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KAZALO - CONTENTS

New Challenges for Sustainable Rural Development in the 21st Century

INTRODUCTION

The social and economic fabric of rural areas and their environment has been shaped over time by agriculture, more than by any other sector, and by associated up- and down- stream activities. In the past, agriculture was viewed as a purely sectoral activity producing primary products, today, however, it is recognised as fulfilling a multiplicity of economic, social and environmental functions, producing, in addition to raw materials for a dynamic quality food production chain, also other important environmental services and public goods, which provide a solid foundation for a vital rural space. A sustainable and competitive agri-food sector is therefore important not only as an element of the rural economy, but also, and sometimes even more so, due to its contribution to preservation and improvement of the quality of life and the social economic and environmental fabric of rural areas. Today, new challenges are faced and new solutions must be found in order to assure sustainable rural development in the future.

The annual IGU conferences are organised around themes which explore and develop the long-term research tasks of the Commission: interpretation of "rural sustainability", regulation of rural sustainability, sustainability and the rural business enterprise, sustainability in the interaction between rural and urban systems, rural community dynamics and sustainability and land use cover and change.

This is a special issue of the Journal for Geography published at the occasion of the 17th Annual Colloquium of the IGU Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems entitled New Challenges for Sustainable Rural Development in the 21st Century, which took place from 13th to 18th July 2009 in Maribor, Slovenia. In this issue, experts from Brazil, Australia, India, Japan, Israel, France, Ireland, Austria, Romania, the Netherlands and Slovenia present, analyse and explain the diversity of ways to improve the quality of life in rural areas all over the world.

Ana Maria de Souza Mello Bicalho examines in her paper the possible role of jute cropping in revitalising stagnated floodplain farming in the Brazilian Amazon, once the most important farming activity in an extensive area along the Amazon River. With the recent installation of a factory in Santarém, in the western Pará state, for producing fibre sheets with industrial applications in the production of vehicles and mattresses in the national market, jute cropping has been reintroduced. The factory is located 12 kilometres to the east of Santarém and draws its workers from the local rural area, paying higher salaries than earned in the farm sector. The main questions regarding the future perspectives of jute cropping in the Amazon are whether the industrial capacity will expand further and whether other manufacturing concerns will be attracted to the region, generating increasing demand for jute, so that the activity will spread further up the river. Another important issue is whether the articulation of floodplain farmers to this new agro-industrial sector will result in significant income and superior quality of life and not reproduce the exploitive subordination of farmers which was common in the past.

The authors **Vladimir Drozg** and **Stanko Pelc** present an overview of research work done in the area of rural geography in Slovenia. It is set up in three parts: the first chapter deals with contextual orientation of rural geography, emphasised by statistical analysis of bibliographic units according to individual areas. The second

part offers the most important research concepts and paradigms, represented in Slovene rural geography. The third part shows some key findings regarding Slovene rural areas/countryside. Among the most important contextual areas of rural geography in Slovenia, the studies from agrarian geography, morphology of settlements, demographic structure and demographic changes, regional development, environment protection and degradation stand out.

Throughout the history, agriculture has always played a dominant role in the development of rural areas, but today its significance is under discussion in many countries. **Andreja Borec** and **Jernej Turk** review in their paper same key milestones and CAP dates, and try to explain the new role of agriculture in rural areas through the concept of multifunctional agriculture. Multifunctionality is therefore argued as a model to bring post-modern agriculture in accordance with the new societal demands. It is emphasized that in addition to producing food and fibre, agriculture produces a wide range of non-commodity goods and services, it also shapes the environment, it affects social and cultural systems and it contributes to economic growth.

The concept of sustainable rural development has gained currency in public discourse in many countries of the world over the past two decades. Like the concept of 'sustainability' per se, it can have multiple meanings in different contexts, but there has been a gradual move from an emphasis on economic development to broader and more holistic approaches which include cultural, social and environmental dimensions.

According to **Mary Cawley**, the Republic of Ireland offers a particularly appropriate context in which to analyse the role of changing governance structures in association with the pursuit of sustainable rural development. Ireland has one of the most centralised administrative systems in the EU, yet, since the early 1990s, non-governmental local partnerships have emerged throughout the state to pursue a range of rural development initiatives, with EU financial support. Since the late 1990s, the local state has become involved more fully in the management structure of these partnerships. More recently, the central state, which is the conduit for their public funding, has sought to bring about greater coordination among the partnerships. The paper discusses the gradual evolution of networking and partnership in the pursuit of Irish rural development policy with reference to objectives and outcomes.

Social conditions in rural areas are at the same time the origin and the goal of sustainable development. Due to differentiated economic development, socioeconomic heterogeneity in rural areas is increasing, yet at the same time it varies greatly between countries and continents.

Frans Thiessen analysed the quality of life in Dutch rural communities in comparison with urban communities in the Netherlands. He found out that the quality of live in Dutch rural areas is high because of the residential quality of villages, the mobility of the inhabitants and the strong commitment of the inhabitants to the local society. Today's Dutch villages, however, bear no resemblance to the traditional village, and social capital is not self-evident nowadays. Social capital is present when local social cohesion contributes to the liveability and social vitality of villages.

The differentiation of social structures is grounded on the different levels of economic development, the different cultural environments, the gap between tradition and modernity, and the measures of regional policies.

In the paper entitled Coping with Depopulation and Demographic Ageing in Rural Japan: From Government to Local Governance, **Doo-Chul Kim** and **Hye-Jin Bu** have analysed the administrative process initiated by the Japanese government which has resulted in the merging of municipalities across the country. Since then, the quality of services provided to inhabitants by the local government has declined in depopulated areas. As a result, it has been suggested that there may be a role for self-organization in the revival of local governance. In many depopulated areas, the distance between the local government and the local community has continued to grow, and this has led to the newly established local government transferring certain responsibilities. Consequently, the reorganization of the local community has become indispensable. This research shows that the success of the Kawane Promoting Association lies in its unique style of management, whereby there is no central authority; instead, decision-making powers are transferred between units as required, ensuring full participation by local residents. For decades, the Kawane Promoting Association has been revitalizing the local region. This is the result of the fact that the Kawane Promoting Association is organized by the local community, with full participation of the local residents. In turn, the situation has greatly improved the abilities of the community for self-governance.

In the following two papers, the authors represented the economic view characterized by the strong presence of the emerging market economies: on the one hand, with the continued expansion of trade and investment accompanying globalization and, on the other hand, by converting – in post-Communist Southeast Europe after 1989.

Peter Jordan investigates in his paper the reasons for the current state of rural space in Southeast Europe, as well as its current structure. It is confirmed that pre-Communist structures, as well as divergent Communist systems and policies contributed as much to the current structures as have divergent post-Communist approaches and developments. Thus, we witness today very different situations in the rural space of Yugoslavian successor states on the one hand, and of other post-Communist countries of Southeast Europe with a planned economy (Romania, Bulgaria and Albania) on the other. But even the countries of former Yugoslavia show many divergences, mainly due to divergent demographic development in the wake of the Yugoslavian dissolution wars. Since economic aspects were more or less neglected, this process resulted in heavy economic and social decline frequently accompanied by depopulation. It is questionable whether under the auspices of the European Union (all the countries of the South East Europe have at least an accession perspective, if they are not already EU members as Bulgaria and Romania) this development can be reverted or at least smoothed down. Having proclaimed the "Lisbon Strategy" in 2000 with the aim of becoming "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world" and having adopted also the position that the objectives of growth and disparity equalisation were not compatible, the EU objective of macro-economic growth overrules now the equalisation objective. This means that EU structural funding will also in Southeast Europe favour the centres rather than the peripheries. Taking into account that also regional policies of national governments follow the same direction, prospects for rural spaces in Southeast Europe do not look bright.

Lučka Lorber discusses in her paper the changes in Slovenian rural areas after socio-economic changes in the post-socialist European states in the 1990s. Special emphasis is put on the analysis of structural indicators of socio-economic changes in the Slovenian rural areas in comparison to the neighbouring countries. Slovenian population is strongly attached to their traditional rural way of life. When ranging people's life values, care for maintaining the rural landscape, assuring the quality of life in relation to nature, and production of healthy food come out among their highest priorities. Transitional processes as a result of socio-economic changes in the Eastern-European countries affected the standard patterns of regional European development. Many rural areas have undergone a successful process of structural change and independent development. However, regional disparities are significant, and not only among the countries that developed under different socio-economic conditions, but also within individual countries, where considerable regional disparities can be observed, in particular between the urban and the rural areas. There is no doubt that revitalisation of agricultural areas and assurance of sustainable rural development pose major challenges for the post-socialist countries.

The global economy is increasingly characterized by the strong presence of the emerging market economies, with the continued expansion of trade and investment accompanying globalization, on the one hand, and on the other hand by the growing uncertainty concerning violent fluctuation of petroleum prices and turbulence in financial markets.

Australia's highly profitable cotton industry is geographically constrained to districts in northern New South Wales and Southern Queensland. However, the rural towns servicing the industry are facing unprecedented stress on account of fierce commercial competition between them, many years of drought in the first decade of the 21st century, technological innovation in cotton production, the chance occurrence of non-agricultural economic opportunities, and even ethnic composition.

Tony Sorensen researched the role of innovative small business in overcoming community stress. The selection of a representative sample entailed the classification of cotton communities on the basis of their economic and social profiles and how they had evolved over the inter-census period 2001-06. This analysis surprisingly showed that cotton growing regions are highly differentiated not just at a single point in time (2006), but also in their development trajectories. This considerably complicated the process of sample selection, but also demonstrated the diversity of rural settlement. The paper starts by sketching the geography of Australia's cotton production and the criteria for the selection of cotton communities studied. Further on, it presents briefly the methods and results of the statistical appraisal. Thirdly, it explains the diversity of economic and social circumstance found. A fourth and final section explores the implications of such variable conditions both for public policy in general and attempts by local actors to secure their community's future. In this respect, it is obvious that some localities are rather more sustainable than others in the long run. Furthermore, it is possible to diagnose the factors apparently contributing significantly to sustained community viability. This, in turn, raises important questions about latent stress points as those factors potentially evolve in hostile directions.

Zarja Bohak and **Andreja Borec** discuss in their paper the importance of farm succession for any family farm, as well as for the future structure of farming and for rural policy makers. This is a process whereby the skills, traditions and the capital of farming are passed from one generation to another. Scientists have acknowledged the importance of scientific investigation of the succession of family farms no more than thirty or forty years ago. There are many different scientific methods used to process the surveys' data and to represent the process of farm succession. The paper offers a review of foreign and Slovene studies made in the last 15 years, in which econometric methods are used in order to describe and analyse family farm succession process. The authors expect that more studies on family farm succession will be made in the future, since this issue is of vital importance for farm survival. Namely, farms without a declared successor are often doomed to decay.

With rapid economic growth in certain regions of the world, the function, appearance and identity of rural areas are changing. A gap is emerging between tradition, in terms of lifestyle as well as methods of production, and modernity, which places quality of life at the top of value systems.

Laucette Laurens's paper deals with periurban areas, which are characterised by radical changes on the social level as well as on the level of spatial organisation. These changes allow us to question urbanity in the sense of everyday life and the art of living together. The author wonders whether agricultural areas could be given a specific or central place in periurban environment. She believes that this question is in place, as agricultural areas are not exclusively private areas anymore, but are becoming more and more public areas, which are characterised by multifunctionality and inhabited by varied actors. The paper also provides an analysis of agricultural areas which have lost their traditional usages and are therefore available for development of different projects and usages. The author is particularly interested in areas which are in transition and in the emerging areas, as well as in the development of new political projects in these areas. She questions such evolutions in order to understand the link between this uncertain context and the innovations in the governance of agricultural periurban areas.

Cultural heritage and cultural landscape are a set of human products that reflect the society needs, thoughts and memories. They represent and symbolize the relationships of power and controls – out of which it has emerged – and the human processes that have transformed and continue to transform them. These transformations create new cultural landscapes that often hide the processes that have made them – political, social, cultural, ideological and economic.

Irit Amit-Cohen analyses in her paper a contested geographical environment where two cultures compete over land and its cultural heritage and therefore each of them has its own interpretations: the Jewish Zionist culture and the Arab Moslem culture. The aim is to define the landscape – its spirit and its representation – that emerges from these competitions and disputes; to characterize it, to analyze its symbols and its uses, mainly for the purpose of formation and construction of identities. The two geographical areas containing cultural heritage sites and cultural landscapes that have become symbolic represent four components: memory, commemoration, representation and function for the two societies. The first such environment is a rural area, which encompasses two very dominant landscapes adjoining each other – a new commercial and cultural centre, which was built for Jewish settlement alongside historical remnants of an Arab village, a mosque and

'Bustan' – an Arab plantation. The second environment is an agricultural area planted with olive trees with a contested significance for the two societies. An examination of the two landscapes indicates that the struggle for cultural dominance between Arabs and Jews is the same struggle expressed by the different cultural landscapes. In this way, a definition of "Contested Landscape" can be used as criteria to describe the value of cultural heritage or cultural landscapes. This definition might serve also as a solution for cultural landscape or cultural heritage sites which present disputes or uncertain national proprietorship. In other words, the very fact that the sites or the landscapes are contested, bestows upon them their uniqueness and singularity.

Sustainable development in rural areas supposes a balanced development of the environmental, economic and social components, and all these are integrated into the development of tourism. The tourist approach to the development of rural communities is one of the most appropriate ways of finding sustainable solutions to the problems of the countryside.

To support this idea, **Pompei Cocean** and **Oana-Ramona Ilovan** have chosen a case study for the Romanian territory, the NUTS 3 level administrative unit. Under the circumstances of the present economic crisis, the European Union programme SAPARD represents for local communities one of the most reliable sources of support for the implementation of development projects. The analysis carried out focused on emphasizing the manner of attracting these resources in the field of tourism in the territory of Bistriţa-Năsăud County, situated in northern Romania, in the North-West Development Region, where private initiatives are representative for Romania's approach to this sector. Sustainable rural development was partly triggered by the implementation of the SAPARD programme during the pre-accession period of Romania to the European Union, also focusing on sustainable tourism in the countryside, and the Bistriţa-Năsăud County was such an example. The authors stress the importance of the tourist activities for the total number of rural development projects in the county.

Consumer demand for quality food is growing steadily. There is an increasing awareness of health and environmental issues, and higher disposable incomes in developed countries enable people to make 'lifestyle choices', such as paying more for the food which is better for them and less damaging to the environment.

Indian agriculture is still the main asset of Indian rural areas after five and a half decades of independence. It has been very successful in terms of foodgrain production through the adoption of green revolution.

Nizamuddin Khan, **Anisur Rehman** and **Salman Sadique** present in their paper Vegetable Revolution and Rural Sustainable Development in India the significant role of the vegetable revolution in the rural development. Vegetable cultivation has drastically increased over the last decade in the area studied. Most of the vegetables are bought and sold either in rural markets or in the nearest regulated markets. The socio-economic stratification of vegetable growers and workers has shown domination of some specific castes in vegetable cultivation, buying and selling, whereas the people of high castes are little involved in vegetable cultivation. More than 80% of vegetable cultivators are landless, small or marginal farmers and market or dispose of their surplus in nearby rural markets. The vegetable revolution has not only increased the income of vegetable growers, but has also contributed to

employment generation, social change and self-sufficiency among landless, small and marginal farmers. The expansion of vegetable cultivation in the sampled villages has been significant for reducing the vulnerability of small and marginal farmers to poverty and misery. Thus, the vegetable revolution is significant in the rural transformation and is a new dimension of rural sustainable development. An efficient vegetable marketing network with integrated markets at the grassroots level is urgently needed for sustainable, economically viable and socially acceptable planning of diversification of agriculture with value added crops like vegetables, both in the study area and on a national level.

The fourteen papers published in this issue represent different views on and good practice examples of solving the problem of revitalization and development in rural areas. They all acknowledge the dependency between authority and local community. The authors see clearly the impacts of globalisation and the gap which is emerging between tradition, in terms of lifestyle and the methods of production, and modernity, which places quality of life at the top of value systems.

Lučka Lorber
Chief and responsible editor

AGRICULTURAL-INDUSTRIAL INTEGRATION AND NEW APPLICATIONS OF NATURAL FIBRES: JUTE FLOODPLAIN CROPPING IN THE AMAZON REBORN?

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Abstract
Agricultural-industrial integration and new applications of natural fibres: jute floodplain cropping in the Amazon reborn?
In recent years natural fibre production has taken on considerable appeal because of new industrial applications in environmental friendly products and growing demand for fibres could contribute to social welfare of poor farmers in developing countries. The new uses of natural fibres are part of highly technical green solutions for problems in the industrial and consumption regions but it may be asked whether this demand really addresses social and ecological issues in regions of primary production. These issues are examined in the Brazilian Amazon where recently a composite fibre sheet factory was opened and fibre cropping is making a comeback after decades of economic stagnation. It is shown here that the expansion of the activity, while significant, has not yet reached the scale of the past, but the market is promising, particularly in the automotive industry, which could further stimulate jute and malva production in the region.

Key words
natural fibres, new industrial applications, agricultural-industrial integration, Amazon region, Brazil.

The editor received the article on 11.12-2009.

1. Introduction

In ten years of research on floodplain agriculture in the Brazilian Amazon I have investigated the environmental, economic, social and political difficulties faced by traditional riverine farmers and how they actively search for new productive strategies which could integrate them into new regional dynamics (Bicalho 2003, 2009, Bicalho and Hoefle 2008a, 2008b, 2010). However, the historic riverine population seldom participates actively in new rural social and economic processes, such as the advance of the agrarian frontier in inter-fluvial areas and the rise of metropolitan agriculture associated to industrial expansion of Belém and Manaus (Bicalho and Hoefle 2008a, 2008b, Caldas *et. al.* 2007, Schmink and Wood 1992, Walker *et. al*. 2009). Riverine farmers are rarely articulated to national and export markets and the options open to them are restricted to supplying food to regional urban markets, which are limited by the region's low urban density so that most of these riverine farmers are poor and marginalised.

New demand for natural fibre today opens a potentially promising avenue for economic opportunity for riverine farmers, building on their past experience with jute (Corchorus capsularis L.) and malva (Urena lobata L., a kenaf type of native fibre of the Amazon), the last great commercial products of riverine Amazonia. In the late 20th Century, fibre crops almost disappeared from the region, but in the present decade are slowly making a comeback in response to demand in the emerging global eco-economy, of which new industrial applications of natural fibres in the plastics industry are important. This study evaluates whether the re-introduction of natural fibre and the rise of new relationships between agriculture and eco-industry in former production areas of the Amazon will benefit a very poor rural population. The key issue is to determine if fibre production significantly increases income as well as improves the quality of life of the local people and so contributes to economic and social sustainability, without which there can be no ecological sustainability.

The regional and global significance of the theme treated here is highlighted by the fact that the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization declared 2009 as the International Year of Natural Fibres in order to call attention to the importance of a rural sector that once involved great commodity crops and today still produces about 30 million tonnes of natural fibres, worth about US$40 billion annually. Among the reasons cited by the FAO for targeting natural fibres is that they are produced by poor small farmers in developing countries and expanding demand helps fight hunger and rural poverty. A second major reason is that natural fibres are increasingly being incorporated into a rapidly expanding high-technological sector of the plastics industry, particularly with applications in automobile manufacturing. The investigation undertaken in the Brazilian Amazon can offer feedback concerning these issues in a region where natural fibres are cropped by poor small-scale family farmers and where production has been stimulated by the Brazilian vehicle manufacturing sector, which in turn is articulated to the expanding global eco-economy.

To some, the issue of small-scale farming in a country noted for agribusiness export commodity production may seem quixotic, but historically and increasingly in recent decades, Brazilian smallholders have been responsible for supplying most of the domestic market with more than 180 million consumers with foodstuffs and are important players supplying raw materials for agro-industry, which also exports

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produce abroad (Martine 1990, MCT 2002, Sorj 1986, Silva 1978, 1996, Wilkinson 2008). In addition to this, buying fibre production from peasant farmers of riverine Amazonia can be important for Brazilian and foreign-owned manufacturing firms because they come under considerable national and international political pressure to be 'socially responsible'.

The results presented are based on fieldwork undertaken between 1999 and 2008 in the municipalities of Manacapuru, Maniquiri, Iranduba, Careiro da Várzea, Itacoatiara, Silves, Itapiranga, Parintins and Santarém, all of which once were important natural fibre producers located along the middle course of the Amazon River and where fibre cropping has been showing signs of recovery (Fig. 1). Primary data collection was undertaken through the interview of 51 former and current fibre farmers in addition to extension agents at the local and state levels as well as representatives of local industries processing natural fibre.

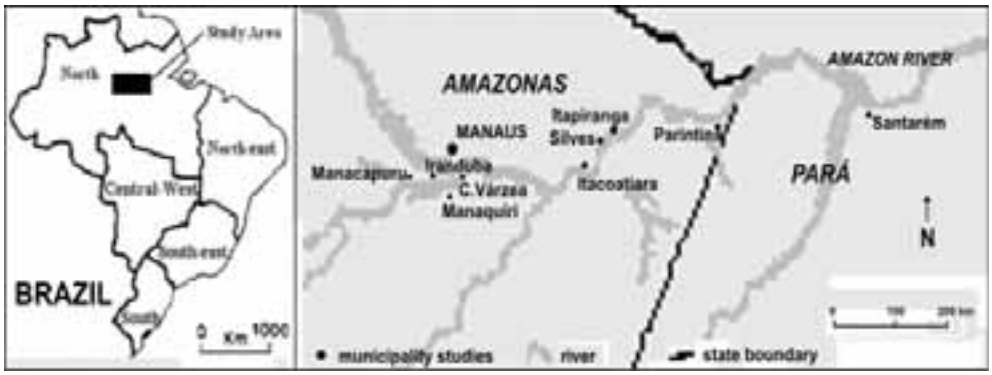

Fig. 1: The study area in the Brazilian Amazon.

This work is divided in four parts. First, there is a brief discussion of social inclusion and exclusion in Brazilian farming in relation to agricultural-industrial integration. Then, trends in international natural fibre production are outlined, followed by another part treating new industrial applications of natural fibre, before entering the evaluation of the regional significance of renewed fibre production in the Amazon. The conclusion highlights contradictions present in the global eco-economy due to the unequal relations between primary producers of natural fibre on the one hand and manufacturers on the other.

2. The social implications of dependency in agricultural-industrial integration

Brazil is characterised by great social polarisation in the countryside and between urban and rural areas as a result of the concentration of land ownership over the centuries. This was reinforced by agricultural modernisation and the growth of commodity production for international markets in the second half of the 20th Century (Martine 1990, Müller 1989, Pinazza and Alimandro 1999, Sorj 1986). Rural social polarisation has generated two distinct farm sectors in Brazil. One sector is attuned to the most dynamic part of the national economy and is composed of capital-intensive producers, who range in size from successful small farmers to agri-business firms supplying the large urban domestic market and manufacturing sectors with a variety of products as well as producing important

global commodities. Another sector consists of a large number of poor small farmers who face severe limitations in changing agriculture practices and crops in order to meet market demand.

The floodplains of the Amazon host a significant number of marginalized small-scale family farmers who lack commercial crops which could insert them in markets and are thus situated outside the dynamic farm sector of Brazil. The floodplain environment imposes serious restrictions for commercial production in terms of appropriate crops and technical practices. In the past, however this was not the case. Seasonal flooding on rich alluvial plains permitted the introduction of jute and later malva for fibre production in the mid-20th Century. The two became the first commercial crops to be extensively planted in the middle Amazon basin, which brought about significant regional change by causing considerable forest clearing of flood plain environments and consolidating agriculture as the mainstay of the local economy which previously had been based on collecting natural products of the forest. However, farmers became highly dependent on fibre middlemen who often practised abusive buying practices in their role as the link between farmers located in remote areas and the fibre industries. The dependency of farmers on middlemen in the Amazon region was similar to other situations of agricultural-industrial dependency found throughout Brazil. Historically, this kind of agricultural-industrial dependency rarely improved the life-style of small farmers and kept them subordinated to the productive and economic control of middlemen and the processing industries (Abramovay 1992, Guimarães 1978, Prado Jr. 1987, Sorj 1986).

In the last two decades there was an exponential increase in the number of processing plants for a variety of farm products in Brazil, giving rise to a more competitive agro-industrial sector and a more balanced relationship between farmers and industry. But in the absence of competition at the local level as well as with recent trans-national acquisitions and mergers of the largest Brazilian firms at the national and global levels, problems with monopolistic practices and the subordination of farmers still remain, so that three situations can be encountered in Brazil today:

1. social exclusion resulting from the dominance of agribusiness farms producing monoculture commodities with extreme land ownership concentration and elimination of small farmers taking place;
2. disguised social exclusion resulting from the dominance of the processing industries which dictate low prices and maintain small farmers completely subordinated so that they remain in poverty and
3. social inclusion resulting from a relationship of interdependence with industry in which produce prices are favourable and farmers achieve social upward mobility to the point of becoming a rural middle class.

Hence, in the case of the return of fibre crops in the Amazon, we have to ask if a balanced relationship will arise between fibre farmers and the new industries or if the past relationships of dependency and over exploitation will be reproduced once again, maintaining farmers in poverty. As fibre production is related to the automobile industry, one of the strongest and most powerful economic sectors in Brazil and in the world, producing goods with high aggregated value, the question is whether poor small farmers furnishing raw material for components will benefit. Behind the rhetoric for eco-initiatives incorporating natural fibres into industrial processes and claims about social responsibility, lurk classic considerations of cost

and profit, which motivate industries to look for cheap materials and can have serious consequences for poor, powerless farmers.

3. International Production of Natural Fibre and New Industrial Applications

The production of natural fibre for the manufacture of twine, rope, food-grade sacks and bulk wrapping materials was once of great importance in international markets. Of the principal fibres which produce natural strand and line the most important is jute, followed by kenaf, coir, flax and agave-sisal (Table 1).

Tab. 1: International production of natural fibre.

Fibre	Main Countries	World Production (t)
Jute	India, Bangladesh	2,861,000
Kenaf	India, China	970,000
Coir	India, Vietnam, Sri Lanka	931,000
Flax	China, Europe	830,000
Agave& Sisal	Brazil, Columbia, Cuba, Mexico, Tanzania, Kenya	424,000
Ramie	China	249,000
Hemp	China, Europe	214,000
Abaca	Philippines, Ecuador	98,000

Source: Suddell (2009).

From the 1970s onward, petroleum-based fibres replaced natural fibre so that, worldwide, the cropping of natural fibres entered into steep decline, causing economic stagnation in the producer regions. In addition to the competition with synthetic fibres, innovation in transport facilities also contributed to the decline of natural fibres, particularly the advent of commodity bulk handling facilities in long distance trade, which eliminated the use of food-grade sacks altogether. Jute has always been the most important natural fibre but it too suffered long decline. In 1990, 2.1 million hectares were planted in jute, which fell to 1.6 million in 2000 and is projected to slump to 1.2 million hectares by 2010, a retraction of about 3% a year. During the same period, production also fell from 3.3 million tons to 2.6 million tons and is projected to diminish to 2.3 million tons by 2010. During this period jute consumed in the developed countries fell by 40% and that consumed in developing countries by 10% (FAO 2003).

Given these trends, considerable debate exists concerning the future of natural fibres. According to the negative viewpoint, the world market for natural fibre will continue to fall due to the strong competition of petroleum-based fibre (FAO 2003). On the other hand, the position of FAO is not entirely negative as it allows for the possibility of the development of new materials and the diversification of products utilising natural fibre. Suddell (2009) takes the more positive and optimistic view that new applications have arisen for natural fibre in the so-called eco-economy where they are used to substitute or in combination with synthetic fibre. Indeed, the use of natural fibre in composite materials in new industrial products is part of a new conception of environmental governance called product-oriented environmental management (Jan 2009, Medina 2005, Williams 2009).

Despite having fallen to a low proportion of world trade today, natural fibre production is labour-intensive and provides work so that it is still socially important for many farmers of the world, particularly in poor-parts of Asia, the main producer region. Proposals for maintaining traditional natural fibre production usually target

such social considerations because of the large number of small farmers engaged in this sector. Many of the proposals revolve around traditional uses for local consumption or readapting production to crafts for decoration and for the tourist market or the occasional use by the Western fashion industry when it incorporates exotic motifs from other regions of the world. However, these markets are quite restricted and short-lived in the case of fashion so that this limited demand will never boost fibre production to its former scale. New industrial applications of natural fibres involve products with greater continuous demand and so could represent a firmer basis for expanding natural fibre production in the world.

Natural fibres are increasingly being used not only for making conventional petroleum-based composite products more environmentally responsible but also to endow them with superior structural qualities, particularly when long natural fibres are used to produce greater strength and toughness to moulded thermal plastics. The most important new applications of natural fibres occur in the automotive and construction industries but there are many other applications in a number of sectors, such as furniture making, shoe manufacturing, textiles and in the substitution of fibre glass. Natural fibres have several advantages vis-à-vis conventional plastic, such as being from 10% to 30% cheaper; having lower density, superior thermal properties and low embodied energy; involving lower tool wear in the moulding process; producing better acoustic proprieties and reducing irritation to the skin and respiratory system (Suddell 2009). Natural fibres have assumed considerable environmental importance in function of being produced with renewable energy sources, consuming less energy to produce and being biodegradable and recyclable (Santos *et. al*. 2009).

European car manufacturers, and in particular German firms, use natural fibres more extensively than their North American and Asian counterparts. Overall lighter vehicle weights reduce fuel consumption and diminish carbon emissions. Fibres are used extensively in bumpers, seating and internal panels to increase impact resistance. Used as insulation, the materials enhance heating and cooling efficiency and reduce noise. The second greatest new use of natural fibres is in building construction and in this case the most important country is the United States. Fibres are used to produce lighter structural walls, as insulation, in floor and wall coverings, thatched roofing and as a composite in roof tiles and building blocks. Another important application is geo-textile used to control erosion on slopes and in road construction (Suddell 2009).

Ironically, a number of the perceived advantages of natural fibres in composite polymers were cited in the past as disadvantages which led to the substitution of natural fibre by synthetics. Natural fibres were said to be inferior because they were not water resistant, were porous and breathable, were biodegradable and were not adaptable to automatic sack filling. The water resistance problem has been overcome by using fibres in composites with resins which have this property. Breathability is now seen to be an advantage in reducing heat and impregnated bad odour, particularly in textiles. Similarly, bio-degradability is highly desirable today as well as the characteristic of being recyclable. All of these characteristics now perceived to be desirable have stimulated a good deal of research into finding other industrial applications which could cause fibre production to expand even further.

4. Regional Significance of Renewed Fibre Production in Brazilian Amazon

4.1 - Historical importance of jute and malva in the Amazon

Jute and malva cropping was once an important farming activity in an extensive area along the middle Amazon River. This part of the Amazon has extensive floodplains in which jute was planted in low-lying areas and malva in higher parts. From the 1950s onward, the planted area, production and number of floodplain farmers growing fibre expanded rapidly until 1980. At the peak, nearly 54,000 farmer families were involved in planting over 95,000 hectares of fibre, almost all of them being smallholders with an average of 1.75 hectares in fibre (Tab. 2).

Tab. 2: Change in number of farmers engaged in fibre production in the Brazilian Amazon.

Year	Farmers	% Change
1975	50,376	-
1980	53,942	7
1985	36,603	- 32
1990	15,022	- 59
1996	1,338	- 91
2000	3,568	+ 167
2007	9,282	+ 160

Source of data: IBGE (1975-2007).

There were almost thirty processing factories along the Amazon River, particularly in production areas. The most important factories were located in Manacapuru, Manaus, Parintins, Santarém and Belém. The factory in Santarém was one of the largest and was specialised in making burlap sacks for exporting Brazilian farm commodities so that Amazonian fibres were once indirectly linked to global markets.

Following a world-wide trend, demand for fibres in Brazil declined rapidly after 1980 due to the competition of petroleum-based fibres and particularly after 1985 with the introduction of bulk grain shipping facilities which eliminated the need for sacking Brazilian commodities. The fall over a relatively short period was dramatic, from 53,942 farmers planting jute and malva in 1980 to a mere 1,338 in 1996. A number of these farmers were interviewed in field research. Some of them still plant fibre crops and those who had progressively abandoned jute and malva cropping between 1982 and 1996 expressed regret about no longer being able to grow what had been their main cash crops. The collapse of fibre production occurred without crop substitution taking place so that the region experienced economic stagnation and farmers reverted to subsistence and semi-subsistence production of basic food crops, which command low prices.

In recent years, however, the agricultural-industrial chain using natural fibre is expanding and fibre production is increasing again, particularly in Amazonas state. Fibre cropping is starting to spread further up and down the Amazon River and the number of farmers involved has passed 9,000. Prices received by farmers have also improved, from R$0.51 per kilogramme of fibre in 2000 to R$0.73 in 2002 and R$1.11 in 2006 (R$1=US$0.47 in 2006). Further expansion is a distinct possibility because the market for natural fibre has great potential for national and global growth and different levels of government in Brazil, especially within the region, have been keen on stimulating the production of natural fibres for new industrial applications.

4.2 - New Industrial Applications of Amazonian Natural Fibre

The demand for natural fibre in the Amazon today is related to new manufacturing applications, which induced the rise of a sophisticated agricultural-industrial sector in the region. Recently, a new composite-fibre factory was set up in the riverine city of Santarém, which is part of an industrial chain utilising new applications of fibres. This factory represents part of a larger process, in which Brazilian industry has accompanied the global eco-economy of incorporating natural fibres into the production of composite polymers and a number of these polymer factories have been set up in industrial areas of Brazil. This industrial chemical sector has had the greatest number of applications in automobile manufacturing undertaken by subsidiaries of European firms.

There are two factories located in the Brazilian Amazon, which supply fibre materials to Brazilian automobile factories for upholstery, acoustic and thermal insulation, bumpers, etc. The POEMA factory located in the Belém metropolitan area was set up in 1992 by Daimler-Benz and was one of the first composite fibre factories in the world. The second factory, PEMATEC TRIANGLE, started producing fibre sheets in 2004 to supply the Volkswagen plants in São Paulo but soon included a number of different Brazilian car manufacturers, such as Mercedes Benz, Audi, GM-Opal, Toyota and Volvo, as customers and expanded into other industrial sectors, such as mattress and shoe manufacturing as well as in construction materials. Sheets are produced in high temperature presses and three fibres are blended with polymer materials in a proportion of 50% jute and malva, 10% curauá and 40% recycled fibres.

In contrast to the POEMA factory, which uses coconut fibre, important in coastal areas, PEMATEC uses jute and malva fibre, which was historically important in inland riverine areas of the Amazon, particularly in the middle part of the basin. In this part of the Amazon, where there are extensive wetlands and floodplains, the possibility of commercial agriculture is very restricted, so that the re-introduction of natural fibre farming could represent a good opportunity for re-dynamising the regional economy.

4.3 Questionable Social Benefits

But what is the social significance of renewed fibre production? Will the scale of production reach the point that a large number of peasant farmers will be integrated in such a way as to improve their income and quality of life? There are already 9,282 family farmers planting jute and malva, which is a significant number, but still well below the historic figure. The number of farmers involved has increased and they were drawn to the possibility of earning an income, but is it a dignified income?

Compared to basic food production in riverine areas, fibre cropping generates more income and involves less work. Basic food crops grown are beans, maize and manioc and only manioc in the form of meal has a market but requires a large labour input and the price is comparatively low. Fibre is highly adaptive to floodplain environments and is also cheap to produce because it does not require agro-chemical inputs so that this kind of cropping is accessible to poor farmers and does not cause soil and water pollution. Fibre farmers have increased their annual income in recent years, from R$3,872 on average in 2000 to R$5,219 in 2002 and

to an estimated income of R$7,863 in 2006 as opposed to R$1,766 for basic food producers in 2002 (R$1=US$0.47 in 2006).

The new source of income for riverine farmers is welcome but is still too low and quality of life poor. Housing is rudimentary, furniture consists of a wooden bench and hammocks, no electricity or treated water are available and house appliances may consist of a radio or manual sewing machine.

Poor working conditions represent another problem for renewing fibre production and work ecology constitutes an important dimension of environmental sustainability. A common complaint among interviewed farmers was the long hours spent in the water harvesting jute and malva. A good deal of the work, which is almost all manual, is undertaken in the water. During harvest the stalks are cut, bundled and placed in the sun for six to eight days to dry. Then, the bundles are soaked in clean, running water for 15 to 20 days. After this, fibre is manually removed from the stalk and again placed in the water and manually beaten and shaken to clean the fibre. Finally, the fibre is put to dry on lines and re-bundled for classification and sale.

5. Economic and Social Dilemmas of the Global Eco-economy

At the primary production end of the natural fibre eco-economy, a good deal more social responsibility is called for than merely thinking in economic terms of production because farmers still earn low income, face bad working conditions and have a poor quality of life in general. The result of new agricultural-industrial integration to date looks more like disguised exclusion involving dependency. When compared to the aggregated value of the final industrial products of the agricultural-industrial chain we can think of raw material production as involving over-exploitation rather than social inclusion and upward social mobility. The best indicator of this relationship is the gulf which exists between the meagre benefits received by fibre farmers in the Amazon and those enjoyed by the industrial and consumer sectors. The gulf in lifestyle is best exemplified by contrasting the way of life of a fibre farm with that of the buyer of a car in Europe, North America or even in industrialised Brazil. New crop methods attuned to better working conditions must be introduced and income and quality of life must be improved or else the firms touting the environmental friendliness and social responsibility of their products are just engaging marketing tactics to sell to green consumers at the same time that farmers remain in poverty.

6. Summary

New industrial applications of natural fibres have been hailed as important alternative environmental friendly products. As many fibre producing regions of the world involve poor small farmers, increasing demand for fibre could also contribute to social welfare. The new uses of natural fibres are part of highly technical green solutions for problems in the industrial and consumption regions but does this demand really address social issues in regions of primary production? These issues were examined in the Brazilian Amazon where recently a natural fibre sheet factory was opened and fibre cropping is making a comeback after decades of economic stagnation. In response to increased demand for new industrial uses in Brazilian automobile manufacturing for products sold in national and export markets, fibre

production and the number of farmers cropping jute and malva were shown to have increased significantly but still have not reached the scale of the past.

Furthermore, even if a new source of income is welcome in a part of the Amazon characterised by poverty, the revival of fibre crops should not be seen merely in economic terms of increased production and some additional income for the local population but also should be related to introducing new crop methods attuned to better working conditions and quality of life so that social responsibility and environmental benefits can accrue to the whole chain of production, including the primary producers. To date, the social benefits for fibre farmers of the Amazon have been meagre. Markets prices may have increased recently but farmer income is still very low, working conditions poor and quality of life low. If the new applications of natural fibre in manufacturing are to be sustainable, issues of social responsibility must be addressed in addition to the environmental concerns, because extreme poverty is still the typical situation for fibre producers throughout the world.

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AGRICULTURAL-INDUSTRIAL INTEGRATION AND NEW APPLICATIONS OF NATURAL FIBRES: JUTE FLOODPLAIN CROPPING IN THE AMAZON REBORN?

Summary

This paper will examine the possible role for jute cropping in revitalising stagnated floodplain farming in the Brazilian Amazon. Jute cropping was once the most important farming activity in an extensive area along the Amazon River but disappeared in the second half of the 20th Century due to global competition with synthetic fibres, so depressing floodplain farming for decades. A natural fibre sheet factory was opened in Santarém in 2003 and jute cropping is making a comeback. This development might open the way for new rural agricultural and industrial work with the prospect of earning higher income and attaining a better standard of living.
For decades floodplain farmers have been poorly integrated in processes of regional development. Economic incentives to increase production have been limited to local initiatives undertaken by the farmers themselves, often times limited to supplying urban markets with vegetables in areas close to large cities, such as Manaus and Belém, and to a lesser extent to medium cities, such as Santarém. The vast majority of floodplain farmers do not have this opportunity due to problems with logistics and lack other high-value products appropriate to their environment which could be sold in regional urban markets or in national and international markets. The demand for all of the historic commercial crops of the floodplains declined rapidly after 1970 so that these areas experienced economic stagnation and farmers reverted to semi-subsistence and subsistence production. The most important negative impact was the long decline of natural fibre cropping of jute and mallow, culminating in the closing of the last processing factories in the end of the 1990s.
With the recent installation of a factory in Santarém in western Pará state for producing fibre sheets with industrial applications in the production of vehicles and mattresses in the national market, jute cropping has been reintroduced, together with another highly resistant native fibre, *curauá* (A*nanas sativus*). These fibres are mixed with polyester and recycled fibres brought in from the industrial Southeast in a proportion of 60% natural fibre and 40% synthetic fibre. The factory is a subsidiary of a firm from São Paulo, located in the Southeast, where 90% of the product is used by manufacturers and the remaining 10% is exported to Argentina. The factory is located 12 kilometres to the east of Santarém and draws and trains its workers from the local rural area, paying higher salaries than earned in the farm sector.

The main issues for the future perspectives of jute cropping in the Amazon is whether the industrial capacity will expand further and if other manufacturing concerns will be attracted to the region, generating increasing demand for jute so that the activity will spread further up river and return to previous levels of production or whether jute cropping will remain restricted to supplying only one factory in Santarém. Another important issue is whether the articulation of floodplain farmers to this new agro-industrial sector will result in significant income and superior quality of life and not reproduce the exploitive subordination of farmers common in the past.

RURAL GEOGRAPHY IN SLOVENIA – AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract
Rural geography in Slovenia – an overview
The paper shows an overview of theoretical and conceptual directions in Slovene Rural Geography. The first part of the paper deals with the changes in understanding of the term rural area, and the second part discusses some theoretical concepts. The last chapter provides an overview of the most often researched topics in the field of Rural Geography in Slovenia.
Key words
Rural Geography, theory of Geography, Slovenia

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1. Introduction

Writing about Rural Geography in Slovenia may be quite a tricky task. Almost the whole Slovene territory could be considered as countryside more or less affected by human activities. There are no large cities in Slovenia, and more extensive suburban development forming urban landscape is quite recent and rather small in extent. Therefore many geographic discussions willingly or unwillingly revolve around rural areas. However, we have to argue that Slovene Geography tends to focus rather on the implementation of geographic ideas than on the development of theories. Slovene Rural Geography therefore follows the basic theoretical postulates of Geography as a science because its own theoretical approaches, which would be oriented towards rural areas, have not been developed yet.

2. Concept of rural areas

The initial geographic descriptions of countries did not consider rural areas as a special field of geographic research. The term 'landscape' was used instead. The most common characteristic of these areas was agriculture, thus the term agricultural landscape was used in the first debates about rural areas. In Slovenia, Jakob Medved provided the following description of rural areas in the sixties (Medved 1967, 155):
The geographic environment of rural areas is defined by three groups of influence: human beings in a certain socio-economic environment, natural circumstances, and general level of socio-economic and technical development.

Only once the differentiation of the countryside became so obvious that urban areas could no longer be analysed together with rural areas, conditions for introducing a modified term were provided. The next definition of the term was based on two characteristics: the relationship towards the city (Vri er 1974, 108-110) and the understanding of rural areas as a regional complex (Ile ič 1976, 254). The emphasis of the first characteristic was on the areas 'outside the cities', which is a rather negative and not a very precise definition (Vri er 1982, 12). Rural areas encompassed everything that could not be described as a city. When considering this definition, we have to bear in mind that most of the settled part of Slovenia was predominantly rural, whereas more and more non-agrarian activities were being concentrated in the cities, making them less dependent on the surrounding agrarian areas. The second characteristic pointed out the agrarian activities and the specific characteristics related to them.
Rural areas are areas outside the cities that are characterized by a smaller population density, the predominance of agricultural activities and forestry, the connection of the majority of non-agricultural activities with agricultural production and population, a slower demographic growth, simpler social stratification and smaller settlements with lower levels of centralization (Kladnik 1999, 163).

This definition is descriptive and defining. It considers rural areas as homogenous areas without developmental dynamics and spatial differentiation, and completely overlooks the aspect of transition from a natural landscape with a minimal level of anthropogenic influences to an urban landscape with a minimum level of nature and maximum level of anthropogenic influences.

