

Collective Action
in Winegrowing Regions:
A Comparison of Burgundy and the Midi

David R. Weir

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Introduction

The winegrower's revolt of 1907 is a familiar topic to students of rural rebellion. It has prompted excellent studies of the political characteristics of winegrowers in the Midi for the period 1850-1914. This wealth of scholarly research on one region (the largest in France in terms of quantity of wine produced) has no counterpart for any of the other great winegrowing regions. This paper seeks to fill in a part of that void by examining the political activities of winegrowers in Burgundy in this period.

French winegrowers are generally characterized as radical, so the historian might logically expect to find that there were incidents in other regions similar to those in the Midi, if smaller in scale. This expectation turns out to be false for Burgundy, as suggested by the report of the prefect of the C^ote d'Or for June of 1907.

The events of the Midi dominated political concerns in my department during the month of June, 1907. The people of the Cote d'Or received the news of the troubles in those departments with more surprise and curiosity than sympathy.

Our people are too calm, too respectful of the law to let themselves be influenced by the Midi winegrowers. They themselves have experienced great suffering. They had days of deprivation and misery when they were forced to battle the phylloxera and rebuild their devastated vineyards.

These sensible people could not help feeling a bit of contempt for these winegrowers who complain of hardships which are due, in large part, to their own short-sightedness.¹

This striking contrast in political attitude and behaviour between two regions who depend on the same troubled market for their livelihood poses a fascinating question: why, under seemingly similar pressures, did the Midi rise in a vocal mass protest and Burgundy watch with "surprise and curiosity"? Answering this question for the revolt of 1907 will provide a focus for a broader examination of differences in political character.

Explanations of such differences will be sought in the changing conditions of social and economic life as winegrowing adjusted to its position in the pre-war French economy. This comparative approach will provide a means of evaluating the existing explanations of the Midi revolt, and hopefully some insight into the more general phenomenon of collective action. Before proceeding with a discussion of the proposed plan of attack on this problem, a more precise identification of the regions is needed.

From the map² (Map I), we can see that the Midi region is on the Mediterranean coast, comprising primarily the departments of the Pyrénées-Orientales, the Aude, l'Herault, and Gard. This area is commonly referred to as the Bas-Languedoc or simply Languedoc.

Burgundy lies in the eastern portion of the center of France, radiating outward from the mountainous "Côte d'Or" in the department of the same name. Most of Burgundy's wine production, and hence most of our analysis, comes from this department, but portions of the departments Rhône, Loire, Jura, Saône-et-Loire, and l'Yonne are also included.

The maps (Map II and Map III)³ offer a view of some of the more important viticultural landmarks in the two regions. The Rhone river valley region which appears on the map of the Midi is not included in this study.

In 1850 these two regions shared that degree of political awareness and potential for radical activism which makes winegrowing regions particularly interesting for studies of collective action in agricultural areas. Radicalism in the south is the subject of a book by Leo Loubère,⁴ and should be familiar enough to require no discussion here. Pierre de St. Jacob, the renowned historian of Burgundy, states in a study of the situation of the peasantry on the eve of 1848 that "although many agricultural regions were

politically ignorant, the plains and the Côte (the winegrowing regions) display a strong republican spirit and often present two conflicting parties, one of which is devoted to the new ideas."⁵ Raymond Long, in his attempt at a sociological interpretation of the legislative elections in the Côte d'Or under the Third Republic notes the presence of certain interest groups which seem to behave as collectivities, including winegrowers, "whose ideas are traditionally more advanced than those of farmers and who tilt the political balance to the Left in the cantons of Nolay, Nuits-Saint-Georges, and Gevrey-Chambertin."⁶ An analysis of the election results during the period 1848 to 1851 bears out St. Jacob's statements; in every vote from the Constituent Assembly in April of 1848 to the plebiscite of December, 1851, the winegrowing regions cast a higher proportion of socialist and republican votes.⁷ This political orientation can perhaps be explained by the unusually high population densities in winegrowing areas which result from the higher labor land ratio demanded by viticulture in comparison with other agricultural pursuits.

Since structural characteristics peculiar to viticulture set it apart politically from other agricultural pursuits, it seems likely that structural differences between winegrowing regions may explain political differences at that level. This paper will demonstrate that that is indeed true: Harvey Smith's attribution of political unrest to changes in the technology of winegrowing and resulting social disruptions is supported by the fact that neither of these occurred in Burgundy. To reach this conclusion it will be necessary to examine the evidence of economic, social and political change within the two regions during the three major periods from 1850-1914; the prosperous expansion under the Second Empire, the phylloxera, and the

economic crisis which opened the twentieth century. Particular stress will be placed on how viticulture was affected by its relationship with the national economy, and how the lives of winegrowers were affected by changes in viticulture. In a comparative study it is always difficult to know which observable differences are relevant to an explanation of the central problem, and this study is no exception. Accordingly, several major alternative hypotheses will be considered before reaching a final conclusion: that cultural differences or regional characters made the Midi more prone to act in a collective protest, that the regions were dependent in different degrees on the wine market, and that they were dependent on somewhat different markets. The implication of the last two hypotheses is that the winegrowers in Burgundy did not feel the effects of the crisis to the same extent as did those in the south.

Winegrowing Before the Crisis

We will limit our historical background to the half century preceding the crisis of 1900-07. The choice of the 1850's as a starting point is not an arbitrary one;⁸ the period of the Second Empire was one of unparalleled prosperity for French viticulture, and marked the beginning of the shift from reliance on local markets to competition on a national scale.

The Second Empire saw significant improvements in many of the conditions for economic growth, several of which were particularly important for viticulture. Credit was a necessity for the expansion of vineyard areas, and the 1850's brought tremendous growth of available credit. The massive influx of newly-discovered gold raised the money supplied by the Bank of France

from 450 million in 1850 to 1550 million in 1870.⁹ Interest rates fell as low as three percent, but even more important was the financial revolution which sought to invest French capital in French economic growth as never before. "The new political regime of the Second Empire broke the Bank of France's stranglehold on the country's financial system, and introduced a number of financial innovations,"¹⁰ most notably joint-stock investment banks and a widening of clientele which, "for the first time, brought country as well as city into the money market."¹¹

An interesting example of this new investment banking has direct relevance to our study of the Midi. The *Crédit Mobilier*, the representative institution of this period of innovation, was originally formed to finance the construction of the *Chemin du Fer du Midi* when the conservative Rothschild banks refused to supply adequate funds.¹² The financial revolution was thus partly responsible for the transportation revolution of this period. Landes suggests that the most important advance of this period was the continued ramification of the railroad system. Its importance for winegrowing was even greater than it was for the growth of the French economy as a whole.

A bulky product such as wine is particularly sensitive to expansion and falling costs of transportation. The growth of the French railroad system in the second half of the nineteenth century rapidly opened urban mass consumption markets to the producers of table wines. This was crucial, for the availability of credit to support expansion of supply would have been meaningless without a concomitant increase in demand. The structural transformation brought about by the railroads allowed wines to be sold on a national scale whereas in earlier periods only the most expensive wines had warranted the cost of moving them beyond the limited regional market. In addition to

this structural increase in demand for wine, there was a general increase in the consumption of all goods due to the general rise in income.

The export market was also booming in this period, buoyed by the free trade atmosphere prevailing in Europe. The Cobden Treaty of 1860 helped formalize this attitude. The famous French fine wines had long served an international clientele, but the lack of serious international competition in this period, combined with the low tariffs, brought ordinary wines into the export market as well.

The growth of domestic demand was heavily biased towards cheap table wines, and the growth of viticultural regions reflects this. Much of the expansion was in the Midi where high yield mass consumption wines displaced all others. In Burgundy almost all new planting was of vines bearing the Gamay grape, which yielded an ordinary wine. The high profitability of winegrowing attracted other agricultural groups into the wine producing regions where wages were estimated to be the highest of any agricultural pursuit.¹³

The pre-phyllloxeric expansion of Midi viticulture created ideal conditions for those trained in the care of vines. The large domains provided work for a transient proletariat in those places of work which could be easily mechanized or systematized. This did not, for the moment, include the care of vines. The owners of the large estates preferred to hire villagers who owned vines themselves as they were not only more skillful in their care, but able to do the work more efficiently than the unskilled migrants. As vines replace grain fields across the Midi, the demand for the skilled labor of vineworkers augmented in great proportion because the culture of the vine required more than twice the amount of labor per hectare.

This led to high wages for skilled vineworkers and drew the sons of diverse categories of peasants into that occupation. There was little trouble finding sufficient work or in controlling the number of hours worked to guarantee that there would be enough time for the tending of their own vines.

There is a second aspect to the life of vineworkers, and a second source of status: the ownership of land. In the expansion period when wages and wine prices were high, vineworkers had great possibilities of expanding their landholdings. Many aspired to and attained the status of an independent proprietor by careful investment of waded wages in land.

The large winegrowing domains in the southern plains forced out other agricultural pursuits but did not threaten the continued existence and modest growth of the older forms of winegrowing during this period of vicitultural prosperity. Expansion in Burgundy took a slightly different path.

The Côte region had long been planted in vines of the noble pinot noir, in predominantly small or moderate sized plots. The total area planted in such vines showed moderate increases during this period.¹⁴ The market for fine wines did not expand with the revolution in transportation, at least not to the same extent as the market for table wine. Moreover, the pinot vines had already established themselves in these localities where they would grow best, so expansion could not have maintained the same quality of product. The prosperity of the Second Empire did encourage the expansion of ordinary wine production in Burgundy as it did in the Midi, but the development of large domains was not common, perhaps because of the hilly geographic conditions. The prosperity of viticulture drew new people into winegrowing areas and the income to a grower of ordinary wines, even in the least desirable areas of the Arrière-Côte, was almost always sufficient to cover his

costs and feed his family.¹⁵

The second Empire was truly the golden ages of French viticulture, allowing the industrious and efficient to become well-off or even wealthy, and the inefficient producers to live a comfortable existence. These successes bred not complacency but experimentation to find ways to improve the quantity of wine and to bring greater regularity to what had traditionally been a most unpredictable crop. Oenological science developed rapidly at universities like the one at Montpellier, and at schools devoted to educating winegrowers. As part of this development many new varieties of vines were studied for possible introduction in French vineyards, including some American vines. These vines proved to be a wooden horse of unimagined destructive power, for they carried the phylloxera vastatrix, a tiny insect which eventually ravaged the whole of France's vines.

The Midi region was the first to be hit, the effects of the insect being noticed first in the department of the Gard where the experimentation with American vines had been taking place. The first really damaging effects did not come until 1875, but by 1879 it had become epidemic in the Midi.¹⁶ Winegrowers in other regions were slow to realize the importance of the problem until it began to attack their own vines. The common explanation of this attitude is that the traditions of individualism in matters concerning their work prevented winegrowers from taking the cooperative steps necessary to deal with the phylloxera.

