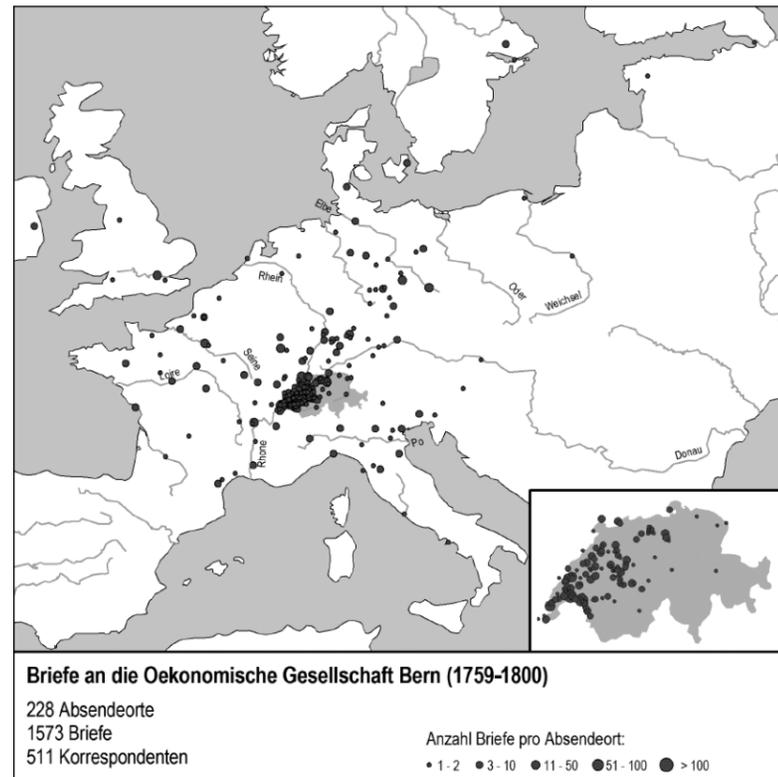


5.3. Social networks in rural society

Panel organiser: Fertig, Christine, University of Muenster, Germany

The panel brings together scholars who research social networks in rural society. Social network analysis has become an important tool of researching different kinds of societies in humanities during the recent years. It provides both theoretical foundations as advanced methodology to analyse relational structures of society. In the panel, different questions will be approached, from networks of kinship and godparentage, integration and segregation of local societies, class building, formation of political milieus, demographic and social reproduction, to organization of collective work. The major objective of this panel is to present research that applies social network analysis in different historical contexts.

Chair: Mathieu, Jon, University of Luzern, Switzerland



Tuesday, 20 August 2013 // 1300 – 1500 // Session 5 – Room A-122

5.3.1. Pyrenean households. Power, family and land

Deering, Dermot, University College Cork, Ireland

The success or failure of a household enterprise in a Pyrenean village community depended on strategic alliances between households in the villages. There was large range of tasks needed to be carried out over the course of an agricultural year if a household was to succeed. The tasks were diverse and labour intensive. Before the advent of mechanization and the intensification of agriculture, *el mano de obra*, the number of bodies needed to carry out a myriad of tasks during the agricultural calendar was large. Family members knew their roles well in advance of commencement of work. Common or routine chores such as the maintenance of access roads, preparing the fields for ploughing in spring, the variety of task connection with the harvesting all necessitated large amounts of people. Though families could be large in the period before out migration to urban took place from the 1960s onwards, one must bear in mind that cycle of marriages and births and tragic accidents often presented households with a shortfall as adults ensured the continuity of the family enterprise. In this paper I will examine the ways in which strategic alliances were formed between families in villages or across to other villages and entered into reciprocal arrangements which could last for generations. These relationships of mutual benefit did place demands on family heads to align themselves socially as well as economically and I will trace the way in which this shaped the social relationships in villages. I will explore how these relationships panned out using the example of two villages from El Serrablo district, Alto Aragon.

5.3.2. Social Networks and Classes in Northwestern Germany, 18th and 19th centuries

Fertig, Christine, University of Muenster, Germany

In the 19th century, class society emerged not only in industrial districts, but also in the countryside. Two drivers have been identified to explain the development from peasant society to class society: First, it has been claimed that the growth of protoindustrial production in several European regions increased the cleavage between land holders and landless people. Second, population growth put more pressure on the propertied to maintain resources, which were getting scarcer in this process. In response, they started to restrict their social networks to people of similar social standing, preferentially to relatives. Both concepts make statements about the relevance of social relations, especially about marriage relations between people of different social standing. However, there has been very little systematic research on social networks beyond the scope of occasional examples or aggregated data. The paper examines the emergence of social classes in rural society by analysing social networks of relatives and godparents. It shows that formal social network analysis can provide for new perspectives and leads to stronger evidence on the formation of rural society. The paper compares two parishes in Westphalia, a Prussian province in northwestern Germany. We can explore family reconstitutions, complemented by data on godparent relations, land holding, credit, and farm transfer contracts.

