

# Natural territories, cultural territories

## Tensions and conflicting challenges surrounding French high Alpine real estate since the nineteenth century

### Introduction

Collective land in mountain areas is faced with significant challenges, both material and ideological,<sup>1</sup> not unlike coastal areas with which it has more in common than is generally believed.<sup>2</sup> The nature of these challenges has changed over the last two centuries, as the societies using these territories have become more diverse. They explicitly reveal the relationships between the urban and rural worlds, between 'upper' and 'lower' territories.<sup>3</sup> Land-related tensions (regarding both ownership and use) in mountain areas are exacerbated by the pervasiveness of tourist activities, which are concentrated in small confined areas but also spread to new areas. These tensions raise the issue of real estate in tourist areas or in those that appeal to urban populations wishing to get away from the city.

While this issue had long remained unaddressed, it has taken on a new dimension with the introduction of mass tourism, which gave other uses and an associated economic cost to this land: land long deemed unproductive, recorded in land registers and administrative surveys as 'moors' or 'screes'.<sup>4</sup> Keeping lands in collective properties was considered as economically nonsensical by urban elites, or at least as a reflection of mountain populations' archaism. Jean-Joseph-Antoine Pilot, an author embodying the local scholars, moulds the image of mountain territories as follows:

'Of all the valleys in the Alps, in the Queyras the land's ancient customs have generally been fully preserved. Curious and strange, they are just as they were several centuries ago. Local habits and old customs have not changed at all. The inhabitants of the arid and mountainous region, cornered in one of the extremities of the Dauphiné, without any relations as it were with those of neighbouring regions, are in a way totally isolated. Though poor and deprived of industry, they are self-sufficient.'<sup>5</sup>

Yet this same land, generally called 'commons', once contributed to mountain communities' social balance, both collectively and at family level. Its management reflected the economic and social structures of the societies working it, as well as the diversity of situations across the valleys,<sup>6</sup> while its maintenance or escheat attests to trends in the nature of the priorities granted to economic development. Despite the end of traditional agro-pastoral activities, these commons are still in use and still play an important role, as current debates surrounding their fate reveal. In short, thinking about collective land means addressing the functionality of land in mountain territories – a functionality that varies with the population categories:

the local farmers who still practise agro-pastoralism or the emigrated natives (the 'urbans') who reserved potential exploitation rights.

It is important to first consider the term 'collective land', most often associated with the notion of 'common', which does not however fully encompass it and needs to be distinguished from that of collective uses. Commons, as Nadine Vivier shows referring to the French *Code civil*, correspond to 'those [goods] whose property or product the inhabitants of one or several municipalities have a vested right to.'<sup>7</sup> In other words, they correspond to the land owned by the community, but also and depending on the case, to the temporary use rights.

To compound the problem, these collective properties can be exploited collectively or rented out to an individual. In the mountains of the Alps, commons occur at altitudes above 1,500–1,800 metres, covering mowed and grazed land,<sup>8</sup> extending up to altitudes of 2,500–3,000 metres. They correspond to high mountain pastures, often far from the villages, and can include temporary hamlets. They generally belong to the community of householders who manage them. This land does not contradict private property; on the contrary, in these territories, the fact of being a landowner is what gives a right to the commons. Far from being a new area of study, the commons have given rise to major and successful works on the crucial periods of their functioning, namely the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There is of course the work of Nadine Vivier, particularly her book that provides a long-term, comparative study of the issue across a vast area, without neglecting the earliest elements she had highlighted in relation to the Briançonnais.<sup>9</sup> There is also the work of Anne-Lise Head-König or, for more localised though not less interesting examples, Hélène Viallet's study and, more recently, Jean-Charles Felley and Yann Decorzant's study of a similar system, the *consortage* in the Valais (Switzerland).<sup>10</sup> All these authors offer an analytical description of the complex modalities of functioning, the internal organisation, the distribution and the types of adaptation or transformation of Alpine commons. They discuss all the situations ranging from controlled maintenance within the community to the abandonment or transfer of property or use to private or state actors, not to forget the underlying confiscation and expropriation trend in the nineteenth century.<sup>11</sup>