The phylloxera brought about some changes in the exalted position of vineworkers in the Midi. The large domains which established themselves in the plains during the expansion did not originally threaten the existence of the familial plots. But the new conditions favored the larger producers

in several ways. They were able to utilize the most efficient methods of pest control, drainage, and irrigation. They had lower costs per surface area and higher productivity rates. The wealthy bourgeois and aristocrat owners of the large domain generally had access to capital which allowed them to make use of the newest methods. Small self-employed growers who typically relied on their own labor to provide most of the necessary care for their vines found it more difficult to substitute or add capital to their labor. This forced a greater reliance on wage work for the grower/workers.

For some, the dependence on wage work had been habitual even before the phylloxera, but the skills which had separated them from the migrant proletariat in that earlier period had been rendered obsolete by the phylloxera. The managers of the large domains were becoming more interested in strict control and discipline than in the special skills of the village workers. Because the new viticulture in the Midi was "scientific" and "industrial", the large domains expected their laborers to perform like a proletariat and came to prefer more deferential outsiders to the villagers who were not afraid to refuse to perform tasks which did not meet with their approval.¹⁷ Labor conditions on the large domains had always brought vineworkers together in teams as they worked. Gratton and others attribute the labor movement of the early twentieth century in part to this grouping of workers on the job, suggesting that this encouraged the formation of class consciousness. This distinguishes vineworkers from other peasant groups, but does not explain their use of collective action. This collective spirit only manifested itself in action when the control of vineworkers over the conditions of work was challenged. In the changed conditions after the reconstitution, wages no longer provided the means to gain independence. The equalization of wages

paid to village workers and immigrant laborers made it impossible for villagers to improve their position as landowners, but it also made it possible for the immigrants to buy small plots of land. This served to lower the status of village vineworkers still further as they no longer had the distinction of being landowners superior to a landless proletariat. This was a period of prosperity. The prosperity had a longer life in Burgundy because of the timing of the phylloxera. The 1880's saw profits soar as Midi competition was drastically reduced. The biggest growth market of this period of prosperity, especially after the phylloxera began to take its toll on the Midi, was in wines of the lowest quality, provided they could be produced at a low cost. This encouraged Burgundy growers of gamay, the ordinary vine of the region, to emphasize quantity rather than quality in their methods of raising vines and producing wine. The great profits of the 1880's were almost wholly consumed by the costs of reconstitution in the 1890's, however, so that by the turn of the century most small growers of ordinary wines in Burgundy had little reserve capital. Productivity increases also accompanied the reconstruction in Burgundy, although they were strongest in the production of fine wines where increases in capital costs could be sustained.¹⁸ Even there the increase seems to have been small compared to that of the Midi, about one-third at best.

Traditional practices of cultivation were rendered obsolete in Burgundy as they had been in the Midi, but the newer methods did not require a great transformation of the work force or the size of domains. Very small plots became inefficient, but there was no great advantage to very large domains.

The reconstitution made capital costs a more important part of total costs in Burgundy as it did in the Midi. This discriminated against the

smallholders, particularly those growing ordinary wines in undesirable regions where the new techniques were even harder to implement, but it did not favor the development of large domains.¹⁹ Proprietorships of moderate size, the traditional productive unit, continued to be satisfactorily efficient. Moreover, the advantage of fine wines and high quality ordinary wines over wines of lower quality became marked in this period, prompting the remark that "now, more than ever, the only reason to be a Burgundy is its quality."²⁰ This acted to put even greater stress on the new creations of the prosperous period.

The new grafted vines required new skills, but there was no change in the organization of work, so it "remained artisanal in nature."²¹ This was encouraged by the spread of education by organizations like the Societe Vigneronne de Beaune, as they maintained the skills of the workers. It seems to have been a remarkably successful attempt to retrain a skilled labor force in what amounted to a new craft after their prior skills became irrelevant.

The phylloxera created other changes, as well. Within French wine growing regions there developed an extensive production of wine by artificial means, partly aided by the developments in oenology. Wine is nothing more than fermented grapes; its alcoholic content being derived from a chemical change in the molecules of the sugar produced in the grape. A similar effect can be produced by the fermentation of cane or beet sugar. Armed with this knowledge, concerned persons in the phylloxeric period urged the artificial expansion of wine stocks by the addition of sugar and water to a small amount of harvested grapes and allowing fermentation to produce a product of alcoholic strength similar to that of natural wine, and with a taste not greatly different from that of low quality table wines. If no water were added the

effect would be to enhance the alcoholic content, (a common practice in Champagne and Burgundy where the alcoholic content of the wine is not always sufficient), without expanding the quantity of wine. The concern in this period was with quality, however, to preserve the public's taste for wine during the years when wine production was lowered by the phylloxera, so that the demand would be there when the supply returned. Winegrowers in the Midi and elsewhere lobbied extensively for the legalization of these methods, and the government consented. By the same logic, importation of wine from Italy and Spain, Mediterranean countries who produced a wine very similar to those of the Midi, was encouraged. Italy and Spain took advantage of the opportunity and greatly expanded their wine production. Not all the winegrowers fought the phylloxera. Some gave up and moved to the cities, but a large number of those who left the Midi vineyards emigrated to Algeria, the prized colony of France, to begin a wine industry there. Algerian wines were also of mediocre quality and low price, an excellent substitute for the stricken Midi wines. As we shall see, these temporary measures proved to have enduring negative effects on French viticulture as it emerged from the reconstitution.

The Crisis of 1900-1907

Causes

The courageous battle of French winegrowers against the phylloxera was no doubt sustained by the hope of a return to prosperity like that of the Second Empire. This expectation would have made it difficult for them to accept the stability and lower profits which would have resulted from the attainment of an equilibrium, but the situation at the beginning of the twentieth century was hardly stable. There were frequent losses and

difficulties in selling wine, indicating that viticulture had overadjusted to the market expansion, or that the market was contracting. The transition to the national market and the devastation of the phylloxera had maintained a situation of high demand and limited supply. By the turn of the century various factors, some the result of policies enacted during the phylloxera, and others part of national trends, were working to raise supplies while holding down demand.

Most of the discussion at the time of the crisis focussed on supply; with critics of the winegrowers' movement blaming the crisis on overproduction, and others blaming various market abuses. Winegrowers themselves blamed the crisis on the fraudulent production of sugar wine. Productivity increases seemed to support the argument of overproduction, but total acreage planted in vines had greatly decreased, so that total production was not much different from pre-phylloxeric times. The poor quality of statistics on production made discussion even more an act of political faith than economic analysis. Laurent tells us that the Revue de Viticulture was full of conflicting interpretations about the cause of the crisis, most of which had their origin in different manipulation of the statistics.²² The choice of endyears has a decisive effect on average production figures, but such averages are a necessary evil given the high variability of yearly harvests. We will employ the most common convention and use 1870-79 as the pre-phylloxeric period, and 1900-07 as the crisis period. In Table I we compare the average figures for these two periods of production (domestic), imports, exports, amount of wine distilled into alcohol, and total wine available for domestic consumption.²³

Table I

Period	<u>1870-79</u>	<u>1900-07</u>
Production	54,670,800	55,179,200
Exports	3,283,500	2,053,750
Imports	824,383	5,299,750
Distillation	4,998,300	2,252,900
Total Wine Available	47,212,783	56,172,300

From this table we can see quite clearly that although the average yearly harvest was not greatly increased in 1900-07 over the earlier period, the amount of wine sold to French consumers was far greater. An important part of this change was France's shift from the position of a net exporter of wine to that of a net importer.

A common argument in this period was that the Meline tariff (highly protectionist) and the resulting tariff wars had hurt the wine industry's export trade. Yearly trade data indicate that the imposition of the tariff in 1892 greatly reduced the French trade deficit in terms of quantity and actually returned France to a surplus position in terms of the value of the wine sold. In 1891 France had imported a record 12 million hectoliters of wine, but by 1893 this was cut by more than half to under 6 million hectoliters. Apparently the high tariffs were in the best interest of French winegrowers and they were justified in lobbying for them. This does not contradict our earlier observation that the free trade atmosphere was beneficial to the growth of French viticulture; it indicates a change in the international market. That change was the expansion of Spanish and Italian

vineyards. Italy's vineyard area had gone from 1,963,000 hectares in 1872 to 3,446,000 hectares in 1892 and Spain's growth was comparable.²⁴ The growth of international competition, by lowering the demand for French table wines in other countries, and competing with them on the French market, had changed the attitude of most French winegrowers toward tariff policy. While they were successful in controlling the importation of foreign wine by the crisis period, they were helpless against another source of competition: Algeria. Imports of cheap Algerian wine formed a major and growing part of total French imports. They were beyond the control of tariff policy and in fact encouraged to promote the growth of the colony.

A second auxiliary market was closed to French wine producers during the phylloxera; industrial demand for distilled alcohol. In the Second Empire the market for industrial alcohol had served as an important balancing mechanism for the wine producers. Surplus wine could be distilled and used as alcohol, providing industry with a needed commodity while allowing winegrowers to draw good revenues even when the wine market was glutted. The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw the introduction of alternative sources for the distillation of alcohol, notably sugar, which, since beet sugar production was concentrated in the North as was much of the industrial demand for alcohol, effectively eliminated this outlet during the period of reconstruction.²⁵ In 1900 the government abolished the traditional "privilege" of winegrowers to distill their excess wine and market the alcohol without submitting to the rigid rules and inspections imposed on commercial distillers. This prevented many winegrowers from making use of this outlet because the regulations required changes in procedures many could not afford to make. In 1906 the privilege was restored as a relief measure but the comparative

advantage of beet sugar had all but closed that market. Gide also mentions that distilled alcohol for drinking purposes had been a near monopoly of the wine producers, but that monopoly was opened by the competition of alcohols distilled from grains and potatoes. ²⁶

We can see that competitive factors were developing in this period for forcing more and more of French wine production onto the national market, but this may not be a full explanation of the severity of the crisis; perhaps the wine market itself had changed. Gide isolates four causes of the declining demand for wine. Competition from other beverages had shaken the place of wine as the national drink. The burgeoning bourgeoisie was turning to tea (the fuel of the British Empire?) and beers and ciders were dominating certain regional markets of rural and working class drinkers. Gide claims to have seen in Paris restaurants, even in workers' restaurants, carafes of milk on the tables. ²⁷

A second and more dangerous source of competition was hard liquor. Gide considered alcoholism to be a threat not only to the French people but to the health of the wine industry as well. He observes that "the man who has taken the habit of drinking hard liquor generally becomes disgusted with wine."²⁸ His proof is that the departments in which hard liquor is consumed in the greatest quantities are also those which consume the least wine, and vice versa. Emile Zola shows us the same phenomenon from a different point of view in L'Assommoir. The roofer, Coupeau, begins to drink wine after his painful fall, but soon moves on to stronger stuff, losing his taste for wine (to say nothing of his family and job) in the process. His early life is an interesting example of Gide's third point; the effects of temperate attitudes on the wine market.

