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Hitting A Moving Target: Endogenous Development In Marginal European Areas

GASTON G.A. REMMERS

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Gaston Remmers has worked since 1991 on the European Union (EU) funded research project Design of Methods for Endogenous Development, which involves research institutions in Portugal, Italy, Greece, the Netherlands and Spain. Until 1995 he worked at the Instituto de Sociología y Estudios Campesinos, in Córdoba, Spain. He is currently finishing his PhD on endogenous development at the Department of Rural Sociology of Wageningen Agricultural University in the Netherlands. Both his PhD, and this paper, draw strongly on his fieldwork in Spain, and express his main interests, endogenous rural development and sustainable land use.

The author can be contacted at the following address: Goudsbloemstraat 130, 1015 JT Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Tel: +31-20-6222306; Fax: +31-317-483990; e-mail: gaston1@dds.nl

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many of the marginal rural regions of Southern Europe have been neglected for years by the administration and their populations have thus developed their own ways of managing their interests, settling disputes and interpreting legal situations. They have maintained an important agricultural and landscape heritage, giving them an advantage over other, more modernised areas. However, attempts to develop these marginal areas often tend to impose 'global' systems and regulations that swamp existing management practices and local diversity.

However, endogenous development, where development is based on local human and natural resources, is becoming an increasingly fashionable alternative approach in European policy circles, notably through the European Union's LEADER programme. Some regional administrations are indeed starting to capitalise on these resources. This is the case in the Contraviesa, a mountainous region in southern Spain. This paper describes how, despite government intentions to develop the diversity and distinctiveness on offer in the region, its biased understanding of local people's livelihood strategies has meant that the approach is not working as well as it might. The paper analyses some of the reasons for this, giving many examples of how government regulations and EU subsidies can diminish, rather than enhance, local sustainability and diversity.

The paper concludes with some concrete recommendations as to how government can support local activities for sustainable development. These include strengthening local institutions for defending local interests and social cohesiveness; recognising that local farming practices are crucial for the maintenance of the local landscape and culture; creating flexible fiscal, legal and food sanitation regulations to support, rather than undermine, local livelihood and production strategies; and supporting diverse activities, such as tourism and agriculture, but in a coherent way.

HITTING A MOVING TARGET: ENDOGENOUS DEVELOPMENT IN MARGINAL EUROPEAN AREAS

Gaston G.A. Remmers

Approaches to rural development are frequently criticised for imposing external ideas and procedures on diverse local situations, thereby stifling locally distinct strategies and practices. Thus rural development often becomes a struggle between the local and the global: a struggle to preserve local elements, while making productive use of them, in order to avoid displacement by exogenous, modernist models. State and other external interveners are commonly seen as blindly applying these exogenous models, and greatly ignorant of the local context. Possible development alternatives may be overlooked as a result.

However, endogenous development, where development is based on local human and natural resources, is becoming an increasingly fashionable alternative approach in European policy circles. And some regional administrations are indeed starting to capitalise on local human and natural resources. This is the case in the Contraviesa, a mountainous region in southern Spain. Farmers there do not seem to appreciate government intentions, however, and only hesitantly become involved in the development process, making use of institutional and other opportunities in only a piecemeal way. In this paper I explore why this is so, firstly outlining the theoretical assumptions made about the concept of endogenous development as interpreted by the research project *Design of Methods for Endogenous Development*¹. Secondly, I discuss the interaction between the administration and the local agrarian population in the Contraviesa region. I then describe the effects of this interaction using the examples of subsidies (for almond and fig production, and reforestation); and a European Union LEADER project². I conclude with some policy suggestions for promoting sustainable development in Europe's marginal areas.

