

## Journal of Alpine Research | Revue de géographie alpine

109-1 | 2021

La montagne et la gestion collective des biens :  
quelles influences ? quelles interactions ?

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### Electronic version

URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/rga/8329>

DOI: 10.4000/rga.8329

ISSN: 1760-7426

### This article is a translation of:

Paesaggi collettivi: il Gran Consortile di Ricalaretto e le proprietà collettive delle valli del Germanasca. -

URL : <https://journals.openedition.org/rga/8553> [it]

### Publisher:

Association pour la diffusion de la recherche alpine, UGA Éditions/Université Grenoble Alpes

### Electronic reference

Michele Francesco Barale and Margherita Valcanover, "Collective Landscapes. The Gran Consortile di Ricalaretto and Collective Property in the Germanasca Valley", *Journal of Alpine Research | Revue de géographie alpine* [Online], 109-1 | 2021, Online since 08 May 2021, connection on 13 May 2021. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/rga/8329> ; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/rga.8329>

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This text was automatically generated on 13 May 2021.



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# Collective Landscapes. The Gran Consortile di Riclaretto and Collective Property in the Germanasca Valley

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

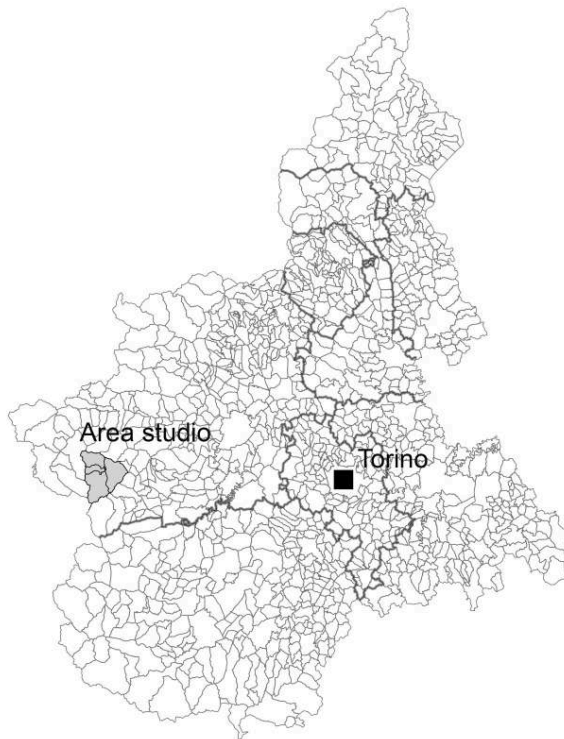
The article was conceived and written by both authors. Historical and archivist research, as well as legal and morphological studies, was carried out by Michele F. Barale. The structure of the interviews and the landscape research is the work of Margherita Valcanover.

## Introduction

- 1 Numerous regions have equipped themselves with the legislative tools necessary to deal with land fragmentation,<sup>1</sup> but long-established collective property institutions (CPIs) continue to co-exist and form an essential part of the territory. CPIs constitute a palimpsest of community attempts to manage the mountain territory. Because they have been around for so long, they play an active part in shaping the landscape. Studies over the past 30 years, for example by the *Centro studi sui Demani Civici e le Proprietà Collettive* (Centre for Studies and Documentation on Civic Domains and Collective Property, at the University of Trento), have made it possible to reconstruct the complexity and territorial importance of the CPIs located in the eastern Alpine arc. However, knowledge about similar structures in the western arc –in particular, their constituent characteristics and their contemporary nature– has been sorely lacking.

- 2 This is a serious matter, as a lack of cultural knowledge leads to a major shortage of tools that can be used for protection, among other consequences. And while the legislation does not take the CPIs into account as some of the great landscape transformers, there is also a *vulnus* and a design problem in these territories.<sup>2</sup> From the architect's point of view, these institutions have to be developed because they operate on two fundamental aspects of mountain areas' habitability: On the one hand, they maintain their unique features and, hence, their landscape value, and on the other hand, they help to permanently support communities of people and, thus, limit the area's abandonment and depopulation.
- 3 In addition to the social challenges, including an ageing population, climate-environmental issues are becoming urgent as they will put the mountain territories<sup>3</sup> under increasing stress: the advancement of the forest<sup>4</sup> and the ensuing wilderness of the slopes<sup>5</sup>, their stability, hydrogeological disorders and the effects of climate change.
- 4 If these challenges are properly addressed and managed, the mountain can become an invaluable reservoir of ecosystem services and a place of continuous cultural regeneration. Its ecosystem (Scolozzi *et al.*, 2019) and cultural diversity (De Rossi, 2018; Membretti *et al.*, 2020) are still considered too little.
- 5 In these terms, CPIs are an emblematic –perhaps key– element of the Alpine region, as this contribution will seek to highlight. The paper focuses on the private CPIs that are located in the Germanasca Valley in the territory of the Turin metropolitan area and limited to the municipalities of Prali, Salza di Pinerolo, Massello and Perrero.<sup>6</sup> The territory under discussion consists of extensive collective properties, and it is well suited to address remarks (especially in terms of design) about the collective ownership model and how it manages and maintains the territory.