Coupeau, remembering that alcoholism had caused his father's death, steadfastly refused all alcoholic beverages, including wine, until the time

of his fall, Gide considers this attitude, generally a reaction to alcoholism, to be a strain on the wine market, and to be the most ironic of all the forces decreasing demand for wine. He sees both attitudes as undesirable extremes, with the bottom of the wine market falling out between them.

The fourth and major limitation to the demand for wine is the lack of population growth in France. Gide suggests that a rate of population growth similar to that of Germany, even with the aforementioned changes in tastes, would have easily absorbed the productivity increases and loss of auxiliary markets incurred during the reconstitution.

Some of these forces were undoubtedly operating on the demand for wine in the period of prosperity, but they were hidden in the rush to bring supply into balance with the overall increase in demand occasioned by the structural transformation from regional markets to a national market. If we remember that this transition was the result of the transportation revolution of the 1850's and 60's, we should expect that that impetus for growth would decline. Landes discusses the effects of transport on regional economic growth, noting that the effects are discontinuous. There is no effect during construction, a strong sudden spur to growth upon completion of an important link, and then decline in the rate of growth as equilibrium is established in the new market.²⁹ Thus, while winegrowers did not lose the urban markets they had gained during the earlier expansion, the growth and high profits could not be sustained and in fact became losses under the changes in that new market which we have just described.

Given that there was an excess of supply relative to demand during the crisis period, the wisest course for winegrowers would have been to reduce production and indeed the profit mechanism is theoretically endowed

with the responsibility of eliminating the excess marginal suppliers. Economic pressures were working in this direction in ways which varied between regions, as we shall see, but there were several obstacles to their operation. An important obstacle was the fact that nature acted to lower supply in certain years, temporarily improving the situation and renewing hopes. Dugrand sees this as perpetuating a chronic crisis of overproduction in the Midi beginning with the crisis of 1900-07 and extending to the present. This explains the seemingly paradoxical though frequent statements by winegrowers that they feared yet another bountiful harvest.³⁰ In economic terms, the earning of higher total revenues from a reduction in quantity supplied indicates that demand is inelastic. This is examined in an econometrical study of the wine market in the inter-war years which concludes that demand was highly inelastic throughout that period.³¹ Data for our short period are not as conclusive, but certainly do not contradict the thesis that demand was inelastic in the first of the crises of overproduction as it was in the rest.

It is to be expected that winegrowers who had experienced the prosperity of the Second Empire and toiled through the reconstitution would be reluctant to abandon their profession. Their situation was complicated further by the fact that the crisis was weathered best by those with the highest productivity levels. This renews our confidence in the ability of the profit mechanism to select the most efficient producers for survival, but it encouraged individual growers to shift to these high productivity methods, not to leave their land. The conflict of individual and collective interests seemed to offer no hope for solution. Winegrowers did not accept this, however, and settled on alternative explanations of the crisis.

One such explanation was that the commercial classes were manipulating the market for their own profit. The network of financial intermediaries had expanded during the shift to the national market, but in a most inefficient manner.³² A typical commercial house would buy from a variety of small producers to fill its retail contracts, thus setting prices paid to producers and prices paid by consumers. In the study of the wine market mentioned earlier, Milhau also observes that retail prices were sticky in the downward direction, while prices paid to producers were more flexible,³³ indicating that merchants had considerable control over their profit levels in times of good harvest. Large growers who could hold their own inventories and profitably speculate on yearly price changes were not greatly affected by this. Smaller growers who were obliged to sell their harvests immediately because they lacked adequate storage space were completely at the mercy of the prices offered by the merchants. Gide was greatly concerned with this problem and suggested the establishment of cooperatives to help solve it.³⁴

Cooperatives could guarantee a regular and homogenous product which the small individual proprietors could not, thus enabling them to enter into direct contracts with consumers and retail outlets. Moreover, they could pool capital to obtain sufficient funds for the maintenance of caves to store the excess product of one year and sell it in a year of low harvest. There were several attempts to create such institutions, particularly by socialists in the Midi. Some of Burgundy's small growers also adopted this form in the first decade of the nineteenth century,³⁵ although the idea was not given strong government support until the 1930's.

The explanation most popular with winegrowers was not a complicated economic argument, but the rampant production of artificial wine from sugar. Their position was that natural wine production was not enough to overburden the market and could attain a healthy equilibrium if fraud

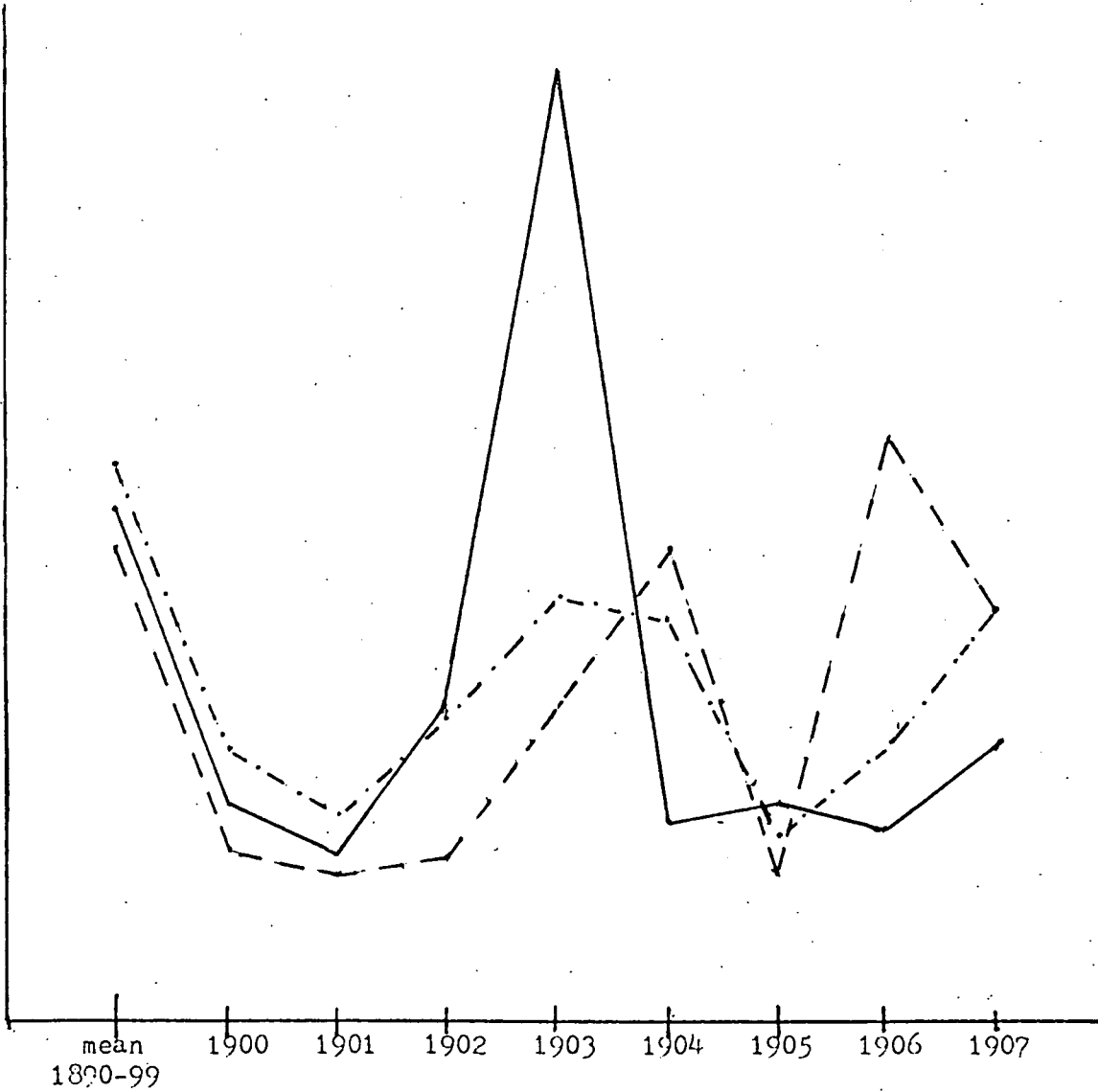
were stopped. There are no reliable statistics on this illegal activity, but the lack of certainty and the existence of some outrageous examples made fraud a perfect political issue. The sale of sugar wine was outlawed in 1897, but winegrowers still consumed 39 million kilograms of sugar in 1899.³⁶ In 1903, following the Brussels Sugar Agreement which lowered the price of sugar, thirty-five communes in l'Hérault declared a harvest of 1,004,915 hectoliters, but sent 2,284,848 h. to markets in the north. Some estimated the total addition to the supply of wine to be about forty percent of the officially declared harvest.³⁷ The French government was trying to stimulate the production of sugar in this period, for reasons unrelated to the problems in the wine market. Because sugar was perceived to be the source of the fraud problem this government support was seen as detrimental to the wine industry. Because the sugar interests were concentrated in the north, the policy was seen as one of regional favoritism, particularly by the Midi growers who were at once the worst offenders and the worst victims of fraud. Regionalism and economic interests thus became merged over this issue.

Economic Effects

The net effect of these economic changes was to lower prices. An obvious question for a regional comparison, especially when discussing a product whose identity is derived from the region which produces it, is whether or not the regional products and the regions were equally affected by the depression. A graph of price movements for the different types of wines is presented on the following page. The graph suggests that the differences between Midi and Burgundy wines was greater than that between different types of Burgundy wines, but that Burgundy ordinary wines do have a certain amount of independence from fine wines. All three moved together in the early years of the crisis,

Graph I

PRICE MOVEMENTS OF MIDI, BURGUNDY
FINE, AND BURGUNDY ORDINARY WINES
DURING CRISIS 1900-07



- average price at production level Midi departments
- - - average price at production level Burgundy ordinary wines
- . - . average price at production level Burgundy fine wines

Each series has been scaled differently for ease of comparability.

but the two regions diverged strongly after 1905, suggesting that the crisis might have been easing in Burgundy after that year. We will want to examine in more detail the effects these price movements had on the economic position of the winegrowers to see if there were important differences capable of influencing political patterns.

Our task is to measure directly the changes in income earned by winegrowers to see whether or not the differences suggested by the price movements were truly affecting the experiences of the different groups of winegrowers. Comparing living conditions in winegrowing regions is not an easy task, however. The local variations within regions makes statistical inference from aggregate figures a tenuous approach at best. Paradoxically, our best source of information may be qualitative rather than quantitative reports. We will use the opinion of a government survey as a basis, and attempt to corroborate that testimony with evidence from later observations.

An important comparative survey of the situation of French viticulture was undertaken by the Parliament in the spring of 1907.³⁸ The members travelled to important centers of winegrowing activity to listen to statements by representatives of local groups as to the extent and proposed cures of the crisis. On the twenty-seventh of May the commission delivered its first report:

The Midi and the departments Var, Bouches-du-Rhône, and Vaucluse are already completely ruined. In this region the winegrower has produced his wine at a loss for several years, and has not yet paid off the costs of his reconstitution. He can no longer borrow from capitalists or establishments of crédit hypothécaire.

