

Wine Tourism in the Temecula Valley

Neoliberal Development Policies and Their Contradictions

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ABSTRACT: Wine tourism is a growing phenomenon, with tourists enjoying not only wine but a rural lifestyle that is associated with winegrowing areas and the elusive essence of *terroir*. The Temecula Valley in southern California, a small wine-producing region and wine tourism destination, is experiencing state-led plans for a vast expansion of production and tourism capacity. This article traces the challenges inherent in this development process, and questions the sustainability of such plans regarding the very environment the wine tourists seek out, especially regarding the availability of natural resources, mainly water, needed to fulfil these plans. The article concludes with a call for an applied anthropology of policy that is centred on the articulations of the state and neoliberal capitalism.

KEYWORDS: anthropology of policy, applied anthropology, California, development, sustainability, Temecula Valley, the state, *terroir*, water, wine tourism

Introduction

On 9 July 1976, at a luncheon at New York City's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel to commemorate the United States' bicentennial, New York Governor Hugh L. Carey proposed a toast to Queen Elizabeth II, the guest of honour. The Queen stood and with a glass of white wine in her hand proposed a toast to the President of the United States. The wine she was drinking was a 1974 white Riesling from Callaway Winery in Temecula, southern California – a winery and wine-producing region then largely unknown to the wine-drinking world. It was the only wine served at the luncheon and the Queen, who usually drank orange juice on such occasions, even requested a second glass and asked to meet the vintner (see Figure 1).¹ This event put little Temecula – located ap-

proximately between Los Angeles and San Diego – on the winemaking map. Nearly forty years later, the California wine industry has an annual impact of US\$61.5 billion on the state's economy and an economic impact of US\$121.8 billion on the entire U.S. economy. The United States is the world's largest wine market where wine sales were US\$30 billion by 2010, becoming the world's largest consumer by volume, surpassing perennial leaders Italy and France (The Wine Institute 2011). State winegrowers have developed considerable political clout (Colman 2008), backed up by such lobbying groups and organizations as The Wine Institute, the California Association of Winegrape Growers, and the Family Winemakers of California. Furthermore, California is the most popular tourist destination in the world, and wine tourism is a major attraction – according to



Figure 1: Queen Elizabeth II drinking Callaway white Riesling wine from Temecula, California at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City, 9 July 1976. Photo © Helen Marcus

the Wine Institute, 20.7 million tourists visited California wine regions in 2010 and spent US\$2.1 billion in the state (The Wine Institute 2011; cf. Hall et al. 2000; Carlsen and Charters 2006; Gmelch and Gmelch 2011). And the Temecula Valley is now an established wine-growing region and itself a tourist destination. Yet, a vast neoliberal state-driven development plan in the process of implementation could provide challenges to the conditions that make the Temecula Valley a saleable – and consumable – tourist space-cum-‘place’ with its award-winning wines and rural vistas. This calls for an anthropology of policy that considers the multiple articulations of state, capital and class(-making) as a necessary basis of applied anthropological interventions.

Towards a Temecula *Terroir*

The present-day California wine industry and wine tourism destination may be centred on the Napa and Sonoma valleys in northern California where the modern industry dates to the mid-nineteenth century, but other regions in the state boast commercial wine production and emerging tourism facilities as well. Southern California has a tradition of winemaking dating to the eighteenth-century Spanish mission era (Muscatine, Amerine and Thompson

1984; Pinney 1989, 2005). In the Temecula Valley, the Spanish friars started wine production in the area in the colonial period. But the present-day wine industry can only be traced back to 1968 when Vincenzo and Audrey Cilurzo planted the first vines (Yelvington interview, Murrieta, CA, 8 July 2012) in the midst of a real-estate boom in the area. Entrepreneur Ely Callaway began farming grapes in 1969 and opened the first winery in 1974, discovering and developing a Temecula *terroir* from the sun-baked scrubland to produce wine fit for a queen (Hudson 1979). John Poole opened Mt. Palomar Winery in 1975 and the Cilurzoes opened theirs in 1978, and slowly wineries began to be established to the east of the town of Temecula along Rancho California Road. The completion of the I-15 freeway in the early 1980s also contributed to the region’s access to the population centres of San Diego and Los Angeles, converting the town of Temecula, incorporated in 1989, into one of the many bedroom community suburbs in the southern California conurbation. The population growth has continued: as of 2000, there were 57,716 people living there, and by 2010 the population had swelled to 100,097.

