

5.4. Ruling the Commons. Part II

Panel organiser: De Moor, Tine, Utrecht University, Netherlands; Alfani, Guido, Bocconi University, Italy

Commons are again a hot topic, in particular in scientific disciplines other than history. Whereas since the late 1960s they were perceived from a negative point of view, this perception seems to have changed recently, due to the work of Ostrom (Nobel Prize in 2009) and due to the economic and social crisis, which enforces the call for new models of governance, other than market and state-based models. The input of historiographical knowledge in the debate is still limited but nevertheless very important as only the study of the long-term evolution of institutions for collective action such as commons can help us to understand why they might be viable, and more resilient, alternatives to other forms of resource governance. In the two sessions we focus mainly on the way in which commons were internally organized and how the commoners adapted their institution to the changing circumstances. Two misunderstandings that are still alive in some parts of the social sciences are the supposed lack of internal organization and the idea that commons are accessible to all as in an open access would be the case. In three papers the internal organization in particular in the form of regulation will receive special attention, and this for different countries in Europe and periods since the late Middle Ages. Several of the presented papers use a new methodology that is currently being developed as part of an international project (Utrecht-Pamplona-Lancaster) whereby for a substantial number of cases the regulation of commons is analysed and compared over time according to a collectively set-up analysis framework. Related to the issue of access to the commons, several papers will focus on the ways resources were divided within the commons and how inequality influenced the functioning of the commons. In fact, only rarely were rights over the commons equally distributed among all the households or all the individuals of a community. Instead, different categories with unequal access could exist, or the community could be split between those who enjoyed the rights to the common resources, and those who did not. These distinctions created conflict within the community and generated specific issues of governance and control. Sometimes, unequal rights were one of the reasons leading to the progressive erosion of the commons, or even to their final disappearance.

Chair: De Moor, Tine, Utrecht University, Netherlands

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5.4.1. Managing the commons in unequal societies. The case of Lombard Alps in XVIIIth century

Mocarelli, Luca, Milano Bicocca University, Italy

It is well known that commons played and play a leading role in mountain economies since the most important natural resources – pasturages, meadows, woods, water – belonged and belong to the communities and were and are used by the inhabitants. My paper will deal with the managing of commons in Lombard Alps in the XVIIIth century stressing the features of the local societies. That means that I am interested in how unequal societies, such as those of mountain areas, managed the commons. In the Lombard Alps we can find a double inequality regarding the use of common resources. First of all we find a clear divide between the “antichi originari” (inhabitants settled there at least for a century) who had access to the commons and the “forestieri” (strangers) who had not. Secondly there was also a great income inequality between originari and forestieri and among the same originari. The paper will focus on the way in which such a social and economic structure affected the managing of the commons, with special regards to the access and use of pasturages and woods, and will demonstrate that in many cases the collective use of commons was not the best solution in terms of equality.

5.4.2. Who, when, how and how much: The transformation of common property rights in alpine farming in early modern and modern times

Landolt, Gabriela, University of Bern, Switzerland

The paper examines how the common-property system regarding the use of alpine pastures in a mountain village in the canton Graubünden has evolved and changed over time. However, the use of the alpine pastures is strongly interrelated with the individual seasonal activities and transhumance practices as well as with collective rights concerning common and private property in the valley, which therefore also need to be considered. The research is based on ethnographic data resulting from oral history interviews (going back to the early 20th century), on the analysis of written alp- and pasture regulations dating from 1805 until today and on secondary historical literature enriched by selected court records from the 15th to the 18th century. By applying Jean Ensminger’s model of institutional change (Ensminger 1992) I argue that the interaction between external (such as relative prices, agrarian policies or population growth) and internal factors (ideology, bargaining power, institutions, organizations), rather than a single dominant fac-

tor (North 2005) determine the transformation process and that this process is far from being linear and does not necessarily end in all property rights being privatized as suggested by Demsetz (1967).

5.4.3. Village Federations. Institutional diversity and polycentric governance in northern Spain (Navarre, 14th-20th centuries)

Laborda Peman, Miguel, Utrecht University, Netherlands

Lana-Berasain, Jose-Miguel, Public University of Navarre, Spain

The aim of this paper is to contribute to the analysis of nested governance of common-pool resources from a long-term perspective. Our main research questions are: How was nesting articulated in pre-industrial societies? Which were their advantages and risks? To answer them, we analyse two historical case studies of nested regimes. In particular, the Valley of Roncal and the Sierra of Lokiz, both of them situated in Navarre, northern Spain, arranged across several levels the management and use of grazing pastures and forests already by the 14th century.