The different uses of this land were central to its evolution since the commons had a vital social function: they allowed each landowner to make use of it based on their own resources, entrenching social and economic differences within mountain communities. For the poorest inhabitants, the commons were a means to sustain themselves or even survive, taking into account a significant function in these high valleys, namely the alleviation of the tax burden. As a matter of fact, common lands, being essential for breeding and representing a major resource, were free from taxes. All these complex elements present a variety of situations depending on the valleys, for example chronologically following the more or less early appropriation of collective land (due to the strong ecclesiastical or noble nature of early urban pressure). They are known and will not be discussed here.

This contribution focuses on the question of how collective land gradually became an area reserved for urban populations to exploit rural resource systems and on the analysis of conflicts associated with the process of change. I am interested in the challenges surrounding these spaces, particularly the way in which different categories of actors have coveted them in recent times. Usage – or even ownership – disputes reveal the complex antagonisms and misunderstandings within contemporary societies surrounding the functions assigned to

this collective land. This article does not seek to be exhaustive. Based on a few examples in the Alps, it proposes new areas of study on the subject.

## 'Reserved' areas

Conflicts about common land in current situations result from the changing land use and the profound and lasting changes to agro-pastoral societies' functioning introduced by burgeoning tourism from the end of the eighteenth century onwards. Over the course of the nineteenth century this land, previously devoted to breeding, was gradually pre-empted for other uses and populations.

### *Tourist uses, prioritised since the nineteenth century*

From the late eighteenth century onwards with the introduction of tourism, urban elites began to use Alpine commons as 'playing fields', a term coined by Leslie Stephen in his book *The Playground of Europe*, published in London in 1871. This land, which had become attractive (again), offered them a field of scientific experimentation for botany or physics, as in the case of Dominique Villars or Horace Bénédict de Saussure. Pure air, the discovery of beautiful landscapes, and excursions very soon became prevalent among this new kind of traveller, as these areas were more accessible than the mountain-tops reserved for mountaineering.<sup>12</sup> With the exception of the local guides who were necessary for their activities, these tourists disregarded the local population, whom they did not see or thought of as backward, with the condescendence that came with their position.<sup>13</sup> Conversely, they considered these vast expanses as their own, land without apparent ownership or fences, and therefore available for their leisure. Except for times when these spaces were occupied by herds (sheep or cattle) and by the families staying in the high mountain pasture chalets to harvest fodder, these land areas seemed empty, unfarmed, and for the tourists passing by, they seemed to belong to the public, in other words to everyone, particularly themselves.

On this mostly communal land, tourist or excursionist societies, especially the national Touring-Club and the *Club Alpin Français* (CAF), and also more local societies like the *société des touristes dauphinois*, the *jarrets d'acier*, negotiated with the municipalities to set up certain sites for the purpose of their activities, building refuges and encouraging the construction of access roads, contributing to what was considered an opening up of the mountains.

Since the Second World War and especially the 1960s, when mass tourism began to develop, these territories have attracted ever more people, first in summer and then in winter for skiing. Hiking trails (*Sentiers de Grande Randonnée: GR*) and more recently organisations like the *Via Alpina* have spurred the enthusiasm of new tourists, hikers enamoured with nature and seeking direct contact with it, further boosted by the environmental trend. These paths, most of the time cutting through communal territory, are a great example of the multiple uses at stake: increasingly massive transhumant herds in high mountain pastures rented from external landowners and place of passage or accommodation for hikers or holidaymakers. The recent issue regarding the use of Patou dogs (*Chien de Montagne des Pyrénées*) to protect herds from wolves brought to light some of the antagonisms between these groups of users.

Figure 1: This group of hikers from Grenoble is captured during a classic excursion to the Emparis plateau in early summer. This site amidst Alpine pastures offers a beautiful view on the Massif de la Meije (early twentieth century).



Source: Cliché H. Müller, Coll. Musée Dauphinois.

