From productivism to post-productivism . . . and back again? Exploring the (un)changed natural and mental landscapes of European agriculture

Geoff A Wilson

This paper has evolved out of a growing dissatisfaction with the relatively uncritical acceptance in contemporary debates that agriculture in advanced societies has moved from ‘productivism’ to ‘post-productivism’. A brief review of current conceptualizations of productivist and post-productivist agricultural regimes reveals inconsistencies in current understandings these dualistic terms. The problem has partly been that the conceptual literature on post-productivism has largely failed to take into account the wealth of actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded research. Productivist and post-productivist agricultural regimes have also been conceptualized from a UK-centric perspective that has largely failed to discuss whether the concept has wider applicability within Europe and beyond. The paper discusses the time-lag and spatial inconsistencies in the adoption of post-productivist action and thought, and emphasizes that different localities are positioned at different points in a temporal, spatial and conceptual transition from ‘pre-productivist’ to ‘post-productivist’ agricultural regimes. The notion of the ‘territorialization’ of productivist and post-productivist actor spaces highlights the wide-ranging diversity that exists within the productivist/post-productivist spectrum, and that productivist and post-productivist action and thought occurs in multidimensional coexistence leads one to question the implied directionality of the traditional productivist/post-productivist debate. It is suggested that the notion of a ‘multifunctional agricultural regime’ better encapsulates the diversity, non-linearity and spatial heterogeneity that can currently be observed in modern agriculture and rural society.

key words  productivism  post-productivism  multifunctional agricultural regime  territorialization  political economy approach  actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded approach

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Introduction

In recent years, debates on the notion of a possible shift from a productivist to a post-productivist agricultural regime (PPAR) have added an interesting new conceptual dimension to agricultural/rural research – a field that was, for a long time, seen as having relatively static theorizations of agricultural and rural change (Marsden 1988; Cloke 1989; Butt et al 1990; Cloke and Goodwin 1992). Debates on post-productivism have brought together a wide array of researchers from different
disciplinary backgrounds (e.g. Buttel et al 1990; Marsden et al 1993; Halfacree 1997a; van der Ploeg 1997), emphasizing that conceptualizations of post-productivism do not fall into one disciplinary domain alone, but need to include a wider range of environmental, economic, social and cultural dimensions. Yet, as this paper will argue, discussions of the shift to post-productivism have been dominated by political economy and structuralist approaches that, although essential to the argument, may have provided only partial answers. Further, conceptualizations of PPARs have been set almost exclusively in a UK context, with the result that the applicability of the concept beyond the UK remains to be proven.

Several years after the first widely publicized discussions of a shift toward a PPAR (Marsden et al 1993; Ward 1993; Shucksmith 1993; Murdoch and Pratt 1993), and at a time when we witness further profound changes in agricultural/rural arenas, it is time to re-evaluate existing conceptualizations. This paper, therefore, has four aims. First, I will briefly review current conceptualizations of both ‘productivism’ and ‘post-productivism’ and point towards inconsistencies in current understandings of the terms. Second, the paper aims to broaden political economy conceptualizations of post-productivism by injecting an actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded component that also enables an assessment of attitudinal shifts to post-productivism at the ‘grassroots’ and ‘intermediate’ actor levels. This will help to reveal that productivism/post-productivism is, in fact, a spectrum of different views rather than two easily definable and ‘separate’ entities on their own. Third, the paper develops a critique of the largely UK-centric conceptualization of post-productivism, and investigates whether, and to what extent, the concept has wider applicability within Europe and beyond. The paper adopts a Western European stance that attempts to broaden the discussion beyond Anglo-Saxon conceptualizations, but I will also discuss possibilities for broadening the concept of PPARs with possible applications to economically less developed countries (ELDCs). Fourth, I will explore implications of these critiques for the understanding of rural spaces ‘beyond post-productivism’. The notion of territorialization of productivist and post-productivist actor spaces will be discussed, further emphasizing the importance of ‘diversity’ in the productivist/post-productivist debate. Existing frameworks that attempt to go ‘beyond agriculture’ will be analysed, and possible alternatives to the term ‘post-productivist’ will be discussed.

Throughout the paper, it is acknowledged that notions of productivism/post-productivism go well beyond the issue of agriculture and cannot be fully understood in agricultural terms alone (cf Latour 1993; Philo 1993; Halfacree 1997b; Marsden 1999). I will, however, focus predominantly on the issue of productivist/post-productivist agricultural regimes in this paper, as debates on productivism first started with analyses of changes in agricultural regimes (e.g. Marsden et al 1993; Ward 1993; Shucksmith 1993; Murdoch and Pratt 1993). However, throughout the paper (and particularly in the conclusions) the extent to which post-productivism can be understood largely through agricultural eyes will be discussed.

From productivism to post-productivism: issues and debates

In the UK, there is little debate on the definition of the productivist agricultural regime (PAR). Lowe et al (1993, 221), for example, argue that productivism can be conceptualized as a commitment to an intensive, industrially driven and expansionist agriculture with state support based primarily on output and increased productivity. The concern [of productivism] was for ‘modernization’ of the ‘national farm’, as seen through the lens of increased production. By the ‘productivist regime’ we mean the network of institutions oriented to boosting food production from domestic sources which became the paramount aim of rural policy following World War II. These included not only the Ministry of Agriculture and other state agencies but the assemblage of input suppliers, financial institutions, R&D centres, etc., which facilitated the continued expansion of agricultural production.

Other conceptualizations broadly concur with this definition and emphasize the often environmentally destructive nature of the PAR based on the drive to maximize food production through the application of ever more intensive farming techniques and biochemical inputs (e.g. Ward 1993; Ilbery and Bowler 1998).

A review of the literature suggests that productivism and post-productivism have been conceptualized on the basis of seven inter-related dimensions (Table 1): ideology, actors, food regimes, agricultural production, agricultural...
polices, farming techniques and environmental impacts. This highlights that a multitude of different characteristics need to be considered to fully understand the postulated ‘post-productivist transition’ (Marsden et al 1993), and that focusing on one dimension alone would only provide partial answers. It is not the aim of this paper to discuss in detail the different characteristics and dimensions of productivism and post-productivism shown in Table I, as this has been done in detail elsewhere (e.g. Marsden et al 1993; Lowe et al 1993; Ward 1993; Ilbery and Bowler 1998), but a brief analysis of individual components is, nonetheless, necessary as a basis for the discussion in the following sections of this paper.

Productivism

As Table I suggests, ideologies of the PAR have been characterized by a central hegemonic position of agriculture in rural society (Cloke and Goodwin 1992) and a sense of unchallenged ideological security for agricultural actors and institutions (Marsden et al 1993), highlighting that productivist agriculture and food production was seen as occupying a special place in the ‘pantheon of traditional conservative values’ (Wormell 1978). Bishop and Phillips (1993) have argued that such agricultural fundamentalism was strongly rooted in memories of wartime hardships, with agriculture seen as having a pre-emptive claim on the use of rural land, aptly referred to by Newby (1985) as ‘agricultural exceptionalism’. Productivist ideologies held a strong belief that farmers were the best protectors of the countryside (cf Scott Report 1942) and, coupled with notions of the ‘countryside idyll’ (Mingay 1989), led to a conservative vision respectful of private property and traditional agrarian institutions (Halfacree 1999). As a result, the main threats to the countryside were perceived to be urban and industrial development – not agriculture itself – and, in a UK context, the ‘rural’ was, therefore, mainly defined in terms of agricultural production (Halfacree and Boyle 1998).

The agricultural policy community in the PAR has been described as small but powerful, tight-knit and with great internal strength (Gilg 1991; Clark and Lowe 1992). In particular, the ‘corporate’ relationship between agriculture ministries and the farming lobby has been stressed (e.g. MAFF/NFU in the UK) that largely excluded other actors from key agricultural policy decision-making processes, led to a strong sense of political and ideological security (Cox and Winter 1987; Winter 1996), and marginalized the conservation lobby toward the fringe of the policy-making core (Cox et al, 1986; Hart and Wilson 1998).

Food regimes during the productivist era are seen to have been largely shaped by the ‘Atlanticist Food Order’ dominated by the USA (Le Heron 1993; Goodman and Watts 1997), characterized by mass consumption of agricultural commodities, the expansion of world food trade in a rapidly growing capitalist market, and the adoption of Fordist regimes of agricultural production (Goodman and Redclift 1991; Cloke and Goodwin 1992). This had severe repercussions for agricultural production through the industrialization of agriculture, resulting in both the commercialization of agricultural holdings increasingly embedded in the ‘treadmill’ of production and profit maximization (Ward 1993) and the emergence of large agri-businesses often poorly rooted in local rural communities (Whatmore 1995). The ultimate goal was to secure national self-sufficiency for agricultural commodities, leading to environmentally harmful intensification (Potter 1998), and government encouragement for maximum production often resulting in increasing surplus production. The outcome was regional specialization of agricultural production and the concentration of farming through the amalgamation of smaller farm units into more efficient larger holdings with associated declines in labour (Ilbery and Bowler 1998).

Moves to increase production of agricultural commodities during the PAR were closely linked to strong financial state (and EEC) support through farm subsidies, price guarantees, and protectionist and interventionist policies that kept prices for agricultural products artificially inflated and gave farmers a strong sense of financial security (Fennell 1987; Ritson and Harvey 1997). While productivism has been strongly associated with faith placed in the ability of the state to plan and orchestrate agricultural regeneration (e.g. Agricultural Act 1947 (UK); Loi d’Orientation Agricole 1960 (France)), it has also been characterized by limited state regulation of environmentally harmful agricultural practices (Cloke and Goodwin 1992), exemption of agriculture from planning controls, and the guaranteed security of property rights (Whatmore et al 1990). This gave farmers freedom to
manage their land as they saw fit, resulting in farming techniques associated with increased mechanization and increased use of biochemical inputs progressively incompatible with sustainable environmental management (Knickel 1990; Mannion 1995).

