly influences the views of nature conservation organizations. In a more trivial sense, nature management has also found its way to larger audiences in society in the forms of, for example, gardening, feeding birds, and voluntary assistance with landscape maintenance activities such as pollarding trees.

In all these social practices, the social representations of arcadian nature become embedded in the lifeworlds of actors. This implies that fixed ideal-types of nature are adapted to concrete situations, where they intertwine with the actors' instrumental use of nature and the local cultural history (Volker 1995). Both the ideal-typical representations of wilderness and rural idyll, and the much more diverse and malleable social representations of nature embedded in social practices of protecting and enjoying nature, are part of the arcadian tradition. Together, they may help to explain the complex interplay of cultural symbol and sensual experience that is typical for our conceptualization of nature. The relation of ideal-types and lifeworld concepts of arcadian nature is reflected in a view, which Frake sympathetically describes in his analysis of the cultural construction of the Norfolk countryside: 'The image of the countryside is . . . a myth, but it is . . . a myth that gives real meaning to real landscapes' (Frake 1996, p. 109).

New Representations of Nature?

The representation of arcadian nature does not necessarily end in primordial wilderness. After analyzing the development of the arcadian tradition until the present, it is tempting to cast a look into the future – however provisional and tentative that look may be. One important observation with respect to future developments is that the close alliance that used to exist between landscape painting, ecological science, and the arcadian view of nature, appears to be disintegrating.

Landscape painting did not die, when photography and film took over the iconization of nature. As Rosenblum convincingly shows for the northern Romantic tradition of painting, 'the Romantic pursuit of natural supernaturalism, of divinity in nature, did not expire in the mid-nineteenth century, but in fact continued with renewed passion in the later nineteenth century and then into our own.' (Rosenblum 1997, p. 70–71). However, the representations of contemporary landscape paintings in no way resemble the conventional arcadian images of nature conservation. They explore other dimensions of nature and landscape: its dynamic powers, its impressive abstract forms, and the confrontation and interrelation of

nature with humankind. If we think of art as a way of exploring new sensibilities, this might have consequences for the representations of nature that we are bound to discover.

There has been a paradigm shift, with major consequences for nature conservation, in the ecological sciences. Until the second world war, the dominant ecological paradigm in the field of nature conservation was that of natural history. This paradigm, with its emphasis on the classification and geographical localization of species, matched perfectly the arcadian stance of the naturalists, as already mentioned. This changed with the coming of the 'new ecology,' which interpreted nature along the lines of physics and chemistry, as 'a composite of strictly physical entities organized into a mechanical system' (Worster 1985, p. 301). The new ecological paradigm rapidly gained ground, stimulating research into energy and material flows and functional relations in natural systems. On one side, this approach was attractive to nature conservation organizations since it promised to provide the technical knowledge for nature management, which was needed once nature conservation abandoned traditional agricultural practices. As with other technologies, the new ecology could provide the control variables of the ecosystem and the way they should be manipulated in order to achieve the management objective desired. In the case of nature conservation, this objective was not a maximum yield of products but the restoration of a reference situation, for instance, the natural state as it supposedly was in 1920, or 1800. This 'ecotechnological' view of nature, essentially opened the way to ideas that became central to the new concept of nature development: the idea that arcadian nature can not only be preserved, but also be made, and the idea that ecosystem development can be predicted from its initial physical conditions.

But there was another side, too. Many advocates of nature development take primordial nature – the nature in the Netherlands as it would have developed, had society not got in the way – as an absolute reference (cf. Vera in Maréchal 1994, p. 93). Nature development, in this sense, is a remarkable blend of the romantic ideal-type of primordial wilderness and the manageable and predictable nature of ecotechnology. The question, however, is whether it is a very consistent blend. Fixing ideal natural states fits in well with the classical concepts of nature conservation based on a static tableau of species diversity, which was thematized in natural history. However, processes and dynamics of nature are central in modern biological sciences. Reflecting this modern concept, it is the dynamic spontaneity of nature, not its static diversity, which emerges as an essential property. This element of spontaneity, too, is present in the concept of nature development (cf. Helmer *et al.* 1995) Listen for instance to the ecologist Zonneveld, who states that 'the essence of pure nature should be that it . . . can follow its own, open development, according to its own laws of nature' (Maréchal 1994, p. 68). Neither nature conservationists, nor policy makers in the Netherlands have yet been able to come up with

a clear solution to these conflicting interpretations. A recent article on nature development by the secretary of the Dutch Advisory Council for Nature Conservation is illustrative in this respect. Nature, according to the Council, is defined as 'everything that orders and maintains itself, whether it follows on from human actions or not, but not according to human objectives.' Paradoxically, the first question to be posed in nature development projects is: 'What is the intended nature objective?' (Haartsen 1995).

This tension, then, may be one of the factors influencing our social representation of nature in the future. On the one hand, there will be a continuing support for ecotechnological management of nature development towards narrowly defined objectives, derived from the romantic ideal-type of primordial wilderness. On the other hand, probably, there will be advocates of a definition of nature which does not stress the absence of human action, nor a desired reference state of nature, but rather the possibility of a manifold of spontaneous natural processes. Perhaps they will find contemporary landscape painting on their side.

Arcadian Nature and Agriculture

What are the implications of all this for the relation between agriculture and nature management? It follows from my argument that the claims of the nature conservation movement are cultural claims. Agricultural practices, obviously, have to meet environmental restrictions on emissions and waste. Clearly, nature conservation claims may be based on resource values, like preserving genetic potential for productive purposes. However, the main thrust of nature claims is based on values of beauty, cultural identity, sympathy, rights of existence, or science – but then, science-as-culture, not science-as-technology. These values were articulated in a cultural tradition that centred and still centres around the arcadian representation of nature, as I labelled it. Cultural does not, however, mean 'soft,' arbitrary or fickle. On the contrary, the arcadian tradition shows a remarkable continuity and a pervading influence on modern society. The claims on the countryside that spring from it cannot easily be dismissed.

For an adequate response to nature conservation claims, it is important to notice the interplay between different sorts of social representations of nature in the arcadian tradition: on the one hand the ideal-types of rural idyll and wilderness, on the other hand what I have called the lifeworld concepts of arcadian nature, which develop in the wide variety of social practices of protecting and enjoying nature. While the former have a fixed and highly symbolic character and are often far removed from actual practices of dealing with nature, the latter are much more flexible and adapted to the experiences and social context of the actors involved. When responding to the claims of nature conservation, it is essential not to focus

exclusively on the ideal-types that are presented by conservationists as nature management objectives, but to investigate closely the lifeworld concepts of residents, farmers, tourists and naturalists related to these claims (van Koppen 1997).

To what extent are the social representations of arcadian nature compatible with agriculture? The analysis presented here may indicate that the gap between farmed landscapes and arcadian nature is not as big as is frequently stated in policy debates. The arcadian tradition is rooted in the thoroughly managed landscapes of the Italian, Dutch and English countryside. It is the rural idyll, much more that wilderness, which has been incorporated in the lifeworld concepts of nature of the vast majority of Western people. A wide range of landscape preference studies confirm that it is well-managed nature that people appreciate most (cf. Friedman 1992).

But this picture may change. Like the rural idyll, the ideal-type of wilderness is likely to 'trickle down' as people start valuing their environment by the standards of wild nature presented in the media. The current nature development projects cannot fail to attract new practices of nature recreation and engender a wider social support. How the future of nature development will influence agriculture depends, amongst other things, on the question which of the competing objectives of nature development will be prominent: the reference model of primordial nature or the process-oriented principle of spontaneous development. The objective of primordial wilderness is incompatible with any form continuous management and exploitation. According to this representation of nature, integration of agriculture and nature management is impossible.

Spontaneity, however, is a different story. Human intervention, not least agricultural practice, has often triggered spontaneous and unintended natural developments, like the settlement of new species and the development of new types of ecosystems. Nature development, interpreted as enabling spontaneous processes, would mean facilitating these developments and making room for more. It is quite unnecessary to remove all traces of human intervention, to accomplish this. On the contrary, the cultural landscape, together with the social practices that maintain it, can be the point of departure. Nature development, according to this concept, does not mean a radical break with the cultural history of the landscape, but further development of this cultural history, characterized by a stronger emphasis on natural processes (cf. Hendrikx 1995). Whether or not agriculture can integrate and contribute to this development is no longer a matter of principle, but an empirical question, dependent on the specific cultural and natural history of the region, as well as on farmers' skills and economic conditions.

Producing Arcadian Nature: Skills and Markets

In conclusion, I will touch on two issues that are closely related to the integration of agriculture and nature management. The first concerns the question of whether farmers have the craftsmanship to manage nature. Many farmers say they have, and many nature conservationists doubt it. In principle, we may conclude from the history of nature conservation, farmers are right here. The landscape of the rural idyll was managed – at least to a great extent – by farmers. Nature monuments, as already mentioned, often required specific forms of agricultural exploitation. Even management of nature development, if we define it as facilitating spontaneous developments, seems to fit with definitions of farmers' craftsmanship (cf. Horlings 1996, p. 43). It is worth noting here that the beauty and natural riches of the countryside were not an unintended by-product of agricultural practices, but to a fair extent the result of deliberate design and maintenance. In our society, where the urban–rural division is no longer a fundamental social dividing line, many farmers partake in the arcadian tradition, as is testified by their membership of nature conservation organizations, and the many initiatives, paid and unpaid, of nature management on farms (e.g., Frake 1996; Hees 1994; Horlings 1997). This does not alter the fact that the integration of nature management on farms implies a major shift in the operational goals of farm enterprises and that a majority of farmers would need support in learning new practices of nature management. It means, however, that craftsmanship is not a major bottle-neck in integrating agriculture and nature management. A far more important factor is economy.

If there is a role for farmers in managing nature, then the main issue is how they can generate income from it. There are at present some arrangements for nature management by farmers that are paid for by the government. Apart from the *Relatienota*, that was mentioned before, there are a few provincial initiatives, as well as funding within the framework of the Common Agricultural Policy. There are many possibilities here, but also many administrative obstacles (cf. Reus *et al.* 1995). A general problem with such arrangements is that government prescription and control tends to be general and static, while nature management often needs to be specific and dynamic.

Another possibility is utilization of the market, by adding extra value to 'nature-friendly' products, that is, products produced according to farming practices that also enhance natural values. This option seems attractive for several reasons: it remains close to farmers' entrepreneurial orientation; it does not involve intensive state control; it can be specific to the region; and, perhaps most important of all, it leaves room for creative experiments and innovations by farmers. There are several farmers' initiatives in the Netherlands that aim at the production of local products in ways that are friendly to environment and nature (van der Meulen and

Rodenburg 1996). However, consumers' attitudes towards these types of products appear, both from these initiatives and from consumer surveys, to be ambiguous. Though many consumers assert that they are much involved with nature conservation, they do not seem to value the production practices of the products they buy. The main motivation for paying extra value for nature-friendly products is not the way they are produced but the association between nature and the health-properties of the product (NRLO 1996a).