Today, Temecula has nearly forty wineries (Temecula Valley Winegrowers Association 2012), and there were two dozen more wine grape growers in the valley. The wineries are possible because of a very favourable microclimate and geology (Birnbaum and Cato 2000; for local histories that touch upon the development of the wineries, see Brigandi 1998; Knight 1999; Danson-Lucy 2003; Barnett et al., 2006; Farnbach, Cilurzo and Cilurzo 2009). Nearly all of the wine is sold on the wineries’ premises in their tasting rooms (see Figure 2) and to the wineries’ wine clubs. Most of the wineries present themselves not as ‘wine capitalism’ but as being family-owned enterprises. These firms cooperate and share innovations (Miller 2012; Miller and Keil 2012).

Wineries in the Temecula Valley produce award-winning wines. South Coast Winery



Figure 2: Wine tourists disport themselves in a winery's tasting room

won the Golden Bear Award in 2008 and again in 2009, given by the California State Fair to the state's best winery, marking the first time in the over 150 years of the competition that a winery from southern California had won. One winery owner told us that these victories gave legitimacy to the Temecula Valley as a wine-producing region as a whole (Yelvington interview with Denis Ferguson, managing partner, Europa Village, Temecula, CA, 3 June 2011). The area is heavily marketed as a wine tourism destination by the Temecula Valley Winegrowers Association (TVWA) and the Temecula Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau. Located about 60 miles from San Diego and 90 miles from Los Angeles, there are around 22 million people living in the general area. This presents a lucrative potential market for the wineries. Sophisticated tourism mar-

keting schemes draw wine tourists to the area for wine tastings, special events throughout the year associated with the wine industry, weddings and corporate meetings, and encourage them to indulge themselves in spas, in gourmet restaurants, and at jazz concerts, mostly aimed at a 'middle-brow' crowd. South Coast, for example, offers all of these services along with appearances by popular entertainers (see Figure 3).

Ongoing construction by several wineries of luxury villas, timeshare condominiums and gated residential communities amidst the vineyards indicates a desire for further growth and an expansion into upscale markets. But critics say that Temecula Valley wineries will have to choose between being known for producing quality wines or being known as a party destination (Comiskey 2011). And be-



Figure 3: South Coast Winery’s promotions

sides the wineries, tourists are attracted to the Pechanga Resort and Casino complex, built in 2001 by the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians at the cost of US\$262 million. And there is ‘Old Town Temecula’ with its 1890s storefronts, antique shops, bluegrass festivals and hot rod shows. A study published in December 2011 shows that travel spending in Temecula Valley in 2010 was US\$556.8 million (Dean Runyan Associates 2011).

Neoliberalism and Wine Tourism

That the potential for the area wineries to become engines of economic growth was put into official development policy reveals one facet of the significant investment in tourism promotion. It is the development and implications of

this policy that are the focus of this article. Led by a Riverside County supervisor, Jeff Stone, the Southern California Wine Country Community Plan and associated activities were initiated in 2008 to create changes in existing zoning regulations and to provide economic incentives to more than triple the number of wineries to over 120 and dramatically increase the acreage under wine grape cultivation by the year 2020. A series of community meetings with the plan’s board of directors – recruited by Stone and consisting of winery owners, residents, governmental service providers, environmentalists and other stakeholders – and members of Riverside County’s planning department spawned a number of policy documents and directives. The planners created elaborate plans for dramatically increasing the existing 5,185-acre (2,098 hectare) vineyard

zone the county created in 1994 to regulate growth in Wine Country by putting nearly 20,000 acres (8,094 hectares) of rural Temecula Valley into three distinct zones: hospitality, residential and equestrian. Wineries, hotels, bed-and-breakfast establishments and the wineries' meeting rooms and entertainment centres, were designated for the hospitality zone. Because the area is home to already-existing upscale residential communities nestled in the Wine Country, the plan would ostensibly create buffer zones between wineries, the residents, who often complain about the noise coming from the wineries, especially when there is nighttime entertainment, and horse ranches that sit adjacent to Wine Country. Smaller wineries would be allowed in mixed residential-hospitality zones. A state-mandated Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was commissioned and the December 2011 report laid out potential problems and their possible avenues of mitigation (RBF Consulting 2011). The plan promised to 'preserve the area's distinct rural character, as well as its economic longevity', and claimed it would 'present policies for preserving, enhancing or developing this area in a manner compatible with the values, resources, and aspirations of the community' (see the plan and associated documents in County of Riverside n.d.).