The Concept of Endogenous Development

One of the premises of the research was that organisational, production and cultural models imposed from centres of power (administration, cities, science etc.) tend to homogenise local diversity. Those regions, communities or farms that are out of reach of centres of power have tended to conserve their local way of doing things best. However, until the 1980s, this fact was predominantly interpreted in the literature on agronomic development

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1. The author has been conducting fieldwork in the Contraviesa since 1991 as part of this EU-financed research programme.
 2. More detailed discussions on the material can be found in Remmers and Haar (1993), ISEC and AAV "El Sol" (1994), Haar (1994) and Remmers (forthcoming)

as proof of the ‘backward’ and ‘underdeveloped’ character of these regions. On the contrary, however, the research project reported here suggests that it is precisely the conservation of these local elements that give them a relative advantage over other regions where the process of modernisation and homogenisation has advanced more. This is because it allows unique products to evolve, it supports an internal market that links production and consumption, and so on. Endogenous development, then, is the strengthening of these local resources for the benefit of the local population.

However, endogenous development rarely implies the absence of external elements, however remote a region may be (Cristovao *et al.*, 1993). It is crucial to understand the capacity of local actors (from the most dominant to the most humble) to adapt external opportunities to their own needs (Long and Ploeg, 1994). The essence of ‘localisation’ then, as a process opposed to globalisation, is the strengthening of local room for manoeuvre to make use of external, ‘global’ opportunities, transforming and adapting them to local conditions. The term ‘endogenous’ development is preferred to local development, as it stresses the degree to which the development process is controlled by local actors. It is this process of continuous (re)interpretation and (re)negotiation of both external and internal elements by local people that allows for a continuous evolution of new forms of survival and forms of interaction with markets, technology, administration and natural resources.

So, at the heart of endogenous development is the relationship between the exogenous and the endogenous. It is not so important to define where the boundary between the two lies, but more to understand how both the endogenous and the exogenous appropriate elements of the other to their own advantage (Amin and Thrift, 1994).

Farming Systems in the Contraviesa

The Contraviesa region is part of the Alpujarra mountains in the south of the province of Granada. The Contraviesa is a ridge running almost parallel to the Mediterranean Sea, reaching altitudes of 1500m, and has cold winters (including snowfall) and hot summers, with rains concentrated between October and May. Mean annual rainfall is approximately 450 mm, although a severe drought has afflicted the area for the past five years. Cultivation focuses predominantly on the dryland production of almonds, figs and grapes. The intercropping of these species with cereals or legumes is still quite common, with more than 25 vine varieties, five fig varieties and 10 almond varieties being intercropped. Mechanisation is difficult, slopes are often greater than 30%, and mule ploughing is still common. At the beginning of the 1990s, some 67% of the population older than 16 years were still professionally involved in some way or another with agriculture. Logically, as an omnipresent carrier of local culture, agriculture must play an important role in endogenous development.

We used the concept of styles of farming to understand better the dynamic nature of farm development (Ploeg, 1994). A style of farming is a set of shared local notions on how to farm, how to deal with markets, with authorities etc., and implies a certain outlook on the future. In the Contraviesa, farm development is strongly influenced by the *labrador* style. This farming style has its roots in the 1940s and 1950s, and has been important in freeing

farmers from feudal *señoricos* (big landholders). Agricultural modernisation at the time, as well as the capitalist opening up of Spain in 1959 ‘chased’ the (very) rich away from the area, as well as the (very) poor, who found alternative employment in new growth poles like Barcelona and Madrid. This opened the way for low and middle income classes to build their own lives. It permitted agrarian families to climb the social ladder from being simple land labourers or sharecroppers at the mercy of more powerful farmers, to being an independent *labrador*. Thus becoming a *labrador* is an emancipatory process, and the *labrador* view of the future is strongly related to the notion of autonomy and self-sufficiency, common words in everyday rural talk. The farm is owned by the family, without bonding ties to a landlord. A self-sufficient farm is one that “has all”: vineyards, figs and almonds, a garden, olive trees and livestock of several kinds (mules, sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, rabbits etc.), and covers a wide range of agro-ecological habitats. If possible it maintains contact with several merchants instead of one. Thus the uncertainties of bioclimatical or market conditions are reduced to a minimum. Over the long term this strategy generates a capital reserve that can cover unforeseen expenses; it is, in this sense, an individualised system of social security.