This finding may be interpreted as a discrepancy between the asserted and the behavioural attitude of consumers to nature conservation. Following on from the analysis of the arcadian representation of nature, we may perhaps give an additional explanation. The utilization of representations of nature for marketing products is not new. Ideal-types of arcadian nature are widely used to communicate quality, beauty, purity, wildness, and the like. These images do not relate to the actual practice of production, but belong to the symbolic domain of external, iconic nature. Consumers know this and act upon it. Nature-friendly products have to break through this pattern, by linking the product and its attributes both with the farming practices and the social practices of the consumer. This can in fact be done by selling local products within the region, to consumers who are involved with the region's cultural identity; or by selling products on the farm, so that consumers are directly confronted with production. To sell products on a larger scale, however, regional and national conservation organizations could play a mediating role, by linking the product to their practices of nature conservation and thus lending credibility to it. What is needed, then, is the commitment of these nature conservation organizations to integrating nature management and agriculture.

Epilogue

In discussing the relation of agriculture and nature conservation, I have concentrated on the possibilities of integration. Of course, incorporating the claims of culture is not the only strategy open to agriculture. Fencing off the claims is another way. This, essentially, is the strategy of segregation. Given the intensity and political power of non-agricultural claims, it would imply a withdrawal of agriculture from large parts of the Dutch countryside, with the remaining agricultural areas focusing on technological maximization. This might offer good prospects for some sectors of agricultural production, like horticulture. But for those agricultural practices that determine the appearance of large areas of rural space, it is doubtful whether claims regarding the management of nature could be averted. As has been argued, people's valuation of nature is closely related to the specific cultural history of a region. These values cannot be suspended by appointing areas for the development of 'real' nature

somewhere else, as some proponents of segregation seem to suppose. Animal husbandry, though not bound to land use, would not be exempted from nature claims: extrapolating from the cultural trends in sensibility to animal treatment, it is unlikely that industrial forms of meat production will be viable in the long term. If the analysis presented here is right, therefore, strategies of integration deserve serious consideration. They offer good prospects for both farmers and conservationists, providing the former are really committed to the claims of nature conservation, and the latter are prepared to revise these claims in a flexible way, adaptive to agricultural production and departing from the myth of a non-cultural nature.

Notes

1 This historical overview is mainly based on Gorter *et al.* (1956), Dekker (1993), Donkers (1995), and van der Windt (1995)
2 It should be stressed that this division of instrumental and intrinsic values is not as absolute as presented here. They often go together in social practices. Nature recreation is a typical example of a practice that combines intrinsic valuation (authenticity, beauty) and instrumental valuation (accessibility, suitability for recreational activities). From survey studies, however, it appears that for nature recreation intrinsic values are more important than instrumental values (NRLO 1996b).
3 Examples of surveys: Gill (1975) reports that a majority of Sierra Club members regard aesthetic and spiritual experiences as being a more important motive for wilderness preservation than recreation or resource conservation. Seippel (1997), using surveys from four Western countries, reports that 38 to 72 percent of the respondents think of nature as sacred.
5 Other resourceful studies are, for instance: Glacken (1976), Worster (1985), Hargrove (1989), Thomas (1984). Schama includes in his book a comprehensive bibliography of cultural studies of nature representations.
6 Moscovici (1977, p. 512). The term external is borrowed from Moscovici's account of *nature externe*.

15 Sustainable Development of Tourism. A Framework for Discussion and Research

René van der Duim

At the end of the era in which fundamental ideologies seem to have disappeared, Korthals (1994, p. 11) points to the emergence of one new vital story, that of 'sustainability.' Almost all levels of governmental policy and almost every economic sector of society now calls for new forms of growth: sustainable, environmentally aware, integrating economic and social development and more equitable in its impact. In the wake of the Brundtland report *Our Common Future* and *Agenda 21*, the tourism sector has also gradually embraced the concept of sustainable development.

International bodies such as the World Tourism Organization, the IUCN, Earth Council and the Worldbank, have become increasingly aware of the scale and scope of international tourism which, by accelerating transformations, could lead to the exhaustion of our natural and cultural resources. The pleas of organizations such as the ECTWT (Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism), Tourism Concern and the Ecotourism Society, together with publications by scientist in journals like *Annals of Tourism Research* or the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, have encouraged many countries to look for new forms of production and consumption in this field, which could enhance the sustainable development of tourism, and indeed sustainable development more generally.

The Dutch Council for Nature Policy (1994) in their report *Are we going too far?*, provoked debate by posing the following central question: 'Do we have to go and see everything which seems attractive and interesting to us, and at what price do we allow ourselves the space and freedom to do so?' One of the consequences was the establishment of intergovernmental 'task forces,' and reluctant admission by the Dutch tourism sector that a percentage of international tourism can be seen as a non-sustainable pattern of production and consumption.

However, as we shall see, sustainable development is a flag of convenience under which diverse ships sail, which helps to explain its power and popularity as a term in debates about development (Adams 1993, p. 218). As in other sectors of society, the concept of sustainable development in tourism accommodates a variety of different disputes, ranging from economic through social and cultural to environmental issues. This variety

not only relates to scale and scope, but also to the direction of the discourse.

It is far from clear whether sustainable development offers a new paradigm, or simply a green wash over business-as-usual. According to Adams (1993, p. 207), most commentators use the term in a loose and untheorized way. The concept of 'sustainable development' accommodates (development) strategies varying from light- to dark-green, from a romantic and nostalgic conservatism to a utopian socialism, from a 'zero growth' school of environmentalism to ideas about the importance of continued growth of the world economy (Schuurman 1992, p. 31). The same heterogeneity applies to discourse on sustainable development of tourism.

There appears to be little homogeneity or sense of common interest in the immensely diverse group of practices, commercial activities and interests we call 'tourism.' Tourism (as a practice and as an industry) is specific to distinct historical, cultural or geographical contexts, which makes the notion itself somewhat artificial.

Hence, the concept of sustainable development of tourism is even more complex to work with. This chapter does not, therefore, treat the sustainable development of tourism as a solution, but rather as a problem for critical review. First there is a brief discussion of the emergence of tourism as a problem. Second we discern the central issues at stake and put forward some questions for scientific research. Third, tourism is dealt with as a process of continuous transformation due to various interventions by producers and consumers. Finally, it will be argued that these processes of production and consumption provide very good reason for conceptualizing the sustainable development of tourism.

The Problem

Tourism was seen as a marginal addition to existing local economies, societies and land-use allocation systems during the 1950s and 1960s. The widespread assumption was that the impact could be accommodated by the use of surplus or existing factors of production, and that these were in any case 'clean activities' in terms of their physical impact. Economic, social and cultural consequences of tourism were supposed to be generally favorable, or at least not disadvantageous (Theuns 1989). Tourism was relatively neglected by the social sciences in those days, and few social scientist considered it worthwhile trying to study tourism as an international phenomenon. The first publications deserving mention appeared in the early 1970s, for example *The Golden Hordes* by Turner and Ash (1975) and the thesis by Hessels (1973) in the Netherlands.

The growth of tourism during the 1970s and 1980s increasingly undermined earlier assumptions about the impact of tourism. This growth is

characterized by an increasing *volume* of international tourism: from 25 million international arrivals and $2 billion in revenue in 1950 to more than 500 million international arrivals and more than $325 billion in revenue in 1995. A redoubling of tourism in the year 2010 is expected.

Tourism is furthermore characterized by an increasing *pace of development*. The overall dominance of Europe is in relative decline, while Eastern Europe, East Asia and the Pacific are catching up very quickly. Finally, there is *increasing complexity*. The tourism product consists of a variety of components, 'manufactured' by a variety of 'producers,' diverging from transnational tourism companies to the local souvenir shop owner, which is gradually 'consumed' by all sorts of tourists, at various places and times.

These developments have reached the point where discussion now focusses on such issues as 'limits of growth,' 'carrying capacity,' 'liveability' and – as in this chapter – 'sustainable development.' All these matters require choices and hence policy intervention and subsequently research to substantiate these choices. As a result, scientific interest in tourism and the discussion on 'pros' and 'cons' have rapidly increased. Among the critical issues are, first, the *economic* costs and benefits of tourism in terms of employment, foreign exchange and Gross Domestic Product (see for instance Theuns 1989; Harrison 1992). Second, the *environmental* consequences of tourism. This issue relates to two fundamental discussions: the impact of tourism on the environment in terms of depletion of water, soil and air; and the material and symbolic transformations of landscape (in the broadest sense) by tourism (see, for instance, Briassoulis and van der Straaten 1992; van der Duim and Philipsen 1995). Finally, the *cultural* 'cost and benefits,' centering on modernization and (under-)development theories and processes of globalization and localization (see for instance De Kadt 1992 and Wood 1993). Closely related to these issues is the whole field of *policy making*, which is virtual *terra incognita* with regard to tourism (Hitchcock *et al.* 1993).

Literature devoted to these critical issues has long been within the framework of a normative cost-benefit analysis. Referring to *economic* impact studies, Theuns (1989, p. 205) argued that:

'since the disutilities caused by tourism development may not only differ according to the type of tourism but also according to the institutional setting in which the development takes place, it is argued that making sweeping statements in which *the* benefits of tourism *per se* in *the* developing countries are praised or *the* costs are criticized gives evidence of unacceptable simplification.'

There has been a shift away from such simplifications in *cultural* studies of tourism within some modernization or dependency frameworks, focusing instead on people as active and strategic users of culture, participating in contexts where no single set of cultural interpretations has an inherent

claim to truth or authenticity. As Wood (1993, pp. 66–68) claims, tourism has its own peculiar dynamics which make it an interesting and challenging field of study, but its impact is always played out in an already dynamic and changing cultural context.

Similarly, the value judgements on for example *ecological* impacts of tourism are just as specific to particular (cultural or political) contexts. In other words, although ecological criteria for sustainability might seem fixed or objectively determined, they in fact are related to specific areas of reality in which interest and values are produced and established. It is therefore essential to acknowledge, when dealing with the concept of sustainability, that our environment in general (and nature in particular) is not only charged with physical impacts of tourism and recreation, but also – and perhaps more importantly – is a register of meanings. The increasingly divergent meanings held by different interest and pressure groups, government agencies and various parts of the tourist industry, need to be acknowledged in order to understand the conflicts and tensions surrounding the issue of sustainable development of tourism (see Clark *et al.* 1994).

The Discourse

The discourse on the relation between tourism and sustainable development has been broadened in yet another way. By and large, the discourse is moving from a dominant tourism-centric way to an *extra-parochial* way (Hunter 1995), asserting that tourism is in competition for scarce resources with other sectors and practices. Hence, the relation between tourism and sustainability is at least threefold:

The first important issue is how and in which and to what extent sustainable development could strengthen tourism development. Environmental problems due to agriculture, chemical industries, oil refineries and so on are influencing the quality of 'the tourist product.' According to Urry (1992), an environment appropriate for the 'tourist gaze' should be neither visually contaminated nor considered as dangerous, unnecessarily 'risky' or polluted. Other prerequisites for a healthy and sustainable development of tourism include a sound economy, a stable political context, availability of infrastructural facilities, an educated workforce, hygiene and the absence of mass poverty or disease (Theuns 1989, pp. 99–102).

A second frequently posed question concerns how and to what extent tourism can become more 'sustainable'; the central issue being how to prevent 'tourism destroying tourism.' Especially during the early 1990s, the tourism sector accepted the sustainability concept as a way of bringing the industry to the environmentally friendly side of the economic spectrum. Once the concept of 'sustainable tourism' had been introduced

there followed quite an explosion of sustainability related issues, thereby creating a kind of environmental legitimation for tourism. According to Hunter (1995), this 'dominant tourism centric paradigm of sustainable tourism development' is concerned with protecting the immediate resource base which will allow tourism development to be sustained. Attention is focussed almost exclusively on the tourist destination area, where management takes on a more meaningful scale. Tourism is primarily seen within destination areas as a triangular relationship between host areas and their habitats and peoples, holiday makers, and the tourism industry (see also Lane 1994, p. 102).