Table I Dimensions of productivism and post-productivism: current conceptualizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Productivism</th>
<th>Post-productivism</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ideology:</td>
<td>Ideology:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Central hegemonic position of agriculture in society (Cloke and Goodwin 1992)*</td>
<td>• Loss of central position of agriculture in society (Lowe et al 1993; Ward 1993)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ideological security (Marsden et al 1993; Halfacree and Boyle 1998)</td>
<td>• Move away from agricultural fundamentalism and agricultural exceptionalism (Marsden et al 1993; Winter 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Agricultural fundamentalism rooted in memories of wartime hardships (Newby 1985; Bishop and Phillips 1993)</td>
<td>• Loss of ideological and economic sense of security: farmers branded as destroyers of countryside (Shoard 1980; Body 1982; Potter 1998)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Agricultural exceptionalism (Newby et al 1978; Newby 1985)</td>
<td>• Changing attitude of public toward agriculture: agriculture as villain (Marsden et al 1993; Harper 1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Belief in farmers as best protectors of countryside (Newby 1985, Harvey 1997)</td>
<td>• Changing social/media representations of the rural (Harrison et al 1986; McHenry 1996; Winter 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Main threats to countryside perceived to be urban and industrial development (Ward 1993; Marsden et al 1993)</td>
<td>• Main threats to countryside perceived to be agriculture itself (Pratt 1996; Marsden 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ‘Rural’ defined in terms of agriculture (Halfacree and Boyle 1998)</td>
<td>• Loss of security of property rights (Marsden et al 1993)</td>
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Actors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Productivism</th>
<th>Post-productivism</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Agricultural policy community small but powerful, tight-knit and with great internal strength (Cox and Winter 1987; Gilg 1991; Clark and Lowe 1992; Winter 1996)</td>
<td>• ‘Rural’ increasingly separated from agriculture; new social representations of the rural (Cloke and Goodwin 1992)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• ‘Corporate’ relationship between agriculture ministries and farming lobby (Cox et al 1988; Winter 1996)</td>
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Most of the literature suggests that by the mid-1980s, the logic, rationale and morality of the productivist regime were increasingly questioned by various state and non-state actors on the basis of ideological, environmental, economic and structural problems (Whitby and Lowe 1994), leading some to argue that the productivist ideology was ‘in disarray’ (Marsden et al. 1993, 68). Yet, contrary to the clearly defined dimensions of the PAR, Lowe et al.’s (1993) and Ward’s (1993) earlier suggestion that there is a lack of a clear definition of

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**Table I Continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actors:</th>
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<tr>
<td>● Agricultural policy community widened; inclusion of formerly marginal actors at the core of the policy-making process (Cox et al. 1988; Buttel et al. 1990; Hart and Wilson 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Weakening of corporate relationship between agriculture ministries and farming lobby (Marsden et al. 1993; Lowe et al. 1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Changing power structures in agricultural lobby (Winter 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Counterurbanization: social and economic restructuring in countryside (Cloke and Goodwin 1992; Lowe et al. 1993; Halfacree 1997b; Halfacree and Boyle 1998)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Increasing demands placed on rural spaces by reconstituted ‘urban’ capitals in terms of new manufacturing and service industries (Lowe et al. 1993; Murdoch and Marsden 1994)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Food regimes/market-related forces:</th>
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<tr>
<td>● Challenge to the Atlanticist Food Order from the early 1970s (Goodman and Redclift 1991; Marsden et al. 1993; Lowe et al. 1993; Goodman and Watts 1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Post-Fordist agricultural regime; non-standardized demand for goods and services; vertically disaggregated production (Marsden et al. 1993; Lowe et al. 1993)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Critique of protectionism; free market liberalization; free trade (Potter 1998)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Increased market uncertainty (Marsden et al. 1993)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● New consumption-oriented roles of agriculture (Marsden et al. 1993)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Changing consumer behaviour (Winter 1996; Potter 1998)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Agricultural production:</th>
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<tr>
<td>● Critique of industrialization, commercialization and commoditization of agriculture; critique of corporate involvement (Lowe 1992; Lowe et al. 1993; Ward 1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Less emphasis on securing national self-sufficiency for agricultural commodities (Potter 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Extensification (Ilbery and Bowler 1998)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Dispersion (Ilbery and Bowler 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Diversification; plurality of activities (Ilbery 1991; Evans and Ilbery 1993; Shucksmith 1993)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Farmers wishing to leave agricultural ‘treadmill’ (Ward 1993)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Move from agricultural production to consumption of countryside (Marsden et al. 1993)</td>
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<th>Agricultural policies:</th>
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<tr>
<td>● Reduced financial state support; move away from state-sustained production model (Marsden 1999)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Demise of state-supported model of agricultural development which placed overriding priority on production of food (Lowe et al. 1993)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● New forms of rural governance (Marsden et al. 1993; Pretty 1998; Ray, 2000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Enhancement of local planning controls (Munton 1995; Halfacree and Boyle 1998)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Encouragement for environmentally friendly farming; greening of agricultural policy (Baldock et al. 1990; Clark et al. 1993; Potter 1998; Wilson et al. 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Increased regulation of agricultural practices through voluntary agri-environmental policies (Cloke and Goodwin 1992; Ward 1993; Hart and Wilson 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Move away from price guarantees; decoupling (Potter 1998; Pretty 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Increasing planning regulations for agriculture (Cloke 1989; Marsden et al. 1993; Lowe et al. 1993)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Loss of security of property rights (Cloke 1989; Whatmore et al. 1990; Marsden et al. 1993)</td>
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<th>Farming techniques:</th>
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<tr>
<td>● Reduced intensity of farming (Munton et al. 1990; Potter 1998)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Reduced use or total abandonment of biochemical inputs (Ward 1995; Morris and Winter 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Shift toward sustainable agriculture (Pretty 1995; 1998)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Replacing physical inputs on farms with knowledge inputs (Winter 1997; Ward et al. 1998)</td>
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<th>Environmental impacts:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Move toward environmental conservation on farms; critique of notion of production maximization (Wilson 1996; Potter 1998; Morris and Winter 1999)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Re-establishment of lost or damaged habitats (Adams et al. 1992; 1994; Mannion 1995)</td>
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Source: author

*Only a selection of sources referring to specific characteristics of productivism and post-productivism are listed here.*
post-productivism still holds true at the beginning of the twenty-first century. This is because there continues to be a lack of consensus as to whether or not the PAR has been superseded by post-productivism. Indeed, some have argued that the long persistence of productivism has been rather unusual and not the norm, as is often suggested by regulation theory. Thus, while regulation theorists (e.g. Boyer 1990; Tickell and Peck 1992; Amin 1994) interpret capitalist modes of accumulation as consisting of a series of relatively stable and long-term periods, critics (e.g. Goodwin and Painter 1996 1997) have argued that regimes of accumulation such as the PAR, and especially the PPAR, have not followed the same pattern, in particular as it is far from clear yet that the new regime of the PPAR has fully superseded the PAR and whether it has created a ‘new period of stability’. Thus, Goodwin and Painter (1997, 21) rightly argue that ‘the process of regulation is constituted geographically. Its unevenness is inherent’. The discussion in the second part of this paper will, therefore, address whether we can safely argue that agricultural regimes in economically more developed countries (EMDCs) have moved ‘beyond productivism’, and whether we should refer to a productivist/post-productivist spectrum rather than conceptually separating the two terms (as most of the literature tends to suggest).

In the absence of a commonly agreed definition of post-productivism, previous work has suggested that the PPAR can be conceptualized as the ‘mirror image’ of the seven inter-related dimensions (see Table 1) of productivism (e.g. Marsden et al 1993; Ilbery and Bowler 1998). Thus, with regard to ideology the PPAR is often characterized by the loss of the central position of agriculture in society, strongly associated with the loss of the privileged political place of agriculture in the ‘new’ (mainly European) liberal left-wing governments (Lowe et al 1993). Similarly, post-productivism is seen as a move away from the agricultural fundamentalism and exceptionalism that characterized productivism, with a loss of the ideological and economic sense of security for farmers, the latter now branded as ‘destroyers’ of the countryside rather than ‘stewards of the land’ (Shoard 1980; Body 1982). This has been closely linked to changing public attitudes portraying agriculture as a ‘villain’ (mainly in environmental and health terms), accompanied by changing media representations of the ‘rural’ (Harrison et al 1986; McHenry 1996), and fundamental changes to the notion of the countryside idyll through new ‘contested countrysides’ (Marsden et al 1993). In the PPAR, therefore, the main threats to the countryside are perceived to be agriculture itself, and less ‘other’ non-agricultural activities. The result has been that – at least in the UK context – conceptualizations of the ‘rural’ and the ‘countryside’ are becoming increasingly separated from conceptualizations of ‘agriculture’ and ‘farming’2 (Hoggart 1990; Murdoch and Pratt 1993; Pratt 1996).

