HAL
open science

Socio-ecological resilience of the commons. A case of pastoral community in the Mountains of North-Eastern Andalusia (Spain)

P. Sanosa, F. Ravera, Pablo Domínguez

To cite this version:

P. Sanosa, F. Ravera, Pablo Domínguez. Socio-ecological resilience of the commons. A case of pastoral community in the Mountains of North-Eastern Andalusia (Spain). XVII Biennial IASC Conference, Jul 2019, Lima, Peru. 10.26147/73ep-v603 . hal-03403546

HAL Id: hal-03403546

https://hal.science/hal-03403546v1

Submitted on 5 Nov 2021

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

Socio-ecological resilience of the commons.

A case of pastoral community in the Mountains of North-Eastern Andalusia (Spain)

Pau Sanosa-Cols[1], Federica Ravera[2] and Pablo Dominguez[3]

[1] PhD candidate at Social and Cultural Anthropology, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain, [2] Postdoctoral Researcher at Universitat de Vic – Universitat Central de Catalunya. Càtedra d'Agroecologia i Sistemes Alimentaris, [3]Senior Researcher at Laboratory of Geography of the Environment (GEODE), Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), France / Linked researcher of the Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (ICTA; LASEG), Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain.

Introduction

This research aims to observe and describe how a community adapts its governance system to a changing socioecological context, particularly implying the transformation of economical conceptions as well as linkages between culture and territory. We study this under the approach of Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2014), considering that pastoralist communities (among other ecosystem-based economies and cultures) have governed, managed, and conserved territories through constant readaptation over time and in front of multiple pressures and drivers of global change (Kothari et al., 2012). The case study is located in the mountain region of the Sierra de Segura (Fig.1a and 1b), being pastoralism a traditional and well adapted lifestyle to particular climatic and geographic conditions (cold winter, hot dry-summer, dry limestone soils, etc.). Even if shepherds do not own the land, they have the right to use it pastorally, through tradition-based but constantly re-updated governance institutions, exercising an historical right over the Sierra, recognized by medieval ordinances (De la Cruz, 1980). Also, community-territory relation is not restricted to this area, since approximately 50% of them practice transhumance to wintering areas (50-150km away), so their decisions and activities go beyond the Sierra (use of livestock trails and movement organization). Considering this, we hypothesize that the community of shepherds still has strong identity characteristics with close ties to the territory, traditional knowledge and mutual support that allow the exercise of socio-environmental governance, at both formal levels and informal, even if strong changes are undergoing.

Santiago-Pontones common grassland management		
Territory	≈ 30.000 ha. of grasslands between 1.400 and 1.900m.	
Community	90 shepherds	70 from Santiago group 20 from Pontones group
Activity	Livestock, mostly sheep's, but also some goats and cows	

Fig1.a. (left) Location of study case, in Sierra de Segura, south-east of Spain; Fig1.b. (right) The grassland area managed by shepherds' governance systems (orange) within the municipality of Santiago-Pontones (red line).

Methods

Participant observation

6 months with shepherds in their daily practices in grasslands, villages and livestock movements.

Data:

Field notes

In-depth interviews (N=20)

To shepherds from Pontones (8) and Santiago (9), half transhumants and half non-transhumants, elders (2) and a woman (all shepherds are males).

- Institution of Governance
- Identity
- Kinship
- Pastoral practices
- Rangelands knowledge
- Ecosystems and climatology
- Change perception and challenges
- Technologies and tools
- Relations with animals and territory
- Religious aspects

Grounded Theory Analysis of all collected data

Results

Different types of governance systems	There is a formal regulation of distribution concerning grassland area and dates of access, but also improvement of infrastructures and other non-formal organization for animals exchange between shepherds, transhumance timings and herd movements.
Two independent governance institutions, one single group	There are two independent governance institutions: Pontones and Santiago. The division responds to geographic and historical processes. Shepherds exchange knowledge and support between them, so in fact works as a single group.
Less sense of community, but still a strong pastoralist identity	There is a perception of a loss of community bonds and that shepherds are loosing knowledge and good practices. Despite that, Sierra's inhabitants recognize the value of livestock and their benefits to territory and cultural heritage.
Adaptive management	There has been changes in the practices and knowledge related to the extensive livestock activity, due to changes in land use, migration and globalization. Shepherds have been able to incorporate new tools and technologies to their management. The whole activity is affected by global agricultural policies, but shepherds and their governance systems have adapted to carry on existing.

Conclusion

This first approach shows that Santiago-Pontones shepherd's community represents a case of traditional uses strongly influenced by processes of globalization, especially at economic but also cultural level. This seems to weaken the territory-community relation, becoming increasingly global-dependent and decreasingly local. This brings in problems to the resilience and sustainability of local socio-ecological systems. In any case, the results show that the governance's institutions and whole shepherds community has been able to assimilate sociocultural changes and incorporate into their decisions and management system these new elements, in order to prevail and continue existing as an agro-pastoral society, which is much more lively than most others in similar rural mountain contexts in Spain.

References

- Borrini-Feyerabend, G., Dudley, N., Jeager, T., Lassen, B., Pathak Broome, N., Phillips, A., & Sandwith, T. (2014). Gobernanza de Áreas Protegidas: De la comprensión a la acción. Gland, Suiza: UICN.
- De la Cruz, E. (1980). Ordenanzas del común de la Villa de Segura y su tierra de 1580.
- Kothari, A., Corrigan, C., Jonas, H., Neumann, A., & Shrumm, H. (2012). Recognising and supporting territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities: global overview and national case studies. Technical Series.

Aknowledgements

We would like to express our gratitude to Santiago-Pontones shepherd's community, who has assisted us so nicely. Research was funded by EXPLORA (Socio-Ecological Heritization of ICCAs in Spain and Morocco, CSO2015-72607-EXP), AGATA (Agrifood systems, Gender And Adaptive Transformation in Mediterranean context, AXA research fund; www.agata.cat) and ADAPTAL (El rol del conocimiento tradicional agrario y alimentario en la adaptación al cambio climático, CSO2016-78827-R).

UAB Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona Departament d'Antropologia Social i Cultural

UVIC UNIVERSITAT DE VIC UNIVERSITAT CENTRAL DE CATALUNYA

AGATA

The International Association for the Study of the Commons