Figure 1



Piedmont and the study area.

Authors: M. F. Barale, M. Valcanover.

## Methodology and objectives

- 6 Our methodological framework is affected by the lack of a published bibliography on the CPIs of the Germanasca Valley. The studies that have been done, now rather outdated, refer to individual Alps (Peyronel, 2000a; Pascal, 1997) and have a historical nature as they mostly concern medieval times (Peyronel, 2000b; Dal Verme, 1983; Rotelli, 1973). To activate any reflection on the area, it is essential to have a historical and geographical framework that makes it possible to know the territory and its structures. This was the driving force behind the research. A contemporary study of the various fragments was necessary to bring back a complex frame.
- 7 The paper is structured into two sections: In the first, there is a comparison among the CPIs identified in the Germanasca Valley. The second one analyses the *Gran Consortile di Ricalaretto* and the two land associations (*As.Fo.*).
- 8 In the first section, 12 CPIs<sup>7</sup> are presented in an aggregated manner and described through thematic cuts inferred from the sources. The aim is to build a fact-finding frame that shows both the historical complexity and the territorial importance of CPIs, as well as the fragility they present in comparison with contemporary reality, by stating that the management of highlands has collective know-how that is not being passed on to younger generations.
- 9 Concerning the sources, the research integrates primary sources of both an archival (municipal and private) and an oral nature. This research was collected through a field

survey, as well as telephone and on-site interviews. Because of the lack of a bibliography, it was necessary to integrate the archival material with interviews addressed to the chairman of each property to obtain both quantitative data and qualitative aspects such as the management (and sometimes the customs and memories necessary to understand the specificities) of each institution. We used the *semi-structured interview* technique, which included a combination of specific questions and more general ones on the main characteristics of CPIs.<sup>8</sup> This technique allows for a homogeneous collection of information and for the respondents to introduce novel or important elements that the authors may not have previously considered. A total of 15 interviews were collected.<sup>9</sup>

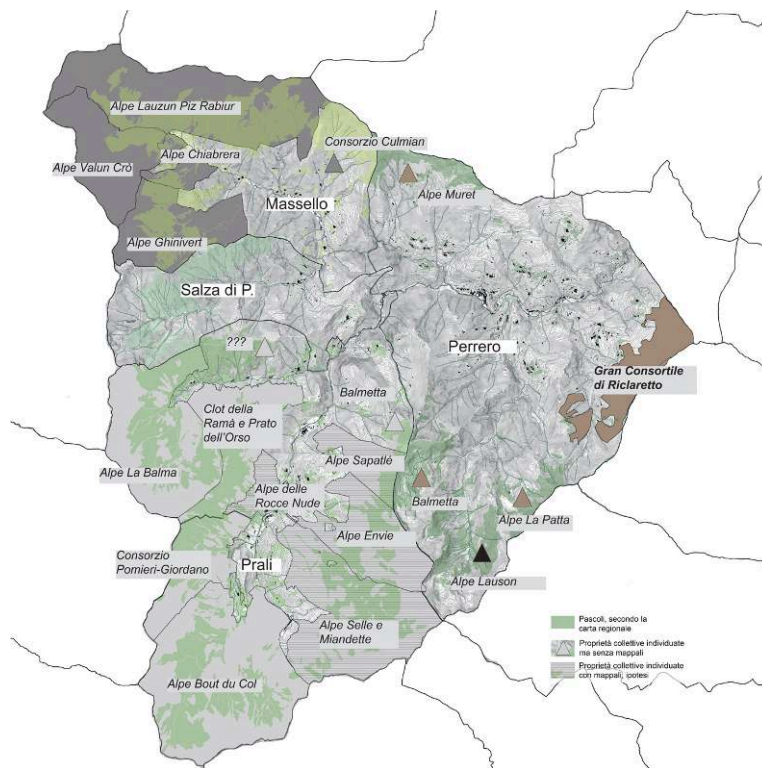
- 10 The original materials (e.g. documents, statutes, cartographies, etc.) made available by the interviewees were also collected and contributed to the map shown in Figure 2.
- 11 The second monographic section dwells on the *Gran Consortile di Ricalaretto*, an emblematic case of CPI. It is similar in complexity and fragility to the CPIs described in Chapter 3 but offers an effective response. In particular, the stages of the territorial project implemented to maintain the possibility of intervention on the territory are analysed. Ricalaretto shows a third way by accompanying the transition from grazing to certified woodland.
- 12 Finally, the paper focuses on the two land associations, which appear to make use of the collective manner of territory management while implementing it on lower quotas and with new goals.
- 13 This article shows that design approaches, such as those implemented in Ricalaretto or the land associations, can be effective at addressing the weaknesses of the CPIs and foster better habitability in mountain areas. Both models show that collective, time-sensitive, skills-based project management can lead to the durable management of mountain areas. Finally, these institutions can limit mountain abandonment by responding to one of the most erosive elements: land fragmentation.