[See print version for illustration]

### *The basis for the reforestation of the high valleys*

The second use, less known from this angle though it had a more direct impact, is linked to the state's reforestation policy implemented in the mid-nineteenth century. The forestry and civil engineering administrations involved in the transformation and modernisation of plain territories through their engineers (building roads, railways, etc.), used the repeated floods in the 1850s as an inducement to accuse mountain populations of showing little regard for the collective good. Building a norm of phenomenon analysis, particularly with the writings of Alexandre Surell drawn on extensively by his successors (Prosper Demontzey, Pierre Bufault), the administrations reinforced the measures of the Forestry Code (1827) and especially participated in the debate that presented commons as a system to eradicate in the name of progress.

‘Reforestation is not an urgent public health measure, except for some highly localised deterioration, but a development and economic and physical restoration operation called for by the general interest and local interest. None of the desired results, whether for land exploitation or inhabitants’ greater wellbeing, will be obtained unless

the latter are first educated [...] and unless their crop economy is transformed, to provide other material profits to make up for those which silvopastoral restoration will take away from them at first.<sup>14</sup>

Through draconian legislation (successive laws of 1860, 1884 and 1910), they imposed the reforestation of highlands to protect the valleys and plains downhill that were undergoing urbanisation and industrialisation.<sup>15</sup> The land reserved for reforestation was mostly taken from communal areas. At the same time the interdictions for communal woods were strongly reinforced so that the impact on the least fortunate families was particularly strong. Coupled with the relative population increase, the decrease in available land gradually contributed to the imbalance of an already fragile economy and caused many to leave. The rural exodus since the end of the nineteenth century took on more definitive proportions after the Second World War. Numerous families definitively left the area in the 1880s, encouraged to settle in Algeria as part of colonisation. That was for example the case of the villages of Freissinières (Hautes Alpes), under the aegis of the Protestant mission<sup>16</sup>, and of Hermillon (Maurienne-Savoie) where the village's school teacher played a crucial role. A few decades earlier, around 1848, families of the Vercors plateau (Autrans and Méaudre) left for Algeria, also for reasons linked to the application of the forestry code. In the nineteenth century, only tight-knit communities like the Queyras or the Briançonnais<sup>17</sup> were able to retain relative control over their commons, through direct resistance to or minimal application of incentive policies. Other valleys or massifs, like the Beaufortin in Savoy or the Champsaur in the Hautes Alpes, relinquished parts of their commons. The latter had already been subject to sharing and appropriation by some large farmers and urban owners since the early nineteenth century.<sup>18</sup> This policy went hand in hand with changes in pastoral farming: sheep were replaced with cattle, cheese dairies were introduced, and Swiss cheese makers arrived, bringing their know-how. For a few decades, this afforded an economic revival while restructuring farms.

In extreme cases, entire heavily indebted municipalities sold all of their land to the forestry administration: the case of Navette in the Valgaudemar (Hautes Alpes) is particularly indicative of this economic situation inherent to exogenous policies, concealed by the very administration that shaped the policies' application. After a series of floods in 1927, the village was deserted by its 'discouraged inhabitants', as indicated in their letter to the Senator of the Hautes Alpes.<sup>19</sup> The real inducement for this emigration was most likely the water and forestry administration's policy of buying off land. It seems that the administration's officers convinced the largest landowners to sell their land, thus encouraging other families to follow suit.

'The people at the National Forestry Office, with their reforestation policy, made the inhabitants leave. They took the opportunity to buy off the houses and the plots at a low cost and they recreated something artificial for the city people. Then everybody thinks we lived like this before. But we cannot stand for it. It disregards the elders. It also disregards the tourists. They want to do the same thing in Navette. They say they are doing it to allow the village to live but they are the ones who killed it.'<sup>20</sup>

The geographer Jean Paul Zuanon confirmed this witness's claim, citing a project by the water and forestry administration to turn one of these villages into a heritage site for tourist purposes. 'Because it needs money, a municipality is willing to sell off part of its communal pastures.'<sup>21</sup>

