

INTRODUCTION



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

—Margaret Mead

On 4 July 2015, during a session of the 39th World Heritage committee¹ held in Bonn (Germany), the addition of the *climats de Bourgogne* to the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) World Heritage list as cultural landscape was unanimously approved. That decision followed the adoption of amendments proposed by Portugal and Vietnam to heed the ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) recommendations to list it as a cultural landscape rather than a site. Following the proposal, it was argued that the *climats de Bourgogne* offered the best possible example of a cultural landscape, not simply from the visual dimension, but also because of the progressive construction of the relationship between the people, the land and the soil. Burgundy, it was maintained, fitted this category better than that of cultural site and there were precedents to classify it as such.² Most of the discussions focused on the protection of the site, especially in relation to both the state party of France and the management plan set out by the Association pour les Climats de Bourgogne. The President of the Association and co-owner of the Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, known as DRC in the world of wine, concluded that ‘the dossier reflects well French wine heritage which now becomes world heritage’.³

The subtle distinction between a cultural landscape and a cultural site was largely lost on the local population and most Burgundians understood the process as a UNESCO heritage stamp, irrespective of the category under which it was listed. ‘This is going to be great for Burgundy!’ exclaimed one of my compatriots, and she was not alone. The announcement became the pretext for a collective Paulée des climats,⁴ a huge picnic

organised on 9 July 2016 in the Château de Meursault by the Association pour la Reconnaissance des Climats de Bourgogne. This celebration was something of a reprise of an older folkloric repertoire of festive sociability and wine tasting, given a modern and more democratic twist and involving the consumption of wine and food in an informal setting, while sitting on the grass. This was followed in the months to come by a series of events, promotional films and publications showcasing the ‘culture’ of the place and the Burgundy story built around the *climats de Bourgogne*, featuring conviviality, vineyards and artisanal production.

The concept of the *climats de Bourgogne* was invented locally in an attempt to renew the terroir ideology while positioning Burgundy wines in the context of an ever more globalised world of wine which has increasingly questioned the hierarchy attached to traditional regions of production. The *climats* are defined as Burgundy’s own version of the terroir, with the term taking on a different sense to that usually associated with soil, exposition and meteorological conditions. According to the dossier, ‘they are particular to Burgundy and designate a parcel of land dedicated to a precisely delimited vineyard, known by that name for hundreds of years, and therefore a precise plot, soil, subsoil, exposure, microclimate, and forming together within a vineyard characteristics that constitute a personality, unique to one terroir and one cru’.⁵ According to this definition, the *climats* are another term for a historically created exceptional mosaic of vineyards with a hierarchy of crus and an international reputation. Superficially then, Burgundy might appear to be simply acquiring recognition for its unchanging landscape, tradition and culture. Yet, for all the power of its rich local identity, folklore and culture which is broadcast to the world, there hides underneath the comforting blanket of this seamless place, untouched by change or conflict, a far more complex reality. Burgundy’s listing as a World Heritage landscape emphasises its international reputation as a traditional and historical site of wine production and opens a new chapter in the production and marketing of its quality, differentiation and authenticity. It is also about readjusting Burgundy and the *grands crus* in response to a changing global market and the shifting kaleidoscope of world wine values.

Burgundy, like other wine producing regions, has frequently experienced profound changes in economic and professional practices. It has also been buffeted by the effects of economic depression as in the 1930s, and by natural calamities, notably the phylloxera crisis of 1880 or more recently by the threat of the esca disease⁶ (fungi). As we shall see, far from being an attempt to secure UNESCO approval for a unique, unchanging physical space and culture, the Burgundian bid is, in reality, the latest example of a response to professional and economic competition and forms part of a

process of constant reinvention. For Burgundy, in the twenty-first century, claiming to be different means redefining some of its most prominent global references such as that of terroir which has been transformed into *climats*, once again linking place to taste by presenting the site of production as an authentic, stable, trustworthy and reliable place. My argument is that place – whether designated as terroir or *climats* – continues to be important, but it has to be regularly articulated or re-articulated to fit into the changing global wine story. I want to argue that ‘Burgundy’ offers a particularly relevant case-study for an in-depth exploration of the ways in which locality is produced not only at the local level where social groups like wine-growers, *négociants*, stakeholders and local wine experts might struggle and want to readjust themselves in their long-term self-narrative, but also at the transnational level by repositioning themselves as ‘different’ and the ‘best’ in the global world of wine. The power of the idea of terroir and its role in the elevation of Burgundy’s winescape to World Heritage status lies in cultural differentiation based on human actions and reason rather than on superior natural endowment. This process is best described as one of self-reflexive imbrication by which individuals and groups imbricate themselves in the global economic world order, re-evaluating their place and their global story. This process is, however, far more differentiated than one assumes.

Yet Burgundy’s application for UNESCO recognition also needs to be read in parallel with that of Champagne, which defined its own bid around the concept of landscape – ‘Champagne Hillside, Houses and Cellars’ – rather than as a cultural site. The Champagne dossier proved to be less polemical than the Burgundian one and clearly demonstrated the powerful resonance of drinking Champagne for the members of the UNESCO delegations. By initially arguing for a different heritage category – that of site – and by seeking to establish a unique position in the global wine hierarchy,⁷ Burgundy launched an ultimately unsuccessful bid to differentiate itself from Champagne. Heritage status is part of a process which aims to transform local places into objects of global interest, bringing local, national and international politics into the arena. Heritage valorisation is not only a fashionable trend, but also a source of social, economic and political power (Bessière 1998: 32). In the new global wine landscape, heritage recognition is therefore a potential trump card to help differentiate Old World wines from their rising New World competitors at a time of increased consumption and the transformation of tastes. As many commentators have pointed out, the worlds of wine have become increasingly complex, accommodating new regions and also different forms of production and marketing, from traditional and modern artisanal production, closely tied to place and vintage, to large-scale industrial production for a

mass market (Banks and Overton 2010). As a result, claiming uniqueness and authenticity in terms of place of origin or provenance remains a matter of great importance.⁸