The regions of the southwest, the west, the center, and the east seem less severely stricken. They are receiving prices which appear to cover the costs of production, although they too feel the effects of the crisis. The sale of their products is becoming slower and more difficult, and the depression which attacks them already through a diminution of their net revenues, looms as an inevitable disaster.

Perhaps only the great wines of Burgundy and Bordeaux, with their international reputation, can hope to escape the crisis.

The workers suffer greatly in all the winegrowing regions, as their income deteriorates under forced unemployment.³⁹

The government commission felt that there was a marked difference between the economic conditions in the Midi and those in Burgundy during 1907, and that some of the most famous of the Burgundy fine wines might actually pass through the crisis without serious difficulty. There is room for doubt nonetheless when one considers the atmosphere in which the survey was conducted. Its visit to the Midi provided the occasion for the first public demonstration of the 1907 movement; a march on Narbonne. It is certainly possible that this activity influenced the commission in its evaluation of economic hardship in the south, so we should look to other sources.

One interesting alternative is a monograph written just before WWI which attempts to compare the recent changes in land prices in various agricultural regions.⁴⁰ Fortunately, there is a good discussion of both the Burgundy and Midi regions within it.. This kind of information is particularly useful in a study of winegrowing regions because the prices of such lands tend to vary widely in a short period of time, offering a sensitive measure of profitability in winegrowing.⁴¹ Moreover, the problems of interpretation are lessened for our study. We shall see that most of the participants in the 1907 movement, and most of Burgundy's winegrowers, owned some land. For these groups changes in the price of land can be expected to be a direct measure of the changes in the economic viability of their position. For those who also relied on wage income we will look to changes in the conditions of labor in a moment, but it would be logical to assume that fluctuations in land prices, as an indicator of the health of the wine industry, would also be a good indicator of living standards for all those whose economic life was dependent

on wine.

Land prices in the Midi dropped suddenly after 1901, and continued to decline at a slower rate until 1907. Caziot lists the following as average prices of a hectare of land in the plains; the best Midi vine land:⁴²

1900: 10,000 to 12,000 francs

1902: 5,000 to 6,000 francs

1907: 2,000 to 3,000 francs

The prices for 1907 are virtually meaningless, however, because it was nearly impossible to sell land at any price. Government auctions often failed to find buyers.⁴³ The revolt of 1907 was apparently successful in improving the situation of Midi viticulture, however, as prices returned to their 1900 levels by 1914.

Land prices in Burgundy are not as easy to evaluate as those in the Midi because they are less strictly tied to agricultural value. A plot consisting of a hectare and a half in Romanée-Conti sold for 166,000 francs per hectare during the crisis, its value being due to the commercial value of its famous name.⁴⁴ Most of famous clos classés thus retained their value. Fine wines without a great name were more sensitive, however, and ordinary wine lands even more so. In Savigny-les-Beaune for example, land which sold for 113,000 francs per hectare in 1894 sold for just half that amount in 1907, and dropped even further by 1914.⁴⁵ Indeed, 1907 does not seem to have been a turning point for Burgundy land prices; a series of disastrous harvests from 1909-1914 continued the deleterious effect of the depression. Most commentators are interested in that later decline. Laurent describes the "final crisis" of 1909-10 as "surprising a convalescent viticulture with a misery that had not been felt in a long time,"⁴⁶ certainly worse than that of 1907. Caziot concludes his survey of Burgundy by stating that "the situation in Burgundy

(in 1914) is extremely bad; the great names alone have conserved a high price, vines bearing fine wines have dropped at least two-thirds, while it is barely possible to sell ordinary vines at any price.⁴⁷ He comments elsewhere that at the same time "there flowed in the Midi not a river of wine, but a river of gold."⁴⁸

The fact that a later period inflicted even greater suffering on Burgundy winegrowers would obviously not have affected their attitudes in 1907. The important result of this survey of land prices is that only after the disasters of 1909 and 1910 did land sales become difficult and at ridiculous prices as they were in the Midi by 1907. Winegrowing in Burgundy was a more viable occupation in 1907 than it was in the Midi at that time.

Although land prices are a good proxy measure of the economic health of winegrowers, it would be useful to know the changes in more direct measures of economic well-being. For vineworkers, this would include an examination of wage rates and the cost of living, i.e., real wages, and some estimation of unemployment rates. For proprietors we would need to know something about the relationship between wine prices and the cost of production to evaluate the profitability of winegrowing.

Robert Laurent has attempted to construct indices of this type for the Côte d'Or for the period 1800-1913.⁴⁹ Wheat prices are used to estimate the cost of living and production costs are a conglomeration of estimates of the various inputs used by winegrowers in a given year, including labor. He has attempted to correct for any errors in his statistical sources by corroboration with the testimony of winegrowers and statements in local and national publications concerned with viticulture. His results for the post-phyllloxeric period indicate that the period 1901-1904 was one of decline for growers of both fine and ordinary wines, as well as wageworkers throughout the department.

There were decreases in money revenue and the buying power of that revenue for all groups. In the year following the harvest of 1901 net revenues dipped below the subsistence level for all growers, although the wages of workers remained sufficient.

The period 1904-08 saw a recovery in all categories. Revenues were sufficient to cover costs throughout this period, although workers saw a loss in real income due to the rise in the price of wheat. This was not severe enough to dip below subsistence levels.

As with land prices in Burgundy, the period 1908-1913 brought renewed declines in net revenues for all groups. For growers of ordinary wines on the Arrière-Côte net revenues stayed below what Laurent determines to be the vital minimum for the entire period 1909-13. Winegrowers on the Côte, whether producers of fine or of ordinary wines, dropped below subsistence levels after the total loss of the harvest in 1910, but regained a viable position after the harvest of 1911.

Wage workers earned a sufficient real wage throughout this period, but we know nothing of unemployment rates. Since employment is more likely to drop in a temporary crisis than wages, we cannot be certain of the fate of those who depended on wagework and have no reason to contradict the opinion of the government survey that unemployment was making life difficult for wage workers in all viticultural regions.

A comprehensive study of the Midi comparable to Laurent's work on Burgundy remains to be done. We can, however, obtain a reasonably clear picture of the situation in the south from a wider variety of sources. Wages remained at their traditional level of about three francs a day for the first years of the crisis, although unemployment undoubtedly rose. In 1903 a strike wave boosted wages and regained jobs in many areas, but the

crisis worsened again in 1904. Unemployment seems to have been the biggest problem from 1905 through 1907, climbing from 25 percent to 50 percent in those years. In some communes it was estimated at 90 percent.⁵⁰ Unemployment is a difficult concept to define in winegrowing regions because many wage workers sought only part-time work in order to have time to tend to their own vines. The demand for work was partly dependent on their ability to draw revenue from their harvests. Any difficulties in the profitable marketing of harvests will simultaneously lower the demand for labor and increase its supply.

As an example of the conditions of landowning winegrowers we can use net revenue figures of a typical domain in the plains:⁵¹

<u>Year</u>	<u>Net Revenue</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Net Revenue</u>
1900	loss	1907	47,800
1901	loss	1908	2,050
1902	loss	1909	25,535
1903	92,416	1910	61,482
1904	50,536	1911	264,241
1905	37,813	1912	164,610
1906	27,600		

The indication is that the century opened in serious difficulties and that a temporary improvement in 1903 was followed by renewed declines. This domain was fairly large and efficient; such enterprises survived the crisis better than the smaller familial producers so we can assume that similar records from other winegrowers would show an even more trying experience.

The chronology of economic hardship in our two regions suggests two interesting conclusions. The first is that our initial interpretation of the

movements of prices was correct; the regions did share similar experiences in the early years of the crisis, but the situation in Burgundy improved throughout the period 1905-07 while the Midi failed to sustain the recovery of 1903. The second is that economic conditions were indeed substantially worse in the Midi by 1907 than they were in Burgundy.

Structural Changes

The impoverishment of winegrowing regions was not uniformly distributed among all groups. Everyone might conceivably have benefitted from higher prices, but the tightened economic conditions intensified the advantages of those forms of winegrowing which arose from the reconstitution with the most efficient methods.

In the Midi this was the large domain with economies of scale and a controllable work force. Increasingly capitalistic owners felt no obligation to hire village workers when they were not needed, especially when the villagers protested the imposition of industrial disciplines. In some localities the domains placed sufficient emphasis on new industrial disciplines that they imported workers from outside, leaving the village populations unemployed. At Cruzy, this touched off a violent strike which was only settled by the intervention of the national government.⁵² The availability of disciplined labor unconcerned with the maintenance of traditional work conditions gave the large domains even greater power over the small winegrowers. Peasants from non-viticultural regions of France, and many from Spain, flooded the Midi throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, with only a brief respite during the phylloxera.⁵³ Before the phylloxera, they had been restricted to more menial occupations, but the conditions of the industrial viticulture removed the basis for distinction between the village winegrower/workers and the unskilled immigrants.

While the pressure of low prices made it difficult for small growers to support themselves on their own land, the fall in wages effectively removed the possibility of saving for the attainment of that status. Most workers could still afford a small plot, including the immigrant workers. This was a period of morcellement, the spread of very small proprietorships. This served to further blur the distinctions between village winegrowers and unskilled immigrants. Smith stresses that this did not threaten to take land away from the villagers,⁵⁴ but it did limit their hopes for the future and lessen their perceived status.

The new structures altered the balance of power in village politics. The patron-client relationship between the large landowners and the immigrant proletariat included a political coalition of the right. Rightist politics in this era of the separation of the Church and state were almost coterminous with religious convictions. The new immigrants, especially the Spanish, were undoubtedly more devoted to Catholicism than the winegrowers, many of whom were Protestant and franc-maçons with strong anticlerical feelings.⁵⁵ The traditionally dominant leftist winegrowers found their position threatened and responded by more active organization. Thus, the socialist labor organizers from the Bourses du Travail found ready listeners in these people in the process of losing control over their work and community.