In 2005, Drozg presented a more detailed and precise definition, which emphasizes the crucial characteristics of the rural areas and omits statements describing the colonial relationship between the cities and the countryside.
The countryside is an area where agriculture and forestry are the most important activities in the formation of the physiognomy of the landscape, a significant proportion of the population is still economically dependent on the primary economic activity, and there are rural settlements in the area (Drozg 2005).

All the above definitions emphasize in particular the morphological aspect of rural areas or the elements of the physical space (land use, settlements). Rural areas are understood exclusively as a physical space and do not include social, personal, virtual and other possible viewpoints. Although modern studies consider also such aspects, Slovene Geography has not yet included them into its definition of rural areas. One should nevertheless stress the following characteristics:
Rural areas are areas of higher rurality (in the physical and social sense) and lower urbanity (in the functional and cultural sense), or areas where the rural identity is more pronounced than the urban one.

A more modern description of rural areas has been provided by M. Klemenčič, who has listed a few crucial facts defining "post-rural" countryside (Klemenčič 2006, 162):
Changes in behaviour and in the understanding of the rural population..,. from understanding rurality as a place of firm entity, to understanding it as a spatial practice..., rural area is a hybrid area... with a set of networks in which one can find different essences..., which results in different types of rural areas. Rurality is deterritorialized because its signs and symbols have become more and more distant from the corresponding geographic space.

We can conclude that in Slovene Geography, rural areas are understood as a physical category, which is similar to the understanding of the landscape. Definitions of rural areas thus derive from elements of physical space, such as land use, settlements and specific economic activities. In addition, rural areas are understood as being different from urban areas. The town therefore appears as the referential point of comparison in all the definitions. It is defined at the same time as an agricultural and forestry area and an area with a smaller population density and a slower demographic growth. However, it is unusual that rural areas include also the highest parts of the highlands and the surrounding areas of the largest towns. As regards the definition of the term countryside, one can agree with Irma Potočnik Slavič, who says that the weakness of the existing definitions lies in:

- the fact that the differentiation of rural areas is not emphasized enough,
- the emphasizing of the differences between cities and rural areas,
- the subjectivity of the emphasized differences (Potočnik Slavič 2008, 14).

We must also stress the fact that different ways of understanding the rural areas have different indicators for limiting these areas versus the cities and the natural landscape, which means that the territorial range depends on understanding the rural areas (we must admit that this question has not yet been subjected to professional analysis, as if the range of rural areas was taken for granted). In the first period, when rural areas were treated as agrarian landscape, the social and economic indexes prevailed (see Vrišer 1974, 108), among which the share of rural population and the quantity of agricultural production were emphasized. In later periods, the differences between cities and rural areas were emphasized especially

as regards the number of inhabitants in the settlements, and the social set-up (employment and educational structure, demographic movements). The latest period tries to limit rural areas using life-style (Drozg 2007) and economic situation indexes (Potočnik Slavič 2008).

3. Conceptual directions in the research of rural areas

The term Rural Geography has been used in Slovenia only since 1967, when Svetozar Ilešič, one of the most important Slovene geographers, became interested in analysing "the general geographic appearance of rural landscape and rural areas" (Ilešič 1979, 254). He defined his point of view in a discussion about Agrarian Geography and landscape as follows:
We must be aware of the fact that in times of high urbanization and strong decline in the share of agrarian population, rural life in the countryside is becoming less and less isolated and more intertwined with other social and geographic processes. ... The term "pure agricultural landscape" is also losing its meaning. ... It is therefore more difficult to discuss such landscape or area in pure "agricultural geographic" terms. If we consider the ecological conditions and the evaluation of their importance through different phases of socio-economic development to a sufficient extent ... we see instead of the so-called agricultural geographic appearance a complex and dynamic general geographic appearance of a rural landscape developing in front of our eyes all by itself (Ilešič 1979, 254).

At the moment, Rural Geography is at a milestone, as is the case with Regional Geography in general. Complex knowledge on a certain area (countryside, region or part of the world) is nowadays hardly if at all possible. The majority of phenomena analysed in Geography are not limited spatially but contextually (Geography deals especially with the spatial characteristics of a certain phenomenon). Today's science differentiates between the subject and the methods of familiarization and not between the areas (space), which is the essence of Regional Geography. The empirical instruments and analytical methods used probably do not show us the whole range of a certain area. This type of discussion is therefore moving closer to essays, and cultural and humanist studies. If we consider the increasing unification of space regarding the social and technical infrastructure on the one hand, and a growing heterogeneity of lifestyles and economic activities, not limited to a specific space (city or countryside) on the other, the discussion of concepts that relate to only one segment of space is questionable. *When learning about the countryside, concepts are used that help us interpret the landscape as a whole and not only the rural areas as a part of it.*

Slovene Rural Geography does not have concepts that would serve as the origin for interpretation of circumstances in the landscape (see Klemenčič 2006, 168), but uses several contextual and methodological approaches to interpret the landscape complex. We can therefore show only the methodological frame of how the area was seen and interpreted through contextual origins of Rural Geography, or with other words, what contents of the countryside would stick out at some point and how they would be interpreted. Svetozar Ilešič was the one who tackled this issue in his 1979 discussion, in which he identified three ways of analyzing the rural area: the morphogenetic, the socio-geographic and the economical-geographic (Ilešič 1979, 241). His division is still valid today, even though it relates more to areas and less to the conceptual differences which in those times were not yet as distinct as nowadays. In his discussions on the rural areas, M. Klemenčič defined the socio-

geographic and pre-structural approach (Klemenčič 2006, 168). "The first one tries to be integral and problem-oriented..., while the second one puts the structure of the rural area in the foreground." (ibid). We believe that the analysis of rural areas shows several (conceptual) directions.

3.1. Geographical concepts that have influenced Slovene Rural Geography

Before reviewing individual geographic orientations, we would like to briefly present the impacts of foreign schools on Slovene Rural Geography. The ideas of German geographers had the largest influence that resulted in an extensive scientific cooperation between the years 1970 - 1999 (see the record of M. Pak, Pak 2008). Slovene geographers have largely adopted ideas about complex Geography, and the impact of the Munich Social Geography was very strong as well. It is necessary to mention also the ideas of French geographers, whose concept of 'genre de vie' was very popular. From seventies onward, the Polish geographic school was influential, especially in the domain of land use mapping (Andrej Kostrowicki). In the eighties, the topics concerning environmental protection became widely accepted. After this period, the influence of Anglo-American Geography gained ground, especially the ideas of possibilism and behaviourism.

Tab. 1: Geographic concepts that have influenced Slovene Rural Geography.

Concept	Period	Foreign representatives	Slovene representatives
Unite (Systematic) Geography	after 1960	Vidal de la Blache Alfred Hettner	Svetozar Ilešič, Marijan M. Klemenčič, Drago Kladnik
Social Geography	after 1970	Wolfgang Hartke, Karl Ruppert	Vladimir Klemenčič
Land use	after 1960	Andrej Kostrowicki	Svetozar Ilešič
Economics of agriculture	after 1960	Anučin Vsevolod	Igor Vrišer
Possibilism	after 1980	Jörg Maier	Marjan Ravbar
Post ruralism	after 1990	Michael Woods, Keith Halcrafee, Arno Paassi, Benno Werlen	Marijan M. Klemenčič

3.2. Conceptual orientations of Slovene Rural Geography

3.2.1. Physiognomic-morphogenetic orientation

The first period of investigating rural areas was based especially on what could be seen, on the observations of the physical space and less on secondary resources, such as statistical data and thematic cartographic maps. The most obvious topics in the landscape prevailed, such as nature (relief, vegetation) and visual effects of human activities (settlements, infrastructure, agricultural land use). Apart from observation and mapping, oral sources were also important. During this period, the geographic familiarization of the countryside was very close to Ethnology and History. In the conceptual sense, the man-nature relationship prevailed. The geographic research was therefore oriented towards defining landscapes with joint characteristics, most often with similar survival conditions and a similar paysage. Regional studies of homogenous rural landscapes were very frequent. The findings from that period were most often genetic (developmental), historically oriented, and with an emphasized segment of natural circumstances – as a display of natural reality that defines human action from settlement to economic orientation on the one hand, and on the other hand as a factor that is shaped and exploited by humans. This orientation considers the landscape as an art category, although there is a "geographic complex of landscape elements" present. However, from the methodological viewpoint, the displays were merely a description of natural, social

elements and morphologic segments, according to the so- called Hettner's scheme. The research of the landscape's structure and the most important landscape elements as well as the principles of connections between them was often not considered at all.

This orientation is still present in Slovene Rural Geography. A classical work of this kind is Ilešič's discussion about the systems of field division (Ilešič 1950) and numerous regional displays of rural areas. We must also emphasize the discussion on the types of cultural landscape (Urbanc 2002) and on the morphological types of settlements (Drozg 1992) that are in the methodological sense very close to the recognition of "deeper structure" of the rural areas and rural settlements.

3.2.2. Functional possibilistic orientation

This orientation in studying rural areas is a reaction to the previous one; instead of emphasizing the influence of nature on human beings, the active role of humans in adjusting and selecting the most suitable possibility for economic development and life as such is emphasized (as opposed to a relatively receptive role which was attributed to the humans in the previous orientation). Possibilities for economic activities and for the exploitation of natural resources are given. This is also related to the expanding of non-agricultural activities to the rural areas, which occurred in the 1960s in Slovenia. In regards to the latter, Matjaž Jeršič defined the following functions of rural areas (Jeršič 1982, 142):

- acquisition of food and raw materials,
- supply of drinking water,
- hydro-energetic potentials,
- natural and environmental role,
- recreational area.

This orientation was at first considered as an evaluation of the conditions for individual economic activities. However, the approach is not methodologically consistent (objective), which consequently means that the results were either very general or very similar – in one period, agriculture was the most important natural potential, and in another period tourism and recreation became the most important. This orientation later on revolved around resources as potentials for economic development – natural, created and endogenous (Potočnik Slavič 2008). Nature and physical environment are still in the foreground of this orientation, yet nature is understood as a potential (economic category) in the sense of natural resources and not as scenery from an artistic point of view.

3.2.3. Processual-structural orientation

Slovene Rural Geography started to familiarize itself with spatial changes in the 1970s. The recording of spatial changes, the transformation and the changing of the elements of landscape formation were to a great extent enabled by ample empirical data – numeric and thematic mapping – as well as by the tendency toward a larger empirical support of findings. The knowledge of processes usually includes the knowledge of structure. This led to numerous typologies of rural areas, settlements and administrative units, in general to a more detailed knowledge of space on the local level. It also led to the discovery of new meanings of rural areas, such as marginal areas (Pelc 2005), demographically threatened areas (Klemenčič 1972), less developed areas (Ravbar 1997), deployment of social capital and the sense of creativity (Ravbar and Bole 2007). This orientation showed a great decrease of the

importance of natural factors for the structure of the rural area, while its ecological importance grew.
Instead of the previously mentioned physical spaces, social space emerged almost unconsciously in the interpretation of rural area. Another change is evident: regionalization was no longer the final aspect of familiarization with the rural area, but a means for new findings. In this context, the works of Drago Kladnik and Marjan Ravbar regarding the classification of the Slovene rural areas should be mentioned, who used a number of thematic maps and typologies to show the development potentials and the level of development of individual rural areas. (Kladnik, Ravbar 2003). Ecological circumstances in rural areas, such as the fragility of the areas and the forms of protection of natural resources also caught attention of geographers. (Špes 2000, Rejec Brancelj 2000). Rural Geography was also affected by quantification in the 1970s. Drago Kladnik tried to evaluate the influence of natural and social factors on the intensity of land use (Kladnik 1990). In this context, we must mention also Vladimir Klemenčič's article *Tendencies of changing the Slovene rural areas* (Klemenčič 1991), which shows the differentiation of rural areas regarding the intensity of urbanization processes.

3.2.4. Socio-cultural orientation
Once the idea of »despatialization« and the move from physical space toward spatial effects of human activities on nature/landscape were introduced into Social Geography, the context of the interpretation of rural areas was also changed. The once unified categories, such as inhabitants, were no longer shown according to demographic indexes, but in smaller groups with certain similar characteristics which generated changes in the landscape. New social groups and lifestyles appeared; the social groups were assigned an active role in the shaping of the landscape and the living environment. Stanko Pelc showed the role of daily migrants / commuters in the changing of the Domžale hinterland (Pelc 1993). Themes showing a different understanding of Rural Geography appeared; not regional displays but displays of effects of human activities on the landscape. We must emphasize the discussion regarding the supply and the habits of inhabitants in rural areas (Drozg 2007), regarding a different meaning of time when evaluating the rural space, and regarding the relationship between "habitus" and "habitat". Rural areas are understood as a cultural phenomenon where the term rurality has the central role, and not as areas with specific social, economic and morphologic characteristics.

Tab. 2: Conceptual orientations in Slovene Rural Geography.

	Subject	Basic concept	Most important fields
Physiognomic-morphogenetic orientation	Landscape, rural settlements	Unified, complex Geography human-nature	Regional displays
Functional-possibilistic orientation	Effects of human activities	Possibilities of economic development	Agricultural and Economic Geography
Processual-structural orientation	Changes, genesis	Changing, transformation, structure	Ecology, spatial planning
Socio-cultural orientation	Actors of landscape changes	Effects of human activities on the space	Local studies, life styles, identities

4. Most often discussed topics in Slovene Rural Geography

Stanko Pelc (2002) argues that Rural Geography has a significant formal role in Slovene Geography as one of the core compulsory subjects in Geography courses at the University of Ljubljana and the University of Maribor. The analysis of the number

of monographic publications and articles from the field of Rural and Urban Geography available in the largest Slovene geographic library (Department of Geography, University of Ljubljana) has shown that the ratio between the number of bibliographic units on urban topics and on rural topics is strongly in favour of the urban ones. Namely, the ratio is 1:4 for Slovene monographs and approximately 1:3 for the articles. According to Drago Kladnik (1999), the main topics of the Rural Geography research field are rural depopulation, urban impacts and urban way of life in rural areas, impact of recreation and tourism, structural changes in agriculture and rural planning. For the purpose of this paper, we analysed bibliography from the field of Rural Geography and were surprised to find out that there were relatively few monographs which were marked by the keywords Rural and Geography. These monographs included beside books also different conference proceedings, diploma works, doctoral and master theses and unpublished research reports (typed or printed). The main topics were rural settlements, land use, regional descriptions of countryside regions, development and planning, and some covered more general rural geographic topic. Quite some monographs dealt with different kinds of activities in rural areas, such as agriculture and tourism, with the development of rural areas and with planning issues. As regards articles, published papers and other published short scientific texts, the majority covered the field of land use and dealt with changes in built-up areas, changes in the use of agricultural land and methodological approaches to land use studies. Another widely investigated field of interest of Slovene Rural Geography is the study of settlements and activities in rural areas. It includes articles about rural settlements, the changes that rural settlements underwent in the process of (sub)urbanisation, the analyses of morphological characteristics of rural settlements, the settlement pattern and the centrality of rural settlements. The activities in rural areas range from basic agricultural activities analysed from different aspects through the most widely researched rural tourism, to less frequently researched topics, such as supplementary activities on the farm.

Rural development is another important topic. It covers texts about rural development and village renovation programmes and about different developmental problems and opportunities for the development in certain rural areas, such as wine roads or drug addicts' community.

Other topics are not as widely researched as the above mentioned. However, they may represent one aspect of the research. Demographic characteristics of the Slovene rural areas such as age structure, population growth, depopulation and economic structure are very often analysed, however, only in a few scientific texts they are the central topic. To conclude this short review, the Slovene Rural Geography is not systematic but strictly thematic.

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RURAL GEOGRAPHY IN SLOVENIA – AN OVERVIEW

Summary

The initial geographic descriptions did not consider rural areas as a special field of geographic research. Instead, the term 'landscape' was used. The most common characteristic of these areas was agriculture, which accounts for the use of the term agricultural landscape in the first debates about rural areas. In Slovene Geography, rural areas are predominantly understood as a physical category, similar to our understanding of the landscape. Definitions of rural areas thus derive from elements of physical space, such as land use, settlements, and specific economic activities. Apart from that, rural areas are understood as areas that differ from the urban ones. The town therefore appears as the referential point of comparison in all the definitions. At the same time, rural areas are defined as agricultural and forestry areas, as well as areas with a smaller population density and a slower population growth. It is, however, unusual that in these definitions rural areas also include the highest parts of the highlands and the surrounding areas of the largest towns.

The Slovene Rural Geography has not developed concepts that would serve as the origin for the interpretation of circumstances regarding the landscape, but uses several contextual and methodological approaches of how to interpret the landscape complex. We believe that the analysis of the rural areas shows several (conceptual) orientations:

- ∞Physiognomic-morphogenetic orientation
- ∞Functional-possibilistic orientation
- ∞Processual-structural orientation
- ∞Socio-cultural orientation

The most often discussed topics in the Slovene Rural Geography are: rural settlements, land use, regional descriptions of countryside regions, development and planning, and some other more general rural geographic topics. Quite some monographs deal with different kinds of activities in rural areas, such as agriculture and tourism, as well as with the development of rural areas and the planning issues.

SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT – EU AGRICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract
Sustainable rural development – EU agricultural perspective
Rural areas are diverse worldwide but the paradigm of sustainable development and the improving of rural development has become an issue that occupies most of the world's governments. The global goal is the same everywhere: to improve the well-being of rural people in the broadest possible sense, but the strategies are various and depend on many different factors and sectors.
Throughout history, agriculture has always played a dominant role in the development of rural areas, but today its significance is under discussion in many countries.
The EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has shifted from supporting agricultural production to supporting producers' income directly and with the objective of sustainable agriculture. Issues such as environmental sustainability, the viability of rural economies, food quality and animal health and welfare standards have become more prominent.
In this paper, we try to review some key milestones and dates of CAP and to explain the new role for agriculture in rural areas through the concept of multifunctional agriculture.
Multifunctionality is therefore argued as a model to bring post-modern agriculture up to speed with new societal demands. It emphasizes that, in addition to producing food and fiber, agriculture also produces a wide range of non-commodity goods and services, shapes the environment, affects social and cultural systems and contributes to economic growth. Although the concept is rather simple, its translation into policies remains, however controversial (Dobbs and Pretty, 2004) it may be. Thus, the need for further theoretical and empirical research support for deconstructing the multifunctional concept is crucial for sustainable agriculture and rural development in the near future.

Key words
sustainability, development, agriculture, multifunctionality

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1. Introduction (overall historical background)

1.1. Sustainable development

The philosophical foundations of sustainable development are deeply rooted in the utopian visions of Dante, Sir Thomas More, Kant, Rousseau and many others. We can also draw reasonable links between the conceptual origins of sustainable development and the religious rituals and magical practices of the world's very earliest peoples.

In more recent times, sustainable development can be traced in various environmental and social movements like early environmental and human ecology movements of Europe and North America; the anti-war and anti-nuclear movements of Europe and North America; the "world order" movement; the "world dynamics modeling" movement; the European "green" movement; the "alternative economics" movement; the women's movement in North America and Europe and, more recently, in Latin America; the indigenous peoples movements in Latin America, Asia, and selected areas of the Pacific; and the worldwide human rights movement that took place in the mid and late 1960s.

By the mid-1980s the United Nations had declared the last decades of development to be a failure, especially in their inability to halt the cycle of poverty that existed in the world's poorest and slowest developing countries. Criticisms of the dominant development paradigm – the "modernization paradigm" – were widespread and recognized in all sectors of development and all disciplines (Adams 1993; Brown 1993; Ekins 1992; Estes 1988; Henderson 1991; Korten 1990; Latouche 1993; Max-Neef 1992; Piel 1992; Sachs 1992). From these debates, the following points emerged:

- Economic growth does not automatically improve people's lives, either within nations or internationally (Adams 1993; Latouche 1993; Max-Neef 1992; Sacks, 1992; UNDP 1992:3);
- Rich and poor countries compete in the global marketplace as unequal partners; if developing countries are to compete on a more equal footing, they will require massive investments in human capital and technological development (Brown 1993; Max-Neef 1993; Speth 1990; UNDP 1992:4);
- "Free-market," "dependency," or "Marxist" paradigms of development do not respond adequately to the development needs of the world's poorest and slowest developing countries (Ekins 1992; Henderson 1991; Latouche 1993);
- The socioeconomic conditions of the world's least developing countries (LDCs) became worse over the last 20 years (Estes 1988, 1993a, 1993b; UNDP 1992; World Bank 1990).

The sustainable development concept in today’s formation is generally given to the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED 1987) popularly referred to as the Brundtland Commission. The Commission's approach to sustainable development emphasized the need for new concepts of global development that:

- accepted the fact that social and environmental problems are interconnected;
- recognized that environmental stresses are not restricted to particular locales or geographic boundaries;
- recognized that environmental catastrophes experienced in one world region, in the end, affect the well-being of people everywhere;

- recognized that only through sustainable approaches to development can the planet's fragile ecosystems be protected and the aims of human development be furthered.

The short historical overview of the sustainable development movement is presented in Tab. 1. Throughout its report, the Commission advanced the argument that sustainable development could only occur under conditions that reflected the realistic limits and "carrying capacity" of a finite planet (Williams 1989; Wheeler 1992). Both in the Commission report and elsewhere, Brundtland drew attention to the intimate and inseparable relationship that exists between poverty, development and environmental un-sustainability (Brundtland 1989).

Tab. 1: Historical review of the sustainable development movement (after Estes 1993).

Related Movements	Major Objectives	Major Contributors
Early Environmental/ Ecological Movement	Centered initially in the U.S. the movement sought to: 1) call attention to the massive assaults occurring against the environment; 2) warn of the impact of uncontrolled population growth; 3) warn of the effects on man and nature of uncontrolled use of pesticides and herbicides; and 4) bring greater balance in economic and environmental policies.	Commoner, 1958; Carson, 1962; Borgstrom, 1965; Dubos, 1965; Ehrlich & Ehrlich, 1968, 1970; Toffler, 1970; Brown, 1970; George, 1977
Anti-War & Anti-Nuclear Movement	Initiated in the U.S. as a protest against the war in Viet Nam, the movement quickly spread to Europe where it became both anti-war and anti-nuclear focused. Brought attention to the de-stabilizing consequences of power and resource imbalances between rich and poor countries.	Kahn & Wiener, 1967; Fuller, 1969; Roszak, 1969; IPPNW, 1991
"World Order" Movement	Spearheaded by a comparatively small number of "visionaries" from international law and the world parliamentarian movements, the movement seeks to develop feasible strategies for improving the quality of world order by the end of the century.	Falk, 1968, 1972, 1992; Falk & Mendlovitz, 1967; Myrdal, 1970; Brandon, 1992; Halperin et al., 1992
"World Dynamics Modeling" Movement	Initiated by a series of dramatic reports from the Club of Rome, the movement is now broader and seeks to promote environmental and economic policies that better reflect the limits and carrying capacity of the planet. Much of the movement's criticism is directed at the political and economic imbalances that exist between rich and poor countries with their resultant social inequalities and unbridled growth that pose grave consequences for the world-as-a-whole.	Forrester, 1971; Meadows et al., 1972; Mesarovic & Pestel, 1974; Tinbergen, 1976; Schuurman, 1993

Tab. 1 (cont.)

"Green" Movement	Centered in Europe, the movement seeks to promote both peace and sound environmental policies, usually in a nuclear free world. Emphasis is placed on the need for new development paradigms that better reflect the true environmental costs of rapid development.	Schumacher, 1975; Group of Green Economists, 1992; Gore, 1992; Piel, 1992b; Finger, 1993; Von Weizsacker & Jesinghaus, 1992
"Alternative Economics" Movement	The movement seeks to provide a practical alternative to prevailing economic systems and policies that pursue short-term economic gains at long-term costs to the environment and people. Priority is assigned to the redistribution of a fairer share of the world's resources to poor countries in the South.	Brandt Commission, 1980, 1983; Hunger Project, 1985; Jolly, 1987; Henderson, 1991; Ekins, 1992; Sacks, 1992; Max-Neef, 1992; Latouche, 1993
Women's Movement	Consists of worldwide movements that seek to obtain for women the same basic social, political, economic and legal rights as those available to men. The movement in the South has also tended to embrace environmental issues of relevance to women and their concerns.	Sivard, 1985; Cook, 1985; Afshart, 1991; Braidotti et al., 1993; Mies & Shiva, 1993; Rose, 1992
Indigenous Peoples Movement	Consists of various movements worldwide that seek to: 1) retain or regain lands and resources previously owned by indigenous peoples; 2) obtain increased legal recognition and protection; 3) promote broader sensitivity to the earth-centered values, beliefs and practices that are at the center of their cosmologies and religions.	Fanon, 1963; Friere, 1985; Guiterrez, 1973; Klandermans, 1989; Korten, 1990; Wignaraja, 1992; Rahman, 1993; Seabrook, 1993
Human Rights Movement	The movement is quite broad and works toward the fullest possible implementation and protection of the civil rights and political freedoms articulated in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other internationally promulgated agreements.	Humana, 1992; Freedom House, 1992

After Estes (1993), the concept of sustainable development (after the Commission's Report) has succeeded in uniting widely divergent theoretical and ideological perspectives into a single conceptual framework and exciting the imaginations of development specialists and lay persons alike, especially with regard to the positive outcomes that can be achieved through a carefully implemented plan of local and global action and in animating governmental leaders, development policy makers and others to enter into formal agreements that seek to both promote socioeconomic development and protect the environment.

1.2. Sustainable rural development

The modernization paradigm has been the model through which development has been both directed and measured for some decades after World War II in the field of

agriculture. However, in the beginning of the 1980's, the agricultural policies and practices that are associated with this paradigm, namely intensification and consumerism, were increasingly challenged by academics and development practitioners. This has especially been the case in the developing world, where these policies have either failed to produce desired results or, in many cases, worsened social, political and environmental conditions. The failure of modernization in the rural sector, in particular, has given rise to a potentially new development paradigm of sustainable development in the field of agriculture.

The eradication of rural poverty has been a major concern of Third World governments and donor agencies for many decades. There are 900 million people living below the poverty line (more than 75%) in rural areas in the world today. Rural poverty is as diverse as are the rural poor in their livelihood strategies, thus various approaches have been used to combat rural poverty. Community Development (CD) emerged as the dominant approach to combat the poverty in the early 1950s in many Third World countries, especially in Asia and Latin America. However, the CD movement declined in the 1960s, when it was realized that the method was not effective in reaching the poor. The French counterpart of CD, animation rurale (AR), was adopted in Francophone countries, especially in Africa in the late 1960s (Geller et al. 1980). Disappointment with the results of CD and AR gave rise to Integrated Rural Development (IRD) and the Basic Needs (BN) approach in the early 1970s. However, by 1980, many donors had retreated from IRD projects or had redesigned them to give greater attention to agricultural production. In many poorer developing countries, agriculture is the principle source of overall economic growth, and agricultural growth is the cornerstone of poverty reduction. Even today, Sustainable Rural Development does not present sustainable development as a panacea to the problems of poverty and other social ills. We have to view it as a necessary and radical alternative to the dominant modernization paradigm.

The rural strategy must focus attention on the plight of the rural poor. It is a clarion call to address the needs of poor people in rural areas. It stresses that improvements in the well-being of the poor will only be possible through enhancement of their productive, social and environmental assets. This means increasing the productivity and growth of both farm and non-farm economies.

2. Rural development in the EU

Rural development in the EU has been closely linked to the evolution of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for over 50 years. Proposed by the European Commission in 1960, it aimed to provide a harmonized framework to ensure adequate supplies, increase productivity and ensure that both consumers and producers receive a fair deal in the market. Thus, the first CAP objectives were:

- To increase productivity
- To ensure fair living standards for the agricultural community
- To stabilize markets
- To ensure availability of food
- To provide food at reasonable prices (From the Treaty of Rome, article 39).

Until 1992, most of the CAP budget was spent on price support: farmers were guaranteed a minimum price for their crop - and the more they produced, the bigger the subsidy they received. The rest was spent on export subsidies -

compensation for traders who sold agricultural goods to foreign buyers for less than the price paid to European farmers. But in 1992, the EU began to dismantle the price support system, reducing guaranteed prices and compensating farmers with a "direct payment" less closely related to levels of production. In 1995, the EU also started paying rural development aid designed to diversify the rural economy and make farms more competitive. In 2003, the mid-term review of the CAP added new measures to promote quality and animal welfare, and to help farmers meet new EU standards. It also led to a strengthening of rural development policy via the provision of more EU money for rural development through a reduction in direct payments ('modulation') for bigger farms. In September 2005, the Council of Ministers adopted a Rural Development regulation for the period 2007-2013. Rural Development is implemented through one fund, one management and control system and one type of programming. The aims of the policy have been simplified and clarified around three clearly defined economic, environmental and territorial objectives:

- improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry;
- improving the environment and the countryside;
- improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity.

January 2007 marks a watershed moment in the evolution of rural development policy in Europe, as the new EU Rural Development Regulation (RDR) comes into effect**.** The new rules offer the promise of simpler administration procedures and a more coherent approach to rural development.
The CAP reforms could be presented with the following milestones:

- 1992: Direct payments and set-aside introduced
- 1995: Rural development aid phased in
- 2002: Subsidy ceiling frozen until 2013 – expenditure on agriculture (though not rural development) should be held steady, in real terms, between 2006 and 2013, despite the admission of 10 new members in 2004
- 2003: Subsidies decoupled from production levels and made dependent on animal welfare and environmental protection
- 2005: RD regulation for the period 2007-2013
- 2007: New RDR.

3. The concept of multifunctionality

3.1 The search for a unified definition
The background to the debate of multifunctionality is a process of agricultural policy reform started in the mid 1980s. The introduction of the concept of multifunctionality by Agricultural Ministers at their meeting in 1998 added a new perspective to the discussion. At that time, agricultural support and protection were at historically high levels, and there was considerable tension in international agricultural trade (Cahill 2001).

Multifunctionality has been the subject of work and discussions by the specialized bodies and institutions of the United Nations (UN) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Discussions were held at the World Trade Organization (WTO) and enabled the EU and other members to present their view of the concept, as the direction for the next debates at trade negotiations on agriculture (Givord, 2000).
The OECD Declaration of the Agricultural Ministers Committee (Maier and Shobayashi, 2001) defines multifunctionality of agriculture as follows: "Beyond its

primary function of producing food and fiber, agricultural activity can also shape the landscape, provide environmental benefits such as land conservation, provide sustainable management of renewable natural resources and preservation of biodiversity, and contribute to the socio-economic viability of many rural areas. Agriculture is multifunctional when it has one or several functions in addition to its primary role of producing food and fiber."

The term multifunctionality is not strictly defined and has many different interpretations, depending on the country and context in which it has arisen. Durand and Van Huylenbroeck (2003) said that the multifunctionality of agriculture can be defined as the joint production of commodities and non-commodities by the agricultural sector**.** Hall (2004) denoted multifunctionality as the way forward for European agriculture with emphasis on the production of appropriate market goods and non-market or public goods and services. In the "normative" approach (Cahill, 2001), multifunctionality is recognized as something of intrinsic value to be preserved or increased. Multifunctionality refers to the fact that an economic activity may have multiple outputs and, by virtue of this, may contribute to several societal objectives at once (OECD, 2001). Working definitions of the key elements of agricultural multifunctionality are: i) the existence of multiple commodity and non-commodity outputs that are jointly produced by agriculture; and ii) the fact that some non-commodity outputs exhibit the characteristics of externalities or public goods, resulting in markets for these goods not existing, or functioning poorly. Many economic activities result in multiple outputs (intended output and other, often unintended outputs or effects); but the specific characteristics of agriculture as an industry (geographical dispersion of farm enterprises, high levels of support and protection in the sector, agriculture and forestry as a major land-using activity in OECD countries) is one of the reasons why the discussion of joint production in agriculture has entered policy debates to such an extent. According to Vadnal (2003), along with the explanation of the concept of multifunctionality, other complex and integrated issues arise: food safety (Maxwell 1996; Cassman and Harwood 1995), preservation of landscapes (Vos and Meeks 1999; Topp and Mitchell 2003) and last, but not least, maintenance of economy growth and livelihood of rural areas and communities (Terluin 2003). Of course, the concept of multifunctional agriculture has both followers and opposers. In general, the EU, Japan, Korea, Norway and Switzerland recognize the fact that agriculture has several roles in addition to the production of agricultural goods and food. Unsurprisingly, the major exporters of agricultural commodities (United States, Cairns group) say the concept is just a pretext for maintaining protectionist agricultural policies.

Multifunctionality is therefore argued to be the new unifying paradigm to bring post-modern agriculture in accordance with new societal demands. It emphasizes that, in addition to producing food and fiber, agriculture also produces a wide range of non-commodity goods and services, shapes the environment, affects social and cultural systems and contributes to economic growth.

How multifunctionailty relates to sustainability is also a recurrent question that frequently appears. Sustainability is a resource-oriented, long-term and global concept. It refers to the use of resources – human, natural and man-made – in ways that allow current generations to satisfy their needs without jeopardizing the capacity of future generations to meet theirs. On the other side, multifunctionality

can be marked as an activity-oriented concept that refers to specific properties of the production process and its multiple outputs (OECD 2001).

The perception of the concept of multifunctional agriculture can be seen in Fig. 2.

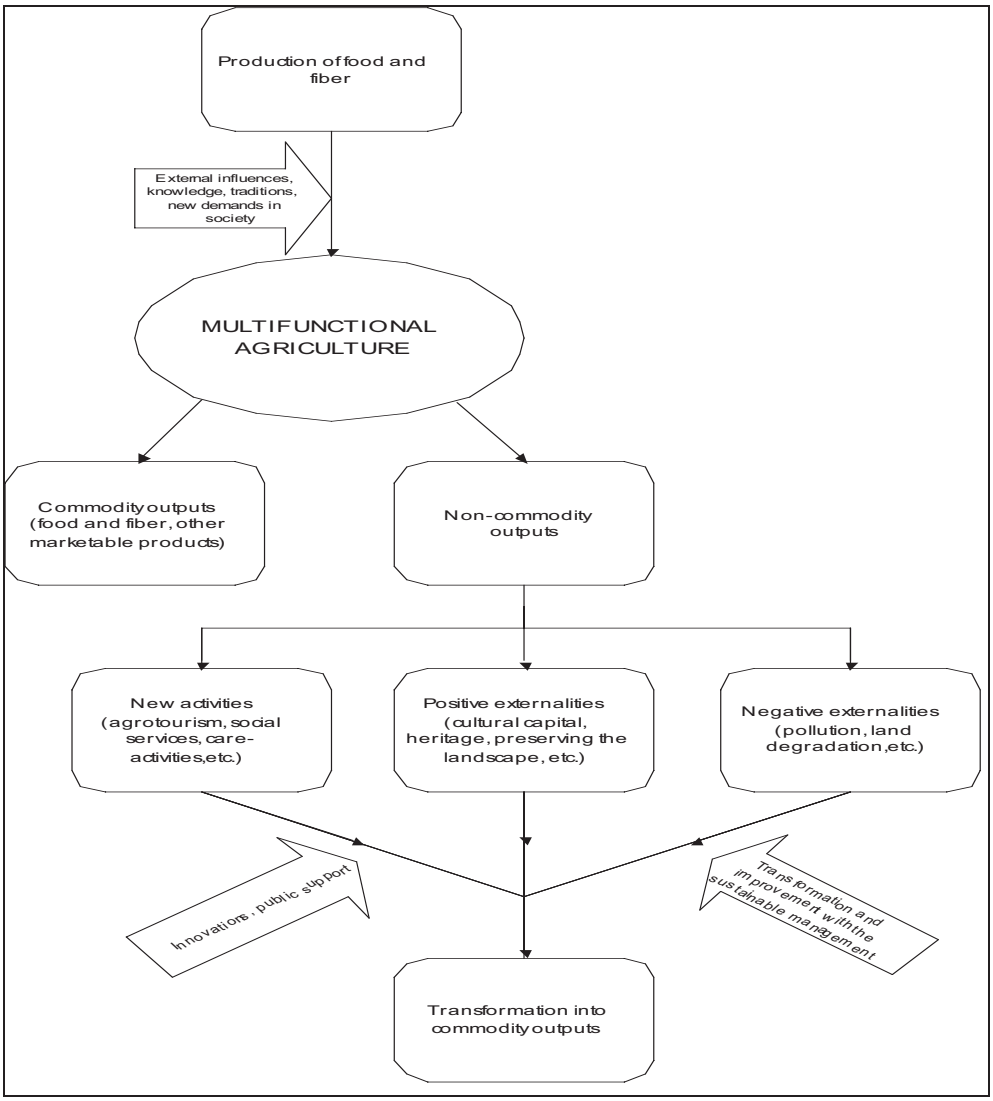

Fig. 2: Agriculture with its multiple functions (Majkovic et al. 2005).

If we start with the agricultural primary function (production), it follows that with the influences from the environment and societal demands, the role of agriculture is much wider. The task of multifunctional agriculture is not just productivity and competitiveness, but also outputs that are characterized as public goods (producing and safeguarding of the rural landscape, protection of the environment, contribution to the viability of rural areas, satisfying consumer concerns such as food quality and

safety, etc.). These various agricultural and non-agricultural functions are valued by society in their own right. The results appear as jointly produced multiple outputs and multiple effects by agriculture in the form of commodity and non-commodity outputs. We have divided non-commodity outputs into three major groups, as can be seen in Fig. 1. If we talk about multifunctional agriculture as an activity-oriented concept, we must mention numerous "new" activities that emerge in modern society and that are more or less connected to agriculture, like agro-tourism, etc. The result that comes from performing agricultural activities and their associated functions is also expressed by externalities divided into positive and negative (for instance, agro-tourism as the activity results in positive – maintaining the cultural heritage, job opportunities, etc. – and in negative externalities – increased environmental pollution). The effects of the latter can be mitigated in the long run - with the sustainable management of resources, we may enhance their efficient use and preserve them for the generations to come. The main interest of farmers is to transform non-commodity outputs that come out of multifunctional agriculture into marketable commodities. This can be done by introducing their innovative thinking, prudent marketing approach and with public support.

3.2. Multifunctionality in the global context

The most active proponents of multifunctional characteristics of agriculture are the European Union (both jointly and as individual countries), Norway, Japan and South Korea; thus, multifunctinality is mostly perceived as a "European policy project". According to that viewpoint, much debate exists about the "exportability" of multifunctionality to non-European regions (e.g. the developing world). After Wilson (2008), most agricultural regimes in the developing word began as strongly multifunctional systems in the past, based largely on small scale, localized and endemic agricultural development often independent from the state or external factors. Over time, the multifunctional quality was reduced, partly because of the increasing importance of agro-commodity chains that influenced agricultural practices in even the most remote corners of the globe, as improved technology is beginning to open new opportunities for many farmers to intensify agricultural production. Also, in developing countries, decision–making opportunities have been very limited in the past, but have seen a recent increase. This could be associated with changes in the role of international institutions, changes to local self-organizing systems, or through the increasing role of NGOs. A substantial portion of the effort towards multifunctional agriculture by NGOs around the world has been an attempt to reconcile the objective of supporting multifunctionality on a domestic level with efforts to enhance food security, economic opportunity and environmental protection in developing countries. Thus, although we may witness a gradual loss of strong multifunctionality pathways in developing countries in the future, farmers will also simultaneously gain more opportunities to choose from a wider array of decision-making pathways (pathways are shaped increasingly by forces and actors exogenous to local/regional agricultural systems (Wilson 2008)).

To resume: developing countries are characterized by multifunctionality in which policies and external factors have been less important while developed countries are more influenced by networked multifunctionality processes in which policy plays a greater role. However, it would be problematic to imply that agricultural systems in the developing world inevitably follow agricultural transitions observed in the developed world. According to the beliefs of many authors, the multifunctionality pathway in developing countries will take a different direction than in developed countries.

3.3. Recognition of the concept of multifunctional agriculture in the EU

New countryside is emerging throughout Europe, characterized by new multifunctional enterprises, strong regional economies, new professional identities and networks that interlink the rural and urban. Multifunctionality is a central feature of these changes, allowing farm enterprises to engage in new activities, such as agro-tourism, production, transformation and commercialization of quality products, management of landscapes and nature, production of energy crops, part-time farming and new co-operative arrangements. In Europe, more than 50% of all professional farmers are actively engaged in one or another of these new rural development practices (Prodi 2002). Europe is not America, nor is it Australia; it is densely populated and city dwellers feel close to rural landscape and value the countryside (Mahé 2001). Europeans want their countryside to remain a place to live. Today, there is a growing demand for non-market goods and services that agriculture provides. The revival of old practices and traditional local products, the success of green tourism and the interest in local cultures and traditions are all proof of this (Givord 2000).

Obviously, the specific nature of agriculture, along with the awareness of multifunctionality, are recognized not only by individuals' strong public support, but also by policy makers in the European Union (EU) who are aware of agricultural characteristics in the EU, as written in Agenda 2000: "The fundamental difference between the European model and that of our main competitors lies in the multifunctional nature of agriculture in Europe and in the role it plays in the economy and the environment, in society, and in the conservation of the countryside; hence the need for maintaining agriculture all over Europe and for protecting farmers' income."

Agriculture is multifunctional because it is not limited to the sole function of producing food and fiber; it also has a number of other functions. At the same time, it is the sector taken as a whole that is multifunctional (European Commission 1999).

It is obvious that there has to be a realignment of agriculture to meet the rapidly changing needs of European society (Delors 1994; European Commission 1996; Depoele 1996). The era when cities merely expected the surrounding countryside to supply them with cheap food is over. Today, there are new needs and expectations (Marsden et al. 1993, Countryside Council 1997). In this respect, elements such as quality production, new short chains linking producers and consumers, organic farming, farmers' management of nature and landscape, integration of care activities into farms, involvement in new forms of energy production, agro-tourism, low-cost sustainable farming, etc. are to be seen as crucial building blocks (Ploeg van der et el. 2002).

4. Conclusion (Values for the agriculture of tomorrow)

Agriculture is facing fundamental changes. Human population growth, improved incomes and shifting dietary patterns are increasing the demand for food and other agricultural products. In undeveloped territories, rural people are food insecure because they do not own farmland, don't have fitting access to markets for their products, and don't have credit to invest in productivity, or to increase inputs or to gain information on best practices. They are food insecure because national markets

have been opened to international competition without any safeguards against price distortion. If hunger is to be effectively combated, these interconnections must first be systematically analyzed so that the problems involved can be tackled at their root. Herren (2008), for instance, argues that to find a solution, we have to go "back to the future". Our goal must be a modern form of agriculture that takes account of traditional, local knowledge and is oriented to small-scale production, while at the same time taking advantage of contemporary insights into ecological interdependencies and biological diversity. Society also tends to formulate new expectations on the role of agriculture. Besides an economic contribution from food production, society increasingly expects agriculture to contribute to environmental and landscape services, water management and flood control, social care and territorial cohesion.

Unlike standard "one size fits all" solutions, the agriculture of future has to take into account the geographical, climatic and cultural characteristics. It has to be based on methods that conserve natural resources and are affordable for developing countries and their farmers. It has to be multifunctional and take into account not only nutritional requirements but also factors critical to the ecosystem.

The advantage that the current society may have for a future of multifunctionality is in memories and experiences from the past upon which we can base strong multifunctional pathways that will be qualitatively, economically and socio-politically different and therefore, possibly more sustainable.

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SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT – EU AGRICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE
Summary

The roots of sustainability paradigm could be first traced in religious rituals and magical practices and afterwards in utopian visions of most important philosophers of the world. Today sustainable development can be discovered in different environmental and social movements especially in Europe and North America and more recently in Latin America, Asia and in selected areas of Pacific.

By the mid-1980s the United Nations had declared the last decades of development as a failure, especially in their inability to halt the cycle of poverty that existed in the world's poorest and slowest developing countries. Criticisms of the dominant development paradigm, so called modernization paradigm, was widespread and recognized from all sectors of development and from all disciplines (Adams, 1993; Brown, 1993; Ekins, 1992; Estes, 1988; Henderson, 1991; Korten, 1990; Latouche, 1993; Max-Neef, 1992; Piel, 1992; Sachs, 1992).

The sustainable development concept in today's formation is generally given to the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987) popularly referred as the Brundtland Commission. The Commission's report drew attention to the intimate and inseparable relationship that exists between poverty, development and environmental un-sustainability (Brundtland, 1989).

