programs including process-based, performance-based and practice-based and the author points out their respective advantages and disadvantages.

View from the Vineyard, A Practical Guide to Sustainable Winegrape Growing is a useful book for those who are interested in understanding current approaches to this most promising form of viticulture. While the book is largely based on experience in viticulture in California and the West, regions with rather different sustainability challenges from those in the East where my vineyard is located, it nonetheless presents a broad enough based viewpoint so that sustainable vineyard activities can be extrapolated to nearly any regional ecosystem and community. The key points of science-based measurement, data gathering and analysis along with achieving vine balance are emphasized throughout this book as important components of sustainable winegrowing. This is the first and only definitive book on sustainable winegrowing and I highly recommend it to all current and prospective winegrowers.

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In the late nineteenth century, peasants from the prosperous and industrially advanced northern Italian province of Piedmont emigrated to California. They transplanted their traditional winemaking skills to the new world, taking advantage of a natural similarity in climatic and topographical characteristics. This identical viticultural terroir and their enological know-how allowed these Piedmontese migrants to take advantage of the openings in a relatively classless frontier society to build empires of wine. They were aided by ethnic economies, with which they were able to mobilize capital from other Piedmontese both in California and back in Italy. Simone Cinotto's new book shows that the preceding statements, while forming an attractive narrative, are almost entirely refuted by a careful look at the history of Italians in the Californian wine industry.

Soft Soil, Black Grapes challenges both popular knowledge and conventional historiography, building its case using three examples of Piedmontese entrepreneurs and their companies. While the first two companies have since been absorbed by larger concerns (the Italian Swiss Colony and the Italian Vineyard Company), the third, Ernest and Julio Gallo, is one of the giants of the American wine industry. Cinotto draws on company and public archives, iconographic sources (including his own extensive collection of wine-related ephemera), and a critical review of other books on Californian winemaking.

Cinotto uses the introduction and first chapter to discuss the development of what he refers to as the "Pavesian myth." The image of California as the "Piedmont on the Pacific" was a construction built in various discursive channels and with the contribution of a variety of actors. Cinotto names the myth after the Italian novelist Cesare Pavese, a Karl May-esque figure who never left Italy but wrote about the American West. Pavese described a California that was rural like northern Italy, but so fertile that a farmer hardly had to hoe. It was a narrative of continuity despite transplantation; later in the book Cinotto argues that this myth reduces to "natural"—Piedmontese emigrating and becoming winemakers—what was actually the product of a specific conjunction of historical circumstances.

That this was not the only possible outcome is illustrated in Cinotto's statistics on Italian labor—only in the West would many work in the agricultural sector, in stark contrast to the more urban Italian communities of the Eastern seaboard. In chapter two ("Producing Winescapes: Immigrant Labor on California Land"), Cinotto shows how the terroir of the early locations on Italian vineyards was anything but ideal; the land they were planted on was selected not so much for its appropriateness for viticulture but rather for its low price. Early vineyards in these less-than-optimal spots were only possible with the transformative (and exploitative) use of low-cost immigrant labor to render them fertile. Indeed, the Italian Vineyard Company was created in the midst of the Cucamonga Desert outside of Los Angeles, where a layer of sand covered the somewhat fertile underlying earth and immigrant labor was necessary to clear the brush, haul in soil amendments, and keep out livestock and other pests. A striking image of grapevines growing out of the sandy soil of an obviously arid valley instantly banishes the idea that California was identical to Piedmont.

Equally fallacious was the idea of the seamless transplantation of enological knowledge from Italy to the Pacific coast. Cinotto makes an important digression in the third chapter to describe how the diffusion of up-to-date enological knowledge (the use of sulfites, the importance of a sufficient sugar level, ageing off lees) was restricted to a very small circle of elite winemakers in Piedmont. Italian peasants (like their cousins around the Mediterranean basin) while certainly familiar with growing grapes, did not produce high-quality wines but rather made a "more affordable beverage of pressed grapes and water," one which tended to turn rapidly into vinegar (62). Cinotto also shows that far from being amateur peasant viticulturalists or experienced enologists, the three entrepreneurs described here were middle class merchants who had no direct experience with winemaking prior to their emigration.

Why is it then that these Piedmontese emigrants came to dominate the California wine industry? Previous scholarship had focused on ethnic economies and ethnic entrepreneurship, and the ways in which in-groups privilege their own members in economic transactions. Cinotto points out, however, that these theories fail to explain why another ethnic group (say the Japanese) did not come to dominate wine production, or why the Piedmontese did not create empires based on the production

"The area known as the Cucamonga Desert was a vast, steppe-like rectangle beaten by wind, completely uninhabited and uncultivated… […] The layer of sand that covered its entire surface made it ill-suited to the abundant irrigation needed in an area that received very little precipitation. In fact, there was so much sand that it completely covered the tracks of the nearby Southern Pacific Railroad when the wind lifted it up." (Cinotto, 2012, p. 56). Courtesy Cal Poly Pomona University Library Special Collections.

of, for example, bread or cheese. The author argues that the Piedmontese, theories notwithstanding, did not always act as an ethnically compact group; in addition, while they made use of ethnic ties, their success in the wine industry was ultimately due to other factors.

