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Andrew W.M. Smith, *Terror and terroir: The winegrowers of the Languedoc and modern France*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016. xiii + 280 pp. Illustrations, map, bibliography, and index. £75.00 (hb). ISBN 978-1-7849-9435-8.

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Terroir. When the word is spoken in front of the British, they usually understand “terror” because the idea of gastronomic heritage linked to regional identity does not immediately resonate in this part of the world. In Britain, the Industrial Revolution soon emptied the countryside and weakened local culinary traditions. As this impressive and aptly titled book by the British historian Andrew W.M. Smith demonstrates, the situation was very different in France. This volume provides a highly original and welcome contribution to the burgeoning literature devoted to the concept of terroir across the disciplines, spanning history, geography and anthropology.[1] It is rare that politics and wine are studied in parallel and, even less common, that they are the subject of both such a careful attention to detail and an anthropological gaze. If wine is still not always accepted in some academic circles as an object worthy of serious historical investigation, it has nevertheless benefitted from a long tradition of scholarship in Europe. The work, for example, of French historians Rémy Loubère and Geneviève Gavignaud-Fontaine comes to mind as helping to shape this intellectual field crossing politics and regional identity through the study of wine.[2] They contribute to a long French historiographic tradition examining regional wine politics. Recent decades have seen the revival of scholarly interest in French regionalism, from both a cultural and political angle, and Smith’s work, published in the series *Studies in Modern French History*, is a significant addition to the field.[3]

A major obstacle to the critical development of the study of wine lies with the political, national and patriotic frameworks in which it has historically been defined, making it a difficult object to unpack and a very unpopular one to attack. In the French context, the recent declaration of 2014, which defined wine as a cultural heritage good worth protecting, has given a new veneer to this long standing national emblem.[4] At the regional level, it is easy to identify the development of propaganda and myths embracing wine as a distinctive element of social and cultural life associated, paradoxically, with well-being in a global capitalist society. This construction has implications for the ways in which wine is studied and how those studies are written. Yet the growing importance of wine as a cultural product is beyond doubt and, as an object sensitive to the social structures in which it is made and consumed, its study can deepen our understanding of the contemporary world. Andrew W. M. Smith offers such an innovative

and convincing reading of terroir in Languedoc's history taking the reader from tradition to terrorism, from regional wine politics to globalization.

Terror and terroir retraces the complex and intricate story of the South of France winegrowers' movement and its activities in the post-war period during the so-called *Trente Glorieuses*. It carefully follows the thread of identity politics among a group of winegrowers incarnated by the CRAV (Comité Régional d'Action Viticole) who openly challenged definitions of Frenchness in identity and policy (p. 264). Through the emblematic revolt of 1907, used as a window to understand how the past influences the present, the author unfolds the journey experienced by the *Languedocien* winegrowers to come to terms with what they defined as the essence of place through wine production. Yet the Languedoc, as a wine region, has a very different political context to that of Burgundy, Champagne, or Bordeaux. Languedoc has generally been seen as a victim of the emerging national wine hierarchy, which, since the eighteenth century, progressively established itself around the debated concept of quality. Smith offers a broader framework of analysis discussing in a very nuanced fashion the changes of political context at the local, national, and global level. He is careful to place his argument in the cultural framework of a global socio-political movement and to study wine as the focus of an ever-changing global industry. He excels in navigating between the local and the bigger picture. The attention to historical and ethnographic details, the complexity and paradoxes attached to the wine lobby, the politics in Paris and Brussels are all treated with the same care and attention. This work relies on solid and rich historical evidence and is attentive to the impact of local politicians and notables, ideologies and cultural movements.

The book is divided into seven chapters including an introduction and a conclusion, as well as a useful index accompanied by illustrations. The *grande révolte* of 1907, known as the "Révolte du Midi," which saw 600,000 protestors on the streets of Montpellier, constitutes the bedrock or motif against which Smith takes the reader throughout a chronologically organised socio-political and cultural analysis of the winegrowers' regional politics of identity. At the heart of this study lies the CRAV that we follow from its birth in 1961 to its increasing marginalisation in French wine politics *en passant par* its turbulent upheavals and radicalisation. The story ends in 2008 with the arrest of a local winegrower, Jérôme Soulère, at his house in the Limoux, following a series of bomb attacks to which he was connected.