Most of these common territories 'grabbed' by the administration served to create natural parks (particularly national parks and to a lesser extent regional natural parks). The idea of reserving land not for reforestation but for the preservation of biodiversity applied to the land already managed by the administration. The charters governing the perimeters of parks and their use caused tensions and triggered long-term divisions among local societies, particularly in areas where the impact of national parks was heavy in terms of occupied space. Intense debates around the signing of the updated charter (in 2006, to be applied in 2014), for example in the Vanoise, or around certain municipalities not signing it, show that this policy has never been fully accepted. Meanwhile, the regional parks enforce Article 19 of the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) regulations, which since the 1990s requires that farmers sign contracts to contribute to the preservation of the fauna, flora and landscape areas in exchange for subsidies.<sup>22</sup> These new regulations and the associated practices bring out new rifts between private and collective landowners, dividing them into proponents and opponents of the new natural parks.

More broadly however, the direct or indirect debates surrounding collective land shed light on the lack of understanding between different groups of land users: locals, newcomers, temporary inhabitants (secondary residents) and tourists. The frequently conflicting debates, especially those involving the diversity of land functions like recreational use and agro-pastoral and/or tourist exploitation, are significant for all kinds of users.

## Coveted areas

Since the 1960s, these areas once dedicated to agro-pastoralism have undergone profound changes: they have either become fallow or been pooled to create larger farms<sup>23</sup> or, mostly, have become central to tourism. The main transformations result from the development of ski resorts. Since the 1920s and especially the 1960s, these resorts have completely altered the function of the land, thus changing its economic value. More recently, some territories, particularly those close to large cities, have also attracted urban populations in search of different spaces and ways of life. By giving this land new value and bringing its different functions into competition, this appeal has created land pressure, which raises major issues for inhabitants of high-altitude valleys.

### *From high mountain pastures to ski slopes: the economic challenges revived with the construction of resorts*

All resorts, irrespective of their nature (village resorts, integrated resorts, first- or second-generation resorts, high-altitude resorts or mid-mountain resorts), have an impact on agro-pastoral areas as they use their land to set up facilities needed for skiing. Second- and third-generation winter resorts in particular use high-mountain pastures and reserve collective land, even if in the summer this land is still used for agro-pastoral activities, rented out to breeders from the village or transhumant herds to maintain the slopes. Laurence Billiard, the deputy mayor of the Villarodin-Bourget municipality in Haute Maurienne, including the la Norma resort on its territory (co-managed with the neighbouring municipality of Avrieux) expressed

this reality: ‘They had the money [for a dam constructed by the French National Electricity Company and an experimental wind tunnel for the high-tech company French National Aerospace Research], and we had the land. Our commons allowed for the creation of the resort, which the inhabitants built and have managed since 1970, and which is still under joint management.’<sup>24</sup>

Resorts in the same category can nevertheless present a variety of situations, reflecting these villages’ long history and that of their commons’ maintenance or disappearance and forms of management. I will take two resorts of the same category as examples: the Alpe d’Huez and the Deux Alpes resorts. Both are second-generation resorts of the same size (about 80 lifts, 133 slopes, a total of 250 kilometres and 30,000 beds), situated in Oisans, about 60 kilometres from Grenoble, and with very vast commons that were the reason behind the resorts’ creation above the ancient villages in the 1920s. Yet in these two cases the use of collective land significantly differs: At the Alpe d’Huez, the resort started in the 1920s using the municipality’s high mountain pastures (Huez). A few locals transformed their mountain chalets into hotels, even before ski lifts were set up (the first ski tow was built by Jean Pomagalski in 1936). An external actor, a member of the Touring Club Lyon, is said to be the founder. The collective use of high-mountain pastures facilitated the resort’s development (a lease was signed in 1925, no longer for hosting livestock but to set up tourist facilities with shared use). During the 1920s, the resort started off with the investments of a few owners (*Société du téléphérique*) who bought out private properties to increase the surface areas of the communal pastures (10,000 ha). This continued until the Second World War, when tourism took over and the commons were devoted to that use. The herds that carried on grazing in the summer essentially served to maintain the slopes – a herd of 370 cattle and about 2,000 sheep. Opting for a more upmarket clientele, the Alpe Huez soon opened its management to foreign capital, which has now reached majority shareholding.<sup>25</sup>