The PPAR has also been characterized by a widening of the agricultural policy community, with the inclusion of formerly marginal actors into the core of the policy-making process, aided by a weakening of the corporate relationship between agriculture ministries and the farming lobby (Marsden et al 1993). This has facilitated the injection of ‘green’ ideas into the agricultural policy-making process by newly empowered actors such as environmental NGOs (Lowe et al 1986; Hart and Wilson 1998). Of equal importance has been the social and economic restructuring of the countryside and the reconstitution of actor spaces through urban-rural migration that has brought mainly middle class and conservative migrants into rural areas for lifestyle, naturalistic and security reasons (Cloke and Goodwin 1992; Lowe et al 1993). These changes to the ‘traditional’ countryside since the 1980s have led some to argue that ‘migration of people to the more rural areas of the developed world . . . forms perhaps the central dynamic in the creation of any post-productivist countryside’ (Halfacree and Boyle, 1998, 9). New interests and actors are coming on the scene in an attempt to create a rurality in their (usually urban) image of the rural that now also permeates the ‘deep’ countryside. Halfacree (1999) argues that the traditional PAR is increasingly moulded into middle class post-productivist space underlain by the rural idyll, further exacerbated by increasing demands placed on rural spaces by reconstituted urban capitals through new manufacturing and service industries (Lowe et al 1993). Farmers, therefore, face new challenges to their authority by their new neighbours over such matters as on-farm pollution, access disputes and environmental management practices (Ward et al 1995).

Forces related to the possible composition of post-productivist food regimes and markets have been more difficult to conceptualize. As many have highlighted, the problem lies in the question of
scale, as no consensus has yet been reached as to whether ‘local’ is necessarily a virtue in the PPAR (Goodman and Redclift 1991; Ray 1998; Halfacree 1999). While some stress the importance of the re-regionalization of agro-food chains and associated processes of vente directe (e.g. Pretty 1998; Williams and Brannigan, 2000), some argue for ‘post-Fordist’ agricultural regimes that emphasize vertically disaggregated food production on the basis of non-standardized demand for high quality goods and services (Lowe et al 1993; Winter 1999). Others stress the new consumption-oriented roles of agriculture operating at various scales (recreation, leisure, environmental conservation) (Marsden et al 1993). What is less contested is that post-productivist actors challenge the Atlanticist Food Order (Marsden et al 1993; Lowe et al 1993), and call for a rapid dismantling of protectionist nation state (and EU) policies (e.g. Tangermann 1996; Potter 1998) to create a ‘level playing field’ for farmers in the global capitalist economy (Goodman and Watts 1997). These developments have led to increased market uncertainty for some farmers, while others have been quick to grasp new opportunities offered through changing consumer behaviour in the wake of the BSE crisis, food health scares, increasing criticisms of genetically modified crops (GMCs), and high levels of toxic pollution in foods (Pretty 1998).

These changes also have important repercussions for the conceptualization of ‘new’ forms of agricultural production in the PPAR. Actors embracing post-productivist action and thought are, for example, seen as critical of industrialization and commercialization of agriculture, critical of corporate involvement (as highlighted in the recent criticisms of multinationals (e.g. Monsanto) in the GMC debates), and wish to leave the ‘agricultural treadmill’ (Ward 1993). Further, PPARs place less emphasis on securing national self-sufficiency for agricultural commodities, largely due to massive food surpluses in most EMDCs (Lowe et al 1993). Where there is less consensus, however, is whether – as recently suggested by Ilbery and Bowler (1998) – extensiﬁcation of agricultural production (e.g. set-aside), diversiﬁcation (e.g. pluriactivity) or dispersion (i.e. de-concentration of farm production) should be seen as key indicators of the PPAR. Although there is now sufﬁcient empirical evidence to suggest that extensiﬁcation of farm production has occurred in many regions of advanced economies, there are also signs that production has intensified in others (Pretty 1998; Potter 1998; see also discussion below). Further, equating extensiﬁcation with post-productivism also neglects that land abandonment (a particular problem in Mediterranean countries) may also lead to environmental degradation, thereby challenging the typically northern and western European assumption that extensiﬁcation necessarily leads to an improvement in the state of the environment. Even more contentious, and as Ilbery and Bowler (1998) openly admit, is the empirical evidence for farm dispersion. As yet, no studies (in a European context at least) have shown that the trend toward concentration of speciﬁc types of production in certain areas has been halted or, indeed, reversed. Similarly, although pluriactivity has now become an important part of diversiﬁed farm holdings, Morris and Evans (1999) convincingly argue that, even during the boomtime of diversiﬁcation in the late 1980s in the UK, only about 6 per cent of farms had on-farm accommodation (the most popular type of diversiﬁcation activity). Indeed, some diversiﬁcation activities (e.g. deer farming) may lead to increased agricultural production, may be environmentally harmful, and should therefore be classiﬁed as ‘productivist’ (Lowe et al 1993). Less debatable has been the importance of commodiﬁcation of former agricultural resources (e.g. land, wildlife habitats, barns, cottages) by urban migrants to rural areas. Indeed, some of the ﬁrst conceptualizations of ‘post-productivism’ placed great emphasis on this speciﬁc indicator (e.g. Kneale et al 1992; Murdoch and Marsden 1994), and current research continues to stress the importance of commodiﬁcation and ‘rural fetishism’ of on-farm resources as an important ingredient of the PPAR (e.g. Halfacree 1999; Marsden 1999).

Changes in agricultural policies are one of the most commonly mentioned dimensions in conceptualizations of PPARs, mainly because policy documents provide one of the more ‘tangible’ and easily accessible sets of information necessary for analysis (e.g. Fennell 1987; Whitby 1996). As a result, policy change during the mid 1980s (in a UK and European context) is usually seen as a key ingredient of the shift toward post-productivism (Marsden et al 1993; Ilbery and Bowler 1998). For example, the MAFF (1979) White Paper ‘Farming and the nation’ is usually interpreted as staunchly productivist (Baldock and Lowe 1996; Marsden 1999), while post-productivist environmental discourses are seen to permeate policy documents
from the mid 1980s, best highlighted through EU and national documents on the ‘future of rural society’ (e.g. CEC 1988 1996; House of Lords 1990) and recent policies such as the accompanying measures to the MacSharry Reforms (Whitby 1996; Potter 1998) and the agri-environmental package in Agenda 2000 (Bignal 1999; CEC 1999; Buller et al 2000). In policy terms, the PPAR is generally seen to be characterized by reduced state subsidies, indicative of a move away from state-sustained production models, and signalling a gradual loss of faith in the ability of the state to influence agricultural regeneration (Marsden 1999). Further, the PPAR has been characterized by the loss of security of property rights (e.g. recent access debates in the UK; tightening of on-farm pollution regulations across the EU) and the further blurring of the divide between ‘public’ and ‘private’ use of rural resources (Whatmore et al 1990; Marsden et al 1993). These debates are closely associated with suggestions that a re-regionalization of governance of rural areas may be occurring (e.g. Marsden 2000; Ray 2000), filling a political vacuum left after the gradual retreat of the state from local/regional agricultural governance and characterized by deregulation dynamics, re-regulation through private sector initiatives, and increased complexity and divergence within para-statal agricultural institutions (Munton 1995; Halfacree and Boyle 1998).

Yet, state retreat from financial regulation of agriculture is, in turn, accompanied by increased regulation of agricultural practices through voluntary agri-environmental policies (AEPs), encouraging farmers to farm in environmentally friendly ways (Wilson 1997a; Potter 1998), and the enhancement of local planning controls (Lowe et al 1993). It has been questioned whether these new types of policies should be seen as true indicators of a shift toward post-productivism. What some have described as the ‘greening of agricultural policies’ (e.g. Harper 1993) has been criticized by others as mere ‘incrementalism instead of reform’, indicative of policies aimed at farm income support rather than environmental conservation (e.g. Baldock et al 1990; Pretty 1998).

Some have also argued that policy changes to the CAP – such as the introduction of milk quotas (Ward 1993), set-aside policies (Cloke and Goodwin 1992), the Alternative Land Use and Rural Economy package (Cloke and Little 1990), the decoupling of agricultural from ‘green’ subsidies (Potter 1998), the LEADER and Objective 5b programmes (Ray 1998, 2000), or the new Rural Development Regulation as part of Agenda 2000 – show signs of a shift toward post-productivism (e.g. Buckwell et al 1998; Bignal 1999; Buller et al 2000). In this context, Shucksmith (1993, 466) argued that ‘the EC Commission and member states have [developed] post-productivist agricultural policy instruments . . . and important elements of this have been the search for new sources of income for farm families and new uses of farmland’. Yet, others have stressed that, based on Hall’s (1993) three theoretical orders of policy change, most agricultural policy changes in the EU are at the second order at most (i.e. new policy mechanisms to accommodate non-radical change) and not radical third order changes (i.e. changes made to a policy’s guiding principles) (Clark et al 1997). Potter (1998) re-emphasizes this by suggesting that most agricultural policies in the EU and USA are currently either at the ‘discourse’ or ‘argument’ stage, but rarely at the ‘persuasion’ stage – i.e. at a stage that precedes real change toward post-productivist policies. Although many have suggested that new policies that encourage sustainable environmental management on farms indicate a shift toward post-productivism (e.g. Marsden et al 1993; Whitby and Lowe 1994), AEPs in the EU possess three features which question their eligibility as indicators of post-productivism: farmer participation is voluntary (leaving many non-participants who may continue to farm in productivist ways); land is enrolled for only a temporary period (usually 5–10 years after which farmers may wish to revert back to productivist modes of production); and different agencies have different agendas with regard to the purpose and goals of AEP (e.g. EU, MAFF, NGOs), leading to inconsistencies in implementation and confusion about the ‘real’ goals of these policies (Buller et al 2000). Finally, some critics argue that, while recent policy initiatives such as the 1992 CAP reforms may well be categorized as post-productivist in their basic philosophy, recent trade liberalization of global markets through the most recent GATT agreements and the watering down of Agenda 2000 may have led to a re-emphasis of productivism (Lowe and Ward 1999; Winter 1999).