Locally-Evolved Coping Mechanisms

Under current conditions (emigration of the younger people, unstable prices for products, a persistent drought, a steady increase in the cost of labour), however, this strategy is no longer very successful. Many families feel insecure and frustrated, and these feelings lead to indecision and opportunism. On the one hand, they feel an urgent need to survive and to provide a future for their children; on the other, they feel that this is no longer possible to achieve through farming. They also feel hunted by the emerging legal-administrative attention that is being paid to this formerly neglected area and the increased paperwork and bureaucracy this implies.

In part, they have been able to solve the problem by resorting to the state: almost all families receive rural unemployment benefit. Although initially viewed with some contempt (as it implies dependency) this has represented the most secure source of income for the past eight years, and there are even families who receive up to four allowances (father, mother, children). People have invented a wealth of ways to obtain the *paro* (as the benefit is called colloquially), for example, by putting all the land officially in the name of one person as if there was only one farmer, whereas each family member works their own parcels, thus ensuring the maximum number of family members receive the *paro*. The resort to the *paro* and the ways invented to obtain it are good examples of how external elements are made use of and moulded according to local need. As it provides some economic security, and as it prevents a worsening of the depopulation process, the *paro* is a very important external element. Nonetheless, the acquisition of an unemployment allowance is related to a certain maximum of land that one is allowed to own and has, as a consequence, certain legal implications. For this reason, many official efforts are viewed with mistrust, as they often mean that one has to reveal his or her possessions, threatening the very pillars of survival (see Box 1).

Box 1. Encounters Between Official and Local Legality: The Wine Sector

A good example is the registration of the wine sector, which documents local production so as to make development plans, regulate the wine sector and apply special instruments such as the label of 'local origin'. This process means that the officials have to identify vineyards and their owners. This is done by identifying vineyards on aerial photographs, and checking their existence and ownership with the actual owners. This encounter between official and local legality frightens many families, who are unwilling to reveal the extent of their landholdings. Obtaining accurate information is therefore very troublesome. Sometimes the owners literally hide, on other occasions they go for more open and direct conflict: "*If you show up with your photos in the vineyard, I'll kill you with an axe*".

As a consequence, people have developed ways of avoiding this exposure, and we describe these as 'oblique movements'. *Oblique movements*³ are side-steps taken to defend one's interests, thereby reshaping and to some degree distorting the intended effect. Oblique movements consist of a passive and an active component. In the former, people reject external activities that could reveal the extent of their property. In the latter, people take advantage of external opportunities so as to improve their family's welfare, but in such a way that they do not have to disclose their personal assets. In practice this can range from simply avoiding contact with the administration, to selective use of agricultural subsidies and keeping their own productive assets (eg. vineyards, land) in a semi-illegal, hidden status. A repertoire of 'social camouflage' is developed to avoid calling attention to oneself. This is why the efforts made to register the wine growing sector, or to bring people together for joint economic activities, or to carry out a scientific investigation, or to stimulate rural tourism etc., all activities that possibly could bring them benefits, are generally viewed with suspicion and distrust. Oblique movements are necessary for self-preservation (Table 1).

Another, and more active, attempt to secure income has been the search for intermediate persons through whom local people can forge links with the rest of society and who can ease the difficulties presented by, for example, dealing with the administration (ie. bureaucracy). These intermediaries tend to be from outside the region, and are equipped with some academic training and a personal commitment to do things to benefit the area. They might be, for example, a local agricultural extensionist, a wine-making expert, cooperative bookkeeper or researcher. Hope and trust are vested in these people and a certain amount of autonomy relinquished to them. This, in turn, leads to elevated demands for results, and can lead to a very exhausting and suffocating situation, sometimes culminating in the withdrawal of these people from their mediation role, or even in the demise of activities of common interest (such as an ecological wine co-operative - Remmers, 1994). The disappearance of these interlocutors is troublesome, but as they are from outside the region, it is sustainable to a certain extent. This is not the case when the mediator arises from among the inhabitants of the region, as is the case of the Neighbour Association "Asociación de Vecinos "El Sol" en la Sierra de la Contraviesa". This organisation is trying to improve the well being of local people (through improved services such as electricity, piped water and transportation). At present, the board of directors is becoming increasingly frustrated due to a lack of support (both from the majority of the