A third and more fundamental question is how and to what extent tourism could contribute to sustainable development in general. Hunter (1995) in particular stresses the importance of a broader approach, whereby the remit of sustainable tourism is reconceptualized primarily in terms of tourism's contribution to sustainable development. Since the predominant sustainable tourism development approach is overly tourism-centric and parochial (with a very limited view on scope, scale and context), 'practical measures designed to operationalize 'sustainable tourism' are failing to address many of the issues critical to the concept of sustainable development more generally, and may even actually work against the general requirements of sustainable development' (p. 156). However, even accepting Hunters' point of view, that 'under all circumstances, the resultant principles of sustainable tourism development are also principles of sustainable development' (1995, p. 163), the concept of sustainable tourism development is fraught with difficulties.

Four Questions

Achterberg points out that a meaningful use of the concept of sustainability starts from the assumption that implicitly or explicitly certain fundamental questions must be answered. Achterberg (1994, pp. 36–40) considers at least four to be extremely important: i) what is so valuable that it has to be sustained? ii) in whose interest will the objects of value be sustained? iii) what are the criteria for sustainability? and iv) how is sustainability pursued? Although extensive discussion of these four questions is well beyond the scope of this chapter, they do reveal some of the issues fundamental to the discourse on 'sustainable tourism.'

Referring to the first question, it could be argued that society should not strive to sustain every form of tourism, but rather those which enhance the quality of life. Discussion and assessment of quality standards should therefore precede decisions about forms of tourism to be promoted (and the way in which this should be done). The following examples illustrate this discussion.

Van Engelenburg and van Duyvenbode (1995) have argued for the compatibility of sustainable tourism development and NGO-development programmes, and subsequently that the quality of tourism development should be derived from development goals. In other words, the contribution of tourism development should be measured in terms of the more general goals of NGO-programmes, such as income generation, empowerment, advocacy towards the government or environmental protection. As a consequence, according to de Man (1996), tourism could sometimes even be used as a temporary vehicle for development. Once some more general development objectives (like community organization or income generation) had been achieved, tourism could be dropped.

According to Lengkeek (1994) the quality of tourist experience is strongly related to the possibility to search for 'other' realities. He argues that tourism should be safeguarded to a certain degree from continual commercialization and government intervention. The quality of tourist experience is endangered by the rationally organized everyday world, which eventually leads to an encapsulation and exploitation of 'contrastructure,' that is everything that falls outside the concept of everyday life and motivates tourists to travel. Lengkeek's theoretically argued tensions between the rationally organized everyday world and the contrastructure is at the heart of the 'sustainability' issue, since this tension, particularly apparent in the socio-cultural and physio-spatial environment, could lead to the exhaustion of the sources of contra-structural space and significance, which seems to be so fundamental for the tourist experience.

These two examples show that the discourse on the sustainable development of tourism within a wider framework should relate to fundamental societal questions, and possible answers concerning the most desirable forms of tourism ought to be subject to value judgements. As the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy (1994) recently stated, it is impossible to work with one, objectively fixed, concept of 'sustainability' or 'sustainable development.' In this sense, the concepts of 'distributive justice' and 'sustainability' should both be the subject of political and ethical debates. These debates are also concerned with in whose interest it is that objects of value have to be sustained.

The second question therefore directly relates to the equitable distribution of resources, between 'rich and poor,' between the present and coming generations and among the various types of tourists looking for different experiences. In the tourism-centric paradigm this question is limited to that of preserving tourism's future seed corn, that is to protecting the immediate tourism resource base which will allow tourism development to be sustained. Stewardship of positive features of the countryside has particular resonance in the context of rural tourism (Hunter 1995, p. 157). While in the context of tourism in the Third World, there are pleas for systems of tourism education, environmental management and planning that will promote sustainable tourism.

Seen in a broader perspective, however, there are further issues at stake, through which the discourse on sustainable development of tourism is related to other, perhaps more fundamental, debates. One of these debates concerns globalization and localization (see for instance Schuurman 1996). Tourism was often seen as a form of cultural imperialism leading to economic dependency, homogenization of culture and destructing of environmental resources during the 1970s. However, recent research also indicates the dialectic between the global and the local, the interrelations between tourism and other economic developments, and the possibilities for new cultural syncretism. The concept of 'glocalization' sees ('local') people as active and strategic users of culture, leading to 'questions about the complex ways tourism enters and becomes part of an already on-going process of symbolic meaning and appropriation' (Wood 1993, p. 66). This concept also raises questions about how and to what extent the enormous migration of people as tourists, together with the flows of money and images that accompany them, could favor the protection of resources as rainforests, now threatened not so much by tourism as well by timber exploitation or cattle breeding. 'Glocalization' also concerns the possibilities for a more equitable distribution of economic resources from tourism.

Sustainable development of tourism, for instance, has often been associated with communitarian ideals and a strong commitment to (local) participation, whether this be in community politics, or in the workforce. In practice, however, as Henry and Jackson (1995) pointed out:

'there is a general pattern for the tourism industry of, at one pole, large-scale organizations (often in divisionalized structures and with transnational interests), operating in an oligopolistic context, while at the same time, at the other end of the scale are small organizations, often operating as simple structure in crowded market places.'

In promoting a sustainable tourism strategy, one has to cope with expropriation of profits from regions by large-scale, even perhaps multinational companies on the one hand, and the development of seasonal, part-time, low paid and un-unionized jobs on the other. As a consequence, bridges have to be built between the large-scale tourism networks, driven by exogenous forces and ruled by the laws of the free market, and small-scale networks, based upon local initiatives with a great sensitivity to aspects of local interests and local quality. In this respect, Dietvorst (1996, p. 9) argues for bridge actors or gatekeepers, who are crucial for guiding the centrifugal forces of the systems world by trying to integrate them in the world of the small-scale networks.

Achterberg's third question concerns the criteria for sustainability. These are once again related to 'parochial' and 'extra-parochial' paradigms. There are many examples how to assess sustainability criteria for tourism over the last few years (see for instance de Man 1993; UNEP 1994; WTO/IISD 1993; Blangy and Epler Wood 1993). A more comprehensive

example, although primarily within the tourism-centric paradigm, of the search for principles and practice of sustainable tourism management is found in Bramwell *et al.* (1996). This publication, funded by the European Commission, by four European universities, developed a theoretical framework to assist understanding and to review the principles and issues surrounding sustainable tourism management, as well as collecting a series of eight detailed case studies from several European countries examining the potential and pitfalls of implementing sustainable tourism management within different organizations and contexts.

However, in order to enable 'the reflexive practitioner to undertake a critical review of his/her own professional practice' Henry and Jackson (1995) stress the importance of putting the discourse on sustainable development of tourism within the framework of a range of policy areas. In order to do so they tease out the relationship between tourism practices and various approaches of environmentalism. Ecocentric and technocentric approaches have various implications for tourism policy and planning. At one end of the spectrum, for instance, a reduction in travel flows is advocated, not simply because 'travel is wasteful of resources but also because it involves dislocation and unsettling of communities and community values' (Henry and Jackson 1995, p 20). At the other end of the spectrum, technocentrics will 'accept market economy principles, and the centrality of technology for the addressing of contemporary problems' (p. 19). The quest for sustainability criteria should be related to various lines of ideological thought and it is obvious that 'technocentric' criteria will not match 'ecocentric' ones.

Similarly there is an argument for deleting the self-evident distinction between 'positive' and 'negative' cultural effects and abandoning (normative) statements about tourism's 'good' or 'bad' impact, and whether culture is being ruined or preserved. A perspective in which people are seen as active and strategic users of culture, participating in contexts where no single set of cultural interpretations has an inherent claim to truth and authenticity (Wood 1993, p. 66), puts a different complexion on the question of criteria for sustainability. Sustainability criteria, if any, emerge first and foremost from this perspective out of a negotiated agreement among stakeholders ('hosts' as well as 'guests') with different interests concerning the ongoing process of symbolic meaning and appropriation.

Finally, the question of how to achieve sustainability is closely related to answers to the questions above. It is essential to realize that different stakeholders have different interests concerning the use to which natural and cultural resources are put, and therefore efforts should be directed towards fostering and facilitating the interaction between stakeholders (Röling in: WUB 1996). Since 'local' entrepreneurs and other 'local' actors as well as international tour operators or hotel companies, tourism experts or governmental institutions are stakeholders, the sustainable

development of tourism can only emerge out of a negotiated agreement. Alternative scenarios are welcomed in this negotiation process. As Korthals (1994) states: 'the public nature of a democratic culture and the thematic approach of societal issues is served by the development of scenarios.' With the help of scenarios, debates can be broadened out and collective agreement can be promoted (see also Lengkeek 1994 and Sidaway; van der Voet 1994).

The development of scenarios is facilitated by (theoretical) tools, such as those offered by Ashworth and Dietvorst (1995) and the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (1995). I shall therefore argue in what follows that developing scenarios for the sustainable development of tourism would be promoted first by viewing the development of tourism as a continuous transformation process due to interventions by producers and consumers of many types. Intervention should be dealt with as a 'an ongoing transformational process that is constantly reshaped by its own organizational and political dynamic and by the specific conditions it encounters or itself creates' (Long 1992, p. 37), embracing both formally organized state agency intervention as well as that of companies, NGOs, 'local' entrepreneurs and the like that attempt to organize the 'tourism production process.' I shall also assert that these intervention by producers and consumers are a very good pretext for conceiving perspectives on sustainable development, which can be elaborated into scenarios.

A Transformation Model

The transformation model developed by the Center for Recreation and Tourism Studies of Wageningen Agricultural University emphasizes the dynamic character of tourism product development while providing an overarching concept that integrates both supply and demand (Dietvorst 1992; Ashworth and Dietvorst 1995). This model shows the continuing transformation of the original resource (whether a tropical rainforest, monument, traditional practice, urban public space, national park, or whatever), due to activities and interventions by producers and consumers of many types, wittingly or unwittingly, for a variety of reasons. It embraces material practices as well as the role of image production and interpretation.

The resource can be any element used in the creation of a tourism product. A distinction can usually be made between resources for which no regulation mechanism is necessary and scarce resources. Scarce resources can be divided into physical resources (land, water, vegetation, energy), economic resources like labour and capital goods (resources converted entirely through human effort), and socio-cultural resources (historical and here-and-now patterns of social life, folkways, traditions,

built environment, art and so on). According to this model, four different but related transformations can be distinguished.[1]

Material Transformation by 'Producers'

Producers are understood as social actors such as capitalist enterprises, state agencies or local people (Long 1992) who transform the original resource (such as the landscape or the city) by various practices (including building facilities, transforming coastal landscapes into tourist resorts, transforming historic buildings into museums, and by constructing trails). Tourism products emerge out of a network of actors who become partially, though hardly ever completely, enrolled in this 'production' process. The suppliers of the tourism product act upon other actors and are also subjected to the influence of activities of others in their region. The different functions compete for their share of the scarce space available. The changing relationship between the state and the market also exerts an influence upon the character and direction of tourism development in a certain area. Competition also occurs between tourism countries, regions and places in the struggle for a part of the market.