This powerful construction of place is often underlined by a series of hegemonic discourses about locality, which necessarily have an impact on the wide range of skills that actors deploy when making quality wine as well as the construction of sustainability in a rapidly changing economic context. Wine entrepreneurs in Burgundy do not necessarily seek to diversify and create multiple meanings of authenticity to accommodate, modify and, at times, resist, the effects of globalisation on local culture and economic life.⁹ They seek to engage, take control and master global forces by consolidating, reinforcing and perpetuating the story of their origins and authenticity, thus creating a differentiated engagement from other producers at the local level. The heritagisation of a site is far from a collective and homogeneous process and we should not forget that it can often benefit some while alienating others. This is this story that we wish to tell. Interestingly enough, as a result of the broader heritage process, place becomes something else, thereby losing its character and its 'authentic' nature.

Visiting Beaune – widely recognised as the capital of Burgundian viticulture – in the summer of 2015, and staying in a local hotel rather than with my family, I was struck by how the town had changed. The majority of the local independent retailers devoted to clothes, food, jewellery and digital technology had disappeared, giving way to wine shops, luxurious gastronomic and artistic temples, restaurants and four-star boutique hotels. Even the Couvent des Cordeliers, which once belonged to the Patriarche wine merchants and was devoted to mass consumption and tourism, has now become the seat of a select, private wine club. Opposite the Couvent, another historic building, once a religious house, is now devoted to displays of contemporary art of an iconic and frequently tacky kind, while a wine tasting is orchestrated in a post-modern way.¹⁰ The changes which have affected the sleepy town of Beaune over the last decade have accelerated the process of heritagisation and by the same token have contributed to the fossilisation of the site. There is a strong sense of pastiche and commercialism which contrasts with the traditional values through which Burgundy defined itself as a convivial and hospitable space.

These traditional collective values, which were at the core of the Burgundian experience, are rapidly being eroded by the intense economic transformation of the place. As one of the Dutch importers I met during my summer trip said: 'It is impossible to buy anything here, they have nothing to sell, I have to go South where good quality wines are still affordable'. Burgundy now faces the challenge of being, somewhat paradoxically,

a public space, the heritage of humanity, and an economically inaccessible luxury product. By focusing on the place, the local elite can present Burgundy as if it were accessible to all, part of the world's patrimony, rather conveniently forgetting that only a tiny minority will ever purchase a bottle of Romanée-Conti. The Burgundy story therefore offers a fascinating insight into some of the fractures in our modern society and the constant battle between the different logics confronting human beings in a specific location. But it is also an example of a crafted and enduring construction of place, with every piece assembled in a seamless puzzle through historical junctures and elitist enterprise. This book is the story of that complex assemblage, viewed not only through a local prism, but also via its deployment on a global scale.

Burgundy as a Long-term Anthropology at Home

The Burgundy region has been famous for its high-quality wines for nearly '2000 years' and superficially it appears stable and unchanging, a region arrogantly proclaiming to be a 'terroir béni des Dieux' ('soil blessed by God') in a 1990s regional publicity campaign. When I started a doctoral thesis three decades ago on Burgundian viticulture under the direction of Isac Chiva, one of the founders of French rural anthropology, it was expected that a traditional ethnographic research project would focus on a single defined bounded site, clearly anthropologically conceptualised and with a strong emphasis on techniques and material culture. The model framework for the researcher was the administrative unit of the region, in my case the *département* of the Côte d'Or and the AOC (*Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée*) area as they together represented the ideal institutional, socio-economic and political contexts. In rural France, there is a persistence of regional forms of collective identification (Lem 1999) and wine regions are particularly noted for this. As a young ethnographer at the time, my topic – the wine growers of the Côte d'Or – was, however, a risky choice in the sense that the study of wine elites was largely under-represented in the discipline of anthropology at home, but it seemed logical and unproblematic given the significance of wine growers in the traditional field of peasant studies.¹¹ Most of my training had been in African anthropology with Claude Rivière and Georges Balandier, and the study of rural Europe appeared to me less attractive than the African rituals analysed in class. Yet it was to become my prime subject of analysis over the next twenty-five years. As one of the local priests in Puligny-Montrachet informed me in the 1990s when I told him I was going to study their local festival, the Saint-Vincent Tournante:¹² 'We are all savages here as well'.

The difficulties associated with the study of a wealthy and secretive group of traditionalist wine growers meant that only those struggling to integrate or achieve recognition in the local professional sphere opened their doors to the long-term scrutiny of a female anthropologist. Progressing into the 'thick description' of the diverse deployments of what it meant to be a *grand cru* producer in this area, it quickly became obvious to me that a strict focus on wine production would only be one side of the story. Already the collective mentality of the viticultural profession was problematised ethnographically by the absence of a sense of collectiveness, and by a certain reticence when it came to talking about collective identity, unless it was the Burgundian regional one which is still a powerful trope in local, national and international discourses. The ethnography of the local wine festival of Saint-Vincent and of the main professional associations completed the investigation by providing a new dimension to the study of the global wine hierarchy and its deployment at the local level. Over the course of the last twenty-five years, the nature of the ethnographic encounter has changed and while my PhD was the result of more than ten years of fieldwork, my more recent ethnographic observations have been spread out across the late 1990s and 2000s, ending with my contribution to the scientific committee organised by the Association pour la Reconnaissance des Climats de Bourgogne. In the course of more than twenty-five years, I have published widely on the local wine industry, made a film on one of their emblematic wine festivals, the Saint-Vincent Tournante, organised several exhibitions in the local wine museum and, above all in the eyes of my interviewees, have the advantage of 'being local'.