The development after II World War especially in the field of agriculture was directed and measured by the modernization paradigm which was increasingly challenged by academics and development practitioners. This has especially been the case in the developing world, where these policies have either failed to produce desired results, or, in many cases, worsened social, political and environmental conditions. The failure of modernization in the rural sector, in particular, has given rise to a potentially new development paradigm of sustainable development in the field of agriculture. Even today Sustainable Rural Development does not present sustainable development as a panacea to the problems of poverty and other social ills.

Rural development in EU is closely linked to the evolution of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for over 50 years. Until 1992, most of the CAP budget was spent on price support, after 1992 the EU began to dismantle the price support system, reducing guaranteed prices and compensating farmers with a "direct payment" less closely related to levels of production. In 1995, the EU also started paying rural development aid, designed to diversify the rural economy and make farms more competitive. In 2003, the mid-term review of the CAP added new measures to promote quality and animal welfare, and help for farmers to meet new EU standards. In September 2005 Rural Development regulation for the period 2007-2013 was adopted. Rural Development is implemented through one fund, one management and control system and one type of programming. In January 2007 new EU Rural Development Regulation (RDR) comes into effect**.** The new rules offer the promise of simpler administration procedures and a more coherent approach to rural development.

In the mid 1980s the concept of multifunctionality come into debate, first by international institutions like the United Nations (UN), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and OECD.

The term multifunctionality is not strictly defined and has many different interpretations, depending on the country and on the context in which it has arisen. Multifunctionality refers to the fact that an economic activity may have multiple outputs and, by virtue of this, may contribute to several societal objectives at once (OECD, 2001). Multifunctionality is therefore argued to be the new unifying paradigm to bring post-modern agriculture in accordance with the new societal demands. It is emphasizing that in addition to producing food and fibre, agriculture also produces a wide range of non-commodity goods and services, shapes the environment, affects social and cultural systems and contributes to economic growth.

How is multifunctionailty related to sustainability is also a recurrent question that frequently appears. Sustainability is a resource-oriented, long-term and global concept. It refers to the use of resources, human, natural and man-made, in ways that allow current generations to satisfy their needs without jeopardizing the capacity of future generations to meet theirs. On the other side, multifunctionality can be marked as an activity-oriented concept that refers to specific properties of the production process and its multiple outputs (OECD, 2001).

Today much debate exists about the "exportability" of multifunctionality to non-European regions (e.g. developing world), although after Wilson (2008) most agricultural regimes in the developing world began as strongly multifunctional systems in the past with reduction over time; partly because of increasing importance of agro-commodity chains that influenced agricultural practices in even the remotest corners of the globe as well because improved technology is beginning to open new opportunities for many farmers to intensify agricultural production. Nevertheless we may witness a gradual loss of strong multifunctionality pathways in developing countries in the future, simultaneously farmers will also gain more opportunities to choose from a wider array of decision making pathways (pathways are shaped increasingly by forces and actors exogenous to local/regional agricultural systems (Wilson, 2008). After many authors belief, the multifunctionality pathway in the developing countries will take a different pathway then it was in developed countries.

In Europe we want our countryside to remain a living place. Today there is a growing demand for non-market goods and services that agriculture provides via multifuncionality. The revival of old practices and traditional local products, the success of green tourism and the interest in local cultures and traditions are all proof of this (Givord, 2000). The awareness of the multifunctionality is recognized not just by the individuals' strong public support, but also by the policy makers in European Union (EU), who are aware of the agricultural characteristics in EU. Agriculture is multifunctional because it is not limited to the sole function of producing food and fiber but it also has a number of other functions. At the same time it is the sector taken as a whole which is multifunctional (European Commission, 1999).

LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT: IRELAND'S EXPERIENCE IN AN EU CONTEXT

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Abstract
Local governance and sustainable rural development: Ireland's experience in an EU context
This paper discusses the role of local governance partnerships in promoting sustainable rural development with reference to EU policy over the past two decades. Ireland's experience is presented as an example. From the early 1990s on, new local partnerships associated with both EU and national approaches to rural development compensated for some of the deficiencies of weak local government in Ireland. Partly because of concerns relating to duplication of expenditure and democratic representation, the partnerships have gradually been brought more closely within the remit of the statutory local government structures. It remains to be seen how Irish rural development policy for 2007-2013 will be implemented within this changing context.
Key words
rural development, sustainability, local partnerships, governance, Ireland

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1. Introduction

The concept of 'sustainability' is socially constructed and therefore its meaning varies over time and space. Since the late 1980s it has become interpreted in a holistic fashion as referring to the use of economic, socio-cultural and environmental resources in benign ways and transmitting them in an undiminished state to succeeding generations (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). 'Rural development', by contrast, is a long-established concept and has been pursued as a strategy since the 1950s to offset features of economic and social decline associated with particular population groups and areas broadly defined as 'rural' in developed and developing economies (Storey 2009). The rural areas that are the focus of development policies in the European Union (EU) are often those where land use is restricted by features of physical geography, farm size and distance from markets, and they are frequently described as being economically 'marginal' and/or geographically 'peripheral' (Moseley 2002). Prolonged outmigration from agriculture, unbalanced age, gender, and occupational structures, a lack of entrepreneurship, and a declining service base are symptomatic features (CEC 1988, 1996; Terluin and Post 2000). The remit of development actions to compensate for the negative economic and social outcomes of structural decline in such locations (which is viewed by some economists as a natural adjustment process which creates a more viable base in a profit or income sense) has been extended over time to include the physical and built environment as well as the economy, society and culture (EUROPA 2003; Ray 2000).

This paper focuses in particular on new systems of partnership governance that have emerged since the early 1990s in the EU to promote more sustainable rural development, as defined above. The Irish experience is used as an example because it differs to some extent from many other European states. The county (of which there are 26) is the basic unit of local government in Ireland and most counties are several times larger than the more common European local administrative unit of the commune. Because of the absence of small scale local administrative units, new local governance structures in the form of partnerships, which operated within new territories (which could vary in extent over time), were developed to meet EU requirements for programme delivery. These structures have evolved since the early 1990s in ways which illustrate adaptation by the central state to the requirements of the EU, whilst at the same time seeking to continue to support the legitimacy of the existing county administrative structures. The paper discusses the evolution of sustainable rural development measures within a partnership delivery model in the EU, reviews the Irish experience of partnership and the associated territorial structures and their evolution over time, and presents broad conclusions relating to the relationship between governance and local government in Ireland.

2. Local partnership governance and rural development in the EU

Partnership was defined almost two decades ago by the OECD (1990, 18) as involving "systems of formalised co-operation, grounded in legally binding arrangements or in formal undertakings, co-operative working relationships and mutually adopted plans among a number of institutions". In the late 1980s, partnership became part of the EU's commitment to rural 'subsidiarity', a principle which sought to involve local communities in policy making at the level at which policy is implemented (CEC 1988). The concept of subsidiarity was also envisaged as contributing to the 'empowerment' of local people by incorporating them more

effectively in developments that impinged on their social and economic welfare (Benington and Geddes 2001; Spear et al. 2001). From a more critical perspective the advocacy of empowerment has been interpreted by some commentators as providing an excuse for the neo-liberal state's gradual withdrawal from its welfare obligations (Healey 2003; Geddes 2006).

There is considerable variation in the partnership entities that exist within and between countries (Moseley 2003). The EU's Leader (liaison between activities for the development of the rural economy) programme, introduced in 1991, is aimed at local development agencies having an integrated multi-sectoral rural development strategy, preferably involving mixed partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors, and operating at sub-regional levels covering populations of between 5,000 and 100,000 people (Esparcia et al. 1999). The measures that were funded include those for agriculture, for rural development groups, and for transnational networking. Emphasis was placed on economic and socio-cultural development in Leader I (1991-1993); environmental sustainability was referred to but was not highlighted to the extent that it was in later Leader programmes. Nevertheless, Moseley (1995, 247) has noted that "many local groups showed considerable environmental awareness in selecting and shaping their projects". Environmental conservation was incorporated more explicitly in Leader 2 (1994-1999) and in the Leader+ programme (2000-2006) as one of the priority themes used to frame actions. Axis 2 of the Community Strategic Guidelines for rural development, which relate to the programming period 2007-2013, provides measures to protect and enhance natural resources by preserving farming and forestry systems conducive to the protection of nature and by protecting cultural landscapes in rural areas (CEC 2006, L55/22). Therefore, 'rural development' has incorporated a more holistic approach to sustainability over time, reflecting the concerns of EU and national policy more generally (CEC 2001; Government of Ireland 1997).

Local governance as a concept and structure attracted growing attention in research relating to rural and urban development during the 1990s (Goodwin 1998; Jessop 1995). It may be viewed as involving an increased engagement by local people with public and private interests in pursuit of agreed common objectives, through new institutional structures. Stoker (as quoted in Goodwin 1998, 5-6) has described it as follows:
Where government signals a concern for the formal institutions and structures of the state, the concept of governance is broader and draws attention to the ways in which governmental and non-governmental organisations work together and to the ways in which political power is distributed, both internal and external to the state.

Two specific, but not exclusive, sets of circumstances have been identified as contributing to the growing role of local governance in rural contexts (Cawley and Nguyen 2007). The first arises from state curtailment of its social obligations in service supply and other support mechanisms during a period of widespread economic recession, in the late 1970s. As a result, the private and the voluntary sectors were encouraged or felt morally obliged, in the case of some long-established voluntary social organisations, to compensate for reduced state involvement (Larner and Craig 2002; Geddes 2006). The second set of circumstances that was conducive to enhanced local governance in the EU in the 1980s was the growing attention being given to democratic representation and inclusion. Partnership became a central feature, both as a process and a structure,

and the voluntary sector was encouraged to become increasingly involved in rural development activities (Turock 2001).

3. Sustainable rural development in Ireland

3.1 Policy, governance and territorial structures

The evolution of the concept of sustainable rural development in Ireland follows closely the more general European model in that emphasis was placed initially on economic and socio-cultural dimensions with the physical environment receiving increased recognition over time. The concept of a multi-sectoral approach to rural development dates to the 1960s in Ireland, although a cohesive strategy relating to sustainable development did not emerge until the late 1990s (O'Malley 1993; Government of Ireland 1997). Partnership as a process and a structure became part of rural development initiatives from 1991 on. Two forms of partnership assumed particular importance because of their widespread presence throughout the state: the Leader partnerships and Local Area Development Partnerships (LAPs). They differed in their origins, governance structures and objectives. Recently, they have been merged into a new entity. The evolution of partnership governance with reference to Leader is of particular interest here.

Between 1991 and 2006, the Leader programme operated in Ireland within the context of guidelines set at an EU level and was monitored nationally. Flexibility was provided for partnership formation and for designating the territorial areas served which varied to some extent between different phases of the programme. Sixteen Leader I (1991-1994) companies were established as partnerships between the Community, the state, private enterprise and voluntary organizations and received combined EU and state funding of IR£35 million (ecu44.8 million) (Kearney et al. 1994). This funding was matched by local contributions, often in the form of voluntary labour rather than finance capital (Moseley et al. 2001). The populations served varied from 30,000-100,000 people. Some 720 groups obtained funding and some 2,854 full-time job equivalents were created (Kearney et al. 1994). Leader II (1994-1999) differed from Leader I in applying to all rural areas in the state, in placing emphasis on stimulating local involvement and capacity building, in addition to medium to long-term development, and in promoting environmental conservation. Another novel aspect involved greater coordination of activities with the County Enterprise Boards (another type of partnership with a role relating to small scale industrial development) and the adoption by the Leader companies of the enterprise functions of the LAPs, changes that were designed to reduce duplication of activities. Combined Irish and EU funding of IR£77.29 (ecu95.58million) was allocated to 36 Leader companies, and two tourism groups received smaller amounts of money (Kearney and Associates 1997). The programme was evaluated positively in terms of its contribution to the creation of new employment (some 4,239 new full-time job equivalents), the establishment of new enterprises, new products and new markets, and the support of existing businesses (Kearney and Associates 2000). Transnational cooperation was also particularly effective (Ray 2001).

The third Leader programme, which ran from 2000-2006, recognised the different support needs of partnerships at different stages of development and contained two separate elements. Twenty-two established groups received €92.83 million from EU and national sources under LEADER+. A second National Rural Development Programme, funded 12 established partnerships, one new group and three other

sectoral and community development groups. Eligibility for funding required a strategic focus on enhancing the natural and cultural heritage, reinforcing the economy, and improving the organisational abilities of communities. A mid-term review of LEADER+ commented positively on business support, job creation and retention, achievement of the main objectives, and collaboration with the County Enterprise Boards and other agencies (DCRGA 2005). There was some delay in establishing a supportive networking structure, as was required (DCRGA 2005). Several groups had adopted an environmental conservation project as their main or secondary focus.

By design, Leader addresses broadly-based rural development, and evaluations in Ireland have pointed to the difficulties in assessing the programme purely on economic grounds (Kearney and Associates 2000). Weaknesses were associated with the two first phases from a cost-benefit perspective which related to 'deadweight' (the funding of projects that might have taken place in any case) and the displacement of existing employment (CAG 1999; DCRGA 2005). Deadweight was reduced through more stringent assessment of applications for funding. An evaluation of Leader+ noted that the cost per job was, in fact, less than that imputed in the original programme and that deadweight was reduced considerably (DCRGA 2005). The displacement effect of employment funded by Leader was more difficult to identify because of the open nature of the Irish economy. There is also an argument that direct displacement can be minimised by focusing funding on innovative projects (CAG, 1999).

Local area partnerships (LAPs) are the second main type of partnership involved in rural development in Ireland since the early 1990s. LAPs were established in four rural sub-county areas as part of the national Programme for Economic and Social Progress in 1991, a new initiative in economic planning (Government of Ireland 1991). The partnerships involved state agencies, the social partners (trade unions, employers, farmers and voluntary groups) and local communities. The basic objectives of the initiative were social first (particularly to offset long-term unemployment) and then to promote local economic projects. In addition to the funding provided by the state and the social partners, the LAPs received funding from the EU through a global grant. LAPs were established in ten additional rural areas in 1994. From 1994 on, their enterprise role was allocated to the Leader partnerships (to avoid duplication of expenditure) and the LAPs focused on issues of social and community development and promoting social inclusion. Their Rural Transport Initiative has been evaluated positively. Programmes relating to the provision of childcare facilities have been queried on the basis of value for money and a social economy programme in terms of its long-term viability (Teague and Murphy 2004).

By the mid-1990s, partnership governance structures were in place which provided a framework for implementing multi-sectoral rural development measures which included environmental conservation. The territorial framework within which the Leader partnerships and the LAPs operated coincided in part with the existing counties but it included new sub-county units and some areas crossed county boundaries. Some overlap was present between the membership of the Leader companies and the LAPs, their actions, and the territories within which they worked. There were also other local social partnerships in place, totalling more than 100 overall, by the mid-1990s, when a need for better coordination was identified by the OECD (1996). Local government structures more generally were being reviewed at

this time which had implications for the organisation of the partnerships and their role in promoting holistic forms of local development.

3.2 Changing governance structures for rural development

Apart from possible duplication of activities, given the large number of units involved, concerns were expressed also in the late 1990s about a democratic deficit arising from the absence of a universal franchise in the election of members to the management boards of the Leader and LAP partnerships (Moseley et al. 2001). This thinking influenced the establishment of a County/City Development Board in each county in 1999 with which the non-statutory partnerships were required to liaise through a special Community and Enterprise unit (Government of Ireland 1998). A national White Paper on Rural Development (Government of Ireland 1999) also proposed greater integration of rural and regional development which had implications for local governance structures. The National Spatial Strategy (DELG 2002) recommended stronger linking of rural and regional development and their incorporation within a broader European spatial planning framework, although progress in this regard has been limited to date. In 2002, the rural development function was moved to a new Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRGA) in order to address issues of regional and social balance more effectively. A review was initiated to secure the most positive impacts for communities from expenditure through rural development programmes (DCRGA 2003).

In August 2007, the Minister for CRGA announced agreement on the establishment of 25 new Integrated Local Development Companies (ILDCs) in rural areas across the state, a number that was later extended to 36, "to improve local delivery of local and community development programmes including rural development" (DCRGA 2007a, 1). By July 2009, 25 new companies were established from existing entities and 12 additional companies were formed through mergers (which allowed for more than one company in the larger counties). Thus, the numerous local partnerships were brought together within the 26 counties, a process that involved lengthy negotiation of mergers between Leader partnerships and LAPs in several instances. The links to the county administrative structure are underlined by a requirement to have annual plans endorsed by the County/City Development Board. The ILDCs are also to have increased membership from the community and voluntary sectors to meet new EU strategic guidelines for rural development for 2007-2013 (CEC 2006). Their main objectives, as stipulated by the DCRGA (2007b, 4) are: "to promote, support, assist and engage in (a) social development, (b) enterprise development to facilitate rural and urban regeneration or (c) community development, designed to benefit and promote the welfare of local communities or to deal with the causes and consequences of social and economic disadvantage or poverty". In other words they incorporate the functions of the former Leader partnerships and the LAPs.

The recent restructuring of the Irish local partnerships involved in rural development has been influenced by EU policy. Council Regulation No 1698/2005 is the basic document relating to support for rural development for 2007-2013 (CEC 2005, L277/6). It refers to provision to be made to transfer the basic principles of Leader to the rural development programmes, building a specific axis in them. In implementing rural development strategies in the Irish Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 (Department of Agriculture 2007, 163), groups are to be selected to deliver the programme based, among other factors, on a plan that proves its "economic viability, innate innovation and sustainability in the sense that all resources will be used in such a way that the options available to future

generations are not impaired". A holistic view of sustainability is therefore being promoted. Special emphasis is to be placed on regional and transnational co-operation, particularly in relation to tourism and environmental initiatives that span a number of local area group territories.

EU rural development for the years 2007-2013 is built around four axes: (i) improving the competitiveness of agricultural and forestry; (ii) improving the environment and the countryside; (iii) improving the quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy; and (iv) Leader. Leader, as Axis 4, introduces possibilities for improved local governance by fostering innovative approaches linking the other three axes together. The ways in which these links will develop in Ireland remain to be seen. The relationships between the new integrated rural development companies and the county council structures, which have not had strong roles relating to rural development in the recent past, have to be worked out. Linking rural development with agriculture as part of a broader policy framework should, however, help to offset one of the weaknesses of the Leader programme, i.e. the fact that it operated largely in isolation from mainstream agriculture.

4. Conclusion

This paper focused on the role of governance structures as part of a sustainable rural development strategy with particular reference to the operation of the EU Leader programme in Ireland since 1991. Ireland provides evidence of new governance structures being introduced to meet the requirements of the international state (the EU) which has generated new issues relating to the relationship between local governance and local government within the national territory. These structures have evolved over time in response to both EU and national policy. The ways in which they evolved reflect the desire of the national state to comply with EU policy, by facilitating the establishment of new partnership entities, whilst also recognising its responsibilities and the political exigencies of protecting statutory local government structures. Local area partnerships, which are central to the Leader approach of involving local people in actions relating to their social and economic well-being assumed particular importance in Ireland, because of the absence of a local government administrative framework below the level of the county. The number of Leader and other local area partnerships increased markedly during the 1990s with support from national and EU sources. Many economic and social benefits were recorded but there were growing concerns by the late 1990s relating to duplication of actions. Disquiet was expressed also about an apparent democratic deficit because the members of the partnerships were not elected according to universal franchise. In 1999, as part of an on-going process of local government reform, measures were taken to bring the partnerships into a closer relationship with the statutory local authorities, by requiring that elected councillors be members of their management boards. Hitherto many partnerships sought to exclude politicians from their boards as a method of avoiding politicisation of their development activities.

A major review of partnership governance was conducted in Ireland from 2003 on and the minister of state with responsibility for rural development proposed a reduction in the number of Leader and LAP partnerships to one organisation in each county. By July 2009, 25 new integrated rural development companies were formed and 12 existing companies had adopted new governance structures, thereby providing for more than one entity in a number of the larger counties. The

rationalisation of the number of existing partnerships on a county level was based on arguments relating, inter alia, to a need for greater accountability in the expenditure of funding and better local representation. It also reflected the objectives of the new EU Rural Development measure for 2007-2013 where the Leader approach is assigned new significance in a broader policy where agriculture and rural development are more closely aligned. In these circumstances streamlining the activities of the existing partnerships was clearly desirable. The future role of the partnerships is envisaged as being strengthened, by the responsible Minister of State, and they provide a basis for representing a range of local community interests as required by the EU. Their relationship with the local authority in each county has also been defined more clearly and requires approval of the annual plans of the integrated local development companies by the local authority. It is, however, too early to judge how the new structures will operate to promote sustainable rural development in Ireland.

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LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT: IRELAND'S EXPERIENCE IN AN EU CONTEXT

Summary

This paper focused on the governance structures associated with the implementation of rural development policy and how these can change over time in response to policy change. The experience of Ireland was used as an example. The paper dealt in particular with new systems of partnership governance that have been promoted since the early 1990s in the EU to attain more sustainable rural development. Sustainable rural development was defined as involving measures that promote the protection of the physical and the built environments as well as the support of viable socio-cultural and economic structures. This concept of rural development has become more explicit in EU policy over the past two decades. Ireland assumes special interest because a deficit of local government structures equivalent to the commune, below the level of the county, meant that new governance structures had to be developed to meet EU requirements for subsidiarity in delivering the Leader programme. Ireland therefore provides an example of a national state's response to the requirements of the international state in the process of implementing commonly agreed policy measures which are supported financially by the latter.

Local governance may be viewed as involving an increased engagement of local people with public and private interests in pursuit of agreed common objectives, through new institutional structures. Local area partnerships play an important role in this context. Partnership was defined almost two decades ago by the OECD (1990, 18) as involving "systems of formalised co-operation, grounded in legally binding arrangements or in formal undertakings, co-operative working relationships and mutually adopted plans among a number of institutions". From the 1990s on, partnership was adopted widely in both urban and rural contexts as a method of involving local people in local development and also of levering finance and other forms of assistance to support state actions. The EU's Leader programme, introduced in 1991, was aimed at local development agencies having an integrated multi-sectoral rural development strategy, preferably involving mixed partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors, and operating at sub-regional levels covering populations of between 5,000 and 100,000 people. Participation by local communities in the actions was required as a method of promoting their empowerment. The measures funded include those for agriculture, for rural development groups, and for transnational networking. During the three phases of the programme, between 1991 and 2006, its remit for economic and social development was gradually extended to include recognition of the need for environmental protection. This broader concept of sustainability is highlighted in the most recent Community strategic guidelines for rural development for 2007-2013, in which Leader is assigned a central coordinating role at a local level. The evolution of the concept of sustainable rural development in Ireland followed closely the more general EU model in that emphasis was placed initially on economic and socio-cultural development with concerns relating to the physical environment receiving increased recognition over time.

Two forms of new local partnerships have assumed particular importance in Ireland, since 1991, because of their widespread presence throughout the state: the Leader partnerships and local area development partnerships- LAPs. The latter were supported by the Irish government, employers, trade unions, farmer groups and the

voluntary sector in order to offset unemployment and meet essential social service needs in the early 1990s and received EU financial support through a global grant. The two types of partnerships therefore differed in their origins, governance structures and objectives but potential for duplication of actions was present even though efforts were taken to reduce this.

By the mid-1990s, partnership governance structures were in place which provided a framework for implementing multi-sectoral 'bottom-up' rural development measures. The territorial framework within which the Leader partnerships and the LAPs operated coincided in part with the existing counties but it included new sub-county units and some areas crossed county boundaries. Some overlap was present between the membership of the Leader companies and the LAPs, their actions, and the territories within which they worked. There were also other local social partnerships in place; more than 100 such entities were present by the late 1990s when a need for better coordination was identified by the OECD (1996). Local government structures more generally were being reviewed at this time which had implications for the organisation of the partnerships. The first stage in reform involved making provision for membership of elected councillors on the partnership boards in order to compensate for a perceived democratic deficit, given that the membership was not elected by universal franchise. In 2003, concerns relating to value for money and duplication of activities were used as part of an argument to reduce the number of partnerships. In August 2007, the responsible government minister announced agreement on the establishment of 27 Integrated Local Development Companies, "to improve local delivery of local and community development programmes including rural development" (DCRGA 2007, 1). These were to bring together the numerous local partnerships on a county basis and required a lengthy negotiation of mergers between Leader partnerships and other LAPs in several instances. The links to the county administrative structure were underlined by a requirement to have annual plans endorsed by the County Development Board. By July 2009, 25 new integrated rural development companies were formed and 12 existing companies had adopted new governance structures, thereby providing for more than one entity in a number of the larger counties (there are 26 counties). The new local development companies have increased membership from the community and voluntary sectors to meet new requirements associated with the EU strategic guidelines for rural development for the years 2007-2013 (CEC 2006).

EU rural development for 2007-2013 is built around four axes: (i) improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector; (ii) improving the environment and the countryside; (iii) improving the quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy; and (iv) Leader. Leader, as Axis 4, is seen as introducing possibilities for improving local governance by fostering innovative approaches linking agriculture, forestry and the local economy and thereby promoting diversification of the economic base and strengthening the socio-economic fabric of rural areas. The ways in which these links will develop in Ireland remain to be seen, not least because the relationships between the new ILDCs and the local authority structures, which have not had strong roles relating to the rural development in the recent past, remain to be worked out.

SOCIAL CAPITAL IN RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

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Abstract
Social capital in rural communities in the Netherlands
The quality of life in Dutch rural communities is high in comparison with urban communities in the Netherlands because of the residential quality of villages, the mobility of the inhabitants and the strong commitment by the inhabitants to the local society. However, today's Dutch villages bear no resemblance to the traditional village and neither is social capital self-evident nowadays.
This article presents evidence from two projects. It summarizes some results of a national survey organised within the framework of the research programme entitled 'The Social State of the Countryside', as carried out by the Social and Cultural Planning Office of The Netherlands (SCP) and a project in one of the most rural parts of the Netherlands (Zeeland). In the Zeeland villages, social capital is analysed from the point of view of the relationship between quality of life, social cohesion and local community care in small villages.

Key words
transformation of rural communities, civil society, social capital, quality of life, social vitality, social cohesion, community care

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1. Introduction

The Dutch countryside is turning into a multifunctional consumption space. It is no longer just the natural preserve of agriculture. Land is increasingly in demand for new functions, like new residential areas, recreation, nature and water storage, mobility and infrastructure (Steenbekkers *et al.* 2008). Country life is also in a state of flux because of ongoing urbanisation in the Netherlands and general developments in the Dutch society, like individualisation (Schnabel 2004). The impact of these developments on the living situation of rural dwellers is a matter of growing concern. At the same time there is the idea that rural communities still have enough social capital to guarantee that rural residents themselves are able to make their environment a good and viable place to live.

A lot of people choose to live in villages in the Netherlands. Village life is associated with safety, tidiness and going 'back to nature'. Moreover, physical planning policy in the Netherlands is less restrictive with respect to new housing in small villages than was the case a few decades ago. However, more and more villages in the Netherlands are faced with a shrinking and ageing population. These developments are seen as a threat to the local social infrastructure and the social capital of villages (Simon *et al.* 2007).

One of the topics of concern is the development of the local community and the local civil society in Dutch villages. In the wider Dutch society the civil society is seen as threatened by developments in the private domain (individualisation), by the development of the Dutch welfare state and by developments in the public domain (privatisation). Modernisation is often connected to new forms of distrust and the loss of social cohesion or social capital (Schnabel 2004; Elchardus 2007; Putnam 2000; Lupi 2005). Although most attention is focused on the Dutch urban neighbourhoods in this respect, the local community and the civil society in villages is also a matter of concern. Issues affecting rural communities which are referred to by local politicians and rural organisations include the further loss of local services, the loss of meeting places, and the effects of demographic and social developments. The closure of primary schools because of the dejuvenation and the loss of volunteers because of the increasing involvement of women in the formal labour market (Droogleever Fortuijn 1996) are, for instance, seen as significant threats for the local community.

One of the main reasons for the current attention paid to social capital and the local civil society in Dutch villages is the Social Support Act (Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning (WMO)), which took effect in January 2007. The Act is the result of two long-term policy processes involving the decentralisation of national welfare policies to local level and the deinstitutionalisation of care for vulnerable members of the local society, especially older people, handicapped people and psychiatric patients (Koops and Kwekkeboom 2005). The Act is oriented around individual responsibility and active involvement with respect to care for all citizens. Local councils are required to stimulate and support local support networks for vulnerable people. The fear that the costs of professional care will grow too fast because of further individualization of the society and because of the burden of an ageing population is also key.

A central idea behind the Social Support Act is the concept of *community care* (Bulmer 1987), defined as 'support for people with serious disabilities (including

support of their social network) to help them live in the local community and be part of it' (Beraadsgroep Community Care, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, in: Hortulanus 2004). 'Community care means that care *inside an institution* has to be replaced by care *in the community*' (Duyvendak and Verplanke 2007). The Social Support Act describes nine fields of action for local authorities. Quality of life in villages and neighbourhoods is the first field of action, which presupposes that this is a precondition for local social cohesion and community care.

In general, the social atmosphere in Dutch villages is often still seen as being akin to that of a real 'community' (a 'Gemeinschaft', cf. Tönnies). However the socio-cultural changes brought about by the new functions of the Dutch countryside, the influx of new residents with an urban background and the modernisation of rural dwellers are seen as a potential threat to the social cohesion in these villages. Besides these developments, the inhabitants of rural communities are facing specific problems. General scale enlargement is causing local service levels and public transport to decline. This is compensated for by a further growth in mobility, but this development exacerbates the access problems of (small) groups without a car. Rural areas are also facing a more marked dejuvenation and ageing of the population than urban parts of the Netherlands (Steenbekkers *et al.* 2006).

Local and provincial authorities in the Dutch countryside want to support social capital in villages and to strengthen a sustainable social infrastructure in rural areas. Social capital is seen as essential for future vitality of villages where people show initiative and responsibility for local affairs. A sustainable social infrastructure will support social cohesion by taking the actual qualities of villages as a starting point and is at the same time open to new realistic perspectives on the development of social cohesion in the future.

In this article we discuss the outline and main results of two research projects: a national survey of social capital in the Dutch countryside and a local survey of social capital for community care in eight small villages in a rural municipality at some distance of the Dutch metropolitan area of Randstad Holland, namely in the province of Zeeland.

If one describes urbanisation in the Netherlands at a regional level ($NUTS_3$-regions) and takes an address density of 1,000 addresses (of households, firms, etc.) per square kilometre as the distinction between urban and rural, then one has to conclude that rural regions do not exist in the Netherlands. However, at the local level, the level of the village or neighbourhood, large parts of the Netherlands are still 'rural' and seen as rural by their inhabitants. Nevertheless, urbanisation is occurring at a rapid rate in the central and southern part of the Netherlands (Steenbekkers *et al.* 2006).

The national survey of social capital is the fourth report of the research programme entitled 'The Social State of the Countryside', carried out by the Social and Cultural Planning Office of The Netherlands (SCP) and financed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV). The purpose of this programme is to develop a monitor which can track future developments in the Dutch countryside. The final conclusion of the first report of the project (Steenbekkers *et al.* 2006) is that the living situation is more favourable in Dutch rural areas than in urban areas. More important is that this is based on a more favourable housing situation, a higher involvement of inhabitants with the local civil society, and is facilitated by high

levels of car availability at an individual level. The conclusion supports the idea that there is a relationship between the residential function and the involvement of inhabitants with the local civil society.

The report on social capital (Vermeij and Mollenhorst 2008) is based on quantitative data gathered during a survey in 2007. 2058 respondents, who live both in rural and urban parts of the Netherlands were interviewed at home.

The local survey was carried out in April 2006 in eight villages in the municipality of Borsele in the province of Zeeland in the southwest of the Netherlands (Van der Meer *et al.* 2008). 358 inhabitants aged 16 and older were interviewed at home and 368 inhabitants filled in a shorter questionnaire. Some of the data can be compared with the result of a questionnaire organised in 1991/92 in the same villages and filled in by 847 inhabitants. The central theme of the project is the social infrastructure and social capital of the village. This was studied by analysing the relationships between the local quality of life, local social cohesion and local community care.

2. Local civil society and social capital in Dutch villages

An important change that has affected Dutch villages can be described as a change from the autonomous village to the residential village (Thissen 2001). Until 1970 many villages in the Netherlands were important to the majority of their inhabitants as providing the principal context for their life and day paths. Many inhabitants were born and grew up in the same village. Their daily routines were carried out in the village and the jobs, services, social contacts, local politics and cultural identity of many inhabitants primarily had a local orientation. The new wealth that developed in the period of reconstruction after the Second World War was reinvested or at least spent locally. As a result, a lot of villages flourished as a local civil society at that time. However 1970 was also an important turning point. From 1970 onwards, jobs were increasingly concentrated in regional employment centres and consumption was transferred to regional shopping centres that offered more choice at lower prices. Increased mobility due to car ownership was the precondition for this development. This resulted in a function loss as far as villages were concerned, that is a loss of jobs and services. The residential function remained and was strengthened because of scale reduction in the cultural and political domain. Inhabitants started to become more and more interested in their home territory. The house itself developed as an important expression of the identity of the people who lived there. The residential environment developed into an important focus of political interest.

With respect to the local quality of life the opinions of certain groups of inhabitants can be summarised as a 'community lost' perspective. In this perspective the 'autonomous village' is still their frame of reference. The core of this frame of reference is a circular chain of relationships that was typical for the autonomous village and that links the development of the number of inhabitants to the development of the local service level and the development of the local service level to the development of the local quality of life and so on (Fig. 1). Although local causal relationships changed in the direction of the residential village, the autonomous village is still a strong frame of reference.

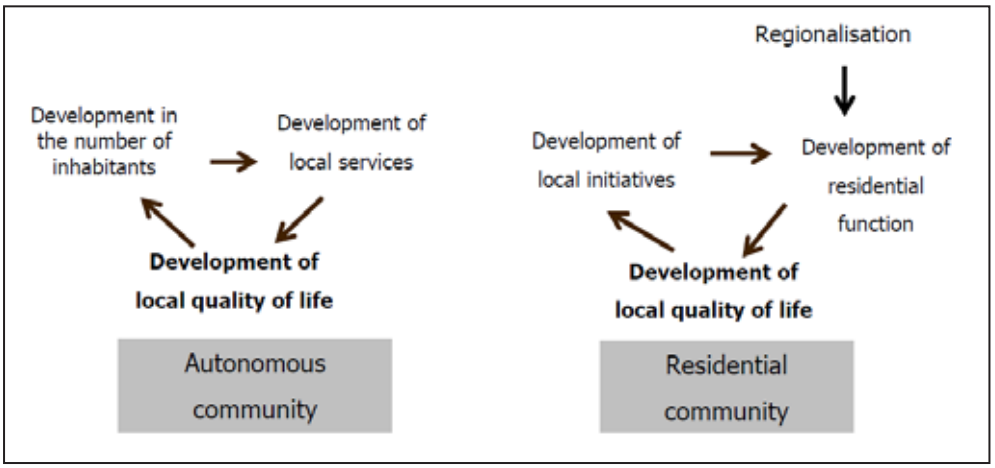

Fig.1 Relationships at a local level in the autonomous community and the residential community, which also act as frames of reference.

However, in a growing number of inhabitants of villages the opinions regarding the local quality of life can be summarised as a 'community transformed' perspective. In this perspective the 'residential village' is the frame of reference. The main difference with the autonomous village is that the development of the local quality of life is dependent on the development of the residential function within a regional housing market. However, in the context of this article, the most important relationship is between the development of the local quality of life and the development of local initiatives. In a growing number of Dutch rural communities, such local initiatives create, from the bottom up, all manner of new services which strengthen the local civil society and social capital. Examples are a village library run by volunteers, a driving service for school children, a village website, a Christmas get-together, a second-hand book shop, maintenance of local small monuments, a village survey by the inhabitants themselves, a local nature project, and so on. These local services are special in this context because they are not a *condition* for the local quality of life but the *result* of the local quality of life (Fig. 1). Moreover, certain local initiatives directed at community care are developing in a similar way. The change in rural communities from relatively traditional autonomous communities to residential communities is strongly related to the changing behaviour of villagers. Changes in the life path and day path are fundamental.

Social capital is a popular concept nowadays and associated with many definitions and approaches. The definitions have in common that social capital is about the value of social relations for the 'productivity' of individuals and groups (Putnam 2000; Vermeij and Mollenhorst 2008). The value of social relations between villagers can be positive as well as negative. A close-knit local community can, for instance, contribute to local support networks and local community care. However, social cohesion can have advantages and disadvantages, often depending on the concepts of bonding and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital concerns the social relations within a group, for instance among the inhabitants who were born and bred in the village. Bridging capital relates to the social relations between groups, for instance between the inhabitants born and bred there and newcomers to the village. Although bonding social capital can be productive for the people it includes, it can be unproductive for the village as a whole. Bridging capital can be

productive because different kinds of people are then linked, including people living outside of the village.

3. Social cohesion and the quality of life and vitality in the Dutch countryside

A central hypothesis in the survey of SCP (Vermeij and Mollenhorst 2008) is that social capital exists when social cohesion is productive for, and contributes to, the quality of life and the vitality of the village. All kinds of variables were developed for the survey to measure differences in social cohesion, opinions about the quality of life and the vitality of the village. With respect to the vitality of the village a distinction was made between bonding types of vitality like volunteering and membership of social clubs, and bridging types of vitality like the attitude to newcomers and to politics. Central to the analysis was the relationship between social cohesion characteristics on the one hand and quality of life and vitality on the other. This was controlled for personal characteristics and characteristics of the local context (urban vs. rural; type of rurality).

Considerable differences exist in the Dutch countryside with respect to the transition from autonomous villages to residential villages and these differences are seen as relevant to social cohesion and to the productivity of social cohesion for the quality of life and vitality of villages (social capital). In order to portray those differences a social typology of villages was constructed based on differences in urbanisation and four groups of social characteristics. Three groups of criteria describe the age distribution, the socio-economic status and life path characteristics of the inhabitants. The fourth group describes the importance of the village in the day paths of inhabitants and visitors.

The resulting social typology (Vermeij and Mollenhorst 2008) more or less reflects the kind of differentiation in the Dutch countryside discussed above. Apart from the distinction between relatively autonomous, 'closed', villages vs. residential villages, two types of residential villages with a relatively high socio-economic status are discerned. The two types differ with respect to age composition (old vs. young). Besides that, two types of 'urbanized' villages can be distinguished: key villages, the local service centres in the countryside, and urbanized villages near urban areas. Only one third of the inhabitants of the last type consider themselves to be living in the countryside. According to this typology one third of all Dutch rural dwellers lives in closed, relatively autonomous villages, nine percent lives in residential villages.

Inhabitants of the Dutch countryside report a somewhat higher social cohesion than the inhabitants in urban areas, with the exception of those in the urban countryside. They focus slightly more on the local community than city dwellers. In this respect the perception of a close-knit local rural community is realistic: people in the village know each other and greet each other to a greater extent than people in urban neighbourhoods. They also more frequently expect neighbours to help each other and team up to combat local problems. This type of social cohesion is typical of the closed, relatively autonomous village. No real differences were found in the case of other forms of social cohesion.

The quality of life in Dutch villages is good in comparison with urban settlements. Loneliness and a lack of safety are reported less frequently in the countryside. Villagers are more satisfied with the residential environment. Although they report

problems with access to special shops more often, they have fewer problems with mobility, although distances are greater. Although they differ from the urban areas, these are differences of gradation, without any sharp contrasts. The high quality of life is partly related to compositional characteristics. For example, the low percentage of people living alone in the countryside is important for the high quality of life reported there.

As regards certain characteristics the Dutch countryside appears to be more vital than Dutch urban areas. However, this relates to quite traditional, bonding relations, like church membership, attending church and participation in cultural traditions. Although there are no differences with respect to active volunteering and active membership of clubs or associations between urban and rural settings, the number of active volunteers in one type of the residential villages is high. The difference with respect to participation in local cultural traditions is particularly related to the closed villages and the use of a local dialect. The Dutch countryside appears to be less vital for some bridging relationships. The attitude of rural dwellers to ethnic minorities is considerably more closed than that of city dwellers. Given that only small numbers of people from ethnic minorities live in these areas, this may be attributable to a lack of familiarity.

An indication for the existence of social capital in the Dutch villages is that many quality of life indicators correlate with social cohesion in the neighbourhood. Especially the strong local relationships in Dutch villages correlate with the quality of life experienced by villagers (Vermeij and Mollenhorst 2008). This is however not the case as regards vitality. There is almost no correlation between social cohesion in the neighbourhood and vitality characteristics. Only participation in local cultural traditions is related to social cohesion in the neighbourhood.

In more general terms (therefore not specific to Dutch villages), there is a relation between the size of individual networks and the contribution that people make to social vitality. People with large networks are more often involved in bonding activities such as working as a volunteer and providing informal care than are people with smaller networks. However, they are also more active in bridging activities: they are more open to new residents and ethnic minorities and are more positive about their influence in politics. People with a large network therefore make a key contribution to the civil society in urban and in rural settlements in the Netherlands (Vermeij and Mollenhorst 2008).

4. Patterns of social cohesion in Dutch villages

The development of Dutch villages from relatively autonomous villages into residential villages has important consequences for patterns of social cohesion and the contribution of social cohesion to, for instance, the willingness to participate in community care and the actual participation in local community care. Self-evident forms of social cohesion are probably in decline and it is unclear how new forms of social cohesion will develop and, if so, whether they will act as social capital. The question is whether new forms of social cohesion will be productive for the local society.

A main conclusion of the project in eight small villages in Borsele (Van der Meer *et al.* 2008) is that these local communities have a lively civil society, that the social cohesion appears to be strong and that the quality of life is high in the opinion of

the inhabitants. The differences between the villages are small, although these reveal a certain pattern.

With respect to the quality of life the differences between the villages are more important than those relating to social cohesion and community care. People are generally positive about their village and they are even more positive than fifteen years ago. However, they attribute this positive opinion less and less to their opinion about the services in the village and more and more to their opinion about the residential quality of the village.

Social cohesion is approached at an individual level on the basis of a description of participation, involvement and place attachment (Lupi 2005). Differences in this respect can be explained better by differences in social position than by differences in geographical position. The social groups with lower participation levels are youngsters, the oldest of the older people, non-religious inhabitants, people who recently settled in the village and residents who do not have a car. Certain groups, like youngsters and recently settled inhabitants, may become more active later on. Non-religious inhabitants exhibit a lower level of social integration in spheres other than church-related activities as well. This demonstrates the importance of the local church in these villages. The oldest of the older people and the inhabitants without a car demonstrate a certain vulnerability.

An analysis of a set of indicators of social cohesion using principal component analysis for ten indicators of social cohesion produces two components (Tab. 1). The most important component (with six indicators and accounting for 25 percent of the variance) can be described as local involvement, including all kinds of active and consumptive participation in local activities. The second component (with four indicators and accounting for 13 percent of the variance) can be described as local orientation, including different kind of life path and day path characteristics. Inhabitants with a strong local orientation also exhibit a high local involvement, but not all inhabitants with a high local involvement have a strong local orientation. This demonstrates that high local involvement is not exclusively related to a strong local orientation.

Tab.1: Indicators for social cohesion and two components (result of a Principal Component Analysis) and their factor scores for the two components

	Component 1 'Local involvement'	Component 2 'Local orientation'
Organises activities in the village	,576	,192
Attends activities in the village	,609	-,002
Attends village council meetings	,552	,090
Is proud of the village	,507	,254
Is active in local associations	,548	,335
Is willing to do something for the village	,545	-,112
Main activities located in the village	-,184	,744
Uses as many facilities in the village as possible	,237	,551
Has family members in the village	,085	,593
Feels first and foremost a villager	,207	,628

Source: Van der Meer *et al.* (2008).

Community care is measured by giving and receiving support to and from other people. One of the main conclusions is that support relationships do not exist between two different groups of givers and receivers. Most people (68 per cent of the respondents) participate in giving and receiving, which illustrates that support relationships are characterised by exchange, reciprocity and social networks.

In the Borsele villages a clear correlation exists at the individual level between several indicators of local involvement and willingness to participate in community care and the actual participation in local community care. It demonstrates the existence of social capital: local involvement contributes to community care. However there are differences between the eight villages with respect to local involvement.