Conceptualizations of post-productivism have also been closely linked to new types of farming techniques associated with the PPAR. The adoption
of new farming techniques is seen as a reaction to the technological and input-driven ‘treadmill’ of the productivist era (Ward 1993), and is usually characterized by reduced intensity of farming and reduced use or total abandonment of biochemical inputs (Morris and Winter 1999), a move toward environmental conservation on farms, the re-establishment of lost or damaged habitats (Adams et al 1992 1994), and a critique of the notion of production maximization and its harmful effects on the environment (Shoard 1980; Bowers and Cheshire 1983). Many commentators argue, therefore, that there is a strong conceptual link between post-productivism and the shift toward environmentally sustainable agricultural practices (Allanson et al 1995; Altieri and Rosset 1996; Pretty 1998) which may also be characterized by the gradual replacement of physical inputs on farms with knowledge inputs (Winter 1997; Wilson 1997c; Winter 1999). Examples of shifting agricultural practices in the PPAR include, for example, the shift from conventional to organic farming (Clunies-Ross and Cox 1994; Tovey 1997), changing notions of ‘best’ agricultural practice that emphasize environmentally-friendly forms of production (Wilson and Wilson, in press), integrated production (Edwards et al 1993; Morris and Winter 1999), precision farming, and new sustainable management practices implemented by farmer self-help groups such as Landcare Australia (Campbell 1994). However, there is little consensus as to whether these practices should be seen as vital ingredients of the PPAR. Some, for example, see integrated production as only a ‘middle way’ between conventional and organic farming (Schmid and Lehmann 2000), while organic farming is seen by some as a pragmatic (and arguably, therefore, even productivist) response to rapidly growing consumer demand rather than an intrinsic indicator for post-productivism (Buller 1999).

Injecting an actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded component

The seven dimensions of the transition from productivism to post-productivism highlight that post-productivism has been largely defined through exogenous forces of agricultural change. In this section, I argue that conceptualizations of post-productivism would benefit from the injection of an actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded approach that also considers the changing endogenous perceptions and attitudes of actors involved in decision-making processes.

Challenging unidimensional political economy conceptualizations

The possible problems of over-reliance on one theoretical framework in conceptualizations of post-productivism were recognized early in the debates (e.g. Cloke 1989; Marsden et al 1996). Marsden et al (1993, 172), for example, criticized the ‘unreflexive application of structuralist concepts to rural change’, and argued that in the early to mid-1980s ‘the overbearing structuralism of previous work was challenged through attempts to tie structural and local changes together in a non-deterministic fashion’ (p. 130). Similarly, Cloke and Goodwin (1992) stressed that, just as regulation theory was greatly challenged as an explanation of a ‘post-Fordist’ agriculture in the early 1990s, so too unidimensional explanations of post-productivism provided by political economy approaches need to be questioned. However, it is only recently that political economy and regulation theory conceptualizations of post-productivism have been openly challenged. Morris and Evans (1999, 349), for example, have argued that rural geography and conceptualizations of recent changes in agriculture contain ‘greater diversity than the dominant political economy discourse would suggest’, and criticize that ‘political economy has become the dominant discourse to the extent that, for many, it has come to represent agricultural geography’ (p. 350).

Despite the multitude of dimensions of the post-productivist transition discussed above, the dominant political economy discourse has, therefore, inevitably led to a heavy emphasis on the importance of the state and policies, a strong focus on the importance of macro-economic factors in actor decision-making (e.g. the view of farmers as ‘accumulators’, ‘disengagers’ and ‘survivors’ in global capitalist agriculture (cf Marsden et al 1989), or Whatmore et al’s (1987) conceptualization of farms as ‘marginal closed’, ‘traditional dependent’, ‘integrated’ and ‘subsumed’), and a heavy emphasis on food production and global market regimes. This was also echoed by Marsden et al (1993, 20) who conceded that ‘current notions within the literature, emerging as they have largely from a political economy perspective, tend to retain an
excessive economism and a set of ‘top-down’, structuralist assumptions about the nature of change. As a result, the farming community has often been viewed as responding almost entirely to outside forces, with little acknowledgement of possible changes from within. Thus, ‘consistently approaching an analysis of agricultural change from one theoretical position has tended to eclipse the rich variety of work on agricultural change which exists alongside that adopting a political economy perspective’ (Morris and Evans 1999, 350). Although adding a crucial dimension to existing debates, revised conceptualizations of post-productivism including, for example, Halfacree’s (1997a, 1997b, 1999) discussion of counterurbanization and post-productivism (see above), work on changes in the governance of rural areas (Imrie and Raco 1999; Philip and Tewdwr-Jones 2000; Ray 2000), and investigations into the different actor-networks affecting post-productivist rural spaces (e.g. Murdoch and Marsden 1995; Marsden 1999) remain largely within the boundaries of structuralist arguments (e.g. Halfacree 1997a, 1997b) still sees migration as an external impact on the farming community), and the vertical chains of actor connections remain relatively unexplored.

I wish to argue here that endogenous forces are equally important for a full understanding of driving forces behind the shift toward a PPAR. Conceptualizations of post-productivism have traditionally paid insufficient attention to local action and thought, and the argument in this paper should be seen as part of a continued evolution of an actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded approach in a post-structuralist context (see also Morris and Evans 1999). This is not to say that the political economy approach is unimportant in conceptualizations of post-productivism. On the contrary, previous conceptualizations remain relevant, but injecting an actor-oriented component will further broaden our understanding of the complex processes taking place. In line with Long and van der Ploeg (1994, 62) who argued for an ‘injection of a more thorough-going and better theorized actor-oriented approach’ in research on rural change, this paper argues that treating the farming community as a homogenous entity – merely reacting to external change – has neglected one of the most important dimensions of the post-productivist transition: whether there has been a shift in grassroots actors’ attitudes concurrent with the postulated dimensions of post-productivism mentioned above, and whether such a shift has been reflected in changing farming techniques and behaviour.

There is widespread recognition in the literature that an actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded approach would strengthen existing conceptualizations of post-productivism. Philo (1992) was among the first to develop a critique of rural research from ‘outside’ the discipline by arguing that rural populations and farmers have often been depicted as ‘homogenous entities’ and that the diversity of individual opinion has been neglected by political economists (see also Ward and Munton 1992 who argued for combining political economy and socio-cultural approaches to understanding pesticide pollution regulation on farms). Ward (1993, 362) further noted that ‘to understand how new sets of regulatory, market and social pressures impact upon farm businesses and households, models will need to be more sensitive to the actions and values of individual actors involved’. Similarly, Marsden et al (1993) advocated a better understanding of rural actors through the analysis of ‘action-in-context’, akin to emphases on the interface between ‘local’ and ‘extra-local’ (Lowe et al 1995; Marsden 1999), and further echoed by Lowe et al (1993, 210) who stressed that ‘a top-down causal argument, which portrays local areas as merely the passive recipients of general movements of capital . . . is inadequate’.

**Actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded approaches**

There is little evidence yet that the wealth of actor-oriented and behavioural literature on rural/agricultural change has been incorporated into conceptualizations of post-productivism. Many actor-oriented studies have investigated a wide variety of issues implicitly related to PPARs, but little has yet been said about explicit links of this body of research to conceptualizations of post-productivism within and beyond rural research (Shucksmith’s 1993 investigation of understanding motivations and behaviours of Scottish farmers in a post-productivist context is one of the few exceptions). In rural research, examples of work that would enhance existing conceptualizations by providing insights into the question on whether attitudes and behaviour of actors have become ‘post-productivist’, include behavioural approaches to understanding farmers’ land use decision-making processes (e.g. Ward and Lowe...
From productivism to post-productivism

1994; Wilson 1997c), work on reactions of grassroots actors to agricultural policies and AEPs (e.g. Brotherton 1991; Whitby 1994; Froud 1994; Wilson 1997a; IFLS 1999), research on farmers’ attitudes toward farming and the environment (e.g. Morris and Potter 1995; Wilson 1996; Lobley and Potter 1998), analyses of the interactions between pollution officials and farmers (e.g. Ward et al 1995 1998), studies of the roles and attitudes of agricultural extension services and officials in policy implementation (e.g. Winter 1996; Lowe et al 1997; Cooper 1998), as well as investigations of actor perceptions and motivations at the macro level (e.g. Clark et al 1997; Hart and Wilson 1998; Wilson et al 1999; IFLS 1999).

Results from these studies highlight that conceptualizations of post-productivism need to go beyond analysis of broader ideological changes mentioned above (see Table 1), and that we should also consider whether values of actors directly involved in processes of agricultural/rural change (e.g. farmers, agricultural extension services, agribusiness managers, policy officials, etc.) reflect the postulated shift toward a PPAR. For farmers as one of the key actors, for example, we should argue that only if farmers’ attitudes (and eventual changes in their farm management behaviour) indicate substantial shifts toward post-productivist thinking (i.e. concern for environment; adoption of environmentally-friendly farming practices; acceptance of new forms of policy regulation; changing perceptions of role of farmers and agriculture; acknowledgement of multiple actor spaces in the countryside), can we fully acknowledge that a transition toward the PPAR has taken place. This actor-oriented view would lead to a more inclusive understanding of post-productivism at different levels of actor spaces.

Two key findings emerge from the body of actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded research that may help put the above-mentioned postulated changes toward post-productivism into perspective. First, research has amply shown that grassroots actors hold a plurality of often highly disparate opinions on issues surrounding environmental, agricultural and rural change, and that they are diverse actor communities that can often neither be branded ‘productivist’ or ‘post-productivist’ (Morris and Potter 1995; Wilson 1996; 1997c; Lobley and Potter 1998; Ward et al 1998).