My more recent work in the region goes back to the launching of Burgundy's bid for UNESCO status in 2008 when I was contacted by the Association pour la Reconnaissance des Climats de Bourgogne to act as the 'anthropological/sociological expert' on its scientific committee. As a result of this invitation, I witnessed part of the process of putting together a 'convincing and solid' application to UNESCO. In this context, the application provided me with a useful timeline to revisit some of my previous ideas and to conduct a different kind of anthropological investigation in the context of a more globally defined industry. Since 2008, I have returned to do fieldwork and I have taken every opportunity to revisit the sites of my original research with a different set of questions. I have expanded the number of informers, selecting them carefully for their more critical view of the UNESCO application.

I have to emphasise that working on this very traditional and often secretive social group of wine producers was not helped by the social configuration of the wine industry, especially the hegemonic position of wine merchants and elites who are highly powerful actors who want to

remain in charge of the Burgundian global story. In this context, the political economy of the place has remained a challenge in methodological and ethical terms. More recently, I added a transnational dimension to my analysis by conducting two weeks of fieldwork in New Zealand in the context of an invitation by the Central Otago Wine Association to contribute to the 2013 Pinot Noir festival in Wellington. This contrasted terrain has revealed some powerful and differentiated examples of the construction of place and has helped me to situate my analysis in a more comparative perspective. A study of wine making in both Burgundy and New Zealand raises questions about the fate of the local environment and how individuals engage with it. The results of their labours depend on the level of engagement and commitment rather than on the arbitrary nature of the location. Yet location provides the framework through which the story and stories unfold. As the French historian Roger Dion¹³ reminded us in the 1950s, never mind the location, the main issue is who is going to buy your wines.

In the case of the wines of Burgundy and the Côte d'Or, which have been the main focus of my ethnographic investigation, broader social and historical processes have constantly transformed the local and social configuration. One of the major changes affecting the community has been the rise of internet technology and the new opportunities for producers to tell their stories. It is only recently that digital communication has come to play an important role for the profession and that films, images, interviews and writings have started to showcase Burgundy and its *climats* in a more prominent fashion. This virtual development of the field of wine culture has played an important role in my research as it has enabled me to follow remotely through Facebook and other media some of the discourses, debates and recent shifts surrounding people, ideas and products. This digital *mise en scène* of wine growers by wine growers represents a major shift in the way in which individual stories are told, which has repercussions for the global world of wine with its paradoxical values, its constant process of imbrication cascading from the local to the national to the transnational and back and forth. The status of the wine grower today has become a feature of our modernity. Some of my long-term informers have also become more concerned about my own social status as a professor, and as the public image of Burgundy came to be more visibly articulated and was often in the national news, they found ways of not responding to my questions. Yet the majority of my longstanding informers have enjoyed the ethnographic experience, using it often in a self-reflexive way and have become close friends over long periods of time. The social trajectory of most of my informers¹⁴ has been upwards and there are only a few cases where personal misfortunes have interfered with their livelihood. What is striking about the long-term

encounters is their more self-reflexive engagement towards the world of wine and the increasing range of initiatives and positionings which have resulted. I have been able to follow closely the group of producers I first met in the 1990s and I have seen them become parents and take ownership of their domains (wine estates). Most of them now claim to be anxious to engage further with their own understanding of the wine they produce. For many, it is an ongoing process, defined by their constant reflections about their own positioning in the world. 'I make the wine I want to make' has become a major trope in the discourse of local producers.

One of the principal transformations of individual and social relationships has been in relation to the local village or community. At one time, *vignerons* defined themselves totally within the village context and as part of a professional group. Now they have a much more outwardly focused regard, not only across Burgundy and other French wine regions, but also internationally. Thus, the concept of culture, anthropologically speaking, has become a loose notion which requires a more ethnographically rooted approach in order to identify changes in core values, shifts in discourses and new positioning in the hegemonic national and global tapestry of politics. As part of the process of creating and empowering groups, the role of the individual has become the primary motor of change and our analysis requires a more holistic view of the forces at stake. Following the impact of globalisation necessitates the unpacking of the story in different locales and settings, while keeping the context in perspective and understanding how diverse and complex the responses are to global forces. The power of ethnographic location is that it provides a window onto the seamless and fluid nature of the social phenomenon, which enables the cutting out of the social reality that is magnified and reiterated through repetitive observation and emphasis on individuals and actors as part of the process. Mattei Candea (2007) speaks of the arbitrary nature of the location and the strengths of the multi-imaginary and multi-sited anthropological approach. For Candea, the bounded fieldsite rethought of as the arbitrary location becomes an explicitly 'partial' and incomplete window onto social complexity. The *climats de Bourgogne* offer just such a window.

The Winners of Globalisation or the Game of Global Imbrications

This book is about wine growers in Burgundy over more than two decades as they have adapted to the forces of globalisation and managed change while continuously weaving the terroir story and imbricating themselves in the seamless unfolding of modernity. This is a story which encapsulates

both winners and losers, but which emerges as a powerful trope of an alternative way of thinking about modernity and engaging with it. Moreover, this is about the politics of identity in the present age of food and drinks globalisation. We cannot all become Burgundians, but we might want to learn a few lessons. In the study of what I define as the *grands crus* producers, the anthropological focus had to be multi-sited, multifocal, multi-layered and oscillating between individuals, permanent groups or those who are more ephemeral in nature, as well as the more pragmatic calendar of events in which the ‘community’ comes together. By ‘community’, I am referring to the fluctuating group of wine producers who attend specific events because they feel engaged or concerned by the agenda of the day. In 2017, it would be rather naïve to assume that the concept of wine growers refers uniquely to the definition of a bounded and clearly delineated social group and that locality, in this case Burgundy, confers collective meanings and values on their sense of belonging. They surely have in common specific views over ‘being part of the Burgundy story’, but they also effectively find individual ways of defining themselves and their families within this location. *Grands crus* producers characterise the arbitrary nature of the window I open, but it is by following both producers and products into their wider connections and circulations that I see them becoming ethnographically meaningful.