A description of the relationship between local orientation and local involvement at the level of the village reveals a pattern that is summarised in figure 2. This pattern can be related to the day path and life path orientation in each of the villages. In villages that are still relatively autonomous, a high local orientation is accompanied by a high local involvement. This relationship is viewed at individual level as self-evident by the inhabitants of this type of village. Of course, residential villages show a decline in local orientation, but also more variation in local involvement (Van der Meer *et al.* 2008).

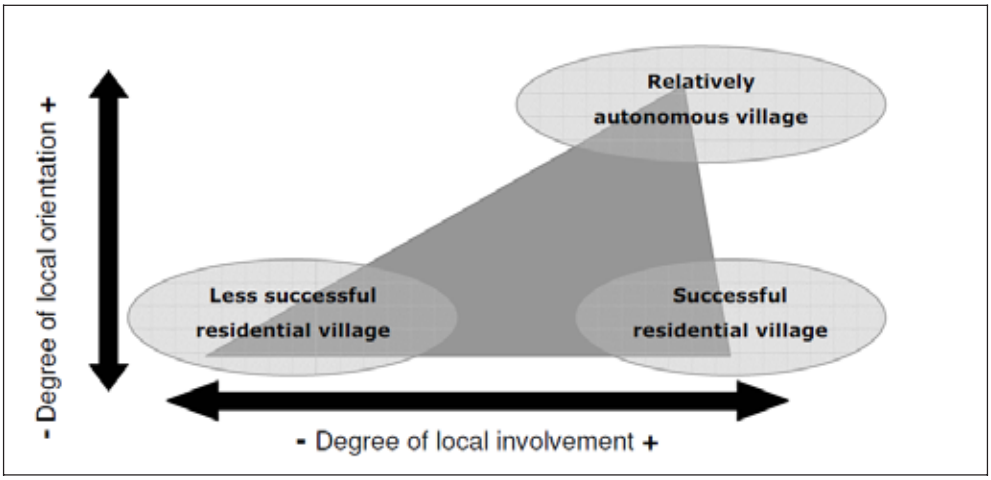

Fig.2: The relationship between local orientation (vertical axis) and local involvement (horizontal axis) at village level (triangle) and types of villages (axes of the triangle).

At first glance these differences in local involvement of residential villages are related to the quality of the residential function and the socio-economic status developed by the village within the regional housing market. Villages that are attractive on the regional market seem more successful in developing (new) forms of social cohesion that are not self-evident related to local orientation. This fits with the idea presented above that villages that are able to develop with success a residential function have also more success with respect to the development of local initiatives.

5. Conclusion

Traditional, relatively autonomous, or closed villages in the Netherlands are characterised by local social cohesion or local involvement that is closely and self-evidently related to the local orientation of their inhabitants. This local orientation is reflected in the relatively local life path and day path of the inhabitants. Local social cohesion or local involvement act as social capital in these traditional villages because it contributes to important values like the quality of life and a positive attitude towards community care. However, this social capital does not seem to provide a firm base for the future, because social cohesion in this type of village contributes more to quality of life and less to social vitality.

Relatively autonomous villages are engaged in an ongoing transformation into villages with a dominant residential function. This transformation is characterised by a constant decline in the local orientation at individual and community levels. This has significant consequences for local social cohesion and social capital. In villages that are successful in developing a residential function, local involvement is also high and acts as social capital that contributes to community care and new local initiatives. The perspective for the development of bridging relations and social vitality appears to be better in this type of community. This is probably due to the fact that they are more successful in attracting residents with large social networks.

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SOCIAL CAPITAL IN RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THE NETHERLANDS
Summary

The article presents evidence from two surveys carried out in the Netherlands about social capital in rural areas and small villages. After an introduction of the main concepts and the policy context of both projects, the development of Dutch villages after 1970 is conceptualized as a transformation of autonomous villages into residential villages.

The first survey was carried out at national level and investigates the relationship between social cohesion and the quality of life and vitality in the Dutch countryside. The second survey was carried out at local level and investigates the relationship between quality of life, social cohesion and community care in eight small villages in a rural part of the Netherlands. It aims to identify patterns of social cohesion at village level.

The conclusions of both projects underline the existence of local involvement in traditional villages in relation to a relatively strong local orientation and the existence of social capital in these villages. However, the transformations that are taking place in Dutch villages raise doubts at to whether such social capital will be useful for future developments. Knowledge about the development of social cohesion and social capital in residential villages can contribute to knowledge that is useful for future policy development with respect to small villages.

COPING WITH DEPOPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC AGEING IN RURAL JAPAN: FROM GOVERNMENT TO LOCAL GOVERNANCE

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Abstract

Coping with Depopulation and Demographic Ageing in Rural Japan: From Government to Local Governance

Recently, the Japanese government initiated an administrative process that has resulted in the merging of municipalities across the country. Since then, the quality of services provided to inhabitants by the local government has declined in depopulated areas. As a result, it has been suggested that there may be a role for self-organization in the revival of local governance. Despite having a rapidly ageing population, Kawane village has been particularly successful in revitalizing local governance through reorganization of the local community. This research examines a variety of the community activities involved and the unique management methods behind them in an attempt to ascertain the factors that have resulted in successful self-governance in this village.

Key words

depopulated mountainous village, local community, Kawane Promoting Association, local governance, Kawane Village, Japan

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1. Introduction

Recently, the Japanese government initiated an administrative process that has resulted in the merging of municipalities across the country. Since then, the quality of services provided to residents by the local government has declined, especially in depopulated areas[1]. Prior to the merging, a small-sized rural municipality was apt to allow its residents to receive prompt public services, even though it was financially inefficient from an administrative perspective. Those benefits were a result of face-to-face relationships between municipal officers and residents, which allowed municipal officers to be easily acquainted with the residents' public service needs[2]. In other words, the residents could access the public services with low costs, and the local government had to endure paying high costs[3]. Since the administrative agglomeration, however, residents have now had to pay high costs to access public services, since the up-scaled local municipalities are responsible to an increased number of residents, with a lower available budget.

These high costs for residents are exacerbated by restricted involvement of municipal officers in community activities. Prior to the administrative agglomeration, municipal officers tended to act not only as members of the administrative system, but also as community members[4]. However, after the administrative agglomeration, it became less likely that a municipal officer would be present in the community activities due to an increased amount of responsibility.

As a result, it has been suggested that there may be a role for self-organization in the revival of local governance. In many depopulated areas, the distance between local government and the local community has continued to grow, and this has led to the newly established local government transferring certain responsibilities, for example the maintenance of cultural heritage, to the local community[5].

However, due to severe depopulation over the last 50 years, most local communities have lost their capabilities to self-organize, while local governments have replaced many of the local communities' roles in rural societies with increased subsidies from the central government[6]. Furthermore, most depopulated local communities with

[1] For more information, see: (1) KAJITA Shin, "Development of Local Allocation Tax-Cut Policies for Municipalities with Small Populations and Its Interpretation: Focusing on Relation with Municipal Merger Policies", *Geographical Review of Japan*, 81-2, 2008, pp. 60-75. (2) CHEON EunGyoung, SAITO Yukihiko and ARA Hiroko, "Change of Public Facilities from the viewpoint of Convenience for Residents in the Consolidated Municipality: A Case Study of Akiruno City, Tokyo Metropolis", *Journal of the Rural Life Society of Japan*, 24-1, 2005, pp. 8-14. (3) HATAKEYAMA Teruo, "Effects on Elderly Welfare Service of the Merger of Municipalities with Geographic Barriers: Case Study in Numata, Gunma Prefecture", *Geographical Review of Japan*, 80-13, 2007, pp. 857-871.

[2] For more information, see: KIM Doo-Chul, "Can Local Government Substitute for Rural Community?: An Alternative Framework for Rural Development in the Context of East Asia", *Geographical Review of Japan*, 72(B)-2, 1999, pp. 100-110.

[3] For more information, see: KIM Doo-Chul, "Enhancing self-organizing capabilities of rural communities", in A.M. Bicalho and S.W. Hoefle (eds.), *The Regional Dimension and Contemporary Challenges to Rural Sustainability*, Laget-UFRJ/CSRS-IGU, 2004, pp. 347-351.

[4] For more information, see: KIM Doo-Chul, *Revitalization and Self-organization in Depopulation Areas: Comparison of Japan and Korea*, Kokon Shoin; Tokyo, 2003.

[5] For more information, see: SAKUNO Hirokazu, "The Problem and Expectations of Regional Development in Hilly-Mountainous Regions and Correspondence of Rural Settlements", *Annals of the Japan Association of Economic Geographers*, 52-4, 2006, pp. 283-296.

[6] For more information, see: KIM, Doo-Chul, "Regional Process of Dependency and Changes of Endogenous Self-organizations in a Depopulated Remote Area: A Case Study of Namiai Village, Nagano Prefecture, Japan", *The Human Geography (Jinbun-Chiri)* 52-1, 2000, pp. 28-50.

rapidly ageing populations are no longer able to take charge of the transferred responsibilities from the newly established local government, despite those responsibilities having traditionally been taken over by local communities. Consequently, the reorganization of the local community has become indispensable, which has become evident to most of the newly established local governments in Japan, but little progress has been achieved as of yet.

In this paper, a successful case of revitalization through the reorganization of a local community will be presented, which took place more than 30 years before the current problem began. In order to clarify the reorganization process, the authors examine a variety of community activities involved and the unique management system behind them in an attempt to ascertain the factors that have resulted in successful self-governance of the area presented in the case study.

2. Outline of the Study Area

Kawane Village, which consists of 19 hamlets, is located in the mountainous area of Akitakata City, Hiroshima Prefecture, Japan (Fig. 1). Located 3 hours by car from Hiroshima City near the border with Shimane Prefecture, the village has experienced significant consolidation with surrounding municipalities, which has resulted in an increased distance from the newly established location of the local government offices. In the case of Kawane Village, the situation has become even more difficult, given that it was already in a remote location, far from the former local government office and difficult to access.

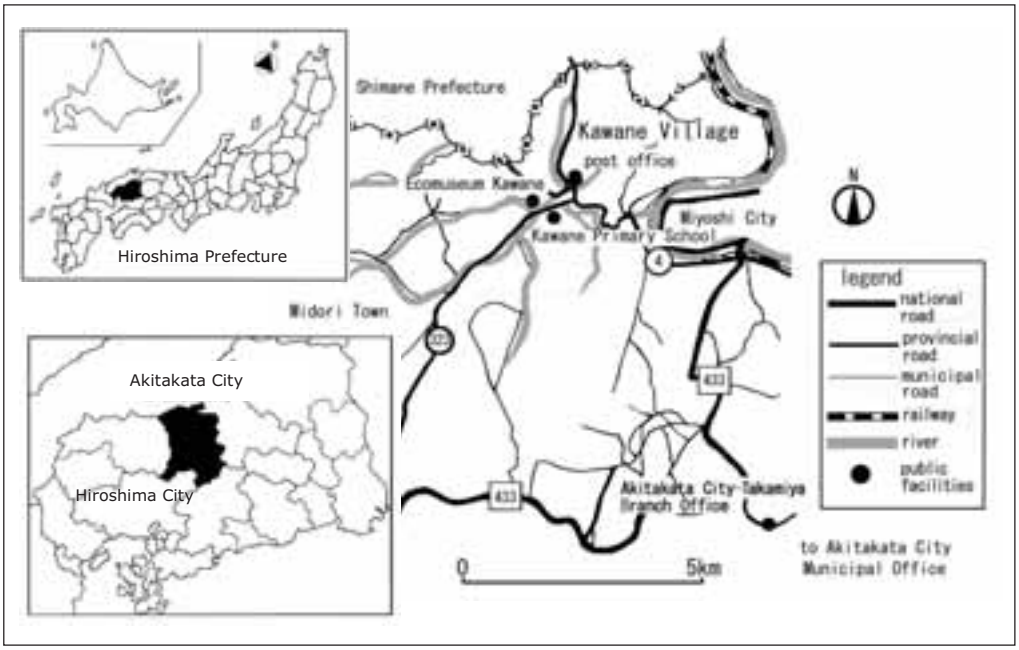

Fig. 1: Study area.

Before 1953, Kawane Village was a municipality with its own village office with financial autonomy. However, in 1953, Kawane Village merged with two other small

municipalities and became Takamiya Town. Eventually, Takamiya Town was merged again in 2006, becoming part of Akitakata City. As a result of this merge, the residents of Kawane Village now have to pay higher costs to access public services from the newly established local government.

According to the 2005 Census, the total population of Kawane Village is 632 people, with 266 total households. Of these, the number of farming households is 153. The ratio of the population over 65 years old was 47 percent as of 2005, which is more than double the national average (Fig. 2). Despite having a rapidly ageing population, this village has been particularly successful in revitalizing local governance through reorganization of the local community, which started more than 30 years ago.

In the process of revitalizing local governance, it must be noted that the Kawane Promoting Association has played a crucial role in confronting the regional problems such as depopulation and aging. It is worth analyzing the leading role this organization has taken in a variety of community activities. Of special note is the unique management system behind this role.

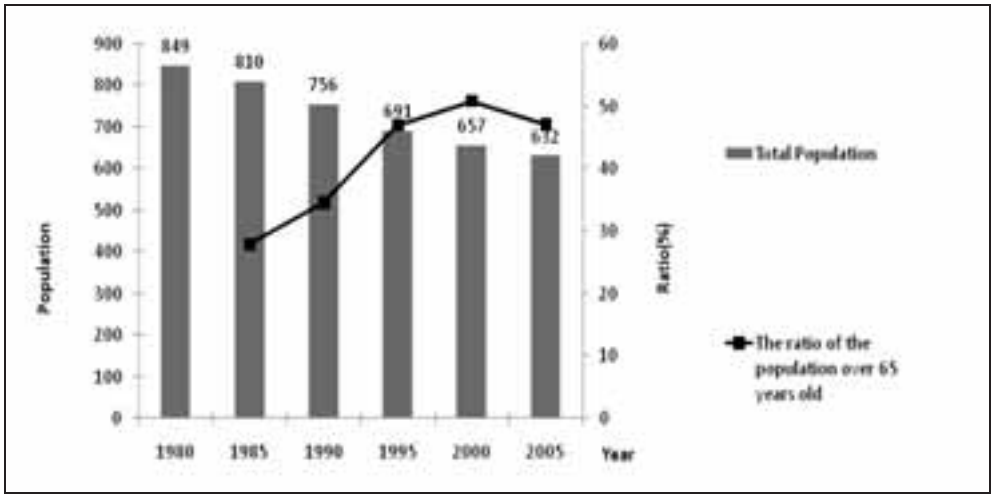

Fig. 2: Changes in population and aging rates in Kawane Village.
Source: Census and field survey.

3. The Role of the Kawane Promoting Association

Since its establishment in 1972, the Kawane Promoting Association has experienced three crucial turning points. In the summer of 1972, Kawane Village experienced a severe flood, which was made worse by inadequate relief efforts by the local government, resulting in devastation for the community. In general, during this period, the infrastructure was still poor in rural Japan, leading to difficulties in providing prompt assistance when disasters occurred. In the wake of this disaster, the locals realized the disadvantage of their remote location and, soon after, a common "our village on our hands" mindset appeared among the locals within the community. This mindset emphasized the need for greater self-sufficiency, which was required to keep them secure.

Before the flood in 1972, the Kawane Promoting Association consisted of only a few households, meaning that it could not be a representative body for the whole village. Participation in the Kawane Promoting Association increased after the flood in part due to this "our village on our hands" mindset. Eventually, all the households of Kawane Village became members of the Kawane Promoting Association, which then replaced the traditional organization scheme at the level of hamlets. Subsequently, members would give encouragement to the entire region to become involved in the organization of cultural activities.

This cooperation across hamlets allowed the cultural activities, namely unique festivals with strong historic traditions, to be continued. Due to severe depopulation over the previous 20 years, these festivals and traditional activities would have been impossible to continue because of insufficient manpower available at the hamlet level. The largest festival held in Kawane Village every year is the Festival of the Fireflies. Great care is taken throughout the year to ensure that the environment is adequate for the fireflies and large amounts of preparations take place for the over 4,000 visitors that attend the festival each year. Additional events include the making of lanterns with local children that are sold to raise money, and the Memorial Event of Peace. Traditional activities such as *Kagura*[7] and the transplanting of rice are very important to each hamlet. These activities require increased cooperation within the Kawane Promoting Association. In this way, the Kawane Promoting Association came into the role of being a representative of traditional organization at the hamlet level. It must be noted, however, that the role the Kawane Promoting Association played was limited to mostly cultural activities because of insufficient experience with collective reasoning. However, through the organization of these cultural activities, the residents slowly began to realize their fundamental entity as being Kawane Village rather then their own individual hamlet.

In 1983, it was decided that the Junior High School located in the middle of Kawane Village would be closed by the local government. This school, in addition to being the main source of alumni in the village, as in other rural areas in Japan, also served as an informal center to the village, often utilized by residents. In addition to the loss of a source of education in Kawane Village, the closure would represent a spiritual and mental blow to the residents. As the representation of residents, The Kawane Promoting Association was able to present a plan for the continued use of the Junior High School facilities. This coordination in constructing a plan to preserve the Junior High School facilities was the catalyst that started the association in acting as the actual representative of the local community in relation to the local government. The Junior High School was then renovated by the Kawane Promoting Association for the good of the community as a part of regional revitalization (Fig. 3 and 4). The Ecomuseum Kawane, as it is now known, is used as a center for community activities in addition to being a rest spot for travelers and a restaurant. Residents of Kawane Village have utilized the facilities in ways that benefit the community, making the building the core of community activities. As it is free to use, the capabilities of this facility were greatly modified to adapt to the aging population's ever-changing problems. All this is made possible by the large amount of trust the Kawane Promoting Association has between its members. Although it has no formal power, the inherited legitimacy from the traditional hamlets, in coordination with its ability to work with government, is central to its effectiveness.

[7] *Kagura* is a Japanese word referring to a specific type of traditional theatrical dance, usually performed in rural areas.

Fig. 3: The entrance of Ecomuseum Kawane. The Japanese words written on the dishes mean "accommodation", "meal" and "training center for community development".
(Photo by the authors, May 2007)

Fig. 4: Ecomuseum Kawane, a former Junior High School.
(Photo by the authors, July 2007)

In the 1980s, after experiencing efforts to preserve the Junior High School, the Kawane Promoting Association began to act as the actual representative for the local community when dealing with the local government. Previously, individual hamlets would have been directly consulted by the local government when dealing

with development projects; however, it became more efficient for the local government to work with the Kawane Promoting Association, rather than with each individual hamlet. When expropriating land for public development from residents, the Kawane Promoting Association would be better able to negotiate between individual landownership and public benefits. For example, the Kawane Promoting Association addresses the maintenance of local roads, a problem many children of elderly Kawane residents consider when visiting their parents. Often rough and potentially unsafe roads need to be paved or widened to better accommodate travelers. The Kawane Promoting Association is able to work with residents on allowing a small portion of their land to be used for the widening of the roads. This is often difficult, as traditionally, Japanese farmers tend to consider arable land more valuable than road.

Consequently, the benefit the local government receives from this arrangement is that it no longer needs to negotiate the distribution of benefits derived from development. Instead, this role can often be taken successfully by the Kawane Promoting Association, which can settle disputes with the residents on their own accepted and understood terms in contrast with the local government, which has to work under general guidelines that are not always acceptable to the residents.

Finally, since the 1990s, the Kawane Promoting Association has begun to manage private land resources and offer welfare services to individuals. Kawane Village faces a serious problem in welfare services provided for the elderly, given that it is located in remote, mountainous area, far from the center of the municipality. To confront the problems faced by the aging population within its community, the Kawane Promoting Association started offering various activities to assist the elderly. The physical wellbeing of the residents is looked after with activities designed to encourage physical exercises to improve overall health (Fig. 5). To assist residents with these exercises, healthcare providers come by the village and offer instruction twice a week. This service utilizes a building constructed by the Kawane Promoting Association for the benefit of the residents. This is of great assistance to those who are unable to travel between their residence and the center of the municipality due to distance or inability to operate a vehicle. Additionally, a delivery lunch service is provided to the elderly living alone in an effort to ensure proper nutrition (Fig. 6). This service also encourages social interaction between elderly residents and the volunteers delivering the lunch.

With regard to managing private land resources, the Kawane Promoting Association has established a sub-organization. This organization is separate from the Kawane Promoting Association in terms of budget and follows special rules in regard to managing private land resources. The abandonment of arable land due to farmers retiring is a large regional problem, especially in smaller communities with larger populations of elderly residents. This service is beneficial in that, when a resident is unable to take care of their arable land, the organization continues its cultivation on behalf of the resident.

4. Self-governance system of the Kawane Promoting Association

The Kawane Promoting Association has instigated the development of eight related departments, each managed by the Kawane Promoting Association, and each responsible for specific tasks or activities (Fig. 7 and Tab. 1). In addition, for certain activities, the Kawane Promoting Association organizes executive committees, as

required, which encourages the participation of various stakeholders in the village. This research shows that the success of the Kawane Promoting Association lies in its unique style of management, whereby there is no central authority; instead, decision-making powers are transferred between units as required, ensuring full participation by local residents.

Fig. 5: Physical exercise healthcare program for the elderly.
(Photo by the authors, July 2007)

Fig. 6: Delivery lunch service to the elderly living alone.
(Photo by the authors, July 2007)

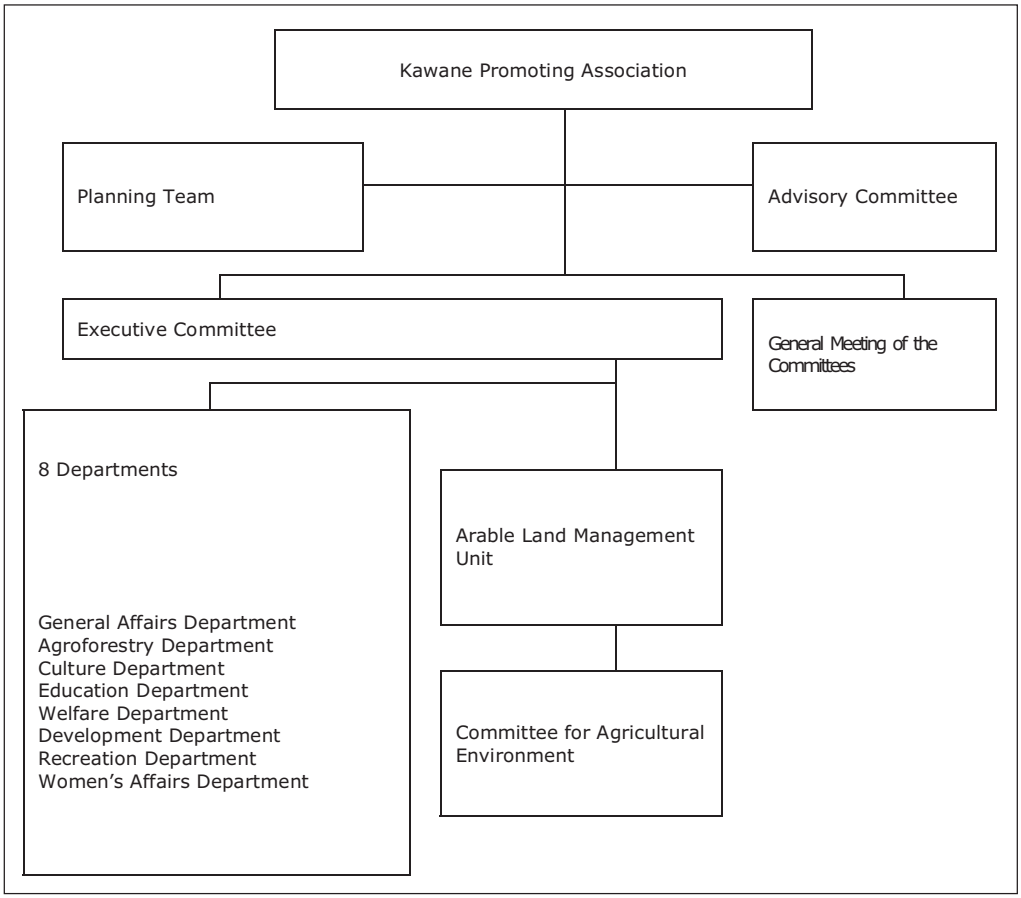

Fig. 7: Organization of the Kawane Promoting Association.
Source: Field survey.

Tab.1: Aims and activities of each department of the Kawane Promoting Association.

Department	**Aims and Activities**
General Affairs Department	Round-table conferences between the Kawane Promoting Association and the municipal officers, issuing bulletins, coordination among departments.
Agroforestry Department	Developing special products, transplanting rice festival
Culture Department	Maintaining and preserving traditional culture
Education Department	Planning festivals, events for children
Welfare Department	Feast for the elderly, delivery lunch service, physical exercise healthcare program
Development Department	Environmental preservation, Fireflies Festival
Recreation Department	Sports and leisure events, participating in town sports competition
Women's Affairs Department	Preparing for transplanting rice, preparing for festivals.

Source: Field survey.

5. Concluding Remarks

Along with its empowerment, the annual revenue of the Kawane Promoting Association has increased every year (Fig. 8). About 80% of the revenue comes from autonomous sources such as donations from the locals, benefits from activities and membership fees. The amount of subsidies from the local government is less than 20% (Fig. 9). With these increased autonomous revenues, the Kawane Promoting Association has been able to expand its community activities. For decades, the Kawane Promoting Association has been revitalizing the local region. This is the result of the Kawane Promoting Association being organized by the local community, with full participation by local residents. In turn, the situation has greatly improved the abilities of the community to self-govern.

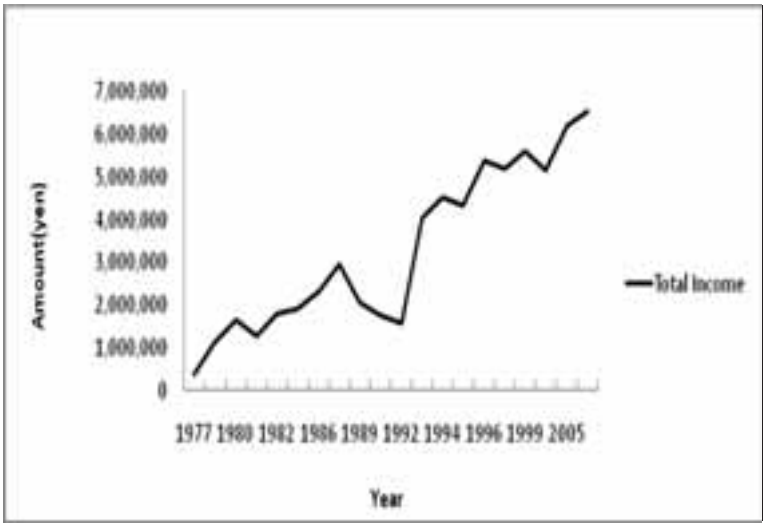

Fig. 8: Annual revenue of the Kawane Promoting Association.
Source: The minutes of the general meeting of committees (1978-2007).

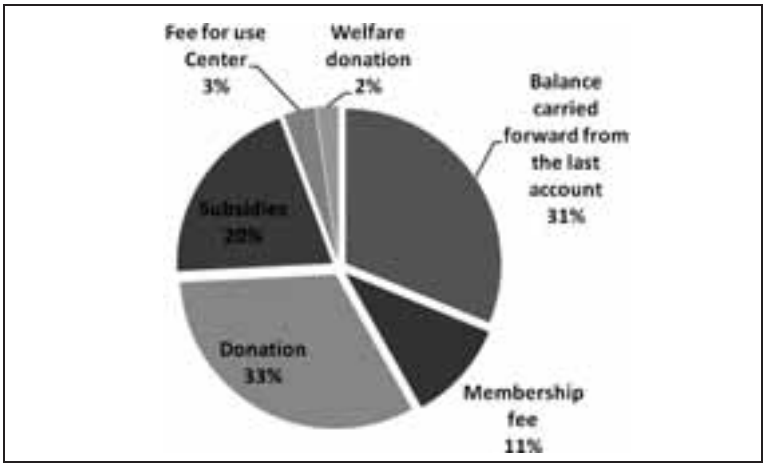

Fig. 9: Revenue sources of the Kawane Promoting Association.
Source: The minutes of the general meeting of committees (1978-2007).

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COPING WITH DEPOPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC AGEING IN RURAL JAPAN: FROM GOVERNMENT TO LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Summary

Recently, the Japanese government initiated an administrative process which has resulted in the merging of municipalities across the country. Since then, the quality of services provided to inhabitants by the local government has declined in depopulated areas. As a result, it has been suggested that there may be a role for self-organization in the revival of local governance. In many depopulated areas, the distance between local government and the local community has continued to grow, and this has led to the newly established local government transferring certain responsibilities. Consequently, the reorganization of the local community has become indispensable.

Kawane village is located in the mountainous area of Akitakata City, Hiroshima prefecture, Japan. Despite having a rapidly ageing population, this village has been particularly successful in revitalizing local governance through reorganization of the local community. This research examines a variety of the community activities involved, and the unique management methods behind them, in an attempt to ascertain the factors which have resulted in successful self-governance in this village.

Since its establishment in 1972, the Kawane Promoting Association has experienced three crucial turning points. Initially, the Kawane Promoting Association, which had previously consisted of only a few households, encouraged the entire region to become involved in the organization of cultural activities. Since the 1980s, the Kawane Promoting Association has begun to act as a representative for the local community, for example, in dealing with local problems and in communicating with the local government. Finally, since the 1990s, the Kawane Promoting Association has begun to manage private land resources and offer welfare services to individuals. The Kawane Promoting Association has instigated the development of eight related departments, each managed by the Kawane Promoting Association, and each responsible for specific tasks or activities. In addition, for certain activities the Kawane Promoting Association organizes executive committees, as required, which encourages the participation of various stakeholders in the village. This research shows that the success of the Kawane Promoting Association lies in its unique style of management, whereby there is no central authority; instead, decision-making powers are transferred between units as required, ensuring full participation by local residents.

For decades, the Kawane Promoting Association has been revitalizing the local region. This is the result of the fact that the Kawane Promoting Association is organized by the local community, with full participation by local residents. In turn, the situation has greatly improved the abilities of the community to self-govern.

DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL SPACE IN POST-COMMUNIST SOUTHEAST EUROPE AFTER 1989: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract
Development of rural space in post-Communist Southeast Europe after 1989: A comparative analysis
This paper investigates the reasons for the current state of rural space in Southeast Europe, as well as its current structure. It is confirmed that pre-Communist structures, as well as divergent Communist systems and policies, contributed as much to current structures as have divergent post-Communist approaches and developments. Thus, we meet today very different situations in the rural space of Yugoslavian successor states on the one hand, and of other post-Communist countries of Southeast Europe with a planned economy (Romania, Bulgaria and Albania) on the other. But even the countries of former Yugoslavia show many divergences, mainly due to divergent demographic development in the wake of the Yugoslavian dissolution wars.

Key words
structure of rural space, communist systems, transformation, agricultural policies, Southeast Europe

The editor recieved the article on 28.10.2009.

1. Introduction

Rural space in the transformation countries of Southeast Europe (in the sense of the countries Bosnia and Hercegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria and Romania) was already in the Communist era a zone burdened with socio-economic problems, low quality of life, and unfavourable economic and demographic development. After the political turn in 1989/90 and during transformation the situation has almost everywhere become even more critical, except for rural areas with more intensive tourism, rural areas located along development axes between larger urban centres and rural areas along borders towards countries in a more prosperous economic situation.

2. General reasons for the socio-economic decline of rural space

General reasons for the at least relative, but frequently also absolute and accelerated, socio-economic decline of rural space were and are that:

a. Rural space receives less investment than urban and especially metropolitan regions. This means less innovation and modernisation in rural space (Musil, in print).

b. Rural space in Southeast Europe receives much less, if any subsidies from European or national sources, much in contrast to rural space in Western Europe in general and especially to Alpine regions in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and France (Benedek 2000, Dräger 2001, Frohberg and Hartmann 2001, Greif 2001, Grosskopf and Thiele 2005/06, Noll 2001, Schneider 2001, Zahrnt 2009).

Apart from national public funds, the Common Agrarian Policy (CAP) of the European Union (EU) invested from its beginning a lot of money into the agriculture of "old member states". Since 2000 ("Agenda 2000"), CAP has no longer pursued the goal of subsidising agricultural production, but of promoting rural space in general with an emphasis on ecological aspects. This has been especially true for the programme period 2007-2013. Today, mountain farmers in the Alps can rather be regarded as subsidised "landscape gardeners" than market producers. In West Balkan countries (Southeast Europe minus Romania and Bulgaria), such support is almost absent up to the present day. Romania and Bulgaria, however, have profited from EU structural funds of the programme SAPARD (Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development) since 2000, and as EU members since 2007 have enjoyed some of the benefits of the Common Agricultural Policy. These benefits are, however, still much smaller for the new member states than for old EU members (European Commission 2009). The rural economy in Southeast Europe is therefore much more, and in some cases almost exclusively, determined by market prices and income in agriculture and agricultural income is usually low compared to income in other branches of the economy.

c. Agricultural markets of transformation countries were forced to open themselves towards the world market. This resulted in the intrusion of powerful competitors from the EU and from overseas, not only with agricultural production in the narrower sense, but also with foodstuffs produced on the basis of agricultural products. Prestigious global brands were preferred by consumers and replaced domestic offers (Grimm and Knappe 2001). This also resulted to some extent in selling agricultural surplus production from old EU countries at dumping prices (e.g.,

potatoes, sugar beets), since it is cheaper to bring certain agricultural products to Southeast Europe than to liquidate them in western Europe. This has detrimental effects on local price levels.

d. The average agricultural enterprise is small and economically weak, due to the fact that restitution to former owners and their heirs has been the main method of post-Communist land reform (Benedek 2000, Knappe and Ratčina 2004). Much in contrast to old EU members, administrative, social and economic supportive structures also are missing (Greif 2001).

e. Migration flows are directed towards better economic prospects. In general, this means selective migration from rural to urban space, leaving older, less qualified and less active (and politically structure-conservative) people behind. Nevertheless, the absolute number of people active in agriculture has grown in all Southeast European countries during the 1990s (Knappe and Ratčina 2004, see also Fig. 1). Where the economic situation in the cities is not much better or even worse, migration may be mainly directed to the countryside, where people at least can find a living or earn money by offering services. Under these circumstances rural space assumes a social buffer function. Such a situation occurred, e.g., in Romania in the years between 1997 and 2000 (Heller 2006).

Factors d. and e. result in an additional issue: declines in market production in favour of subsistence and a further reduction of potentials for innovation (Knappe and Ratčina 2004).

2. Reasons for the socio-economic decline of rural space specific to groups of countries, individual countries and subregions of countries

Besides common characteristics, the situation of rural space in Southeast Europe varies between individual countries, and also within countries. This variation is mainly due to divergent structures already existing before the Communist period, divergent impacts during the Communist period and divergent transformation policies after the turn of politics.

This paper will not deal with pre-Communist divergences (for more see Krauss 2009), although their impact must not be underestimated – not the least, because they also influenced policies in the Communist and post-Communist period. The focus here is on divergences caused by the Communist period and divergent transformation policies after the fall of Communism.

2.1 Divergences emerging from different policies in Communist times

The impact of Communist systems on rural space varied significantly. The main divide existed between Socialist self-management in Yugoslavia and centrally planned economies in the other Communist countries of Southeast Europe. There also were further differences among the last group of countries, however (i.e., between Romania, Bulgaria and Albania). There were, in addition, regional differences between mountain districts on the one hand and plains and uplands on the other. Differing policies related to the extent and intensity of collectivisation, Stalinist collectivisation in Albania and Romania, Neo-Stalinist collectivisation in Bulgaria, and divergences due to the extent of settlement concentration in rural space (A comprehensive survey can be found with Wädekin 1982).

Fig.1: Agricultural labour 1990-2000
Areal colours indicate the share of agricultural labour in total labour force in 2000 (darkest shade: 67%, palest shade: <3%). Columns express by their height the growing or declining share of agricultural labour in total labour force: while the left, pale column represents the year 1990, the central column stands for 1995 and the right, dark one for 2000.
Source: Knappe and Ratčina 2004a.

In Yugoslavia collectivisation ended in 1948 after the break between Tito and Stalin. What had been collectivised (mainly the most fertile plains in the Pannonian Basin; pastures, but also tobacco and rice fields in Macedonia; see Fig. 2) was converted into self-managed enterprises. What had not been collectivised remained with small private farmers, in total 67% of the agricultural area (Taschler 1989). Their size was limited by law (to 10 ha) and they were not supported by public measures. Farming was usually performed for subsistence and the small farmsteads were viable only

when additional income was available (from commuting to industrial work or from tourism). In association with migration to cities there was widespread farmsteads abandonment and depopulation of large regions. Starting in the 1960s, rural space became a major source of guest workers to West European countries (Büschenfeld 1999).

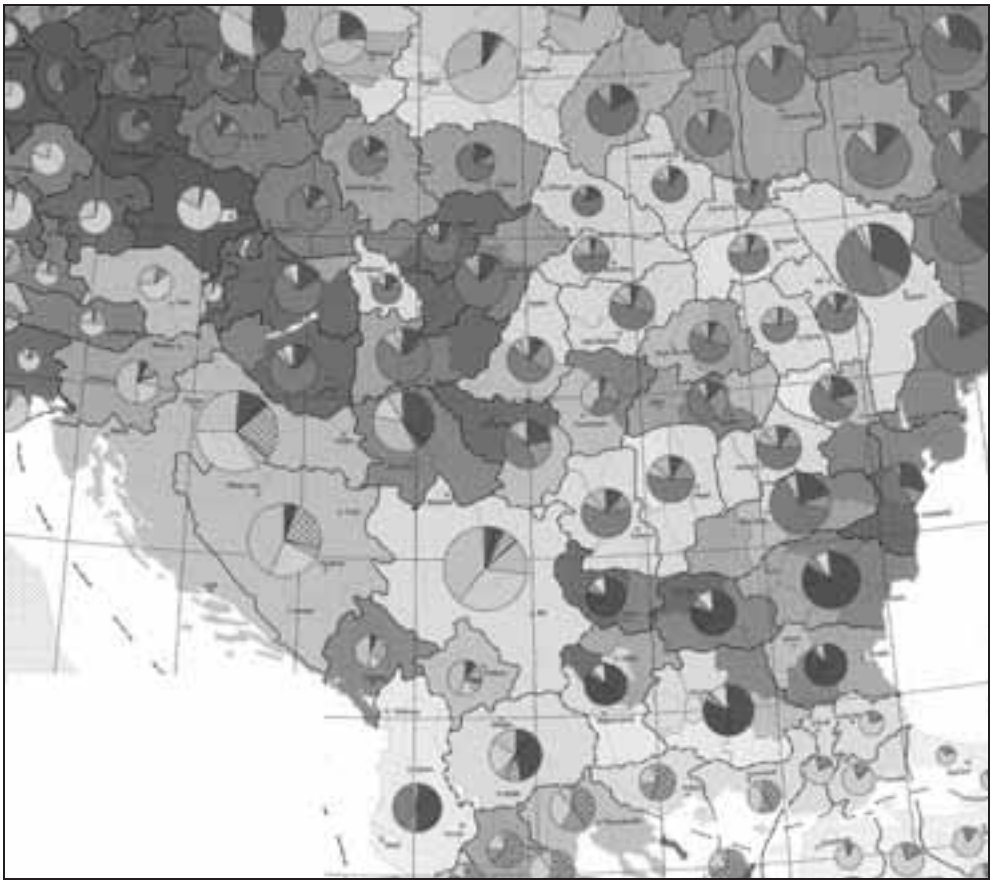

Fig.2: Tenure at the end of the 1980s.
Colours of circles and circle sectors: reddish colours = state farms, violet (confined to Bulgaria) = „agroindustrial complexes", green = co-operatives, yellowish colours = private farms.
Source: Taschler 1989.

Both Albania and Romania had small-scale agriculture in pre-Communist times (Müller 2000). Farmers were partly motivated, partly forced to join agricultural co-operatives, mainly in the 1950s (Wädekin 1982). Later, and mainly in fertile plains areas, agricultural co-operatives were transformed into state farms. By the end of the 1980s, 95% of the agricultural area in Albania had been collectivised; the rest was in personal plots for the private use of workers at collective farms (Taschler 1989). In Romania the share of collective land reached 85%, but mountain regions remained private (Taschler 1989). Today, the latter present themselves in the state of traditional, demographically balanced farming structures. Collective farms were

generally strong market producers of huge size and heavy mechanisation. However, the workers at these farms usually felt to be forced and did only the unavoidable. They invested much more effort into their private plots, which turned into a stronghold of food supply.

Bulgaria also had a predominantly forced collectivisation, but in contrast to Albania and Romania collective farming was promoted by heavy financial support from the state (Wädekin 1982, Taschler 1989). Collective farms were able to pay high wages and farm workers had a better living than the urban population. In the 1970s the collective farms were transformed into "agroindustrial complexes" characterised by very large farm sizes (the largest in Southeast Europe and comparable only to farms in the Soviet Union) and a vertical interweavement of agriculture and industrial food production (Wädekin 1982, Taschler 1989). By the end of the 1980s, 90% of the agricultural area was collectivised into state farms (not co-operatives) (Taschler 1989). As in Romania, small private farms had been preserved only in the mountains. Bulgaria was the only Southeast European country fully integrated into the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), the economic alliance of the Eastern Bloc. In the framework of this alliance, in agriculture Bulgaria had the specialized role of an animal producer and of fruit and vegetable production. Bulgaria produced in these sectors a large surplus for export to other COMECON countries. Due to the dry climate, irrigation was necessary. The irrigation systems, however, were not adequately maintained and were partly dysfunctional when Communism collapsed (Ilieva and Iliev 1995, Ilieva and Schmidt 2001)

Where agriculture had to a high extent been collectivised in the Communist period (all Southeast European countries except Yugoslavia), the administrative centres of large state and co-operative farms had not only acquired economic, but also educational, health care, social and cultural functions. The dissolution of large enterprises after the fall of Communism meant the loss of these extra-economic functions, very often with no adequate replacement by villages and communes (see Grimm 1995, Greif 2001). This contributed to a reduction in the quality of life in rural space.

Except for Yugoslavia, all Communist countries in Southeast Europe pursued a policy of settlement concentration in rural space, abandoning small traditional villages in favour of larger agro-industrial villages or towns. Small traditional villages received no investment into all kinds of infrastructure (Schmutzler 1977). In consequence they fell into decay and lost population. In some cases this decay became irreversible. In Albania and Bulgaria many small traditional villages were also actively destroyed. When Romania started with such a policy in the later 1980s under the title of "systematization" (sistematizare) and, among others, villages of ethnic minorities were in danger of being destroyed, this aroused international protest and Romania gave up these plans (Sauberer 1990).

2.2 Divergences emerging from different transformation policies after 1989

Transformation policies in rural space varied as regards velocity of system change, extent of maintaining larger agricultural enterprises, privatisation methods of agricultural ownership and accompanying measures (e.g., financial support, development programmes) (see Lukas 2001, Knappe and Ratčina 2004, 2004b, Maurel 1994, Schulze and Netzband 1998).

As regards velocity of system change, transformation policies ranged from very slow and careful (as in Bulgaria) to very fast and radical (as in Romania and Albania, immediately after the fall of Communism in 1991).

As regards the extent of maintaining larger agricultural enterprises, very much in contrast to East Central European countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary), larger farm sizes remained only (concentrated in some regions) of Bulgaria and the Serbian Voivodina [Vojvodina]. In Romania and Albania almost all land was split up into very small farms.

As regards privatisation methods of agricultural ownership, restitution to former owners and their heirs prevailed, especially in Romania and Albania, while in Bulgaria, Serbia and Macedonia state and co-operative farms very also transformed into private companies (stock companies or shared liability companies) without having been fragmented. By restitution pre-Communist patterns of land ownership were at least partly restored.

None of these transformation policies affected Yugoslavia to such an extent as other countries in the region; due to its predominantly private agriculture throughout Communism, not very much had to be transformed.

Resulting from these divergent structures and policies in pre-Communist, Communist and post-Communist times, we meet currently in Southeast Europe the following typical situations.