Changing economic and social conditions in the early twentieth century had opened a breach in the wine sector for the Piedmontese. Far from being first players in the wine industry, they had been relative latecomers. The Spanish had introduced *Vitis vinifera* in the 1500s, and thereafter the British and Irish, and still later the French, Germans, and Scandinavians entered the wine market. The Piedmontese had faced fierce competition in the late 1800s—indeed, this is why some of the early Piedmontese vineyards were in such disadvantageous locations, not by chance

overlooked by earlier entrepreneurs. This "latecomer effect," combined with the Piedmontese's lack of capital and winemaking skills forced them to activate ethnic networks and build social capital through marriage and ethnic cooperation.

Key to understanding the Piedmontese success during and especially after Prohibition, Cinotto suggests, is knowledge of California's complex theoretical constructions of race of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Though quite racially mixed—with large populations from Europe, Mexico, and East Asia mingling with a relatively small native-born population—Californian society was stratified according to the prevailing pseudo-scientific racial theories of the day. Cinotto reveals that the racial category of "white" did not include Italians: the Piedmontese ranked behind northern Europeans, but they were still ahead of African Americans, Mexicans, and Asians. The three companies here surveyed all used this in-between position in the American racial hierarchy to mobilize a workforce with the carrot (appeals to ethnic solidarity coupled with corporate paternalism) and the stick (the threat of Mexicans or Japanese as replacement labor in the case of disputes).

> *In sum, Piedmontese winemakers articulated a narrative of ethnic identity that benefited from the specific racial and racist structure of Californian society on one hand, and aimed at interclass national solidarity on another. […] Proletarian immigrants paid for the nonmonetary and immaterial benefits bestowed on them by ethnic winemaking entrepreneurs with modest wages and meager possibilities of reproach* (p. 149).

Chapter 8 again seems like a slight digression from the main arguments, but is important as Cinotto shows how the Piedmontese winemakers, far from being limited by their cultural baggage, adapted quickly to the novel business environment of California and the capitalist Zeitgeist. They embraced technological innovation and mass production, as well as attempting to market their standardized products at the national and international level just like other American capitalists.

The final two chapters are as close as academic writing can be to exciting. The central question of the book is not why the Italians in California took up wine-making as a business, but rather why (to borrow a term from Rostow) they were able to achieve a sort of "enological takeoff" and came to dominate a market in which they had initially had only disadvantages. While ethnic cooperation and adoption of Fordist strategies were important, it was Prohibition—Cinotto argues—which provided the historical-economic opportunity which the Piedmontese winemakers were able to seize. Cinotto explains that Prohibition was not simply about pro-hibiting alcohol but rather a front in a battle against everything that was perceived as "foreign" by mainstream American society. This is not an original observation, but Cinotto's genius is connecting it to how Piedmontese winemakers turned what was for most winemakers a disaster (i.e. the outlawing of their principal product) into a springboard.

Even before Prohibition officially began when the Volstead Act took effect in 1920, the rising sentiment of an ever-stronger temperance movement attached a

negative stigma to the production and sale of alcoholic beverages. Seeing which way the wind was blowing, many of the Piedmontese's primary competitors began to exit the market even before Prohibition started, and many more followed thereafter. The negative social capital of being involved with wine production and the shrinking legal business opportunities made winemaking a risky business, and those ethnic groups which possessed the social mobility to move up and away from it, did so. Thus many native French and Scandinavian winemakers—who had taken the places of the first native-born and British winemakers—dropped out of the business as the cost-benefit ratio changed. Another group of competitors—the German-American winemakers—were eager, in the post-WWI era, to avoid any association with what might be considered "foreign" (and, by extension, subversive) and gave up winemaking as well. The slowly-built ethnic networks of the Piedmontese became even more useful when the other ethnicities started to exit the wine industry.

The Piedmontese found a playing field that was remarkably clearer than it had been just a decade and a half earlier, but which allowed them to prosper in an industry whose daily components, under Prohibition, were "risk, danger, and hard work" (p. 221). Cinotto argues that it was because they were forced to remain in winemaking, as they lacked the upward mobility of the other ethnic groups, held back as they were by California's racist social structure.

This book is commendable not only for what it accomplishes—demystifying a popular and historiographic misconception—but also for how it accomplishes that task: a carefully documented thesis built with clear exposition. While this erudite book certainly assumes an intelligent reader, Cinotto is careful to give the requisite background to concepts that may lie outside the ken of his audience, like the late nineteenth-century European agrarian crisis, the terms and theoretical debates about ethnic entrepreneurship, and anthropological theories about race and their effect on American immigration policy. The illustrations were also a valuable addition to the text: the maps of Italian and Californian wine regions helped the reader see their historical evolutions, and the 45 black and white photographs added force to what had been said in the text. Indeed, as the above-mentioned photograph of the vineyard in the Cucamonga Desert, they are occasionally even more important. Extensive endnotes—which go above and beyond the mere bibliographic citation, pointing the interested reader to other texts—and a thorough index round out the book's utility. *Soft Soil, Black Grapes* is an essential addition to the bookshelf for anyone interested in the history of American viticulture or of Italian immigrants in the US, and a fascinating and informative read for anyone else.

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