Second, studies show that many agricultural actors continue to adopt ‘productivist’ action and thought. A few examples relating to farmer environmental attitudes and adoption or non-adoption of AEPs may illustrate the point. Studies suggest that most farmers interviewed in regional, national and international surveys continue to depict productivist attitudes, best expressed through persisting perceptions of farmers as the best ‘stewards of the land’, emphases on production maximization as the ultimate goal of farming, and critical views, if not outright rejection, of new types of ‘green’ policies (e.g. Gasson 1969; Morris and Potter 1995; Wilson 1996; Lobley and Potter 1998; IFLS 1999). This has been echoed by researchers such as Morris and Evans (1999, 352) who argue that ‘for most farmers it is “business as usual” in meeting food output goals’, Shucksmith (1993, 467) who found that most farmers were unwilling ‘to adapt their businesses to, or engage with, the new [post-productivist] imperatives’, or Potter (1998, 88) who suggested that existing evidence ‘does little to support the hypothesis that farmers generally are becoming more conservation minded’.

According to Shucksmith (1993) and Burton (1998), such behaviour can largely be explained through the fact that farmer’s attitudes and behaviour derive in large part from the subconscious and cumulative assimilation of an established ethos of being a ‘farmer’, and that farmer identity and rootedness are often situated in traditional conceptions of the role of agriculture. Thus, Shucksmith (1993, 468) argues that many options potentially open to farmers, such as ‘post-productivist’ forms of diversification, ‘may never seriously be considered because they are literally “unthinkable” ’. This is further supported by Morris and Potter’s (1995) ‘participation spectrum’ for farmers’ adoption of AEPs that suggests a plurality of responses ranging from ‘resistant non-adopters’ and ‘conditional non-adopters’ to ‘passive’ and ‘active adopters’—similar to Shucksmith’s (1993) farmer attitude classification into ‘accumulators’ (productivist), ‘conservatives’ (productivist) and ‘disengagers’ (post-productivist)—with most farmers in Morris and Potter’s survey falling into the ‘conditional non-adopter’ and ‘passive adopter’ categories. Morris and Potter, as well as subsequent research conducted in the UK (e.g. Wilson 1996; Lobley and Potter 1998), found that of those farmers participating in new agri-environmental schemes, the majority joined schemes for financial reasons and/or because schemes fitted well with current farm management practices. Other work
suggests that many farmers only enter a limited quantity of eligible land into schemes, while intensifying production on the rest of the farm (Whitby 1994; Wilson 1996; 1997b; Lobley and Potter 1998), suggesting that many farmers continue to farm in productivist ways while adopting ‘post-productivist’ policies.

These findings were recently confirmed in an international study, where, out of 789 participant farmers investigated in ten European countries, the majority (79 per cent) mentioned financial motivations as their main reasons for scheme participation (IFLS 1999; see also Brouwer and Lowe 1998). Indeed, that AEPs throughout the EU are voluntary, and not regulatory, should be seen as a recognition by policy-makers that large parts of the European farming community continue to be sceptical about changes to productivist ways of farming. As mentioned above, it is questionable whether AEP can be regarded as entirely post-productivist, and that most agri-environmental schemes in the EU (and beyond) are about maintenance and not change suggests that there is little potential yet for bringing about substantial shifts in farmers’ attitudes (Buller et al 2000). This has been acknowledged by Marsden et al (1993, 65) who argued that ‘adjustments are not easy . . . and the effort is handicapped by the legacy of the productivist ideology which is deeply engrained in the outlook and behaviour of many farmers, landowners and agricultural officials’.

However, there are continuing discrepancies between formulation of (arguably) post-productivist policies ‘at the top’ (e.g. EU AEP regulations; policies with de-coupling tendencies and parts of the Rural Development Regulation in Agenda 2000) and productivist interpretation of these policies by grassroots actors (e.g. among most EU farmers) (Clark et al 1997; Potter 1998; Buller et al 2000) – re-emphasizing why injection of an actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded approach is vital for the understanding of a possible shift towards post-productivism. Thus, even if farmers cannot ‘think’ in post-productivist terms, it could be argued that they are more or less forced into it, not least via other intermediary (e.g. NGOs) or state-level actors (e.g. farm extension services as implementers of state policies). It would be wrong, however, to argue that policy-makers (or other state actors) are necessarily post-productivist in thought and action, as there is much evidence to suggest an equally varied kaleidoscope of attitudes among officials and government extension services (e.g. Cooper 1998; Wilson et al 1999). The different discourses that permeate the ‘implementation gap’ highlight that different actors are situated on different points of the productivist/post-productivist spectrum (see Figure 1), and that there is a complex ‘geography of post-productivism’ waiting to be further explored.

Although most European farmers appear to be situated toward the productivist end of the spectrum, it also needs to be acknowledged that an increasing proportion of the farming community is beginning to adopt post-productivist ways of thinking. In the above-mentioned international survey, for example, 54 per cent of farmers stated that they were participating in agri-environmental schemes because they wished to promote environmental conservation (IFLS 1999), highlighting that productivist farmers’ responses to policies are not incompatible with post-productivist concerns. Other studies have suggested that the dominance of productivist thinking may increase with the degree of proximity of survey respondents to the farming community (e.g. Wilson et al 1999, for Spain). This would suggest that actors closer to the policy core (i.e. those driving the policy agenda) may be more post-productivist than those at the periphery (cf. Hart and Wilson 1998) and, as Lowe et al (1993) have suggested, highlights possible tensions within both geographical and actor spaces in which post-productivist differentiation (both in thought and action) may be contested through various actors attempting to impose their respective representations of the ‘rural’ and ‘farming’ over others (see also Lowe et al 1997).

Further differentiation in post-productivist thinking is becoming evident within farming communities themselves. Various studies looking at the importance of farmer age for environmental thinking and responses to policies, for example, suggest that older farmers tend to have more traditional notions of farming and agriculture and may, therefore, be more productivist than their younger counterparts (Ward and Lowe 1994; Wilson 1997a; Potter 1998; IFLS 1999). The latter have usually benefited from more modern education systems and better access to information, and more often show greater interest in conservation-oriented innovative farming practices. That most farmers in the EU are older than 50 years (Potter 1998) may be one of the explanations why productivist thinking currently tends to predominate. More substantial
shifts toward post-productivist thinking are to be expected in the next few decades as new generations of farmers are brought up in a farming environment already more solidly embedded in post-productivist action and thought.

Despite the latter caveat, there is little evidence yet that most European farmers (as well as US, Australian and New Zealand farmers; cf Wilson 1993; 1994; Potter 1998) have whole-heartedly engaged in new forms of post-productivist action and thought. Mental landscapes of European agriculture remain relatively unchanged and embedded in productivist modes of thinking. This, together with a similar lack of evidence of a shift toward post-productivist thinking among many ‘intermediate’ and ‘upper’ level actors such as street-level bureaucrats, pollution officials and national and EU policy-makers (Clark et al 1997; Lowe et al 1997; 1999; Cooper 1998), begs important questions. First, is the notion of post-productivism only a conceptual construct that describes patterns at the macro-structural level and that has not yet permeated down to the grassroots level? Are we, therefore, facing a ‘post-productivist myth’ as suggested recently by Morris and Evans (1999)? Second, considering that actor attitudes may not have yet shifted toward post-productivism, is it possible to pinpoint exactly, as some of the literature would suggest, when the transition toward the PPAR has occurred?

In answer to the latter question, most of the literature argues that, in the context of EMDCs, the era of productivism lasted from about the Second World War to the mid 1980s (e.g. Shucksmith 1993; Lowe et al 1993; Ilbery and Bowler 1998), although some authors have placed the beginning of the post-productivist transition to the 1970s in the context of the oil shocks in 1973 and 1979 which gave urgency to resource conservation (Baldock and Lowe 1996; Halfacree and Boyle 1998). Others, meanwhile, argue that the PAR is far from over yet (e.g. Marsden et al 1993; Morris and Evans 1999; Marsden 2000). Injecting an actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded approach suggests that the temporal context to post-productivism is more complex than has hitherto been acknowledged, and that the different dimensions that characterise the PPAR – including changing attitudes – have occurred at different times.

Thus, the breakdown of the productivist food regime and the Atlanticist food order in the late-1970s (Marsden et al 1993) could be seen as the first step in the transition to post-productivism. This was then followed by the (debatable) breakdown
of the productivist policy regime in the mid-1980s. However, acknowledging findings from actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded studies suggests that the breakdown of productivist attitudes and ideologies has not occurred yet. This usefully highlights that political economy approaches have traditionally led us to search for a post-productivism, while an integration of agency, and the acknowledgement of the complex adoption and non-adoption of post-productivist thought by various actors, allows us to conceptualize both multiple post-productivisms and different mental stages of post-productivism along a wide-ranging spectrum. Thus, different arenas of agriculture have adopted post-productivist thinking at different times, with recent shifts in consumer behaviour and societal views of the roles of agriculture arguably the most ‘post-productivist’, while there is little evidence yet that attitudes of most actors at the grassroots level have gone beyond traditional productivist action and thought. The transition from productivism to post-productivism may, thus, be more difficult because of the perceptual gap between grassroots and higher level actors, and will require not only time and effort with regard to practical considerations, but also negotiation in balancing the numerous and complex goals and ideologies of often competing agricultural/rural interests. This transition may, therefore, need the same time frame as was needed for the emergence of the PAR (i.e. several decades).

Beyond UK-centric conceptualizations of post-productivism

Conceptualizations of the shift from the PAR to the PPAR have largely been developed by English-speaking academics, and have been heavily biased toward the UK experience and history of agricultural development. UK researchers developed and popularized the concept of post-productivism during the early 1990s (e.g. Marsden et al 1993; Lowe et al 1993; Ward 1993). This was recently recognized by Halfacree and Boyle (1998, 6) who conceded that ‘the concept of the “post-productivist countryside” has been developed mostly in the context of recent changes which have affected what are generally understood to be rural areas of Britain’. Yet, there is ‘recognition amongst the main literatures about the integrative and holistic nature of the new processes of rural change, the approaches thus far have yet to theoretically develop an approach which begins to guide a clearer understanding of the processes which are making things different in the European post-productivist countryside’ (Marsden 1999, 242).