Symbolic Transformation by 'Producers'

It is widely acknowledged in the field of marketing that the acquisition of product information is influenced by a personal interpretation of the design or package. Because the tourism product often has a specific spatial character, people's view of the environment and the resulting mental image is subject to manipulation by producers. These producers transform the physical structure of a region more or less indirectly through coding. A certain coding is added to the already transformed material resource. In many cases this is the real added value of the tourism product, i.e., the illusion. The tourism product is packaged, designed and assembled. Lengkeek (1994) has argued that in this respect, tourist attractions are increasingly 'created' today. Attractions receive a 'signifying' function in modern society because they are designated as beautiful, worth-while, 'extra-ordinary' (Urry 1992) and funny. It is through coding that the producer can manipulate the consumer market.

Symbolic Transformation by 'Consumers'

Consumers or visitors transform the resource in the region or the area visited by them through their distinctive interpretation of the product offered. Tourists somehow 'match' their motives, needs, preferences with advertisements in newspapers, recommendations by friends and relatives, and with former experiences, which influence their decision to go for a day out, on holiday or to visit a museum. This transformation or assem-

blage is indirect because the supplier reacts to the trends in the market: the behaviour of the visitors.

Adventure and challenge is no longer looked for in stories or printed material but increasingly in visualized fiction and personally sensed authentic experiences. Pictures, movies or television replace verbal contacts or written sources. Sensory and more especially visual experiences are important today and form a major source of orientation for tourists: we are gazing at the Alps, the 'wonders of nature,' other tourists or the eruptions of El Arenal in Costa Rica. Lifestyle changes are not only important explanatory variables here. Different lifestyles also compete for the use of the same space at the same time, leading to conflicts between local inhabitants and visitors for many resources and facilities that are of central importance in much local policy for such areas.

Material Transformation by 'Consumers'

Finally, the decision to take a walk in the neighbourhood or a holiday in Costa Rica or on the Costa Brava contributes to the transformation of the physical and social structures of the areas visited. Space consumption, crowding, wear on infrastructure, deterioration of natural or historic monuments, erosion in vulnerable rainforests, disturbance of birds and other animals, traffic congestion and all kinds of environmental impacts belong to the direct transformation of the original tourism resource, as well as 'the struggles that take place over the attribution of specific social meanings to particular events, actions and ideas' (Long 1992, p. 24).

Fundamental to the understanding of each of the transformation processes described is the context in which they take place. The four transformations in the model form just the surface reflections of much wider and more complicated developments in society. The model focusses upon the spatially visible tracks of the transformations, but neglects the explanatory mechanisms. In order to reveal these, and reflecting discussions earlier this chapter, the original model has been extended by adding for instance the dialectic between the *global* and the *local*, between *flexibility* and *sustainability* and between *acceleration* and *inertia*.

We have already made some observations relating to the global–local debate. The closely relate discussion concerning the dialectic between acceleration and inertia points to the different time-space axes in which tourism transformation processes are taking place. On the one hand, tourism is part of the even faster circulation of goods and services within consumer capitalism and the ever increasing mobility opportunities. On the other hand, these increased mobility opportunities enable people to sustain their own small worlds at greater distances, through the same acceleration processes that threaten spaces which are characterized by (relative) inertness (rainforests, traditions etc.). According to Dietvorst (1996), the challenge is to find a balance between the development pro-

cesses on these very different time-space axes. Indeed, it is one of the central issues with respect to sustainable development of tourism.

The tension between sustainability and flexibility leads to all kinds of systems control and intervention. More insight is needed on the impact of these interventions in complicated social reality. The actual debate on the shift in roles between the public and the private sectors offers interesting viewpoints in this respect. However, in the following we will confine ourselves to some preliminary perspectives on sustainable development of tourism based on the above mentioned model.

Transformations Towards Sustainability?

One of the key issues involved in the discussion on sustainability is the debate about the level of consumption and production processes. Precisely consumer and producer behaviour is situated at the heart of the transformation model, and precisely consumer and producer behaviour lend themselves to direct interventions by (governmental and non-governmental) agencies.

The question, however, is which intervention practices will lead to the sustainable development of tourism. Although the concept of sustainability might seem fixed or objectively determined, it is not. It is in fact related to specific areas of reality in which interests and values are produced and established. Not only the world, but the tourism sector as well, are at the beginning of a lengthy process of scientific research and opinion formation concerning the meaning of sustainability. As we stated earlier, the concept has been unduly elevated into a symbol with which it is not possible to take issue.

The intention, however, is clear: we are concerned with a relationship between tourism and the environment (in the broadest sense of the word) that will safeguard the quality of at least the latter, but preferably both, on a long-term basis. The analogy with 'social justice' is self-evident: it is no more possible to provide an operational definition of the sustainable development of tourism that will have the same meaning for everyone and that will remain valid over time, than it is for the concept of social justice. Defining the meaning of the concept is a continuous and political process, which always takes place on the basis of incomplete knowledge and which will not be the same for everyone at any moment (Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy 1995, pp. 19–22). Hence, there are numerous views on sustainability, closely related to the discourse earlier in this chapter. Within a tourism-centric paradigm the issues at stake are clearly different than those within a less limited view on tourism.

In the following we will share the views of the Netherlands Scientific Council, which has discerned four different perspectives. These four perspectives on sustainability provide the basis for scenarios. It will

become clear that these four views or perspectives are primarily analytical, ideal-type constructs based on *a priori* attitudes. An analytical working method is, however, needed in order to provide a sufficiently clear framework for the many choices that need to be made in an exploration of future trends. The significance of the various positions to be distinguished is that this ambivalence is systematically charted and can therefore serve to clarify opinion formation.

The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy has specified these views in the form of scenarios for a number of basic environmental issues, such as world food supply, the management of resources like copper and chlorine, and nature conservation. Unfortunately they have not yet been specified for the relation between tourism and the environment. We will therefore briefly discuss four basic views or perspectives concerning the way in which sustainable development of tourism is to be attained. These four views focus especially on the consumer needs and practices that are to be fulfilled and the activities of all kinds of producers through which those needs can be met. We will add some preliminary remarks on possible consequences of the four views for the development of scenarios for sustainable tourism. However, these remarks are tentative and confined to the relation between tourism and the natural environment.

Four Views on Sustainability

Following the transformation model, the four views should focus especially on the practices of producers and consumers. The view may for example be taken that only minimal adjustments are required in order to cope with environmental problems. Both the present level of tourism consumption and production can be continued with some adjustment over a lengthy period without endangering sustainability. This perspective may be described as *utilizing*. It could also be argued that the solution should not so much be sought in the production sphere but that, instead, the volume or pattern of consumption should be modified. This perspective may be labelled *saving*. Further alternative would be to counter environmental problems by continuing to meet the present high level of consumer needs while modifying productive activities directed towards those needs, for example by a change in technology or the use of different energy sources. This action perspective may be described as *managing*. Finally, environmental problems may be viewed as being so serious that both the level of tourism consumption and production processes need to be adapted. This perspective is concerned with *preserving*. The four views which have been taken as the starting point are outlined in more detail in Table 1. Four perspectives on the sustainable development of tourism can be discerned on the base of these four views.[2]

Table 1 Four Views of Sustainability

	Level of consumption	
Production	high	low
Adaptation of production methods	utilizing	saving
Change in nature of production methods	managing	preserving

Source: Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (1995)

Utilizing

In the *utilizing* perspective, deliberately engineered radical social transformation of tourism for environmental purposes is regarded as undesirable and impossible. At best, the social dynamic of tourism can be adjusted, not directed. In addition, there is the danger that simpler solutions to environmental problems will be ruled out in the laborious process of imposed behavioral change. This applies not just to consumption processes but also to excessive intervention in production processes in tourism. Problems need to achieve a certain scale in order to unleash creative energy, as with Mallorca where the EC is financing a project on sustainable tourism.

The development of tourism may in this view be at the expense of particular environmental wishes; a certain level of environmental risk can never be ruled out. Some forms or levels of pollution of water, soil and air due to tourism and transport are, however, acceptable. Others can be mitigated by means of technological adaptations. The availability of energy and raw materials is not regarded as a major problem. Much can be achieved by technology. Furthermore, the growing scarcity of resources will mean a rise in prices, leading in turn to endogenous substitutions.

Under this action perspective however, there is a particular need to check the rapid growth of the world population. The growth of the population in the Third World is a source of major concern. The associated poverty results in major environmental problems (erosion, destruction of the tropical rainforests, etc). Precisely because it is difficult to alter the development of consumption and production, tackling poverty becomes an important lever and tourism is seen as one of the instruments for economic growth. A rapid increase in prosperity is called for, both indirectly in order to mitigate the population numbers and directly to improve the environment. An increase in prosperity in western countries, and as a consequence growth of international tourism, is also regarded as desirable and possible. Practices as leisure and tourism, predicated on high living standards, are so firmly enshrined that any reduction in prosperity

may be regarded as illusory. Tourism is thus seen as a driving force behind development, contend with poverty and an economic alternative for other production processes like agriculture or cattle breeding. In summary, under the 'utilizing' perspective tourism will be more or less *business as usual*.

Saving

Under the *saving* perspective, both environmental risks and the risks inherent in the process of social adaptation are, to a certain extent, accepted and taken in the interests of sustainability, in that the resilience of both systems is regarded as considerable. Methods of production in tourism, including technology, cannot however be changed rapidly. Nor is this required from the viewpoint of environmental risks. These risks can be reduced to acceptable levels by reducing the *volume or pattern of tourism-oriented consumption* bearing on the environment. This provides the most important lever for change. Cutbacks in consumption are not just required for the environment but are also regarded as necessary in the interests of a fairer distribution of scarce resources both worldwide and between present and future generations.

Under this view, it is desirable to work towards a package of consumer needs in which each world citizen makes limited use of natural resources. This is based on the assumption that ultimately everyone has the same right of access to sufficient resources in order to meet certain priority consumer needs (that is, redistribution), before all kinds of luxury needs can be met. Environmental problems which, despite the lower level of consumption, could still arise, are accepted as potentially insoluble or inevitable.

As stated in the introduction, this argument has recently been promoted by another Dutch Council, the Council for Nature Policy (1994). In line with the Rio Declaration, the Council drew the attention to the extremely high and non-sustainable consumption levels in the Netherlands. For example, every year more than 75 percent of the population takes a holiday with an average of nearly 2.5 holidays per person. Yearly, almost 12 million holidays are spent abroad of which almost one million in non-European countries. This volume and pattern of tourism consumption should be subject to debate form the 'saving' perspective. The message under the 'saving' perspective is: *less far and less often*

Managing

The *managing* action perspective is based on the assumption that, contrary to the way in which they are met, tourist needs cannot be rapidly changed. The natural environment is regarded as 'robust within limits,' meaning that these limits need to be monitored closely in order to prevent acci-

dents. Risks exceeding those limits are not acceptable. The social capacity for adjustment is regarded as considerable, but the optimism of the 'preserving' action perspective is not shared. It is not for nothing that the present level of consumption in the West is widely pursued throughout the world. For this reason the potential in terms of organized human inventiveness – Research and Development – needs to be exploited in order to come up with new production methods in tourism that spare the environment as far as possible. The focus is on regulating adjustments in tourism production processes. It is important to accumulate as much information as possible in order to provide the foundation for a deliberate, future-oriented tourism policy. By 'investing in the future' – for example by the development of 'clean' technologies and new materials – it would become possible to revive renewable resources and reduce leakages on a worldwide scale. From the managing perspective, changes in the nature of tourism production methods are welcomed, in order to make tourism *cleaner and greener*

Preserving

From the *preserving* action perspective, there is a willingness to change both consumer and producer behaviour in tourism. Environmental risks are regarded as high and avoiding them requires adjustments to the level or pattern of leisure and tourism consumption, *and* changes in the relevant production activities. It is held that the necessary social willingness will ultimately be available. Undoubtedly this will arouse resistance, since the necessary intervention will cut across numerous interests and acquired rights.

