



European
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DEPARTMENT
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AND
CIVILIZATION

ROBERT
SCHUMAN
CENTRE FOR
ADVANCED
STUDIES



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Leibniz Institute for
the History and Culture
of Eastern Europe



Utrecht University

WORKSHOP

MANAGING THE LAND: AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL ACTORS IN TWENTIETH CENTURY EUROPE

Dates: **April 11-12, 2019**

Venue: **Villa Salviati, European University Institute, Florence, Italy**

Conveners: Corinna Unger (European University Institute, Florence), Dietmar Müller (Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe, Leipzig), Liesbeth van de Grift (Utrecht University)

Abstract

Agriculture and rural life, topics long dismissed by many historians as irrelevant or old-fashioned, are currently receiving renewed attention in the field of contemporary history. The revival of rural and agricultural history is closely connected to concerns about environmental degradation, food shortages, land grabbing, and migration in the context of climate change, and to academic debates about the so-called Anthropocene, natural resources, and the notion of sustainability. Many historians are studying issues like land rights, property relations, access to natural resources, and rural infrastructure projects in different parts of Europe and in European colonies abroad. Others focus on social relations and practices in rural spaces, on rural political structures, on settlements in frontier regions, on efforts toward the 'modernization' of agriculture, and on the connections between local, regional, national, and international production, marketing, and governance structures.

Our workshop brings together representatives of these different strands of research in order to discuss fresh perspectives on the rural and agricultural history of contemporary Europe. Rather than looking at twentieth-century European rural and agricultural history through the lens of national governments or politically defined events, we focus on the activities related to the management of land in a broad sense. The workshop centers on the different historical actors, from peasants to bureaucrats, from landowners to the advocates of land reform and collectivization, from the members of rural women's associations to business representatives advertising the use of new agricultural technologies, and their various interests, agendas, and strategies. Finally, our aim is to overcome the confines of nationally defined approaches and to contribute to genuinely European perspectives on rural and agricultural history.

Schedule

April 10

Participants arrive in Florence

19.30 Dinner

April 11

10.00 Welcome and introduction

10.30 *Panel I: Assessing the Value of the Countryside*

Elisa Tizzoni, The spread of mass tourism in rural Mediterranean villages: the Cinque Terre as a case study

Ekaterina Koller, 'Decline' narratives and late Soviet rural transformation (1960s-1980s)

11.45 Coffee break

12.15 Eunice Blavascunas, Where is Europe in the idea of rewilding: Geographical and historical considerations

13.00 Lunch in the cafeteria of Villa Salviati

15.00 *Panel II: Competing for Rural and Agricultural Resources*

Iva Lucic, Whose forests? Forest property rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the inter-imperial transition from the Ottoman to the Austrian-Hungarian Empire (1878-1918)

Tatjana Tönsmeier, Agriculture during World War Two: Rural actors and the social dynamics of occupation

16.15 Coffee break

16.45 Andrew Tompkins, For farm and fatherland? Claiming German property on French territory after 1945

17.30 End of day one

19.30 Dinner

April 12

9.30 *Panel III: Advocating Rural Development and Agricultural Modernization*

Zsuzsanna Kiss, Professionalization of land agents in Eastern-Central Europe (in the pre-WWI period)

Carolyn Taratko, The birth of development consulting: Agricultural consultants at the nexus of natural and human sciences in interwar Germany

11.15 Coffee break

11.45 Gustav Berry, Managing the land through rural domestic education: Actors, strategies and practice in Sweden ca 1900-1970

Heinrich Hartmann, A 'hidden integration' of Europe's countryside? Transnational expertise and networks in the definition of Southern European rural development, 1940s to 1970s

13.00 Sandwich lunch

13.30 Concluding discussion

14.00 End of workshop