In Burgundy the pressure of economic forces was urging a return to the scale of production most common before the period of expansion. The care of the grafted vines which preserved the quality of the old vines still required a skilled labor force, and the lack of incentive to concentrate in large domains meant that industrial control of the work force was unnecessary. Thus the marginal growers who were unable to withstand the crisis and turned to wage work were faced with a traditionally acceptable lifestyle rather

than an unfamiliar and demeaning one. The fact that the crisis followed directly on the heels of the phylloxera seems to have discouraged immigration throughout the period, so there was little outside competition for jobs. In fact there were incessant complaints about labor shortages; serious enough to warrant the calling of a Congress in 1911 to discuss the problem of rural depopulation in the Côte d'Or.⁵⁶

The patterns of land ownership were changing in this period, but in the opposite direction of the changes in the Midi. There had been morcellement at the time of the expansion, but the tendency was reversing itself as winegrowers sought to obtain enough land to profitably employ the new techniques of cultivation and pest protection.⁵⁷ Those who were unable to do so sold their land and relied more heavily on wage work, or moved to the cities. There was not a threatening immigrant labor force seeking land, so the ownership of land did not have the importance of a status distinction from persons outside the village community that it had in the Midi. The trend toward concentration of property began in earnest after 1907.⁵⁸

The combination of the phylloxera and the depression in the years 1890-1910 seems to have altered the political balance in Burgundy as it did in the Midi, putting greater stress on the socialist vineworkers. The stress was not the result of an influx of conservative peasants, but of the departure of the bankrupt winegrowers.⁵⁹ These changes also seem to have gained real momentum after the economic crisis, as evidenced by the evolution of the political support for Camuzet, the deputy from Beaune. A young and ardent socialist at the time of his election in 1902, he was abandoned by his early political friends before 1914, and was forced to continue moving toward the right to appeal to the moderate vote.⁶⁰

Political Organization and Collective Action
in the Midi

The mobilization of the Midi movement has been well-documented elsewhere, so it will be sufficient to recall the main features of that movement for comparison with Burgundy.

The landowners were the first to protest in a collective fashion. In 1893 a bumper harvest, the first big post-phyllloxeric production peak, brought prices down low enough that there was talk of a need for government action to counter the "mevente" or price depression. Some 30,000 landowning winegrowers met in Montpellier to publicize their concern. The government of the Third Republic feared an attack from the right, seeing in the protests the influence of the large conservative proprietors. This fear persisted throughout the crisis period. Government officials were besieged by petitions, resolutions, and orders of the day calling for the control of fraud. Winegrowers held meetings to discuss their problems throughout the period from 1893 to 1907, "reaching particularly threatening levels in 1894, 1901, 1903, and 1905, when winegrowers called for the mass resignation of officials and even threatened civil disorders."⁶¹ No single organization emerged to unite the interests of the landowners; there were many small competing organizations, each of which took a hard-line stand often incompatible with the others.⁶² Resolutions were generally exaggerated and violent as in the congress at Béziers in 1905, even though that congress was held with the intention of unifying winegrowers. The fear of the government that the large conservative landowners would rob the government of the loyalty of the peasantry appear to have been unfounded since most of the meetings were one-sided affairs in which the large owners failed to receive broad support.⁶³

An important reason for the failure of the landowners movement was the parallel development of labor organization among agricultural workers in the Midi.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century most unions were short-lived because they were created to solve a particular problem and disappeared when that problem was solved. They were local affairs, but the urban labor movement offered organizational assistance.

In 1901 and 1902 workers accepted declining wages in some areas, apparently preferring lower wages to unemployment. Their attitude seems to have been one of resignation in the face of the disaster then experienced by the wine industry as a whole. There was some participation by workers in the winegrowers' meetings, and, in those regions participating in the tax strike of 1902, the workers followed the lead of the growers. This support was sporadic with no evidence of independent initiative. The harvest of 1903 changed the situation. A severe frost limited the harvest, driving prices up enough to brighten the profit picture for many growers. The larger growers were reluctant to share their good fortune with the workers, so the winter of 1903-04 saw a wave of agricultural strike activity unprecedented in French history. There is no doubt that the influence of the urban labor organizations was important for the spread of information and the raising of class consciousness both prior to and during the strikes,⁶⁴ but the strikes were local affairs, run by local union leaders, directed at local landowners for the satisfaction of local demands, and often settled by village leaders.

The Fédération des Travailleurs Agricoles du Midi, only loosely affiliated with the CGT at that time, had no hand in the 1903-04 strike movement, although they gained support in its wake as vineworkers saw the advantages of organization. The disadvantages of large-scale organization with national

political goals appeared shortly thereafter.

In December, 1904 the Federation, following the doctrines of the CGT, staged a general strike which accomplished nothing. Early in 1905 the Federation became officially affiliated with the CGT, a further step toward communist ideological purity. The concern of the Federation with national issues was not shared by many workers who were more interested in local economic control than national revolution, with the result that the strikes in the years between 1905 and 1907 were once again the work of local organizations who were becoming, in the eyes of officials and the press, increasingly militant.

The strikes of 1903-04 had consisted primarily of parades and other public displays designed to bring public opinion to bear on the landowners. The economic position of the workers was not strong, so it appears that the social pressure was decisive in the success of the strikes. The later strikes also used this tactic to some extent, but their demands were more radical, calling for the establishment of the right to work the land. For the strikers the issue was the reduction of unemployment, but landowners and others perceived this as an attempt to gain control or ownership of the land and refused to consider such revolutionary demands.⁶⁵ Moreover, many vineworkers did not actively support movements in which revolutionary issues were important.

To understand the dissatisfaction of workers with the Federation and the right to work strikes and their eventual participation in the revolt of 1907, we must understand the peculiarities of their position. Vineworkers, despite their syndicalist activity, were not a landless proletariat. Workers in most regions owned, or could expect to inherit, from one-half to one hectare of land. Vineyards of this size were not sufficient to support a family, so wage work on the large domains was essential to the survival of the vineworkers and his family. Still, the distinctions between workers and

small proprietors were blurred enough that there was a strong feeling of shared interest. It is quite possible that many persons passed through various stages of landedness during their lifetimes, and it is certain that the small landowners had sufficient sympathy for the needs of the workers that they generally granted wage demands before the strike movements, and gave both moral and financial support to the striking workers.⁶⁶ Many could also remember the pre-phyllloxeric period when Midi viticulture was a much more artisanal mode of production. This gave the labor movement the appearance of a struggle for an older, outdated way of life; a common feature of nineteenth century urban movements, and never completely compatible with a proletarian socialist revolution. Thus,

while the tactics which the labor leaders sought to adapt and apply in the Midi were those of an industrial trade unionism, they were only partially suitable for the conditions of workers who were, first and foremost, villagers and agricultural artisans, and who above all appeared to want to avoid precisely the kind of routinized mass discipline which the heads of the Federation and the CGT expected of them.⁶⁷

The disenchantment of workers with the militant labor organizations led to a greater participation in village organizations of winegrowers. This was forbidden by the Federation as an attempt at an entente patronale. They were of the opinion that workers should not concern themselves with the terms of sale of a product which did not belong to them, and that they should abstain completely from the patronal movements for the defense of viticulture.⁶⁸ The Federation's leadership seems to have shared the government's fear that the large landowners would turn the peasantry to the support of their conservative interests. The effect of the increasing participation by workers was just the opposite. The workers felt that they could pursue their interests as landowning winegrowers without abandoning their interests as workers and without being dominated by conservative proprietors. The workers joined

forces with the smaller growers, their fellow members of the village community, but the influence of the large landowners over these two groups diminished as workers became more active. The labor movement had thus provided the winegrowers movement with an enthusiastic popular support, trained in certain forms of collective action, and frustrated with attempts to improve their situation at the expense of property, i.e., ready to cooperate in the defense of larger regional interests.⁶⁹

Politics in Burgundy

In the Midi, the national trend toward the production of high-yield wines for the mass market had created a homogeneity of product unique in French winegrowing regions. We have seen the importance of this homogeneity for the spread of collective consciousness in the southern villages. It should not be surprising, then, to discover that this expansion of ordinary wine production had a nearly opposite effect on the unity of interests of Burgundy winegrowers. It did, in fact, aggravate what Laurent calls a "traditional rivalry between Beaune and Dijon, resting on the difference of interest between producers of fine wines and producers of ordinary wines. This made any collective manifestation difficult."⁷⁰

In 1894, when meetings were held in both Beaune and Dijon, a federation of agricultural societies of the Center and East was proposed, but never formed. Similarly, a union of viticultural societies of the Côte d'Or disappeared as soon as it was born in 1895. At the Paris exposition of 1900 Burgundy presented a united front, but it was impossible to organize all the divergent groups for the exposition at Liège in 1905. The fear of being dominated by the Midi winegrowers kept Burgundians out of national organizations,

and eventually led to the first congress of the Confederation Generale des Associations Viticoles de Bourgogne, in 1906 at Macon.

The Progrès de la Côte d'Or, a daily newspaper published in Dijon, gave considerable coverage to the congress, beginning with the publication of the announcement on October 14. This announcement, signed by the presidents of several winegrowing federations, attributed the crisis and its resulting misery to fraud, and invited everyone to attend, beginning November 4th, to form an imposing demonstration.⁷¹ It appears that the turnout was imposing (2500 persons),⁷² but once again bickering over local politics prevented a strong and unified approach. When the president of the congress stated that the majority opinion that sugar should be banned had been compromised to placate the producers of fine wines, there was a renewed call from the gallery for the complete suppression of sugar. M. Pennelle, the president of the Chamber of Commerce of Beaune protested; "We desire the union of all Burgundy wine growers, but if the assembly votes the complete suppression of sugar, we will have no recourse but to leave and hold another meeting on Sunday at Beaune."⁷³ His adamant attitude results from the importance of sugar to producers of fine wines. Carnot, the right-of-center deputy from the second district of Beaune, was booed as he began to address the congress, but he appealed to them to unite in strength and not complain in division and weakness.

Camuzet, the politically agile socialist deputy of the first district of Beaune summed the situation this way, "It is essential that sugar be kept from the production of artificial wines, but one must not forget that there are interests to protect in Champagne and Burgundy for certain fine wines."⁷⁴ The resulting resolution indicates that Camuzet had a good understanding of the political realities; sugar was to be forbidden for use after the first

cuvee, and those wishing to improve the alcoholic content of their wines at the first cuvee would be permitted to do so, but would pay a surtax so that their wines could not be competitive with natural wines. The surtax would not be an intolerable burden for the producers of fine wines because the increase would not be a large percentage of their revenues. It was intended to discourage the use of sugar in ordinary wines where the making of artificial wine from sugar was more profitable than the production of natural wine. The compromise result, not wholly satisfactory to anyone, was unable to generate the fervor of Albert's condemnations of fraud.

The landowning winegrowers of Burgundy were a divided group of quarrel-
ing interests on the eve of 1907, and the only coherent representation of their interests came from politicians like Camuzet and the permanent committee of the Confederation. The permanent committee was formed of the most visible men in the various sub-regions of Burgundy and came to dominate later congresses through controls on size and agenda. It gradually became a professional lobbying organization to whom the wildly democratic manifestation of 1906 was a scene to be avoided in the future.⁷⁵ Similarly, the use of such tactics as the resignation of local governments and the refusal to pay taxes was never entertained in winegrowers' meetings, indicating an implicit faith in the responsiveness of legitimate channels to the need for change.