The aim of this section is to discuss to what extent the notion of post-productivism can be applied outside of the UK context, and what implications a broadening of the term beyond the UK may have for temporal and spatial dimensions of the post-productivist transition. In other words, how easily can the notion of post-productivism be transferred to other geographical and cultural settings, and what implications does this have for the terminology of ‘post-productivism’ itself (discussed in the last section of this paper)?

Beyond the UK: some thoughts on post-productivist terminology

A broadening of the concept of post-productivism beyond the UK first needs to address the problem of conflicting terminology. Because of the heavy focus on the UK, conceptualizations of post-productivism have been strongly biased toward UK terminology of the ‘rural’ and the ‘countryside’ (cf Hoggart 1990). In this paper, I have deliberately used the term ‘post-productivist agricultural regimes’ – rather than ‘post-productivist rural areas’, the ‘post-productivist countryside’ or the ‘post-productivist phase of rural development’ – precisely because, in an international context, the English notions of ‘rural’ and the ‘countryside’ are strongly contested and often non-existent (Hoggart et al 1995). There is a wealth of literature on conflicting definitions of ‘rural’ across Europe (e.g. Hoggart 1990; Murdoch and Pratt 1993; Halfacree 1994; 1997a; Hoggart et al 1995; Buckwell et al 1998; see also work by the Permanent European Conference for the Study of the Rural Landscape). In Germanic countries, for example, translations can be found for agriculture (Landwirtschaft) or ‘rural areas’ (ländlicher Raum), but direct translations of ‘rural’ (ländlich?) or ‘countryside’ (no equivalent word) are problematic. Similarly, terminologies such as the ‘post-productivist phase of agricultural regulation’ (e.g. Marsden et al 1993, 104) should be avoided as they overemphasize the importance of the regulatory framework in conceptualizations of post-productivism to the neglect of other, equally important, dimensions (see Table I). UK-centric terminologies may have, therefore, hindered,
rather than advanced, conceptualizations of post-productivism. I acknowledge that the term ‘post-productivist agricultural regimes’ is far from ideal (see below), particularly as its emphasis on ‘agriculture’ may be seen to indicate (to UK readers) an over-emphasis on agricultural production and, therefore, on traditional ‘productivist’ notions of rurality. Nonetheless, if the notion of post-productivism is to be broadened beyond the UK experience, and in the assumption that many other EMDCs share with the UK the potential of being able to move beyond post-productivism (see below), the more neutral terminology of ‘post-productivist agricultural regimes’ may be more appropriate.4

**Post-productivism in the context of advanced economies**

Figure 1 shows the possible sequence of different ‘agricultural regimes’ in the post-productivist transition, and highlights schematically the possible temporal and spatial implications of a broadening of ‘post-productivism’ beyond the UK framework. Although we need to be cautious about the implied linearity of development shown in Figure 1, it suggests that PARs are preceded (in temporal and conceptual terms) by ‘pre’-productivist regimes. If we also consider that ‘post-productivism’ may be an unsatisfactory and, therefore, transitory term (see below) best used in the context of the post-productivist transition (cf Marsden et al 1993), Figure 1 also suggests that this transition may be followed by what could be termed the ‘multifunctional agricultural regime’. I will return to these different phases in the transition toward post-productivism and beyond in the discussion below.

First, we need to consider whether the UK-centric notion of post-productivism can be applied in the context of other EMDCs. A review of the international literature reveals surprisingly little reference to ‘post-productivism’ (and indeed ‘productivism’) in EMDCs beyond the UK (e.g. Buttel et al 1990; van der Ploeg 1997; Ritson and Harvey 1997; Grafen and Schramek 2000). This suggests either that there is little faith among the academic community that the concept applies in other EMDCs, or that advanced economies other than the UK have not yet moved beyond productivism. Both of these explanations are highly unlikely. Much work has highlighted, for example, that many similarities exist between agricultural and rural developments in the UK and other Western European countries (e.g. Hoggart et al 1995; Whitby 1996; Buller et al 2000), and that similar processes of rural diversity are occurring in different parts of Europe (van der Ploeg 1997; Marsden 1999). It is particularly with regard to the development of CAP policies that researchers have ventured beyond the UK framework in their conceptualizations of post-productivism (e.g. Baldock and Lowe 1996; Clark et al 1997; Potter 1998; Buller et al 2000) – arguably one reason why so much emphasis has been placed on the policy dimension (see above), as it is the only truly ‘common’ indicator to assess post-productivism across the EU. Similarities are, however, also emerging with regard to common EU member states responses to changes in the organization of food regimes under the GATT (Redclift et al 1999), similarities in responses by member states to CAP policy frameworks (e.g. similar adoption of AEP structures; Whitby 1996; Buller et al 2000), or growing consumer demand for organic products across the EU, to name but a few. The notion of a shift from the PAR to the PPAR should, therefore, be applicable in most EMDCs.

There is also no doubt that there are large temporal differences in the transition to post-productivism in advanced economies (one reason why the time arrow in Figure 1 has no specified dates). Even within the EU, there are major differences in the temporal ‘location’ of different agricultural/rural societies (see Figure 1). While most northern European countries may be firmly embedded in the post-productivist transition (or even in a multifunctional agricultural regime; see below) (Whitby 1996; Brouwer and Lowe 1998; Carlsen and Per Hasund 2000; Andersen et al 2000), evidence suggests that Mediterranean countries may not have fully entered the productivist phase (as productivism itself can be seen as a northern European and North American phenomenon), let alone gone towards post-productivist modes of thinking (Garrido and Moyano 1996; Wilson et al 1999; Peco et al 2000; Louloudis et al 2000). Post-productivist policies may be ‘imposed’ onto these countries through the CAP framework, but practices and thinking often continue to be productivist. There may be a large gap in Mediterranean countries between post-productivist policies imposed by Brussels and farmers with staunchly productivist attitudes – a major explanation, for
example, for the often low uptake of agri-environmental schemes in these countries (Buller et al 2000). This has been reiterated by Louloudis et al (2000, 104) for Greece where ‘productivist thinking has been favoured over post-productivism, and ... environmental considerations have been subordinate to commodity production’. Similarly, Peco et al (2000, 169) have argued for Spanish implementation of EU Agri-environment Regulation 2078 that ‘Spain had only little experience with implementation of AEPs, and the persistent productivist ethos that had marred implementation of agri-environmental schemes under Regulation 797/85 has continued to strongly influence the implementation of Regulation 2078’. Spain, Portugal and Greece, in particular, have criticized the EU for imposing policies that aim at the intensification of agriculture, at a time when they are still mostly concerned with ‘catching up’ with their northern European counterparts through the intensification of commodity production (IFLS 1999).

Is the notion of ‘post-productivism’ applicable in an ELDC context?

If we extend this discussion to include ELDCs, then the question of timing of the post-productivist transition becomes even more complex (see Figure 1). A variety of interesting questions emerge here. If we accept that ‘pre-productivist agricultural regimes’ can be identified – characterized by high environmental sustainability, low intensity and productivity, weak integration into capitalist markets and horizontally integrated rural communities – then many rural societies in ELDCs (but not in EMDCs?) would fall into this category (cf Chambers 1983; Glaeser 1987; Corbridge 1988; Altieri and Hecht 1990; Pretty 1995). However, does pre-productivism then automatically imply that all societies are ‘aiming’ towards productivism (i.e. implied directionality)? Can post-productivism, therefore, only occur in rural areas that have ‘gone through’ the productivist phase, or is it possible to conceive of rural areas that move directly from pre-productivism to post-productivism – in other words, can no ELDCs, although their agricultural practices may often be environmentally sustainable, be currently classified as ‘post-productivist’?

These questions suggest that post-productivism may have been defined against a set of criteria that may not be applicable beyond certain advanced economies. Two examples illustrate the point. First, counterurbanization and its impact on the countryside of EMDCs, identified by many as a vital ingredient for post-productivism (see above), is an EMDC-centric concept and (so far) rarely applicable in the context of ELDCs. Second, the rising demand for organic produce in most EMDCs – an important factor in changing ideologies and perceptions of the role of agriculture as part of post-productivism (see Table I) – is a concept that is less relevant in most ELDCs (and indeed some EMDCs such as Greece or Portugal) where agricultural production has, often by economic necessity, been ‘organic’ for thousands of years. This highlights that, if the concept of PPARs is to have validity beyond the UK and other EMDCs, conceptualizations of post-productivism need to consider relative changes in action and thought of rural societies (i.e. changing perceptions of agriculture relative to earlier societal conceptions; willingness of grassroots actors to adopt new forms of environmentally-friendly farming techniques, etc.), rather than attempting to establish absolute indicators of post-productivist change based largely on the UK experience. This further stresses the importance of changes in attitudes as a necessary component of conceptualizations of post-productivism. There is an urgency, therefore, to develop a conceptual framework for the understanding of PPARs that can also be applied in specific ELDC contexts, particularly as the need for initiatives and policies that emphasize environmentally-friendly agricultural practices has grown as a result of the Green Revolution (Glaeser 1987; Conway and Barbier 1990; Pretty 1995; 1998).

Beyond post-productivism: towards a new terminology?

In this final section, I will explore implications of the above-mentioned critiques of the PAR and PPAR for the understanding of rural spaces ‘beyond post-productivism’. The notion of territorialization of productivist and post-productivist actor spaces will be discussed, existing frameworks that attempt to go ‘beyond agriculture’ will be analysed, and I will suggest a possible alternative to the term ‘post-productivist’.