References to ‘national’, ‘culture’, ‘artisanship’, ‘localities’, ‘place’ are all linguistic examples of the arbitrary epistemological position that anthropologists often unconsciously favoured when working on specific professional groups such as farmers, wine growers or cheese producers. The methodological hurdle posed by the study of these highly regarded and protected crafts still challenges the observer. Even multi-sited ethnography leaves the anthropologist hungry for a better understanding of the complexities of scaling. It is, however, more useful to read places in a transnational and global perspective as agencies that mediate and shape, but are also being shaped and mediated in unintended ways by developments in local, national and transnational arenas. This assemblage (Ong and Collier 2005), friction (Tsing 2005), or what I prefer to describe as reflexive imbrication, is the key to understanding how models are transculturally mediated, translated or contested and reinterpreted by specific groups. Terrio (2000) noted in the case of the *chocolatiers* in France that they struggled with adaptation, while other industries such as viticulture flourished in the face of crisis. *Grands crus* producers have, in general, a positive and ambitious economic story to tell, but the social implications of this success might have adverse effects in the long term, and the terroir story has provided a point of anchorage and stability in a fast changing environment. Anthropology, with its intimate knowledge of alternative

conceptual universes and local worlds, offers one of the few remaining critical vantage points from which to challenge the generalising claims of the global hierarchy of value (Herzfeld 2004: 4).

Drawing on more than twenty years of fieldwork carried out not only in Burgundy, but also in London, Paris and New Zealand, with some of the world's most famous wine producers, wine experts and wine lovers, this book seeks to demystify terroir and to describe for the first time the effects of the growing challenge from a generation eager to question the very essence of quality and to become more ecologically minded. The book tells the story of the often hidden debate over the issue of quality which is perceived as being hindered by the hegemony of the AOC legal system. It provides a unique long-term ethnographic analysis of what lies behind terroir in Burgundy and thus raises important questions about the future of quality wine in a global era and about terroir as a global ideology. AOC distinctions were based on complex factors that often had little to do with 'taste', quality or the market. The formalisation of these distinctions in the long process of creating AOC laws has been critical, however, in determining how communities of producers interacted and continue to interact with the commercial world (Guy 2003).

Key Anthropological Themes

The aim of this study is to provide an anthropological perspective on international debates about the discursive power of terroir, the relationship of this discourse to Burgundy as a community and landscape, the social and cultural constructions of global capitalism, and the leverage of mechanisms such as World Heritage status to enshrine commodity value for a region and a nation. Unlike other disciplines, anthropology focuses on people's representations and concerns the comparative study of human societies and cultures and their development. It also seeks to unpack social reality in all its complexity and in a long-term perspective. Anthropology is, after all, a science of critique and not a contributor to myth-making.

Anthropology, like other human and social sciences, has long demonstrated an interest in the study of drinking and alcohol, but wine was often studied alongside other beverages such as tea, coffee, rum and brandy and was never given top billing. The volume *Drinking Cultures, Alcohol and Identity*, published in 2005 by the anthropologist, Thomas Wilson, features only two chapters (out of twelve) devoted to wine, while the majority of the others deal with alcohol consumption across cultures. Until recently, anthropological research on wine was generally scant and wine as an object of enquiry was, first and foremost, located in a specific national and cultural

context which was studied like other alcoholic drinks for its impact on identity and society. The specificity of the anthropological perspective was therefore to examine the consumption of alcohol as a way of life, one element of a given culture (Douglas 1987), rather than simply focusing on the site of its production. From Ireland to Hong Kong, Mexico to Germany, alcohol was seen as playing a key role in a wide range of functions: religious, familial, social and even political. Consumption within the context of these wider cultural practices revealed how class, ethnicity and nationalism were all expressed through this very popular commodity (Wilson 2005). It could be argued that wine serves as a pretext for a scrutiny of other traditional areas of anthropological investigation such as rituals, politics and kinship which were seen as going through major transformations and were therefore worth studying. The production and consumption of alcohol is an economic activity of consequence and its ceremonials and rituals reflect both real and imagined worlds (Douglas 1987).

It is only recently that wine has acquired an independent status in anthropological literature, and the publication in 2013 of *Wine and Culture: Vineyard to Glass* edited by Rachel Black and Robert C. Ulin was something of a milestone. For both anthropologists, the study of wine breaks new ground, but it is also linked to the critical issues at the forefront of the social sciences and humanities, especially in relation to modernity and complexity. In their introduction to *Wine and Culture*, Black and Ulin invoke the academic tradition of focusing on a single and bounded entity, with food and drink often being seen as part of the binding of social structures or other traditional forms rather than being the prime object of analysis. Yet wine also carried the shadow of the intoxicating and disordering nature of alcohol drinking cultures. In the USA, the ambiguous historical status of wine made it slow to be acknowledged as part of food studies, while, in France, the increasing mythologisation and politicisation of wine made it an object almost impossible to engage with unless to claim its unique quality. Such attitudes are still very present in contemporary analysis of wine in France and at times French historians, sociologists and geographers teeter on the edge of propaganda, arguing for the unique position of the French in relation to wine drinking culture. More recently, Chantal Crenn (2013) suggests that the anthropology of wine in France has generally been obscured by the emergence of rural France as a research field at the end of the 1980s as part of the national development of the discipline in the context of decolonisation. Anthropologists have been focusing on material culture, rituals and traditions (Chaudat 2012).