The state's involvement in this project is a near textbook example of neoliberalism at work. According to David Harvey, neoliberalism is 'a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices' (Harvey 2005: 2), resulting in a system of 'accumulation by dispossession'. For Harvey, neoliberalism in action entails the 'privatization and commodification' of public goods, such as nature, 'financialization', in

which any kind of good can be turned into an instrument of economic speculation, and the 'management and manipulation of crises', including financial melt-downs (Riverside County has experienced unemployment rates significantly above the state and national figures; see State of California 2012). And, finally, for Harvey neo-liberalism entails 'state redistribution', in which the state becomes an agent of the upward redistribution of wealth (Harvey 2005: 159–64, *passim*; cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Greenhouse 2009; Hilgers 2011; Hyatt 2011; Kingfisher and Maskovsky 2008; and Wacquant 2012).

Here, the state, and elected officials like Jeff Stone, has to appear to balance the interests of groups whose subjectivities they help to form. Residents of the Wine Country were leery about the plan because in general they were opposed to their taxes being used to subsidize the wineries. When in 2010 part of the plan was approved by the county's Board of Supervisors to improve the roads on which the wineries are located, residents complained that the projects were to benefit the wineries and not the residents. One resident criticized the plan and Supervisor Stone: 'If somebody has a dream for Wine Country, I think they should put up the money required to bring that dream forward' (quoted in Downey 2010a). Much of the residents' discourse revolves around their fears that more development in the area will bring the congestion, traffic and noise they moved there to avoid. 'Part of the charm of Wine Country is that it is more rural', said Dan Matrisciano, a retired aerospace engineer who had lived in the middle of the vineyard zone for ten years. 'If they get too much in here, I think it might kill it. Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe people would like a Wine Country in the style of Las Vegas, but I doubt it' (quoted in Downey 2010b). When residents were briefed on the plan in early public meetings designed as informational exchanges, they complained that the plan did not ensure an adequate separation between the hospitality and residential

zones, as it would still allow wineries in the residential areas. Elisa Niederecker, a twenty-year resident of Wine Country, and a member of the plan's advisory committee, captured many of the residents' concerns when she said 'Homeowners next to very large, commercial venues is a disaster waiting to happen'. She added: 'It's going to be very, very hard to keep the rural atmosphere when you've got so much commercialism', saying 'My fear is it's going to get too big, too fast, and there's going to be non-stop feuding' between winery owners and residents (quoted in Klampe 2011; see Downey 2011). At least two formal groups formed to oppose the plan. In March 2011, Protect Wine Country formed and started litigation against Riverside County in order to stop building permits for a wide number of projects the group saw as being inconsistent with maintaining the rural character of the area. The

group proclaimed: 'Our mission is simple – to stop the urbanization of Wine Country' (Protect Wine Country n.d.). And Save Temecula Wine Country (n.d.) stated that they 'embrace a vision for responsible growth that takes into account the rights of all stakeholders, while preserving the equestrian and rural lifestyle that has long been a part of Temecula'. And it was not just the residents who were worried over the style and pace of development. The established winegrowers expressed concern that the plan would not live up to its goals of protecting vineyard land. In August 2012, the TVWA circulated a petition to Supervisor Stone, urging interested parties to sign by warning that 'Temecula Valley's wine industry is at risk', imploring the Board of Supervisors to '*prioritize vineyard development over interests that are incompatible with Wine Country's unique agricultural character*' (emphasis in original),



Figure 4: A rural Temecula Valley vineyard

reasoning that vineyards are needed, after all, for wine, that they provide noise and traffic buffers that protect residents from the impact of visitors, and that 'Vineyards create the unique, agricultural character than attracts millions of visitors and tax dollars to the Temecula Valley for an authentic, rural, agrotourism experience'.