The major contribution of this book is to offer a solid and nuanced socio-political contribution to the broader discussion of terroir, which is all too often reduced to the level of nostalgia and mythology rather than being understood as part of a social struggle for the emancipation of small landowners. It is about how the Languedoc, characterised by a strong left-wing political tradition and a rooted but diverse regionalist movement, came progressively to engage with both Europeanisation and globalisation. The Languedoc wines of today still illustrate past and present struggles of coming to terms with a global market in which their position was weakened by their long-term historical and political alienation and inability to position themselves between different regional, national and global market strategies. Compared to the emblematic and historically powerful wine regions of Burgundy, Champagne or Bordeaux, Languedoc offers a contrasting case of regional identity associated with a more tumultuous economic transition due to its regional heritage and a complex socio-political landscape. The history of quality is, in this part of France, one of harsh conditions of social emancipation, but also of **"friction" used as metaphors to conceptualise the ways in which global forms have been articulated in specific contexts.**

Terroir, a slippery concept, has long since escaped its French birthplace and is exerting a powerful hold over the global imagination. Yet very few studies have scrutinised the regional political dimension of its emergence in opposition to the French state. Unlike Burgundy, which relied on its folklore and confraternities to rally the winegrowers around quality in the inter-war period, Languedoc experienced the wine crises throughout the post-war period and those crises provided the bedrock to a story of radicalisation and resistance against any external market forces (p. 14). Chapter four is dedicated to the ethno-historical construction of the wine movement as part of the regionalist Occitan identity bringing an interesting angle to any discussion about folklore as a political and economic strategy.

Against the landscape of wine modernisation, the CRAV incarnated the long opposition of local vigneronns to the French state. It was the embodiment of the regional winegrowers' movement, which progressively transformed into direct action encapsulated by the shootings perpetrated by the extreme wing of the group in 1976. Both regional cultural identity and the specificities of the regional economic realities played an important part in explaining the political trajectory undertaken by the CRAV and the Languedoc. Interestingly Smith underlines elegantly the paradoxes attached to the CRAV as a wine organisation: "Both post-war regionalists and the CRAV shared their roots, and despite being characterised as left-wing movements, they had a nuanced relationship with socialism as an ideology" (p. 12). One might wonder how those political regional nuances played out or connected in terms of the emergence of the AOC and the notion of quality attached to French wine production? Comparative case studies or transnational approaches—for example at the EU level in terms of wine policies—might be able to tell us a different story about the emergence of quality in French wines.

The CRAV was originally composed of labourers and smallholders motivated more by francs per hectolitre than a romantic conception of the genius of the South (p. 11). During the various phases of its development—from the origins of the movement in 1944, to revolutions in the vines (1961-1976), Montredon during the Mitterrand era, and finally modernisation followed by marginalisation—it is "a story of the development of the nation, the region and of wine" (p. 17). Mechanisation and modernisation became the enemies to fight against the backdrop of a transition from plonk to finer wines, but this phase became enmeshed in a bloody confrontation with the state. Each major modernisation after 1907--1953 with the *code du vin*,^[5] the 1961 birth of the CRAV, the 1976 killing of Emile Pouytès and Commander le Goff—responded to upheavals in the global wine economy such as the import of wines from Italy and Spain and the increasing liberalisation of the Common Market. Violence was a common response to the threat of hardship.

The radicalisation of the CRAV was the result of its increasing popularity at the end of the 1960s due to its capacity to manage internal divisions. Its methods during this period seem to be a useful leitmotiv in charting the progress of relations between the *Défense* movement and the government, with the CRAV as interlocutor in a tense dialogue (p. 115). The killing of a policeman in Montredon became a turning point in the history of the group, challenging its raison d'être while slowly undermining its position in the national debate. Modernisation was taking its toll despite the Socialist victory of President Mitterrand in 1981, and the CRAV became isolated and marginalised in the regional landscape throughout the 1980s as a result of its violent actions and declining membership.

The CRAV story is illustrative of a broader anti-globalisation movement that took root in the south of France and went beyond national boundaries. It has today become a story of an alternative to neo-liberal policies and aggressive globalisation. This story echoes some of the current debates in the global wine industry around notions of authenticity or artisanship, ecological and environmental concerns, as well as the winegrower as the new hero of our modern times. Languedoc wines contributed to the reframing of new forms of economic alternatives to respond to globalisation, and they have become a key player in the discussion on quality, artisanship, and terroir.

Overall this book will appeal to scholars and students from both humanities and the social sciences. It will become a must read in the literature on terroir.

NOTES

[1] See, for example, the work of the historian Thomas Parker, *Tasting French Terroir: The History of an Idea* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2015). In anthropology see Amy Trubek, *The Taste of Place* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press, 2008) and, more recently, Marion Demossier, *Burgundy: A Global Anthropology of Place and Taste* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2018).

[2] Léo Loubère, *The Wine Revolution in France* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990); Geneviève Gavignaud-Fontaine, *Le Languedoc viticole, la Méditerranée et l'Europe au siècle dernier* (Montpellier: Presses de l'Université Paul Valéry, 2000).

[3] For more discussion, see the work of Gilles Laferté, *La Bourgogne et ses vins: image d'origine contrôlée* (Paris: Belin, 2006) reviewed in *H-France Review* 9.18 (2009): 69.

[4] See <https://www.france.tv/france-5/c-dans-l-air/64151-le-vin-francais-patrimoine-mondial-de-l-humanite.html> (accessed January 9, 2017)

[5] The *code du vin* defined a new body of legislature to shift towards a “policy of quality” (p. 65).

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