What is interesting in these transatlantic parallels is the fact that the majority of American anthropologists decided at the beginning of the twenty-first century to focus on European fieldsites, including France,

Italy and Bulgaria, rather than looking at their own vineyards, which are also the result of a long and complex historical and migratory transfer of resources, people and knowledge. French anthropologists, on the other hand, myself included, often focused on their own locality, practicing what was coined as 'anthropology at home' in the 1980s and 1990s without considering its transnational dimensions. These parallel conversations have been separated by the language barrier, but also by the impossibility of bridging two anthropological traditions rooted historically in different definitions of culture. What they have in common is the terroir perspective which has generated research on both sides of the Atlantic and has also, to some extent, provided a bridge between wine and food studies, legitimising the former. Several publications have been devoted to terroir and either to its translation from French into other contexts or its deployment in anthropological terms. The work of geographers, especially from New Zealand and Australia, has played a major role in allowing terroir to be analysed as a more transdisciplinary object.

Another major obstacle to the critical development of the anthropology of wine in Europe as an object of enquiry lies with the political, national and patriotic frameworks in which wine was defined, making it a difficult object to unpack and a very unpopular one to attack. In the French context, the new status given in 2014 to wine as a cultural heritage good has given a new protectionist impetus to its construction as a national emblem of identity. At the regional level, it is easy to find examples of the development of the propaganda embracing wine as a distinctive element of social life associated, paradoxically, with well-being in a global neo-capitalist society. This construction has implications for the ways in which wine is studied and how it is written about. Yet the growing importance of wine as a cultural product is beyond doubt and its study, as an object sensitive to the social structures in which it is made and consumed, can deepen our understanding of the contemporary world.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that wine does not necessarily appeal as an object of study to anthropologists because other than in exceptional cases such as the perpetual wines of Sicily, it does not have a kind of 'exotic' flavour or serious status. After informing my fellow anthropologists about what I am studying, I am often told cynically 'It must be hard to do fieldwork'. The anthropology of wine is traditionally associated with European fieldwork and would inscribe itself as part of what I would describe provocatively as 'soft anthropology', using the image of the ethnographer quenching his/her thirst after visiting one producer before lunching with other fellow wine drinkers. In the hierarchy of knowledge, it remains a marginalised area of research and it could be argued that interdisciplinarity has provided the anthropologist with a more than welcome home and an

opportunity to gain more legitimacy. At least this has been my experience over the last two or three decades.

Amongst the key themes providing a framework for the development of my argument, globalisation, terroir and heritage deserve a brief introduction as they are at the core of this volume. Globalisation has often been described by anthropologists in terms of a clash of cultures or as the result of the external forces created by sovereign rule, market rationality and regimes of citizenship which have had a profound impact on communities, nation states and social life. Most of the anthropological literature refers to the intensification of global interconnectedness, suggesting 'a world full of movement and mixture, contacts and linkages, and persistent cultural interaction and exchange' (Inda and Rosaldo 2002: 2). Recent research has sought to capture globalisation in a more refined fashion using 'assemblages' (Ong and Collier 2005) or 'friction' (Tsing 2005) as metaphors to conceptualise the ways in which global forms have been articulated in specific contexts. Anthropological contributions have therefore helped to define more complex material, collective and discursive relationships to modernity. Yet they have largely focused on the negative impact of globalisation, presenting either a rather gloomy picture of the forces at stake and their devastating consequences for local cultures or a naïve and romantic analysis of resistance to it. I aim to place at the heart of my analysis the long-term effects that globalisation has on people, but more specifically, to understand how communities change and shape their worlds.

Terroir, a slippery concept as I will demonstrate, has long been a staple of French discourse and its more recent resonance on a global scale is testament to its power and capacity for myth making (Parker 2015). Yet very little is known of its transnational dimension (Black and Ulin 2013). The concept originated in the codification of the AOC in the Burgundy wine region in France as recently as the early twentieth century yet in the early twenty-first century has come to be considered as a natural law of the quality of wine and some other consumer products. Using my interviews and fieldwork observations since 2008, I have tried to map individual discourses on terroir, analysing it as a social construction of place in the face of global challenges. My argument is that terroir, and more recently *climats*, are the result of a single narrative that is shaped both within the region and around the globe. French wine makers are shown in dialogue with a global wine world that is being buffeted and shaped as much by markets as by climate change.

Finally, the concept of food and wine heritage has recently been recast: scholars have embraced an innovative and interdisciplinary approach to food and have engaged in a productive debate with the concept of food heritage, recasting food 'as a vehicle to express and shape interactions

between humans' (Pottier 1996: 303). In their editorial introduction to the special issue of *Aofood*, Jacinthe Bessièrè and Laurence Tibère argue that the promotion of food heritage in contemporary France appears as a 'societal issue', a space for mobilising projects which contributes to the construction of cultural identities and to the dynamics of territorial development against the landscape of a global economic crisis (Bessièrè and Tibère 2011). This way of thinking and of using heritage seems unsurprising from a French perspective, the self-appointed land of food and wine, where the concept of culinary heritage was first coined and instrumentalised in the 1980s (Demossier 2000). Yet the concept of food heritage has now spread further in anthropological circles as part of the development of both food and heritage studies at a global level. This fascinating cross-fertilisation of two traditionally separate fields of research opens the doors to new areas of enquiry. By locating the anthropology of food heritage at the crossroads of the study of society, food production and consumption, as well as the politics of scale, new sets of questions have come to the fore which focus on contested anthropological concepts such as nostalgia, authenticity, territorial identities, tradition, political economy and innovation. I am interested in the contextual specificity of political processes and the mechanisms through which localities are differentially incorporated into larger scales of social, economic and political life. But this book is also about how specific localities incorporate broader processes and values into their global story in order to maintain the permanence of the fit between place, people and culture. All these constitute the bedrock of our modern, complex and fluid societies, against which individuals and groups seek to identify, negotiate and root themselves in the face of major economic upheavals. The study of wine heritage is thus linked to new theoretical perspectives which problematise heritage as 'essentially a political idea' (Schofield et al. 2008: 36).