## Collective property in the Germanasca Valley. A declining palimpsest

### General characteristics

- 14 The Germanasca Valley is an Alpine valley and a branch of the Chisone Valley, which reaches the Prali basin from Perosa Argentina, passing through Pomaretto and Perrero. The *Vallone di Massello* and the eponymous municipality are on the side of the Germanasca Valley from which the valley of the municipality of Salza di Pinerolo branches off. Finally, the *Rodoretto* Valley, which takes its name from the main hamlet of Prali, branches off directly from the Germanasca Valley.

Figure 2



Overall plan of the four Municipalities and the collective properties identified. Not all of them managed to have the exact cadastral extension; however, thanks to the regional land use map, it was possible to intersect the validated data with oral sources and cadastral references and thus have a cartographic approximation.

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## Origins, altitude and land registers

- 15 CPIs are very old property institutions, and documentary evidence traces them back at least to the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Dal Verme, 1983; Pascal, 1997; Peyronel, 2000b). In archival documents, they appear as “indiviso”:<sup>10</sup> In Prali, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, they were fiefs of the “Count Horatio San Martino”. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they were registered as “emphyteutic goods” belonging to the Abbey of Casanova. In Massello, the emphyteusis has been registered since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, while redemption takes place during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Pascal 1997).
- 16 Taking up the scheme of Bätzing (2005), which illustrates land use very well, it is possible to say that CPIs are usually located at a relatively high altitude, above 1,800 m, with the original function of an *alpeggio*<sup>11</sup> pasture. It was historically cultivated up to this altitude, while the CPIs began where it was only possible to graze cattle and, albeit more rarely, cut the forest. These CPIs identified portions of land whose burdens or benefits were to be shared among a large group of people: the high pastures with the best grass and the banks of the streams that flow down from the mountain pastures to the hamlet.

Figure 3

Municipality	Name	Date of establishment	Surface (ha)	Number of Members	Statute	Original function	Current function
Massello	Alpe Luzzon Piz Robler	first testimony XI sec. 2019 last update	1156	77	undivided property	pasture	pasture
	Alpe Ghisneret	it covers two sides of the mountain, now an administrative subdivision: due to this reason the origin can be dated at least before 1713	533	80+	undivided property	pasture	---
	Alpe Ciasbrava	Middle Ages?	90	39	undivided property	pasture	---
	Consorzio Coudislar	1800 cc	222	85	consortium (non profit legal personality)	pasture	pasture, dairy farm
	Valon Crò	---	888	6*	undivided property	pasture	wildlife farm
	As.Fo. C.S.	2016	23	20	land association	crops	moving
Prali-Rodoretto**	Bout de Col	2019 last review of statute	1154	49	undivided property	---	---
	Salto e Mondama di Prali (Lughezzani Terni, Marcollo, Cior Nicolo or 12 Lughezzani)	1634, first mention	---	82	undivided property	---	---
	Pomeri-Giordano	---	---	21	consortium	---	---
	Sapelli	---	---	---	---	---	---
	Wall (Giordano)	---	---	---	---	pasture?	abandonment
	Rocco Nudo (Isotto Vergio)	---	---	---	---	pasture?	abandonment
	Garnello	---	---	---	---	---	---
	Pelino	---	---	---	---	---	---
	Fenorell	---	---	---	---	---	---
	Envie (comprende Sellgion)	---	---	86+	undivided property	---	---
	Alpe La Salma**	1885 in Statute	828	30	undivided property	---	---
	Clot della Rena e Prato dell'Orso**	---	---	301	30	undivided property	---
Perrero	Alpe Roncaglia e Pinerolo (dalla cima sud-est di Rissotto)	1810, first mention	507	---	undivided property	pasture	silviculture
	Alpe La Patta	1078 sac	---	---	undivided property	pasture	?
	Alpe Salma	---	---	---	undivided property	---	---
	Alpe Rabatrasca (Pinerolo)	---	---	---	undivided property	---	---
	Alpe Muret	---	---	---	undivided property	---	---
As.Fo. "Albergo Olivieri"	2019	68	34	land association	crops	moving	

The table shows the private collective properties divided by Municipality. The authors estimate the presence of 24 p.c. on the territory of the municipalities examined, distributed as follows: the Municipality of Perrero owns five, plus an *As.Fo.*, plus a former Civil Code now public; the Municipality of Massello also has five plus one *As.Fo.*; the Municipality of Salza di Pinerolo does not own any: the existing pastures are individual private properties; finally, the Municipality of Prali has about twelve.