Thus, the encouragement of further intensification comes with unforeseen and potentially deleterious effects on the industry and region that these plans were meant to promote. These effects include further strains put on the environment, especially on water resources, challenges to the labour regime, increased conflicts between wineries and homeowners and real estate developers, and, ultimately, the potential to despoil the very place that is being commodified for its rurality, agricultural feel, its characteristic sense of place, and the cultural and physical landscape that accounts for the specific qualities of the wine – in short, the *terroir*. It is apparent that hidden in the plan were built-in implications and assumptions regarding the relationships between class fractions – winery owners and agro-capitalists and landowners and residential housing developers, horse ranch owners and operators – and the neoliberal(izing) state: The interests of the winery owners seemed to be favoured in this equation, but even the winery owners through the TVWA expressed concern for the implications of further growth in the valley. In addition, an analysis of the plan through the lens of the anthropology of policy² reveals several lacunae in the plan that we might identify as three main contradictions. Here we mean 'contradictions' in the dialectical tradition not simply as logical inconsistencies, but as conflictual social-structural oppositions, such as when in actuality one need is satisfied at the expense of another. One contradiction has to do with the assumptions regarding the availability of labour, one is surrounding the idea of *terroir* and the commodification of place and the other related to the 'political economy of

the environment' (Carrier and West 2009) and resource use.

Concealing the Commodification of Labour

Vineyard and winery workers did not have such venues as public meetings and websites to announce their concerns. Vineyard workers are drawn from the large (over 600,000) but clandestine labour force of skilled Mexican migrant farmworkers. These workers are of varying legal statuses with respect to citizenship and work permits, and are located within transnational migratory circuits, maintaining social relationships on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. Given these relationships and the role of the border and immigration laws, the workers are motivated to work hard. Many of these highly skilled and specialized workers individually harvest a ton (907 kg) or more each day during the four-month harvest season. This compares favourably to other wine-growing regions around the world. Despite experiments with new trellising techniques in order to facilitate mechanical harvesting when possible given the geography and the growers' financial situations, worker skill combined with worker economic and legal vulnerability ensures a general resistance to mechanization in favour of migrant worker labour in California wine grape harvesting.

Workers in the Temecula Valley are recruited in various ways. Some form a year-round staff for the wineries. Others are recruited by the labour-contracting and farm-management firms operating in the valley. Still others maintain informal relationships with the winery owners and return to work for the same owner year after year. They form a non-unionized workforce. Winery labour is segmented along various social lines (e.g., ethnicity, class, gender, legal status), as bartenders and other winery workers are drawn from the native U.S. labour force.

The Wine Country plan had as one of its justifications the increasing of employment in the tourism and related sectors. However, it assumed the availability and exploitability of unlimited supplies of vulnerable farmworker labour. While the plan provided for a number of contingencies with respect to zoning and environmental impact and its mitigation, workers and their status and their conditions of employment and living were left to 'the market'. In discussing worker housing, Supervisor Stone said: 'There is nothing in the plan that has to do with migrant housing. That would be something that the businesses ... would probably have to arrange somehow with the growth of the agricultural area. It is just part of capitalism. Someone is going to have to make those type of arrangements for those workers' (Yelvington interview with Hon. Jeff Stone, Temecula, CA, 9 May 2011). The question for an anthropology of policy is whether this is merely an accidental omission, or if it clearly demarcates the boundaries between state intervention and what is to be left to 'the market' under neoliberal regimes. The answer might very well be 'yes' to both, and 'yes' further still to the acknowledgment that such development plans which ostensibly fail to account for labour's production of the object (wine, vineyards, etc.) to be commodified as well as for the conditions of the reproduction of labour (housing) are really indicative of how labour and the contributions of workers are subsumed and hidden in the wine production and consumption process. There are a number of ways the exploitative labour practices are hidden in general (Dilley 2005), and this seems especially so for immigrant vineyard workers in the California wine industry, as McLean's anthropological research in Napa Valley suggests (McLean 2010). In the case of wine production, a key component to the commodification process is to obscure the extraction of surplus value and, instead, replace even a tacit acknowledgment of this process with representations of taste and authenticity.