First, for Bosnia and Hercegovina [Bosna i Hercegovina], Montenegro [Crna Gora], Kosovo [Kosova/Kosovo] and Serbia proper [U a Srbija] (without Voivodina), the predominant small-scale agriculture has persisted throughout the Communist period and is continuing. It is no longer limited by law. However, small-holding farmers usually have no money to invest, to enlarge their plots or to buy new machines. They do have, at least, small tractors and other small machines – very often still from Communist times, while in Romania and Bulgaria the huge tractors and other machines have become useless with small farms. However, young people migrate to cities, the remaining population is over-aged and maintains agriculture mostly just for subsistence (Dahlman 2006, Knappe and Ratčina 2004, Todorović 2007).

In Bosnia-Hercegovina and Kosovo, material and immaterial war damages, in addition political and legal insecurity function as additional push factors, mainly for emigration. Extensification of agriculture is proceeding quickly. In Montenegro, tourism at the coast functions as a pull factor with a similar effect on rural areas in the hinterland: they lose population, since it is easier to find a job or a better earning at the coast, and every investment promises more and faster returns there (Jordan 2005). In Serbia proper, however, rural space shows hardly signs of extensification in agriculture, not even conversion from farmland to pasture. Rural areas convey the impression of a functioning farming landscape. Local initiatives stimulate locally even intensification, e.g. in Central Serbia (Guča), where a juice producer stimulated raspberry production in his surroundings.

In Voivodina [Vojvodina], the dominant group of large, productive and efficient self-managed agricultural enterprises was converted into private companies, mainly after the era of Milo ević (2000). They are today efficient producers and very successful on the market. Mechanisation, use of fertilizers and number of employees

have not declined, but partly increased compared to the late 1980s (Todorović 2007).

In Macedonia [Makedonija/Maqedoni], many self-managed agricultural enterprises in the fertile basins were privatised in the middle of the 1990s (Gruber 1998). Macedonian farmers cultivate tobacco, rice and vegetables and market these products very successfully in Western Europe. Agriculture is the most prosperous branch of Macedonian economy.

In general, for the former Yugoslavian territories it can be stated that between 1990 and 2000 crop production increased almost everywhere, while animal production remained stable except for Bosnia and Hercegovina, where it has heavily declined (Knappe and Ratčina 2004, see Fig. 3 and 4).

Much in contrast to the successor states of Yugoslavia, the other former Communist countries of Southeast Europe (Albania, Bulgaria and Romania) experienced radical restructuring of rural space in economic and social terms due to privatisation after 1989. Restitution was the main variant of privatisation in agriculture (Schulze and Netzband 1998, Tillack 2001). In this way a symbolic, social and popular gesture was given precedence over economic aspects. Land was split into very small units, where it was impossible to produce economically. Many people, inexperienced in farming and agricultural marketing, received land. They also did not have enough money to invest in machines and other means of production. Consequently, most farms produce just for subsistence. Animal stock was significantly reduced, since the large stables of the collective farms had been closed down and adequate food supply became impossible. This resulted in a significant decline in crop, as well as animal market production (Knappe and Ratčina 2004, see Fig. 3 and 4). Legal insecurity (related to ownership) is an obstacle for investment, economic co-operation and private initiatives even two decades after the fall of Communism. Where they had not completely been destroyed, traditional settlement structures revived, but could only insufficiently replace extra-economic (educational, health care, social, cultural etc.) functions of the former central units of co-operatives and state farms (Greif 2001).

In Romania [România], immediately after the fall of Communism (1991) the land of collective and state farms has been returned to its former owners and their heirs. Almost every fifth Romanian citizen received a plot and most of them accepted it. The land was cut into about four million tiny farms with 2.5 ha at the average (Knappe and Ratčina 2004). This caused (along with an unfavourable economic situation in cities) a positive migration balance in favour of the countryside between 1997 and 2000 (Heller 2006). This migration must also be seen against the background of an urban population that had only a decade or two earlier migrated to the cities, and was thus not fully urbanized in the sociological sense. In the meantime, among the millions of farmers a smaller group has evolved who enlarged their farms, invested and produce for the market. Also the limits for restitution have been extended to 50 ha. Partly also a new type of co-operatives has emerged. Such co-operatives buy (at reduced prices) means of production for their members and sell their products in a professional way. But there is still a mixed situation, and intensity of agricultural use continues to decline right in most fertile areas, since agriculture proves unable to compete with other branches of the economy.

Fig.3: Crop production 1990-2000.
Areal colours indicate grain yield in 2000 (darkest shade: 70-95 dt/ha, palest shade: 14,7-20 dt/ha). Diagrams represent development types of grain yield 1990-2000: strong growth, weak growth, stagnation, weak decline, strong decline.
Source: Knappe and Ratčina 2004a.

In Bulgaria [B□lgarija], as well, restitution to former small farmers and their heirs was practised. But most of them were (in contrast to Romania) not willing to return to the villages. High specialisation in Bulgarian agriculture (on animal husbandry based on large stables, fruit and vegetable cultivation) also made splitting into small farms much more difficult. The formerly export-oriented agriculture had lost all former markets. Irrigation systems (necessary in the dry climate) had mostly collapsed and would have needed major investment. Dissolution of agro-industrial

complexes – typical for Bulgaria – meant the closing down of processing industries in the countryside, in turn a loss of local markets for agricultural products and a loss of workplaces. Former managers of agro-industrial operations frequently succeeded in acquiring land, but did not cultivate it and used it just for speculative purposes (Ilieva and Iliev 1995, Ilieva and Schmidt 2001). In consequence rural space in Bulgaria is characterised by a great deal of abandoned land, an extreme distortion in age structure, a high share of subsistence farming, a decline of animal stocks almost to a half (Fig. 4), a decline of crop production to 60% (Knappe and Ratčina 2004, see Fig. 3).

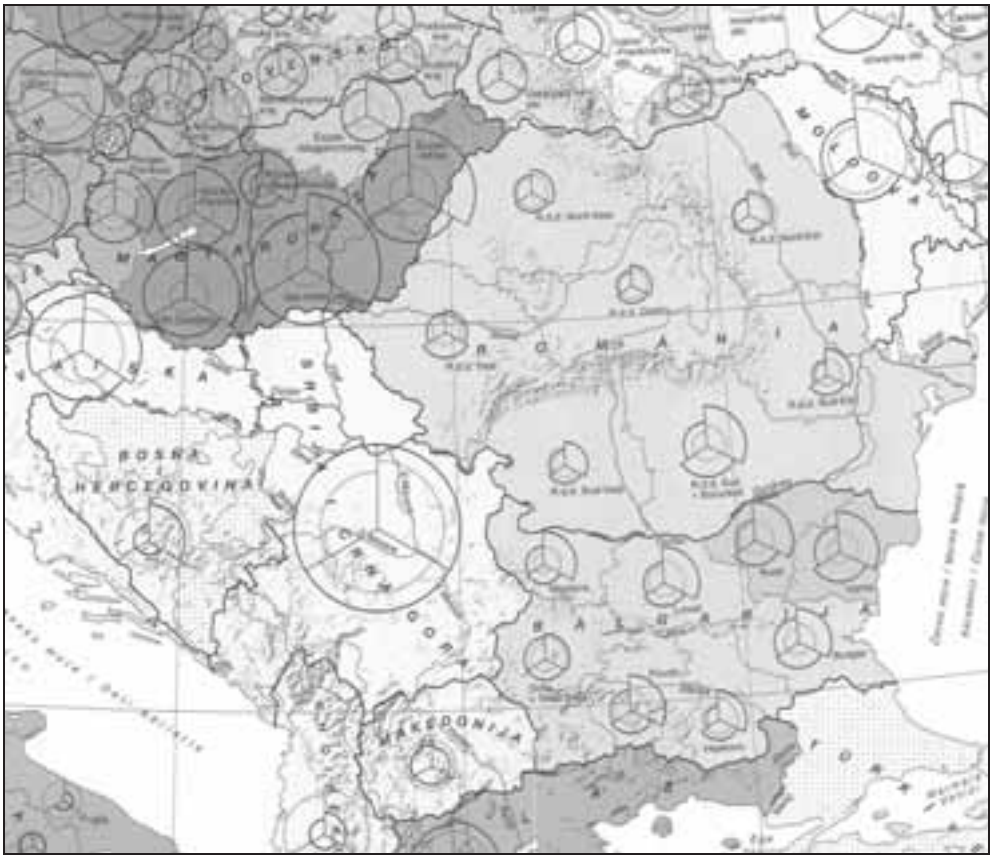

Fig.4: Animal husbandry 1990-2000.
Areal colours indicate milk production per cow in 2000 aus (darkest shade: 6500-7104 kg/cow/year, palest shade: 1405-2500 kg/cow/year). Circle sectors represent livestock in 1990 (right upper sector), 1995 (lower sector) and 2000 (left upper sector), whereby the dark brown circle stands for pigs and the green circle for cattle.
Source: Knappe and Ratčina 2004a.

In Albania [Shipëri], restitution to small farmers occurred as fast (in 1991) and radically as in Romania, but in contrast to Romania much less regulated and almost out of state control. The state was – especially in the first 1990s – not in the position to gain control over the very strong clans and local communities. Workers

of collective farms distributed the land almost as they found it appropriate. Up to the present day considerable legal insecurity exists and even violent quarrels for land ownership are frequent. A very high rural population density due to migration restrictions to cities in Communist times as well as still high fertility rates had resulted in an extreme splitting of land (even more than in Romania): 1.2 ha at the average split into 4-8 plots (Knappe and Ratčina 2004, 23). In contrast to Romania, but similar to Bulgaria, restitution caused a flow of migration to the cities, predominantly to Tirana, the only economically prosperous city, which tripled its population since 1989 (Doka 2005). But agriculture and rural space has still also a social buffer function, more people are active in agriculture then before the fall of Communism (Knappe and Ratčina 2004, see Fig. 1).

3. Conclusion

After the fall of Communism, rural space in Southeast Europe is except for urban hinterlands, tourism regions, areas along major transportation routes and occasionally also western border regions in socio-economic decline. But situations vary by countries and regions. The agriculture of Serbian Voivodina and of Macedonia had to undergo only some changes in tenure to be compatible on the European market, with positive effects on rural space in total. In Serbia proper traditional small-scale private farming has well persisted throughout Communist times and provides a still dense rural population with a reasonable living. In Montenegro the dominance of tourism at the coast had a detrimental effect on the same kind of rural structures in the hinterland. In Bosnia-Hercegovina and Kosovo the war events of 1992-1995 and 1999, respectively, as well as emigration resulted in a lot of abandoned land and in depopulation of rural space.

Where agriculture had predominantly been collectivized during Communism, i.e., in Albania, Bulgaria and Romania, transformation of rural space meant a profound restructuring and the replacement of a large-scale and highly centralized system by small-scale and decentralized structures. Since economic aspects were more or less neglected, this process resulted in heavy economic and social decline frequently accompanied by depopulation.

It is questionable, whether under the auspices of the European Union (all the countries of South East Europe have at least an accession perspective, if they are not already EU members as Bulgaria and Romania) this development can be reverted or at least smoothed down. Having proclaimed the "Lisbon Strategy" in 2000 with the aim of becoming "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world" and having also adopted the position that the objectives of growth and disparity equalisation were not compatible, the EU objective of macro-economic growth overrules now the equalisation objective. This means that EU structural funding will also in Southeast Europe favour rather the centres than the peripheries. Taking into account that also regional policies of national governments follow the same direction, prospects for rural spaces in Southeast Europe do not look bright.

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DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL SPACE IN POST-COMMUNIST SOUTHEAST EUROPE AFTER 1989: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Summary

Rural space in the transformation countries of Southeast Europe (in the sense of the countries Bosnia-Hercegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria and Romania) was already in the Communist era a zone burdened with socio-economic problems, low quality of life and unfavourable economic and demographic development.

After the political turn in 1989/90 and during transformation the situation has almost everywhere become even more critical, except for rural regions with a more intensive tourism and rural areas located along development axes between larger urban centres as well as along borders towards countries in a more prosperous economic situation.

As general reasons for the at least relative, but frequently also absolute and accelerated socio-economic decline of the rural space the following may be mentioned:

- Rural space receives less investment than urban and especially metropolitan regions. This means less innovations and modernisation in the rural space.
- Much in contrast especially to Alpine regions in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and France, but to rural space in Western Europe in general, rural space in transformation countries receives much less, if any subsidies from European or national sources. Rural economy is therefore almost exclusively determined by market prices and income in agriculture as compared to income in other branches of the economy.
- The agricultural markets of transformation countries were forced to open themselves towards the world market. This resulted in the intrusion of powerful competitors from the EU and from overseas not only in the sector of agricultural production in the narrower sense, but also with foodstuff produced on the basis of agricultural products. Prestigious world trade marks are preferred by consumers and replace domestic offers.
- Due to the fact that restitution to former owners and their heirs has been the main method of post-Communist land reform, the average agricultural enterprise is small and economically weak. Much in contrast to old EU members, also administrative, social and economic supportive structures are missing.
- Migration flows are directed towards better economic prospects. This means in general selective migration from rural to urban space leaving older, less qualified and less active, also politically structure-conservative people behind. This means a decline of market production in favour of subsistence and a further reduction of potentials for innovation.

Where agriculture had to a high extent been collectivised in the Communist period (all countries to at least 85%, except Yugoslavia at only 32%), the administrative centres of large state and collective farms had not only acquired economic, but also educational, health care, social and cultural functions for the rural population. The dissolution of these large enterprises meant also the closing down of these extra-economic functions and very often no adequate replacement by central functions of villages and communes. This contributed to a reduction in quality of life in rural space.

TRANSITION IN SLOVENIAN RURAL AREAS

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Abstract
Transition in Slovenian rural areas
This paper discusses the changes in Slovenian rural areas after socio-economic changes in the post-socialist European states in the 1990s. It illustrates regional and national factors having effect on transition in Slovenian rural areas. Special emphasis is put on the analysis of structural indicators of socio-economic changes in the Slovenian rural areas in comparison to the neighbouring countries.
Slovenian population is strongly attached to their traditional rural way of life. When ranging people's life values, care for maintaining the rural landscape, assuring the quality of life in relation to nature and production of healthy food come out among their highest priorities. The mentioned fact implies an elaborate analysis of interdependence between the economic impacts of trade economy and realisation of common European agricultural policy in relation to maintaining traditions of living and farm management in Slovenian rural areas. Thus, evaluation of national agricultural policy and development of rural area through indicators showing land use categories, individual farm sizes and their ownership structure, the share and mobility of rural population and individual farms' production orientation, are a good indicator of transition in Slovenian rural area.

Key words
rural development, agriculture, common European policy, development indicators, regional disparities

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1. Introduction

Diversity and indigenous development are typical of the European agricultural areas. In the EU-27, rural areas (predominantly rural and intermediate regions) represented 90% of the territory and 54% of the population in 2005. The corresponding shares for predominantly rural areas were 53% of the territory and 17% of the population. Rural areas are therefore particularly important in terms of territory. These are, in terms of economics, nature and culture, complex areas which are all different from one another and have experienced different levels of adaptation to the socio-economic structural changes in the 20th century, particularly in the 90s.

Structural changes can be ascribed not only to the natural and geographical facts, but increasingly to the external factors such as the quality of the natural and social heritage. High level of development in some agricultural areas in Europe shows that a rural-based activity in itself is not necessarily a burden to dynamic economic development and jobs growth. Even if economic activity tends to be concentrated in more urban areas, rural areas generate 42% of the Gross Value Added (GVA) in EU-27 and provide 53% of the employment, these shares being larger in the new Member States (74% and 83% respectively), (Eurostat 2009).

Not that long ago, agricultural areas were treated as being homogenous and experiencing equal barriers and developmental opportunities. This way of thinking no longer suits the real situation in the European region. Nowadays, the common characteristics of agricultural areas are low population density and high percentage of agricultural land-use of space. However, due to the diversity in rural development in different regions, specific regional and local conditions should be considered. Among the Member States, the importance of rural areas varies from the more "urban" ones (BE, NL, MT) to the more "rural" ones (IE, FI, SI) along a continuum where Intermediate Regions can play a major role (CY, LU, CZ, EE, SK, BG, UK, LT) , (Eurostat 2009).

The experience from the past has shown that multilateral projects are of rising importance for regional development and territorial cohesion in the programme area comprising Austrian, Hungarian, Slovenian, Italian and Croatian border regions. Therefore the programme partners consider it important for the programme design and implementation to widen the scope of the cross-border programmes and to take care of the needs and opportunities of multilateral projects. The law on balanced regional development that Slovenia introduced in 2005 gives foundation to the establishment of development regions and cohesion regions.

Through the extension of the eligible territories, added value and higher level of cross-border cooperation will be achieved with the activities, which will have a broader impact on the development of the overall territory. It will be easier to fulfil the objectives related to the Lisbon strategy (research institutions, universities, etc., additional regional resources and competences). Development programmes are focused on developing economic areas, regional municipal and traffic networks and protecting sensitive areas in terms of ecology (Lorber 2008-a).

Slovenia borders with the countries which had developed in different social-economic conditions. Italy and Austria were developmentally connected with the European market of the EU-15. Hungary was a member of the Eastern-European

political and economic system until 1989 and Croatia, which, together with Slovenia, developed within the socialist planned economic system of the SFRY until 1991.

Transitional processes as a result of socio-economic changes in the Eastern-European countries affected the standard patterns of regional European development. The European integration process is a multi-layered one and tends to have different effects in different European areas. Many rural areas have undergone a successful process of structural change and independent development.

However, regional disparities are significant, and not only among the countries that developed under different socio-economic conditions, but also within individual countries, where considerable regional disparities can be observed, in particular between the urban and the rural areas.

Tab. 1: Regional disparities, NUTS 2 level, 2006.

	2006	2006 GVA in %		
	GDP in EUR/person	Agriculture	Industry	Service
Slovenia	15504	2,0	34,5	63,5
Western Slovenia	18350	1,4	28,1	70,5
Eastern Slovenia	12680	3,6	42,1	54,2

Fig.1: Regional disparities, NUTS 2 level, 2006.

There is no doubt that revitalisation of agricultural areas and assuring sustainable rural development poses a major challenge for the post-socialist countries, particularly in their border regions (Lorber 2008-b).

2. Socio-economic situation in rural areas

In most rural areas, a first characteristic is the low level of concentration of the population: at EU-27 level, population density varies from 36 inhabitants/km² in predominantly rural areas to 548 inhabitants/km² in predominantly urban areas. In most Member States, population density did not evolve significantly in rural areas between 1995 and 2005. In Slovenia, population density varies from 81 inhabitants/km^2 in Predominantly Rural region (PR) to 141 inhabitants/km^2 in Intermediate region (IR), (Eurostat 2009).

At EU-27 level, the income per habitant is by 28% to 32% lower in rural areas and generally increases with a higher urban character. In the new Member States where the general level of income is about half of the EU-27 average, (Slovenia is an exception – 10% below the EU-27 average) the gap between predominantly rural areas and predominantly urban areas is accentuated. In Slovenia, it is 32% lower in rural areas (71% EU-27) than in intermediate areas (102% EU-27).

Tab. 2: Employment by main sectors, 2006.

	Agriculture	Industry	Service
EU-27	6,3	25,1	68,6
Slovenia	10,0	35,1	54,9
Austria	5,5	27,5	66,9
Hungary	4,9	32,4	62,7
Croatia	17,3	28,7	54,0
Italia	4,2	28,8	67,0

Source: SURS, EUROSTAT

The primary sector still represents 18 % of the employment and 5 % of the value added in rural areas of EU-27. This situation is more marked in the new Member States, with the corresponding shares standing at 29 % and 9 % respectively (Slovenia – PR 14.1 % and 3.9 % ; IR 5.2% and 1.2 %). In general, even in rural areas, the majority of the economic activity depends more and more on the service sector. This trend should increase in the coming years as, between 2000 and 2005, the relative importance of the primary sector in the economy of the rural areas in EU-27 decreased by 6.3 percentage points in terms of employment and by 1.2 percentage points in terms of value added, (Eurostat 2009).

With around 13.44 mio persons employed in 2005 in EU-27, the primary sector (agriculture, hunting and forestry) represented an important part of the EU economy in terms of employment: 6.2% for EU-27, ranging from 1% in United-Kingdom,… Slovenia 10 % (14.1 % in PR and 5.2 in IR)... to 33% in Romania.

Tab. 3: GDP and Share of Sectoral GVA in %, 2007.

	2007	Gross value added in %, 2007		
	GDP/person	Agriculture	Industry	Service
EU-27	24800	1,9	26,5	71,6
Slovenia	16600	2,0	34,5	63,5
Austria	32800	1,9	31,1	66,9
Hungary	10000	4,2	29,5	66,3
Croatia	8443	6,8	30,2	63,0
Italia	25900	2,0	27,0	70,9

Source: SURS, EUROSTAT.

In terms of value-added, the EU-27 primary sector reached around 182 bio Euros in 2005 and accounted for 1.8% of GDP, ranging from 0.4% in Luxemburg…2.4 % (3.9 % in PR and 1.2 % in IR) in Slovenia to 9.5% in Romania.

The importance of primary sector in EU-27 is declining. Between 2000 and 2005, its share diminished by 1.8 percentage points in terms of employment (Slovenia 2.8 %) and by 0.5 percentage points (Slovenia 0.6% ; 0.9 % PR and 0.2 % in IR) in terms of value-added , (Eurostat 2009).

3. Transition in agriculture sector

In 2005, agriculture utilised 172 mio hectares in EU-27 (Slovenia 0.488 mio hectares) of which 60% were dedicated to arable crops, 32% to permanent pastures and 6% to permanent crops (Slovenia 35.9 %, 58.1 % and 5.7 %). As the distribution depends mainly on natural conditions, there are major variations between (and generally within) Member States. Typical examples are the importance of permanent crops (vineyards, olive trees) in dry areas of Mediterranean countries (e.g. EL, CY, IT, PT, ES) or the major share of permanent pastures in mountain or rainy areas (e.g. IE, UK, SI, AT, LU, NL) , (Eurostat 2009).

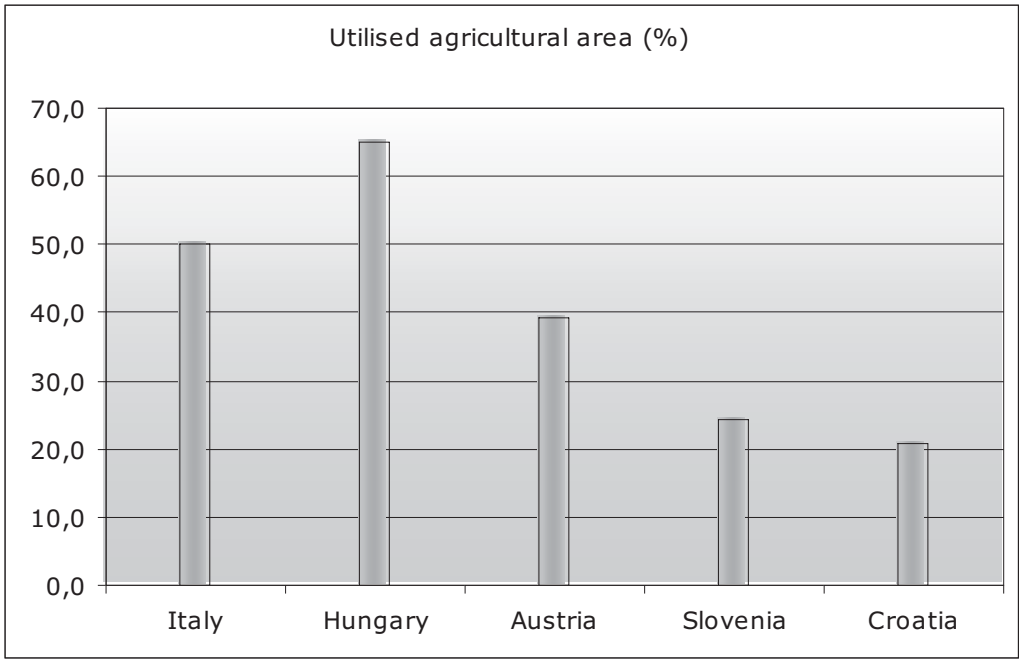
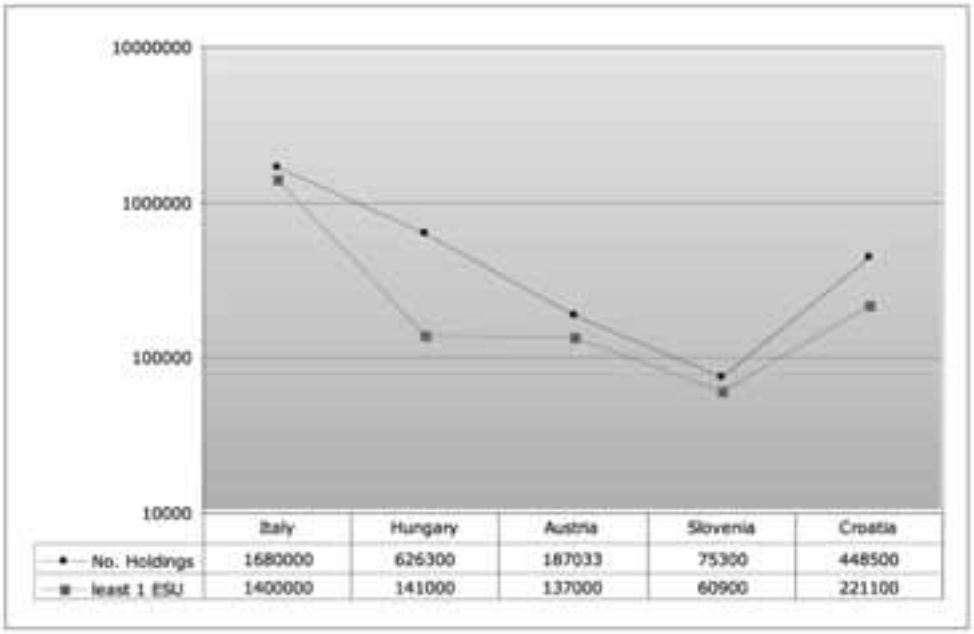


Fig. 2: Utilised agricultural area UAA.

Natural conditions are one of the deciding factors in development of agriculture. A very lively relief is typical of Slovenia and the share of UAA in Less Favoured Areas (LFA) is one of the highest in the EU-27. Merely 7.6 % of UAA can be found in the non-LFA (EU 27 46%, EU 15 41.5% and EU 12 44.2%). The largest share of UAA can be found in the mountain LFA, namely 69.5%, which is the highest in the EU-27. Therefore, the above-average level of permanent pastures and well developed livestock farming do not come as a surprise.



	Italy	Hungary	Austria	Slovenia	Croatia
No. Holdings	1680000	626300	187033	75300	448500
least 1 ESU	1400000	141000	137000	60900	221100

Fig. 3: Farm Structure Survey, 2006.

There were 14.5 mio farms in EU-27 in 2005 (Slovenia 71,500 in 2007), with an average size of 12 hectares, varying from 1 hectare in Malta…6,5 hectare in Slovenia… to 84 hectares in Czech Republic. In general, farm sizes are higher than the average in EU-15 (with the exception of EL, IT and PT) and lower in the new Member States (with the exception of CZ, EE and SK). Variations in structure among regions of the same Member State are in general much lower in new Member States (with the exception of CZ and HU) than in the old ones. In Slovenia, the lowest average size is 5.5 hectares in Spodnje-Posavska Region and 7.7 hectares in Notranjsko-Kraška Region, (Lorber 2008-c).

Variations between Member States and regions are even greater when measuring the ESU on average, the economic size of farms in the new Member States is ten times lower than in EU-15 (the Czech Republic is the only new Member State above the EU-27 average economic size that stands at 10.5 European Size Units; Slovenia 4.6).

Differences in economic farm size distribution in percentage of farms in different size classes are particularly noticeable. The proportion of farms < 2 ESU in EU-27 is 61.5%, EU-15 29.4%, EU-12 - 83.2%, and Slovenia 48.3%. In the range between 2 and 100 ESU, the distribution for EU-27 is 38.5%, EU-15 70.6%, EU-12 - 16.8 %, and Slovenia 51.5%. The proportions of farms larger than 100 ESU are the following: EU-27 – 2.0%, EU-15 – 4.7%, EU-12 – 0.2% and for Slovenia – less than 0.1% , (Eurostat, 2009).

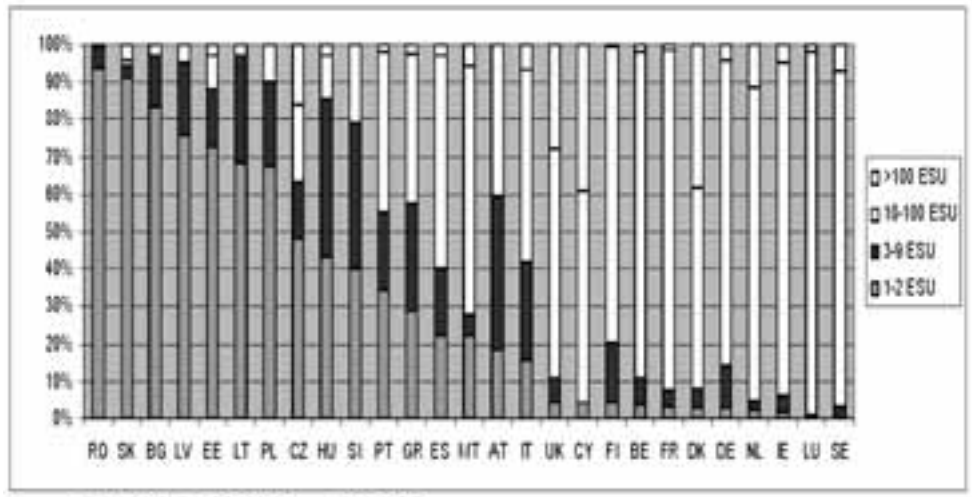


Fig. 4: Number of holdings per economic size of farms (ESU).

Due to historical reasons, high fragmentation of property in the time before transition is typical of the new Member States. Only in the recent years, the number of farms has been decreasing in comparison to the average size of farms which has been increasing.

The total labour force in agriculture represents around 12.7 mio annual work units for EU-27 (Slovenia 95,000). The basic feature of agriculture in the EU is family farming with 1 to 1.5 full-time jobs, though there are significant variations between Member States. In southern countries of EU-15 and in most New Member States, there are many holdings with less than 1 full-time job. On the other extreme, in some regions, agriculture production is based on very large agricultural holdings organised in legal entities and mainly based on non-family labour force.

Very small farms that could be considered as based on semi-subsistence activities are very important in some Member States, particularly in the New Member States. In 2005, there were around 6.4 mio holdings (44% of EU-27, Slovenia 54 %) in which more than 50% of the production was self-consumed. These farms covered 12 mio hectares (23% of EU-27) and used 3.8 mio annual work units (52% of EU-27), (Eurostat, 2009).

Changes in labour productivity in agriculture between 2000 and 2005 are particularly reflected in the new EU-12 Member States with annual growth of 8.8% (Slovenia 7.9%). Such rapid growth is a result of structural changes in the economy and agricultural policy on the EU and national levels.

Gross Fixed Capital Formation in the EU-27 reached 49 bio Euros in 2005, of which 93% took place in the EU-15. The rate of investment, measured by the ratio between the Gross Fixed Capital Formation and the Gross Value Added, was around 33% for the EU-27 but was half in the new Member States than in EU-15 (19% and 35% respectively). In EU-15, it varied between 14% in Spain and 91% in

Luxembourg. Among the New Member States, high rates (at least 40%) are observed in the Baltic States, in Czech Republic and in Slovenia, (Eurostat, 2009).

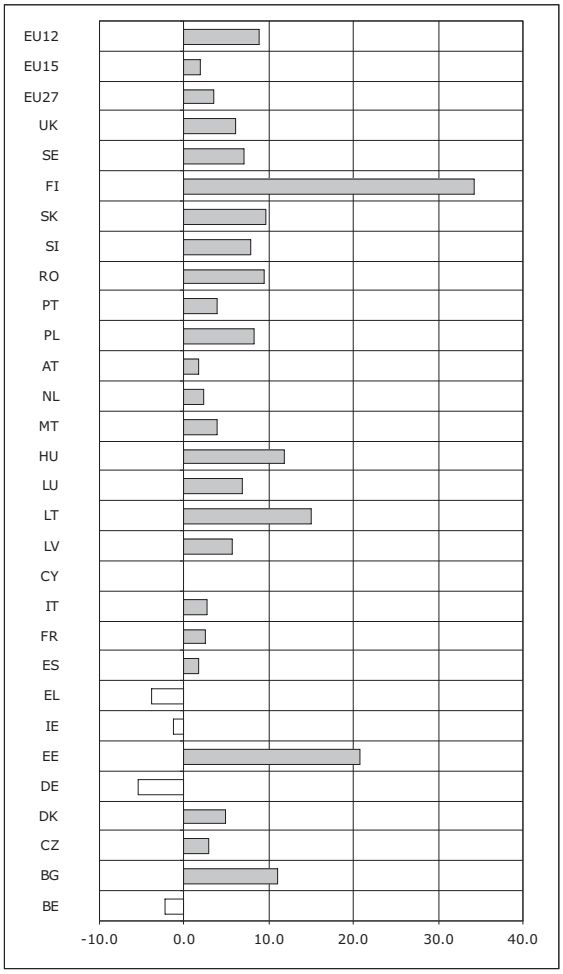


Fig.5: Average Annual Grawth Rate of Labour Productivity in Agriculture, 2000 to 2005.

4. Diversification and quality of life in rural areas

Rural development in Europe comprises a number of different spatial trends, systems and factors. Many rural areas have undergone a successful process of structural change and independent development, while many of them are still facing them. Structural weaknesses can be deteriorated by natural factors such as peripheral location, relief configuration, unfavourable climate changes, lack of water, etc. Agriculture as a source of income in still very important in these areas, however, its competitiveness is still relatively low.

According to definitions, a family farm manager is considered as pluriactive if he carries out any activity other than farm work for remuneration, be it on the holding

itself (farm diversification), on another holding, or as employee in a non-agricultural enterprise. Farm diversification is understood as the creation of any gainful activities that do not comprise any farm work but are directly related to the holding i.e. use its resources or products, and have an economic impact on the holding.

In the recent years, supplementary activities (pluriactivity) among the farmers and diversification of economic activities on farms have expanded a great deal. The most important activities comprise processing of farmer's own products (EU-27, 55.8%; Malta, 93.8%; Cyprus, 92.5%; Portugal, 86.2%; Italy, 84.0%; Romania, 73.4%; Hungary, 62.7%, etc.), different tourism activities (EU-27, 7.1%, United Kingdom, 56.8%; Austria, 35%; Slovenia, 20.0%; Ireland, 19.6%), and contractual seasonal works activities (EU-27, 11.3%, Bulgaria, 72.8%; Finland, 55.9%), (Eurostat 2009).

Slovenia possesses ideal conditions for farm tourism which can successfully contribute to the development of rural areas by favourable environmental conditions and attractive landscape, favourable locations in relation to urban centres and appropriate infrastructure.

There are many factors affecting the development of supplementary activities (other gainful activities). Farmers, considering the size of their farm, choose one option or another. Supplementary activities (pluriactivity) are the domain of smaller farmers, while diversification is chosen at larger farms. The proportion of supplementary activities in small farmers (0-2 ha) amounts to 41%, while the farms > 100 ha this proportion amounts to only 15%. Inversely, the proportion of small farmers in diversification of farms amounts to 10%, and the large ones to 23%.

The type of farming is another important factor in making decisions on taking up supplementary activities. Some of the activities demand far more presence and work than the other. The share of pluriactive family farms tends to be the highest at farms involved in intensive cattle farming (38%), while being the lowest at farms specialised in milk production and horticulture (15%).

Like the farm size, the type of farming may also influence the kind of diversification activity set up: contractual work is more frequent on farms specialised in field crops, processing of farm products on farms specialised in permanent crops. As for tourism, its - so far modest - development is mainly linked to farms specialised in grazing livestock.

Human capital is a very important factor for pluriactivity and diversification of farms. In addition to the age structure, good educational structure is important here. Therefore, the assistance policy for rural areas is based on improvement of the age structure of the owners of family farms and on promotion of education and entrepreneurial mind-set (Kolnik 2009).

Unfortunately, we are also faced with the process of marginalisation where agriculture is no longer profitable. It is then when changes in land use practices occur which could undermine the foundations of regional economies. Lately, intensive forestation of agricultural areas and depopulation of have been noticed in Slovenia.

Structural changes in rural development bring about more opportunities than risks. Diversification enhances opportunities for investment and additional income as well

as promotes nature and landscape protection. The most daring predictions say that new information and communication technologies can quicken decentralised development in rural areas and enable establishment of small and middle-sized enterprises.

5. Common Agricultural Policy

Common Agricultural Policy was designed to facilitate productivity in agriculture. After the reform in 1992, financial support was given mainly as a reimbursement for the abandonment of land use. Between 1993 and 1994, an area of approximately 6 million hectares of agricultural land was abandoned. This initiative increased agricultural income particularly in the EU areas where agriculture was intensive even before, and the farmers were getting paid sums equal to their real former income. In terms of development, the areas where agriculture had been less intensive were in a worse position this way, which brought even larger dichotomy between different agricultural regions.

Studies on spatial impact of common agricultural policy on income, labour market, the infrastructural and natural resources revealed a close connection between agriculture and rural areas. This induced proceedings toward accelerated development of rural areas. The results tend to vary and depend on the individual region, specific geographic-, environmental-, cultural- and socio-economic conditions, and partly of the type of production and regulation of the market.

Intensification, concentration and specialisation in agricultural production had negative impact on spatial development: monotonous landscape; abandoning traditional methods of cultivation; use of expansive wetland areas, marshes and natural pastures; polluting ground water due to the increasing use of pesticides and fertilizers, which affected the decrease in biodiversity.

Nowadays, we understand the significance of agricultural policy in a wider economic and social context of agricultural areas. Agricultural development is connected to assurance of sustainable agricultural production, use of environment protection measures and greater diversification in use of agricultural land. Taking into account the given natural resources and the structure of Slovenian agricultural holdings, rural area tourism is an opportunity for an additional income source at agricultural holdings. In the context of offer and demand for healthy food, tourism gives new market perspectives for development of organically grown food and for sustainable rural development. Local communities are increasingly paying attention to investment programmes for the environment which opens new perspectives and possibilities.

6. Conclusion

The future in sustainable development of rural areas lies in development of autonomous development perspectives and discovering domestic potential as well as in integrating with other regions according to the bottom up principle of cooperation. The necessity of integral consideration of cities and countryside as one whole functional region is of special importance here. Small and middle-sized cities are the generators of regional economic development in a polycentric system of cities. These cities represent centres of employment which, with their infrastructure, enable development of service activities in the region and provide access to larger

labour markets. Cities in scarcely populated rural areas bear special significance in maintaining the settlement structure and cultural landscape.

In the open-market system, rural areas with unfavourable production structures are faced with international competition. They can improve their competitiveness by producing high quality agricultural crops and products, using adequate marketing strategies and by rediscovering the multifunctionality of agriculture – ecologic- and organic food production. Sustainable rural development is enabled by returning to old, environment-friendly production- and processing technologies.

Obtaining these goals requires support to regional education centres. Further education and promotion of entrepreneurial mind-set will help increase the proportion of pluriactivity and diversification of family farms. Further reduction in number of farms and increase in average farm size will, along with higher productivity, are a basis for subsequent rural development.

The future of Slovenian rural areas depends on implementation of measures provided in the national agriculture development programme, harmonized with the European Directives. The local environment itself will decide whether the opportunities given will be turned to advantage, their advantages recognised and their development potentials focused, in accordance with the bottom up principle, in the right direction towards the intended goal of sustainable landscape development.

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TRANSITION IN SLOVENIAN RURAL AREAS

Summary

Slovenian population is strongly attached to their traditional rural way of life. Rural areas are therefore particularly important in terms of territory. These are, in terms of economics, nature and culture, complex areas which are all different from one another and have experienced different levels of adaptation to the socio-economic structural changes in the 20th century, particularly in the 90s.

Structural changes can be ascribed not only to the natural and geographical facts, but increasingly to the external factors such as the quality of the natural and social heritage. Nowadays, the common characteristics of agricultural areas are low population density and high percentage of agricultural use of space. Slovenian space borders with the space of the countries which had developed in different social-economic conditions. Italy and Austria were developmentally connected with the European market of the EU-15. Hungary was a member of the Eastern-European political and economic system until 1989 and Croatia, which, together with Slovenia, developed within the socialist planned economic system of the SFRY until 1991.

Transitional processes as a result of socio-economic changes in the Eastern-European countries affected the standard patterns of regional European development. Many rural areas have undergone a successful process of structural change and independent development.

However, regional disparities are significant, and not only among the countries that developed under different socio-economic conditions, but also within individual countries, where considerable regional disparities can be observed, in particular between the urban and the rural areas. There is no doubt that revitalisation of agricultural areas and assuring sustainable rural development poses a major challenge for the post-socialist countries.

There were 71,500 farms in 2007, with an average size of 6,5 hectares, the lowest average size is 5.5 hectares in Spodnje-Posavska Region and 7.7 hectares in Notranjsko-Kraška Region. Due to historical reasons, high fragmentation of property in the time before transition is typical. The basic feature of agriculture is family farming with 1 to 1.5 full-time jobs., agriculture production is based on family labour force.

Many rural areas have undergone a successful process of structural change and independent development, while many of them are still facing them. Structural weaknesses can be deteriorated by natural factors such as peripheral location, relief configuration, unfavourable climate changes, lack of water, etc. Natural conditions are one of the deciding factors in development of agriculture. A very lively relief is typical of Slovenia and the share of UAA in Less Favoured Areas is one of the highest in the EU 27. Agriculture as a source of income in still very important in these areas, however, its competitiveness is still relatively low. Slovenia possesses ideal conditions for farm tourism which can successfully contribute to the development of rural areas by favourable environmental conditions and attractive landscape, favourable locations in relation to urban centres and appropriate infrastructure.

Human capital is a very important factor for pluriactivity and diversification of farms. In addition to the age structure, good educational structure is important here. Therefore, the assistance policy for rural areas is based on improvement of the age structure of the owners of family farms and on promotion of education and entrepreneurial mind-set.

Unfortunately, we are also faced with the process of marginalisation where agriculture is no longer profitable. It is then when changes in land use practices occur which could undermine the foundations of regional economies. Lately, intensive forestation of agricultural areas and depopulation of have been noticed in Slovenia.

The future in sustainable development of rural areas lies in development of autonomous development perspectives and discovering domestic potential as well as in integrating with other regions according to the bottom up principle of cooperation. The necessity of integral consideration of cities and countryside as one whole functional region is of special importance here. Small and middle-sized cities are the generators of regional economic development in a polycentric system of cities.

The future of Slovenian rural areas depends on implementation of measures provided in the national agriculture development programme, harmonized with the European Directives. The local environment itself will decide whether the opportunities given will be turned to advantage, their advantages recognised and their development potentials focused, in accordance with the bottom up principle, in the right direction towards the intended goal of sustainable landscape development.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DIVERSITY IN AUSTRALIA'S COTTON-PRODUCING COMMUNITIES

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Abstract
Economic and Social Diversity in Australia's Cotton-producing Communities
Australia's highly profitable cotton industry is geographically constrained to districts in northern New South Wales and Southern Queensland. However, the rural towns servicing the industry are facing unprecedented stress on account of fierce commercial competition between them, many years of drought during the 2000s, technological innovation in cotton production, the chance occurrence of non-agricultural economic opportunities, and even ethnic composition. Our research focuses on the role of innovative small business in overcoming community stress and we have selected a small sample of six local government areas to examine this link in depth. The selection of a representative sample entailed the classification of cotton communities on the basis of their economic and social profiles and how they had evolved over the inter-census period 2001-06. This analysis surprisingly showed that cotton growing regions are highly differentiated not just at a single point in time (2006), but also in their development trajectories. This considerably complicated the process of sample selection, but also demonstrated the diversity of rural settlement.

Key words
diversity of rural settlements, non-agricultural activity, cotton industry, innovative SME's

The editor received the article on 11.11.2009.