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- 17 The various elevations and differentiation in use (private/collective) are also evident in the cadastral projection of the properties. The private parcels are small and concentrated around the hamlets, usually at lower altitudes. Seed fields are radially arranged around the hamlets. The CPIs parcels are set over this belt: these parcels are extensive because they are a few, and they occupy the space from the hamlets up to the ridges and the peaks.<sup>12</sup>
- 18 The boundaries have remained almost completely unchanged for centuries, and there have only been a few small variations.

### Property infrastructure: property and use rights

- 19 The CPIs are property institutions configured as either *indiviso*, *consortia*, or hybrids. The lack of legal clarity, as well as the very old statutes and registers of shareholders, is usually a distinctive feature of the less exploited CPIs. However, to access funding measures, a widespread process of updating has been underway in recent years and is still ongoing,<sup>13</sup> which often leads to the old metric system<sup>14</sup> being abandoned to make way for millesimal allocations following the condominium model.
- 20 The rules that determine rights and use are usually part of the statutes, although there are also customs. While the CPIs are common properties, each owner shares the landed property with the other owners, but everyone owns a share that determines the

proportion of the rights of use. The grazing and harvesting of timber represent rights of use. Given the high number of members or co-owners, management happens with the election of a board comprising a few members (five to seven people); decisions are made at the annual meeting, where the vote of each co-owner is proportional to their share.

- 21 The access and transmission rules follow the law regulated by the Civil Code. Historically, the quantity and kind of cattle depended on the size of the share, which could be supplemented with sums of money if the share resulted in portions of an animal.

### **A community of co-owners**

- 22 Although a demographic analysis was not carried out, it can be argued that the average age of the co-owners is rather high for the shared properties and that leading roles are more common among the elderly; the role of secretary is often occupied by middle-aged women. Usually, the role of president is given to the same person for many years as they have access to and experience with history and archive materials, while they also implement maintenance projects.
- 23 In most cases, those who enjoy rights are the elderly. On the one hand, they are burdened with an onerous legacy because of the constant re-organisation of cadastres upon the death of the owners; on the other hand, they have been educated to maintain the CPIs and put a lot of energy into it, almost as if it were a vocation.<sup>15</sup>
- 24 While there is no institutionalised body or form of debate, the network of older people, who are often in contact with each other for residential or religious reasons, ensure that there is an exchange of information on how best to manage the CPI. In general, interviews often showed a common look at the *Gran Consortile* as a paradigm case.

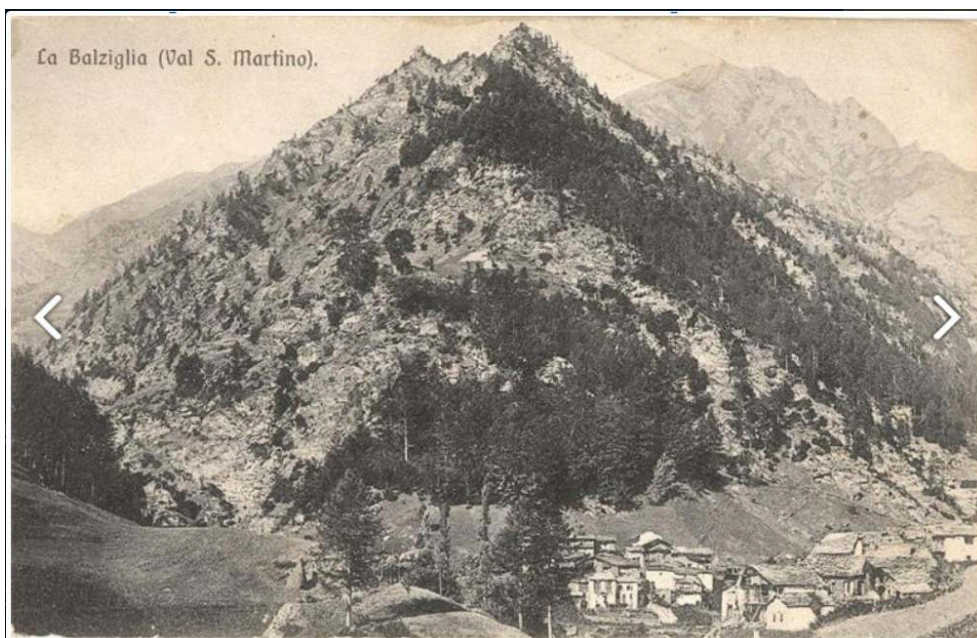


Figure 4



Massello from the 1950s. The terraced landscape in the background is still visible.  
Source: Municipality of Massello.

Figure 5



Borgata Balziglia in the 1930s.  
Source: Municipality of Massello.

Figure 6



Borgata Balziglia in 2020.  
Credit: M. Valcanover.

Figure 7



The river signs the border between c.p. Valun Crò (left) and c.p. Alpe Lauzun (right), Massello.  
Credit: M.F. Barale.