Terroir From Local to Transnational

The organisation of the book follows the analysis of several ethnographic windows which have been carefully selected and are based upon a long-term investigation into the world of wine, allowing the development of a broader argument about place, quality, taste, terroir and the global world of wine. For centuries, Burgundy has been widely recognised as the home of the world's finest wines and as the birthplace of a model of terroir connecting taste to place. That concept was given legal form during the 1930s when the French state developed the system of AOC, emphasising the relationship between a given place, its micro-climatic characteristics and the local culture incarnated by wine growers and their traditional techniques.

The story of terroir seemed to guarantee the taste of place and to justify the high price of purchase for this closed gustatory experience. The terroir model has proved incredibly attractive and has rapidly expanded to the European and, more recently, global level and now provides a counter-story to that of globalisation, standardisation and industrialisation by challenging the vast array of anonymous, mass produced foods and beverages available to the consumer (Demossier 2010). Terroir has become a global phenomenon, encompassing everything from Portuguese wines to Fontina D'Aosta cheese. All manners of foodstuffs, artisanal products or techniques have sought to gild themselves with the blazon of terroir.

Yet as the Burgundian model of terroir has gone global, its very legitimacy has been challenged amongst the vineyards where it first took root. To understand the phenomenal success of terroir and why its whole ideology is now called into doubt, it is necessary to ask some fundamental questions: Why are the great vineyards of France located where they are? Why does one site produce a superior wine, while an adjacent plot that looks the same yields a lesser one? What is the taste of terroir? These are the questions being asked by the new generation of young wine growers who perceive terroir to be the fossilised and hegemonic system of the AOC which impedes any opportunity for innovation. Moreover, changes in consumer tastes are increasingly challenging traditional definitions of terroir and are questioning the work of producers (Teil 2012). The attempts of this new generation of wine growers to open a debate about what a good quality wine means has been blocked by the powerful and institutionalised model of terroir and its partisans, and the profound implications of the conflict are a major theme of this study.

Chapter 1 will examine the different meanings of place and terroir in Burgundy. The first part will engage with the geographical representation of Burgundy and the complexity of its patchwork of soils/vineyards through the four different denominations of origin it produces: *Grands crus*, *Premiers crus*, *villages* and regional denominations. It will discuss the historical and social construction of terroir and will analyse the ways in which specific groups have sought to empower themselves periodically by imposing new definitions of quality in a bid to combat fraud and cope with economic crisis and the deregulation of the worldwide wine market. The role of the connection between history and place will be critically assessed and contextualised in relation to the current debate on quality. Specific emphasis will be placed on the emergence and consolidation in social terms of various groups, from wine growers to wine merchants, who contribute to the emergence of a quality norm. Burgundian wine growers, with their internal struggles and their subordinate positioning within the commercial sphere, will be discussed in the light of their challenging

relationship to the land. The chapter will then focus on the issue of ownership of 'place' and its continuity within the same family lineages. The social construction of place as an artefact of human imaginings and activities will be analysed through the transmission of a technical and cultural heritage within these families. It will discuss how each generation reinvents a special relationship to place, but also struggles to redefine its own contribution to the wine story. Finally, it will explore the complex social grammar of the landscape presented at the beginning and how this reading is transmitted from one generation to the next through a differentiated, but intimate, relationship to place and its diversity of products.

Chapter 2 focuses on the wine grower. Throughout the terroir debate, special emphasis has been placed either on soil and nature or on culture which have both been presented as uncontested and God given factors in the definition of quality wines at different historical periods. However, central to the definition of the product is the constant negotiation between the soil, climatic conditions and the work and knowledge of the wine grower. This chapter will focus on the discussion central to the issue of quality, namely the work of wine growers and their attempts to control nature and produce excellence in a context of climatic changes. It will engage with the growing social visibility of the group and its differentiated and hierarchical social composition. Issues of knowledge, cultural and social capital and engagement are thus central to the production of excellence, as are good marketing skills. This highly individualised and differentiated Burgundian wine landscape provides a range of economic niches which enable good and even bad producers to achieve distinction and excellence. However, only a small group of wine elites has achieved real economic success and has moved the goalposts of quality by redefining quality and terroir through more ecologically friendly practices and discourses. Interestingly, a few wine growers at the margins of Burgundian viticulture have joined them in promoting ecological methods in their production. This chapter will explore the ways in which each producer engages with the concept of quality through the work invested in his/her plots. Case-studies and the individual stories of wine growers will argue for a differentiated type of engagement in relation to terroir and the nature of the knowledge displayed in viticulture. Moreover, it is through the accumulation of experience and knowledge that producers are able to redefine their competence and *savoir-faire*. The chapter will also engage with the recent debate on quality and the attempt of some wine growers to produce more ecologically defined products and to defend quality wine in a more reflexive fashion. A discussion on bio-dynamic and biological wines will be included.

In Chapter 3, we explore the connection between taste and place which has been promoted as a characteristic of the Burgundian wine industry

for at least eight centuries. Very early on, the history of Burgundy was associated with that of the *courtiers-gourmets* (wine brokers), a professional group founded in 1375 which played a key role in defining quality norms. They progressively established themselves as intermediaries, ensuring the quality, taste and authenticity of their products and facilitating the economic relationship between villages as places of production and towns such as Beaune and Dijon as centres of commercialisation. This chapter will explore the long historical association between a place and a taste and will analyse the role of intermediaries in constructing local reputations. It will also engage with the historical, social and political construction of taste by wine experts and their imposition of gustatory norms on the world of production and consumption.

The AOC system helped to consolidate the mythical image of an ahistorical terroir producing a wine with a taste unchanged since time immemorial. This view dominated the French wine industry until very recently, and has also been a major factor in the creation of an image of the wine grower as the embodiment of traditional agrarian values and as a guarantor of quality. Yet it is based upon a myth and despite its venerable history, the association between taste and place only became formalised very recently, in the 1990s, through the role of wine writers, experts and guides who helped to impose a gustatory reading and mapping of each AOC. The notion of the taste of place will be discussed in the light of this specialised wine literature and the role of experts by scrutinising its construction as a landmark in international and global tastes. For wine growers, the concept of a taste belonging to a specific plot is a new one as the emphasis was traditionally placed on the natural and geological characteristics of the vineyard rather than on the qualities of the final product. Taste was not articulated in a sophisticated way at the time because there was no normative discourse on taste in the wine market. Taste and its definition was first and foremost the prerogative of the market.