The Deux Alpes resort began to develop a few years later (1936), and especially in the 1950s. It is the outcome of the merging of two high-mountain pastures of the two municipalities of Mont de Lans (2/3) and Venosc (1/3). These pastures, the subject of disputes between the two municipalities, nevertheless saw the birth of a resort founded and managed by local owners. During the summer months they were still used for pasturing livestock (the successive leases have constantly been renewed); in fact the first cable car served to transport hay before even becoming a ski facility. The owners of the pastures (transferred from locals to the *Compagnie des Alpes* in 2009) managed the ski lifts and a large part of the real estate. They decided to give the resort a reputation as a sports and family destination.<sup>26</sup>

One of the major questions relates to the assets provided by common goods, in terms of available space but also regarding the structures of collective functioning for the development of the municipality and the control of its territory. It is interesting to note that a rather prevalent myth exists regarding most resorts: that winter tourism was introduced by individuals from outside the valleys. With their networks and expertise, they are said to have created the resorts and transformed these territories by modernising them. Yet more detailed studies of a few resorts show that these outside initiatives and actions, while real, were not exclusive, including in the most prestigious resorts like Méribel. Certain local actors played a role that was not only anterior but also crucial. To adopt these outside initiatives there had to be at least consent to leave the use or even sale of land to outside investors. After having gained more detailed knowledge of the functioning of mountain societies and the role of the land for

local residents, we will be able to better understand their occasionally surprising behaviour. For example, some proprietors accept the sale of their land and, even more, they facilitate external interventions by well-known individuals like renowned architects, economists, officials or politicians like Philippe Lamour (Queyras). For those residents who participate in these transformations, it is their way to make their territory more visible and more valuable.

This understanding of the societies at stake tells us that the very structure of high valley economies (including the role of migrations and of multi-activity) had long since accustomed the populations to constant adaptation, in which private or collective land has always played a role far beyond the intrinsic value of the land. Very quickly the locals sensed the value of tourism to develop a new form of multiple land use, enabling job seekers to remain in the villages, or to return. At the time, selling plots (private property) was seen as a significant resource for those who owned land and agreed to do so. The transfer of collective land often related to the role of a mayor or group of local stakeholders who saw it as being in the village's interest.<sup>27</sup>

These new contexts revealed locals' attitudes: those who wanted to be part of these changes and those who opposed them. While consent was initially granted, some changed their minds once faced with the new transformations and projects announced: attitudes ranged from regret to refusal. It is interesting to look at the diversity of attitudes, within the same villages or between valleys, towards the *Plan Neige* ('snow plan' set up in the 1970s) and its current variants (EU framework). Under the aegis of the state, this plan allows local government, when it retains control of its land, and especially private stakeholders (property developers or groups) to expropriate owners to set up ski lifts and in particular to build blocks of flats for seasonal tourist use.<sup>28</sup>

### *Acute and often contradictory challenges*

There are several types of challenges at different levels: from an economic point of view between investors and tourism; from a spatial point of view between municipalities and large groups that operate on a regional and increasingly international scale, without taking local social aspects into account. Hence the different policies depend on the resorts and their situation. Certain municipalities, often small or medium-sized resorts, have retained control of the ski lifts and the land, with experience of common management of the land. Examples include the Autrans resort (Vercors) that has opted to prioritise cross-country skiing and its proximity to Grenoble with a more modest clientele, and Mongenèvre and Vars (Hautes Alpes), with very different developments in the way they relate to real estate and its use. Others (communities of municipalities and joint syndicates) have resumed the management and exploitation of resorts, to make decisions for the future of their land, trying to become less dependent on tourism alone (Grasse in Vercors, Queyras resorts). Yet others like large high-altitude resorts organised around territories devoted to tourism, where agro-pastoral farming, if it exists at all, remains marginal (large Tarentaise resorts) have put their land up for tender to large groups and private operators (*Compagnie des Alpes, Transmontagne*). Conflicts then revolve around the use of the land, torn between 'urbanisation' and preservation of biodiversity (national and regional parks).