Burgundy's winegrowers were somewhat less united than those of the Midi, and less radical in their tactics, but they were organized in the defense of their interests. Burgundy vineworkers do not seem to have made any steps toward mobilization. When the CGT held its congress in Montpellier (1902) to lend support to the burgeoning labor movement in the Midi, it was noted that "the vineworkers' movement has not penetrated the regions of Bordeaux

and Burgundy."⁷⁶ In May, 1914, Paul Ader, president of the Midi Federation, expressed his regret that "between the regions of Beaujolais and Champagne, there did not exist a single organization of workers in Burgundy, despite the presence of some sympathetic workers."⁷⁷

The Statistique des Grèves shows not one agricultural strike in the Côte d'Or in the first decade of the twentieth century. It may be that workers participated in the village organizations of the growers and came to be controlled by the dominant groups in the Confederation just as the small growers of ordinary wines. This would be a good direction for future research, but it is sufficient for this study to note that the workers offered no independent examples of modes of action, nor did they constitute a powerful group contending for control.

Reconstructing the activities of Burgundy winegrowers during the days of May and June, 1907 is a difficult task. A thorough search of the national archive series for the police and the Justice Department turns up no reports on Burgundy for this period.⁷⁸ They contain information on the Midi events, but other regions did not draw national attention. It is tempting to infer from this that nothing of interest happened, but verification from local sources should help to cure any nagging doubts. The prefect's report which began this paper is helpful in this regard, but there are those who might argue that a political appointee stood to gain prestige from ignoring minor incidents and reporting tranquillity to a superior besieged with difficulties elsewhere. Contemporary newspaper reports might then be of interest as a third point of view.

The coverage of the Midi meetings by the Journal de Beaune⁷⁹ is interspersed with its much more extensive coverage of the running controversy between the Chamber of Commerce and the winegrowers over statements made by Ponnelle to

the parliamentary commission at the time of its visit to Beaune (April, 1907) Ponnelle had made the observation that wine of high quality had nothing to fear from the competition of Midi wines. He implied that those Burgundians who were suffering from the crisis had brought about their own misery by abandoning the traditional high quality methods in favor of higher yields in lower quality wine. This transition did indeed occur during the expansion under the Second Empire, and especially during the 1880's when the Midi was crippled by the phylloxera and Burgundy had not yet been affected. The growers argued that the merchants had urged them to make the change in order to realize higher profits for themselves during the temporary boom market in ordinary wines. Evidently the brief unity of the compromise resolutions of the 1906 congress had eroded.

There are no reports of actions by Burgundy winegrowers during this period. There is a report in the Journal de Beaune of May 30th that the departmental union of winegrowers of the Saône-et-Loire had decided to imitate the Midi and to hold a meeting of protest the following Sunday (June 2), but apparently this meeting, if held at all, did not warrant even the abbreviated coverage given the meeting at Nîmes on that date, because there is no follow-up report. By now the coincidence of negative evidence seems sufficient to conclude that Burgundy's winegrowers were indeed passive during the revolt of 1907. It would be interesting to see whether or not they also shared the political prejudice against the Midi's methods which is evident in the Journal de Beaune.

We have mentioned the expression of solidarity by the union of the Saône-et-Loire, and there are other isolated examples of support. On the fourteenth of July, Raquillet, the socialist mayor of the commune of Mercurey, refused to lower the red flag which had been raised over the town hall, explaining

that he wanted to show the proper attitude of respect for the Midi movement. He was arrested, tried, and acquitted.⁸⁰

On the ninth of July, the sub-prefect at Beaune reported to the prefect that

there were rumors circulating at Beaune that the events in the Midi had had a significant repercussion on the collection of taxes in Burgundy, but that only in four or five communes of Nolay was there any resistance.

Many winegrowers, unable to sell their harvests, are in great misery and made use of the example of the Midi, following the advice of the mayor of Paris-l'Hôpital (Saône-et-Loire) and refused to pay their taxes. There is not, however, any serious agitation, and for the moment none is expected.⁸¹

This kind of response seems less political than economic; winegrowers unable to make ends meet simply took advantage of the political climate to cut costs. There is no indication in the report that this action was accompanied by demands or threats directed against the hospital.

There were, no doubt other instances of support for the Midi movement, but the dominant feeling in the region seems to have been less than enthusiastic. At the congress of 1907 the issue was addressed directly:⁸²

M. Hucquet, of the Rhône, asked of the Congress a vote of reprimand and blame against the government who massacred our brothers in the Midi.

(Cris, Tumulte, violentes protestations dans toute la salle)

M. Jacob, mayor of Tonnerre, No politics! We are here to demand our rights, but we do not want separatist actions.

In the face of the protests of the delegates, M. Hucquet could not finish his address nor bring his proposition to a vote, censured by all the winegrowers present, who declared themselves to have come to Chalon to do a good day's work (faire de la bonne besogne) and not to get involved in politics.

Burgundy's winegrowers were indeed opposed to non-legitimate political activity.

This Congress represents the triumph of order in Burgundy's politics. Attendance was limited by the permanent commission to official representatives of

associations. Their intention was to make the meeting absolutely professional. Thus, when the president of the congress reported that syndicalist ideas had made great progress in Burgundy between the 1906 and 1907 congresses, that the people who at the time of the 1906 congress were incapable of a common effort had become aware of the value of organization and had grouped themselves under the form of associations and regional or departmental federations, he was describing a movement toward a well-organized and professional (i.e., legitimate) instrument for the defense of Burgundy viticulture. The Confederation became a lobbying organization, similar to the CGV, but without the activist preparation of the defense committees. The two regional groups joined forces just before World War I.⁸³

Regional Contrasts and Conflicts

As part of our discussion of the importance of regional unity in the protest movement we must be careful to distinguish those regional qualities and interests which were not shared by the two regions under study. The similar traditions of political radicalism which we noted at the outset do indicate that both regions had a demonstrated capacity for collective action, but do not suggest that they were in any sense united in their interests. It may have seemed implicit in that discussion that our task would be to explain why Burgundy did not join the Midi in its movement of protest, but that would be too simple a conception. There are, as we shall see, reasons to expect that Burgundy would not produce a collective movement during this period. There are also convincing reasons to expect that such a movement, if it had occurred, might have had different goals from that of the Midi. For example, in 1894 when there were meetings in Narbonne, Nîmes, and

Montpellier to organize the defense of Midi winegrowers, meetings were held in Beaune and Dijon to "respond" to those in the south by putting forward the interests of Burgundy winegrowers.⁸⁴ This attitude was the result of some real conflicts of economic interest as well as the different regional characters reflecting their different historical origins.

Several important regional conflicts of interest arose because of the different requirements of the different regional wines. Burgundy was a divided region with about half of its total wine sales coming from fine wines, and half from ordinary wines. The Midi, despite its greater size, yielded a nearly homogenous product. Fine wines and ordinary wines depended on slightly different markets for their income, and had some different input requirements. This resulted in a certain amount of intra-regional conflict in Burgundy which we shall discuss in some detail later, but it also set apart Burgundy winegrowers from Midi winegrowers.

The sugar issue was the spearhead of the war against fraud, and an important rallying point in the Midi movement. For the Midi, sugar was economic poison, serving only fraudeurs and the rich populations of the north. Thus, the population and their representatives were united in a call for some form of control on sugar which would be severe enough to prevent its use in the making of wine. Politicians naturally suggested high surtaxes, while the people more often clamored for banning its sale to wine producers. Sugar was routinely used by producers of fine wines in Burgundy and Champagne, not to enlarge their stock of wine, but to enhance its alcoholic strength. For them, it was a factor of production, not a means of fraud. This became a division issue within Burgundy, resulting in 1906 in a compromise resolution suggesting a moderate tax. Moderate demands were not a characteristic of the 1907 meetings in the Midi, so this issue must have separated the interests of Midi

growers and growers of fine wines in Burgundy.

A second issue dividing these two groups was tariff levels. A major concern of Midi growers was competition from imported wine, especially Italian and Spanish wines which were very good substitutes for their own product, having been developed during the phylloxera for exactly that purpose. The grands crus of Burgundy on the other hand, were in constant search of foreign markets for their product and in no fear that another country could reproduce their unique wine. Throughout the period of the crisis, imports were greater than exports by quantity and less in money value. (See Table 1) This indicates that imports were of cheap wines, while exports were predominantly the quality wines of Bordeaux and Burgundy. Any move toward freer trade would tend to intensify the existing situation, favoring the producers of fine wines, and hurting the interests of Midi growers. The importance of this divisive issue has continued to the present and was the main motive for the riots in Narbonne in March, 1976.⁸⁵

Ordinary wine producers in Burgundy felt themselves to be in conflict with the Midi on certain grounds also. They saw their troubles as being due, in large measure, to the competition of Midi wines. Camuzet (deputy from the first district of Beaune) argued their case in the Chamber, saying "if our wines sell poorly, it is because of the unfair competition of Midi wines."⁸⁶ In 1900, the department Côte d'Or imported 200,000 hl. of Midi wine, even though its own wine was selling at low prices. Part of the problem was attributed to freight rates which offered a lower per kilometer rate to Midi growers than to those closer to the big northern population centers. At a congress in 1906, Burgundy's winegrowers demanded that rates be equalized by distance, to restore their natural advantage of geographic location. Later congresses mellowed this tone of antagonism toward the Midi by suggesting

that train rates be equalized, but also lowered for all wine shipments.

Explanations

Having examined the evidence of social and economic differences as well as the political contrasts to be explained, several explanations present themselves. One candidate is a cultural interpretation.

We have mentioned that the Midi revolt was in part an expression of regional interests against a national policy perceived as favoritism toward other regions. Even urban workers gave their support to the winegrowers movement and received the brunt of the repression. The strength of this internal unity was no doubt dependent on a shared feeling of external separation, not only from the northern industrial and sugar interests, but from all of France. The strength of Midi regionalism has deep historical roots. The name Languedoc comes from the generic name for a collection of dialects spoken in the south of France during the Middle Ages. They became perverted to patois under the influence of French from the North during the eighteenth century. Patois reached its peak in the middle of the nineteenth century;

Industry and commerce of the nineteenth century grew up speaking French, while agriculture remained the sphere of patois, with the result that the language dichotomy came to approximate to the dichotomy between town and country.

For the peasants it is the language of the local, as opposed to national traditions, of proverbs and invective, of merry-making and salty jokes whose humour, it is asserted, is lost if translated into French.⁸⁷

The peasants and recent urban migrants of this region shared this cultural heritage with a tradition of opposition to northern influence. This Mediterranean regional character is frequently described as hotheaded and prone to fits of temper; such statements, as one might expect, were especially

common during the wine crisis. Yet the revolt of 1907 was not the first time southern localities set themselves in opposition to the rest of France; histories of the Commune indicate a strong undercurrent of regionalism (as opposed to nationalism) in the supporters of that movement.