Temecula *Terroir* and Wine Tourism: The Commodification of Place

Observers, whether the *Los Angeles Times* (Comiskey 2011), or the local *Press-Enterprise* (Klampe 2011), agree that the Temecula Valley Wine Country is in the midst of an 'identity crisis' and has come to a 'crossroads' as the contradictions between the very features that make it a tourist attraction – wine, rural wineries, authentic experiences – and the drive to (over-) commodify and 'brand' a sense of place as a tourist destination are revealed (Murray 2012). A recent journalistic account of the area asks 'Is Temecula Valley big enough for serious vintners and serious partyers?' going on to provide the following description:

Rather than a wine destination, the Temecula Valley has become something of a wine playground, where play wines upstage real wines, where 'wine country' is a carefully cultivated affair that has less to do with what vineyards produce than with how they look – all in the service of a tourist trade run slightly amok.

On any given weekend, stretch limos and party vans stream down Rancho California Road filled with partygoers. Cruise ship patrons, on dry land for a few days in San Diego, are carted in by the busload. In winery tasting rooms, gewgaws outnumber corkscrews by impressive ratios. Wineries give up their crushpads for weddings, concerts, corporate retreats, barbecue bashes. It's said that women of a certain age spill out of white stretch Hummers to pose for pictures in front of the entrance sign at Cougar Winery – tops, evidently, are optional. More than any other wine region in California, Temecula is a place to party (Comiskey 2011: E1, E4).³

Even if these contradictions are resolved as time goes on, there is an ever-present contradiction at a deeper level in wine tourism in general and in Temecula Valley tourism in particular. This contradiction centres on the concept of *terroir*, a French term referring generally to the 'taste of place' traditionally associated with wine, though it has since been adopted in the artisan production of cheese (Paxson 2012),

honey (Bishop 2005) and tequila (Bowen and Valenzuela Zapata 2009). In general, *terroir* is used in reference to the growing area, covering all the associated variables including sun, rain, temperature, soil and slope, but it also entails the winegrowers' agricultural practices, from perceived optimal time for pruning, degree of vine pruning, time of harvest, to the choice of harvest methods (van Leeuwen and Seguin 2006; Trubek 2008). Discourses of *terroir* involve evoking notions of the distinction and of the authenticity of place-as-nature. However, this notion obscures and ignores the role human hands have played in the construction of this 'natural' environment (Ulin 1995, 1996).

Imbued with perceived authenticity, the origins of place are used as a feature to push sales and drive business (and development). Place-based marketing is common throughout wine industry in selling place and selling taste, as can be seen in the distinguished appellations of France (Colman 2008; Trubek 2008). In smaller operations such as those found in the burgeoning Temecula Valley, the marketing of place is even more explicit, as potential buyers must literally visit the place in order to consume the products (of which wine is only one). The wineries do not produce enough wine to become engaged in national or international distribution networks, nor do they seem interested in doing so. It is very, very difficult to obtain Temecula Valley wine outside of the Temecula Valley. This re-union of the consumer with the site of production contributes and reinforces the 'authentic' wine-tasting experience (Weston 2003; cf. Cohen 1988; Bruner 2004). This produced perception of de-commodification allows participants to feel as if they are part of the locale, adds to the tourism experience, and contributes to a feeling of distinction and taste. As discussed with respect to migrant labour, much of the production process is still hidden.

What is ultimately sold, marketed and 'branded' in wine destinations is an idealized version of a place, a time and a taste. Through

geographic 'branding', place is marketed as much as the product – the actual product of wine and the augmented products and events, such as scenery, cuisine and relaxation in a certain style (Hall et al. 2000; Carlsen and Charters 2006; Poitras and Getz 2006; Barber, Taylor and Deale 2010; Gmelch and Gmelch 2011). Wine consumption is just one aspect of a draw for Temecula Valley visitors; the equestrian region and Old Town Temecula are big draws as well, but the wine and wine tourism events do serve to accentuate the *terroir* and brand identity of the Temecula Valley. Wine tourism remains a large business strongly motivated by a sense of place in relation to land and 'culture'. The importance of other locally oriented behaviours and activities further emphasizes the value of place to the wine consumer, and this includes the local landscape, community and heritage. In geographic branding in wine-production areas, appellation is promoted as a high-quality location. Part of the branding effort is to make the place itself well known; merely selling the wine for its place of production is ineffective if there are not corresponding positive perceptions of that place as a unique region or locale.

