



Panel

## 10.3. Innovation and change in European agriculture via the spread of new crops from the 16th to the 19th century. Part I

**Panel organiser:** Moriceau, Jean-Marc, University of Caen, France; Olivier, Sylvain, University of Caen and University of Perpignan, France; Chaussat, Alain-Gilles, University of Caen, France

The development of new crops in Europe was a contributing factor to the numerous changes observed in European agriculture from the 16th to the 19th century. Some crops were unknown until cultivation. Others had already been present for a long time, but were introduced later into existing cropping systems. In such cases, the novelty doesn't lay in the plant itself, but in its increased use. The phrase "new crop" covers these two scenarios and concerns human food as well as fodder and non-alimentary uses. What was the impact of these new crops on existing farming systems? What were the contributing factors or obstacles to their propagation. Did these types of crops become established? Were these crops made durable? How did they affect the populations that cultivated them? This panel proposes to study the emergence, development and spread of these new crops. It may also include some methodological talks about the historical available sources and also the ways the change and the diffusion can be mapped.

**Chair:** Moriceau, Jean-Marc, University of Caen, France

Thursday, 22 August 2013 // 1000 – 1200 // Session 10 – Room A-122

### 10.3.1. A plant for the planet : a contribution towards a world history of herba medica, alfalfa, luzerne

Paper

**Ambrosoli, Mauro, Professor at the University of Udine, Italy**

A lesson from Renaissance agriculture: from the humble beginnings of medieval confusion 32 millions of Hectars (79 millions of acres) of *Medicago* sp. are grown today in the world. Following Ambrosoli 1997 and 1999 which dealt with the historical diffusion of *Medicago* and *Trifolium* species in Western Europe 1350-1850, I will discuss the planet distribution of the *Medicago* sp. using a temporal and spatial approach with due attention to economic and social factors.

### 10.3.2. Alfalfa in the agricultural manuals of the Eastern Mediterranean

Paper

**Sopov, Aleksandar, University of Harvard, USA**

The story of alfalfa in the Eastern Mediterranean has never been told before even though this area is known to have been facilitating the diffusion of plants between Asia, Europe and Africa. I will discuss the Mamluk and Ottoman agricultural manuals and attempt to provide an outlook on the place of alfalfa in the Late Medieval and the early Modern period in the Eastern Mediterranean. These agricultural manuals provide us with a glimpse into the intellectual world of the Eastern Mediterranean and the agricultural thinking within.

### 10.3.3. Artificial pastures and tithes in Normandy (17-18th centuries)

Paper

**Poncet, Fabrice, University of Caen, France**

Although Normandy is known for its permanent pastures (which expanded during the 17th and 18th centuries), certain areas also saw the spread of artificial pastures (sainfoin, clovers, alfalfa). This spread, which can be traced by observing the conflicts surrounding tithing, provides an interesting subject of study. The main theme of that work will be: Are the tithes a good way to perceive this change in agriculture? Is it possible to have in such a way a geography and a chronology of the spread or some details about the reasons why people used these plants. How relevant could these details be? Which difficulties stand between a cartography of the conflicts and a cartography of the spread in itself?

### 10.3.4. Spanish Broom in the changes of Southern France agriculture, from the 17th to the 19th century

Paper

**Olivier, Sylvain, University of Caen and University of Perpignan, France**

For many centuries, a wild-growing plant in Mediterranean countries, Spanish broom (*Spartium junceum* L.), has been exploited on account of its fibres, which could be used to make a rough fabric. Spanish Broom spontaneously spread all over many uncultivated lands, when the extent of fallow land grew up during the famous 17th century crisis. So, its increased use occurred from the 17th century in the Lodévois, a part of the province of Languedoc. Later, in the 18th and 19th centuries, it became a massive presence giving rise to new agricultural practices. It was integrated into crop rotations in parts of the Languedoc region of France, in order to make use of uncultivated areas. The increasing maintenance of this broom growing in the Lodévois during the modern period is involved in processes of complex cropping at the borders of the cultivated area. The exploitation of this plant, seemingly marginal, does indeed contribute in its own way to agricultural change from the eighteenth century onward.

#### Participants

##### Ambrosoli, Mauro

He has been active in many research topics. In the last decade, he looked at the agricultural modernization with particular attention to the transformation of European commons and the diffusion of a green belt of city orchards and commercial vegetable gardens (2002 and 2011). He contributed to various conferences, seminars and lectures in Italy, Belgium, England, France, USA. Academic career: professor of modern history at the Universities of Torino (Italy) (1976-1993) and Udine (Italy) (1994-2011). Director of the History Doctorate (2001-2011) at the University of Udine.

##### Chaussat, Alain-Gilles

Doctoral fellow (scholarship of county Basse-Normandie) at the University of Caen Basse-Normandie. Thesis supervised by Jean-Marc Moriceau of "The role of buckwheat in the history of populations, in the Massif armoricain and its fringes, 17th-19th centuries". Member of CRHQ, (UMR-6583) and "Pôle Rural" of Caen. Formation in Art history, Archeology and History (University, Paris X). Member of the board HSR (Association of Rural History and Society). Member of the board CRHQ (Centre for Research in quantitative history). Member of "Groupe Meule" (Collective project of research of millstones).

##### Moriceau, Jean-Marc

History Professor at the University of Caen Basse-Normandie. Member of IUF (University Institute of France). Chairman of HSR (Association of Rural History and Society). Chairman of « Pôle Rural » in Caen (Research group in rural history, geography and sociology).

##### Olivier, Sylvain

Dr Sylvain Olivier, teacher in a high school in Montpellier (France) and adjunct professor in history at the University of Perpignan (France). He works on the mediterranean agriculture and environment from the end of the Middle Ages to the 20th century. Ph.D. thesis (2012): "On the fringes of agricultural space.. Fallow lands and broom in the Lodévois (17th-19th century)" (supervised by Jean-Marc Moriceau, CRHQ-university of Caen).

##### Poncet, Fabrice

Teacher in a high school in Condé-sur-Noireau (Normandy) and doctoral fellow at the University of Caen Basse-Normandie. Thesis supervised by Jean-Marc Moriceau about agricultural specialization in Normandy from 15th to 19th century (commercialization and consumption of butter, cattle breeding, landscape transformations). Member of CRHQ, (UMR-6583) and «Pôle Rural» of Caen.

##### Sopov, Aleksandar

PhD Candidate, History Department and Middle East Studies, Harvard University. Dissertation Proposal: Production of Food in the Eastern Mediterranean during Ottoman Rule. He is a specialist in Ottoman history, European Environmental History and Early Islamic History. He studied in Macedonia, Turkey and United States. Junior fellow at Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (2011/2012), he has been a teaching assistant in Harvard.