5.4.4. From total State to anarchical market. Lessons from the past for a collective action approach – the Albanian mountainous commons

Bernard, Claire, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Montpellier, France

Lerin, Francois, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Montpellier, France

Hoxha, Valter, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Montpellier, France

Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) is an important sector of the agrarian economy today in Albania, counting for approximately M\$25 exports, 60 000 collectors, various localized value chains and first transformation industries. Wild MAPs collection mainly occurs in common mountainous pasture and forest lands, and was based on traditional uses in pastoral and medicinal local practices. The real economic take off and massive collection of the resource occurred during the communist regime, to fulfill the need of export based cash-flows. It was a total State organized system structured by cooperatives and State farms. After the regime collapse, the MAPs sector was basically driven by commercial forces and markets. This drastic change is, for the theory of collective action of great interest, because neither one system nor the other totally abolished the existence of the commons as commons. Our communication will highlight major institutional problems related to the management of commons throughout the conventions and agreements organizing the MAPs collection. An historical (and yet not done) analysis of these two antagonist systems, based on field studies for the contemporary situation and on Albanian archives for the past periods (1860-1991) is of great interest for todays challenges. Both in terms of rural development and agro-biodiversity conservation, there is a need to find innovative ways for a collective action to sustainably rule these commons. Neither State nor markets are able to deal with identified pressures against MAPs resources.

Participants

Alfani, Guido

Guido Alfani is Associate Professor of Economic History at Bocconi University, Italy and Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow, UK. He is a member of Dondena Centre for Research on Social Dynamics and chief editor of the journal Popolazione e Storia. His research interests include economic inequality, social alliance systems (particularly godparenthood), historical demography (particularly epidemics and famines). He is the Principal Investigator of the ERC-funded project EINITE-Economic Inequality across Italy and Europe, 1300-1800.

Bernard, Claire

Claire Bernard is a graduate from the Paris School of International Affairs (2009) and AgroParisTech (2011). Claire Bernard has started a PhD in Environmental Management (2012), dealing with biodiversity conservation and valorization. Her intervention-research on a development project in Northern Albania, funded by the French Global Environmental Facility, seeks to understand what it takes in terms of strategic actions to trigger an environmentally sound development in disadvantaged territories.

De Moor, Tine

Tine De Moor is Professor of “Institutions for Collective Action in Historical Perspective” at the Department for Social and Economic History of Utrecht University. Her research combines extensive empirical research and analysis with modeling and a strongly theoretical framework. She is an executive board member of The International Association for the Study of the Commons, and co-founder of the peer-reviewed open-access International Journal of the Commons. Currently she is in charge of several projects on institutions for collective action, of which one is an ERC Starting Grant (www.collective-action.info).

Hoxha, Valter

Valter Hoxha holds an engineer degree in Agrarian Economy and Policy from the Agricultural University of Tirana (2008). He later specialized in rural areas development and innovation with the Master of Science at the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Montpellier. He ist currently writing a PhD thesis in Geography and Spatial Planning at the University of Paul Valéry, Montpellier III, focussing on the conserving and valorization of biodiversity, in the case of medicinal and aromatic plants collection in Albania.

Laborda Peman, Miguel

Miguel Laborda holds a BA in Law (2009) and a BA in Business Management (2009) from the University of Zaragoza, Spain. In 2010, he graduated from the LSE (MSc. Political Economy of Late Development). In October 2011 he joined the ERC Project

‘United We Stand’ as PhD candidate. He studies the emergence and long-term dynamics of corporate collective action in pre-industrial Europe. His interests include global economic history, long-term economic growth and the political economy of development, particularly the debate on the deeper determinants of growth and the Great Divergence.

Lana-Berasain, Jose-Miguel

In 1997, José-Miguel Lana-Berasain successfully defended his doctoral thesis on agricultural changes and property relationships in the southern part of Navarre (19th-20th centuries) at the University of Zaragoza. After 1997, he worked at the Public University of Navarre, first at the Department of Geography and History (1997-2001), later on (2001-current) with the Department of Economics. From 2010 on, he has been appointed as Profesor Titular at UPNA. He was member of the Council of the Spanish Society of Agrarian History (2002-2009) and president of the Geronimo de Uztariz Institute for Economic and Social History (2001-2005).

Landolt, Gabriela

Gabriela Landolt is a doctoral student at the Institute for Social Anthropology, University of Berne, Switzerland. Her main research interests are the analysis of institutional change in the context of common pool resource management in the Swiss alpine pasture management under special consideration of power relations and ideology.

Lerin, Francois

François Lerin is a social scientist and senior scientific administrator with the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Montpellier, a division of the Centre International de Hautes Études Agronomiques Méditerranéennes (CIHEAM). He holds a PhD in economics from the University of Paris X-Nanterre. His primary research topic is the multi-scale analysis of international agro-environmental programs and local implementation contexts, with a focus on pastoralism and agro-biodiversity. He has conducted field work in the Balkan countries and the south of France, and is currently coordinator of the BiodivBalkans project.

Mocarelli, Luca

Luca Mocarelli is full professor of economic history at Milano Bicocca University, Faculty of Economics. He is treasurer and member of IAUH board (Italian Association for Urban History) and President of IAAH (International Association for Alpine History). He has worked extensively on urban and regional economy with special regard to early modern Lombardy. His recent works deal with the building sector in Milan (18th -20th centuries), commons in mountain areas, and labour history.