Chapter 4, entitled Winescape, will explore the role of regional wine culture in constructing Burgundy's reputation as the historical birthplace of quality wine. The first section will explore the historical dimension of this literature, which has always been transnational in scope and influenced by the role of specific groups that have argued for the exceptionality of place in viticultural terms. Several examples will be analysed in detail to demonstrate the role of the Burgundy story through its circulation among European and global elites. Wine in Burgundy is often discussed in the plural, defined as a wide and diverse range of precise geographic plots, some of them no larger than a small garden, but always clearly identified and named. The evocative power of Romanée Saint Vivant, Corton and Puligny-Montrachet, to name just a few, situates the drinker in an

international language and culture shared by educated, wealthy, discerning and, until recently, predominantly westernised elites. Like Bordeaux wines, Burgundian *grands crus* reinforce ideas about lifestyle and class in a culturally differentiated world. In the Côte d'Or that experience takes on a new dimension. The international resonance of the *grands crus* story not only appeals to consumers seeking distinction in the Bourdieusian sense, but has also become emblematic in the world of wine production. The *grands crus* story acts as a form of cultural marker for the world wine industry, and is perpetuated, disseminated and transmitted through the various networks established between agents and brokers. The *grands crus* story is not only about the French classification system based on geographic origin rather than grape variety, as in the New World, but it is also about how the reading of these classifications operates in transnational contexts, through different drinking cultures. The chapter will discuss these categorisations and how they operate at a global level through culture. The second part of this chapter will discuss the contemporary literary construction of the product through a wide range of guides and publications focusing on specific *grands crus*, from the Guide Hachette to Robert Parker, which will serve as the basis for a discussion of quality and excellence and will enable us to understand the construction of imaginary worlds of taste.

Chapter 5, 'Beyond Terroir', will engage with the study of the wine growing elites who through diverse strategies have attempted to redefine their products by placing emphasis on the soil or more ecologically and environmentally friendly production methods in order to engage with their own consumers. What is emphasised is minimum human and technological intervention and an appreciation of nature/terroir as mediated through the wine which contrasts with the global and uniform technical approach promoted by oenologists and mass produced New World wines. Nature is constructed as the paragon of quality to contrast with the technical domestication which dominated wine production for much of the post-war period and was associated with the intensive use of pesticides and other chemicals. The example given by this group of wine elites, recognised as producers of excellence, provides a fascinating insight into the relationship between nature and man in the context of resilience – defined as the ways in which Burgundian communities have coped with the location of these vineyards and the difficulties encountered when growing wine at its climatic limits. This chapter will focus on the emergence of the discourse of 'Nature' since the end of the 1990s to discuss the power relationships at stake at the local and international level. It will place the debate on wine as a natural product closed to its place of production in the long historical traditions of the nature/science opposition and will discuss its modern form in contemporary wine discourse. Case-studies will be included to

demonstrate how the discourse of nature or the natural resonates with new markets of wealthy consumers looking for authenticity and distinction through wine consumption. At the same time, the chapter will examine how the hegemony of terroir is debated at the local level, arguing that there is a tendency to use terroir as a local governance tool leading to homogeneity and rootedness, while supplying a means for individuals in localities to respond to globalisation. This new chapter in the construction of terroir could be read as a disjuncture relative to the traditional *grands crus* story, but it is also about different strategies coalescing to respond to greater differentiation in parallel with the consolidation of the terroir and the *grands crus* story worldwide. As one of my informants explained: 'If you are working very hard and you like your product and it sells, the AOC system becomes meaningless'.

Chapter 6 will examine how the terroir story has become a transnational marketing tool which is interpreted in a wide range of ways by a diversity of consumers and producers. Taking the example of the Japanese manga *The Drops of God*⁵ and the Pinot Noirs producers in New Zealand as two different ethnographic vignettes, an investigation of terroir will enable us to investigate the multiple interpretations and imaginings associated with the taste of place and the deployment of terroir as a strategic European tool. The chapter will discuss these two examples as a means of understanding professional debates around the concept of quality and of opening new social avenues to wine consumption through its possible democratisation. The *grands crus* story offers a new insight into the social construction of quality at the local level and its circulation as an iconic discourse of the negotiated relationship between culture and nature. Through the concept of terroir and its globalisation, the *grands crus* model offers a classic example of a geographically and historically stable site and a fluctuating, but strongly culturally defined, group of producers working in a particular ecological milieu. Its success, so often praised internationally by wine lovers, experts and producers, could be defined as an archetypal transnational investment terrain and a successful worldwide cultural story. Its long-established reputation as a significant place producing the best wines in the world relies on the connections made between different imaginative discourses and experiences which promote place, producers and consumers in a quasi-religious encounter. The taste of place here takes on its full meaning, but is passed on in different ways from the knowledge about the place to the taste of a particular wine.

