

Zeitschrift: Histoire des Alpes = Storia delle Alpi = Geschichte der Alpen
Herausgeber: Association Internationale pour l'Histoire des Alpes
Band: 19 (2014)

Rubrik: English summaries

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 12.12.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

English summaries

Anne-Lise Head-König, Diverse pastoral systems and resources in the Pre-alpine and Alpine regions of Switzerland. A long-term view

From the end of the fifteenth century until the present day different forms of ownership of pasture land have existed in the Pre-alpine and Alpine regions of Switzerland. Within some cantons, they could even co-exist: collective, associative, institutional (ecclesiastical, among others) and private forms. The type of ownership was also variable due to economic as well as to political factors. Then, the way in which pasture land was made use of differed according to the lie of the land, the climate, the nature of the property as well as with regard to demand. Finally, there was also considerable variation in the kind of demand, depending on whether production was for subsistence purposes, for the internal market or for the international market.

Aleksander Panjek, Ines Beguš, Matajur and Colovrat. Management and sustainable use of natural resources: between the Venetian and Habsburg sides of the Julian Alps in the Modern Age

According to Anton Melik, authoritative Slovenian geographer, the disparity between the altitude of the tree line – still noticeable in the 20th century – between the two sides of the Julian Pre-Alps was due to deforestation, a process to create grazing area, made significantly worse by strong demand for timber from the Friuli plains. Inspired by this, the article focuses on pasture as a form of meadow and woodland use: woods, too, were ploughed up to make room for new meadows and

commons. The Natisone Valley and the Upper Isonzo Valley are compared and analysed to define the relevance of endogenous factors, such as pasture practices and the institutional management of natural resource. Early findings suggest a broader and complex explanation for the more extensive deforestation on the Veneto slopes. If foreign demand did boost timber trade, a major role was played by a pasture-based economy and the rural communities' independence.

Martino Laurenti, Defending the Alps, defending the community. Communalization of the Alps and peasant revolts in 15th and 16th century Waldensian communities

This paper examines the political sustainability of the use of pastureland in the Waldensian communities of the western Alps between the 15th and the 16th century. Between 1478 and 1535, the Angrogna community signed several agreements with the feudal families who held the eminent domain of those lands. Representatives of the two sides negotiated long and hard – a common event in Europe's peasant communities – to define the right of managing local resources (rivers and lakes, woods, grassland) bitterly disputed between feudal lordships and rural municipalities. In the community studied, the problem merged with micro-conflicts, which often flared up into violence between rural municipalities and aristocracy. Finally, the article will highlight the link between the defence of the rights of common use of pastures and the peasant revolts that broke out over the 1484–1561 period.

Chérie Faval, From common to public, from common to private. Pasture land in the Aosta Valley between evolution and involution of the "Consorteries"

The paper aims to show how specific natural and human factors, typical of an Alpine socio-political context, were behind the rise and consolidation of some communitarian-collective systems of resources management in Valle d'Aosta, North-West Italy. Focusing on pastureland, our analysis elicits two findings. On the one hand, we pinpoint the peculiar features of an age-old *Consorterie*

system until its demise at the hand of a new order, which replaced bottom-up management rules by importing top-down ones, based on two processes: “common to private” and “common to public”. On the other hand, as the resources to be managed since the *Consorterie* have not changed, we suggest that the *model* and management principles inherited from the past can possibly be reclaimed, which prompts a comparison with some EU-funded policy measures currently promoted for the Region’s crop-livestock farming system.

Herbert Weigl, Water for the City of Salzburg. The Almkanal, the aqueduct of Fürstenbrunnen, and the mill of Alterbach

This article deals with the topic of availability of the resource water in the city of Salzburg on the basis of some examples. In the long-term perspective turns the look from a medieval waterworks, the Almkanal, into the present to the water supply consisting of three pillars. The directiv focuses are the big changes within the 19th century. The Fürstenbrunner water pipe brought the transition from a early modern type to a central form of water supply in 1875. With the beginning of the torrent control the mill site Alterbach became secured as a habitat. The criterias and conditions of these caesuras give informations on the availability of drinking-, service- and drivingwater in the city of Salzburg. The effects and its durability are interesting results in the context of the local und environmental history.

Paolo Tedeschi, Notes on natural assets management in the valleys of Eastern Lombardy during the 19th century: water

This paper looks at water management in the valleys of Eastern Lombardy in the 19th century. Besides checking and maintaining river banks and beds, municipalities had to verify that water was supplied equally for farming and manufacturing activities. With extensive common land, dear to maintain, Alpine landowners were legally bound to join *comprensorj* (later, *consorzj*) and pay a fee based on the cadastral value of their estate. Landowners and municipalities were jointly responsible for the safe upkeep of homes and factories. The law

(and consortia) did not cover the high valleys, where a difficult terrain required prevention and repair efforts by farmers and municipalities. The exploitation of small Alpine lakes and springs came under the Councils; licences and rental agreements gave cattle-breeders access to high pastures; water resources were fairly supplied, and the community drew benefit.

