

Chapter 4



# Worldviews of Labour

## *Legality and Food Ideologies*

This book opened with Giampiero's views on the changes in local labour regimes brought in by the co-ops. The same administrator admitted in an interview that 'the wallet' was not always enough to 'shift ideas', as 'the peasants of San Giovanni, those under contract labour from the cooperatives, our member-workers . . . are not anti-mafia [*loro non sono anti-mafia*]'.

This critique of these 'not sufficiently anti-mafia' ideas of the local workers often resonated with the negotiation of the co-ops' food production policies, as set by administrators. Once, Mina, Falcone's vice president, had invited Flavio, a representative of Bolognese left-wing consumer cooperative CoopBrino, to come to San Giovanni to liaise with people from the cooperatives as a business partner because CoopBrino had just signed a business agreement to distribute the anti-mafia cooperatives' produce in Bologna. This was a success, as it sealed links between north-



**Illustration 4.1:** Commercial fairs, family and enterprise: an instance where members of the two teams came together. Here, a manual worker (Adamo, with his daughter Marella) and an administrator (Giusy) co-host a stand with the products of the Falcone cooperative on display at a fair in Palermo.

ern Italian consumer co-ops and the anti-mafia cooperatives. I accompanied some of my research interlocutors as they fetched him from Trapani airport. As we returned to the village, Flavio mentioned that he found San Giovanni repulsive; he said to me that the village looked like a zoo, and the locals ('imbued with mafia,' he commented) were the animals in the zoo. He imagined that it must take a lot of effort to collaborate with the locals and even suggested that I should call myself 'not an ethnologist' (anthropologist) 'but an ethologist'. This chapter will attempt to explain this animosity and the socio-cultural chasm this implies.

The chapter, as well as the next one, aims to elucidate how two main ideologies that drove the anti-mafia cooperativist endeavour are framed and deployed by the cooperatives. These ideologies fortress the co-ops as an enclave, sealing them away from local society to a certain extent – at least on paper. They are in a way antithetical, but the choice to analyse them with some sense of narrative continuity and in quite some detail is not arbitrary: they formulate fields of contestation across and over which divisions among and between those labouring in the co-ops are born and developed. These ideologies concern food activism processes and attitudes on food value and values, an issue around which many a movement and associations strive (Siniscalchi 2013a; Luetchford and Pratt 2014). What follows in this chapter concerns ideologies of food and their impact on internal divisions in the co-ops.

An anthropological discussion of cooperatives' promotion of food activism and overall attitudes to food production and distribution necessitates paying attention to the diverse subjective degrees of identification with such claims, which can vary for the different work groups developed within such organisations, especially between a 'production' and a 'consumption/distribution' team. In fact, I propose that food activism claims are part of what makes divisions of labour within cooperatives more pronounced, in stark contrast with cases where democracy is the most central aim – at a local and global level – for food activists, and indeed contradicting the very meaning of cooperativism as industrial democracy.

There are three points here, all converging to elucidate how the administration of the co-ops see their endeavour as an enclave of good economic practice. First, in ethical production-oriented cooperatives, internal stratifications go well beyond systems of voting and reflect divisions among the workforce in terms of remuneration and ideology; second, food activism can be a set of principles that cooperative administrators identify with more than workers do; and, third, a group's area of responsibility – production or consumption – influences the degree to which their attitudes are shaped as claims to partake in 'food activism' or not.

To trace the local situatedness of food activism ethics – that is, the ethical configurations accompanying people’s commitment to collective mobilisation around issues related to food – it is necessary to discuss the character of the confiscation process as well as the cooperatives’ organisation of labour. To that end, this chapter will scrutinise the cooperatives, describing what they do, how they are organised, what the important roles are, what the relations are between members, and how they carry out food activism.

## Divisions in Labour, Fractures of Food

### *Divisions*

As already discussed, there were two types of cooperative members – administrators and manual workers. The difference between members and other (‘daily’) workers came down, firstly, to contracts: members had permanent contracts, although there were important distinctions between administrator-members and worker-members concerning levels of remuneration and timing of payment, as well as periods and time frames of actual work. (While administrator-members enjoyed professional terms of continuous work, worker-members were restricted by their permanent contracts, receiving actual work and pay for *only* the agricultural season; only three worker-members had a monthly wage). The second key feature distinguishing members from non-member daily workers was democratic participation, meaning that all members sat on the Members’ Assembly, which met annually. By contrast, non-member daily workers signed three-month contracts for seasonal agrarian work and were paid on a daily basis, but they had no rights to democratic participation. (To tell them apart, as and where appropriate, from the worker-members, I use the terms ‘daily workers’ or ‘*braccianti*’.)