3. In Spanish we would use the expression "movimientos de soslayo" and in Netherlands the word "ontwijkmanoeuvre"

Table 1. Understanding People's Behaviour in the Contraviesa

People from the Contraviesa				
Want to	Do this because of	Do this by	Defend	Generate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defend the future of their children • safeguard their current income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their perception of the world in which uncertainty is a constant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incorporating defence mechanisms into their livelihood strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating savings • diversifying agricultural resources and products • enlarging their land • diversifying their market channels • using all kinds of subsidies • obscuring the true state of their household finances • hiding from control • searching for intermediaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the true state of their household economics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a fairly great array of subsidies that are sometimes theoretically not compatible • few opportunities for developing areas of common interest, eg. cooperatives • an unstable legal base for their economic activities and consequent risk of losing official support (financial or otherwise)

members of the Association as well as from the administration). Thus the Association is slowly declining, and eventually one of the few elements of endogenous social organisation with development potential will be lost. At the same time, the administration will lose an opportunity to link with rural activities. These intermediaries are very important people and should be treasured by the administration.

Implications for Agriculture and Natural Resource Management

In this section I give two examples of how external intervention clashes with local rationality, focusing on the management of local resources. Both stem from subsidies. First, subsidies are essentially meant to reconnect disadvantaged sectors or regions to the global economy. Second, subsidies are an important reason for local distrust towards government and a cause of oblique movements. These result from the bad experiences people had, and continue to have, with government money being promised but not given or being delayed.

Subsidising Dried Figs and Almond Growing

The contrasting ways in which subsidies are applied to dried fig and almond production prompt very different responses. Almonds are subsidised by hectare⁴, which means that farmers must show ownership of the land to qualify. The subsidy also prescribes certain cropping techniques, which are the same for the whole of Spain, irrespective of local circumstances. For example, it prohibits almond fields from containing more than 10% of associated crops. This means that fields which also contain figs are excluded, and the

4. Through the country-specific “Plan for the Improvement of Almonds”

Box 2. How Subsidies Can Undermine Sustainability

A legume, *Vicia articulata* (known locally as *moruna*), is traditionally intercropped with almonds, figs and vines. It is also used as a green manure. Whenever a piece of land is considered 'weak', *moruna* is sown and ploughed under. As such, it is considered a better fertiliser than animal manure, chemical fertiliser and worm humus. Not only does it fix nitrogen, but it also fragments soil through root growth, and contributes to the soil organic matter content. One year of green manuring with *moruna* is said to sustain the associated crop yield for the next three years. It is fairly resistant to drought, and also highly valued as an animal fodder, being said to stimulate milk production in goats. However, its use in the Alpujarra is declining, partly because of the prescriptions attached to the EU subsidy for almond growing. This ignores the value of *moruna*, undermining one of the virtues of the traditional agricultural system, and has increased the application of chemical fertiliser three or four-fold (Remmers and Lora, 1995; Remmers 1996).

cultivation of annual crops such as green manures marginalised, despite their agronomic value (Box 2).

This philosophy clashes strongly with local practices, and instead of improving understanding between the European administration and the region, it generates a tendency to cheat in order to take advantage of the EU whenever possible⁵. This example demonstrates that if plans for developing the area are not consistent with the practices of the inhabitants, local farmers will take advantage of them in a way that undermines them.