Chapter 7, translating terroir between Burgundy and New Zealand, between the old original model of European viticulture and the emerging Pinot Noir producing regions of New Zealand, offers a powerful example of the global process of culture and its flow. It is clear that the two regions

are radically different. The New Zealand experience seems to have had little in common with that of Burgundy, which could be defined as almost hermetically sealed in its own materiality, temporality and self-experience. Central Otago, on the other hand, could be seen as open, soaking up external influences. Yet what both areas have in common is the global wine industry defined by capitalism as well as consumers cultivating 'differential distinction'. In this global context they started from different historical positions which explains where they are now in the pursuit for excellence. In this competition, the position they have respectively reached determines to some extent their attitude towards each other. For the majority of Burgundian wine producers, Burgundy has nothing to learn from Otago, while Otago has everything to gain from a cultural exchange. This is therefore an unequal relationship in the context of the global cultural economy. Globalisation therefore appears as both a homogeneous and heterogeneous process in which the notion of scale plays a major role. In Burgundy, the AOC system has put constraints on the local viticulture and in its capacity to innovate, borrow or change while in Otago the lack of a legal framework means that innovation is an intrinsic part of the global pursuit of excellence. The existence of specific networks of producers-buyers-wine critics-consumers attached to the production and the commercialisation of wines worldwide has created the conditions for encouraging differentiation and 'distinction'. Marketing, but more importantly, 'taste' as a social experience, is central to the process of identifying specific networks. The Burgundy model has through globalisation established itself as a benchmark for the discerning buyer who has a certain level of social, economic and cultural capital. This is considered as the model to aspire to in terms of wine production, but also in terms of taste and consumption. Otago's place in this hierarchy is still being defined and, as we shall see, its pathway is complex, multi-formed and partly inspired by the Burgundian model. It is still in the process of writing its own story.

Finally, using the case-study provided by Burgundy's campaign for UNESCO World Heritage status for the *climats de Bourgogne*, Chapter 8 investigates how Burgundian wine and its political and economic elites emphasise heritage, cultural traditions and ecological concerns by claiming the right to global recognition. Burgundy uses heritage as a new means to serve the definition of specific micro identities to counter-globalisation. Yet the application for World Heritage status and the debate surrounding it reveals the continuing strength of a traditional model of terroir amongst intellectual and cultural elites. The project was put together by the region of Burgundy, the department of Côte d'Or, the towns of Beaune and Dijon, the BIVB (Bureau Interprofessionnel des Vins de Bourgogne)¹⁶ and the Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin. The owner of the Domaine de la

Romanée-Conti (widely known as DRC) was the president of the association established to campaign for UNESCO recognition and most of the meetings took place under his leadership. Having been invited as an expert to participate in the definition of the *climats de Bourgogne*, I was able to analyse the construction of a historical narrative around the notion of *climats*, an ill-defined term but one that is embodied in imagined notions of an enduring and thus authenticated social configuration. By exploring its deployment and internal contestation through the various debates and scientific committees that I attended, this chapter argues that the candidature was elitist driven and was far from achieving professional consensus. As the example of Burgundian *climats* demonstrates, beneath the seemingly harmonious discourse of terroir lies a far more heterogeneous and imaginative society. Special emphasis will be placed upon the tension between nature and culture through the debate surrounding the scientific commission as well as the fierce debate about terroir which raised questions about long-term ecological and environmental issues. Terroir thus provides a window onto the mechanisms by which societies are able to use globalisation and modernity to suit their own purposes. The paradox of this is that the global explosion of attention to terroir – or the national conditions of winescapes – conceals human intervention, local land politics and the homogenisation of many wine manufacturing practices in most parts of the world, including France. The chimeric qualities of the concept of terroir freight wine from Burgundy in particular with a sense of mythological excellence. What I hope I have achieved in this book is to uncover the layers of meaning, practice and myth that constitute the Burgundian wine community now and in the past, and to restore reasoned perspective to the discourse around Burgundy, terroir and heritage.

Notes

1. See <http://en.unesco.org/events/39th-session-world-heritage-committee>. Consulted on 2 February 2016.
2. See <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2015/whc15-39com-INF.19.pdf>. Consulted on 15 February 2016.
3. My own translation. See <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2015/whc15-39com-INF.19.pdf>, p.194. Consulted on 15 February 2016.
4. For more information on La Paulée de Meursault as a form of economic folklore, see Laferté (2006).

5. My own translation. See http://www.climats-bourgogne.com/fr/notre-dossier_17.html. Consulted on 2 February 2016. Crus is defined here as a specific AOC wine classification term which refers to several vineyards assembled to constitute a specific vintage.
6. Esca is a grape disease that affects mature grapevine trunks.
7. Only a few viticultural sites have benefitted from the cultural site classification and it is very often because of the cultural elements that they have been recognised as such. The site of Primošten in Croatia is one such example.
8. See the discussion on authenticity in Barrey and Teil (2011).
9. For a useful analysis of the social sources of authenticity, see Wherry (2006).
10. To this observer, it resembled the Californian wineries and their *mise en scène* of wine.
11. For an example, see the work of the anthropologist Claude Royer (1980), on French wine growers.
12. This work, funded by the Ministry of Culture, covered the year of preparation behind the Saint-Vincent Tournante and gave us the opportunity to make a film and to prepare an exhibition in the local wine museum. For more information, see Demossier (1999).
13. Dion (1959). For an analysis of the current debates in French geography around the legacy of Dion, see the work of Jacqueline Dutton (forthcoming).
14. I have followed over the years around ten families as well as twenty wine growers more closely. We have had discussions on a number of topics over the years. Long-term ethnographic participation in key events has also contributed to my thinking about the field.
15. *The Drops of God* best-seller in South Korea was also a smash hit in France (it has been translated by the publisher Glénat); it helped to introduce wine to the masses in parts of Asia, and had a massive impact on the wine industry in South Korea. The July 2009 *Decanter* publication of 'The Power List' ranking of the wine industry's most influential individuals placed the authors Shin and Yuko Kibayashi at number 50, citing their work as 'arguably the wine publication of the last 20 years'.
16. The BIVB or Burgundy Wine Board which is composed of wine growers, wine producers and wine merchants was created in 1989 as a regional non-profit organisation under the French law 1901. According to its website, it is built on the principle of each member having an equal voice, and it defends and promotes the unique skills of the profession of wine making, the *négoce* (wine merchant) trade and vine growing, and the heritage of a shared passion. For more information, see <http://www.bourgogne-wines.com/>. Consulted on 11 July 2014.