However, the member/non-member distinction is misleading. On the one hand, worker-members and daily workers had much in common despite the (undeniably significant) difference between stable employment and short-term contractual work. Manual members’ work (and hence pay) was as seasonal as that of most daily workers. Due to their similar salary, work and living conditions, the situation of the daily workers was similar to the permanent worker-members with whom they identified, as they equally considered themselves ‘parts of the cooperative’ (see table 4.1).

**Table 4.1** General Information about the Spicco Vallata Cooperatives

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Land</b>	<b>Other assets</b>	<b>Organisational affiliation</b>	<b>Established</b>
Lavoroaltro	Riccardo	130 ha in Spicco Vallata (of which 14 ha is vineyards)	An agrotourism establishment opened in 2010	Arci	May 1999
Liberanima	Partinico Legal seat: San Giovanni	19 ha in Canicattí (100 km away) 3 ha of lemon grove	—	Libertà	July 2007
Borsellino	San Giovanni	130 ha in Spicco Vallata (32 of which is vineyards)	An agrotourism establishment opened in 2010	Libertà	June 2006
Falcone	San Giovanni	155 ha (30 of which is vineyards) 50 ha from the municipalities of Trapani e Paceco (100 km away)	A winery (Centò) An agrotourism establishment opened in 2006	Libertà	June 2001

On the other hand, there were crucial differences *among* members, between the administrator and worker-members. In that respect, diverging from a marked tendency in anthropology of work to distinguish between workers in stable employment and contractual workers,<sup>1</sup> I focus on another distinction: stratification *within* those in stable employment (administrators and worker-members), not least because the latter, more often than not, were allied with daily workers.<sup>2</sup> The two-tiered organisation of all Spicco Vallata cooperatives (which, in turn, established a pattern followed by anti-mafia cooperatives elsewhere outside Sicily) is a salient issue, with repercussions in terms of class, ethics, relatedness and the overall meaning of participation in anti-mafia cooperativism. As the mechanics of voting and ‘collective’ decision-making were not often disputed in the field, and as internal stratifications go well beyond systems of voting, I shall not dwell on this theme in my ethnographic narrative.

In fact, although bereft of voting rights in the cooperatives, daily workers shared a similar experience (and status) with worker-members due to their commonalities (and shared values). In addition, worker-members, as members, had the burden of sharing potential losses in the cooperative. The lack of ‘voice’ in the co-ops, associated with membership and its recurring stable employment, did not mark out a broad stratification along the lines of membership/non-membership as much as the issue of livelihoods did. In fact, it is part of my argument that, in order to understand internal divisions within cooperatives we need to move, both methodologically and analytically, beyond a focus on schemes of decision-making – not least because they have been appropriated by techniques of ‘governance’, as the relevant literature notes (Zamagni and Zamagni 2010). It is telling data, nonetheless, to juxtapose with cooperatives’ ‘participatory democracy’ the fact that the Falcone, Borsellino and Lavoroealtro all had a similar mode of collective management whereby the ideas of the administration teams dictated the overall planning.

In all three, this was arranged in two decision-making bodies. Firstly, the Administration Council, which met monthly, and where only 5 members voted. Electing the Council was among the duties of the annual Members’ Assembly, where all members had a vote. I observed Administration Council meetings in the three co-ops. In the two co-ops’ assemblies I followed in 2008 and 2009, all decisions by the councils were approved with a 100 per cent majority, including the councils’ annual planning and previous year’s balance (*bilancio*). The assembly also elected the members for the next year’s council, constantly electing a majority of administration members over worker-members (thus, for each cooperative, three administrator-members and two worker-members) and

without exception reflecting the views of the Consortium and Libertà. As for the significance of the Members' Assemblies as 'democratic participation', it would suffice to quote the opinion of Mina, Falcone's vice president, which she confided to me just after one of the co-op's annual assembly meetings: 'Well yes, the assembly is important, but too much democracy can be a waste of time when deciding things corporate; we need organisation and quick decisions.'