The branding of the place and the product relies not only on taste and standing, but also on exclusivity. The brand is valued only if it is known but hard to come by, reputable yet rare. For the Temecula Valley's small, 'family-owned' wineries, the winemaking tradition is increasingly cherished as a craft that is beginning to be passed down through generations. Wine production is presented as an art, with highly individual form and function. *Terroir*, then, results from the production of the wine and is valued in its consumption. *Terroir*, or sense of place, is what is ultimately marketed to potential wine tourists, thus providing something to sell. A contradiction lies in this connection, however, as development in the area will be seen to affect the *terroir*, and thus the wine. Increased traffic to the area detracts from the singularity and uniqueness of the place and suggests to residents and wine tourists

alike that what should not be commodified might just be commodifiable after all.

Sustainability in Southern California?

The contradictions continue in the use of natural resources in wine production and in accelerated Temecula Valley development. The very notion of a Wine Country in southern California is a contradiction in and of itself, an environmental paradox that profoundly affects the most elemental compound of life – water. So little of the precious liquid is present naturally in southern California – and the broader desert southwestern United States where water politics are ever more contentious as evocatively explained in Marc Reisner’s classic *Cadillac Desert: The American West and Its Disappearing Water* (1986) – that wine production of any sufficient scale would be impossible without significant imported supply. Available water throughout California is expected to decrease as long-range forecasting indicates that the southwest will become hotter and drier overall. Moreover, increased development in Arizona means that water deliveries from the Colorado River, on which agriculture in the southern part of California depends, will drop (Littleworth and Garner 2007). Imported water from the Colorado River also has high levels of salt that can contaminate the soil and aquifers into which it is pumped (Reisner 1986: 6–8), which is becoming such a problem that the Temecula region may have to construct a local desalination plant (Simms interview with Charles W. Binder, Sacramento, CA, 3 May 2012), perhaps resulting in an extremely salty brine produced as waste, necessitating expensive treatment or transport out to the Pacific Ocean.

Moreover, the Colorado River aqueduct system has become infested with the quagga mussel, an invasive species first discovered in Lake Mead, Nevada, in early 2007 and in Lake Skinner in the Temecula area later that year (Binder 2011). The mussel is a filter feeder, removing

nutrients from the water, affecting the overall food web, and transforming water chemistry, necessitating high ongoing maintenance of the entire Colorado River aqueduct. The State of California has stepped in, enacting legislation prohibiting release of waters containing the mussel and creating a control plan. Even water ‘imported’ from northern areas of the state such as the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta region poses significant environmental and human health issues, including elevated trihalomethane levels and saltwater intrusion as a consequence of altered flows from pumping (Simms interview with Bob Pierotti, Glendale, CA, 25 April 2012). Furthermore, many earthworks and levees throughout the region have been hand-built by farmers or private industry with little oversight. Given that the region is very seismically active, an earthquake could cause these protective barriers to fail on a scale similar to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Louisiana. As such, the state is considering a distribution system that would bypass the delta entirely, the projected scope and cost of which is largely unknown, yet certainly large (Boxall 2010). These consequences and actions further demonstrate the political and economic costs associated with providing sufficient water for southern California agriculture, including wine production. Groundwater supplies are steadily decreasing as well, with a net loss of between 1.5 and 2.2 million acre-feet⁴ per year due to evaporation, runoff to surface waters and other causes. The quality of remaining groundwater is declining also, as the growing use of pesticides and fertilizers that infiltrate aquifers, coupled with concentration of naturally occurring contaminants such as arsenic and salts, necessitates increasingly costly treatment and blending operations (Littleworth and Garner 2007; Penn 2008).