Burgundy, though not without its own proud cultural heritage, was better integrated into French society by the late nineteenth century. Characterizations of the Burgundy region during the crisis tend to emphasize its loyalty to the republican principles of the government and its hard work in the face of disaster.⁸⁸ There is a good amount of literature on the individualist tendencies of winegrowers and their personal pride in their product,⁸⁹ but this did not preclude strong regional pride, as the agitation by Burgundy winegrowers for restrictions on the label "de Bourgogne" indicates.⁹⁰ This kind of behavior on the part of other agricultural groups, such as wheat growers, might seem absurd, but no one with a taste for wine will fail to emphasize regional differences. In the late 1870's when the phylloxera raged in the Midi, it has not yet touched Burgundy, leading the winegrowers of that region to assert that "the phylloxera is in the arms,"⁹¹ an obvious expression of their condescending attitude toward the complaining Midi growers. These cultural differences are an appealing explanation of the different political response, but seem to be most often asserted at exactly those times when political activities differ. Characterizations such as rebellious or respectful are not very meaningful when they are made during periods of rebellion or quiescence, and the political history of Burgundy in the mid-nineteenth century indicates that they were not always calm. For these reasons, and by general predisposition, this study shall seek an explanation in other differences.

A somewhat more convincing argument can be based on economic differences. One such alternative is that the two regions were dependent in different degrees on the wine market. This is supported by a recent study which categorized French viticultural regions according to whether winegrowing was the single crop (monoculture) or dominant among several (polycultural).⁹² The Midi is the major example of the first, Burgundy ranks among the second. Over-reliance on viticulture was a common criticism of the Midi, and Mercurey, one of the few communes in Burgundy which we found to be active in 1907,⁹³ is also selected by one author as the best example of a uniquely viticultural commune in southern Burgundy.⁹⁴ At this point, however, support runs out for this theory. In 1907 there was a flurry of concern over the deepening crisis in Burgundy, prompting the Syndicat Viticole de la ^Acôte dijonnaise to propose that monoculture be abolished in that region.⁹⁵ This indicates that dependence on winegrowing was seen as causing severe hardships in Burgundy just as it was in the Midi.

A common explanation of collective protest is that it comes in response to sudden downturns in the quality of economic life, or that economic hardship creates political unrest. Does this explain what we now know of political activities in the two regions? If we limit our attention to the period of May-June, 1907, our answer seems clear; the timing of the crisis in the two regions was such that Burgundy winegrowers were significantly better off in this period and could easily be assumed to have had less economic motivation for collective action. But the use of measures of economic hardship as explanatory variables in predicting collective action has recently come under criticism, so perhaps we should examine this attractively simple conclusion more fully.

Snyder and Tilly assert that "under some conditions hardship does, we concede, precipitate rebellion. But we do not think there is any general connection between collective violence and hardship such that an observer could predict one from the other."⁹⁶ Empirically, they find no significant correlation between economic quality of life variables and level of collective violence in France as a whole from 1830 to 1960. This suggests two tests of the explanatory power of economic hardship in our own case; did collective extra-legitimate activity occur at times which were not times of increasing hardship, and did times of hardship pass without evoking mass protest? The answer to both questions is, of course, yes. The year following the harvest of 1903 was a peak period of collective action in the Midi, but economic conditions were improving at that time. The years 1901 and 1902 appear to have been the worst of the crisis period, especially in Burgundy, but there was no great protest against this sudden economic decline. The weakness of our simple economic argument when it is removed from the narrow limits of the 1907 revolt indicate that it is unable to adequately account for the formation of political attitudes in the two regions over the longer term.

All the alternatives discussed to this point are based on real differences between the two regions, just as real as the political differences. But correlation and causation are vastly different phenomena and none of these differences, nor all taken together is a satisfactory general explanation of mobilization for collective action.

Harvey Smith has suggested that the activism of the Midi winegrowers can be understood as a valiant but doomed defense of an artisanal mode of production and way of life.⁹⁷ Such responses are not uncommon in the history of urban artisanal groups,⁹⁸ but may seem inappropriate to a discussion of a peasant group. A closer look at the production of wine in the two regions

will show that the model of a skilled trade is a good description of wine-growing, particularly in Burgundy where the persistence of the skilled production of fine wines is highly reminiscent of another familiar theme in French economic history: the endurance of a luxury trade based on skilled labor and a market with a taste for quality.

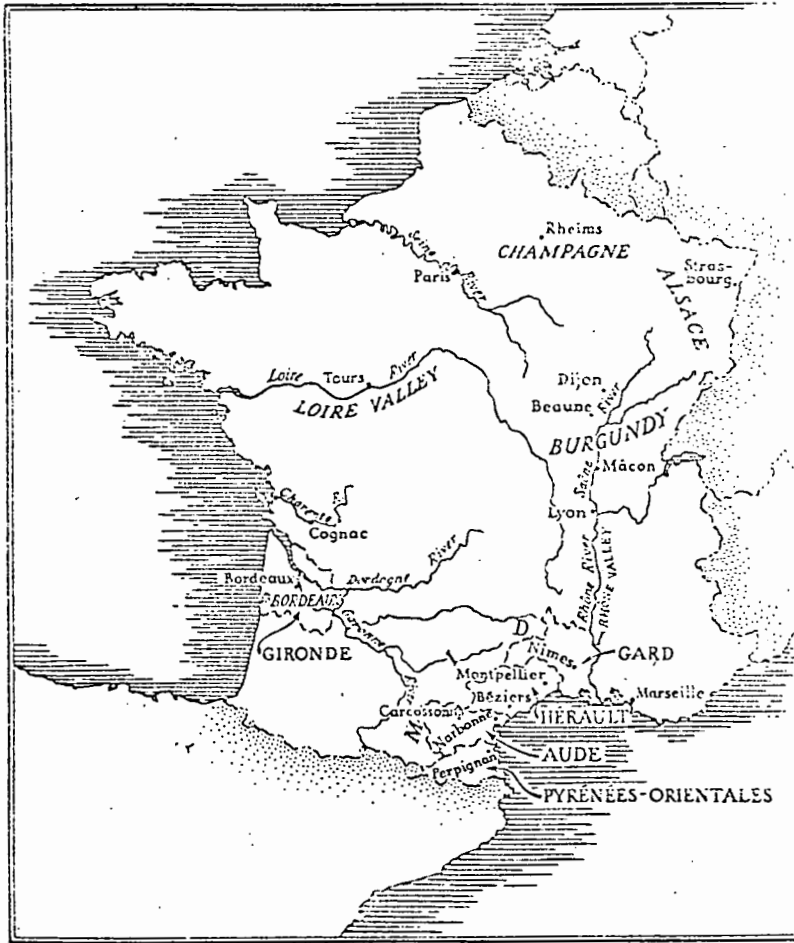
Recall our earlier discussion of technological and institutional transformations under the crisis of the phylloxera and the price depression. A crisis commonly implies a transition to some new set of conditions, and this is particularly true of economic crises. The two regions were adjusting in different ways to the new economic conditions in the national economy and the wine market, and these patterns of adjustment had different effects on the social position of winegrowers. This pressure on their status in their work and community life is the explanation of our problem. The answer lies in the experience of that amorphous class which formed the bulk of the population of both these winegrowing regions; part wageworker and part landowner, and dependent on both sources of income for its livelihood. This is the class which led the strikes against the large landowners and then joined them to protest the depression in all of Midi viticulture. This is the class which sat silently in the villages of Burgundy. In the south it was threatened by the ascendance of an immigrant proletariat, and the dual loss of status as skilled worker and potential or actual landowner. In Burgundy it was buffeted by the price squeeze and forced off the land in increasing numbers, but those who remained enjoyed the continuation of skilled employment on small and moderate-sized domains.

In a study limited to one region which did produce a protest movement it is difficult to be certain which of the various observed dynamics was responsible for a particular outcome. The advantage of a comparison with a

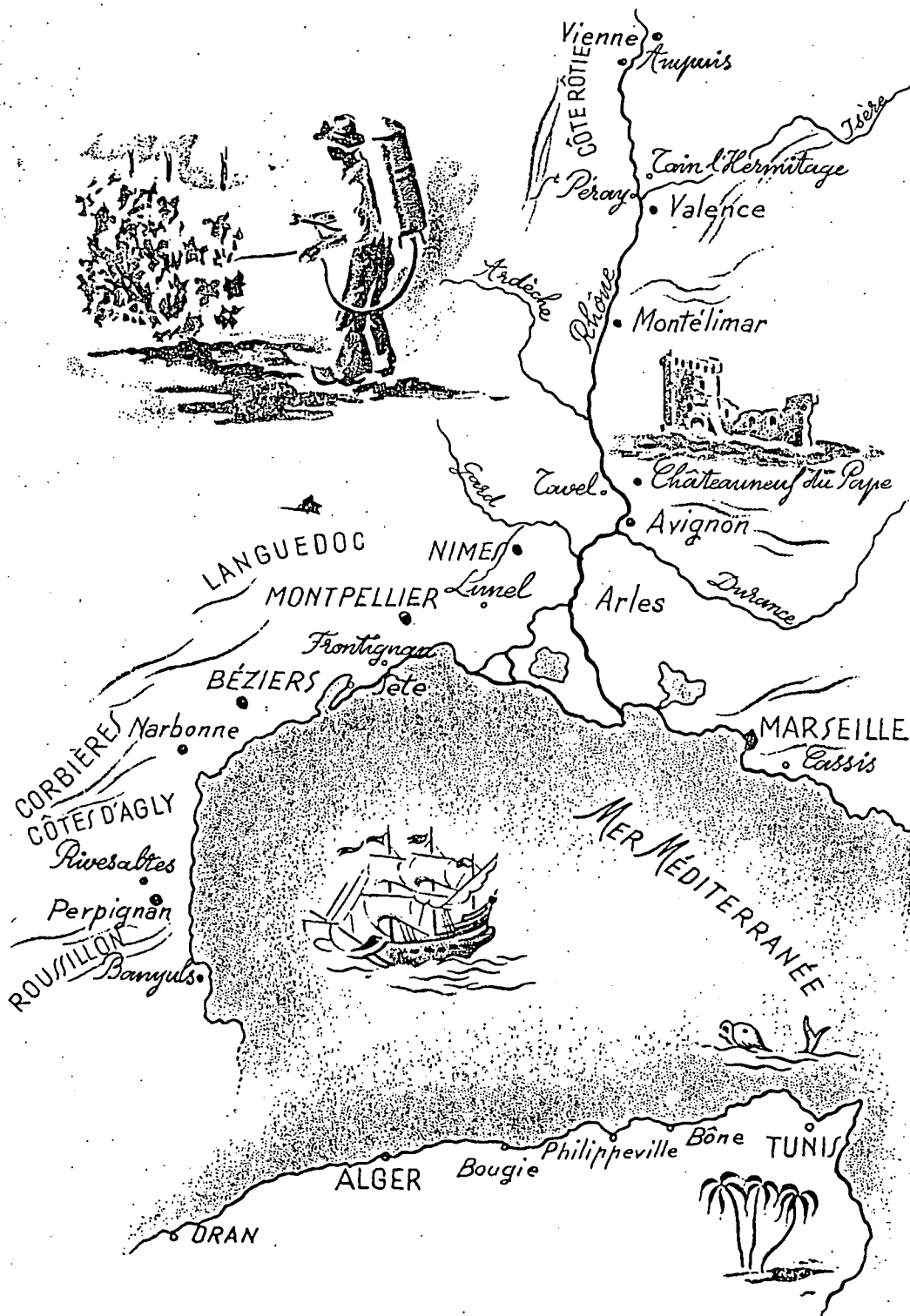
quiescent region is that many potential explanations can be placed in proper perspective. Most importantly, the real bases of political activity appear much more clearly by the contrast with another region. In this case, Harvey Smith's interpretation gains credence by contrast with the nearly opposite conditions in Burgundy.