This vision of sustainable tourism development means that people must submit to tight ecological constraints and reconcile themselves to a sober lifestyle. Even more than in the 'saving' perspective, the emphasis is on meeting certain priority consumer needs for each world citizen now and in the future. This course of action is advocated since it allows for a substantial increase in population. The uptake of scarce resources by the rich countries must be reduced so as to leave something for the developing countries and for future generations.

Radical government intervention is legitimated to an even greater extent than from the 'saving' perspective. This in turn calls for strong governments that are capable of making use of all the available means, both directly and indirectly, for example via the market. The 'preserving tourist,' in other words, is a post-tourist who stays at home, and is striving for what Backers (1994) has called *hedonistic austerity.*

Table 2 Four Views of Sustainable Tourism

	Level of tourism consumption	
Production	High	Low
Adaptation of tourism pro-duction methods	*utilizing* business as usual	*saving* less far and less often
Change in nature of tour-ism production methods	*managing* cleaner and greener	*preserving* hedonistic austerity

Conclusion

As the discussion of sustainable development of tourism moves from a dominant tourism-centric way to a broader approach, whereby the remit of sustainable development of tourism is reconceptualized primarily in terms of tourism's contribution to sustainable development (Hunter 1995), the discourse has become more complex as well as more important. The complexity and importance is closely linked to the extent in which the discourse on sustainable tourism development is and will be connected to other more fundamental societal issues, such as which forms of tourism one should strive for and in whose interest it is to do so.

The complexity is also linked to the basic assumption that it is impossible to work with one, objectively fixed, concept of 'sustainable development of tourism.' Although ecological, socio-cultural or economic criteria for sustainability might seem fixed or objectively determined, we consider sustainable development of tourism to be the outcome of the struggles and negotiations that take place between individuals or groups, directly or indirectly involved in the 'production' of tourism, with differing and often conflicting social interests, operating along various time-space axes.

As a consequence, social science research in tourism should focus on the practices of all sorts of actors involved and intervening in tourism development and the resulting material and symbolic transformations. Research should include the analysis of tourism's impact in an already dynamic and changing cultural context: the analysis of mechanisms and conflicts of interest leading to exhaustion of the sources of contra-structural space and significance, which seems to be so fundamental for the tourist experience, and the development of scenarios by which debates can be broadened and collective agreement can be promoted.

Perhaps the perspectives mentioned above could facilitate these debates when specified as scenarios. However, it has only been possible to make some preliminary remarks on perspectives on sustainable development of tourism here. These remarks illustrate the incompleteness of the information and scientific uncertainty, but also demonstrate how different atti-

tudes need to be adopted if sustainability is to be a 'realistic' concept. From such a starting point, a social science research agenda should facilitate developing perspectives on sustainable development of tourism, and get the various interested parties on speaking terms.

Notes

1 For a more extensive discussion, see Asworth and Dietvorst (1995). This part of this chapter is based on the introductionary chapter of the their publication *Tourism and Spatial Transformations*.
2 The following ideas rely on the perspectives and scenarios elaborated in report 44 of the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (1995), called *Sustained Risks: a Lasting Phenomenon* (pp. 43–47).

16 The Multiple Realities of the Rural Environment. The Significance of Tourist Images for the Countryside

Jaap Lengkeek, Jan Willem te Kloeze and Renze Brouwer

Introduction

Tourism and recreation[1] have an important influence on the use and development of rural areas. In the Netherlands, this has been particularly evident since the end of the Second World War. Population increase, spectacular economic growth paralleled by increasing affluence and a growing amount of free-time, provided the impetus for a massive trek to the countryside. Elsewhere too the countryside has become important for tourism and recreation. The conclusion drawn by the *European Conference on Rural Development* (Cork 1996) emphasized that rural development is not only a matter of agricultural reform and the management of natural resources, it also involves tourism and recreation. Rural development, argued the statement, requires an integrated approach. The significance of recreation and tourism is sought primarily in the way it can contribute to the regional economy.

The Dutch choice of the countryside as a place to spend their free hours, free days and holidays coincided with certain developments that put the countryside, as a venue for leisure-time activities, under increasing pressure. With the modernization of agriculture, urbanization and the construction of new roads and waterways, the scale of the landscape changed as did its accessibility and the experiences it offered. The nature of these changes was such that the government decided to adopt a counter offensive, a policy aimed at maintaining adequate green recreation space. This policy resulted in the laying-out of large recreation areas and a network of paths for cyclists and walkers. Government involvement reached a peak in the 1970s but in subsequent years became gradually less important. Even so, in the course of twenty-five years this policy became so self-sufficient that there was little question of it becoming integrated into other areas of rural policy. With its own framework of planning, its own policy organizations and a sector of specifically tourist-recreational organizations, it formed a policy world that was largely inward looking and which was defensive in its attitude towards other policy sectors.

Now that this policy is loosing significance because of developments that have taken place in both government organization (withdrawal of

government) and society itself (commodification), the concept of integrated rural development is being put forward for the first time. This can be seen most clearly in the recently initiated 'valuable cultural landscapes' policy, a basic assumption of which is the integrated development of agriculture, tourism, recreation and nature management. The minister responsible (in this case the Minister of Agriculture, Nature management and Fisheries) required the hitherto centrally directed recreation and tourism policy to decentralize as much as possible, and stipulated that interest groups at the regional level be brought together to ensure a joint approach.

Not only in the Netherlands but in other countries too, the self-sufficiency of recreation and tourism policy in relation to other rural functions was one of the reasons why the development of scientific knowledge on the subject of tourism and recreation led to few linkages with other sociological approaches to rural society (Cloke and Goodwin 1992). This resulted in an isolation that was disadvantageous to the world of recreation and tourism, and also limited insight into the significance recreation and tourism could have for rural development. In recent years a turning point seems to have been reached and this segregation is no longer so acute (Urry 1992; Dupuis and Vandergeest 1996).

Our contribution concentrates on a theoretical perspective which brings the importance of recreation and tourism for the countryside more sharply into focus. The relevance of this position will be illustrated with three brief interpretations of practices found in the rural areas: camping on the farm; the thematization of the countryside and the creation of a rural identity.

Contested Territories

The image associated with the use made of the Dutch countryside by recreation and tourism in the period 1945–1960, is one of large groups of cyclists, walkers, campers with bungalow tents, site caravans and families driving around in their cars. On sunny days recreation projects were scenes of great activity: sunbathers closely packed together, children at play in the water, wind-surfers trying to avoid swimmers, boys and girls flirting with each other and at least one child who had lost its parents. Today the countryside still provides the location and setting for the most diverse leisure activities.

The use of the countryside for these various tourist and recreational activities resulted in conflict between recreationalists (de Milliano and van Sambeek 1986) and between recreationalists and other interest groups. The latter were concerned with the menace posed by the growth of tourism to the quality of village life (Kerstens 1972), and the threat to nature (Voskens *et al.* 1987). The controversy between nature organizations, who were responsible for the management of large nature areas on the one hand, and

recreationalists on the other, became increasingly sharp during the 1980s (van de Windt 1995). Restrictions were increasingly placed on recreation and tourism in order to minimize or prevent the ecosystem from being disrupted.

Conflicts between those using the countryside do not always arise because the one actually hinders the other. The presence of a particular group of people in an area can, for some, be reason enough for feeling their experience as a whole is being negated. Crowds disturb the illusion that country places have managed to escape the frenzy of modern life. At the same time country people may find it difficult to accept that their home is being used as a backdrop for tourism and that they are left with the feeling that their living space is being taken over by others.

The physical environment, and thus the countryside as well, can be relevant to its users in a variety of different ways. The types of relevance can be linked to four different values attributable to the surroundings:

- *utility value*; instrumentally speaking these are opportunities offered by the surroundings for the pursuit of activities (for example, paths for walkers, a temperature which allows people to enjoy being able to dress more lightly, the possibility of meeting others etc);
- *experience value*; this relates to evaluations emerging from general schemes of perception and these are based on the aesthetic, a perception of contrasts and experience transmitted by the senses and described by such qualifications as ugly or beautiful; hilly or flat; open or closed; sweet smelling or foul);
- *attraction value*; the expression of a variety of interesting facts and specific information about an area, such as stories about the history or the significance of a place, references to people who have written about a particular location, background stories to things that can be found locally or that once existed (see for example MacCannell 1989);
- *appropriation value* which indicates the extent to which people get the feeling or the certainty that an area is theirs and that other visitors can be seen as intruders.

On the basis of these values, the countryside in general or one rural area in particular can acquire a number of totally different significances. Many activities are not directly related to experiential qualifications such as country, farm or nature, but concern the utility value of infrastructure or physical qualities that are the result of agrarian history: sand paths, ditches, space and views or limited accessibility. For many people the countryside is a place where one can walk or cycle relatively undisturbed. But these activities could, in principle, take place anywhere that the same possibilities for use are available.

Experience value involves a specific experience that is associated with the countryside. The experience value primarily refers to rural *space* recognizable in specific contexts. The image is evoked by the sound of farm animals, the penetrating smell of manure, the broad horizon and here

and there the silhouette of a village, old farmhouses which look as if time has stood still, the style of clothes worn by country people, confrontations with farm machinery and clay on the streets. It is difficult to accommodate the sight of a group of amateur cyclists, dressed in excessively colourful aerodynamic costumes, within the rustic image.

Attraction value is primarily associated with *place*: something that only exists 'there' and is identified by all the many special references to it in descriptions and stories. Some parts of the province of Drenthe (in the northeast of the Netherlands) are directly associated with stories about the area that have appeared in literature. The accompanying illustrations also exert their influence. As a result the province is associated with heather-covered moors and sheep. These wandering flocks can, however, only survive by being artificially maintained and have in fact, little to do with modern agricultural functions. Not fully realistic, thus. Many areas of managed agriculture are oriented to the maintenance of particular rural images. The concept of authenticity is often used in the context of tourism research because tourists often ask whether or not what they are visiting is actually what it seems to be (Ex and Lengkeek 1996). There is considerable variation in the importance attached to the authenticity of a tourist attraction (Cohen 1979). 'James Herriot country,' for example is neither a social or geographical reality but mainly a literary fiction. Since the stories associated with objects are important in stimulating tourist interest, those who develop tourist products tend to provide plenty of information about tourist attractions. This information is often very exaggerated and sometimes entirely fictitious. Tourist attractions are frequently viewed with suspicion: they are not authentic, they are (re)constructed or appear to be more than they actually are. For a number of years now all the French motorways have been equipped with boards indicating what is to be seen in the surrounding countryside: vineyards, wild horses, battlefields. The Dutch rural tourist board continues to issue maps of new routes all of which are accompanied by extensive descriptions: the cherry route; the windmill route; the route along characteristic old farms and so on.