While highly suggestive, this data on its own cannot provide the necessary nuances of what the administrator/worker division of labour in politically driven cooperativism really meant for the lives and livelihoods of worker-members. Where collective decision-making falls short of 'industrial democracy' (Holmström 1989), this is the *outcome* rather than the reason for internal stratifications. The reasons, as shown here and in the remainder of this book, lay mostly *outside* the cooperatives framework: in the backgrounds of the members, in the broader social relationships in which they were embedded, and in how these related differentially to the political project guiding the co-ops. For this reason, I shall not explore the typical and typified decision-making processes in cooperatives in my ethnography. I shall, instead, examine disagreements, splits and conflicts in the workplace and beyond, as indicative of opinions challenging the legality-oriented ideology of the cooperatives that were never expressed in the democratic bodies of the organisations, at least not during my fieldwork.

## **Food and Legality: Ideological Overlaps of Administrators**

As discussed, anti-mafia cooperatives make explicit references to a political struggle waged against the mafia. 'Legality', an activist and ethical embracing of the law, was members' constant point of reference. The term stems from the history of the anti-mafia movement and has been unrelated to other food ethics claims so far, despite having been a central tenet of the production of 'democratic' public discourse in Italy (Ginsborg 2003a: 145; Santino 2002; Schneider and Schneider 2003, 2005) and potentially associated with a vocal civil society (Pizzini-Gambetta 2006). Their organic produce, small in production volumes but highly valued, quickly established the cooperatives as niche exporters of quality food from the island to northern Italy and a number of foreign countries and attracted the attention of many (often international) food reviews and magazines. Journalists noted, in a leitmotif phrase, the 'combination of nature and

culture' represented by the organic foodstuffs cultivated on confiscated land (e.g., Self 2009).

Through the discussion of the cooperatives' social composition I elucidate two issues. I first look at how internal divisions impeded cooperative arrangements of internal democracy and associated food-activist claims with administrators more than with workers. Second, I trace how these divisions were, to an extent, the outcome of food-activism commitments. In that respect, I aim to show how cooperatives' food-activism goals often do not necessarily abide by or nurture industrial democracy but actually hinder it.

In the anti-mafia co-ops' case, this process was conveyed in a two-tiered organisation, whereby administrators embraced food-activist principles more than workers did. Disseminating the co-ops' reputation, distributing the produce and promoting consumption were the work of administrators. Using websites, leaflets and newsletters, Libertà endorsed what Lino, a co-op administrator, described to me as 'the continuation of the anti-mafia movement's history' (as discussed in the previous chapter). Many administrators were Libertà members, and therefore Libertà influenced the administration's collective decisions substantially. As Checco, the cooperatives' thirty-year-old public relations manager, once told me, the food and wine produced symbolised 'a sense of purity: being the fruit of both organic agriculture *and* legality processes.' Checco noted many times in our interlocutions that awareness of food ethics and anti-mafia awareness were two sides of the same coin for the cooperatives. Libertà, whose Palermitan branch was most active in the cooperatives' marketing, called the cooperatives' foodstuffs and wine 'pure' and 'ethical.' Giampiero, the thirty-two-year-old vice president of Libertà Palermo and a member of the Borsellino cooperative, told me that '*because of this twofold approach*' (anti-mafia and organic), buying their produce implied 'ethical consumption.'

My informants among Palermitan administrators, who were also members of Libertà, stressed the 'purity' (*purezza*) of their produce. They argued, in different circumstances, that the foodstuffs they produced participated in a 'virtuous economic circle': the foods and wine were 'the products of legality in all respects.' Specifically, the administrators underlined that the foods the cooperatives produced were cultivated on legally expropriated land using organic agriculture, which guaranteed that their production was socially and environmentally fair. Moreover, distribution took place through consumer cooperatives as well as through outlets organised by Addiopizzo.<sup>3</sup> Piero, the Borsellino cooperative's agronomist, told me once that this fact was a way to be in line with their food ethics

and politics. 'It is legality all the way,' Luca, the Falcone cooperative's president, noted in an interview. This idea of legality keyed in well with the administrators' sense that they operated within 'virtuous networks' of meritocracy (as explained in the next chapter).