## Retain or retransform: major challenges for the future of mountain communities

### *Associations Foncières Pastorales (AFPs): pastoral real estate associations or the rehabilitation of collective land*

Over the last few years, the gradual disappearance of the last farmers and the threat of the total disappearance of the local farming sector – with the exception of sheep transhumance through the rental of high mountain pastures in collective or private property – encouraged the creation of pastoral real estate associations (*Association Foncière Pastorale*: AFP). If this organisation did not already exist there were attempts to set it up in many of the high valleys in the last decade. It offers an example of attempts to adapt collective land organisations. It is strongly based on the issue of knowing what covers mountain land ownership, inhabitants' or owners' rights, similar to what was already manifest at the turn of the nineteenth century when it came to specifying what was legally and socially meant by commons.<sup>29</sup>

The example of the application of the organisation in the Queyras is interesting as it attests to the new problems raised there by the new modes of farming collective or private land, in the current context that is at once demographically, legally and economically restricted. In 2003, to prevent further abandonment of farmland, which was a very significant phenomenon in the 1980s and 1990s (farms reduced by one third, livestock by 8 per cent, farmed surfaces by 20 per cent, with an increase in the size of farms from 19 to 26 ha), the Abriès municipality created a pastoral real estate association: this experiment was seen as original in its current organisations in the southern Alps. The aim was to pool the land (private and collective, farmed and high-mountain pastoral land). The organisation manages the land on behalf of the owners, allocates the surface areas, and signs leases with farmers. This framework is highly similar to that of the nineteenth century, since private land, particularly those near the village or even the gardens, can enter the AFP.<sup>30</sup>

One of the arguments in favour of the AFP is that it allows for land consolidation without changing ownership, which is no small operation in valleys where ownership is highly parcelled out and scattered.<sup>31</sup> It also makes it easier for young farmers, locals or from outside, to settle with the help of the AFP as part of a policy called the GAD (*groupement pour une agriculture durable*, an economic interest group for sustainable farming). Common buildings are made available, facilities are provided to set up collective interest companies, and aid is offered to re-launch production for more local markets, in exchange for quality guarantees, returning to old, traditional livestock breeds and crop varieties and bringing them back into fashion (cattle and sheep meat, cheese, honey, grain). At the same time, the district's high-mountain pastures continue to be farmed through conventional rental to transhumants (40,000 animals recorded, including one fifth from owners from the Queyras).

The goal of this pastoral real estate association is to allow farming to exist in a system that combines the two activities, tourism and farming. According to its 'promoter', it challenges the objectives created in the 1960s (setting up the park and developing tourism only). The goal is to extend this experience to all eight municipalities of the Queyras. Seven have adopted it despite strong reactions from real estate owners. It is interesting to note that this organisation, which uses all the funding systems (EU, region, *département*), was initiated

and is managed by a few farmers, mainly new inhabitants (settled in the 1970s) who practice multi-activity themselves.<sup>32</sup>

### *Individual and collective property: belonging to a place*

The example of the Queyras and the reactions aroused by this organisation provide an indication of the extent of the real and symbolic significance of owning plots privately or collectively. The economic aspect is of course crucial. It is reflected in the desire to retain land or the choice to sell it at the highest price – land which, depending on its situation and its status in the new PLUs (*Plan local d'urbanisme*, local urban plan), takes on incomparably more value than farmland and/or its former value. But the reactions that accompanied the AFP project in the Molines municipality (Queyras) reveal other relationships with the land. A petition was started by owners – locals, natives but especially native secondary residents – who still had a few properties or use rights on the commons, against the despoilment of the land, both private and collective. While the arguments were admittedly economic, they primarily appealed to the identity that land represents for them and their descendants. Underlying these arguments, which may arouse scepticism, is the role of land, even more than property (individual or collective), in one's way of being recognised as truly belonging to that place. This relates to identification with territory, which by far exceeds the sole ownership of a house. For the time being, the outcome of this petition has led to the collective refusal to set up a pastoral real estate association for the Molines municipality, unlike the other seven. Also indicative of the pervasiveness of this new collective organisation and of the associated issues is the fact that it weighed heavily in the latest municipal elections in March 2014.<sup>33</sup>