Subsidies for fig production are clearly preferred to those for almonds. The subsidy for dried figs is per kilo of product and is paid to the processing industry, who then passes the subsidy on in a higher price paid to the producer. A subsidy to the product allows farmers to carry out production in the way they like best, without anybody meddling in their agricultural practices or in their family economy. Farmers' comments on these subsidies are often as follows:

"The subsidy for dried figs is how it should be. In this way we do not have to deal with all this damn paperwork. Do you want to stimulate the production of some crop? Give a subsidy to the product. We will take care of producing it. We don't need somebody to come to tell us how to grow our crops."

Conserving The Land: Subsidies for reforestation of agricultural land

Another subsidy, for the reforestation of agricultural land, may come into operation soon. There is no doubt that the conservation of soil and water is crucial in the Contraviesa, especially as the whole of south-east Spain is prone to land degradation. Regional authorities support it, arguing that the conservation of the land is vital for rural tourism.

5. In the first phases of the Plan many false bills were presented to obtain the subsidy related to the purchase of fertilisers and pesticides.

However, although many farmers also support the idea of subsidised reforestation, the current conditions for obtaining this subsidy are not met with a lot of enthusiasm. People are unlikely to become involved and conservation objectives will, therefore, not be met. One reason is that the importance attributed to reforestation of agricultural lands makes farmers feel their main activity (agriculture) is being replaced, as one farmer pointed out (May 1993):

"This is what they want with the Contraviesa, they want to get rid of the farmers, it has to be either "rural tourism" or "Mediterranean forest". Even the agricultural extensionists do not stand up for the case: when you go to their office you almost feel ashamed to speak about agriculture. If you speak about reforestation, they pay you all the attention you need, but if you mention that you have a vineyard and you have plans with it, they pass over you."

Reforestation is thus not seen as part of local economic activity but rather as a substitute. Secondly, the minimum-sized areas for reforestation easily exceed the size of specific parts of a farm where a farmer considers reforestation to be possible and desirable.

In a group discussion in September 1994 (Remmers *et al*, 1996), farmers proposed an alternative, the *reforestación melgar*. This alternative draws on the local notion of *melga* or *merga* - small areas within or bordering other areas containing other vegetation (that may be crops). Farmers' knowledge about their land is implicit in this notion. At the same time it repositions reforestation within agricultural activity, as those spots selected are where environmental protection can best be combined with the farmer's agro-economic interests.

The LEADER Initiative

In 1991 the EU decided to create structural economic funds called 'LEADER Initiatives' for the development of marginal rural areas, based on the assertion that the "*recuperation of the equilibrium of the activities and the conservation of an interwoven and sufficiently diversified socio-economic structure needs a clear endogenous and local focus that is founded on the capacity for action and technical knowledge*". It promotes the creation of "Local Action Groups" as the stimulus of the programme, stresses the importance of agriculture, the potential of rural tourism, the relevance of diversified livelihoods, and highlights the learning aspect of the Programme while stating that the "*success of the initiative depends on the capacity of the local agents to exploit in an innovative way the local resources and to assimilate new practical knowledge*"⁶. It leaves broad scope for all kinds of approaches.

In the Alpujarra, regional authorities translated the LEADER programme into a complex programme (see Table 2) based heavily on rural tourism (receiving 75% of the budget). The way the Alpujarra programme functions diverges quite fundamentally from common rural development schemes in Spain, especially as it has put considerable effort into bringing together several administrative institutions and private enterprises such as banks and

6. Translated from Spanish from the Communication published in the Diario Oficial of the EC, No. C73/14, 19-3-1991: 33, 37