Cooperative administrators promoted in a series of leaflets and newsletters and explained in interviews the idea that their products (organic wine, pasta and legumes) embodied – in a play on words – 'the fairness/ the taste of Sicily' (*Il g(i)usto di Sicilia*). It is significant to acknowledge that this articulation of nature and culture emphasises the incarnation in the landscape of anti-mafia activism. Linking nature and culture in presenting food-activist claims is a central tenet of some associations, such as Slow Food (Petrini 2001: 8; Siniscalchi 2013a). Recent studies have explored and problematised Slow Food's interacting principles of economy/ecology (Siniscalchi 2013b). The choice to cultivate organic foods (one not necessarily shared by workers) is, in that sense, the outcome of a series of interlocked conditions: it appears 'fair' and 'alternative' (to the dominant system of food distribution as well as to the hegemonic mafia influence in Sicily), but, eventually, it serves a marketing logic. It is sealed in an understanding of an economic enclave that starts in confiscation and ends in the 'fair and good' food on the table. The commercial recognition of this choice is supported by a system of northern Italian consumer cooperatives in ways that underline how the negotiation of the anti-mafia legality claims contribute significantly to the branding of the cooperatives' products. This backing also has a Sicilian counterpart in the form of Addiopizzo, an anti-racketeering association, that has managed to organise a number of Palermo small store owners and small businessmen against Cosa Nostra's *pizzo* (racket) (see Gunnarson 2015). Addiopizzo also backed the Libertà co-ops and their food-activist beliefs.

While all the workers I spent time around insisted that organic agriculture and anti-mafia activism were not their primary concerns, the middle-class anti-mafia cooperative administrators constantly negotiated the discourse of legality in ways that matched current food-marketing needs. Their activity merged leisure with work, as they often met on occasions such as the biannual Addiopizzo feast or film evenings organised by Libertà; several of their friends worked at these events. In the words of Checco, attending such events was not only political socialisation but also an 'ethical obligation vis-à-vis their social allies' (such as the Addiopizzo and the consumer co-ops that distributed their products). It involved the promotion of their products in stands that also showcased Libertà leaflets that informed the public on anti-mafia initiatives, such as demonstrations and talks in schools.



As Ernesto, a Falcone administrator, told me once, their work entailed ‘a mission’ to link food with anti-mafia ideas: this was their ‘cultural project.’ In order to explore this cultural project in Palermo and San Giovanni, I organised focus groups in which the administrators of the cooperatives participated. In these meetings, Ernesto solemnly stated that the administrators ‘embodied’ civil society principles for San Giovanni as well as the ‘mission’ to develop organic agriculture in Spicco Vallata, an asset underestimated by local peasants. Their mission to produce organically on the confiscated land entailed negotiating a balance between the northern Italian consumer cooperatives that were their business collaborators and the local peasants working as manual labourers for the anti-mafia cooperatives. In the negotiation of food activism among anti-mafia cooperative members, fissures did not arise as to whether activism should be focused on production (more associated with manual workers) or consumption (the task of administrators), since the administrators – who liaised with the consumer cooperatives of northern Italy – monopolised the cooperatives’ strategic production of discourse on marketing and food activism. The local peasants of Spicco Vallata, working in the cooperatives in working-class posts, were viewed as outsiders to this process.

Cooperative administrators complained about the locals’ ‘aesthetics’, suggesting that the entire village had been constructed on the back of mafia-related *speculazione edilizia* (real estate speculation), done as cheaply as possible. In fact, many people visiting the village found the derelict facades of most houses embarrassing. Consumer cooperative representatives often came from Bologna (the capital of Emilia in northern Italy) to visit the anti-mafia cooperatives and confirm their collaboration. They compared San Giovanni to impoverished Bolivian villages they had visited while backpacking.

I already referred to the case when Flavio, a representative of CoopBrino, came to San Giovanni. That very week, another CoopBrino representative from northern Italy, Rosy Fernasi, had expressed to me, in private, that she ‘shared what my Libertà friends think of this place: it’s pretty crap’. But this was a private interlocution between Fernasi and me, whereas the Flavio event took place in a car with other co-op administrators. Flavio and I were strangers to the island and Spicco Vallata, differently interested in the cooperatives, and the administration team thought they should somehow disassociate from his opinion.