The appropriation value of the countryside is oriented to the exclusive right of use, experience, or the attraction of unusual stories and is reflected in the enormous interest shown by Dutch town-dwellers, since the 1960s, either for moving permanently to the country or for owning a second home or holiday house there. The conflict between claims can be seen in the many protests from local people against setting up big tourist attractions, laying out large-scale nature reserves, or protection policy towards the landscape or cultural monuments. Appropriation value can be based on a feeling of connection, on a right built up more or less from repeated use, which is sometimes associated with activity, the investment of time (exercise of social control or helping to keep certain things going) and with actual legal rights and authority (such as anglers who have a license to fish or may lease or even own fishing waters and their surroundings).

On Multiple Realities

The various values attributed to socio-physical surroundings and thus to the countryside as well can give rise to widely differing concepts of rurality. An important question here is why particular values are attributed to certain areas. It would seem that those who use rural areas for recreation or tourism are precisely the ones for whom what the countryside is, is the less relevant than what it signifies for them. Research (Brouwer 1997) has shown that the image developed for the tourist, partly because of the use of visual material in promotion, gradually comes to dominate the image of the rural areas and as a result this image becomes increasingly narrow. Countryside reality becomes increasingly identified with that of touristic illusion. Is there still a countryside in reality? This question should first be posed at a more general level. What is the reality of the image of the world in which man lives?. We shall therefore detach ourselves for a moment from the specific context of the countryside.

The German sociologist and philosopher Alfred Schutz (1990) concluded that individuals build up a communal notion of reality in which material and social phenomena are experienced as given and natural. In ordinary daily life people work, as it were, with unconscious theories of existence: self-evident, habits, experiences, knowledge, beliefs or common sense, which can be maintained as long as they work and are not contradicted. Individuals share these notions of the self-evident with each other. Against the background of an objective reality that can only be partly comprehended, they build up a communally shared reality which forms the reality of everyday life. Doubts about its limitations are to some extent 'bracketed.'

This intersubjective reality is constructed around certain aspects or 'parameters' of reality (Lengkeek 1996). These parameters which have, broadly speaking, been drawn from Schutz (1990) are: tension of consciousness; proprioception: a feeling of 'self' and the edges of ones own finite being; sociability; time and space.

Let us begin with the tension of consciousness. The individual in modern western society is accustomed to doing things with considerable intensity. The pattern of daily transactions is complex but the individual is supported by a fixed routine. Because of this intensity and complexity, individuals are able to assess things carefully for themselves and to anticipate what might occur. The individual is subject to considerable tension because of this. Modern society creates stress, we say. One important part of this intense existence (but certainly not the only part) is related to work. Application, involvement, competition, and perseverance are the important pillars on which the production system is based.

A second parameter assumes special significance in this fairly frenzied existence of 'being busy.' Following Olivier Sachs (1985) we call this proprioception, the self-evident experience of ourselves and our physical

boundaries. This experience involves a number of self-evidences including the way an individual more or less pushes aside the fact of his or her own end: death. Death is feared in everyday life but the daily round allows little room for this feeling. In the same way the possibility that others will die is put, as it were, into parenthesis. In the public domain sexual drives are also suppressed and kept within bounds. The sociologist Norbert Elias (1969) described the western process of civilization as an ever increasing mastery of physical drives. Violence or fear of death are overcome and pushed aside. The image of self is partly linked to the success or failure of this struggle to achieve self control.

The image of self is also related to a third parameter: a degree of sociability. An image of the self and others is developed through contact with those around one. The social community carries a world of culture and images and transmits this. We relate reality to the social world with which we are familiar. Language is the most important medium in the exchange of signals and significances. Language is an invaluable help, but at the same time limits the world which individuals talk about with each other or which they, thinking in the same words, make accessible to themselves. The language which individuals speak is bound up with the people with whom they associate. The way an individual uses language makes him or her recognizable: we, them, foreigners, the respectable, the common, insiders and intruders.

The fourth parameter is time. Time is the experience that the one moment is not the same as the other. In the modern intense world the feeling of time is dependent on the clock and not on day and night and the changing seasons. The clock, apparently, has made time objective. More and more is being written by different authors about the speeding up of our consciousness of time, the units into which the way we spend time are divided and how these follow each other in rapid succession, compartmentalizing our consciousness of time (Giddens 1991; van der Poel 1993). Within the course of an individual life, time can have a variety of meanings. As individuals become more adult and more intensely involved in the tensions of everyday events, the feeling that time flies grows. Children do not have this feeling to the same extent. Later, however, diaries and appointments drive their tempo up.

The last parameter is the space that constitutes the horizon of our everyday life. This horizon is becoming wider and wider thanks to television, the airplane and the car. Within this space individuals can now move more rapidly from one place to another. Everyday space offers trusted routines: there are smells, the colours of the landscape, the feeling of smooth tarmac, and roads that always go somewhere. Everyday space, that as 'place' contains forms and symbols well-known to us, acquires a more global uniformity in the modern context. In this way damage is done to 'a sense of place' and it seems as if the specificity of the space in which the individual finds him or herself has largely disappeared (Harvey 1989).

Whilst the – intersubjective – everyday reality in modern society is viewed primarily as experiential, there appears to be an increasing fascination for that which is outside the rationalized world. Wertheim (1977) concluded that societies, also the more traditional, have a dominant ordering and alongside this something that can be characterized as social counterpoint. Counterpoint in musical terms indicates the use of two independent melodies which are heard at the same time within the one composition. The human imagination has produced many different sorts of reality expressed in art, culture, leisure and amusement in which the social order is turned up-side-down, ignored and attacked. In western society this has led to the more or less parallel development of the rationality of the Enlightenment (with its emphasis on scientific knowledge, technology and efficiency) and the imagination of the Romantic (with the emphasis on autonomous nature, emotions and the fictive). Modern man appears to move backwards and forwards between both sides of the world.

The Quest for Otherness and the Lifeworld

What is specific to the tourist and the recreation experience is that variations are developed around the world of everyday experience along the parameters we mentioned earlier. For a brief moment people enter another reality, a reality distinct from that of daily life. The individual allows the intensity associated with the tension of consciousness to fall away. He or she 'takes time off,' 'is free.' Or they feed the tension with risk-filled activities that demand the fullest concentration. In both cases this contributes to a special feeling of self. Thus tourism can involve both relaxation and effort. Playing with death can be the basis for certain types of tourist passion. Hunting or running great risks in climbing are forms of behaviour in which the denied relationship with death is made real in a form that is far removed from that of everyday life. During holidays sexuality often acquires another dimension. The holiday romance is a very illustrative example. The hunting season for young men and women opens on the beach or in the disco. In the disco, to the accompaniment of deafening music, one is taken up in ones own body and in an overwhelming feeling of communality. One can experience ones body again on the beach: naked and sensitive under the warmth of the sun. Above all the holiday offers, for a moment, another social world. It seems as if the shopkeepers, the waiters, the people in the street are all taking part in a performance, that is being put on for us, the holiday makers (and not infrequently this is in fact the case). People often want to belong to this world. Francophiles develop a great sympathy for the French baker. What they would most like to do is embrace him and show him that they have been absorbed into his world. Or when the longing for another place overwhelms them, they

buy a second house. What is remarkable is the break with the normal feeling of time that people experience when they go on holiday. A short holiday, during which many things happen or one full of new sensations is experienced as a long period of time and people often return to it in their thoughts. But a lazy holiday of four weeks is quickly over and slips into memory. The change of surroundings puts holiday makers in another spatial context. Sometimes they do little more that what they would normally do at home but even so they are 'out' (as Urry 1992, puts it: 'Home from Home'). Sometimes the difference from the everyday is not very great but it is significant: in old-fashioned tourist spots there is the look-out tower which offers a view of the surroundings that is very different from the usual one.

The way in which the experience of other realities is 'realized' in a particular physical space or social context determines the type of value being sought in that context: strictly oriented to utility; focused on the terms of general experience; living out a story or image; or control and appropriation. In short, the four values we discussed earlier. Even so some degree of nuance is necessary in attributing values to the countryside. A theoretical consideration must be taken into account here which can in principal be applied to every valued determined by tourism and recreation. The journey or search for an unusual reality can be more or less removed from everyday life or be given varying degrees of significance. Cohen (1979) developed a typology of touristic experience which ran from the farthest extreme of superficial amusement to recognizing the existential importance in that which was other than day-to-day reality. In this case he compared existential significance with the notion of the sublime in a place of pilgrimage, where pilgrims sought to communicate with a world that is better than the one they had left behind. In this way the countryside too can assume the significance of a negotiable object, quick and easy to reach, a place of pleasure, somewhere to recover from the stress of everyday life, an object of historical interest both cultural and natural where solidarity, intimacy and a calm pace of life can still be found.

The tourist image of the countryside may be becoming more dominant but is not per se unambiguous and it also displays inconsistencies. The various kinds of significance found in the rural environment are repeatedly being reassembled or linked to each other in new ways (Dietvorst 1994), changing aspects are emphasized and new aspects are constructed. These significances do not simply appear out of the blue. In Schutz' phenomenological theory, different realities provide departure points for a better understanding of the process of changing significance. His reasoning is that people have access to a reservoir of suggestions, memories, determinants of value and significances that have been built up during the course of cultural history. Following philosophers such as Hegel and Husserl, he refers to this as the 'lifeworld.' This lifeworld encompasses all the social and cultural experiences that have been built up over time

and which are related to the reality parameters referred to earlier: both the everyday as well as all experiences and fictions that diverge from it. If the parameters form the skeleton of our awareness of reality, then the life-world in its totality is the fabric that encases this skeleton. The lifeworld thus creates a frame of reference from which people as human beings together experience culture and society as something external to themselves. People adopt an attitude to this and undertake action directed at the external world. In this position the internal existence of a lifeworld is accepted as implicitly present or possible (Schutz 1990, p. 116). The external world is constructed or reconstructed from this position as if this were objective reality. The lifeworld not only forms the background to the modification and adaption that takes place in everyday reality as circumstances change. It also forms the source from which all sorts of realities that differ from those of daily life are derived. Nostalgia, future dreams and other flights away from the here and now are developed from the lifeworld. Thus touristic experiences, within the conditions of a time and space that differs from the everyday, are capable of becoming reality for shorter or longer periods of time.

This source of significance ascription is drawn on to construct 'rural resources' from landscape, traditions, buildings, paths and hedges anything which can be of service to the tourist. This can happen in many different ways: one way is the observation and interpretation made by tourists visiting the countryside, another is that businessmen or government put together a 'tourist product' in which different kinds of significance are explicitly or implicitly offered to the tourist and recreationalist. In this way the countryside, for some, becomes a place of amusement and pleasure, for others a place where they can find peace. For the one it is a place full of interesting villages, farms and the remains of agricultural traditions, for the other somewhere where those qualities missing in city life can be found and enjoyed (Bramwell and Lane 1994; Vandergeest and Dupuis 1996). The countryside can, however, also give a new interpretation to everyday life: as a place that offers a valuable life environment where living is comfortable (Hinrichs 1996).