Stefania Bianchi, Mark Bertogliati, Water resources in the Insubrian Valleys of the Central Alps, between community-based management and private property (13th–19th century)

Through an in-depth analysis and case-study approach this paper focuses on the complex theme of water resources management in the alpine valleys north of Milan, from the 11th century to the advent of modern hydroelectric power. In this region, the presence of water-mills and hydraulic plants reflects socio-economic dynamics, the productive capacities and relationships with reference markets, but also cultural processes and local environmental and historical constraints. A systematic reconstruction (e.g. through the 1895 Cadastre of public waters of Canton Ticino) provides an accurate picture of the presence of hydraulic machinery in this region. Water-powered technology was the main investment in the sector of raw material processing of the preindustrial age, in many ways representative of the relation between man and water.

Klaus Brandstätter, Gerhard Siegl, Conflicts over wood resources and sustainable forest management in Tyrol from the Middle Ages to the 21st century

To meet the growing demand for timber caused by the mining boom, since about 1450 sovereigns drew on common woodland, drastically limiting residents' use rights. In 16th-century decrees to regulate the use of forests (*Waldordnungen*), the farming of once common land by the locals is described as an act of mercy. Woodland, carved up into small portions, was for the first time allocated to farmstead owners, to guarantee better forest stewardship. Criticism of the bad condition of forests and concerns about timber shortages were a constant for

centuries. The sovereign responded by decreeing measures to save timber, but his economically motivated norms failed. The condition of the forests remained bad until the 20th century, when wood was superseded by other sources of energy. Thus, the pressure on woodland ceased, paving the way for an ecologically sustainable forest management.

Giulia Beltrametti, A conflicting history of three mountain forests. Ligurian Apennine, Maritime Alps, Lepontine Alps

Forest history is too complex to be interpreted as a simple dichotomy between two forms of agrarian customs and collective mentalities (Marc Bloch). On this premise, the paper studies three cases of mountain forests, documented by rich archival sources. Combining a local viewpoint and an historically regressive methodology, we pinpoint the juridical, economic, political, and social factors behind the evolution of so-called “natural space”, a core resource in Alpine economic systems. As to the impact of ownership on the practice of land use, the boundary between private and “communal” property is often blurred. Also, use rights and rights of access often overlapped and were constantly re-negotiated. It was arguably this jurisdictional fluidity that guaranteed a sustainable social order, based on the dynamic balance between control of social competition and a fair access to resources.

Johannes Lang, Three countries – three strategies. Natural resources as a key to competition between Bavaria and the lands of Salzburg, and Berchtesgaden

Several salt mines were established close together in the border area between the former states of Bavaria, Salzburg, and Berchtesgaden. The extraordinary monopoly of Reichenhall was broken by the opening of new salt pans in Hallein and Schellenberg (near Berchtesgaden) at the middle of the 12th century. Hallein held sway over its competitors as a market leader until the 17th century. In Salzburg and Berchtesgaden, the salt works played a fundamental role in their climb to independence. While the Berchtesgaden salt mine was in the hands of

the cathedral chapter, the archbishop of Salzburg involved several abbeys and citizens in the production process. In Reichenhall, the salt works were controlled by civil society and local authorities. Business development in the three localities was influenced by these different ownership structures as well by the kinds of salt deposits available.

Agnese Visconti, Science and entrepreneurship in the discovery and mining of iron ores in the mountains of Lombardy under the Habsburg

Based on published and unpublished archival records, the article shows the rise of Habsburg control in Lombardy in the early 1780s. Under its rule, a complex plan emerged, which combined the mathematical, natural and technical knowledge of the Mining Surveyor with the decision to support the great timber merchants, mines licensees and steel works owners. The paper highlights a strategy which, within ten years, halved the losses from iron in Lombardy's international balance of payments. A comparison is drawn with similar cases in the Italian peninsula (Piedmont, Tuscany and Calabria). Yet, left unattended, the forests were severely damaged, partly by municipalities with no means to improve their state, and partly by private owners who felled them to plant more profitable crops. Finally, the essay shows the limits of Habsburg legislation in the administration of the Lombard territory.

Pierre Judet, The Grange system. A dominance system for the exploitation of mining resources in Maurienne (Savoy), 19th century

This paper follows the rise, development and decline of a system of natural resources exploitation, focusing on the Savoyard commune of St Georges, which built its wealth on high-quality “natural steel” from a rich iron vein. Rising demand for metallurgy products was behind a thriving mining industry in the 19th century, and aided a “dominance” system, despite the presence of a legislation and of a mountain community. The Grange family stood out among the

new “actors” who oversaw a vast metallurgy cluster (Grenoble area to Annecy). They controlled cast-iron mining and processing, forest resources, a multi-active workforce, and a complex social network, often based on lending. In 1875, Schneider, a company seeking high quality iron for le Creusot, acquired their rights, but was soon superseded by the reliable and effective Thomas Gilchrist process, which was to expand into another area.