1. Introduction

The authors are currently working on economic and social prognoses for Australia's cotton producing communities and how their commercial and community leaders might best tackle the task of securing their futures, especially through the use of innovative business management techniques[1] (Kotey, Sorensen and Reavell 2009). Our starting point was a detailed analysis of economic and social conditions in cotton communities as portrayed by 2006 census data and changes occurring over the five years since the previous census. We expected to find a small number of community types and that these would be evolving sedately between the two censuses in question. The conditions discovered confounded such expectations and revealed great heterogeneity in both current conditions and local economic and social evolution for the study localities over the 5 years since the previous 2001 census. This exploratory work helped to improve our understanding of spatial variations in economy and society among cotton producing local government areas (LGAs), prior to selecting a representative sample of LGAs where we could investigate the behaviours of innovative small businesses in considerable detail.

Our purpose here is to sketch briefly the geography of Australia's cotton industry and to both describe and explain current socio-economic conditions in cotton communities. A brief final section explores the implications of such variable conditions both for public policy in general and attempts by local businesses to secure their community's future. It is also obvious that some localities are more sustainable than others in the long run, and we canvass reasons why.

2. On the Cotton Industry

Cotton is a major Australian crop produced within a limited range shown in Fig. 1, mostly in the Murray Darling Basin (MDB) system – an area twice the size of France and roughly 2000km N-S and 1000 km E-W. The industry developed during the 1960s in the Gwydir and Namoi river catchments of Northern New South Wales[2], operated by a few large corporations like Auscott. These locations are still the heartland of cotton production, as shown in Fig. 2. Since then, the industry has prospered and expanded geographically across the MDB and has become notable for its global price and quality competitiveness and 98% export orientation. These achievements depend on intensive research and development: genetic modification (pesticide resistance, lower water up-take, fibre quality); ecological sustainability; nutrient needs; optimal tillage regimes and the use of precision agriculture, among others. This large scale and high quality production provides growers with high returns on capital, despite expensive outlays on (a) laser levelling of fields, (b) irrigation storage and distribution works, (c) specialist cotton harvesters (all picking is mechanical), and (d) modern ginning facilities to remove impurities and produce pure cotton lint. Ninety-five percent of farms, for example, plant transgenic cotton, and it is easily Australia's most profitable crop.

[1] This work is funded by a large grant from Australia's Cotton Catchment Communities. Cooperative Research Centre based in Narrabri, NSW, Australia.

[2] http://www.freeessays.cc/db/41/sff255.shtml [Brief history of Australian cotton industry accessed 28.09.09].

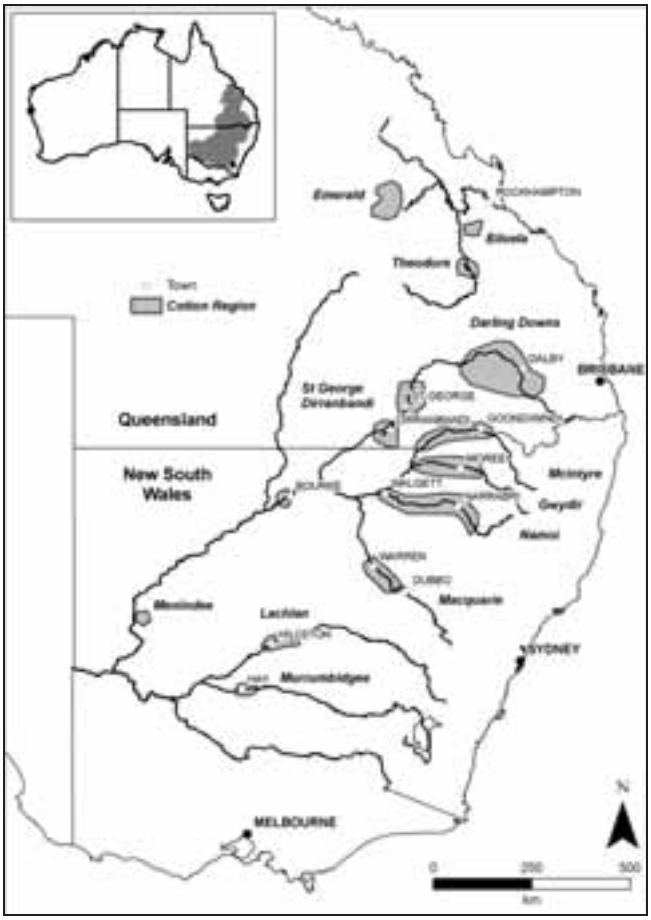

Fig. 1: The Spatial Distribution of Cotton Production.

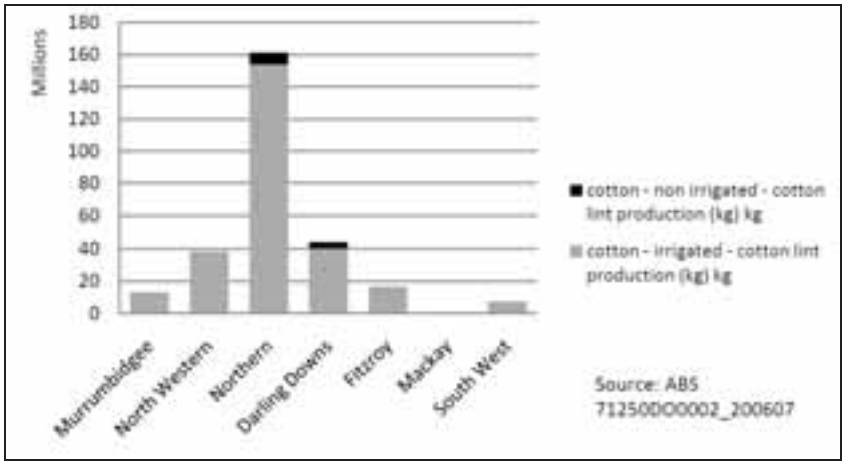

Fig.2: Regional variations in Lint Production 2006-2007.

The crop is to some extent a high risk one. Its export orientation exposes producer income to fluctuating cotton prices, severe exchange rate movements, and producer subsidies in competing nations (e.g. up to US$240,000 per farm in the United states). The crop is about 90% irrigated and most of the water comes from vast inland storage dams holding run-off from the headwaters of the Murray-Darling river system. On-farm capture of intermittent stream flows, as at Cubby Station on the Balonne River system near St George in southern Queensland, augments the major dams. Additional water comes from groundwater reserves, especially on the Condamine River near Dalby. Groundwater is a more reliable source of irrigation water than surface flows for the time being, but is subject to over-extraction and depletion. Dependence on irrigation is, then, a second regional development nightmare, especially when the MDB has just been through a maybe 1 in 100 year drought. It has lasted 7 years in southern growing areas and, although less elsewhere, it greatly depressed output. There were some signs of recovery in the northern MDB catchments of the Namoi, Gwydir, McIntyre, Condamine and Balonne systems after good rains from late 2008 onwards. Fig. 3 shows the volatility of production in recent years arising from drought.

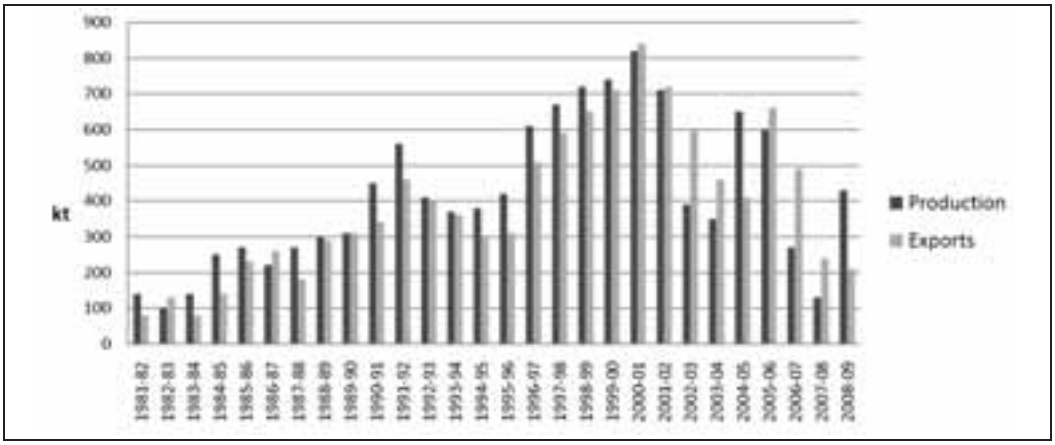

Fig. 3: Variable Production and Export

Volatile production makes for some interesting producer – community dynamics. The well-being of most Australian rural towns, which lie well beyond the commuting range of large cities, is dependent on agricultural profitability and consequent farmer outlays on both production and consumption goods. Long droughts, like the current 7 year drought in southern NSW and northern Victoria, are therefore a major stressor for small towns because storages tend to empty quickly, curtailing agricultural production for extensive periods[3]. However, there are some mitigating conditions. Cotton is so profitable that farmers can live off the income from a single good season for up to three years. Other less water intensive crops such as wheat, canola, and lucerne for fodder can sometimes substitute successfully in a drier year.

While this helps farmers, it is less use to cotton dependent service businesses, which (a) engage in such production-related activities as picking and ginning,

[3] See http://www.mdba.gov.au/water/waterinstorage and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murray-Darling_Basin

spraying and top dressing, and transport; or (b) the supply of capital items like pumps, fencing, on-farm water storages, handling facilities, and laser levelling. Without employment and income, often highly skilled service workers quickly migrate elsewhere, leading to circular and cumulative job and population losses. In Australia's case, migration opportunities have been plentiful during one of the greatest mining booms of all time, which fuelled large shortages of all kinds of skilled labour. Indeed, Australia avoided technical recession during the current global financial crisis, is now growing strongly, and unemployment reached only 5.7%. History has shown that rural workers are often mobile in both directions, so they could flood back to agriculture after several good production years under normal seasonal conditions.

3. Socio-Economic Conditions in Cotton Communities

These dynamics may well affect each cotton dependent community in different ways, according to their rainfall conditions, farm investment and production strategies, the local importance of cotton production, regional opportunity sets, business management skills, and the socio-economic complexion of rural residents. In 2006, cotton's share of the value of regional agricultural production was 24% in Northern NSW, about 10% in northwest NSW, the Darling Downs and SW Queensland, and lower elsewhere. Some rural towns have better opportunities than others in tourism, downstream processing of agricultural produce, mining, accessibility to growing places and their spill-over effects, quality lifestyles or cultural and historical associations. They also have different capacities to realise opportunities through quality leadership, strategic capacity, and entrepreneurial ability.

On the down-side places face a variety of potential threats specific to their circumstances. For example, Aboriginal populations typically have low education skills and income and places with large Aboriginal populations may be handicapped in retaining services. Some places are also much more dependent on irrigation water than others or perhaps less able to husband available supplies. They may therefore suffer greater swings in economic fortune, exacerbated where government buy-backs of irrigation licences occur. At Bourke in northern NSW, a major local agricultural producer (Tourale Station) sold its water entitlements to the government, and it has been estimated that the Bourke economy could lose 10% of its trade. The MDB Authority is also tightening water regulation concerning ground water extraction and harvesting surface flows by individual farmers.

On top of these, the normal adjustment processes of rural settlements will occur, favouring the growth of larger, better located, and more resource rich communities (Sorensen 1990). Strong evidence points to the high profitability of large farm enterprises, leading to rapid consolidation of holdings and accelerated rural depopulation. However, larger agricultural producers often have different purchasing behaviours compared with small ones, tending to favour larger service centres. Finally, the well-being of rural communities is often age-related since older people tend to have lower disposable incomes and different spatial perceptions to the younger set. Thus, social and economic conditions will vary between places both at a single moment in time and over the course of a few years.

Fig. 4 hypothetically demonstrates a variety of possible population and service trajectories over a 10 year period for different types of cotton-producing community

facing a major shock (with year zero = 100). That shock is often drought, but could also be disease, a slump in commodity prices, or a drastic change in such public policy settings as water entitlements or the introduction of carbon emissions trading. Settlement type A, which includes regional service centres on major transport routes, has broadly based economies which are often reasonably insulated from system shocks. Type B places suffer large cyclical gyrations in production and population for the reasons given, but usually recover. Types C and D suffer permanent damage of differing severity according to quality of both local resources and human (especially business) and social capital.

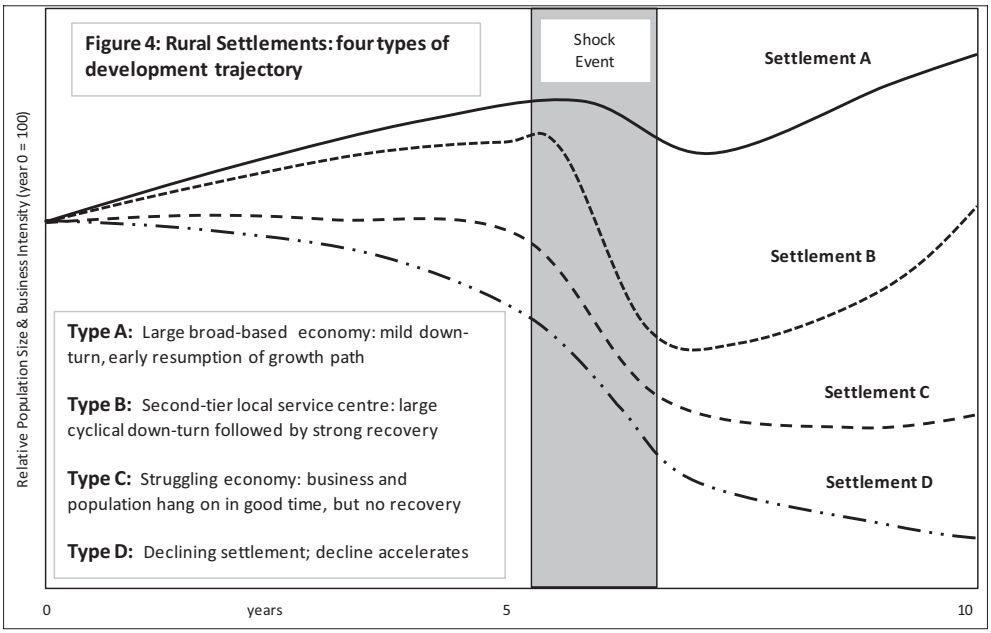

Fig.4: Rural Settlements: Four types of development trajectory.

We explored some of these issues via census data – of the types listed in Tab. 1 – for all 19 local government areas (LGAs) hosting cotton production in 2006 and 2001. Such data omit important information on several crucial issues for place well-being, including social capital, quality of institutions, leadership and entrepreneurship, infrastructure, the cost and availability of finance capital, and environmental resources. Nevertheless, the census data reveal many important aspects of place and how they are changing over time. Two separate data sets, each of about 50 socio-economic variables, were constructed, providing (1) a 2006 statistical snapshot and (2) a picture of changes occurring between 2001 and 2006. Where necessary, data were standardised to percentage, ratio values or deviations from the mean to enable ready structural comparison between LGAs irrespective of population size. Because of a high level of autocorrelation between variables, each data set in turn was subjected to a principal components analysis to create a small number of statistically significant composite descriptors. This resulted in 9 synthetic variables with Eigenvalues >1.0 for 2006 data and 13 synthetic variables for the 2001-06 change data. The computed component scores on each synthetic variable for all 19 LGAs were then subjected to cluster analysis using the Ward method. Two separate runs classified LGAs on the 2006 and 2001-06 change data. The Ward

procedure progressively groups observations (here LGAs) with like profiles across the synthetic variables and maximises their separation from other groups in 9 (or 13) dimensional space. The iterative grouping process progressively loses information as clusters form and grouping ceases when statistically significant information loss occurs. The merits of this specific method are discussed in depth by Sorensen and Weinand (1991).

Tab.1 : Selected variables.

	Variable Types (2006 Data) 49 Separate Items Selected	**Variable Types (2001-06 Change Data): All 49 (2006) Variables, plus extra items shown (=52)**
Demographic Structure	Age Structure (5 age cohorts)	
	Gender Balance (M/F)	Separate Change in M & F
	Indigenous Proportion	Plus Change in Indigenous Population
	Median Age	
Income & Housing Expenditure	Median Individual and Household Incomes	
	Family Income Structure (6 income bands)	
	Median Housing Loan Repayments	
	Housing Loan Repayment Structure (4 bands)	
	Median Rent Paid	
	Rental Payments Structure (4 bands)	
Housing and Households	Median Household Size	
	Household Structure (3 categories)	
	Dwelling Type (3 categories)	
	Structure of Housing Occupance (3 categories)	
Work and Education	Unemployment Rate	Plus Change in Workforce Size
	Labour Force Participation Rate	
	Full- (part-) time Share	
	Share of Population with (a) Degree (b) Other Tertiary	
	Industrial Structure (4 categories)	
	Occupational Structure (3 categories)	

We were surprised by the outcome revealed in Tab. 2, which plots cluster memberships in 2006 against those arising from the change data. Remember, the clusters shown are those reached when information loss became great. The large number of single member clusters, for both dates, and the small sizes multi-members clusters mean that the socio-economic characteristics of cotton LGAs in 2006 were highly diverse and that the changes occurring within them over the 5 years to 2006 also differed substantially. Moreover a comparison of cluster membership between the two dates shown in Tab. 2 reveals few similarities. In one small instance, Hay, Narrabri and Warren had very similar socio-economic

conditions and change trajectories because they appear in the same cell in Tab. 2. However, their change patterns over 2001-06 were also similar to three other places (Goondiwindi, Dalby and Balonne) which were in other clusters in the 2006 analysis. Likewise, Gwydir and Wambo shared similar features with Hay, Narrabri and Warren in 2006, but belonged to another cluster according to their change data (see Fig. 1 for many of these locations).

Tab.2: Cluster Membership: 2006 data x 2001-06 data.

		2001-06								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2006	1	Balonne Dalby	Bourke Murrumbidgee					Moree Plains		
	2	Goondiwindi		Murilla						
	3		Banana				Emerald			
	4	Hay Narrabri Warren		Gwydir Wambo						
	5					Bauhinia				
	6				Chinchilla					
	7				Walgett					
	8								Narromine	
	9									Waggamba

Source: Computed by the authors.

Such heterogeneity means that many of the towns whose businesses we were studying encountered very different operating conditions, even before we added in the vagaries of social and human capital, local resources, or the significance of cotton production in the agricultural sector. We had to select just six towns for in-depth investigation of the roles and operations of innovative businesses in dispensing of producer and consumer services under uncertain conditions, but this had just become a difficult task. We may hypothesise that business conditions will be very different in all these places because of their diverse geographical environments and likely response mechanisms by businesses, residents and governments alike to adverse consequences of all kinds. This is important because the cultures of innovative businesses are likely to be shaped partly by their operating environments and partly by their managers' and indeed staff skills, knowledge, creativity and imagination, and focus.

Having selected these communities, the second stage of our project was to visit each of them for familiarisation with all the economic, social, political, institutional and environmental issues we have flagged. Such visits also aimed to identify innovative business that appeared to be operating successfully in high-risk environments. These will be the focus of the project's third stage when we will explore how small business operators work to secure their future viability. We anticipate finding many common approaches and strategies irrespective of locational circumstance. Equally, we expect personal traits and place characteristics will, in some degree, uniquely colour business management techniques, thereby increasing our understanding of the relative importance of spatial and behavioural issues in shaping rural regional economies. The businesses selected had to demonstrate an ability to ride out the roller coaster cycle of agricultural conditions and shifting small

town viability in a fiercely competitive market place. Note also that Australian federal and state governments provide very little support for any of the actors in this game compared with international standards. In fact, governments' financial contributions to gross non-metropolitan product, whether in the form of regional policy or farm support, have been calculated at c. 0.4% annually, a trivial amount (Hearfield and Sorensen 2009, Sorensen 2009).

4. Discussion

This project is timely because Australian agriculture and cotton in particular, face many unprecedented difficulties, which will test alike both community resilience and business adaptation. We have already noted the difficulties and changes imposed by:

- drought
- fluctuating international commodity prices (modified by fluctuating exchange rates)
- galloping new production technologies
- market-driven consolidation of farm holdings, leading *inter alia* to a long-term average annual decline in farm population of 1.5% (Sorensen, 2009)
- the rise and fall of different settlement types
- ever changing transport and service delivery settings
- changing government environmental regulations, and
- widespread lack of government financial support for rural communities.

These are complexly interlinked and, with exception of environmental regulation, largely market driven. Indeed Australia is ranked third out of 175 countries on the Heritage Foundation's scale of economic freedom after Hong Kong and Singapore[4]. The survival and resilience of communities operating in Adam Smith's laboratory depends largely on local effort: the strategies and tactics of small business and the quality of community leadership. Many geographical studies focus on the latter, but now it is time to examine the former, which appear to be central to the sustainability of place.

Furthermore, the pace of change in market systems is accelerating, whether in rural or urban settings. Whereas Europe and parts of north Asia are particularly bound up with defence of traditions, Australia has few traditions and those are readily set aside as a mobile society's attachment to place is relatively thin and new opportunities elsewhere are eagerly sought. This raises the interesting perspective that sustainable businesses and communities have to be far-seeing, imaginative and highly adaptive rather than backward regarding. So one element of our study entails formal scenario construction over a 10 year time horizon to get a feel for what might happen to cotton communities. We will then ask our business respondents about their expectations about their operating environments and assess their degree of foresight against the scenarios constructed. Our *a priori* expectation is that effective businessmen, judged by past and present performance, will also have strong and accurate future orientation. Given that their behaviours will be moulded partially by their operating environment, this will suggest a degree of community foresight and ability to adjust to changing conditions as they emerge.

[4] See http://www.heritage.org/index/topten.aspx for a list of the top 10.

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DIVERSITY IN AUSTRALIA'S COTTON-PRODUCING COMMUNITIES

Summary

I am currently working on economic and social prognoses for Australia's cotton producing communities and how their commercial and community leaders might best of about the task of securing their futures. A starting point for this project entailed detailed analysis of economic and social conditions in cotton communities portrayed by data from the the 2006 census and changes apparent from the comparable census five years earlier. I expected to find a small number of community types and that these would be evolving sedately between the two censuses in question. The conditions discovered confounded such expecations and revealed massive heterogeneity in both current conditions and local economic and social evolution for those localities engaged in cotton production.

This paper starts by sketching the geography of Australia's cotton production and the criteria for the selection of cotton communities studied. It then presents briefly the methods and results of the statistical appraisal. Thirdly, it explains the diversity of economic and social circumstance found. A fourth and final section explores the implications of such variable conditions both for public policy in general and attempts by local actors to secure their community's future. In this respect, it is obvious that some localities are rather more sustainable than others in the long run. Furthermore, it is possible to diagnose the factors apparently contributing significantly to sustained community viability. This, in turn, raises important questions about latent stress points as those factors potentially evolve in hostile directions.

THE USE OF ECONOMETRIC METHODS IN FAMILY FARM SUCCESSION STUDIES

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Abstract
The use of econometric methods in family farm succession studies
Farm succession is an important issue for any family farm, for the future structure of farming and for rural policy makers. This is the process whereby the skills, traditions and capital of farming are passed from one generation to the next. Scientists realized the importance of scientific investigation of succession on family farms no more than thirty or forty years ago, as the earliest studies bear dates from 1968 on (see i.e. Nalson 1968). There are many different scientific methods used to process surveys' data or to represent the process of farm succession; this paper offers a review of foreign and Slovene studies from the last 15 years, in which econometric methods are used to describe and analyse the family farm succession process.

Key words
family farm, farm succession, econometric methods

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1. Introduction

Scientific research on family farm succession has become more and more important presently, as many farms, especially in transition countries, face big structural changes (Potter and Lobley 1996, 172; Bohak and Borec 2008, 1).

According to Fennell (1981, 19-21), family farm succession is a process occurring over a long or short duration of time, during which a farm family plans a transfer of knowledge, labour, skills, management, control and ownership of the farm business from the retiring generation to the next generation. It involves the creation, preservation and, finally, the ultimate transfer of the farm business assets to achieve personal, family and business goals (Glauben et al. 2004, 1 and 2). Each family farm business is unique and there are no uniform instructions on how to accomplish succession. It is important to understand that many different factors affect the process; the most important are structural characteristics of the farm and the farm family (Kimhi and Nachlieli 2001, 49; Corsi 2004, 5; Kerbler 2007, 2 and 15). Which factors are really significant and how they work is the subject of interest of many international studies.

The literature on this topic was mainly published by social scientists, while agricultural economists mostly tackled farm succession from the fiscal point of view. Nowadays, agricultural economists focus more on various factors affecting succession by using econometric methods; while rural sociologists (by applying classical statistical methods) try to shed light on various practices and patterns of the process of farm succession, farm transfer and farmers` retirement.
This paper comprises a review of studies (authored by agricultural economists) in which econometric methods were used as a tool for the analyzing of statistical data from a survey.

The aim of this article is not to make a detailed analysis of the application of econometric methods or to estimate whether the chosen method in each presented study is appropriate or not. Our intention is only to present which questions concerning the succession process are researched with the use of various econometric methods.

2. The use of econometric methods in the family farm succession process- the case of 5 foreign and 2 Slovene studies

2.1. Foreign studies

Kimhi (1995) theorized about the choice of successor in family farms. He outlined the theoretical farmer’s dynastic utility model and presented a solution for its maximization. Finally, the writer suggested that the farm should be attractive to the children and that sometimes it might be optimal for the family to choose a successor who is not the best candidate for running the farm.

The problem of optimal time for transferring the farm belongs to the family of intergenerational transfer problems; a Miljkovic (1999) paper attempted to disentangle this problem. The aim of Miljkovic's work was to model the optimal time for transferring the family farm from parents to children in less developed economies using the option value approach. The results of his work are dependent on culture/county and family specific implications, but, generally, parents will likely be ready to transfer the farm if they perceive that losses from the delay of transfer

due to lack of their ability to adjust to new technology/market conditions are increasing, while their more educated succeeding child has a better chance of improving farm operations.

The exit from farming was studied by Kimhi and Lopez (1999). These authors presented farmers´ retirement decisions in connection with succession considerations. The household survey was conducted using a questionnaire administered by mail; almost 500 farmers from Maryland (USA) answered the questions. In order to estimate determinants of the retirement decisions, respondents were asked to rate several possible considerations that may affect their retirement decision. To find out what is the relative importance of succession considerations, data was processed using descriptive statistics and by presenting a regression of the importance of succession considerations. The authors found that retirement and succession decisions are not separable and that the relative importance of succession considerations is positively related to the importance of the farm enterprise relative to other income-generating activities of the family.

In 2000, Taylor and Norris published a paper about fairness and conflict over the transfer of the farm from the perspective of the younger generation in Canadian farm families. The authors interviewed 36 successors (35 sons and 1 daughter) aged from 20 to 47 years and their 36 off-farm siblings (25 sisters and 11 brothers), who ranged in age from 25 to 46. A multiple regression analysis was carried out in order to determine the predictive effect of the three independent variables, respondents' agreement on the rule of fairness, agreement on fairness of transfer and perception of family warmth or conflict. The authors concluded that higher levels of conflict were predicted particularly when the farm successor and off-farm siblings do not agree that the farm transfer is fair.

Mann (2007) developed a theoretical model for farm succession in which identity-related variables gain in importance at the outset of the process and environmental factors become more significant during the later stages of succession. To test the model, a mailed survey of 731 potential farm successors between the ages of 14 and 34 was carried out in Switzerland (questionnaire). Data was processed in three steps. The first step involved a factor analysis to identify the core variables that affected occupational choice. Then, an ordered probit analysis was developed in order to check how attitudes towards farming changed during adolescence. A third step was an attempt to verify the theoretical model through another ordered probit analysis. The results revealed that for both men and women, the prospect of working alongside their parents is an important factor in the decision to take over the family farm.

2.2. Slovene studies

Juvančič (2002) developed an econometric model that quantifies the impact of determinants of structural changes on agricultural holdings in Slovenia. Two sub-models closely connected to the problem of farm succession, i.e. a model of farm survival and a model of farm growth were presented. The author decided to use a probit equation for the first model and an OLS (Ordinary Least Squares) equation for the second. Data for the research was taken from the Census of the population, households, housings and agricultural holdings in the Republic of Slovenia in 1991. The author found that the probability of farm survival is higher in less favoured areas, as the basic characteristic of such areas is lower accessibility of off-farm employment.

Tab. 1: Overview of family farm succession studies using econometric methods.

Study	Data collection method and sample	Data processing methods	Objectives	Type of publication
1. Kimhi (1995)	no data	derivation of equations to build a model of differential human capital investments (model of simultaneous equations)	to present a model for specific human capital investments in an altruistically motivating farming society with a heterogeneous population	article in a journal
2. Miljkovic (1999)	no data	option value model (derivation of equations)	to model the optimal time for transferring the family farm from parents to child(ren) in less developed economies	article in a journal
3. Kimhi and Lopez (1999)	household survey in Maryland; use of a questionnaire in spring 1992; 469 respondents	ranking of retirement considerations, descriptive statistics, regression of the importance of succession considerations	to present and discuss retirement and succession considerations of family farm operators in Maryland	article in a journal
4. Taylor and Norris (2000)	interview, 36 (35 sons, 1 daughter) successors aged between 20 and 47, 36 off-farm siblings (25 sisters, 11 brothers) aged between 25 and 46	paired t-test. Chi-square test, correlation matrix, multiple regression analysis	to examine fairness and conflict over transfer of the family farm from the perspective of the younger generation	article in a journal
5. Mann (2007)	from the Farm Transfer Data Network and questionnaire for farmers (775 respondents) and their children (454 respondent boys, 277 respondent girls)	3 steps: (i) factor analysis (ii) ordered probit analysis: how attitudes towards farming changed during the time (iii) ordered probit analysis to verify the theoretical model	to develop a theoretical model for farm succession in which identity-related variables influence occupational choice at the beginning of the process and environmental factors gain in importance during the later stages of succession	article in a journal
SLOVENE AUTHORS				
6. Juvančič (2002)	census of the population, households, housings and agricultural holdings in the Republic of Slovenia in 1991	probit equation for the model of farm survival and OLS equation for the model of farm growth	to examine the factors affecting labour allocation and dynamics of labour supply on agricultural holdings in Slovenia	dissertation
7. Kerbler (2007)	questionnaire; 789 mountain farms with farm operators aged 45 or more	probit model, tobit model	to study the relationship between succession on mountain farms in Slovenia and their socio-geographical structure	dissertation

Kerbler (2007) researched the relationship between succession on mountain farms in Slovenia and their socio-geographical structure. He tried to uncover how succession status and decisions on farms are influenced by the factors of the socio-geographical structure of mountain farms with the use of the bivariate probit model and how the same factors influenced timing of succession using the tobit model. The survey was mailed to 3000 Slovene mountain farms with farm operators aged 45 and over. The final sample included 789 mountain farms. The results suggested that succession status and decisions on farms are influenced by almost all studied factors (the position of the farm, the size of the farm and the farm family, the farm income, the presence/absence of the successor, the age/education of the family members, machinery, etc.). Tab. 1 briefly shows the presented studies on the family farm succession process.

3. Conclusions

In the case of presented papers, scientists apply econometric methods when they want to answer questions about optimal timing of farm transferral from parent to child, optimal timing for retirement, choice of successor, fairness over farm transfer, key succession considerations and possibilities or necessity of farm exit.

In the other family farm succession studies (i.e. Kimhi and Nachlieli, 2001, 42-58; Väre, 2003, 2-12, etc.), the econometric method is used to investigate the discrepancy between planned and actual succession or to ascertain the likelihood to retire or to have a successor.

In our opinion, we can expect more studies on family farm succession in the future since this issue is of vital importance for farm survival, as most farms without a declared successor often end up in decay.

The process of farms disappearing could kick start the beginning of other losses such as abandoning of farmed areas, the loss of farming tradition and the loss of employment. For this reason, it is necessary to study the factors that may influence the succession status on a farm and to acquaint agricultural policy makers with those results in order to plan new policy measures or to assess the validity of the old ones.

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THE USE OF ECONOMETRIC METHODS IN FAMILY FARM SUCCESSION STUDIES

Summary

In this paper, we presented 5 foreign and 2 Slovene studies on the family farm succession process. The econometric method was used to describe and analyze the process in all presented papers, although the research questions were quite different.

Kimhi (1995) presented the problem of the choice of a suitable successor in family farms. Using the econometric method, he developed the theoretical farmer's dynastic utility model and presented a solution for its maximization.
The aim of Miljkovic´s (1999) paper was to model the optimal time for transferring the family farm from parents to children in less developed economies using the option value approach.

The exit from farming was studied by Kimhi and Lopez (1999). To find out what the relative importance of succession considerations was, authors presented a regression of the importance of succession considerations.
As emotions also play an important role within the family farm succession process, Taylor and Norris (2000) prepared a study about fairness and conflict over transfer of the farm. A multiple regression analysis was carried out in order to answer the scientific question.

Mann (2007) carried out a survey in order to test the theoretical econometric model for tracing the process of becoming a farm successor on Swiss family farms. The results revealed that for both men and women, the prospect of working alongside their parents is an important factor in the decision to take over the family farm.
In Slovene scientific space, we found only two econometric studies connected with the problem of family farm succession.

Juvančič (2002) developed two econometric models closely connected with the problem of farm succession, i.e. a model of farm survival and a model of farm growth. The author decided to use the probit equation for the first model and the OLS equation for the second.

Kerbler (2007) researched the relationship between succession on mountain farms in Slovenia and their socio-geographical structure. He tried to find out how succession status and decisions on farms are influenced by the factors of the socio-geographical structure of mountain farms by using the bivariate probit model and how the same factors influenced timing of succession using the tobit model.

In this contribution, we presented a few problems connected with family farm succession that were disentangled with the use of econometric methods. In the other family farm succession studies, the econometric method is also used to investigate the discrepancy between planned and actual succession or to ascertain the likelihood to retire or to have a successor.

In our opinion, we can expect more studies on family farm succession in the future since this issue is of vital importance for farm survival, as farms without a declared successor often end up in decay.

INCERTITUDE ET INNOVATIONS TERRITORIALES EN ESPACE AGRICOLE PÉRIURBAIN

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Abstract
Incertitude et innovations territoriales en espace agricole périurbain
Croiser incertitude et innovations territoriales permet d'avancer dans la compréhension des processus et des dynamiques des espaces agricoles périurbains, apparemment contradictoires, pris entre des mécanismes d'appropriation liés à différents usages et d'abandon lié au recul des activités agricoles. Ce questionnement permet d'utiliser ce paradoxe comme un angle de lecture stimulant. Les exemples du Languedoc-Roussillon et de l'agglomération de Montpellier sont une illustration de ces processus de recomposition socio-spatiale dans lesquels les espaces agricoles sont confrontés à de nouvelles dynamiques incertaines et innovantes. De ce fait, ces espaces apparaissent être des espaces multifonctionnels à inventer. Ils pourraient occuper une nouvelle place dans la structuration d'une urbanité à l'échelle des agglomérations actuelles.

Key words
espaces agricoles périurbains, incertitude, innovations territoriales, interstices, terrain vague, Languedoc-Roussillon

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1. Introduction

Les réalités et les évolutions actuelles des espaces agricoles périurbains se prêtent particulièrement bien à l'étude du processus d'innovations territoriales dans un contexte caractérisé par l'incertitude. Comment est pensée et vécue cette interface qui bouscule les réalités socio-spatiales et contribue à la construction de nouvelles spatialités, territorialités et temporalités ? En quoi les caractéristiques apparemment contradictoires de ces espaces (entre un espace approprié et un espace disponible) expliquent l'émergence de processus territoriaux innovants dans lesquels ces espaces agricoles trouveraient une nouvelle légitimité ?

2. Un enjeu social majeur : Penser et vivre les espaces agricoles périurbains

L'espace agricole périurbain est intégré dans la limite mouvante de l'espace urbain, marquée par les dynamiques d'étalement urbain et par des processus de recul des espaces agricoles. Le devenir de ces espaces est de ce fait incertain et nourrit des inquiétudes chez les populations résidentes, les gestionnaires locaux, les propriétaires et les usagers. Les spatialités , les territorialités, les temporalités sont bousculées, remises en cause, reconstruites à la mesure des nouveaux enjeux qui s'affirment sur ces espaces dont la multifonctionnalité et le multi-usage. Dans ce contexte, les innovations territoriales pourraient être considérées comme des tentatives de reprise en main de l'évolution de ces espaces, en y réinscrivant un ou des projets, c'est-à-dire en y recréant de l'ordre (Ballandier 1988). Ces espaces seraient-ils des *« lieux perdus et à réinventer, des non-lieux plein de signes et vides de sens, des hors-lieux confinés aux frontières »* (Agier 2008) ? Les dynamiques actuelles créent des ruptures paysagères, environnementales, des discontinuités géographiques qui renforcent le sentiment d'incertitude et génèrent ainsi des initiatives de mise en place de nouvelles territorialités et territorialisations. Ce contexte incertain est vu à la fois de façon positive et négative puisqu'il ouvre le champ des probables et des possibles.

A ce titre, les espaces agricoles périurbains font figure de caricature tellement les dynamiques sont prégnantes (évolutions des variables socioéconomiques, évolutions des politiques publiques, …). Pour autant, ces interactions entre incertitude et innovations territoriales ne disent rien sur la nature des incidences de l'incertitude sur les innovations territoriales.

- Est-ce le contexte d'incertitude qui génère des innovations territoriales qui seraient la traduction d'une adaptation et d'une recherche de solutions capables de répondre à ce contexte ? Cela signifierait que les acteurs disposent de capacités d'action variables dans un contexte où certains sont fragilisés tandis que d'autres gagnent en présence, voire que certains apparaissent. Il y a donc un élargissement des acteurs présents en même temps que les problématiques territoriales se renouvellent. Les territoires changent sans que l'on sache très bien quels vont être les nouveaux usages, pratiques et appropriations. Que vont devenir les espaces agricoles périurbains ?
- Est-ce les innovations territoriales qui génèrent de l'incertitude ? Dans ce cas, elles correspondraient à des expérimentations qui ne seraient pas encore validées ? Comment s'organisent les acteurs autour et pour un territoire renouvelé et/ou émergent ?

La nature de ces questions tient de l'exercice de prospective, et notamment elles permettent d'approcher les façons dont les acteurs se projettent dans l'avenir. Si ce contexte d'incertitude est par bien des aspects contraignant, il est aussi une source possible de créativité, d'imagination dont les acteurs peuvent se saisir. Les espaces agricoles périurbains sont, dans ce contexte, mobilisés ou remobilisés à d'autres fins que celle d'être la seule variable d'ajustement de l'étalement urbain. Ils pourraient peut être participer à la volonté sociale et politique de redonner du sens au développement urbain.

Cette communication s'inscrit dans le projet collectif de l'équipe de recherche[1] dans laquelle je me trouve. Il est centré sur un objet concret : les projets agri-urbains, que nous définissons comme une procédure de fabrication intentionnelle des rapports entre les activités agricoles et les territoires, un processus de réflexion collective de construction de projets suivi de sa mise en œuvre. L'hypothèse est que ces projets, en tant que processus d'innovations territoriales, transforment les rapports des acteurs des territoires urbains à leur agriculture et des acteurs agricoles aux territoires de l'urbain. Les espaces agricoles périurbains sont de plus en plus différenciés par la diversité des pratiques et des projets mis en œuvre. Deux orientations méthodologiques sont privilégiées, (i) analyser les projets « agri-urbains » : pratiques, sociabilités, dispositifs, gouvernance territoriale …, (ii) caractériser les espaces agricoles périurbains : formes, dynamiques, différenciations internes … Ils ont été mis en pratique et expérimentés sur des exemples locaux portant sur l'agglomération de Montpellier par le biais d'une typologie des espaces agricoles (UAP[2]) et à l'échelle de la région Languedoc-Roussillon par l'analyse des mutations des espaces agricoles et dynamiques d'urbanisation (P. Abrantes, 2008). Ce travail relève à la fois d'une recherche académique et d'une recherche-action.

3. Postulat, questionnement, problématique

Mon travail porte sur des espaces agricoles localisés en zone périurbaine, et plus particulièrement ceux d'entre eux qui ont perdu partiellement ou totalement leurs usages agricoles. Ces espaces font figure de marges agricoles qui deviennent de plus en plus des marges urbaines (selon la variable classique d'ajustement de l'étalement urbain, en limite du front d'urbanisation). Qu'est-ce qui caractérise ces espaces agricoles ? S'ils représentent un potentiel, reste à savoir pour qui et pourquoi ?

Mon postulat méthodologique serait que ces espaces agricoles sont des trous dans la trame urbaine et périurbaine, insérés dans un système instable et mouvant. Ils seraient instables dans le temps à venir proche et lointain, et représenteraient une *« interface entre la fin d'un monde et le début d'un autre »* (M. Vanhamme 2008). Leur avenir serait incertain car il est difficile d'identifier l'ensemble des usages possibles à venir. La nature des projets les concernant reste très souvent à définir. Ont-ils vocation à devenir de nouveaux espaces publics, ouverts, accessibles ? Peuvent-ils contribuer à la structuration d'une nouvelle urbanité (dans le sens de vivre et faire ensemble) ? Considérer que les espaces agricoles peuvent participer à la création d'une urbanité à l'échelle des agglomérations actuelles change complètement les perspectives et la signification de ces espaces. Ces questions fondamentales amènent les acteurs concernés, au-delà de leur diversité, à

[1] Equipe « innovations territoriales » de l'UMR Innovation, http://www.montpellier.inra.fr/umr-innovation/
[2] Unité agro-physionomique

travailler, réfléchir ensemble, voire à penser collectivement à un projet pour ces espaces. La nature des échanges entre acteurs agricoles et acteurs urbains, leur capacité à faire ensemble sont aussi très incertaines car elles bousculent les organisations habituelles et sont au-delà des cadres administratifs et juridiques habituels.

Pour répondre à ce questionnement, j'ai retenu les notions d'interstices et de terrains vagues comme grille d'analyse. Je souhaite confronter ces deux termes qui me semblent caractériser la réalité des espaces agricoles périurbains. D'une part, si l'interstice est *« ce qui résiste encore, du moins temporairement, aux politiques foncières de l'aménagement. C'est la réserve de disponibilité d'une ville. Sa qualité principale est sa résistance à l'homogénéisation et à l'appropriation définitive »*, elle donnerait à ces espaces de nouvelles qualités dont pourraient se saisir les acteurs. D'autre part, le vague est lié au flux, à l'indéterminé et au vide et le terrain est lié à la limite et est un support d'appropriation. Je retiens de cette confrontation sémantique que ces espaces agricoles seraient des espaces interstitiels qui auraient donc une position paradoxale.

Des espaces paradoxaux qui d'une certaine façon ressemblent aux friches industrielles décrites par M. Vanhamme : *« de grands espaces vides, inoccupés, disponibles, qui vont permettre de faire autre chose, autrement, ailleurs »* (M. Vanhamme 2008). Ils apparaissent disponibles pour de nouveaux modes d'occupation car les usages traditionnels ont fortement décliné, voire ont disparu. Ils sont investis par de nouveaux usagers et peuvent être qualifiés de multifonctionnels. La multifonctionnalité interroge l'urbanité possible de ces espaces entre *« espace de culture et de sociabilité »*. Quelles sont les nouvelles réalités spatio-temporelles de ces espaces ? Comment sont-ils réinvestis, et au nom de quel idéal ou projet urbain ?