Table 2. Understanding The Alpujarra LEADER programme

The Alpujarra LEADER programme:				
Looks for/wants to	Does so because	Does so while/through	Defends	Gets/generates
Make productive use of endogenous development resources (EDR), identified as landscape; artisanal and architectural features; and local savings	Tourism is attributed great economic importance because of local EDR A demand for rural (eco) tourism was perceived in urban areas		The unlawful use of government resources	Increased pride of Alpujarra people, increases the idea that Alpujarra is a nice place to live and work Increased trust in government
Develop tourism				Increased collaboration between different administrative levels and private enterprises
Conserve landscape (only in second phase)	It has detailed knowledge about the management of tourism			Select group of participants
Generate alternatives to agriculture and stimulate demonstration projects	It wants to show that "things can be done in another way than through agriculture" and make local people aware of endogenous resources that might benefit the area			Very selective interfaces with local groups and people; loss of weak and incipient local initiatives (private and collective)
Stimulate recuperation of artisanal and architectural activities	It ignores the rationality of agricultural activity Agriculture can not be the motor of development, as it is too difficult to make agriculture profitable			Loss of endogenous development potential Economic diversification, not on the household level but at a regional level (tourist areas and agricultural areas)
Diversify economic activities	Diversification of income sources connects in principle to local household and farming strategies			Weakening of the agricultural sector
Mobilise local savings	Savings are endogenous resources; mobilising them is a way making people responsible for their future Informal economies do not fit in a modern society	Obliging people to contribute up to 40-60% of required funding from their own money in order to receive funding for an activity		Uncertain future because of insufficient maintenance of endogenous resources that enable tourism (such as landscape, which is an agricultural product)
Gradually eradicate local informal economy		Required compliance with standard fiscal and other (food) sanitary production regulations Collaboration with local banks, that enables a quicker transference of subsidies and so increases trust in government	A "central" fiscal and administrative rationality: no distinctions are possible since "every Spaniard is equal before the law"	
Greater participation of population	Participation allows a better definition of objectives and increases the effectiveness of the programme	Decentralisation of activities, hearings, consultations, BUT following formal procedures, and stressing economic activities as opposed to activities for empowerment or social cohesion	Its claim that changing such central regulations is not its role	

entrepreneurs. This has created quite an effective intermediary level for negotiations with provincial and community authorities, and results in an unprecedented speed with which subsidies are handed over to applicants. However, there are several constraints, including a biased understanding of local reality.

For example, LEADER identifies several endogenous resources (local savings, landscape) as appropriate tools for development, but does not consider their sustainable maintenance, and even less the logic of their existence. For example, landscapes were created through farming, yet farming receives very little support in the programme. Local savings are a safeguard for the future and are used only hesitatingly, however prosperous a future the LEADER programme promises. No attempt is made to address the conflict between formal (state) and informal, semi-legal (local) practices; although the latter constitute a crucial local survival strategy, administration sees them only as a nuisance. The rigid application of central fiscal and sanitary regulations will create serious problems (Box 3), and will eventually lead to only a very select group of people benefiting from the programme, as well as to a loss of diversity and endogenous development potential.

The efforts made to increase people's participation are also based on a very weak assessment of the historical interface between government and local people, and therefore the programme is not able to identify and stimulate the sometimes weak and incipient development initiatives, defending both collective interests as well as private. Oblique movements on the part of the administration are most likely to come across as ignorance and a failure to appreciate local ways of acting and thinking, often fed by an insufficient capacity to deal with situations that may include a reversal of power. The clearest example of the failure of the administration, as main promoter of the LEADER Plan for the Alpujarra, to connect with the region was its absence at the "International Congress of Mountain People". This meeting was organised in October 1993 by a local NGO in one of the villages of the Alpujarra and brought together many local social groups. Most of these groups work very informally, are small and tend to focus on social and ecological issues. The administration missed an opportunity here to improve the programme because these groups were badly represented in the initial formulation of the LEADER programme. At that time LEADER had given preference to more formally represented stakeholders, largely with economic interests.