Specifically, later the same day as Flavio’s remark, Luca was somewhat embarrassed and apologetic towards me regarding Flavio’s ideas. Flavio being their business partner through CoopBrino, Luca thought he should stress that he found Flavio’s remark offensive, although he had laughed

when he had uttered it. Moreover Luca wished to clarify that the cooperatives had a specific role in the area, often not understood either by locals or by their Emilian partners:

Here [in San Giovanni] we find ourselves [he spells each syllable out clearly and raises his voice] in an *unevolved* society (*una società non-evoluta* [emphasis added]) – not only due to the presence of the mafia but also due to the fact that income, culture and social status are in such a condition that the only thing that matters to people is the price [of the produce]. That’s it. It is not important *how* something is produced – the only thing that matters is its price, nothing else. And since I work in San Giovanni and not in Bologna, I have an eye open for all the world market but I pay attention on how to impose change on this reality.

Luca’s disassociation from Flavio’s point is then only partial. The vignette above, as well as Luca’s words, point to a classic theme: food ethics do not mean the same thing across classes, and the negotiation of a past that constructs a retrospective genealogy of ethical food production associated with peasant struggles and constitutes current food production as part of a broader activism is also informed by class (cf. Pratt 2007). The relative distance in the above quotations, between the different work groups of the cooperatives, underlines that conceptualisations of agrarian change should take class dynamics seriously (Bernstein 2010).

This is influenced by the administrators’ participation in the values of the recent anti-mafia movement, in which Libertà plays a crucial role. The managerial roles of certain people (like Mina, Ernesto and Luca) in associations such as the NGO Libertà on the one hand and the cooperatives on the other are central to the merging of two parallel types of discourse (the anti-mafia movement and food ethics). At the same time, local workers, more focused on their own farms’ produce, were absent from this configuration. This was reflected in the two-tiered organisation of the cooperatives.

Mina, Giampiero, Luca and several other administrators insisted, in several interviews, that in order to support food ethics, and in order to guarantee the distribution of their *g(i)usto* product and the dissemination of anti-mafia activism alongside and through the produce, hierarchical principles of labour should be applied to the cooperatives. Mina was one of the administrators who was more involved with promoting the cooperatives as ethical food and wine producers. Part of her job was to nurture and develop the business partnership of two Spicco Vallata cooperatives (Falcone and Borsellino) with consumer co-ops in northern Italy, where their produce was distributed. This work often raised issues of prioritis-

ing a politicised marketing of the products, often by downplaying equal work relations and particularly democracy within the co-ops.

## Workers: Worldviews Apart?

The peasants of the cooperatives that Giampiero referred to were the people in the manual workforce who were either members of the cooperatives or day labourers; alongside their cooperative employment, they were also smallholders.<sup>4</sup> They earned wages from the cooperatives by working in the confiscated land plots and also worked on their own land tracts (*pezzi di terra*), mostly vineyards. One such case was Pippo Pitrè, a fifty-eight-year-old from San Giovanni, who used to be a member of the Borsellino cooperative but had resigned a few months before I met him. His resignation was due to conflicts with the administration over the fact that, as a member-worker, he did not receive a monthly wage. This mishap took place over a misunderstanding about work the Borsellino administrators thought he had offered voluntarily, helping out another co-op. When Pippo retrospectively demanded wages, he was astounded to hear that he had been 'a volunteer'. He eventually decided to go back to work as a daily worker for the Falcone, as he needed some income. I rented the apartment he owned at the centre of the village. Pippo's family lived in a farmhouse two kilometers outside the village, as they preferred the tranquility of that area. His wife Maria, sixteen years his junior, did not work outside the home; they had a seventeen-year-old daughter, Elena.

As I had become good friends with Pippo, the Pitrè family often invited me for dinner. After a day of work in the vineyards of the cooperatives, Pippo regularly asked me to join him in his house for a warm dish of pasta with vegetables from his garden, cooked by Maria. As we sat gathered around the table, he would boast that we were enjoying his 'own wine,' comparing it to the cooperative's: 'the cooperative wine is too commercial,' while the wine from his vineyard was 'authentic and pure.'

He was proud that he cultivated the red Nero D'Avola variety at 670 meters above sea level, as it is very difficult to grow red grapes at such a high altitude. 'That's the heroism, that's what's really difficult,' he said, 'not just co-op activism.' Pippo was also proud of the fact that he matured the wine in his 'cellar' (in fact, the garage). Like other daily cooperative workers, he thought homemade conventional wine was qualitatively superior to the organic wine made at the cooperatives' winery. For him, the only advantage of the cooperative production of bottled

organic wine was that they produced it on a larger scale; in terms of quality, 'his wine' was superior. Pippo, like many other peasants working in the cooperatives but also maintaining their own – conventional, not organic – vineyards and farms, could not conceive why organic produce was any better than 'the local, traditional one', as he put it. Tano, another worker, emphasised to me that while he enjoyed working in the co-ops' vineyards, he much preferred his own: 'There is more meaning in working my own land, despite what people [administrators] say about organic agriculture and activism. My own product is better.'