Wineries are notorious environment degraders⁵ and use large amounts of water (see, e.g., Williams 2001 for a technical illustration). Given water’s necessity, local water politics affect the modes of production and consump-

tion as a kind of environmental appropriation. Yet in spite of these challenges, Temecula does indeed have a thriving wine industry, mired as it is within California's complex political economic exigencies. Water control in the state is divided among several agencies, and understanding their roles and the extent of their authority can be challenging. Vineyard and winery owners have balked at the level of power various agencies have over water. One farmer notes that 'You wake up one morning and some bureaucrat says, "We're only going to give you 30 per cent of the water you're supposed to have". It's no different than half of your 401(k) going away a year before you're supposed to retire' (quoted in Penn 2008).⁶

The further contradiction is that so much of basic global resource is transformed into a small quantity of a luxury good, and that this use of water is not tracked very well. Irrigation in vineyards can amount to 50 or more gallons of water per vine during a growing season, and when accounting for water use within the winery as well, it is estimated that between 81 and 436 U.S. gallons of water are required to produce a single gallon of wine in California (Franson 2008). The disparity is not just the result of climatic variation throughout the state; indeed, part of it can be attributed to the lack of monitoring of water use. One study in California shows that roughly 75 per cent of small wineries, and 45 per cent of mid-sized and 25 per cent of large ones, do not monitor water usage at all, and also that up to 60 per cent of wineries do not know how much water is required to produce their wines (Pregler 2011).

The Wine Country development plan, as neoliberal artefact, treats nature – water as a natural use-value – as something to be rather freely appropriated, potentially resulting in 'market environmentalism', a system in which the market is viewed as the solution to environmental problems such as resource limitations (Anderson and Leal 2001; Bakker 2004). The idea is that environmental resources will be used more efficiently if they are treated as

economic goods (Bakker 2007; Whiteley et al. 2008). Essentially this is the 'financialization' (Harvey 2009), or neoliberalization, of the natural world (Bridge and Jonas 2002). Yet, in the context of water scarcity projected water demands to support the planned expansion are staggering. As part of the plan's EIR, the Rancho California Water District anticipated an annual average water use of 17,120 acre-feet in the Wine Country plan area based upon the needs as of 2011. It was estimated that if the plan was fulfilled, demand would increase by 10,336 acre-feet per year to 27,456 acre-feet per year, or a potential increase of 38 per cent over demand as of 2011. From where will this additional water come? Area residents and grape growers, when interviewed, seem not to know, pointing out that increased restrictions over the years, such as replacing larger-diameter water pipes with smaller ones, allude to supply problems that already limit growing capacity. For its part, the plan was silent on suggestions to close this gap between current and anticipated demand, and this silence perhaps belied untenable assumptions about the continued availability – on the market – of water for agricultural development. A technical memorandum noted only that 'calculations show that there is a potential water demand increase of 10,336 acre-feet/year that should be accounted between the current and proposed Plan' (Rancho California Water District 2011: 3). An interview with an engineer from the local water utility confirmed that all additional supply would come from additional imports, because any increase in local groundwater withdrawals would result in unsustainable rates of depletion (Simms interview with Warren Back, Temecula, CA, 19 September 2012), while responsibility for ensuring the availability (and for considering the potential environmental consequences) of this increased imported supply was relegated to higher levels of the California water bureaucracy. Planners insisted, however, that the land-use changes as set out in the plan would

limit the growth of residential communities in favour of wineries on larger parcels, and therefore would require less water than if the plan were not enacted and if the construction of residential communities was allowed to take place in a less regulated and directed way.

Conclusion

The Wine Country plan as a piece of neoliberal state policy entails the emergence of an activist state in organizing capital and markets. In and through this process we see the complex making and marking of the boundaries of the state and civil society – and the appropriateness of a range of subjectivities such as ‘citizenship’ or those based on ‘place’. Even if we regard the state as an inchoate ensemble of institutions and policies relatively autonomous from civil society but able to monopolize public governance and the distribution of public goods on behalf of certain strata and collectivities, and we can see that it is indeed hegemonic, this does not mean that it is always completely successful in its many and often internally contradictory projects. Nor does it mean that the subjectivities it promotes and authorizes are always consonant with its aims, many that they are. As we have seen, the Wine Country plan as policy document, and the institutionalizing activities it represents and seeks to guide, is susceptible to internal contradictions. Even under its own terms of reference, in seeking to promote the prerogatives of capital, clearly seen in its refusal to intervene in the worker-capital contract, it threatens to subsume and despoil the very wine tourism industry it seeks to promote by leveraging the elements critical to an invented *terroir* that attract wine tourists in the first place, and by reducing nature to a commodity in the context of real scarcity.