Implications for Policy Formulation

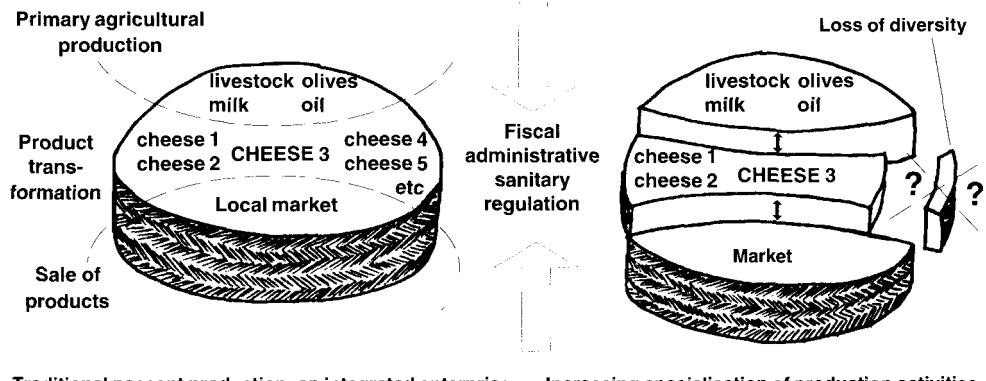
Policy makers, especially in Southern Europe, must be aware of the existence in disadvantaged marginal regions, of a *legal-administrative and technical pluralism* (Benda-Beckmann et. al., 1989). For years these regions have been neglected by the administration and have thus developed their own ways of managing their interests, settling disputes and understanding legal situations. The current interest in developing marginal areas through endogenous development tends to impose a strong legal-administrative and technical system that implies nothing less than an assault on the local one. This, literally, provokes and reinforces the so-called 'oblique movements'.

Box 3. Traditional Cheese Making and Official Standards

After many years of reviving local practices, an industrious couple set out to produce artisanal cheese legally. They received funding from LEADER to set up their small but well-equipped enterprise. They produce an enormous variety of cheeses using milk from their own sheep and goats and oil from their own olives, while selling their products locally. The integration of their productive and commercial activities, their experience and the flexibility of their work style are crucial for their survival and at the same time the main source of trouble with official regulations. In their words:

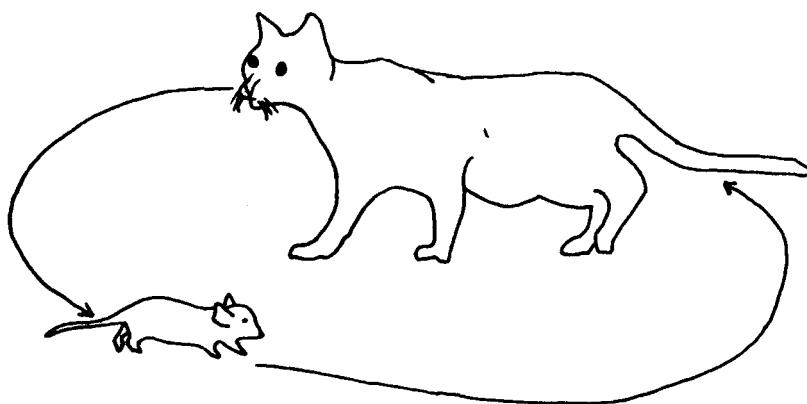
"The regulations give specifications for the production of "fresh cheese", "mature cheese" or "cheese in olive oil", but not "fresh cheese transformed naturally into mature cheese", a traditional cheese called "moho"; or "cheese matured in olive oil", which is a technique that we recovered from traditional food conservation techniques. But we find tremendous difficulties in convincing the sanitary authorities that these cheeses are all right, no threat to public health, and made following sound cheese making practices... You see, the procedures are not in the books... It would be very easy for us to produce emmenthal cheese or gouda cheese, because everybody knows what you are talking about and it is well documented, but what the hell does this have to do with the Alpujarra? Speaking about recuperating local traditions, about endogenous development...".