It is telling to juxtapose with cooperatives' 'participatory democracy' the fact that Falcone, Borsellino and Lavoroeltra all had similar modes of collective management whereby the ideas of the administrative teams dictated the overall planning. The main actors in the cooperatives' decision-making, the Palermitan administrators, engulfed food activism by way of democratic politics. This meant working in terms of a conceptual enclave: fusing the ideology of a pure political system (free from mafia) with the idea of a pure system of consuming ethical, organic foods. Doing this, however, comes with costs for the internal democracy within the cooperatives.

This was reflected, importantly, in contested notions across teams' views over such issues as danger and safety or the freedom of speech (see also Rakopoulos 2015c for a lengthy commentary). Across such differences among the work teams, (ideas on) the relative safety of interlocutors and anthropologist sometimes conflicted. For instance, Adamo, a forty-year-old agricultural member-worker of Falcone from San Giovanni, commented on my unwillingness to meet a *mafioso* recently out of prison, calling me 'a pussy and a fake anthropologist' and suggesting that 'a real man and a proper anthropologist should be into this kind of stuff'. The *mafioso* was a friend of his; Adamo insisted I meet him. For Adamo, the danger in this case was if the office-based administrators found out about our dealings, as this could have had consequences for his position as a member of the cooperative. I felt I had to find a balance between the danger of being challenged by his perceptions of what constituted a 'real man' and a 'real anthropologist' and the danger of being discovered by members of the office team as someone who had relations with 'the mafia'.

Adamo often emphasised the fluidity of relations with mafia, arguing that mafia and anti-mafia were distinct but did not constitute two worlds apart. As he had told me, in connection with another instance, 'the mafia is eternal in San Giovanni: as omnipresent as the fog is in your London'. Hence, while mafia clans' inter-relations are unpredictable, *the mafia* is

seen as a constant, much as ‘family is the centre of Sicilian life’ as earlier anthropological research stated in a, slightly debatable by now, fashion (Boissevain 1966: 19; but see Rakopoulos 2017a).

The main sense of unease I had was not from Adamo’s comments or my own sense of safety, which I understood was guaranteed due to my friend’s linking me with the *mafioso*; it was, rather, that there was a danger that the cooperatives’ anti-mafia-committed administrators would find out about that link. That Adamo, his mafia friend Gioacchino and I had ‘dealings’ should have to stay a secret, because if the administrators found out, it might lead to grave consequences for Adamo’s position as a cooperative member. Adamo, like everyone else in the co-ops, was not free to express any positive views about people he liked who happened to be mafia members, let alone to bring others into contact with *mafiosi*. His stance, although not identifying with the silent mafia person, was removed from the views of (most of) the members of the anti-mafia team who condemned anyone who had relations with the mafia.

Some days after I had met Gioacchino and interviewed him, thirty-one-year-old Marelio, an administrative member of Falcone, called me in. Marelio had overheard me talking on the phone and suspected I had dealings with *mafiosi*. Finding this situation dangerous, he asked for details. I clarified that I could not share information with him in order to protect informants. He commented that I was buying into *omertà*, and thus the dangerous ethics of the mafia code of silence. He therefore identified what anthropologists perceive as ethical behaviour, with mafia morality. Silvio, the thirty-four-year-old president of Borsellino and also an administrator, heard about my contact with Adamo and the *mafioso* through local gossip. He thought my contacts with ‘the mafia’ put me in danger and suggested disciplining the person who had led me to establish bridges between ‘the cooperative and the mafia’. This was the danger Adamo had mentioned, as it imperilled his job. Thankfully, he was never disciplined.