4. Un questionnement adapté à la réalité de la région Languedoc-Roussillon (sud de la France)

Cette région du sud de la France connaît depuis le début des années 1960 des changements sans précédent, exceptionnels dans leur ampleur. Elle a connu une progression démographique moyenne de l'ordre de 1,1 % par an entre 1962 et 1999 pour atteindre 2 296 000 habitants en 1999 et 2 534 144 en 2006. La progression démographique à l'échelle de la région est de 10,4 % entre 1999 et 2006, soit le 1er rang national. La croissance démographique est encore plus forte pour le département de l'Hérault (1,5 %) et pour l'aire urbaine de Montpellier entre 1990 et 1999 (1,88 %). Cela s'accompagne d'une pression immobilière exceptionnelle et d'un recul des activités agricoles dont l'ampleur attendue est inégalée à ce jour :

- *« D'ici, à 2015, on prévoit que les surfaces viticoles passeront de 290 000 à 190 000 hectares (…)*
- *Chaque année, la construction des maisons individuelles consomme en moyenne près de 1 000 hectares dans la plaine agricole languedocienne. Chaque année, environ 10 000 hectares de friche potentielle s'ajoutent aux terres abandonnées les années précédentes (…) »*

Ces évolutions agricoles sont différenciées entre les secteurs de secano et de regadio. L'élevage ovin a quasiment disparu des zones de garrigues (secano) où il était encore fortement implanté dans la première moitié du XX° siècle. Les

documents des archives départementales de l'Hérault permettent de comptabiliser environ 8 000 à 10 000 moutons qui transhumaient dans les années 1920-1921. Cette pratique de la transhumance était très courante à l'époque compte tenu de la sécheresse estivale qui ne permet pas d'alimenter les animaux en plaine. Cette pratique n'est plus qu'anecdotique dès les années 1960-1970. Ainsi de vastes espaces ont été progressivement libérés, en particulier de grands domaines (tel l'exemple du. Mas Dieu en périphérie de Montpellier avec 540 ha, cf. http://afm.cirad.fr/documents/7_Ressources/Sagert/FR/alinat.pdf. Les zones de petit parcellaire ont été aussi affectées.

5. Le cas de la commune de Pignan, en zone périurbaine de Montpellier

A l'image de l'ensemble des communes de la zone littorale de la région Languedoc-Roussillon, la commune de Pignan a connu une croissance démographique exponentielle. Elle est passée de 2 200 habitants en 1968 à 5 700 en 1999 et 6 200 en 2006. Les prix des terres agricoles abandonnées ont atteint des prix inégalés, landes, garrigues, oliveraies abandonnées et embroussaillées s'échangent entre 1 et 5 €m² tandis que les terres maraîchères aux environs de 2 €m². On assiste donc à une déconnexion entre la valeur agronomique des terres et leur valeur d'échange marchand. L'intérêt porté à ces terres n'est plus seulement productif. Ceci se vérifie par l'évolution des activités agricoles. Les surfaces agricoles de la commune recouvraient en 2000 700 ha contre 1 700 ha en 1979. On ne compte d'ailleurs plus que 20 exploitants en 2000 contre 52 en 1979. On constate un véritable déclin des activités agricoles productives notamment dans les zones sèches, et une concentration de la production agricole sur les terres intensifiables et irrigables de plaine.

Cette évolution est contradictoire avec la façon dont la commune de Pignan parle de l'activité agricole dans son document d'urbanisme. Dans le PLU[3], le conseil municipal de Pignan affirme qu'*« il s'agit de pérenniser l'activité agricole présente, activité historique qui joue un rôle identitaire et garant de l'entretien du paysage ».* La commune est donc confrontée à un véritable hiatus qui l'oblige à intervenir dans la gestion de ces anciens espaces agricoles. Pignan n'est pas un exemple isolé car de plus en plus de collectivités locales et territoriales intègrent les problématiques et les espaces agricoles dans leurs projets territoriaux. Cette contradiction apparaît aussi à l'échelle intercommunale qui joue un rôle de plus en plus important en France dans la gestion de l'urbanisme et de l'étalement urbain.

Ainsi dans le SCOT[4] de Montpellier, l'espace agricole est qualifié d'espace naturel et agricole. Dans le PLU de Pignan, les espaces agricoles abandonnés sont qualifiés de zone naturelle répondant à des objectifs précis : sauvegarde des sites naturels, création d'une coupure d'urbanisation, préservation du paysage et des écosystèmes, protection contre les risques naturels et les nuisances.

A coté de cette vision très urbaine, ces anciens espaces agricoles sont mobilisés localement dans un projet de remise en valeur d'anciennes oliveraies, porté à la fois par la commune de Pignan et par la coopérative oléicole de Pignan. On peut donc repérer dans ce projet, une stratégie productive de la coopérative oléicole et/ou de propriétaires mais aussi une stratégie de contrôle social de cet espace de la part de la commune (volonté de se servir de ces espaces pour limiter le risque incendie de

[3] Plan local d'urbanisme
[4] Schéma de cohérence territoriale

forêts et le mitage urbain). A coté du projet économique et du projet de la collectivité locale, on peut identifier une troisième stratégie, portée par des associations, qui serait plus collective, centrée sur la maîtrise du cadre de vie.

6. Des espaces agricoles abandonnés qui seraient un espace des possibles : espace mou ou espace structurant ?

En prenant appui sur les résultats issus du travail de master de Lysiane Grivel (UM3), ces espaces agricoles abandonnés correspondent à un espace mou. Le morcellement foncier entre une multitude de petits propriétaires (963 parcelles dont 260 en indivision, près de 780 propriétaires) rend extrêmement difficile toute action collective, voire annihile les efforts des acteurs publics, notamment ceux de la commune. L'exemple de l'AFAL[5] Les Olivettes (créée en 2004) est très éclairant de cette difficile mobilisation des propriétaires privés. Cette association ne regroupe que 36 propriétaires et 21 ha sur 500 ha potentiels. Comment construire une action collective sur un espace aussi restreint et qui de plus ne remplit pas toutes les conditions attendues (continuité de l'espace par le juxtaposition de parcelles contiguës, accessibilité de ces parcelles). En effet, le potentiel agronomique est limité et les efforts de réhabilitation et donc le coût seront élevés. Ainsi, 40 % de ces surfaces sont couverts par des friches et des landes, 33 % sont des oliveraies abandonnées, 13 % sont occupés par des habitations et des terrains de loisirs et seuls 7 % sont cultivés et entretenus par l'agriculture. En bref, ce contexte apparaît peu favorable. Lysiane Grivel a réalisé en 2007 une enquête auprès des 780 propriétaires et a obtenu un taux de réponse de 20 %. Soixante sept personnes ne souhaitent pas revaloriser leurs parcelles. Les personnes souhaitant s'engager ont des parcelles complètement dispersées. L'accessibilité des parcelles est limitée et parfois absente.

Mais cet espace et ce projet ne sont pas seulement mous, ils sont aussi structurants car ils sont portés par deux acteurs fondamentaux que sont la commune et la coopérative oléicole de Pignan. Ces deux acteurs ont des possibilités d'intervention non négligeables, mais ils seront malgré tout pénalisés par l'inertie des propriétaires privés. Pour ces deux acteurs, il s'agit d'assurer la maîtrise foncière pour la commune, et de conforter un projet de développement économique pour la coopérative oléicole de Pignan (augmentation des volumes d'apport d'olives, maintien de la diversité des variétés locales d'olivier). En soutenant l'installation d'un berger, la commune utilise l'élevage comme un moyen d'entretien.

Ces projets sont saisis comme une opportunité par d'autres acteurs, tels les associations locales de défense du cadre de vie ou les Sociétés de chasse… qui y voient un moyen de faire avancer leur vision du territoire et de consolider leurs activités.

Ces espaces agricoles sont paradoxaux et ambigus. Ils sont à la fois marginalisés et marginaux, mais aussi de plus en plus investis et revendiqués par un grand nombre d'acteurs et pour des usages variés. Ces espaces sont de plus en plus complexes et devraient connaître un changement de statut dans un futur proche, mais il est difficile d'être assuré sur leur avenir.

[5] Association foncière agricole libre est constituée en vue de réaliser des opérations répondant à des objectifs agricoles. Les propriétaires restent libres de la mise en valeur et de la gestion de leurs terres. Elles sont gérés par l'ordonnance n°2004-632 du 1er juillet 2004 relative aux associations syndicales de propriétaires.

7. Un espace agricole périurbain multifonctionnel qui reste à inventer

Qu'ils soient, qu'ils restent ou qu'ils deviennent mous ou structurants, ces espaces agricoles abandonnés restent d'une certaine façon des trous, des creux dans la trame périurbaine qui se caractérisent comme un espace en devenir, une interface. Ils demeurent incertains car les efforts de réhabilitation sont loin d'être opérationnels.

Les investissements et les engagements qu'ils suscitent préfigurent une nouvelle urbanité. Ces espaces demeurent à la fois indéterminés, flous et de plus en plus appropriés. Le croisement et l'interférence de ces processus font de ces terres agricoles des espaces qui sont à la fois privés et publics. Privés parce que leur statut juridique est de cette nature, et que l'on observe des mécanismes d'appropriation et de fermeture, d'enclosure. Publics parce qu'ils connaissent une très grande diversité d'usages qui fait fi du statut de la propriété juridique. Cette superposition pose le problème de l'articulation entre la propriété et les usages et de la capacité des communautés locales à porter un projet centré sur les préoccupations du faire et du vivre ensemble. Va-t-on assister à la juxtaposition de différents projets ou aura-t-on la chance de voir émerger un projet collectif autour de ces espaces agricoles ? Rien n'est moins sûr quand bien même ces espaces agricoles sont abandonnés actuellement. L'abandon ne signifie pas que ces espaces se trouvent en dehors de multiples stratégies. J'oserai donc considérer que ces espaces pourraient s'apparenter à des espaces du quotidien, en référence à Georges Balandier (1983, 2008). Ils sont à la fois privés (le chez soi) de par leur statut juridique, mais aussi par le biais de stratégies de privatisation. Ils sont aussi des espaces « électifs de l'entre soi » portés par des groupes fermés. Ils pourraient être des espaces « ouverts mais très contraignants » dans lesquels pourrait s'effectuer « une activité collective régulière ». Cette classification pose, me semble-t-il, des questions sur la capacité des espaces du quotidien à être des espaces publics, dans la mesure où ces espaces publics supposent de dépasser un fonctionnement centré sur des relations sociales en milieu fermé. A quelles conditions ces espaces agricoles périurbains peuvent-ils conserver une ouverture, une accessibilité pour des usagers non encore identifiés ? Est-ce que les projets politique et économique de réhabilitation sont capables d'intégrer ce flou et de permettre le maintien d'une incertitude positive et constructive ? Cet enjeu qui n'est pas exprimé par les animateurs du projet me semble être essentiel dans la mesure où aucun d'entre eux n'est assuré de savoir ce que pourrait être l'urbanité de ces espaces.

D'ors et déjà, ces stratégies génèrent de nouveaux modes de gouvernance à l'échelle locale au nom d'une publicisation actuelle ou à venir, de la participation d'acteurs variés. Ces espaces pourraient devenir des espaces de créativité liée à leur multifonctionnalité. Cette créativité ne pourra vraisemblablement s'exprimer que si les acteurs s'autorisent à imaginer des modalités de faire et de vivre ensemble autres que celles données par le droit.

Ces interstices pourraient ne plus être seulement des trous mais de nouveaux lieux centraux dans le sens où ils permettraient d'imaginer un nouveau sens au développement urbain. Il me paraît judicieux de poser ces questions à l'ensemble du phénomène périurbain, en considérant que ces espaces agricoles révèlent ces évolutions.

8. Conclusion

Les espaces agricoles périurbains apparaissent bien être des limites, des interstices, des terrains vagues dont l'ambiguïté de leur statut représente autant un handicap qu'un potentiel. Leur relative disponibilité en accroît leur incertitude tout en rendant possible l'émergence d'une nouvelle forme d'urbanité. Ils sont donc marqués par des enjeux forts et une pression sociale croissante qui structure de nouvelles modalités de gestion dans lesquelles les agriculteurs partagent les décisions avec les autres usagers et gestionnaires.

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INCERTITUDE ET INNOVATIONS TERRITORIALES EN ESPACE AGRICOLE PERIURBAIN

Summary

Croiser incertitude et innovations territoriales permet d'avancer dans la compréhension des processus et des dynamiques des espaces agricoles périurbains, apparemment contradictoires, pris entre des mécanismes d'appropriation liés à différents usages et d'abandon lié au recul des activités agricoles. L'enjeu social majeur actuel est de savoir comment les acteurs pensent et vivent ces espaces agricoles périurbains et comment ils articulent le contexte d'incertitude et les processus d'innovations territoriales. Ces innovations peuvent permettre de repérer de quelles façons sont (re)mobilisés ces espaces.

Mon analyse est centrée sur les espaces dans lesquels les activités agricoles ont disparu, sinon reculé. Ces espaces font figure de marges agricoles qui deviennent de plus en plus des marges urbaines. Mon postulat scientifique serait que ces espaces agricoles sont des trous, des creux, des vides dans la trame urbaine et périurbaine, insérés dans un système instable et mouvant. Leur avenir serait incertain car il est difficile d'identifier l'ensemble des usages et pratiques possibles à venir. La nature des projets les concernant reste très souvent à définir. Les outils juridiques et normatifs sont très souvent insuffisants, voire inadaptées. Considérer que les espaces agricoles peuvent participer à la création d'une urbanité nouvelle à l'échelle des agglomérations actuelles change complètement les perspectives et la signification de ces espaces. Ces espaces paradoxaux apparaissent disponibles pour de nouveaux modes d'occupation car les usages traditionnels ont fortement décliné, voire ont disparu. Ils sont investis par de nouveaux usagers et peuvent être qualifiés de multifonctionnels.

Les exemples du Languedoc-Roussillon et de l'agglomération de Montpellier sont une illustration de ces processus de recomposition socio-spatiale dans lesquels les espaces agricoles sont confrontés à de nouvelles dynamiques incertaines et innovantes. Le cas de la commune de Pignan (ouest de l'agglomération de Montpellier) en est une illustration parfaite dans lequel se mélangent les intérêts et les stratégies d'un large panel d'acteurs.

Ces espaces apparaissent être des espaces multifonctionnels qui restent à inventer. Les investissements et les engagements qu'ils suscitent préfigurent une nouvelle urbanité. Ces espaces demeurent à la fois indéterminés, flous et de plus en plus appropriés. Le croisement et l'interférence de ces processus font de ces terres agricoles des espaces qui sont à la fois privés et publics, fermés et ouverts, appropriés et disponibles. D'ors et déjà, ces stratégies génèrent de nouveaux modes de gouvernance à l'échelle locale au nom d'une publicisation actuelle ou à venir, de la participation d'acteurs variés. Ces espaces pourraient devenir des espaces de créativité liée à leur multifonctionnalité. Cette créativité ne pourra vraisemblablement s'exprimer que si les acteurs s'autorisent à imaginer des modalités de faire et de vivre ensemble autres que celles données par le droit.

Ces interstices pourraient ne plus être seulement des trous mais de nouveaux lieux centraux dans le sens où ils permettraient d'imaginer un nouveau sens au développement urbain. Il me paraît judicieux de poser ces questions à l'ensemble du phénomène périurbain, en considérant que ces espaces agricoles révèlent ces évolutions.

Confronter un contexte d'incertitude et les processus d'innovations territoriales semble être une entrée analytique pertinente pour aborder des espaces originaux qui bousculent la partition entre le rural et l'urbain. Ce renouvellement conceptuel et méthodologique est une nécessité qui suppose quelques audaces scientifiques. De ce fait, cette communication se veut être plutôt un essai qui suppose la poursuite de mes travaux individuels et leur articulation avec les travaux de l'équipe innovations territoriales de l'UMR Innovation.

CONTESTED LANDSCAPE AND SPIRIT OF PLACE: THE CASE OF THE OLIVE TREES AND AN URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD IN ISRAEL

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Abstract
Contested Landscape and Spirit of Place: The Case of the Olive Trees and an Urban Neighborhood in Israel
Cultural heritage and cultural landscape are a set of human products reflecting the needs, thoughts and memories of society. They represent and symbolize relationships of power and control, from which they emerged, and the human processes that transformed and continue to transform them. Such transformations create new cultural landscapes and cultural heritage that often conceal the processes – political, social, cultural, ideological and economic, that have created them. The purpose of this paper is to analyze a contested geographical environment, where two cultures, the Jewish Zionist culture and the Arab Moslem culture, compete over the land and its cultural heritage, and therefore each of them, has its own interpretations. The aim is to define the landscape, its spirit and its representation, which emerge from these competitions and disputes; characterize it and analyze its symbols and its uses, primarily for the purpose of forming and constructing identities.
Keywords
Contested Landscape; Cultural Landscape; Icon; Symbol

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1. Preface

Cultural landscapes and cultural heritage sites developed in a geographical area for the needs of a specific community may undergo a change and become icons. In other words, they will not only reflect customs, events and ideology of the community, but in their manifestations they will represent values and messages to the in-group and to others. These values and messages will thus signify belonging to a group and testify to the ownership of the territory by the group. In the words of Jean Gottmann (1952),

> The abstract strength of an existing order is rooted in the spirit of the nation and its place or of the group of nations involved in their space…. What it signifies here is a psychological attitude resulting from a combination of actual events with beliefs deeply rooted in the peoples' mind. … These symbols are many and varied. A national iconography usually stops at a boundary; the frontier line is in grave danger when such is not the case.

This quotation expresses the idea that observing the landscape is a matter of subjective reference. This reference stems from the emotional attitude that society develops toward landscapes, sites and places.

The emotional attitude to cultural landscapes and cultural heritage sites and monuments is shaped by historical events, influential figures, religious and national characteristics, and fashionable effects and tendencies. Emotional attitudes to places and landscapes can be strengthened by education directed by national leaders and by interested bodies. As Gottmann (1952) claimed, the historical factor and local iconography combine to support the establishment of political authority over a certain area.

A cultural landscape or heritage site that has become an icon will change in status to a symbolic landscape. As such it can be analyzed in different ways. First, it may be analysed as a text (Duncan and Duncan 1988; Duncan 1990), and according to Terkenli (2001) as a valuable text, or as an irreplaceable archive (Holdsworth 1997; Ewald 2001) which reflects the society – its works of arts, its vernacular innovations, its ideas and its mores – at a specific time and place. Second, it may be according to its role in helping to coalesce community values and reconstruct social identities and local pride for certain groups, while excluding or erasing others. Such a role has been described by researchers who have emphasized the power of interpretation in modeling the societal image and identity (Duncan 1973; Cosgrove 1984; Duncan and Duncan 1988; Daniels 1993, 2004; Lowental 1991; Rose 1995; Duncan and Lamber 2002; Amit-Cohen 2008). A third possibility is to view the cultural landscape and cultural heritage sites as cultural products: a consumer product which, like any other economic or industrial product, undergoes refinement and improvement. Rowntree and Conkey (1980) developed this approach and claimed that the cultural-symbolic landscape and sites not only reflect a social structure, but also are an inseparable part of society, its landscapes and products. Finally, the formation process of symbolic landscapes and sites may be analyzed according to four criteria: 1) heritage and memory – historical documentation and observing the changes of the status of cultural heritage landscape and sites through time scale; 2) commemoration – the process that transforms the cultural landscape and sites into a symbolic landscape involving classification and categorization of the landscapes through the choice of values and messages to be preserved; 3)

representation and modeling – the means chosen to represent memory and its messages; and 4) purposes and functions.

These four components – history and memory, commemoration, representation and functions – occupy a significant place in the formation of society's identity as expressed and reflected in the symbolic landscape. Choosing the commemoration, the presentation, and how to "use" a symbolic landscape or a cultural heritage site often arouses broad public interest where opposing ideologies attempt to persuade each other. Perhaps more than any other cultural phenomenon, these attempts reflect the spirit of the era, its conflicts and sensitivities, and the political and national interests of various social groups.

The purpose of this article is to present the four components comprising the cultural-symbolic landscape and examine their expression in a contested geographical environment. Additional to the main purpose, a second objective is to suggest a new definition of cultural heritage or cultural landscape. To do so, I have chosen two geographical localities in Israel containing cultural heritage sites and cultural landscapes that have became symbolic. Prominent in these environments is an encounter between two societies, Jewish and Arab, both with a culture of memory, heritage and myths encompassing the four components of memory, commemoration, representation and function. The first such environment is an urban area, which encompasses two very dominant landscapes adjoining each other: a new commercial and business center alongside historical remnants consisting of a mosque and an old building which became a historical museum. This area and the commercial project are known as "Manshiya", the name of the former Arab neighborhood. The second environment is an agricultural area planted with olive trees with a contested significance for the two cultures.

2. History and Memory, commemoration and representation – theoretical background

Heritage and memory serve three primary functions – to supply continuity from the past to the present, to represent the culture, and thus create self-identity (Schwartz 1982). At the same time, memory and heritage are not permanent; they assume different forms and are shaped according to the mood of the time. Each memory begins as an intimate historical story, amended due to constraints of time and space, then additional layers are added to create "a mosaic of personal memories that are distinct from one another" (Ohana and Wistrich 1996, 27). It finally becomes a collective memory, part of the identity of the social group, whether small or large. To preserve its memory, the group needs to resort to commemorative activity. Such activity is vital for consolidating a social-cultural identity. Commemoration combines social, cultural, political, ceremonial and artistic activities constituting various representative expressions. These can be an original site or landscape, or a carefully designed artificial element with ceremonial and textual components. The choice of the landscape and its representation, the filtering and the caution exercised in their selection, are designed to guarantee the survival of the ethos within local and national memory. The representative function chosen for these means, sites, landscapes or objects is what transforms them into intermediaries of memory. These intermediaries include tombstones, monuments, sculptures, ceremonies, memorial days and holidays, street names and signs, historical structures slated for preservation, gardens, and natural or cultural sites and landscapes. Historical events and figures are often connected to these

"intermediary agents". Over time, they were sanctified and became a focal point of ritual (Lissovsky 2004).

Following this approach, research involving memory and heritage, commemoration and representation, can be divided into three groups: 1) sets of memory and the links between them which in turn form the basis for classifying subjects worthy of commemoration; 2) the form of their representation, which presents a choice of commemoration landscapes; and 3) cultural heritage sites and landscapes, their purpose and function**.**

3. Symbolic landscapes – their purpose and function

Often the functions of the cultural-symbolic sites and landscape expand and the landscape and site evolve into vicinity that meets contemporary needs. Such development stems from the social-cultural potential of the cultural heritage landscape and site, with their historical subject and design providing added value, which in turn contributes to the economic development of the sites and their significance. Expansion of the functions of cultural sites sometimes leads to a situation where sites and landscapes adopted by the larger community change their status by being perceived in the community consciousness as active landscapes rather than just symbolic sites.

The expanded designation of cultural heritage sites and symbolic cultural landscapes can be divided into three parts:
- The strengthening of communal identity, both on the local and the national levels (Troyansky 1994; Ashworth 1994).
- Economic development adjacent to the site that reinforces memory (vacation and leisure, assembly site, educational center) (Newcomb 1979; Ashworth and Larkham 1994).
- Advancing power and vested interests (Tudor 1972; Cohen 1989; Young 1990; Zerubavel 1994).

Since its war of independence in 1948, these three aspects have significantly affected the landscape of the State of Israel.

4. A Contested Landscape in Israel

Contested landscapes can be created in two ways:
- A common environment for more than one cultural or interest group, within which each group has its own separate cultural-symbolic landscape. Each group thus possesses the territory of its symbolic landscapes.
- An environment containing a joint cultural landscape for multiple groups, but to which each group ascribes different significance and purpose.

When an environment is contested, or when there is a struggle between two groups, with each group claiming ownership of the area, a struggle also ensues between the different icons of the groups. In the event of one group taking over the contested area, the result may well be a deletion of the symbols and icons of the group evicted from the disputed territory.

The geographical area called the Land of Israel by the Jews and officially named Palestine during the British Mandate (1918-1948), was populated by two principal

religious-ethnic groups: Jews and Arabs. All residents of this territory – Jews as well as Arabs – were Palestinians, i.e., residents of Palestine under the rule of the British Mandate for Palestine. Each cultural group developed its environs while shaping its unique symbols and iconography. Jewish society relied on symbols and icons about 3000 years old, some of which were located within the residential environment of the Arab population. Added to these were the icons of Zionist settlements, which began in the 1880s and were concentrated in the Jewish territory. The decision of the United Nations on November 29, 1947, to partition Palestine into two states – Jewish and Arab – was rejected by the Arabs who launched a war to thwart the partition. This war, which ended with ceasefire agreements signed in the summer of 1949, left some Jewish areas in the hands of the Arabs and some Arab areas in the hands of the Jews.

The Jewish areas taken over by the Arabs were emptied of all their Jewish residents. This happened to the residents of the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem, residents of the Gush Etzion settlements, the residents of Beit HaArava near the Dead Sea, and other areas. Arab rule erased almost every vestige of Jewish identity in its territory. All the old synagogues in the Old City of Jerusalem were destroyed, the tombstones in the old Jewish cemetery on Mount Olives were uprooted and Jewish settlements were razed to the ground.

In Arab areas taken over by the state of Israel in the same war, various processes transpired. Some areas were abandoned by their residents, with the encouragement of the Arab leaders in the unfulfilled hope of returning after the anticipated Arab victory; some fled or were chased out by the Israeli army, while some remained where they were under Israeli rule. Wherever Arabs remained under Israeli rule, their icons remained as well. Abandoned places usually lost their symbols and most of the villages were destroyed. However, in some instances religious structures (mosques) remained untouched, even if there were no worshippers.

Many studies have devoted considerable attention to the deletion of Arab and Jewish icons, cultural heritage and cultural-symbolic landscapes. A good example is the research of Azaryahu and Golan (2001), Levine (2004), and Yacobi (2003). Shai (2002), for example, analyzed an initiative adopted by the Israel Land Administration (ILA) to demolish uninhabited houses in abandoned villages in Israel in the years 1965-1967. Since the summer of 1967, the Jewish areas and Arab areas, their symbols and icons are not only in contact but they are under dispute and a reason for violent incidents.

5. Manshiya Neighborhood in Tel-Aviv-Jaffa an Authentic-Historical Remains in an Urban Area

5.1. History

Until the year 1948, the Arab neighborhood of Manshiya (Fig. 1) was situated between the old Arab city of Jaffa and the new Israeli city of Tel Aviv. The neighborhood was established in 1870s following the razing of the old Jaffa city wall by the Turkish authorities and the development of new neighborhoods for both Arabs and Jews outside the old city. At the end of the 19th century, a number of Jewish families settled in Manshiya, some quite famous (see Glass and Kark 1991, 161-163). In 1916, the Ottoman rulers built a mosque at the northern end of Manshiya (Hasan Bek Mosque).

Fig. 1: Picture of Manshiya, 1932.

On November 29, 1947, after the UN decision to partition Palestine into two states, the Arabs of Manshiya began to fire toward the southern Jewish neighborhoods of Tel Aviv. In these events the mosque served as an outpost for Arab snipers who would often shoot at the Jewish-populated neighborhoods. According to the partition plan, Jaffa was to be part of the Arab state. In order to prevent this from happening, the "Irgun Tzvai Leumi-Etzel" (Etzel), a nationalistic military organization with a paramilitary force that operated against both the British and Arabs to win Jewish sovereignty, decided to conquer Jaffa and the neighborhoods along the seashore, between Jaffa and Tel Aviv. On April 27, 1948, the neighborhood of Manshiya was taken, followed by the conquest of Jaffa.

On May 12, a delegation of Arab notables arrived at the Hagana (the Israel Defense Forces) headquarters, and following negotiations signed a surrender agreement. On May 13, 1948, the British left Jaffa and in 1950 Tel Aviv and Jaffa were joined into one city, renamed Tel Aviv-Jaffa. The Arabs of Manshiya fled and Jewish immigrants were settled in the abandoned houses. The neighborhood deteriorated and became part of the Tel Aviv-Jaffa southern slums.

5.2 Commemoration, Representation and functions

Over the years, the houses of Manshiya were destroyed, and in the mid-1970s, the Tel Aviv-Jaffa municipality removed 3,100 residents from Manshiya Neighborhood, mostly Jews who immigrated to Israel in the 1950s. Instead, the municipality built a park and planned a business center on 600 dunams (60 hectares). Only two authentic remnants were left untouched: the village mosque and a house in whose ruins the Etzel Museum was built. The business center planned to be part of a large project and meant to represent the modern developing city in contrast to Old Jaffa. Ultimately, however, the large project was not approved by the regional planning authorities, although part of it was already built. Since then the area where the two buildings are located became a symbolic landscape. For some it reflects a border where the new and modern Tel Aviv ends and the old neglected Jaffa begins. For others it symbolizes a contested landscape.

The museum and the exhibit in it do not represent the history of the neighborhood or that of Jaffa and Tel Aviv. It rather describes the activities of Etzel in the War of Independence from November 29, 1947, until it's dismantling on September 22, 1948. In September 1948, Etzel was incorporated into the Israel Defense Forces. A

room in the Etzel Museum commemorates the history of the organization, which existed for 17 years, and honors the liberators of Jaffa. The exhibition includes historical documents, photographs, maps and movies which describe the Etzel organization and the battle to liberate Jaffa.

The Mosque was left untouched next to a parking lot and beside a small memorial park. The park and the memorial monument in it were erected in 1957 for soldiers who fell in the battle for Jaffa in the War of Independence (Azaryahu 1993). During the 1980s, the Tel Aviv-Jaffa planning authorities planned to convert the Hasan Bek mosque into a tourist attraction as part of the new image of the business center. Public objections of both cultures, Arab and Jewish organizations (youth movements, religious parties, local leaderships, put a stop to the plan, but the adjoining tall modern buildings overshadow the mosque, making it difficult to discern the old building from afar.

On June 3, 2001, a major anti-Arab demonstration took place next Hasan Bek Mosque. Over one thousand Israelis participated in sporadic rock and fire-bomb attacks toward the mosque, calling for revenge against Arabs. This was done following a Hamas suicide bombing across the street. On August 19, 2005, another confrontation occurred beside the Mosque and since then the mosque, with its unique Ottoman style architecture contrasting with the contemporary modern high-rises that are situated nearby, has been a symbol of contested landscape. As with the mosque, the museum became also a symbolic landscape. On one hand it remained an isolated island in the large park along the seashore; a park which is part of the open urban space of Tel Aviv-Jaffa, on other hand it symbolizes an urban area in which two societies have their own separate cultural-symbolic landscapes.

6. Symbolic Landscape in Rural Area in Israel – the Olive Trees

6.1 History and Description

Different rituals, messages and values of the two cultures, Jewish and Arab, surround the olive tree (Fig. 2), a symbolic feature in many cultures. The tree plays an important role as an Arab-Jewish icon in that it is common to both cultures. However, it has acquired different meanings over time. And in today's Israeli reality, it represents different and even opposing values in the two cultures.

The Israeli olive is a relatively short tree, up to six meters high, evergreen and long lived. The tree is distinguished by its thick gnarled trunk and silvery-green leaves and is very prominent in the Mediterranean flora. Its appearance arouses interest and easily explains its sacred status in the various communities. It is often planted – alone or in a grove – next to the grave of a righteous or a holy person. The tree has deep roots and can thus grow almost anywhere. It quickly takes root in the mountain slopes and rocky areas of Galilee. Frequently, when natural and manmade disasters injure or destroy orchards and forests, the olive tree remains standing.

A few olive trees in Israel (Galilee) date from the Roman period, two thousand years ago, and there is testimony that olives were cultivated in the Land of Israel and Syria more than six thousand years ago. The old trees turn hollow inside as they age. These characteristics make the olive tree unique and also explain its values: its deep roots, hopes, aspiration for peace as well as providing security, light, beauty and health, a statement of control and victory and so on. Nations, states, cultures, religions - all have utilized the olive tree, its branches and leaves,

to present their messages, creating many visual symbols which give expression to the tree, its branches and leaves.

Fig. 2: Old Olive Tree in Israel.

6.2 Heritage, Commemoration and Functions

The olive tree occupies an important place in Jewish tradition. It is one of the seven species with which *Eretz Israel*, the Land of Israel – "a land of olive oil and honey" (Deuteronomy 8:8) – is blessed. We learn of the status and significance of the olive tree from many sources. One is the parable of Yotam (Judges 9:8-10) "The trees went out to anoint a king over them; and they said to the olive tree, reign over us. But the olive tree said to them, Should I leave my fatness, with which by me they honor God and man, and go to hold sway over the trees?" The olive tree symbolizes fertility and rootedness: "Thy children like olive plants round about thy table" (Psalms 128:3) and its economic importance is emphasized in a harsh reproof: "Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy borders, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil for thine olive shall cast its fruit" (Deuteronomy 28:40). The olive is a basic agricultural product (Babylonian Talmud, Brachot, 41, a). Many laws from the areas of agriculture and Jewish ritual are connected with the olive and its oil. Olive oil is the best of oils and is thus used for religious ritual.

The connection between the olive branch and the striving for peace originates in the story of Jonah and the olive leaf and the story of Noah and the ark (Genesis 8:11). The olive branch also had a great influence on Zionist renewal. The branch appears as the symbol of the state of Israel (Mishory, 2000, 139-164; Figure 3) and in the symbols of the IDF (Israel Defense Force). It represents the striving for peace and security: in the IDF emblem the olive branch embraces the sword. The olive tree does not only appear in national symbols. It also appears in paintings, shields of local authorities, and in names of settlements. Its appearance in the local Jewish landscape, especially the Zionist settlements, symbolizes the hope for survival and the ability to cope with the difficulties of striking roots and settlement.

Fig. 3: Olive Tree in Israel State Symbol.

The striving for peace and the relationship to the olive branches as symbols of peace are also expressed in international symbols. Among these symbols, the UN symbol stands out with its double motifs: the map of the world and the two olive branches next to it. The symbol expresses the UN's aspiration of spreading peace throughout the world.

In Christian tradition as well, the olive – the tree, its branches and fruit – has a symbolic meaning (for example, Christian tradition identifies the Garden of Oils on the Mount of Olives as the garden in which Jesus walked, surrounded by his students). The olive tree is also important in Muslim tradition. In the Koran, the olive is mentioned six times, as one of the fruits given by Allah. Olive oil is mentioned once in the chapter which talks about the divine light which will shine in the hearts of the believers.

The hollowness of the olive tree generated one of the legends in Islam: When the prophet Mohammad died, all the trees mourned for him and as a result of all the pain and suffering, their branches fell to the ground. Only the olive tree's branches remained green. The other trees asked the olive tree, "Why aren't you mourning the death of the prophet?" The olive tree answered, "I mourn him greatly, but you wither on the outside and my heart is burnt on the inside".

Despite the importance of the olive tree in both Jewish and Arab cultures, time brought with it many changes. To a great extent, Israeli-Jewish society underwent the processes of secularization, modernization and post-modernization. Today, this society is primarily urban, secular and post-modern. As such, it emphasizes the "Lexus" from the well-known title of Tom Friedman's book, i.e., the most up-to-date model of the prestigious car is more important than the symbolic old olive tree. The tree has lost its actual significance and only its symbolic significance remains.

In contrast, in Israeli-Arab society, the olive tree is not only a symbol but a central component in the life of the village and the community. In many villages the olive tree is an important part of the economic base and the olive harvest is the most important economic period of the year in village life. The family and its olive trees

are deeply connected. The tree connects the villagers to their land and signifies their ownership of the land and its boundaries.

In the territorial competition between Jews and Arabs over spatial dominance, the olive tree serves as a first class instrument for expressing Arab ownership of the land. Planting the olive tree is a sign of a boundary, and its uprooting by Israeli groups for security purposes symbolizes an attempt to evict the Arabs from their land, to deny their territorial rights.

In recent years, the olive tree symbolizes the aspiration for shared life and coexistence in the same territory in the State of Israel. Every year, on October and November, the Galilee olive festival is held; the festival offers a family celebration of the olive harvest, together with Galilean tours, its nature and its cultures. The participants are taking part in a variety of creative activities: they learn about oil and trees; they visit an authentic olive press; they are lodged in Arab and Circassian villages; meet and discuss of Israel political, social and cultural issues. The event has twin goals: economic-tourist and social-cultural.

7. Interpretation of Landscape: Discussion and Conclusions

The landscape, like a written text, has many readers, and therefore can be interpreted on many levels. The different interpretations can lead to disputes and arguments, but also may advance understanding and co-existence.

The historical museum on the Jaffa-Tel Aviv border displays an architectural encounter of natural building materials from the environment with synthetic building materials – limestone at the base of the building, and on the top, glass and metal (Fig. 4). The modern-artificial materials grow out of the original natural materials. The building is a landscape relic in the area of contact between Tel Aviv and Jaffa. The foundation of the building is a remnant of a Jaffa neighborhood, Manshiya, which was erased from the landscape. On this foundation, a new addition takes over, adapted to the needs of a historical museum in a modern city.

Fig. 4: The Etzel Museum

The structure that serves the historical museum not only gives expression to the national Jewish-Arab encounter, it also expresses a process of urban renewal. In this process, old relics are ignored and new modern and post-modern structures are preferred, without the historical context and cultural tension.

The mosque, an authentic remnant of the Arab Manshiya neighborhood, is also outside its natural environmental context. Consequently it loses some of its urban and communal relevance and remains solely a monument (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5: Hasan Bek Mosque and a new commercial center.

The encounter between Jaffa and Tel Aviv as it is described by the landscape remains, also raises a historical paradox. Until 1948, Tel Aviv functioned as the core of Zionist settlement in the Land of Israel. As such, it was not a frontier area. Jaffa was an Arab enclave that bordered the Jewish city. The area of contact between the two cities became the front line during the establishment of the State of Israel. The decision to build the historical museum atop a structure which remained from the Arab neighborhood, as well as the decision to leave the mosque as it is, was intended to document this historical encounter. Over the course of time, alongside the historical encounter, a new urban encounter began to develop in the form of the business center. At the present stage, the historical encounter is already serving as decoration for the urban renewal.

The olive tree's branches and leaves are of universal status, symbolizing peace and hope, unity and healing. Contrasting with this universality, we can discern here the cultural differences between Jews and Arabs in respect to the olive tree. In a picture of a Zionist landscape, the olive tree will appear in the background or adjoining other landscape symbols, such as a water tower, houses, orchards, etc. The sign is implicated and illustrative. These signs symbolize renovation, new settlements and a willing to strike roots in the land of Israel. In a picture of an Arab village, the olive tree will always appear involved with a significant action - olive picking or planting – in order to display continuity of working the land and ownership of the old territory

as well (Cheavlier and Gheerbrant 1996). "The olive tree is known to have important social and economic impacts during its harvest season, with its ability to gather a large number of working hands, especially among women, when Palestinian families including children, women, men, students and the elderly all gather in their olive groves to harvest their trees while bringing alive Palestinian traditions and folklore with cultural evenings and activities. These activities represent our identity and therefore they are part of our symbols (Kayali 2007).

The olive tree, a universal symbol of peace has been the object of conflict in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The uprooting of the ancient olive trees, as a byproduct of war, has had tremendous affects on the Palestinian agriculture, economy and identity. In Palestine, the olive tree is prized for its historical presence, its beauty, its symbolic significance and most importantly for its economic significance. Olive trees are a major commercial crop for Palestine, and many families depend on it for their livelihood. For the Jews the olive tree is a symbol of stability and sign for holding the land.

An examination of the two landscapes indicates that although the geographical environments are different, the struggle for cultural dominance between Arabs and Jews is the same struggle expressed by the different cultural landscapes. In some instances, the two landscapes may coexist in the same geographical area. In other instances, each community acquired different messages in respect to the same landscape. This approach shows that the cultural heritage and cultural landscape possess somewhat different and varied facets. Each community chooses for itself the components of the landscape that can be used for its cultural identity and the message it wishes to transmit, and uses them to weave a tapestry of its unique cultural landscape. In this weaving process, the community ignores and abandons the components that are foreign or do not belong. In this way, two cultures can exist side by side in the same area and relate to the same landscape with different interpretations. One interpretation of the landscape does not of necessity lead to the deligitimization of the other interpretation. A definition of "Contested Landscape" can be used as an added criterion to describe an outstanding value of cultural heritage sites or cultural landscapes. In other words, the very fact that the sites or the landscapes are contested, bestows upon them their uniqueness and singularity.

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CONTESTED LANDSCAPE AND SPIRIT OF PLACE: THE CASE OF THE OLIVE TREES AND AN URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD IN ISRAEL

Summary

Cultural Heritage and Cultural Landscape are a set of human products that reflect the society needs thoughts and memories. It represents and symbolizes the relationships of power and controls - out of which it has emerged - and the human processes that have transformed and continue to transform them. These transformations create new cultural landscapes that often hide the processes that have made them – political, social, cultural, ideological and economic.

The purpose of this lecture is to analyze a contested geographical environment, where two cultures compete over land and its cultural heritage and therefore each of them has its own interpretations: the Jewish Zionist culture and the Arab Moslem culture. The aim is to define the landscape – its spirit and its representation - that emerges from these competitions and disputes; to characterize it; to analyze its symbols and its uses – mainly for the purpose of formation and construction of identities.

The two geographical areas containing cultural heritage sites and cultural landscapes that have become symbolic that present four components: memory, commemoration, representation and function for the two societies. The first such environment is a rural area, which encompasses two very dominant landscapes adjoining each other – a new commercial and cultural center which was built for Jewish settlement alongside historical remnants of an Arab village, a mosque and 'Bustan' – an Arab plantation. The second environment is an agricultural area planted with olive trees with a contested significance for the two societies.

An examination of the two landscapes indicates the struggle for cultural dominance between Arabs and Jews is the same struggle expressed by the different cultural landscapes. In this way, a definition of "Contested Landscape" can be used as criteria to describe the value of cultural heritage or cultural landscapes. This definition might serve also as a solution for cultural landscape or cultural heritage sites which present disputes or uncertain national proprietorship. In other words, the very fact that the sites or the landscapes are contested, bestows upon them their uniqueness and singularity.

SAPARD PROGRAMME AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN BISTRI A-NĂSĂUD COUNTY, ROMANIA

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Abstract
SAPARD Programme and Its Implementation in Tourism Development in Bistriţa-Năsăud County, Romania
Our analysis focused on emphasizing the manner of attracting the financial resources in the sector of tourism in a particular territorial entity (Bistriţa-Năsăud County, situated in northern Romania, in the Northwest Development Region), where small private initiatives were representative for Romania's approach to this sector. Sustainable rural development was partly triggered by the implementation of the SAPARD programme during the pre-accession period of Romania to the European Union. Focusing on sustainable tourism in the countryside and Bistriţa-Năsăud County was another such example.

Key words
recent tourism development, impact, feedback.

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1. Introduction

Sustainable development in rural areas supposes a balanced development of environmental, economic, and social components, and all these are integrated into the development of tourism. This is why we thought the touristic approach to the development of rural communities was one of the most appropriate ways for finding sustainable solutions to the problems of the countryside. In order to support this idea, we chose a case study for a Romanian territory with a NUTS 3 level administrative unit. In addition, under the circumstances of the present economic crisis, European Union financing programmes were seen by local communities as one of the most reliable sources of support and implementation of development projects.

Still, one had to take into account the rather difficult, slow and therefore long process of learning about the European Union programmes, which was why the respective process alongside a certain inert characteristic of the Romanian rural communities led to a rather late and inadequate accessing of European funds in some cases. An example of this was the SAPARD programme.

We presented the features of the natural and human resources that determined the location of new touristic activities mainly in the northern part of the studied county. The presence of certain territorial identity features synthesised mostly by the cultural landscape of the rural area (the Land of Năsăud) as well as the presence of a rural natural landscape were the main factors motivating the development of touristic activities in the chosen NUTS 3 level unit.

This study also included several case studies (meant to show the perception of the beneficiaries of the SAPARD funds, their accomplishments and problems as a result of being included in the programme, the lessons learnt), as well as an analysis of spatial disparities induced by the territorial location of touristic activities.

2. Methodology

We based our research on recent studies focusing either on the structural changes that Romanian rural space underwent as a result of implementing the European financing SAPARD programme (Alexandru 2009) or on the development of tourism in Bistriţa-Năsăud county, as part of a larger study on the regional development of its northern area (Ilovan 2006, 2009).

In addition, we interviewed the owners of the touristic pensions concerning their experience with accessing European funds through the SAPARD programme. We also looked at to what extent the respective touristic pensions were integrated into touristic activities.

3. Main features of the touristic potential and of the touristic activity in Bistriţa-Năsăud County, as reflected by general regional development

Bistriţa-Năsăud County lies in northern Romania (Fig. 1).