Furthermore, Spanish fiscal regulations dictate that for the livestock and cheese production different accounts are kept, with different fiscal regulations, implying, for example, that for their cheese production they have to buy the milk from their own livestock production. Obviously this leads to a tremendous and discouraging increase in administrative expenses (capital, labour), that threatens their comparative advantage over industrial production for which these regulations may be justified. Current Spanish sanitary and fiscal regulations cannot cope with very complex, integrated and indeed peasant production systems of the type one would find in marginal rural areas. In this case, the cheese makers are only succeeding in their efforts because their faith and joy in what they are doing enables them to row against the stream. Their above-average education and urban background are also crucial in this; enabling them to tackle, anticipate and sometimes outwit global prescriptions, adapting them to local conditions. It is unlikely that most other local people, not endowed with these resources, would have the capacity to transform their own traditional, semi-legal practices into something with greater economic value. Thus, fiscal, administrative and sanitary pressures result in a loss of endogenous potential (such as speciality cheeses) and in a disintegration of mutually reinforcing activities; the exact opposite to the ideology of diversified livelihoods that LEADER promotes:



Oblique movements are, however, social constructions. They are not only “*everyday forms of peasant resistance*” (Scott, 1985), but also everyday forms of administrative resistance. In a sense, the administration and the (mostly agricultural) inhabitants are like actors on the rural development stage, where they play a cat and mouse game. The administration is the big cat (although not always that bad), trying to put out bait for the inhabitants, the mice, who ingeniously manage to capture the bait before the administration can start to communicate with them or have any influence on them. On other occasions it seems that the inhabitants offer bait to the administration (the attempts to find mediators, the emergence of the Neighbourhood Association, the Congress of Mountain People), who, however, does not seem to be able to fully appreciate it. In this case the image is more of two cats biting each others’ tails, while at the same time trying to flee from each other. There exists a continuous effort to outwit each other; both parts try to get, mobilise or transform what the other most wants to hide or only reluctantly wants to give (either subsidies, local savings, agricultural identity etc.). Both are targets, both are hunters; both try to hit a moving target.

Figure 1: Hitting a Moving Target: Endogenous development as a game of cat and mouse



Whatever game is played out, the question is how to slow down its movements satisfactorily to reach more mutually beneficial outcomes. In our view the greatest opportunities to do so, and so to encourage endogenous development, lie with the administration. These opportunities lead to the following policy suggestions.

- Understand the interaction between state and citizen. This demands an institutional flexibility and learning capacity. The LEADER programme as it is operating in the Alpujarra definitely heads towards this, but is as yet still insufficient. At least with regard to the Alpujarra, intermediaries and informal procedures are of vital importance in this process and therefore must be supported.

- Instead of focusing heavily on economic activities, considerable attention should be paid to strengthening local associations, for example equipping them with human and monetary resources, in order to generate a network of local agencies that provide channels for social cohesiveness and for getting local interests and alternatives on the agenda. The wide range of participatory approaches available (Pretty *et al*, 1996) seem very appropriate for this goal. These certainly would also help to create flexibility and bring about the ability to learn and adapt (Pretty and Chambers, 1994), and so overcome the oblique movements on both sides.
- In the marginalised rural areas of Europe, farming is of continued relevance for maintaining the agricultural landscape, as a provider of local products, and as an activity that has a strong cultural bearing on the way people interact with the administration. The development of institutional capacity to communicate with the main managers of the land, the farmers, will be important if local opportunities and ideas for resource conservation are not to be missed.
- Diversifying income sources, or *pluriactivity*, is definitely an important notion to follow. However, the term is deceiving. Essentially, it is only worth pursuing if the different activities reinforce rather than contradict, each other, which brings us to the next two points.
- Coherence between emerging sectors (tourism) and existing ones (agriculture) is a crucial challenge. Strengthening existing and creating new local markets is important to achieve this. In this way, regional distinctiveness adds value to local products.
- Rigid and bureaucratic fiscal, sanitary and administrative procedures and regulations should be adjusted, whenever possible, to local reality. They tend not to appreciate fully the synergistic character of the different activities that together constitute peasant production; their strict application promotes specialisation instead of diversification at the household level.
- Hidden potential for endogenous development is in danger of being lost, as it mostly operates in the semi-legal sphere. Much of this hidden potential could be brought to light through participatory research into local agricultural, livestock rearing and food processing practices.

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