## Land use and landscape

- 25 Let's imagine the landscape in question during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century at its demographic highpoint and during the agricultural exploitation of the territory: At the bottom and in the middle valley, there are villages with a concentric band of crops around the houses. Along the slopes that are less exposed to the sun, the *indritti*, or steeper slopes, there will be wooded areas cultivated with 'noble' trees, mostly larch

and beech. The farming decreases and the villages gradually become thinner towards the top, leaving room for collective properties and their meadows and sometimes for wooded areas. Finally, the various mountain peaks rise with bare rocks.

- 26 It can be said that there was a monoculture of larch, a controlled crop designed and kept pure by using specific cutting methods. The forest was for sustenance to produce wood for the owners' heating and building purposes. The pasture, on the contrary, could have had both sustenance and income function: In their interviews, Tron in Massello and Breusa in Rodoretto reported the tenancy of portions of pasture, even in ancient times, due to the excellent quality of the forage collected at high altitudes.
- 27 The territory today looks very different. There is the age-old question of the forest advancing as it is no longer being controlled and taken care of, and of the shrub vegetation that has spread like wildfire, especially in the form of alders and rhododendrons. Untidy vegetation has invaded the soil close to the houses. The leaf does not allow the recognisability of the landscape's historical and anthropic characteristics, leaving us to imagine the "original" facets only in some small glimpses or during the winter. The landscape is no longer suitable for total agro-forestry-pastoral exploitation.
- 28 In general, for almost all the CPIs analysed, we see the same grazing exploitation operated by third parties on lease and not by the owners themselves. On average, the rents are relatively low and shared among co-owners or more rarely invested in maintenance. An exception is the Bout du Col (Prali), a cattle pasture in great demand for the quality of both the vegetation and the water.<sup>16</sup>
- 29 Many CPIs own stables and rooms for dairy production (*bergerie*), built on pre-existing buildings or ex-novo during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The graze cattle is mostly made up of bovine herds; there are also flocks of sheep and sometimes goats. The number of heads is established in *adult livestock units*,<sup>17</sup> according to values often found in old statutes that no longer correspond to the needs and possibilities of grazing today. This is one of the main factors that have prompted many CPIs to update their statutes and grazing plans in recent years.
- 30 The forest's exploitation has fallen into disuse in almost all cases, except for containment operations where necessary or close to ski slopes.

## The "Gran Consortile of Ricalretto" (Perrero, TO)

Figure 8



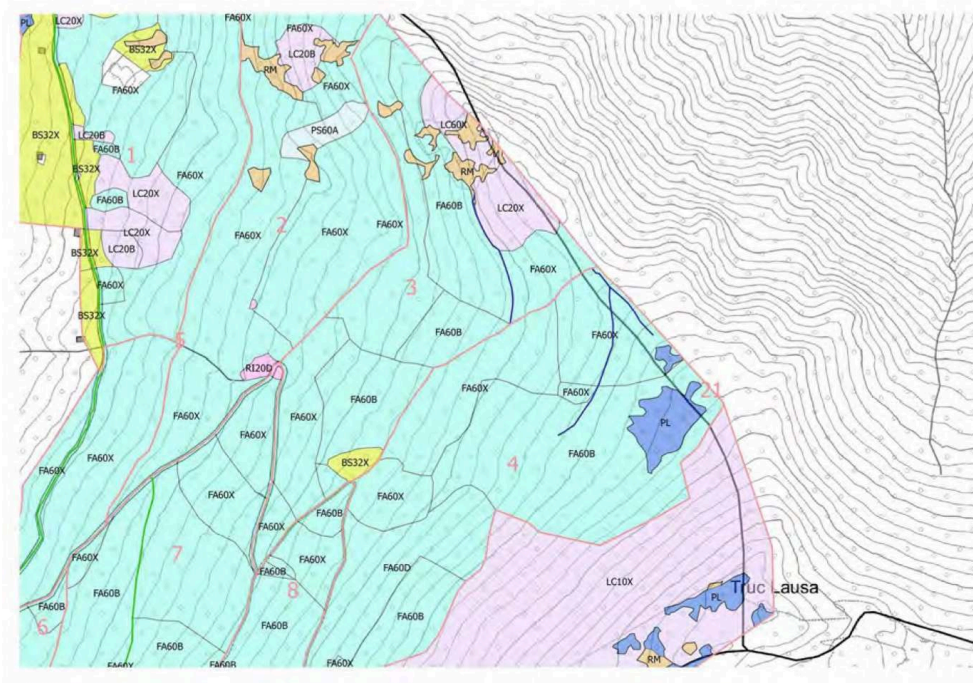
Photo of the Consortium extracted from the 2016-2030 Corporate Forestry Plan.

Source: *Piano Forestale Aziendale 2016-2030*, cover image.