The territorialization of productivist and post-productivist action and thought

The broadening of post-productivism beyond the UK experience discussed in the previous section
has repercussions for what may be termed the ‘territorialization’ of PPARs. The discussion so far has highlighted that there are substantial temporal inconsistencies in the transition to post-productivism (e.g. attitudes lagging behind and remaining largely productivist), but similar inconsistencies also apply at the spatial level as productivist action and thought can co-exist alongside post-productivist patterns. This is essentially what the post-productivist transition implies (see Figure 1).

The example of European agriculture usefully illustrates the point. With regard to farm holdings, for example, post-productivist farms are located at one end of the spectrum, while productivist holdings are located at the other. Post-productivist farms have gone through the PAR and, by adopting post-productivist action and thought, they may have increased environmental sustainability on their farms, reduced intensity and productivity, have attempted to leave the agricultural treadmill, and have become more horizontally embedded with their rural community. Productivist farms, meanwhile, continue to farm with high intensity and productivity (often resulting in low environmental sustainability), remain highly integrated into the capitalist market (e.g. agribusinesses) and continue to have little horizontal integration with rural communities. Various researchers have stressed the geographical component of territorialization between productivist and post-productivist holdings, usually centring around the argument that fertile lowland areas (in a European context) are more likely to remain productivist, while agriculutely marginal upland areas are more likely to adopt post-productivist action and thought (Ward 1993; Buller 1998; Buller et al 2000). Halfacree (1999) has suggested that some of the current productivist holdings may even have become ‘super-productivist’ (i.e. more productivist than during the PAR), as shown by further evidence of intensification in East Anglia, the Paris Basin, Emilia Romagna, the Netherlands and the newly intensifying arable regions of former East Germany (Hoggart et al 1995; Wilson and Wilson, in press).

Although the territorialization of farm holdings is most easily (but not necessarily most usefully) conceptualized on the basis of the dualistic poles of productivism/post-productivism – also referred to in the UK context as the ‘two-track countryside’ by Ward (1993); as the ‘agrarianism/environmentalism’ spectrum by Buller (1998); or as the ‘super-productivism/rural idyll spectrum’ by Halfacree (1999) – territorialization can also mean a broader spectrum of responses encompassing a wide variety of adjustments in farming. As Lowe et al (1993, 206) argued, ‘the retreat from agricultural productivism has been varied. Some farming areas continue to experience intensification of production; others face new types of productivism linked to other external capitals . . . while others are experiencing a partial decoupling from the high-tech model through various forms of extensification and diversification and reintegration into local and regional economies’. Marsden et al (1993) suggested a more complex territorialization into ‘preserved’, ‘contested’, ‘paternalistic’ and ‘clientelist’ countrysides, without claiming that these necessarily needed to be reflected in neat geographical entities (i.e. conceptual rather than spatial territorialization). This usefully highlights that most actors are located ‘in between’ productivist and post-productivist action and thought, and it is this territory that is the most likely arena of conflict for financial resources, actor spaces and ideologies (Murdoch and Marsden 1995). It particularly leads one to question the utility of the dualistic notions embedded in traditional conceptualizations of productivism/post-productivism discussed above.

More recently, Marsden (2000) has suggested three broader categories of territorialization that may also be more applicable outside the UK context. First, the productivist agro-industrial dynamic (synonymous with productivist action and thought) is characterized by the squeezing out of nature in the agro-food system, standardized products, capital-intensity, sophisticated food-supply chains, high concentration of farms, and large farm units. In line with the productivist ideology, rural space is seen essentially as agricultural space. Second, the post-productivist dynamic (the other extreme of territorialization) sees rural space as consumption space, rural land as development space, the use of the natural as attractor in the counter-urbanization process, and is characterized by commodified nature. Marsden, however, emphasizes that the post-productivist dynamic is not necessarily synonymous with sustainable environmental management of the countryside – a factor also considered in Figure 1 where post-productivist action and thought may not be as environmentally sustainable as pre-productivist agricultural regimes (e.g. the legacy...
of the productivist era is still apparent on many ‘post-productivist’ farms through high nitrate-levels in soils; a productivist neighbour may adversely influence a farmer’s attempts at sustainable environmental management, etc.). Marsden, thus, usefully illustrates that post-productivism should only be seen as a transitory phase and that it is not a means to an end toward sustainable rural systems as suggested by earlier conceptualizations. Finally, Marsden argues that the third dimension can be encapsulated in the rural development dynamic (i.e. the ‘bit in the middle’ in Figure 1). This is characterized by a new role for agriculture, re-embedded food supply chains, a revised combination of nature/value/region with co-evolving supply chains, and by a recapturing of lost values of rural space. The emphasis here is on rural livelihoods and new associational designs and networks – in the European context a ‘Europe of rural development regions’ (Ray 2000), where rural development acts as a counter-movement and activates the potential of rural resources. All three dynamics may occur together, re-emphasizing that the territorialization of productivist and post-productivist action and thought is not necessarily spatially defined.9

If we extend the notion of post-productivist territorialization beyond farming and farm holdings, the different dimensions of post-productivism (Table I) can also be located within the productivist/post-productivist spectrum. While the ‘territory’ of AEP may, for example, be located toward the post-productivist end of the spectrum, the ‘territory’ of farmers’ attitudes continues to be located near the productivist end. However, thought and action of one and the same agricultural actor may also be located at different places in the spectrum. A farmer may adopt (arguably) post-productivist agri-environmental schemes, while at the same time continuing to adhere to productivist farming ideologies. Further, some parts of a holding may be farmed under the PPAR (e.g. an SSSI or a parcel of land entered under the UK Countryside Stewardship Scheme), while other parts may be farmed for maximum commodity production (on-farm territorialization).

It is evident, therefore, that the PPAR runs concurrent with (rather than ‘counter’ to) the PAR – a fact supported by Halfacree and Boyle (1998, 7) who emphasized that ‘the idea of a post-productivist countryside does not mean a countryside in which agriculture is either no longer present or in which it has been eclipsed in significance by other land uses’. This echoes debates surrounding notions of ‘post-Fordist’ modes of accumulation, where it has been questioned that new regulation (e.g. new local governance) has formed a dynamic element of a new ‘post-Fordist’ mode of regulation (e.g. Goodwin and Painter 1996; 1997), thereby also allowing for Fordist and post-Fordist modes of regulation to occur simultaneously. The transition to post-productivism, therefore, should not imply that productivist institutional forms, networks, ideologies and norms have been superseded. In the European context, post-productivism has not been radical, but rather incremental and accommodationist to productivist action and thought, and productivism and post-productivism can occur simultaneously, spatially as well as temporally. Thus, the before-mentioned assumption that, after a brief period of crisis and restructuring, a new, qualitatively different, post-productivism would rise from the ashes of productivism needs to be questioned.

**Beyond the post-productivist transition: towards multifunctional agricultural regimes?**

The detailed discussion above was necessary to highlight that ‘post-productivism’ may not be the most appropriate terminology to describe postulated changes in European agriculture. How appropriate can a term such as ‘post-productivism’ be for an era that still incorporates productivist action and thought? In this last section I will, therefore, discuss how a broadening of the notion of post-productivism beyond the UK context may influence debates about an agricultural regime that goes ‘beyond’ post-productivism, and I will suggest that the term multifunctional agricultural regime would be more appropriate for the conceptualization of changes in contemporary agriculture and rural society (see Figure 1).

To do this, however, we need to take a brief step back, and rethink the traditionally relatively uncritical use of the term ‘post-productivism’ in the literature. For example, a broadening of the notion of post-productivism beyond the UK, and possibly beyond EMDCs (see above), needs to consider that the evolution of the term ‘post-productivism’ only brought into being the term ‘productivist’. We have, therefore, witnessed the retrospective definition of the ‘productivist’ era from a ‘post-productivist’ vantage point,
highlighted by the fact that during the ‘productivist’ era few actors were aware that they were (or still are) productivist.10 Like any terminology beginning with ‘post’, the notion of post-productivism may also indicate a hesitance by those who propelled the term into the academic terminology to create a new terminology (see also Latour (1993)) for a similar discussion about ‘post’-modernity as a highly problematic conceptualization). This may particularly be linked to problems of dualistic theorizations of societal organization (Thompson 1999), echoed by those who developed the term ‘post-productivism’ themselves conceding that ‘the spatial and sectoral unevenness of the substitution of the new for the old shows how ambiguous such terms as ‘post-Fordism’ and ‘post-modernism’ are, and points up the weakness of unilinear arguments’ (Marsden et al 1993, 19). Similarly, Cloke and Goodwin (1992, 324) argued that in their eagerness to join in with new developments in theories of rural change, rural researchers ‘may come to borrow inappropriate ideas and begin to use somewhat overarching concepts in a rather cavalier fashion’. The prefix ‘post’ may, therefore, merely denote something which comes after another thing, and does not necessarily mean its opposite – in other words, post-productivism has only been defined in the ‘negative’ as what it is not, rather than as what it may be. A new term would, therefore, strengthen the implicit assumption of true change.

I wish to suggest here that the notion of multifunctional agriculture regime – a regime that conceptually, temporally and spatially follows on from the post-productivist transition – addresses most of the above-mentioned problems. I argue that it captures recent changes in agricultural regimes and the territorialization of productivist and post-productivist action and thought more fully than other recently suggested terminologies such as ‘heterogeneous agriculture’ (van der Ploeg 1990), ‘post-rural’ (Murdoch and Pratt 1993), ‘post-agricultural’ (Marsden et al 1993), ‘differentiated rural spaces’ or the ‘differentiated countryside’ (Lowe et al 1993; Marsden 1999), ‘new rural spaces’ (Halfacree 1999; Marsden 2000), ‘sustainable agricultural modernization’ (Marsden 1999), or ‘neo-productivism’11 (Morris et al 1999). I acknowledge that the notion of a multifunctional agricultural regime is not a new terminology, as it has been used by many in the (UK) context of ‘multi-functional agriculture’ or ‘multi-functional rural systems’ (e.g. Fuller 1990; MacKinnon et al 1991; Evans and Ilbery 1993; Shucksmith 1993), and has recently also been rekindled by EU policy-makers as one of the key notions of future policies for a sustainable European countryside (CEC 1999). It is, however, a new term in the context of a conceptualization of an agricultural regime ‘beyond post-productivism’. Thus, just as the post-productivist transition may only occur in societies that have gone through the PAR, so the multifunctional agricultural regime may only occur in societies that have gone through the post-productivist transition. It is important to emphasize that this is not to say that the notion of post-productivism is redundant. On the contrary, it is as vital as ever, but should only be used in the context of the post-productivist transition.