## Conclusion

Discussing land in the mountains, particularly collective land, implies complex studies and analyses extending far beyond solely economic aspects to deepen the thematic issues broached in this article. To understand what collective land has become and how it is used and managed, it seems necessary to know the long-term development of common property regimes. This involves detailed, micro-historical studies. They are essential to discover the functioning of local communities against the background of a national and increasingly European legal system. These studies are also crucial to grasp the nature of the divergences between municipalities and between different groups of their inhabitants, reflecting communal and relational power struggles in the face of past and current migrations. This article has made it particularly clear that collective forms of tenure are part and parcel of the overall operation of mountain societies not only in former periods of prevalent agro-pastoralism but also in more recent times, when tourism has become the dominant economic activity. Although refocusing commons analysis of French high Alpine real estate in such a way is a long, sensitive and difficult task, which still requires further research, it will allow us to better understand the current functionalities of mountain territories and the practices of their preservation in the context of conflicting planning policies. Finally, this question also offers another way to highlight the new vulnerability of these mountain territories.

## References

- 1 Particularly the ideological construction developed in the eighteenth century that presents collective land as un-productive, contrary to the liberal model and to be turned into private property. See Marie-Danielle Demélas/Nadine Vivier (eds.), *Les propriétés collectives face aux attaques libérales (1750–1914)*. Europe occidentale et Amérique latine, Rennes 2003; Nadine Vivier, *Propriété collective et identité communale. Les biens communaux en France de 1750 à 1914*, Paris 1998. This article is mainly the result of a study carried out within Labex ITEM (*Innovation et territoires de montagne*) ANR-10-LABX-50-01) at the University Pierre Mendès-France Grenoble II.
- 2 Alain Cabantous et al. (eds.), *Mer et Montagne dans la culture européenne (XVIe–XIXe siècle)*, Rennes 2011.
- 3 Luigi Lorenzetti, *Dépendances et disparités. Une lecture comparative du rapport entre terres hautes et terres basses. Le Valais et le Tessin, 1870–1930*, in: *Histoire des Alpes. Storia delle Alpi. Geschichte der Alpen 17* (2012), 101–118.
- 4 Studies of the Series M of the French departmental archives, particularly Series 6, 7 and 8 (Hautes Alpes Département Archives) and *Enquête agricole, deuxième série, Enquêtes départementales: Hautes Alpes, Haute-Savoie, Savoie, Isère*, Paris 1867; Léonce de Lavergne, *L'enquête agricole*, in: *Revue des Deux Mondes LXII* (1866), 1039–1056. More broadly, on the surveys in general see Nadine Vivier/Corinne Marache (eds.), *L'Etat et les sociétés rurales. Enquêtes agricoles, enquêteurs et enquêtés en Europe du Sud au XIXe et XXe siècles*, Annales du Midi, tome CXXV, no. 284, Toulouse, October–December 2013, 493–570.
- 5 Jean-Joseph-Antoine Pilot, *Le Queyras*, in: Mathieu Cassien/Alexandre Debelle, *Album du Dauphiné ou recueil de desseins représentant les sites les plus pittoresques, les villes, les bourgs et principaux villages*, Grenoble 1968 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1835–1839), 166. This descriptive pattern embraced by state officials, scholars and travellers can be found in the work of authors of the early nineteenth century, and even throughout that century.