This event elucidates the subtle ethical challenges I faced during fieldwork. Codes of conduct were informed by the cooperative distribution of labour (influenced by people’s class and other backgrounds), revealing the often contradictory morals that separated colleagues in the cooperative, who were divided across the distribution of labour, personal background, participation in local kinship and friendship networks. It also shows the relationality of my research position – contingent to each *specific* relationship I established with people. In the background is the heavily gendered nature of my fieldwork, as ‘being a man’ was understood as a performed pattern of behaviour that I had to live up to in order to fulfil expectations some interlocutors had for me. Episodes like this

allowed me to reflect on my gendered position in the field and on how the (arguably rigid) ethics of anthropological fieldwork often contrast indigenous ideas about respectability, as the fact that confidentiality was glossed as '*omertà*' shows.

An anthropology of such divisions, then, underlines the issue of subjectivity in discussing economic organisation and food ethics and values where often a distance between local and 'authentic' is present (Pratt 2007) – in this case, across divisions of labour. Specifically, it is impossible to conceptualise cooperatives as united, cohesive actors in democratic mobilisation over food concerns. On the contrary, claims about food ethics can often underline, and deepen, already existing internal divisions of labour. The positions of workers and administrators (the latter being the real actors of activism in Sicily, rather than the 'cooperatives' they compose) are influenced, among other issues, by their position vis-à-vis food and legality ethics and their overall viewpoints on production as well as their commitment to anti-mafia principles.

## Differences across Foodways and Law

The idiom 'legality' informs conceptualisations of food ethics and activism in contemporary Italy. The class-situatedness of this ethics, and the associated political activism from which it derives, is the key point for conceptualising anti-mafia food activism in Sicily today. Administrators stress the discourse on organic production and on anti-mafia principles, while their co-members – the local workers – are less interested in framing their activity in these terms. It is important to conceptualise food activism as a classed element of cooperative ideology. Administrators are invested in shaping the cooperatives towards ethical consumption, while producers (local worker-members) identify much less with these proclaimed characteristics. This is identified both in how workers think of their activity (prioritising their own produce over the cooperatives') and in how administrators think of their colleagues' commitment (which they see as relatively low).

Internal democracy in cooperatives draws from the ideological interaction of food activism and legality activism, wherein the administrators 'guide' the co-ops in their mastering of the food ethics and anti-mafia discourses. Much change has taken place in a shift towards the study of food consumption since, say Goodman and DuPuis' essay (2002) that noted an asymmetry, with production weighing heavier in terms of scholarly focus (such change acknowledged in, e.g., Klein and Murcott 2014).

Production of food in a co-op environment is not endowed with the same attitude across workers: the obvious two-tiered organisation of labour in the agrarian anti-mafia cooperatives of Sicily reminds us that food ethics begin way before the consumption of foodstuff. The production of food and wine is mostly associated with local workers who care little about identifying with anti-mafia or food activism principles and who most often prioritise, in terms of their sense of selfhood and pride, their own private production of wine. The strict separation of consumption and production into different teams within a sharp division of labour is rooted in, and informed by, a series of other disconnections between producers and managers of distribution/consumption, including personal origin (respectively, rural Spicco Vallata and urban Palermo), ethical stance, class understood in a range of semantics and other sources of income (private farming).

Seeing political movements as moral politics cannot fully account for the agrarian moral economies they inspire (Edelman 2001); the anti-mafia agrarian cooperatives' discourse, conveyed by their administrators, explicitly attempted to merge moral claims regarding food production with a politicised discourse (around legality). In the case of Sicily's anti-mafia cooperatives, principles of food activism are followed only by some members – a condition that emphasises the challenges of achieving internal cohesiveness and democratic organisation.

This chapter has briefly situated the actors of Sicilian anti-mafia ideologies, over food activism, in specific divisions. The phenomenology of those hints at a classic sociological division of labour. However, as illustrated in the story of Pippo over produce, quality and family life and in the vignette around talking to *mafiosi*, this is mostly a division based on worldviews, which precedes internal co-op divisions and is rooted in class differences. The valuation of their skill and the valorisation of their labour follow what are already existing differences among work groups that often have contrasting repercussions in the way they operate internally.