Practices in the Rural Areas

The changing significance of the countryside and the many physical consequences this involves, including the construction of new facilities, conservation measures and the development of nature, has led to the creation of diversity in rural spaces and the overlapping of these spaces (Cloke and Goodwin 1992; Hoggart *et al.* 1995). Each space corresponds to specific everyday (local inhabitants) and unusual realities (tourists). In this context, Urry (1990) and Rojek (1993) refer to 'plural leisure landscapes' which involve a constant production of scenes and sensations. Often the

specific images of countrylife and the use made of rural space do not correspond with each other or they do at different tempos (Dietvorst and Hetsen 1996). Above all it is the dominance of groups of social actors and their images that turn the countryside into a competitive arena (Hinrichs 1996, p. 261).

In this section we will briefly give a few examples of how situations or social practices in which the differentiation of concrete forms of tourist recreative behaviour are expressed. We will look at the significance the local population attaches to its own rural living space, the background lifeworld and the values of the particular surroundings, and we will examine the way actors give validity to their lifeworld.

Different Styles of Camping on the Farm

A great deal of tourist and recreative behaviour is oriented specifically to the countryside. One way of experiencing the countryside is to stay there for a while and camping is a way of doing this, bringing the individual into contact with the land, smells and so on. There is a variety of different ways one can camp. Tourist recreative behaviour shows both regularity and differentiation. There is a relationship between practice and action and this can be differentiated according to 'styles.' Research carried out a few years ago showed that there are different styles of camping and that within the context of camping in the countryside, a variety of patterns can be identified (Zonneveld 1988). These different styles express different world images and accentuate divergent aspects of the lifeworld.

Styles of holiday making are related to more general patterns: these can be designated 'lifestyle.' Giddens has described lifestyle as routinized practices that are embedded in habits of clothing, eating and consuming, for example, and in the surroundings in which people chose to meet one another (Schuurman 1989; Schuurman and Walsh 1994). Lifestyle, according to him, can be defined as 'a more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces, not only because such practices fulfil utilitarian needs but because they give material form to a particular narrative of self identity' (Giddens 1991, p. 81). Kelly (1983) pointed out the importance of leisure activities such as recreation and tourism that form identity.

According to Bourdieu (1984) what is involved here is primarily the differentiating capacity of taste – in the sense of the competency to judge – that is expressed through lifestyle. Style of behaviour is dependent on resources (money, knowledge, contacts) which individuals learn to deal with from the time they are children. Gradually they become accustomed to reacting to situations in a particular way: this Bourdieu calls 'habitus.' On the one hand Bourdieu, considers regularity in action can be explained by viewing the habitus as a central mechanism. The habitus consists of enduring, learned but 'unconscious observations and value systems'

(dispositions) which in certain areas of activity determine thought, values and ways of doing things. On the other hand, the habitus maintains a dynamic relationship with external circumstances or 'conditions of existence.' It is true that the habitus is formed under the influence of external conditions (social position of parents, family of orientation, resources available). But once formed, the habitus exerts an influence on situations because the habitus is directed by the perception of situations, the choices people make and the ambitions that people try to realize in particular surroundings.

Lifestyle is the making concrete of habitus in behaviour and consumption patterns and this is brought to full expression in certain situations. Lifestyle can change under the influence of changing situations. It is precisely here that the setting of the lifeworld provides elements and possible associations which allow style patterns to be adjusted and renewed.

We know that in general the lowest status groups are underrepresented amongst campers (Zonneveld 1988). The preference for camping is in itself a distinction in the total range of holiday possibilities. If we compare 'ordinary campers' with 'campers on the farm' then the latter is differentiated from the former not so much by structural characteristics such as income, training and profession, but by taste and preference. In a negative sense this is expressed by their rejection of large-scale tourist accommodation, which they perceive as holiday factories, in a positive sense by their preference for what they expect to be an authentic experience of the countryside or the farm and personal contact with the farm family. They imagine that during their stay on the farm they will come in contact with real farmlife such as they picture it in their imagination or as they remember it from their youth. This image appeals to the past, to the pure, the simple. Some people are looking for these qualities because the everyday lifeworld is not authentic and too complex. They believe that if there is one peaceful place left amid the tension of modern day life, this must be the farm campsite.

Our study into the different forms of small-scale camping in the Dutch countryside offers an insight into the different styles of these campers. The behaviour, motives and preferences of those camping on farms can be described along two dimensions: preference for a certain degree of comfort and the degree to which the farm campsite is chosen as a matter of principle. Four styles of campers can be identified (te Kloeze 1990): comfort-oriented farm campers; idealistic farm campers; complex farm campers; chance farm campers.

What are these different types of campers looking for in the countryside? It is theoretically relevant, in the context of this contribution, to ask whether and to what extent we can define these consumption styles in terms of the four values referred to earlier. In so doing we will consider the values associated with the surroundings: both those attributed to the

physical environment (nature, attractive landscape and the farm), and those attributed to the social (contact between the host, hostess and guest). The latter refers to one of the lifestyle fields introduced by Ganzeboom (1983): network and social contact.

The comfort-oriented campers attach much importance to comfortable accommodation and are less concerned with seeking the small-scale, peace and space. They prefer a larger terrain with extensive facilities (although in comparison with standard campsites, relatively simple farm campsites) and they look for contact with their fellow campers. Utility value is the dominant theme for them. Attraction value may also be important, particularly because their awareness of camping possibilities has been created by 'recruiting' folders and enticing images. They are sensitive to the advertising message which promises them rural surroundings and a good and dependable location.

The idealistic farm campers chose this form of camping because it offers a small-scale environment together with peace, space, natural surroundings, personal treatment and contact with farmlife. They find the standard campsite impersonal and are not looking for comfort. 'Question of principle' campers score high as far as experience and the appropriation values are concerned. It is their spot. Nature, the rural idyll, the desired and experienced hospitality, the personal contact with real farm men and women who really want to offer and do offer this (not 'staged authenticity' but 'real'), and to such a degree that they wish to return again and again to this spot; to the host and hostess; back to the land where life is good, back to nature. This is what they are doing it for. People search for these experiences in the Netherlands itself, but new and attractive destinations can also be found in Rumania or Poland, for example. Here in particular the individual has the feeling that he or she can return to a time that is the same now as it was when displayed in the picture books during the first half of this century. It is a passionate search for the smells and colours of the past, literally and figuratively taking a peep into the country kitchen.

The combination of the motives and preferences mentioned here can be found amongst the *complex* campers: comfort is important, consciously choosing this form of camping is equally important. The value of the surroundings as far as use, experience and attraction are concerned play a certain role in the process of deciding to stay on an agrarian campsite. Appropriation is less important.

Finally, for 'chance' campers neither comfort nor a conscious choice for this type of camping is of decisive importance; cheapness is, however. This type of camping is an interesting option for those on benefit or with a minimum income. The attraction value is not unimportant: it fuels the opportunistic choice for this form of camping. Whereas use value and experience value are more relevant for complex campers, the four values

have less explicit significance for chance campers. For them camping as a style is dominant: where and how will depend on price and chance.

Whilst there is no clear difference between those who camp on the farm and campers in general, something can be said about the way in which family life and life phase play a role in the preference for a specific style. Older people are mostly found amongst the 'idealistic' campers and young families amongst the 'comfort oriented.' Ganzeboom (1988) has already pointed out that the notion of life phase is an omission in Bourdieu's approach. It is an important element if we wish to emphasis the dynamic character of habitus and lifestyle: each phase of life has its own limitations and possibilities with an eye to consumption patterns and within this (apparently) also its own image forming mechanism. Campers adapt their camping choice to the conditions prescribed by the phase of family life they find themselves in. Camping styles are, therefore, life-phase specific. An initial preference for small-scale camping is temporarily abandoned when the children become teenagers. Because of the children a four or more star camping is chosen. When the 'empty nest' phase arrives there is a return to earlier preoccupations (Hout, te Kloeze and van der Voet 1993). Preferences that have been internalized by habitus at a younger age can be by-passed for a time in favour of others. As soon as external circumstances permit, preferences learned at an early age are practised again. This illustrates the stable but also the dynamic character of lifestyle (that is, camping style) and habitus.

What is particularly noticeable here is that the differences in country-camping styles corresponds to a certain extent to differences in the 'style' in which farmers[2] offer various camping possibilities. The concept 'style' does not necessarily have to be limited to lifestyle, as a combination of consumer practices (for example, tourists) but can also be used on the supply side as 'farm style' (Long and van der Ploeg 1994). *Professional* campsite farmers run their campsites in a professional and commercial way (good facilities, a large number of camp places, large numbers of campers). They have plans to extend their camping business, for them the commercial and financial motive is decisive, the social aspects of the business less so. Dairy farms and mixed farms are over-represented, as are sites in the attractive touristic provinces of Limburg and Zeeland. The social side of the business is important for the *idealistic* campsite farmer (desire for contact and a friendly atmosphere, a positive attitude to recreation in the countryside). Most farmers of this type have arable or mixed farms. The motives and preferences mentioned above can also be found amongst the *idealistic-professional* campsite farmers. They run their businesses in a professional and commercial way but they do not lose sight of the social aspects. They are mostly found amongst farmers whose farm is their main enterprise and they are concentrated in Zeeland. Finally, the *pragmatic* campsite farmers are less commercial and professional in their approach and the social aspect is certainly not a decisive one. The oppor-

tunity to start a campsite on their farm came by chance (this type of campsite is mostly found amongst livestock farmers and horticultural concerns).

The images that make camping on the farm a tourist experience are very much alive amongst the various 'style groups' into which campers can be divided. These images are also reflected in the supply of campsites offered by farmers. Farmers respond to the demand and in doing so take the running of their farm into consideration. This means that each farmer will react in his or her own way. Some will take up the theme of nostalgia, others will respond to the demand for peace and comfort. However, in making these choices the campsite farmer will also be constrained by the affinity he or she feels for the lifestyle and thus the camping style of the client (te Kloeze 1990).

Thematization and Scene Making

As we have seen earlier, those who supply tourist and recreational facilities in the countryside make use of the images and values in their surroundings, and actively use images that have associations with the consumers' lifeworld. Thus tourism is to an important extent a trade in experiences. The tourist can choose from a wide range of tourist destinations. Price is not decisive for this choice. For Dutch people a weekend in London or Paris is often just as expensive as spending a few days in the southern province Limburg. At least as decisive as the price and the quality of the holiday accommodation is the experience sought. We realized from recent interviews with tourist entrepreneurs in Dutch Limburg and the Voerstreek in Belgium that today they are more preoccupied with the 'attraction value' of the surroundings whereas in the past they were more concerned with the quality of accommodation. The attractiveness and diversity of the physical space and the cultural surroundings now act as a source for the development of touristic product chains (Jansen-Verbeke 1994, p. 39). The landscape, nature and architecture are brought into play in all possible ways in order to meet the demand for diversity. In addition to these consumer demands, entrepreneurs engaged in tourist product development are also confronted by developments within society itself. In the countryside this is mainly reflected in the increasing amount of attention being given to the protection of nature and the landscape. This has made it more difficult for entrepreneurs working in the context of tourism and recreation to introduce changes into the physical and spacial surroundings. They avoid the problem by thematizing the countryside. In doing so space is given a specific significance that is attractive to large groups. Urry (1992, p. 145) described this process as follows:

'There is an increasingly pervasive tendency to divide up Britain spatially. A series of place names have been invented for the tourist. In the north of England there is 'Last of the Summer Wine Country,'

'Emmadale Farm Country,' 'James Herriot Country,' 'Robin Hood Country,' 'Catherine Cookson Country,' 'Bronte Country' and so on.'