5.3.3. Sexuality, Networks, Social and Political Change in a rural Society. Western Valais (Switzerland) in the 18th and 19th centuries

Guzzi-Heeb, Sandro, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Illicit sexuality has often been interpreted as a problem of the lower classes, mostly as a symptom of crisis or as a consequence of legal obstacles to marriage. In contrast, the sublimation of sexual impulses is typically interpreted as a motor of civilization, capitalism and economic change. My paper, based on a micro-historical approach to social networks, questions these interpretations, showing that social milieus characterized by a tolerant sexual morality played an important political role. They were the social foundations of reformist political factions that contributed to a significant democratization in the Swiss canton of Valais. In this deeply Catholic region, during the 18th and 19th century significantly more children were conceived before marriage and out of wedlock in opposition milieus, than among conservative groups. Comparable networks were also tied to demographic change at the end of the 18th century, to the penetration of tourism in the alpine region and to the emergence of new economic activities in the late 19th century. From this point of view non-marital sexuality was a highly subversive force and clearly tied to innovative ways of behaviour, both among the social elites and the common people. This paper will focus on an Alpine valley: the Val de Bagnes, a mountain region where we can rely on excellent sources on local families. Our results can partly be compared with other communities in Western Valais and in other Swiss regions.

5.3.4. Landholding and Kinship Networks in Nineteenth-Century Minas Gerais, Brazil

Mendes, Fabio Faria, Universidade Federal de Viçosa, Brazil

This paper discusses some preliminary results from ongoing research on kinship and inheritance practices in nineteenth century Minas Gerais, Brazil. The unity of analysis is the rural parish of Piranga, at the southeast Minas Gerais, from 1780 to 1880. Piranga valley was one of the first sites of gold-mining at the end of the seventeenth century. In the last decades of the eighteenth century the region transitioned to an economy centered on farming and ranching to supply food staples to regional markets. We use land records and probate inventories to explore patterns of inequality in land property, networks of kin and neighbours, and inheritance practices not prescribed by the Luso-Brazilian Succession Law. We also analyze the overlapping of kin, marriage and godparent networks with the economic strategies of large farmers and smallholders.

Participants

Deering, Dermot

Dermot Deering is a recently retired secondary school teacher of Geography and History. He is now embarking on a PhD on Rural and Social history of a Spanish upland region. He has been Director of the Irish Environmental Network and has been active in creating its Tree Cover Policy. He has contributed articles in local environmental publication, the Local Planet, and an educational publication for the Irish Department of Education. His interest of research lies at the interface between landscapes and the social systems in which rural communities operate.

Fertig, Christine

Christine Fertig is assistant professor in social and economic history at the University Muenster, Germany. Her research fields include rural history, historical social network analysis, history of the family, kinship and godparentage. Recent publications: *Familie, verwandtschaftliche Netzwerke und Klassenbildung im ländlichen Westfalen, 1750-1874* (Stuttgart 2012); "Rural Society and Social Networks in Nineteenth-Century Westphalia: The Role of Godparenting in social mobility", *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 39 (2009), S. 497-522.

Guzzi-Heeb, Sandro

Sandro Guzzi-Heeb is professor in Early Modern History at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland. His research fields include the history of social and political conflicts, the history of the family, of kinship and of sexuality. Recent publications: „Spiritual Kin-

ship, Political Mobilization and Social Cooperation: A Swiss Alpine Valley in the 18th and 19th Century", in : Guido Alfani, Vincent Gourdon (éds.), "Spiritual kinship in Europe, 1500-1900", Basingstoke: Palgrave-McMillan 2012, 183-203.

Mathieu, Jon

Jon Mathieu is professor of history at the University of Lucerne, Switzerland. He was the founding director of the "Istituto di Storia delle Alpi" at the Università della Svizzera italiana and has published widely about mountain regions in the modern period.

Mendes, Fabio Faria

Fabio Faria Mendes is associate professor at the History Department at the Federal University of Viçosa. BA in History from the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (1988), MA in Political Science (Political Science and Sociology) by the Brazilian Education - SBI / IUPERJ (1992) and Ph.D. in Political Science (Political Science and Sociology) by the Brazilian education - SBI / IUPERJ (1997). His research interests are on the border between History and Social Sciences, acting on the following topics: historical sociology, family history, historical demography, social network analysis, social mobility and inequality in historical perspective.