Most importantly, such dissimilarities underline the significance of the difference between people participating in each work team. This difference in worldviews, that rarely became palpable, cannot be reduced analytically to a 'division of labour' framework. As much as they are structured in sets of labour differentiation (a two-tiered system), the significance of such differentiation cannot be exhausted in ideas on skill across a manual and an intellectual part. It is this economic reductionism that opened this book (see page 4) that this ethnography wishes to tackle, with more fodder to come to that direction in the following

**Table 4.2** Pay and Membership Status in the Spicco Vallata Cooperatives' Workforce

Name	Cooperative members'		Contractual ('daily') workers	
	Administrative workforce	Manual workforce	Administrative workforce	Manual workforce
<b>Liberanima</b>	2 members (on monthly wage of c.500€)	3 members (on daily pay)	—	1 seasonal worker (man)
<b>Borsellino</b>	5 administrators on monthly wage ranging from 1,200€ (Salvo, president) to 940€ (Niko, administrator)	12 members (all of them on daily pay)	—	4 seasonal workers (men)
<b>Falcone</b>	7 office-based administrators on monthly wage ranging from 1,230€ (Luca, president) to 1,030€ (Manlio, administrator)	10 member-workers 4 of them on monthly-wage contracts, 6 on contracts based on daily pay	2 office-based administrators, on annual renewable contracts	11 seasonal workers, cooperative members as fieldhands (men, on daily pay contracts); some amassing a monthly 700€ 4 seasonal workers (men) in other capacities, e.g., tourism 5 seasonal workers (women) 4 seasonal workers (men)
<b>Lavoroaltro</b>	3 administrators on monthly wages ranging from 1,100€ (Vito, president) to 800€ (Mario, administrator)	12 member-workers	—	

\* All members were on permanent contracts. All figures denote mixed pay.



**Table 4.3** General Information about Other Anti-mafia Cooperatives

<b>Cooperatives outside Spicco Vallata</b>					
<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Land</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Established</b>
Il Gabbiano	Rome	30 ha (mainly vineyards)	Independent	3	2008
Le Terre di don Peppè Diana	Caserta area (Campania)	No land – buffalos for mozzarella production	Libertà	7	2009
Casa dei Giovanni	Bagheria	c100 ha (dry farming)	Used to collaborate with Libertà` but now independent	9	2001
Valle del Marro	Gioia Tauro [Calabria]	60 ha (mainly vineyards)	Libertà	10	2008
Beppe Montana	Catania area of eastern Sicily	2,000 orange trees 100 olive trees	Libertà (and Etna Consortium for Legality and Development	4	2011
<b>Defunct Cooperatives in Spicco Vallata</b>					
Akragas	San Giovanni	130 ha (mainly vineyards)	Preceded Libera and the Consortium	4	Established 1998; liquidated by the Consortium in 2002
Paradiso	San Giovanni	130 ha (mainly vineyards)	Preceded Libera and the Consortium	5	Established 1998; liquidated by the Consortium in 2002

\* The Consortium and Liberta's imposition of a regularisation of labour did not work in the case of Casagiovane, as the administrators paid no national insurance contributions to the workers. This caused a scandal, which is still under investigation at the time of publication. Meanwhile, the Casa is isolated by other cooperatives, the state and Liberta.

chapters. One fundamental area of contradictions outside the economic realm was that of kinship and its various ideological and practical workings in the forging and operation of the cooperatives. Like food, attitudes to kinship and recruitment based on kinship proved a great dividing mechanism across the co-ops' teams. But unlike food, claims to kinship and family, rather than solidifying, in fact actually acted as a gluing device for accommodating cooperative work in people's lives.

## NOTES

Some of the material in this chapter has also been published in 'Food Activism and Anti-mafia Cooperatives in Contemporary Sicily' (2013).

1. Of course, this is an older discussion, often highlighting gendered stratifications (e.g., Goddard 1996). Recent anthropological research on industrial settings (Parry 2007) where there is a consistent divide between fixed and (sub)contracted workers takes the discussion further. The line of argument is that those in stable employment, unlike contractual workers, are privileged ('embourgeois', as Parry has it) by comparison. The debate on precariousness and genealogical differences among workers is also akin to this discussion (Procoli 2004; Standing 2011).
2. This is why, for most of the book, the term 'manual workforce' or 'workers' means both daily and member-workers, unless stated. I do appreciate that, legally, administrators were cooperative workers, too. However, the teams identified themselves as 'administrators' and 'workers', respectively.
3. Addiopizzo is the name of a Sicilian civil society association catering for the horizontal organisation of retailers who adopt an 'anti-racketeering' policy, shopkeepers who refuse to pay racketeering money to the mafia. Today, the association has NGO status, and three hundred retailers subscribe to its principles. Even so, it is estimated that 80 per cent of Palermo's retailers still pay the mafia's protection (ISTAT 2015).
4. Farmer-owner of a small plot.