- 31 The *Gran Consortile di Riclaretto* is a private shared property located in the municipality of Perrero, at an altitude between 1,200 and 1,900 m. It extends for 397 hectares, which, according to the ancient measurement system still in force, is equivalent to 46,663 atoms. In 2016, there were about 300 landlords (Corporate Forest Plan, 2016); management takes place through a board consisting of seven elected members, while decisions are taken at a general meeting convened once a year. It was probably created due to the laws on the subversion of feudal rights (Peyronel 2000a) in force in the Kingdom of Sardinia after its annexation by France (1802).
- 32 Historical statutes make it clear that the primary function of the *Consortile* was the grazing of cattle. Cutting the forest was less important, given the many articles devoted to the protection of pastures and animal types to be pastured.
- 33 From the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the *Gran Consortile* suffered because of the abandonment of the highlands. The disappearance of uses and habits continued for decades, which caused the grazing areas to shrink, the forest to advance and wooded larch monocultures to transform into mixed woods. What makes the *Gran Consortile di Riclaretto* a paradigmatic case is the anthropic response to this transformation, which was as profound as it was inevitable and began in the 1980s when Ferruccio Peyronel assumed the chairmanship.
- 34 The actions carried out by Peyronel, with support from and approval by the Shareholders' Assembly, which could a posteriori be interpreted as signals of planning, can be summarised in two moments: the process of usucapion and, subsequently, the obtaining of PEFC certification for the *Consortile's* woods.
- 35 In the second half of the 1980s, the *Consortile* faced a de facto management stalemate: 65% of the ownership shares were neither represented nor representable at the assembly, which effectively voided any decision that was taken. The reason for this was the acts of succession, which had been drafted without much discussion and left out all mention of particles that may be irrelevant to the individual but are fundamental to

collective management. With a deed filed on 23 June 1989 at the Magistrate's Court of Perosa Argentina, the 194 living owners applied "special usucapion" against 345 owners of parcels constituting the *Consortile*, who were born in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and presumably died at the signing of the deed.

Figure 9



Cartographic excerpt of the Consortium of Riclaretto in Corporate Forestry Plan 2016-2030 with Resolution of the Regional Council 10 April 2017, n. 25-4878.

Source: *Piano Forestale Aziendale 2016-2030*. Corporate Forestry Plan 2016-2030. Forest map with land cover. Excerpt: parcel 3.

- 36 The second key moment in the case of Riclaretto was the decision to support the transition of prevailing use, from pasture to woodland, and to make it a long-term source of income alternative to renting the pastures that have now largely disappeared. Two other figures intervened in this process: forestry technicians Andrea Ighina and Igor Cicconetti, who drew up the "Corporate Forest Plan 2016-2030". The plan aimed "to provide the *Gran Consortile* with a planning tool that allows maximising the exploitation of the wood resources in terms of quantity, quality and sustainability" and to develop a functional document for obtaining "certification for forest management sustainable according to the PEFC model and concretely implement the concept of multifunctionality of forest resources" (Business Plan, 2016: 8). The plan approved in April 2017 was followed by an application for inclusion in the PEFC's sustainable forest certification, which was obtained the same year. As Andrea Ighina explains, "Forest Plan and PEFC certification are only the first phases of a medium and long-term project. The aim is, on the one hand, to create a quality production chain, where the certified timber of the *Consortile* becomes the raw material for the realisation of building products or furnishings and, on the other hand, to create a wood that is attractive from the landscape point of view, not only for residential users."<sup>18</sup>
- 37 The PEFC certification for the forests of *Gran Consortile di Riclaretto* is a crucial element at the local and the territorial scale. The *Gran Consortile* is one of the few private

Piedmontese structures with certification for sustainable forest management, which is usually reserved for public bodies that are associated with each other.

## Land associations: new forms of landscape protection

- 38 Thanks to L.R. 21/2016, two land associations (*As.Fo.*) were founded next to the collective properties:<sup>19</sup> C.S., established in 2018 in Massello, and Albarea Olivieri, formed in 2019 in the municipality of Perrero. These are non-profit associations created by private properties, whose goal is to intervene against the abandonment of land.
- 39 They have several features in common: They are both located in the vicinity of hamlets, mostly where land fragmentation is more evident, and there are many small property parcels. C.S., for example, covers an area of 23 hectares and includes 514 property parcels. They have few members (Albarea Olivieri has 34, C.S. has 25), and each is the sole owner of their respective funds.

Figure 10



As.Fo. Albarea-Olivieri, Perrero  
Credit: Andrea Ighina.

- 40 The proximity to the settlements means they are located at a lower altitude than has historically been the case with CPIs. Both associations are located between 1,000 and 1,500 m above sea level, where invasive vegetation predominates on the paths and pastures, even close to the villages. It is this aspect, common to both, that led to their creation: As a priority for establishing the association, the two respondents<sup>20</sup> stated the landscape recovery of the villages to improve their liveability and have a “landscape that is not diminished”.<sup>21</sup> Their main purpose is to keep the spaces around the buildings ‘open’ and permeable. Therefore, the aim is to better qualify their habitability in the permanent use of the houses’ owners but, above all, for the territory’s practicability.