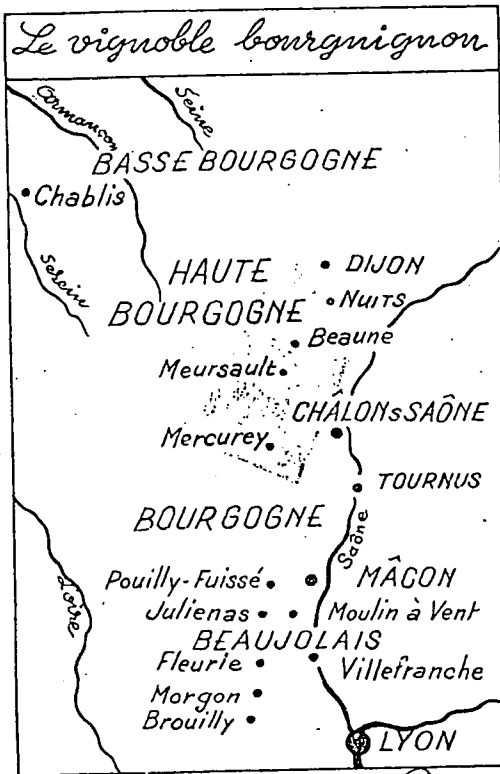
We conclude that the absorption of viticulture into the national economy made it subject to the same pressures felt by other industries in a capitalist society and selected only certain forms for survival. Where this process of capitalist rationalization brought with it a proletarianization of a landed artisanal labor force there was conflict and protest. Where the adjustment favored the continuation of traditional forms, even on a reduced scale, political activity was limited to legitimate republican forms. This fulfills our earlier hope that a comparative study might add to our understanding of the general phenomenon of collective action.

MAP I

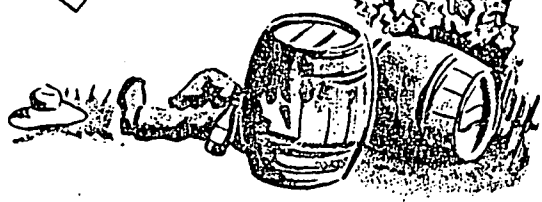


THE MAJOR WINEGROWING REGIONS OF FRANCE





DIJON



Graph II

FRENCH WINE PRODUCTION AND PRICES
1865-1909

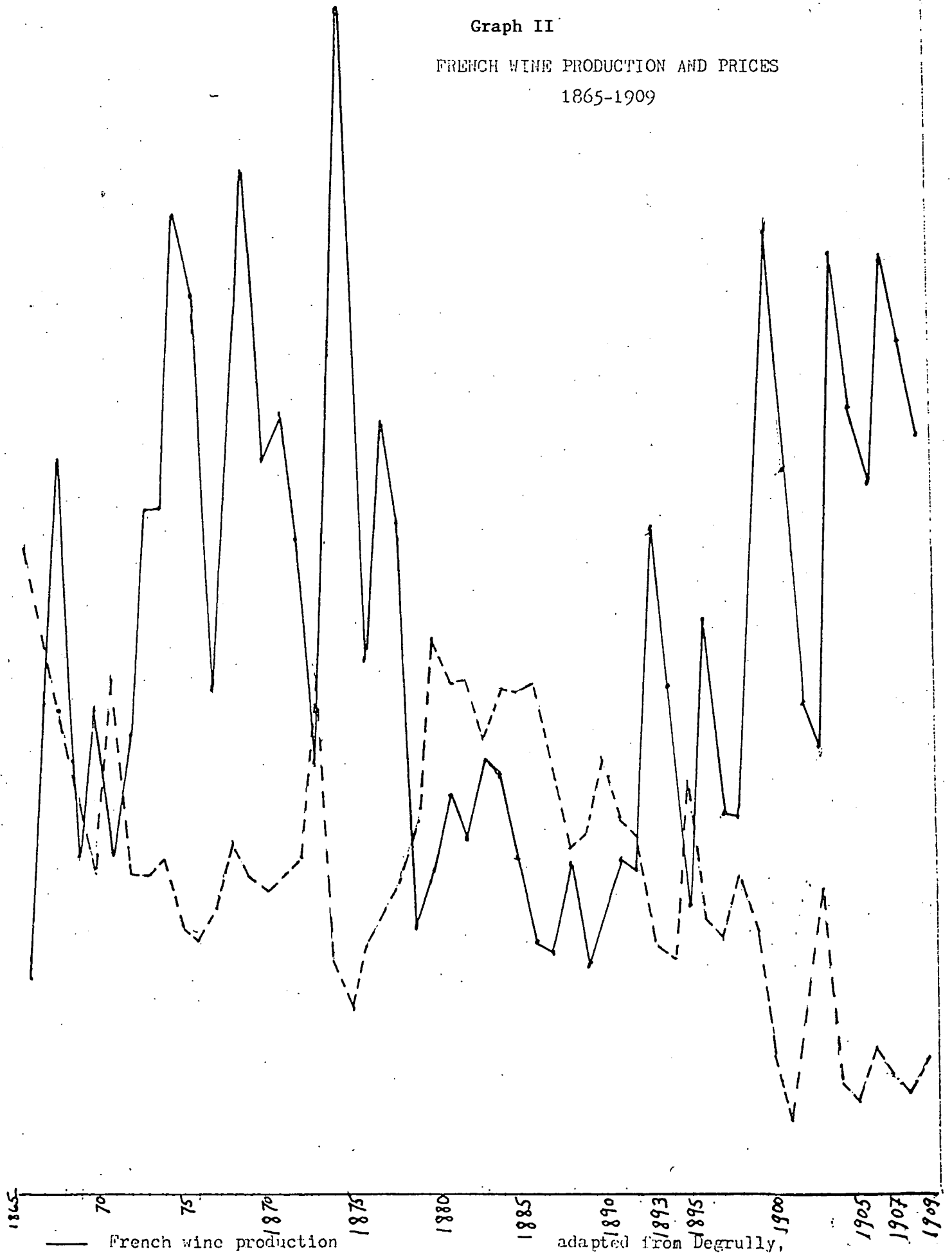


TABLE 1

TRADE SURPLUSES AND DEFICITS

<u>Year</u>	<u>Quantity in hectoliters</u>	<u>Value in millions of francs</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Value</u>
1877	+ 2,394,274	+191.5	1892	-7,555,000	- 92
1878	+ 1,193,106	+142	1893	-4,326,000	+ 5.5
1879	+ 108,626	+137	1894	-2,771,000	+ 88
1880	- 4,732,993	- 68.5	1895	-4,660,000	+ 11
1881	- 5,266,561	-111	1896	-7,035,000	- 51
1882	- 4,918,463	- 68	1897	-5,756,000	- 23
1883	- 6,439,621	-140	1898	-6,989,000	- 91
1884	- 5,656,109	-107	1899	-6,748,000	- 57
1885	- 5,580,889	-133	1900	-3,312,000	+ 72
1886	- 8,301,042	-258	1901	-1,698,000	+144
1887	- 9,880,070	-220	1902	-2,035,000	+122
1888	- 9,946,285	-195	1903	-4,463,000	+ 43
1889	- 8,309,059	-132	1904	-5,044,000	+ 50
1890	- 8,668,000	- 81	1905	-2,563,000	+139
1891	-10,229,000	-156	1906	-3,653,000	+ 94

Computation based on statistics for imports and exports in Degruilly,
op. cit.

TABLE 2
PRICE MOVEMENTS OF MIDI, BURGUNDY
FINE, AND BURGUNDY ORDINARY WINES
DURING CRISIS 1900-07

YEAR	MIDI	BURGUNDY	
		<u>ordinary</u>	<u>fine</u>
mean			
1890-99	16	43	679
1900	7	20	240
1901	5	16	200
1902	10	23	230
1903	25	32	420
1904	6	30	650
1905	7	14	200
1906	6	21	800
1907	9	28	550

Midi figures are in francs per hectoliter paid to producer, taken from Warner, p. 20.

Figures for Burgundy ordinary wines are in francs per hectoliter paid to producer, adapted from Laurent, Methodologie, p. 177.

Figures for Burgundy fine wines are in francs per barrel (456 liters) paid to producer, adapted from Laurent, Methodologie, p. 176.

TABLE 3

PRODUCTION AND PRICES 1890-1909

<u>Year</u>	<u>Quantity harvested in hectoliters</u>	<u>Avg. Price per hl. paid to producer</u>	<u>Value of harvest</u>
1890	27,416,327 hl.	36.10 F.F.	988,793,866 F.F.
1891	30,139,755	32.30	1,008,998,590
1892	29,082,134	31.30	911,932,383
1893	50,069,770	25.10	1,256,527,529
1894	39,052,809	23.80	928,929,995
1895	26,687,575	34.80	829,851,717
1896	44,656,153	26.25	1,173,661,485
1897	32,350,722	24.97	808,029,409
1898	32,382,359	28.88	961,760,756
1899	47,907,680	25.48	1,249,385,747
1900	67,352,261	17.96	1,264,255,916
1901	57,963,514	14.43	870,301,680
1902	39,883,783	20.23	846,974,010
1903	35,402,336	28.12	948,380,760
1904	66,016,567	16.73	1,223,891,141
1905	56,666,104	15.59	883,125,378
1906	52,079,052	18.36	956,283,983
1907	66,070,273	16.91	1,117,343,626
1908	60,545,265	16.00	965,375,747
1909	54,445,860	18.00	999,671,963

Adapted from Degruilly, Paul Essai historique et économique sur la production et le marché des vins en France, Paris, 1910, pp. 289, 304, and 319.

TABLE 1³

67
58

TRADE SURPLUSSES AND DEFICITS

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1891	- 10,229,000	- 156	1906	- 3,653,000	+ 94

Computation based on statistics for imports and exports in Degruilly, op.cit.

TABLE 2

68
59

PRICE MOVEMENTS OF MIDI, BURGUNDY
FINE, AND BURGUNDY ORDINARY WINES
DURING CRISIS 1900-07¹⁶

YEAR	MIDI	BURGUNDY	
		ordinary	fine
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660

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81. A.D. Côte d'Or 20M 359.
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