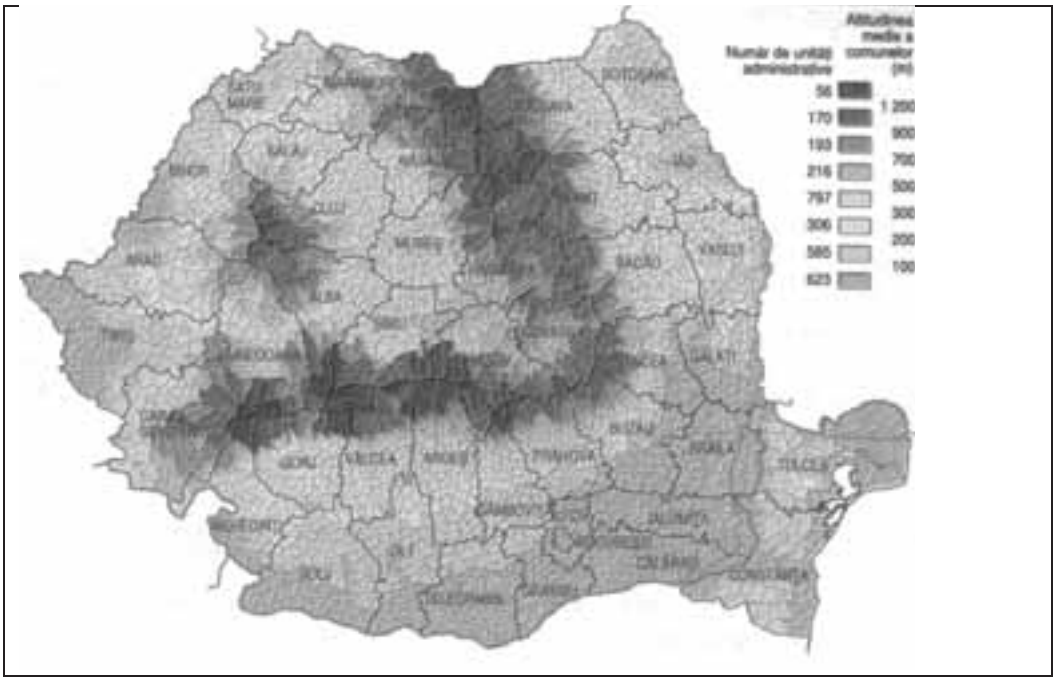

Fig. 1: The position of Bistriţa-Năsăud county in Romania (Legend: Număr de unităţi administrative – number of administrative units; Altitudinea medie a comunelor – Average altitude of communes, in metres).
Source: Rey, Groza, Ianoş, Pătroescu, 2006, p. 35.

The features of natural and human resources, with impact not only on the touristic activity, but also on larger regional development, were synthesised in earlier studies on the northern part of the county (Ilovan 2006, 2009). Many of those features were also characteristic of the entire county. We presented them as part of a SWOT analysis meant to create a complex image of regional development and implicitly of the potential of future touristic activities:

-The strengths of regional development in Bistriţa-Năsăud county were the following: balanced geomorphologic space (mountains, hills, and fields); rich and quality hydrographical resources, especially in the north; rich exploited and exploitable mineral water with resources mainly in the north; large pastures and hayfields; continuity of settlements; ethnographical regions present; distinct mental spaces; high communication facilities as a result of small distances between settlements; strong polarising centres (Bistriţa and Năsăud); maintenance of a well shaped profile of Năsăud from an educational and ethnographical point of view and of Bistriţa as an economic and administrative centre, and a permanent ascending trend in tertiary sector development;

-The weaknesses of regional development in Bistriţa-Năsăud county consisted of the following: predominant rural population; massive emigration abroad; emigration of the well-trained labour force; youth emigration; negative migratory growth; decreasing population; loss of the traditional community's values; insufficient works for preventing losses as a result of floods; agricultural land fragmentation; little arable land in the north as compared to the south; lack of modernisation of the agriculture which was still only subsistent; no big economic agents for the largest part of the territory; intraregional (west-east and north-south) disparities from

where the demographic and economic features were concerned; inexistent, non-modernised, or old infrastructure; marginality imposed by the absence of an important road axis in the context of railway transport losing its importance for the northern part of the county, where natural touristic potential is best represented; inexistent cultural life except several important events for the three major urban centres (Bistri a, Năsăud and Beclean) and for some other settlements; lack of perspective in development, as no significant development project existed;

-Opportunities might have been the following: capitalisation of touristic resources; superior capitalising of the woods; investment in the regional business of those who worked abroad; tertiary sector development and investment in education;

-The risks were as follows: chaotic deforestation; geomorphologic, hydrological, and climatic; old population or ageing population; feminisation of the population; intense depopulation in certain areas; high rates of demographical dependency as a result of average life span increase and not because of youth, due to high birth rates; loss of the educational profile of Năsăud; loss of a certain part of the labour force through emigration abroad or to other parts of Romania.

Tourism is a possible development direction for Bistri a-Năsăud County, and especially for its northern part (the Land of Năsăud – Fig. 2), where four of the five touristic pensions developed through SAPARD projects are located.

Fig. 2: The Land of Năsăud – touristic potential and its capitalising (after Ilovan, 2009, Fig. 161 with changes).

The Land of Năsăud, lying between the Someşul Mare Valley in the south and the high peaks of the Rodnei and the Ţibleş Mountains in the north, included three landforms: the valley of the above-mentioned river (a modest one in the context of major geostructures); the eastern and central part of the Someşul Mare Hills, very significant where size was concerned; the southern slopes of the Ţibleş Mountains, the southern and western slopes belonging to the Rodnei Mountains, and the northern slopes of the Bârgău Mountains, also important according to their size.

The mountainous chain in the northern, eastern, and southeastern periphery of the Land of Năsăud bordered the Ciceu Hills, the Suplai Hills and the Năsăud Hills, where most of the settlements of the region were located. Gr. P. Pop included the Ciceu Hills, the Suplai Hills, and the Năsăud Hills under the name of the Someşul Mare Hills (2001, p. 164).

The support capacity of the territory and its potential was the target – "parameter" that we had to identify in relation to the people. From this point of view, we considered the characteristic features imposed by land use to be significant – the expansion of the hay field and of the pastures against the forested areas, the location of households and the necessity of settling the neighbouring territories with expansion towards the mountainous area, because of the spatial restrictions imposed by the morphology of the micro-basins.

Among the characteristic elements identified for this region and targeting its uniqueness as a territorial entity, the following were significant for the regionalisation of the Land of Năsăud (Pop 2001, pp. 160-161):

- the right side tributaries of the Someşul Mare drained the entire hilly area (the Ilişua, the Ţibleş, the Salva, the Gersa, the Rebra, and the Cormaia);

- the tight connection of the hills to the northern mountainous space (the Ţibleş and the Rodna Mountains) through the small depression basins and high altitude passes or gorges;

- the summits of the hills were long and parallel along the north-south;

- the links for communication developed longitudinally along the Ilişua and the Zagra valleys, etc. and along their tributaries, but their transversal ones were more difficult, thus leading the authors of Geografia României, III to affirm that: "each hydrographical basin has become an individuality where the aspect of human settlement groups is concerned" (p. 524);

- the depresionar micro-basins appeared through processes of differential erosion, within zones of geological and geomorphological contact, between the different structures belonging to the Rodna's crystalline and the sedimentary and volcano rocks of the Bârgău and of the Ţibleş Mountains (Mureşianu 1996, p. 140).

The following types of tourism have potential for development or have been emerging in the recent period in the Land of Năsăud, where four of the five SAPARD pensions are located, and in the county as a whole:

- mountain tourism (winter sports, speleotourism);
- cultural tourism – polarised by the main urban centres of the county and by areas with original rural civilization and culture;
- rural tourism focusing on agro-tourism – chaotic at present, although it is an emerging type of tourism, while internal and external requests for this type of tourism exist;

- balneal tourism;
- religious tourism;
- adventure tourism;
- transit tourism.

We recommend the following directions meant to promote touristic activities in general:

- superior capitalising of the most visited routes through offering adequate material basis and integrating it into major touristic routes;
- stimulating new trends in rural tourism in order to harmoniously integrate their development in local and regional development plans through observing rules for quality of services and environmental rules;
- environmental protection and efficient management of pollution factors in order to ensure sustainable development;
- preservation and protection of natural resources, of historic monuments and of characteristic ethnographic values;
- efficient management of the county image in order to attract tourists;
- taking into account opportunities for ensuring qualified personnel in tourism such as those offered by the faculties in Bistri a and Sighetu Marma iei, specialised in the Geography of tourism.

We believe that the county has all necessary natural premises to ensure a sustainable and intense touristic activity. This potential has not been exploited or has been only chaotically developed.

We discussed the regional development directions from a critical perspective and from the point of view of the resilience of the regional system (Cocean 2005). In this context, although potential existed, tourism was possible not as an immediate, but rather as a postponed solution and ensured sustainable development. Commercial activities and wood exploitation supported the present economy, but only in the context of demographic ageing and population decrease. Regional evolution in the long-term was, therefore, unpredictable, in the context of Romanian society undergoing quick and continuous changes.

4. Implementing SAPARD projects in tourism in Bistriţa-Năsăud County

At the national level, under measure 3.4 (Development and diversifying of economic activities that generate multiple activities and alternative income) and the sub-measure of Rural tourism, Romania started 670 projects for touristic pensions, out of which the Northwest Region of Romania had 89. Within this region, Bistri a-Năsăud County had 5 projects, Bihor, 37, Cluj, 17, Maramureş, 12, Satu Mare, 2, and Sălaj, 16.

The small number of projects in some counties in comparison with others (as was the case in the researched county) was mainly caused by the disparity in the touristic potential and the traditional touristic activity. For instance, Bistri a-Năsăud County developed its touristic activity mainly through balneal tourism in the town of Sângeorz-Băi or cultural tourism in Bistri a city, while the entire rural area was chronically underdeveloped for decades, as the types of tourism it had potential for – rural tourism and tourism for winter sports – were underdeveloped, chaotically developed or not present.

The SAPARD programme (2000-2007) encouraged the development of five projects in the field of tourism in Bistri a-Năsăud County (Tab. 1).

Tab. 1: Projects focusing on tourism, included in the SAPARD programme in Bistri a-Năsăud County

Settlement	Project title	SAPARD Programme	EC Contribution (euro)	National budget (euro)	Private contribution (euro)
Măgura Ilvei Commune (Măgura Ilvei village)	"Măgura Ilvei" agro-touristic pension	65,538.80	49,154.10	16,384.70	65,538.80
Şan Commune (Valea Mare village)	"Teodora" touristic pension	100,000.00	75,000.00	25,000.00	100,000.00
Telciu Commune (Fiad village)	Rural touristic pension	100,000.00	75,000.00	25,000.00	100,000.00
Bistri a City (Piatra Fântânele village)	Building a touristic pension	100,000.14	75,000.11	25,000.04	100,000.14
Zagra Commune (Zagra village)	Rural touristic pension	99,988.52	74,991.39	24,997.13	99,988.52

All five touristic pensions were started as projects financed by the SAPARD programme in 2006. As a result of interviews with the owners of touristic pensions and of research in the area, we presented either owners' feedback or the most striking features of their activity:

- The owners of the touristic pension in Măgura Ilvei (Fig. 3) were still waiting for the last payment in order to be able to start hosting tourists. Their main problems, similar to others, were the difficulties they encountered in receiving money; it was mostly late or too late; the many necessary trips to Bistri a and Satu Mare in order to meet with those who took care of implementing the SAPARD programme; the poor communication skills of those who implemented and supervised the SAPARD projects and their overall loss of time and patience. The owners of this pension revealed that the sum that they received from SAPARD funds reached only 30% of the total they invested. That was a major problem, as money came according to initial estimated costs, while prices increased;

- The "Teodora" pension in Valea Mare village (Fig. 4) had a very interesting rustic look, while the gate was chained and locked, and a wood processing company was what welcomed tourists before reaching its gate (Fig. 5).

- A touristic pension under construction in Fiad village (Fig. 6). Since 2007, the owner has been trying to solve his problems with the construction company, who declared bankruptcy and stopped the work he was paid for. Too much bureaucracy and stress were other problems mentioned by the pension owner;

Fig. 3: Touristic pension in Măgura Ilvei, 2009.
(Photo by Oana-Ramona Ilovan)

Fig. 4: "Teodora" pension in Valea Mare village, 2009.
(Photo by Oana-Ramona Ilovan)

Fig. 5: Wood processing activities neighbouring "Teodora" pension in Valea Mare village, 2009.
(Photo by Oana-Ramona Ilovan)

Fig. 6: Touristic pension under construction in Fiad village, 2009.
(Photo by Oana-Ramona Ilovan)

- The touristic pension in Zagra village (Figure 7) still needed arrangement in its surroundings. The owners, a family from Năsăud, welcomed tourists and could be reached by phone (one of the neighbours was assigned to give the owner's phone number to interested tourists). The pension was mainly used during weekends for meetings among colleagues and parties. Sometimes guests preferred to bring their own food and drink, while the owner also offered catering.

Fig. 7: Touristic pension in Zagra village, 2009.
(Photo by Oana-Ramona Ilovan)

Most owners declared that they would avoid getting involved in the programme if they had to start again and thus avoid unfinished or belated project implementation. Deficiencies of the programme according to the feedback offered by owners of touristic pensions developed as projects of the SAPARD programme were the most mentioned features during interviews. To the deficiencies mentioned above, we added others focusing on negative impact on any touristic activities:

- lack of adequate signalling of touristic pensions or no signs at all;
- inadequate arrangement or no arrangement of the areas neighbouring the touristic pensions;
- poor quality of road infrastructure in most of the county.

Therefore, as far as the SAPARD programme focusing on tourism was concerned in Bistri a-Năsăud County, one might conclude that it was a failure from the point of view of the owners of the touristic pensions.

4. Conclusions

The results of SAPARD projects started in Bistri a-Năsăud County were the following:

- no pension functions on a regular basis (weekend tourism, unfinished project implementation);
- very few pensions and therefore less attractiveness of the region;
- the discouragement of owners' feedback.

We concluded that the development of touristic activities as a result of projects within the SAPARD programme was only in the stage of "only for myself" and still not working as it should. There is still a long way to a welfare economy based on tourism.

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SAPARD PROGRAMME AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN BISTRI A-NĂSĂUD COUNTY, ROMANIA

Summary

Sustainable development in the rural areas supposes a balanced development of the environmental, economic, and social components and all these are integrated into the development of tourism. That is why we considered that the touristic approach to the development of rural communities was one of the most appropriate ways for finding sustainable solutions to the problems of the countryside. In order to support this idea, we chose a case study for the Romanian territory, that of a NUTS 3 level administrative unit. In addition, under the circumstances of the present economic crisis, European Union financing programmes represent, for local communities, one of the most reliable sources of support and implementation of development projects. Still, one had to take into account the rather difficult, slow and therefore long process of learning about the European Union programmes and that was why the respective process alongside with a certain inertia characteristic of the Romanian rural communities led to a rather late and inadequate accessing of European funds in some cases. An example was that of the SAPARD programme.

Our analysis focused on emphasizing the manner of attracting the above-mentioned resources in a sector field, that of tourism, in a particular territorial entity (Bistriţa-Năsăud County, situated in northern Romania, in the North-West Development Region), where private initiatives were representative for Romania's approach to this sector. Sustainable rural development was partly triggered by the implementation of the SAPARD programme, during the pre-accession period of Romania to the European Union, also focusing on sustainable tourism in the countryside and Bistriţa-Năsăud County was such an example. We showed the importance that the touristic activities had within the total number of projects for rural development in the county.

This study also included several case studies (meant to show the perception of the beneficiaries of the SAPARD funds, their accomplishments and problems as a result of being included in the programme, the lessons learnt), as well as an analysis of spatial disparities induced by the territorial location of touristic activities.

We presented the features of the natural and human resources that determined the location of new touristic activities mainly in the northern part of the studied county. The presence of certain territorial identity features synthesised mostly by the cultural landscape of the rural area (that of the Land of Năsăud) as well as the presence of a rural natural landscape were the main factors motivating the development of touristic activities in the chosen NUTS 3 level unit.

Moreover, we did a comparison to the other counties and development regions of Romania, focusing on the role of the SAPARD programme in tourism development. In this context we underlined the strengths and weaknesses of the process of implementing the SAPARD programme in Romania, the way the rural communities perceived it and its efficiency.

Our paper concluded with a short analysis of the role of the SAPARD programme after 2007 and of the other programmes that the Romanian state and the European Union initiated in order to support the development of tourism in the rural area of Romania, including that of the chosen case study: Bistriţa-Năsăud County.

VEGETABLE REVOLUTION AND RURAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract
Vegetable Revolution and Rural Sustainable Development: A Case Study
Indian agriculture is now at a critical juncture. The liberalization of agricultural trade, increasing trends of urbanization and fragmentation of the land have resulted in commercialization of Indian agriculture. In the present scenario, farmers are bound to turn towards more remunerative crops, like vegetables, for their sustenance. India has a large population and diverse agro–climatic conditions that favor the growth of various vegetables in the country. Vegetable revolution, in the last decades, has been a ray of hope for the landless, small and marginal farmers. This has become a new dimension of development in favor of the poor rural masses. Our study was undertaken in the Bulandshahr district, lying in the Indo-gangetic plain. This area not only has fertile land, but also has an efficient infrastructure to support vegetable cultivation. The present study focuses the role of vegetable cultivation upon rural sustainable development**.** The study revealed that the area studied witnessed an alarming growth in expansion of vegetable cultivation during recent decades. An efficient vegetable marketing network with the integration of rural markets at a grassroots level is urgently needed for sustainable, economically viable and socially acceptable planning of diversification of agriculture with value added crops like vegetables both in the study area and in the country at a national level.

Key words
Vegetable revolution, marginal, small, farmers, sustainable, development

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1. Introduction

Indian agriculture is at a crossroad. It is moving towards commercialization and diversification with value added cropping and farming systems owing to the fact that uneconomic traditional food grain-based subsistence cropping systems persisted in the country for such a long period. After independence, emphasis was given to increase area and productionof food crops to meet the requirements of food production for the burgeoning population. Green Revolution, a technocratic and capital-intensive agricultural innovation, was introduced during the late 1960's and 1970's. The revolution brought a tremendous breakthrough in both horizontal and vertical expansion of grain-based foods, especially wheat and rice. The country became not only self-sufficient, but began to export grain-based foods by the turn of the 20th century. This growth, however, occurred at the cost of environmental sustainability, social equality and economic viability.

The economic reform policy, under which subsidies for inputs were reduced, caused frustration among farmers due to the increase in production costs per unit volume of production and a rather slow increase in price per unit volume of output. The economic viability of grain-based crops and the survival of farmers have been challenged in recent decades. Diversification of cropping systems with value added crops like vegetables, flowers, medicinal plants and fruits are seen as new options for Indian farmers to improve their incomes and the economic viability of agriculture in the country.

Vegetable cultivation is a very important component of Indian agriculture. Its cultivation is a caste oriented activity and mainly cultivated at a small scale. But now commercial, large-scale production has begun in the country, particularly after liberalization of agricultural trade under the auspices of WTO. MNC's have also invested in this sector, and contract vegetable farming began recently. Increasing urbanization, rising income and purchasing power among middle class people, along with increasing awareness of the importance of fresh vegetables among developed countries' consumers, have augmented the production of vegetables in developing countries like India. (Timmer et.al. 1983) Improved infrastructure and institutional arrangement such as private storage facilities, consciousness of food quality and food standards among small income groups, even in village areas, also led to enhancement in vegetable cultivation (Timmer et. al 1983; Jaffe 2003).

Technological and scientific knowledge multiplied vegetable production many times over in the last few decades. In global vegetable production, developing countries have contributed a larger share. These countries enjoy a higher level of benefits by horticultural revolution e.i. vegetables cultivation rather than developed countries (Ali 2000, pp.1-29). Vegetable cultivation also has many socio-economic implications. Various forms of employment are available through involvement in various jobs required for vegetable farming and distribution from the producer's gate to the end consumers in any region.

Health improvement through nutrition intake from fresh vegetables also has a positive impact. It is helpful in removing micro nutrient deficiencies and works as antioxidants in maintaining the health of vegetable consumers (Rao et.al. 2001, pp.1217-1224). India has a high potential for expansion of vegetable cultivation in both time and space owing to the diversity in agro-climatic conditions. The production level in India has been improving over the years. Supply of vegetables at

the appropriate time, place and price is the main challenge before the nation. An optimum equilibrium between supply and demand at the local, regional, national and international levels at a consumer-accessible price is urgently needed for sustainable development of vegetable cultivation in the country.

Marketing facilities could also encourage the vegetable revolution. Rural markets, however, at the grassroots level, can play a very significant role in the buying and selling of agricultural commodities, especially perishable items, such as vegetables. These market centers stand at the bottom of national and international marketing networks. The majority of rural population fulfill their demands of fresh vegetables from these market points. Small and marginal farmers with small amounts of marketable surplus prefer rural markets for the disposal of surplus, as they can save travel and transport costs and achieve higher prices or income contrary to what they would attain if they sold the same small size of surplus in distant, specialized regulated markets. Vegetable buying and selling through rural markets also generates employment and incomes through involvement of local people in various market functions and operations. This process of marketing vegetables through these various channels helps small and marginal farmers to generate money, employment and other socio-cultural benefits that lead to rural sustainable development.

2. Aims and objectives

Taking into consideration the role of rural markets in the buying and selling of vegetables and expansion of area under vegetables, the researchers aim to understand the following objectives:

- The proportion of vegetable marketed surplus to pass through rural markets.
- The socio-economic standing of the vegetable cultivators in the villages that the markets service.
- The impact of the vegetable revolution on sustainable development of small and marginal farmers in the Bulandshahr district.

3. Database and methodology

The study is based on both primary data and secondary data. Primary data were generated through field survey of the sampled villages. The secondary data were obtained from the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Lucknow and Vikas Bhawan, Bulandshahr. District Statistical Magazine was also used for basic information regarding vegetable cultivation. Fifteen villages, one from each administrative development block, were selected for the detailed field survey. Village selection was made on the basis of the following criteria:

- Presence of vegetable cultivation.
- Accessibility.
- Size of the population.
- Social Structure of the village.
- Distance from rural and regulated market centres

The field survey was conducted in all 15 sampled villages. For detailed study, fifty percent of households of vegetable cultivators were surveyed in the sampled villages. Thus, the total number of households surveyed from the sampled villages

was 903. A questionnaire was used for collecting data regarding age, sex, caste, buying and selling of vegetables, area used for vegetable cultivation, change in area, employment generation and social change. Data were analyzed and processed using simple statistical techniques. Indicators of sustainable development were selected for measuring the impact of the vegetable revolution. The selected indicators were income generation, employment generation, social change and self-sufficiency.

4. Study area

The district of Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh is situated between 28.40^0 and 28.0^0 North latitude and between 77.0^0 and 78.0^0 East longitudes. Bulandshahr District lies in the Meerut Division of Uttar Pradesh, located in Upper Ganga - Yamuna plain, having an area of 3480.18km^2. The district is about 84km in length and 62km in breadth. The District is divided into 7 tehsils and 15 blocks for administrative convenience (Fig.1). There are 1197 villages, 55 rural markets and 16 urban centers in the study area. The climate of the district is liable to extremes, being very cold in winter and very hot in summer; similar to the climate experienced by a large part of the Indo-Gangetic plains of northern India. The total population of the district is 2,923,290 according to a 2001 census. 60% of the population lives in rural areas.

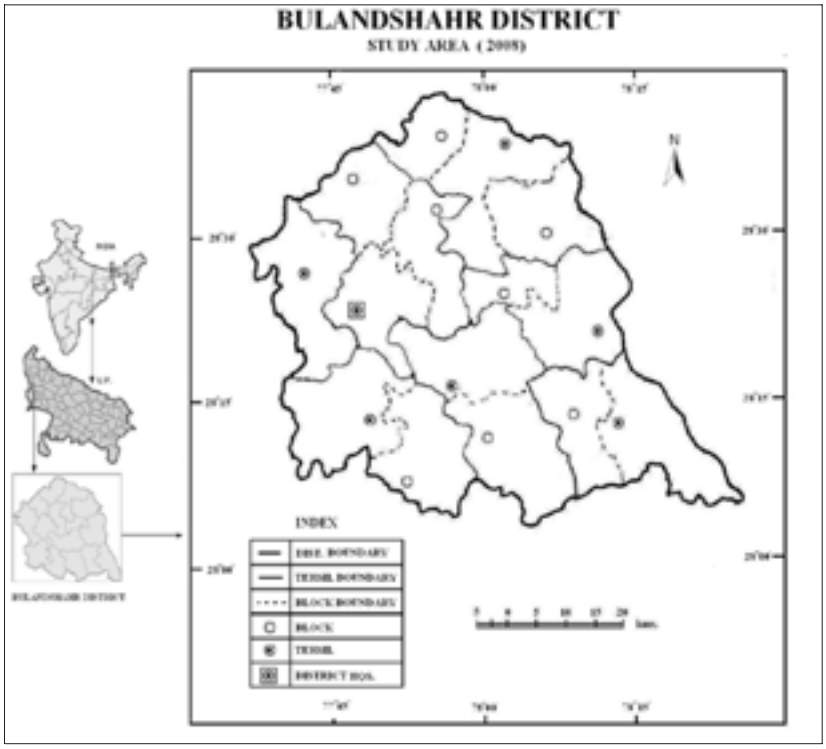

Fig. 1: Location Map

5. Discussion

5.1 Vegetable buying and selling through rural markets

The vegetable marketable surplus is bought and sold through various agencies/traders and changes many hands from the producer's farm gate to the ultimate consumption point. The producer's house, village shop, village traders, rural market, urban and regulated markets are the important agencies/places of vegetable buying and selling in the study area. Various market channels have been explored or identified for the buying and selling of marketable surplus of vegetables through field survey. These channels are producer-consumer, producer-village trader-consumer, (rural) market-regulated producer-assembler, markets-retailers-consumers and producer-regulated market (whole seller)-retailer-consumer. The data on the proportion of marketed surpluses bought and sold through various sources indicates that the regulated markets contribute the largest share, followed by the rural market. The share of marketed surplus of vegetables bought and sold through the regulated market is largest (44.86 percent) followed by rural markets (37.40 percent), village traders (13.68 percent) and village shops (4.06 percent) as shown in Tab. 2. Though the share of vegetable buying and selling through the regulated market is large, the role of rural markets is still very important in vegetable marketing because the regulated markets are only visited by large farmers who have a large amount of marketable surplus. Their share among the total vegetable cultivators is quite small in comparison to landless, small and marginal farmers. Regulated markets are not economical for small farmers with a small amount of surplus, as the farmers would have to pay rather high transport and travel costs per unit weight of marketed surplus. The perishable nature of the commodities is another factor that encourages the smaller vegetable growers to prefer the nearby rural market centers for buying and selling immediately following harvest. Market accessibility to rural markets for both producer-sellers as well as purchasers is easier than to regulated and urban markets, as in the latter case, various extra costs such as license fees, entry fees, and other taxes, etc. have to be paid by producer-sellers at urban markets. The rural markets, however, are the most convenient centers for buying and selling of marketed surplus by marginal and small vegetable growers in the study area.

Fig. 2: Vegetable Buying and selling Through Rural Markets.

Fig. 3: Modes of Vegetable Buying and selling.

Tab. 1: Share of Marketed Surplus Bought and sold Through Various Channels in Sampled Villages (2009).

Sampled villages	Village shop (%)	Village Traders (%)	Rural market (%)	Regulated markets (%)
Pindrawal	02	19	31	48
Alampur	04	11	41	44
Ahmadgarh	02	13	38	47
Himmatgarhi	06	17	35	42
Jadol	04	13	42	41
Taiyyabpur	05	16	29	50
Tomri	03	12	40	45
Kulsena	02	14	37	47
Ekkataj	06	17	35	42
Deorala	04	13	42	41
Khanwaya	07	08	41	44
Samkola	04	13	42	41
Kisola	05	16	29	50
Dhakoli	04	11	41	44
Narsena	03	12	38	47
Total	4.06	13.68	37.40	44.86

Source: Field Survey, 2009.

Tab. 2: Share of Vegetable Cultivators in Sampled Villages According to Caste (2009).

Sampled villages	Saini (In %)	Lodha (In %)	Muslim (In %)	Yadav (In %)	Other (In %)
Pindrawal	36	24	32	--	08
Alampur	22	17	34	18	09
Ahmadgarh	28	20	17	---	35
Himmatgarhi	36	23	10	17	14
Jadol	27	21	---	36	16
Taiyyabpur	49	---	34	11	6
Tomri	25	22	---	---	53
Kulsena	27	35	32	--	06
Ekkataj	19	25	38	9	09
Deorala	22	13	17	22	26
Khanwaya	34	17	11	19	19
Samkola	36	---	34	---	30
Kisola	23	32	22	20	3
Dhakoli	18	17	17	27	21
Narsena	45	26	17	11	01
Total	29.8	19.46	21.00	12.66	17.06

Source: Field Survey, 2009.

5.2 Social Profile of Vegetable Cultivators

The study of social stratification of vegetable growers is an important feature for analysis of any economic activity in India, as the caste system is historically rooted in every aspect of Indians' lives. The vegetable cultivators belong to different castes and/religions in different sampled villages. In general, it was found that some castes are dominant in vegetable cultivation and marketing. The people involved in the vegetable cultivation generally belong to other backward classes or low castes, as shown in Tab. 3. Saini accounted for, on average, 29.8% of vegetable cultivators in sampled villages, followed by Lodha (19.46%), Muslim (21.00%) and Yadav (12.66%). The remaining communities, together, contributed to 17.06% of vegetable growers.

Scheduled castes and high castes showed very negligible shares in vegetable growing in the study area because the former are deprived of land holdings and work as landless laborers, while the latter do not have the household labours which are greatly demanded in various operations of horticulture, especially vegetable cultivation. Generally high caste household members are primarily involved in white-collar jobs either in secondary and tertiary economic activities.

5.3 Participation in vegetable cultivation in terms of land holdings

The field survey of 903 households of vegetable cultivators from fifteen villages shows the same pattern of economic stratification as in the case of the analysis of

vegetable cultivators according to caste. The economically poor and deprived communities are engaged in a high proportion of vegetable cultivation because of land stress and excess household labor available to be absorbed in this farming system. They follow intensive farming methods with more value added crops for increasing economic viability of their limited land and to absorb their excess available labor. Data reveal that marginal farmers make up the largest share (38.87 percent) among total vegetable cultivators. They are small farmers (25.14 percent), landless (22.26 percent), medium farmers (9.96 percent) and large farmers (3.77 percent). Thus, farmers who have small and marginal landholdings for their sustenance dominate vegetable cultivation. Large holders usually belong to high castes and show little interest in vegetable cultivation, as it involves more labor, care and marketing stress, being a perishable commodity.

Tab. 3: Participation in Vegetable Cultivation in Sampled Villages in Terms of Landholdings (2009).

Sampled Villages	Landless	Marginal (1-2)	Small (2-4)	Medium (4-10)	Large (>10)	Total Households
Pindrawal	12 (21.8)	19 (34.5)	16 (29.09)	5 (9.09)	2 (3.63)	54 (100.00)
Alampur	18 (24)	33 (44)	19 (25.33)	5 (6.66)	0 (0.00)	75 (100.00)
Ahmadgarh	21 (25.33)	29 (32.22)	22 (24.44)	10 (11.11)	8 (8.88)	90 (100.00)
Himmatgarhi	9 (20.00)	19 (42.22)	14 (31.11)	3 (6.66)	0 (0.00)	45 (100.00)
Jadol	12 (20.00)	21 (35.00)	17 (28.33)	6 (10.00)	4 (6.66)	60 (100.00)
Taiyyabpur	7 (16.66)	22 (52.38)	10 (3.80)	3 (7.14)	0 (0.00)	42 (100.00)
Tomri	22 (27.16)	34 (41.97)	17 (20.98)	6 (7.40)	2 (2.46)	81 (100.00)
Kulsena	14 (23.72)	19 (32.20)	18 (30.50)	5 (8.47)	3 (5.08)	59 (100.00)
Ekkataj	11 (22.91)	22 (45.83)	11 (22.91)	4 (8.33)	0 (0.00)	48 (100.00)
Deorala	10 (19.60)	17 (33.33)	17 (33.33)	4 (7.84)	3 (5.88)	51 (100.00)
Khanwaya	13 (19.69)	23 (34.84)	17 (25.75)	9 (13.63)	4 (6.06)	66 (100.00)
Samkola	11 (16.41)	25 (37.31)	16 (23.88)	11 (16.41)	4 (5.97)	67 (100.00)
Kisola	9 (19.56)	22 (47.82)	9 (19.56)	4 (8.69)	2 (4.35)	46 (100.00)
Dhakoli	23 (32.85)	31 (44.28)	10 (14.28)	6 (8.57)	0 (0.00)	70 (100.00)
Narsena	9 (18.36)	15 (30.61)	14 (28.57)	9 (18.36)	2 (4.08)	49 (100.00)
Total	201 (22.26)	351 (38.87)	227 (25.14)	90 (9.96)	34 (3.77)	903 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2009.

6. Dynamism in areas under vegetable cultivation

The vegetable cultivators in the sampled villages were also questioned about the expansion of vegetable cultivation in the recent period. They were asked about their opinion regarding the change in area under vegetable cultivation over the past decade. The survey revealed a significant expansion of vegetable cultivation in the

study area, and most of the respondents (38.53 percent) were in favor of the opinion that the area has doubled in the last decade. The share of respondents who favored the opinion that there has been a significant increase in the area was 28.01 percent, followed by those who said there has been no change (17.27 percent), the area has decreased (8.19 percent) and the area has become half as large (7.97 percent). Thus, the study has shown that during the last decade, the area under various kinds of vegetable cultivation increased at a rate of 4.12% per year. The increase showed variation from village to village (Table 5). The highest change was recorded by Pindrawal (15%); followed by Alampur (11.60%), Jadol (10.00%), Ahmadgarh (8.00%) and Samkola (8.00%), respectively.

Some of the sampled villages also reported negative growth. This is mainly due to the unavailability of a rural market in the vicinity, an increase in transportation costs, irregular supply of water for irrigation, social stratification and composition of the villages under discussion. The area increased tremendously in small and marginal sized holdings unlike larger sized holdings, which recorded either stagnation or decline during the same period.

Tab. 4: Assessed Level of Change in Vegetable Cultivated Area in Sampled Villages From 1997-08 to 2007-08.

Sampled Villages	Became Half as Large	Decreased	No Change	Increased	Doubled	Total Households
Pindrawal	05 (9.25)	02 (3.70)	10 (18.51)	14 (25.92)	23 (42.59)	54 (100.00)
Alampur	04 (5.33)	8 (10.66)	12 (16.00)	18 (24.00)	33 (44.00)	75 (100.00)
Ahmadgarh	11 (12.22)	10 (11.11)	8 (8.88)	27 (30.00)	34 (37.77)	90 (100.00)
Himmatgarhi	3 (6.66)	4 (8.88)	7 (15.55)	12 (26.66)	19 (42.22)	45 (100.00)
Jadol	2 (3.33)	3 (5.00)	4 (6.66)	29 (48.33)	22 (36.66)	60 (100.00)
Taiyyabpur	3 (7.14)	2 (4.76)	8 (19.04)	10 (23.80)	19 (45.23)	42 (100.00)
Tomri	4 (4.93)	6 (7.40)	19 (23.45)	21 (25.92)	31 (38.27)	81 (100.00)
Kulsena	7 (11.86)	3 (5.08)	11 (18.64)	13 (22.03)	25 (42.37)	59 (100.00)
Ekkataj	1 (2.08)	3 (6.25)	10 (20.83)	14 (29.16)	20 (41.66)	48 (100.00)
Deorala	5 (9.80)	3 (5.88)	09 (17.64)	13 (25.49)	21 (41.17)	51 (100.00)
Khanwaya	7 (10.60)	3 (4.54)	11 (16.66)	13 (19.69)	32 (48.48)	66 (100.00)
Samkola	5 (7.46)	5 (7.46)	09 (13.43)	18 (26.86)	30 (44.77)	67 (100.00)
Kisola	7 (15.21)	4 (8.69)	7 (15.21)	17 (36.95)	11 (23.91)	46 (100.00)
Dhakoli	6 (8.57)	16 (22.85)	14 (20.00)	23 (32.85)	11 (15.71)	70 (100.00)
Narsena	2 (4.08)	2 (4.08)	17 (34.69)	11 (22.44)	17 (34.69)	49 (100.00)
Total	72 (7.97)	74 (8.19)	156 (17.27)	253 (28.01)	348 (38.53)	903 (100)

Source: Field Survey, 2009.

Tab. 5: Expansion of Area under Vegetable Cultivation in Sampled Villages From 1997-98 to 2007-08.

Sampled Villages	Area Under Vegetable Cultivation (1997-98) (In acres)	Area Under Vegetable Cultivation 2007-08) (In acres)	Decadal Change in Area (In acres)	Average Growth per Year (In %)
Pindrawal	20	50	30	15.00
Alampur	30	65	35	11.66
Ahmadgarh	25	45	20	8.00
Himmatgarhi	23	30	07	3.03
Jadol	25	50	25	10.00
Taiyyabpur	22	24	02	0.90
Tomri	11	17	06	5.45
Kulsena	27	22	- 05	-1.85
Ekkataj	16	18	02	1.25
Deorala	17	21	04	2.35
Khanwaya	22	16	- 06	-2.72
Samkola	05	09	04	8.00
Kisola	22	28	06	2.72
Dhakoli	11	06	- 05	-4.54
Narsena	17	13	- 04	-2.35
Total	293	414	121	4.12

Source: Field Survey, 2009.

Fig. 4: Participation of Women and Children in Vegetable Cultivation.

7. Employment Generation Through Vegetable Cultivation

Vegetable farming absorbs abundant labor, unlike grain-based cultivation. Cultivation, including the preparation of fields, sowing, irrigating, weeding; harvesting, transportation and marketing operations, needs many people to work relentlessly during various steps of the process. The study revealed that in the study area, 2,704 (53.52 percent) of the total 5,052 people from among the 903 households surveyed were involved in picking and plucking the vegetables. This task employs the largest number of people both as part time and full time workers. Vegetable cultivation demands a huge number of workers, as vegetables must be harvested as soon as possible due to their perishable nature. Transportation and marketing provided employment to 1,714 (33.92 percent) and 1,402 (27.25 percent) people, respectively. The number of employed vegetable workers in various operations varied from village to village (Tab. 6).

Tab. 6: Employment Generation Through Vegetable Cultivation in Sampled Villages (2009).

Sampled Villages	Cultivation (in %)	Plucking/packaging (in %)	Transportation (in %)	Marketing (in %)	Total Persons Involved
Pindrawal	67 (22.18)	164 (54.30)	74 (24.50)	87 (28.80)	302 (100.00)
Alampur	103 (24.52)	154 (36.66)	136 (32.38)	99 (23.57)	420 (100.00)
Ahmadgarh	124 (24.60)	276 (54.76)	143 (28.37)	158 (31.34)	504 (100.00)
Himmatgarhi	65 (25.79)	153 (60.71)	88 (34.92)	76 (30.15)	252 (100.00)
Jadol	92 (27.38)	204 (60.71)	152 (45.28)	126 (37.50)	336 (100.00)
Taiyyabpur	64 (27.23)	142 (60.42)	97 (41.27)	76 (32.34)	235 (100.00)
Tomri	118 (26.04)	210 (46.35)	144 (31.78)	132 (29.13)	453 (100.00)
Kulsena	68 (20.60)	159 (48.18)	92 (27.87)	83 (25.15)	330 (100.00)
Ekkataj	86 (32.08)	146 (54.47)	79 (29.47)	67 (25.00)	268 (100.00)
Deorala	82 (28.77)	144 (50.52)	86 (30.17)	72 (25.26)	285 (100.00)
Khanwaya	98 (26.55)	163 (44.17)	104 (28.18)	89 (24.11)	369 (100.00)
Samkola	102 (27.20)	169 (45.06)	112 (29.86)	79 (21.06)	375 (100.00)
Kisola	74 (28.79)	182 (70.81)	117 (45.52)	69 (26.84)	257 (100.00)
Dhakoli	94 (23.97)	239 (60.96)	145 (36.98)	110 (28.06)	392 (100.00)
Narsena	88 (32.11)	199 (72.62)	145 (52.91)	79 (28.83)	274 (100.00)
Total	1325 (26.22)	2704 (53.52)	1714 (33.92)	1402 (27.75)	5052 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2009.

8. Role of Vegetable Cultivation in Sustainable Development

Vegetable cultivation has emerged as an efficient means of income generation for poor farmers who possess small pieces of land. The livelihoods of these poor

farmers depend on this activity. The study revealed that a large proportion of people involved in the cultivation of vegetables in general are dependent upon this activity for their livelihood. The field survey shows that it not only increases the income of farmers, but also acts as a means for social transformation, economic development and becoming self-sufficient. The households under study were asked for their response regarding the role of vegetable cultivation in social change, employment, income generation and self-sufficiency. A major portion of the households under study were of the opinion that vegetable cultivation has emerged as a means of social change (89.36 percent) and provides income to poor, landless and marginal farmers (82.72 percent). 70.76 percent of respondents thought that vegetable cultivation helps farmers become self-sufficient. Table 7 shows the role of vegetable cultivation in sustainable development.

Fig. 5: Employment Generation Through Vegetable Cultivation.

Tab. 7: Role of Vegetable Cultivation in Sustainable Development.

Role of vegetable cultivation	Number of Households	Percentage of Total Households
Employment	617	68.32
Income generation	747	82.72
Social Change	807	89.36
Self-sufficiency	639	70.76
Total	903	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2009.

9. Conclusion

The vegetable revolution has had a significant role in rural development. Vegetable cultivation has drastically increased over the last decade in the area studied. Most of the vegetables are bought and sold either in rural markets or the nearest regulated markets. Socio-economic stratification of vegetable growers and workers showed domination of some specific castes in vegetable cultivation and buying and selling, whereas the people of high castes are little involved in vegetable cultivation. More than 80% of vegetable cultivators are landless, small or marginal farmers and market or dispose of their surplus in nearby rural markets. The vegetable revolution has not only increased the income of vegetable growers, but it has also contributed to employment generation, social change and self-sufficiency among landless, small and marginal farmers. The expansion of vegetable cultivation in the sampled villages has been significant to reducing the vulnerability of small and marginal farmers to poverty and misery. Thus, the vegetable revolution is significant in rural transformation and is a new dimension of rural sustainable development. An efficient vegetable marketing network with integrated markets at the grassroots level is urgently needed for sustainable, economically viable and socially acceptable planning of diversification of agriculture with value added crops like vegetables, both in the study area as well as on a national level.

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VEGETABLE REVOLUTION AND RURAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY

Summary

Indian agriculture is the main asset of Indian rural masses, still, after five and half decades of independence. It achieved high level of satisfaction in term of foodgrain production through the adoption of green revolution. Now the foodgrain based cropping system became uneconomical because of increasing input costs many folds as compared to prices of outputs. Diversification of cropping as well as farming with value added system has taken place in the country. Vegetable cultivation at commercial scale started after globalisation of agricultural trade in the form of a revolution in developing countries like India. The urbanised population ,increasing health consciousness , rise in purchasing power among middle income group of consumers, high demand for fresh vegetables in developed nations are important deriving forces of such revolution. Besides, liberalisation of agri business, development of infrastructural facilities i.e. refrigerated transport net work, rural link roads, cold storage facilities and the establishment of accessible and economical marketing and processing facilities in production areas have accelerated the production and area in response to increasing export of vegetables in recent period. The vegetable cultivation is socio economic oriented phenomena and usually controlled by backward and poor farmers with marginal small size of the holding less than 3 hectares of land.It provides opportunities to rural masses to improve their incomes through employment in various operations from production to consumption points. This will directly or indirectly improve the health conditions, living standard, infrastructural facilities and allied socio econmic conditions in the rural areas and integrated and sustainable rural development could be taken place.

Data regarding various aspects of vegetable revolution at grass roots level are not available in recorded form, so the researchers have selected a micro level area called Aligarh district for detail survey.12 villages are selected for field survey to generate data regarding employments, incomes. Social conditions of growers as well as role played by this revolution on socio economic transformation of rural areas in the study region.

Study revealed that the country as well as study region witnessed an alarming growth in vegetable cultivation during last three decades.90% of vegetable growers belonged to land less, marginal and small farmers. Marketing and processing are done by mainly land less or marginal farmers with shares of 60-70%. Female workforce are involved in preparing, packaging and some other post harvest activities. Almost all commercial vegetable growing villages have witnessed development of infrastructural facilities at satisfactory level in the study area.

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