## Discussion and conclusion

- 41 The cases of the *Gran Consortile di Ricalaretto* and the two land associations make it possible to extract tools that could guide the planning ability of the remaining CPIs on the territory.
- 42 *Ricalaretto* shows a third way is possible for mountain territories: effectively managing the transition of uses. This path is an alternative to abandonment and forms of return. Furthermore, *Ricalaretto* demonstrates how this process can have positive externalities not only for the economic sector but also for the forest's ecological environment and soil maintenance. It also states the centrality of the concept of community, which can play a key role in transforming territories and, hence, landscapes, if supported by a long-term territorial project.
- 43 Along with the *Gran Consortile*, the land associations perform the task of functionally managing the territory. They try to recompose the land fragmentation by operating with a juridical structure that is more flexible than that of CPIs in the past. *As.Fo.* inherit from CPIs the community model of managing collective land, of the pastures' open space and the woodlands surrounding the villages: The *As.Fo.* can satisfy a landscape demand.
- 44 Comparing the latest CPI cases with more traditional ones, it appears that the latter are – given the issues raised in this paper – structurally unable to cope with the complexity of contemporary issues, which require strategies that are different from those of years gone by. There is now a need for a land project to act on what is its fundamental feature: the physical size or the surface area. Therefore, it becomes necessary to manage large pieces of territory in a multi-purpose but unified way to create business economies, ecosystem services, climate resilience and, last but not least, valuable landscapes (Cavallero, 2013).
- 45 These are practices that should find operational subsistence in the responsible administrative bodies, like regional landscape plans. In short, the management of mountain areas must be carefully studied, designed and managed to attain the size and territorial extension that ensures its functional expansion and profitability from both a business and an ecological point of view (Cavallero, 2013).
- 46 The recognition of the landscape<sup>22</sup> and the direct or indirect economic value (Signorello, 2007; Bottero *et al.*, 2011)<sup>23</sup> that it can generate, that is, triggering a supply chain economy that starts from the quality of the raw material and the awareness that the management of a polyculture<sup>24</sup> forest can mitigate the effects of climate change, makes *Ricalaretto* a case as emblematic as it is complex.
- 47 The collective dimension is of primary importance due to its structure and its history. Singular entities cannot manage vast mountain territories: The collective management effort seems to cross various eras and uses, and it needs a “long duration” (Carestiato, 2008: 141; Cavallero, 2013). As the SNAI has pointed out, this management must be equipped with a design dimension.
- 48 Regarding the disciplines related to architecture, the cultural and landscape heritage dimension is no less important. The purely ecological dimension cannot be separated from the anthropic dimension, which mainly describes the emergence of a specific identity or dominant characteristics.<sup>25</sup>

- 49 In conclusion, a harmoniously constructed landscape in constant balance between man and nature is the first form of Alpine welfare. It is a social construction (Olson, 1983) that must compel the community to preserve it either from abandonment or from the speculation that, in all monocultures, damages all types of resources. It is a task that should also be accomplished, protected and formalised in regional legislative production, where there is still no sign of it.<sup>26</sup>

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Archivio Antico e Storico del Comune di Perrero (AASC Perrero)

#### **Archive sources. Private archives**

Archivio Peyronel - Gran Consortile di Ricalretto (Perrero)

Archivio Tron - Proprietà Ghinivert, Pis Lausoun Rabiour, Chiabriera (Massello)

Archivio consortile - Consorzio Pomieri-Giordano (Prali)

Archivio Peyrot - Consorzio Selle-Miandette (Prali)

Archivio Breusa - Alpe della Balma (Prali, loc. Rodoretto)

#### **Sitography**

<http://www.piemonteparchi.it/cms/index.php/natura/natura-2000/item/593-l-alto-vallone-di-massello> (consultato Agosto 2020)

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<https://www.comune.massello.to.it/> (consultato Agosto 20

## NOTES

1. With L.R. (Regional Law) no. 21 of 2 November 2016, the Piedmont region established *Associazioni Fondiarie* (Land Associations, or *As.Fo.*) to “recognis[e] the predominant role of the collective and economic management of agricultural and forestry land” (Article 4).
2. The Italian government’s launch of the SNAI (National Strategy for Internal Areas) in 2013, with a Partnership Agreement for the period 2014-2020, has highlighted the importance of projects created with local actors who can properly act on the ground.
3. The future of mountain areas is at the heart of many speeches, discussions and conferences such as “The new central role of mountain territories”, Camaldoli, 8 and 9 November 2019.
4. According to the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020 (<https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9825en>), Italy is one of the 10 nations worldwide that have experienced the highest percentage increase in forest area over the past decade.
5. As this paper is being finalised, extreme weather events are taking place all over the Italian peninsula. In the autumn of 2018, Storm Vaia also heavily damaged the eastern Alpine sector. For details on the effects of the storm in the forest sector, see Chirici *et al.* (2019) and Motta (2018).
6. The municipality of Pomaretto, part of the Germanasca Valley, was not part of the investigation. Restrictions on the free movement of people in Italy due to the lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic forced the authors into their homes between March and May 2020, which limited their ability to do the research.