The multifunctional agricultural regime is characterized by the territorialization of productivist and post-productivist action and thought, and includes the multitude of different actor responses to the challenges of post-productivism (i.e. it may well include the four types of countrysides suggested by Marsden et al (1993)). While the notion of post-productivism implies a directionality of action and thought toward a specific goal (i.e. that all actors aim at moving toward the PPAR), the notion of a multifunctional agricultural regime allows for multidimensional coexistence of productivist and post-productivist action and thought and may, therefore, be a more accurate depiction of the multi-layered nature of rural and agricultural change. Actors in the multifunctional agricultural regime may be imbued with a sense of reflexivity in that – similar to notions of reflexive modernization (Beck et al 1994; Ray 1998) – there is a recognition (and acceptance?) of actors and groups of actors about their relative ‘location’ in the spectrum of productivist/post-productivist territorialization – in other words, it may be an agricultural regime where the boundaries between the different dynamics (Marsden 2000) or rural structured coherences (Cloke and Goodwin 1992) may become more distinct, thereby allowing for productivist action and thought to co-exist (happily?) alongside post-productivist modes of rural change.

Conclusions
This paper has evolved out of a growing dissatisfaction with the relatively uncritical acceptance in
contemporary debates that agriculture in advanced societies has moved from ‘productivism’ to ‘post-productivism’. A brief review of current conceptualizations of productivist and post-productivist agricultural regimes has revealed inconsistencies in current understandings of the dualistic terms. The problem has partly been due to the fact that the conceptual literature on post-productivism has largely failed to take into account the wealth of actor-oriented and behaviourally grounded research. An inclusion of such research points towards considerable differences in productivist and post-productivist action and thought at different levels of actor spaces, and highlights that we are dealing with a spectrum of different views rather than two easily definable and ‘separate’ conceptual entities on their own. The problem also partly lies in the fact that the PAR and PPAR have been conceptualized from a UK-centric perspective that has largely failed to discuss whether, and to what extent, the concept has wider applicability within Europe and beyond. The paper has discussed the time-lag and spatial inconsistencies in the adoption of post-productivist action and thought, and has emphasized that different localities are positioned at different points in what could be seen as a temporal, spatial and conceptual transition from ‘pre-productivist’ to ‘post-productivist’ agricultural regimes. Implications of these critiques for the understanding of rural spaces ‘beyond post-productivism’ are fundamental, and the notion of the ‘territorialization’ of productivist and post-productivist actor spaces highlights the wide-ranging diversity that exists within the productivist/post-productivist spectrum. That productivist and post-productivist action and thought occurs in multidimensional coexistence leads one to question the implied directionality of the traditional productivist/post-productivist debate. It suggests that the notion of post-productivism should only be used in the context of the post-productivist transition, and that the notion of a multifunctional agricultural regime better encapsulates the diversity, non-linearity and spatial heterogeneity that can currently be observed in modern agriculture and rural society.

Throughout the discussion it was emphasized that notions of PARs and PPARs go beyond the issue of agriculture and cannot be fully understood in agricultural terms alone. Yet, the starting point of any critique of productivism/post-productivism has to be agriculture, as it is within this framework that the terms were initially conceptualized (e.g., Cloke and Goodwin 1992; Marsden et al 1993; Ward 1993; Shucksmith 1993). Although the focus in this paper has been predominantly on the ‘traditional’ issue of productivist/post-productivist agricultural regimes, the extent to which post-productivism is understandable largely through agricultural eyes has to be questioned. Thus, it is impossible to understand what many of us mean by ‘post-productivism’, and indeed by ‘new’ terms such as multifunctional agricultural regimes, without going beyond agriculture. This leads to important questions for the future. Although this paper has highlighted the dilemma of the use of the ‘rural’ in conceptualizations of post-productivism, the fact that the PAR and PPAR occur simultaneously has broader implications for understandings of ‘rural society’ as a whole. Thus, most of the patterns highlighted in this paper with regard to agriculture will, to some extent, also apply to rural society as a whole (e.g. multiple actor attitudes and identities; mutual coexistence of productivist and post-productivist rural spaces; multifunctional rural regimes), although much more work is needed in the future to unravel the complex relationships that exist between concepts of rural change and other economic and socio-cultural changes in contemporary society.

However, it is with regard to theorizations beyond agriculture and the ‘rural’ that the most challenging questions lie. First, I have already briefly highlighted in this paper that there are striking parallels between the critiques of post-productivism in agriculture on the one hand, and critiques of classical regulation theory views of the transition from Fordist to post-Fordist modes of accumulation on the other. Just as I have questioned here that it is difficult to pinpoint a ‘crisis’ during which agricultural productivism was superseded by post-productivism (as indeed they occur in parallel), Cloke and Goodwin (1992) and Goodwin and Painter (1996) have also questioned that new regulation has formed a dynamic element of a new ‘post-Fordist’ mode of regulation, thereby also allowing for Fordist and post-Fordist modes of regulation to occur simultaneously in spatial, temporal and conceptual terms (see also Marsden 1992). Our meaning of, and discussion about, productivism/post-productivism, therefore, has to be firmly embedded in parallel debates surrounding the lack of clear evidence of a shift from Fordist to post-Fordist modes of accumulation. The notion
of multifunctional agricultural regimes, thus, can only be fully appreciated within the framework of a possible ‘territorialization’ of Fordist/post-Fordist modes of accumulation (see Cloke and Goodwin 1992).

Second, our interpretation of the productivist/post-productivist debate also intertwines with broader debates regarding possible shifts in societal organization as a whole (for example, a shift from modernity to post-modernity, or indeed from pre-modernity to post-modernity (cf Cosgrove 1990)). If we acknowledge that productivist and post-productivist action and thought are occurring simultaneously, this has repercussions for those who argue that post-productivism may be an expression of postmodern society (e.g. Philo 1993; Halfacree 1997b). If we accept that the post-productivist transition is multi-faceted, it follows that post-productivism can not necessarily be equated with post-modern action and thought. However, just as we can argue against a directional shift from productivism to post-productivism in agriculture (and arguably rural society as a whole), so too others have argued against a directional shift towards post-modernity (e.g. Latour 1993 ‘we have never been modern’). Thus, more work is needed on linking debates on productivism/post-productivism in agriculture/rural society with those debates in other ‘post-...isms’ that, at first glance, show some striking parallels in their questioning of directional and unambiguous shifts from one organizational state to another.

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Notes
1 The use of the word ‘agricultural regime’ is deliberate at this point in the paper. See below for a discussion of the wider ramifications of the possible use of other terms such as ‘post-productivist countryside’, ‘post-productivist rural areas’, etc.
2 This is maybe best highlighted by the recent statement of UK Prime Minister Tony Blair in light of the new Rural White Paper that ‘farming in the UK may be in crisis, but the countryside is not’ (February 2000).
3 It should be noted that there is a wealth of literature in rural sociology on understanding the behaviour of farmers from within the farming community (e.g. MacKinnon et al 1991; Ward 1993; Tovey 1997; Winter 1997; to name but a few), but this research has so far not been sufficiently linked to conceptualizations of PPARs (see below).
4 In addition, avoiding the term ‘rural’ in the terminology of post-productivism avoids the problem of having to define the ‘rural’ – a problem which has marred Anglo-Saxon ‘rural’ research for decades (Hoggart 1990; Murdoch and Pratt 1993; Halfacree 1994; Hoggart et al 1995).
5 It needs to be acknowledged that the use of dualistic terms such as ELDCs and EMDCs is highly problematic (e.g. Polanyi 1957; Corbridge 1986 1988), but for want of a better alternative these terms are, nonetheless, the most useful in the context of the discussion in this paper.
6 The notion of ‘indicators’ to measure the extent of environmental and ideological change has been increasingly critiqued by academics in recent years (see Moxey et al 1998), for excellent critiques of the indicator concept.
7 See also Cloke and Goodwin (1992) who have argued that post-productivist territorialization can be conceptualized through ‘rural structured coherences’ that comprise arenas of contestation such as those embedded in the new hi-tech service sector economy, rural areas as places of commodification or areas of slow and steady decline.
8 These conceptualizations have been criticized by Hoggart et al (1995) who found only uneven presence of the ‘paternalistic’ countryside outside of the UK context.
9 This is also true for the non-spatial territorialization of, for example, consumer responses to GMIcs, or farmers’ adoption of organic farming practices, which are not locality-dependent.
10 It is true that the word ‘productivist’ was used in some agricultural national contexts before the term became incorporated into theoretical discourses of rural change (e.g. ‘une agriculture productiviste’ in the post-war decades in France; Buller (1999)), but the term was usually used to denote a ‘productive’ agriculture rather than delineating a specific rural/agricultural era.
11 ‘Neo-productivism’ is seen to represent more than just minor adjustments to farming practices and is seen as a more radical break from the productivist
system than ‘post-productivism’. It places the environment internally with farming, by emphasizing the importance of organic and integrated farming (Morris and Winter 1999). However, this (albeit interesting) conceptualization focuses almost entirely on farming practices to the neglect of other, equally important, dimensions of post-productivism (see Table I).

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