Policies in their more mundane manifestations – family policies of no texting at the dinner table, for instance – or grand state policies

regulating the state’s prerogatives for monopolizing violence over its citizenry may equally and profitably be studied by applied anthropologists. Here, we suggest that when policies are studied anthropologically that their creation and enforcement be treated through a process of ‘abstraction’ (Ollman 2003: Ch. 5) as a diagnostic of larger power relations and the workings of social, economic and political institutions. By pursuing the contours of the Wine Country plan, we can use an ‘anthropology of policy’ approach to study and theorize about the state and about civil society, and the relationship between the two in the total social formation – their nodes of articulation, spaces of relative autonomy, mechanisms of mediation. Thus, the study of policy makes policy a window into the ways in which the state and capitalism – that is, the present state of the state and the present state of capitalism in the long development of each – entail specific regimes of governance and regimes of accumulation and their articulation with and in the social formation in particular spaces – political as well as geographic. This requires a theory of the state and its features and functions (see Das 1996) and how it might be approached anthropologically (Sharma and Gupta 2006; cf. Bouchard 2011). Simultaneously, it requires anthropological theoretical attention to the developments of capitalism (Roseberry 2002). This, in turn, entails a focus on capitalism’s production systems and spheres of circulation, and its periodic restructurings, too, as seen and understood through ethnographies of local cultural configurations of workers, entrepreneurs, merchants, consumers, and so forth, involved in the production, commodification and exchange of specific objects – like wine – and the conditions for the production of these objects. This approach to the anthropology of policy goes beyond ‘interpretive’ and ‘symbolic’ approaches to the study of policy, and our critique here mirrors Roseberry’s early (1982) insistence (cf. Scholte 1986) that mate-

rialist and interpretive approaches be fused – just because of the impossibility of separating the material from the ideal – in a common frame of reference under the rubric of ‘political economy’. This is more than a programmatic methodological manifesto for applied anthropological interventions, but one that calls for epistemological, philosophical and, ultimately, political responses to the obligations of praxis.

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Notes

1. The story about the Queen asking for the second glass and then asking to meet the vintner is

perhaps apocryphal, but it has become the stuff of legend in the Temecula Valley. Ely Callaway himself gave an interview where he recounted that a member of the luncheon organizing committee told him that the Queen had requested a second glass. 'By that time there were ten people from the press standing around listening', he said. 'So we made every paper in the United States the next day – "Unknown wine served to Queen, asked for second glass"'. He dismissed rumours that the Callaway wine was chosen because Callaway himself had paid off the selection committee or used his political influence. 'The key that everybody misses is that the wine got attention and was selected because it was a superior product that was totally different from any other wine in the world', he said. 'I didn't have any influence with anybody, and we didn't buy it' (Thomas 1997: 13–14). In an interview, Callaway's longtime viticulturalist John Moramarco said that some time before the Queen's visit Callaway had been lunching at the Waldorf and heard of the plans for the luncheon honouring the Queen. He asked what wine was going to be served and sent the manager a case of Callaway white Riesling. This, Moramarco suggested, was how the wine was chosen. He also suggested that if the wine had not been good, it would not have been chosen (Yelvington interview with John Moramarco, Temecula, CA, 9 July 2012).

2. Some key works in the anthropology of policy informing our analysis include Geilhufe (1979); Cochrane (1980); Hinshaw (1980); Wright and Shore (1995); Shore and Wright (1996, 1997); Okongwu and Mencher (2000); Abram (2003); Wedel et al. (2005); Schwegler (2008); Davis-Floyd (2011); and Shore, Wright and Però (2011).
3. The reference to Cougar Winery is significant because 'cougar' is a slang term in the United States referring to an older woman who seeks out younger men for sexual relationships.
4. An acre-foot is a U.S. unit of volume typically used in large-scale measurements of water usage and defined as one acre of surface area to the depth of one foot, totalling 43,560 cubic feet (1,233 cubic meters), equalling 325,853 U.S. gallons or 271,330 imperial gallons.
5. See the article on the life of Jess Jackson, owner of Kendall-Jackson, by Parrish (2011).
6. A 401(k) is a type of retirement savings account in the United States, taking its name from a subsection of the Internal Revenue Code.

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