7. In particular, this section includes the processing of data collected from interviews with the chairmen of the following CPIs: Piz Lauzun Rabiour, Ghinivert, Chiabrera, Coulmian, Vallon Cro, Bout du Col, Selle Miandette, Pomieri Giordano, Envie, La Balma, Clot della Ramà and La Patta.

8. The interview was structured around four thematic areas: quantitative data (size and unit of measure, number of members, average altitude and real estate); access and inherited transmission; environmental and functional landscape characteristics; and management and legal aspects. The interview format may be requested from the authors.

9. The 12 CPIs mentioned in the first section, along with the *Gran Consortile of Ricaretto* and the C.S. and Albarea-Olivieri land associations.

10. Literally, “shared [property]”.

11. The Italian term *alpeggio* refers to a high-quota place where herds and flocks are taken during the spring and summer months to graze and reside. Usually, there is a *bergeria* in the *alpeggio*, which is where the cheese is produced. The *alpeggio* is different from the pasture, where cattle are taken for a short time before being brought back to the stables.

12. The comparison between the historic Alps of Massello and the C.S. *As.fo.* is relevant in this regard. On average above 1,800 m, the historic Alps occupy large areas recorded in a few cadastral parcels: for example, Piz-Lausoun-Rabiour, 1,156 ha (44 parcels), and Ghinivert, 530 ha (20 parcels). The *As.fo. C.S.*, on the contrary, is located at an average altitude between 1,000 and 1,400 m, has an area of just 23 ha, and consists of 514 proprietary parcels

13. Over the past 20 years, Alpe La Balma and Ricalretto were subject to cadastral and property re-organisation. Since 2019, Alpi Pis Lausoun Rabiour, Ghinivert and Envie-Selligon have initiated the re-organisation; Bout du Col concluded it in 2020.

14. In ancient times, the shares were measured in *soldi* (coins), *denari* (money), *punti* (points) and *atomi* (atoms), according to the Carolingian monetary system applied to land-based measures (Peyronel, 2000a). The atom, a unit of measurement of a surface area of approximately 80 m<sup>2</sup>, determines, according to the CPI and the location, the number and type of cattle to be pastured. In the ancient mountain economy, ensuring grazing units was equivalent to allowing the survival of the family cores.

15. The Waldensian culture that has permeated these institutions for centuries has likely generated some kind of special responsibility and sensitivity in this field.

16. Interview with K.B., chairman, 7 August 2020.

17. In Italian, Unità di Bestiame Adulto, or UBA.

18. Interview with Andrea Ighina, 08 September 2020.

19. Regional law (L.R.) of the Piemonte region, Italy.

20. For C.S. and Albarea-Olivieri, the two interviewees were V.V. and Andrea Ighina, respectively.

21. Interview with V.V., *As.Fo. C.S.*, 5 and 24 August 2020.

22. The European Landscape Convention (2000) relates to “all landscapes, even those that do not have an exceptional universal value”, since all landscapes have identifying factors and characteristics that bind populations to places.

23. The economic value of the landscape is recognised by the National Strategic Plan for Rural Development 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 (PSN) and various rural development plans.

24. The literature on the subject is vast. On the relationship between the above-mentioned Vaia storm and the composition of the woods, see Motta R. et al. (2018).

25. As highlighted by the Art. 1 of the European Landscape Convention (2000).

26. The authors addressed the relationship between the Germanasca Valley's CPIs and the landscape legislation of the Piedmont region at the "Twenty Years of the European Landscape Convention: Challenges, Results, Prospects" conference on 30 October 2020. <https://youtu.be/wgTMaN1H16I>

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## ABSTRACTS

Communal land management is a core element of the Alpine mountain landscape. In the Germanasca Valley, situated in Italy's Turin region, collective management in the form of private shared ownership has been taking place for centuries.

This study, perhaps the first of its kind in this particular geographical area, seeks to sketch a picture of these proprietary structures and bring out their salient features by investigating the value of these realities today. This type of shared ownership is described with regard to location, property and use rights, land and landscape use and its economic dimension. The last point of focus is two recently established land associations (*As.Fo.*) located on the same axis of collective management.

While some properties are still being used as they were originally intended, others remain only on paper, and others have been lost to history. Among these collective properties, the case of the Gran Consortile di Ricalretto in Perrero stands out as a property that has managed to virtuously transform its use by adapting to the current dynamics.

Archival sources and oral interviews form the basis for this research, which was conducted with an eye on the passage of history and by analysing the territory and the landscape. This paper investigates the meaning of Ricalretto for neighbouring properties but with a strategic view towards the future of the mountain environment itself.

## INDEX

**Keywords:** landscape planning, Alpine mountain management, collective property, commons

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