- 6 Without even mentioning the extreme diversity of situations encountered as soon as the perimeter of analysis is expanded to plain territories and lands of large real estate properties, see the introduction in: Demélas/Vivier (eds.), *Les propriétés collectives*, see note 1.
- 7 Demélas/Vivier (eds.), *Les propriétés collectives*, see note 1, 23.
- 8 Often irrigated by ancestral irrigation canal systems integrated in the collective management.
- 9 Nadine Vivier, *Propriété collective et identité communale. Les biens communaux en France, 1750–1914*, Paris 1998; Id., *Le Briançonnais rural aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles*, Paris 1992.
- 10 Anne-Lise Head-König, *Les biens communaux en Suisse aux XVIII<sup>e</sup> et XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles: enjeux et controverses*, in: Demélas/Vivier (eds.), *Les propriétés collectives*, see note 1, 99–118; Hélène Viallet, *Les alpages et la vie d'une communauté montagnarde. Beaufort du Moyen Âge au XVIIIe siècle*, memoirs and documents published by the Académie salésienne, Documents d'ethnologie régionale, no. 15, Grenoble 1993; Jean-Charles Felley/Yann Decorzant, *S'unir pour survivre. Le consortium d'alpage du Scex-Blanc (1922–1979)*, in: Anne Marie Granet-Abisset/Luigi Lorenzetti/Luca Mocarelli (eds.), *Gérer et transformer les territoires alpins. Ressources endogènes et apports exogènes depuis le 18<sup>ème</sup> siècle*, Grenoble 2016 (forthcoming). See also the work of Claudio Lorenzini and Stefano Barbacetto on the Eastern Alps in the abovementioned forthcoming book.
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  - 18 Viallet, *Les alpages*, see note 10.
  - 19 Archives départementales des Hautes-Alpes, letter from the inhabitants of Navette addressed to the Senator on 21 February 1929, cited by Montredon, *Sociétés de montagnes*, see note 16, 109.
  - 20 Marcel Besson, unpublished interview with Anne Marie Granet, La Chapelle en Valgaudemar, May 2001; Id., discussions with Marcel Faure recorded at a workshop at the Musée Dauphinois, January 2001.
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  - 23 Due to the abandonment of farmland and to remain profitable with mechanisation and CAP norms.
  - 24 Anne Marie Granet-Abisset, Interview with Laurence Billard, Grenoble, 10 October 2014.
  - 25 Elodie Favier, *L'Alpe d'Huez, la naissance d'une station*, Master's 1 and 2 thesis, University of Grenoble, 2005 and 2006.
  - 26 Jack Fournier, *Raconte moi les deux Alpes*, Bourg d'Oisans 2001.
  - 27 On this topic see the documentary on the Albiez le Vieux municipality-resort, as part of the series *A la découverte des Français*. The documentary observes the municipality and the fate of its inhabitants for 15 years after the foundation of the resort in 1959: TV documentary *Mais où sont les neiges d'antan*, ORTE, broadcast date 19. 2. 1974, second part of *A la découverte des Français, sur Albiez le Vieux*, <http://www.ina.fr/video/CPF86600770> (17. 9. 2015).
  - 28 Television report *Le plan neige pour l'aménagement de la montagne*, Fr3 Alpes, broadcast date 29. 12. 1977, interviewer: Claude Francillon, in: *Montagnes Magiques. 100 ans de tourisme à l'écran*, fresque INA-Labex ITEM (Innovations et territoires de montagne), <http://fresques.ina.fr/montagnes/fiche-media/Montag00065/le-plan-neige-pour-l-amenagement-de-la-montagne.html> (17. 9. 2015).
  - 29 Demélas/Vivier (eds.), *Les propriétés collectives*, see note 1, Introduction.
  - 30 This is for example the case of the Villarodin-Bourget municipality, which is also trying to set up an AFP. Research on this municipality is underway.
  - 31 See Anne Marie Granet-Abisset, *La route réinventée, les migrations des habitants du Queyras, 19e–20e siècles*, Grenoble 1990.
  - 32 Study carried out in March 2013.
  - 33 Information gathered in the Queyras and for the hamlets of the Modane municipality.