A similar sort of development is underway in the Netherlands. VVVs (Tourist Information Offices) and entrepreneurs offer a choice of theme-orientated activities such as castle tours, architecture walks, discovery trips, opulent banquets and drinking festivals in the countryside. There are even companies that specialize in setting out 'theme routes.' The promotion of certain rural areas is conducted in much the same style as that adopted for 'city marketing': with the help of posters, brochures and other forms of advertisement images are created of regions and these are linked to stories about their history or their very special character. In this way entrepreneurs create more associations with the district and in doing so are careful to take into account which specific theme appeals to which tourist target group. In this way rural space is transformed into a multiple tourist-recreative space. In a symbolic way the area is absorbed into a tourist product. This often begins with the laying out of the terrain and the architecture of the bungalow park. The tourist product is linked to the uniqueness of the natural surroundings, the culture and the history of a particular rural area. These theme-orientated activities are based on a mixture of play, education and nostalgia. In accordance with this recipe, each area can be given a touristic significance.

In addition to this thematization of the countryside, there is also the question of scene making. Those who are involved with creating attractions try to organize the countryside in such a way that it corresponds to stereotypical tourist images. Here the emphasis is placed on the quality of the picturesque, the idyllic and that which never changes. (Urry 1992). In presenting the countryside to the tourist an association is made with a specific awareness of time (Vandergeest and DuPuis 1996). The countryside is intentionally presented as a place where time seems to stand still. Tourists are introduced to old crafts and typical regional products. They receive information about the history of the area and excursions are organized that exploit the present day nostalgia for harmony and tradition. Less attractive realities or modern influences on country life are retouched as much as possible or left out altogether.

The tourist is offered these many 'faces' of the countryside through the medium of changing themes and presentations. Entrepreneurs are flexible in the way they exploit the changing demands of tourism and society. This way of presenting the countryside does not correspond to everyone's deepest expectations and fantasies. Our research in Limburg and the Voerstreek in Belgium showed that the idealized images of the countryside created by the tourist entrepreneur had considerable significance for the business of daily life. Those who live there, and especially those with a specific interest in the history of their home area, experience

this thematization as an attack on good taste and on the integrity of their own notions about the identity of their surroundings. Different views about this sort of development, in which the increase in attraction value influences the strengthening of the personalization value shows that the local population, but also tourists themselves, make demands on the surroundings to a certain degree and in doing so use their image of the area as a measure against which to evaluate change, whether good or bad. In this way some members of the local population will derive a certain pride in the interest tourists show for their village or region. Others, however, will try to distance themselves as far as possible from tourism or even agitate against it. In this context tourism is often an important factor in the process of differentiation within local communities.

Local Identity and the Transformation of the Countryside

Earlier we discussed the way in which images of the countryside are formed and how this is part of the tourist-recreational process. Logically the question now arises as to how this relates to the image held by those who live in rural areas. The time when the farmer's activity determined the rhythm of country life and the organization of rural space is past. Newcomers, such as tourists, commuters, owners of second homes and project developers have in their different ways acquired an influence on the organization of country life. (Murdoch and Marsden 1994). The countryside is becoming increasingly transformed into a new type of 'consumption space' for different income groups (see Urry 1992; Marsden *et al.* 1993; Hinrichs 1996). The construction of golf courses, walking or cycle paths and the building of (spa)hotels, theme parks and luxury holiday bungalow parks makes the rural area attractive to the urban dweller who is looking for touristic pleasure or for an attractive living space. This spatial transformation influences the orientations of the indigenous rural population. They no longer have a clear view of their own society and they lose the feeling that they are rooted in it. According to Groot (1989) this loss has far-reaching consequences for the development of local identity. At the same time this is the arena in which large-scale processes manifest themselves and where power relations appear and are given form. Processes such as globalization and cultural homogenization do not mean that there is no longer any desire amongst rural inhabitants to differentiate themselves from the outside world. Processes leading to increases in scale trigger reactions. The consequences of globalization and universalization seem to be that not only tourists but local inhabitants as well begin to look for inspiration in the past (de Haan 1996, p. 17). At the moment we see that there is a revival of old customs and uses and an increasing consciousness of and attention to one's own village or social community. Changes in the countryside which are the result of external forces do not necessarily lead to the destruction of cultural differences. On

the contrary, they result in a new sharpening of differences. The emphasis on one's own culture can be seen as a form of resistance to forces that have intruded upon and taken away part of the authority individuals had over their own lives (see Cohen 1985; Groot 1989; van Ginkel 1995). Thus tourism can seem to be a threat to local communities. Tourism can also play a positive role offering new images and significance (van Ginkel 1995).

The giving of significance refers, for example, to ideas about the development of nature and style of life, living and recreation (Mormont 1990; Marsden *et al.* 1993; Hoggart *et al.* 1995). Because each space corresponds to a specific function (Lefèbvre 1991) such as recreation area, nature reserve or a peaceful spot, there is a considerable chance that new claims to the same space will be seen as a threat. In this battle various conceptions of reality relating to nature and rural concerns are brought to the fore (Marsden and Murdoch 1994). There is a tension today between the struggle for change on the one hand, and the desire for conservation on the other, and it is a struggle that provides plenty of fuel for the various frictions (Shaw and Williams in Bramwell and Lane 1994, p. 19).

The struggle over the use of space is prompted by the struggle for control over the course of events (Mormont 1990). These goals are sought not only for political and economic reasons but are rooted in social and cultural motives (Vandergeest and Dupuis 1996). Broadly speaking it is the personalization value that is most frequently at issue. Murdoch and Marsden (1994) believe that competition has grown in recent years because rural resources have become increasingly integrated in large-scale economic and cultural circuits. The value of land and buildings in many rural areas, especially in areas close to towns, has risen sharply. There are many social and cultural factors responsible for the way prices have been driven up. Murdoch and Marsden illustrate this by referring to the strategies of project developers. By selling and renovating (country)houses or bidding for investments such as holiday apartments, project developers emphasis in various ways the idyllic aspects of the countryside. In doing so they appeal to the taste of the capital-rich middle class (Hinrichs 1996).[3] The new middle class is glad to see country places developed according to its own aesthetic values and in this way a social distinction is introduced between themselves and the indigenous population. At the same time this middle class is assured of a lucrative investment for its economic capital. Encouraged by such transactions on the part of the new middle class, the commodification of the countryside proceeds apace:

'Rurality is as much a product produced for, marketed to and consumed by different class fractions. Rurality as an object for consumption rests on both material instances and symbolic understandings of landscape, tradition and place' (Hinrichs 1996, p. 261).

This quotation from Hinrichs emphasizes the countryside as an object of consumption based on a particular conception of landscape, behaviour and place. Image forming plays a particularly important role in the personalization of rural space. According to Mormont (1990), image forming is the result of divergent networks of actors. Connections in these networks are the result of shared values, and market and political relationships. Social changes result not only in other networks, they also lead to a new representation of the countryside.

The new monster association between tourist and nature management organizations such as the ANWB, the *Nederlandse Spoorwegen* (the Netherlands Railway), the *Vereniging tot behoud van Natuurmonumenten* (Association for the Conservation of Natural Monuments) and the *Wereld Natuurfond* (World Nature Fund), together with their struggle for a 'new' nature, is an example of this. The decreasing importance of agriculture creates space for new and varied images of nature, landscape and village life. Nature organizations present the countryside predominantly as worth protecting from the forces that threaten it. Tourism entrepreneurs present an image of a healthy traditional and authentic countryside. Television programmes and advertising show us an image of the countryside where tradition and strong social integration are just as real today as in the past. In an advertisement for a Limburg-brewed beer, the principal character cycles through an idyllic landscape where farmers harvest the corn together in the old traditional way. This is intended to make us feel that some of the typical features of the countryside are also basic to the production of this beer: these include tradition (farm labourers, use of wooden beer barrels and figures chalked on a board); solidarity (as opposed to the individuality of city life) and health (no haste and pressure).

Conclusion

We have presented a theoretical view in which the social construction of reality has been give a central place. The reality in rural areas is also a social construct both in the context of the everyday lifeworld, and in the world of images that attract tourist and recreationalists. In this process, as we have shown, various 'countrysides come into being' sometimes within one and the same space. The way in which the countryside is relevant to tourists and tourist entrepreneurs, and the consequences this has for the country dwellers can be related to a variety of values: utility value; experience value; attraction value; and personalization value. These values show how the lifeworld is fitted to particular social and physical space that has clearly been dominated and is still sometimes dominated by agricultural use and agricultural interests. From a sketch of practical situations in which this perspective has been employed, it appears that a dynamic process of transformation is taking place in the countryside. Rural

communities and space have both undergone far-reaching changes and are increasingly influenced by processes of economic restructuring and new social composition. These have a very different origin from those associated with the agricultural domain (Cloke and Goodwin 1992).

The chosen theoretical perspective provides a structure for further research into the relationship between these processes of change and recreation and tourism which we have classified as unusual projections of the lifeworld on the surroundings. The theory can be applied further at three levels.

First, the level of the relationship between social, economic and political processes through which the context of the social construction of the countryside changes, especially as far as the countryside and tourist recreational context is concerned. This theory can then be related to various scientific approaches to rural society and global transformations.

Second, the level of the actors involved in this process, including those actors who together give content and form to the realization of lifeworld values in the countryside (tourist groups, associations of entrepreneurs, government organizations, interest groups and societies), and also those actors who come together to fight out claims to rural space or who enter into negotiation with each other. Insight into the social world of the actors and the confrontation between opposing interests form the basis for focused interventions to bring interest into balance and to reconcile them if possible.

Third, the level of substantive not-everyday attribution of significance from the lifeworld to the countryside, the raison d'être of the claims of tourism and recreation to the countryside. This level of analysis should clarify what tourists are looking for in the countryside (space for those seeking peace and quiet; dusty paths for 'real' walkers; the 'true' fishing water, the experience of agricultural nature and so on), and has implications for design and differentiation in the organization and management of space.

This differentiation is an analytical one, an attempt to get close to particular aspects of the process of transformation as a whole. These aspects all play a role within social practice and these relationships deserve research attention. In the introduction we sketched a problem of scientific integration. As Marsden *et al.* (1993, pp. 3–4) observed:

> 'Rural sociologists . . . must always go beyond traditional agrarian concerns which focus on the political and social position of agricultural labour. They must embrace the position and role of rural people, notions of rurality in contemporary society, and the processes and structures through which access to and use of rural resources are constructed. They are quintessentially *social science* questions.'

When the study of rural sociology becomes more systematically concerned with the way recreation and tourism develops in the countryside there will

be another task for scientific integration which can have many practical consequences for the interpretation of and intervention in processes of rural restructuring.

Notes

1 Recreation and tourism are both used as concepts in this chapter. We make a distinction between the two in as much as recreation is seen as a break from the routine of everyday life, that in time, space and significance lies close to the trusted everyday life. Tourism, in our view, is more removed from daily life: people travel farther afield for it, stay overnight and remain for longer periods in a place that cannot be reached during a short break in the daily routine. Recreation and tourism merge into each other and it is, therefore, difficult to make a sharp distinction between them. In some places in the text one of these concepts has been used. This choice is a little arbitrarily and more for reasons of style. We in fact mean both concepts but to be consistent and use both every time is tiring both the writers and the reader.

2 We refer here to the farmers who run camping sites but in fact it is usually the farmers' wives who deal with this side of the business (Oostindie and Peters 1994).

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