

8.1 The tragedy of the forests

Room 103

Chair: Carl Griffin

8.11 Takashi Iida – ‘Timber beneficences’ from the lords’ forests: new light on demesne lordship (*Gutsherrschaft*) in Brandenburg-Prussia, 1700–1850

This study examines the development of *Gutsherrschaft* in the royal demesnes of Brandenburg-Prussia, leading up to its dissolution. It focuses on the lords’ obligations, which have been investigated only slightly in contrast to the peasants’ obligations, which above all included their labour services on the lords’ estates. Besides estates, the lords owned large forests, from which they were generally obliged to assist their peasants, who mostly did not have any of their own.

During the long period of desolation after the Thirty Years War, the royal lords engaged in reconstructing peasants’ farms. In 1729, Friedrich Wilhelm I declared that in the future, he would give all the necessary building timber to his usufructuary peasants free of charge and to his land-owning peasants for only one-third of the cost. Once the desolation had been overcome, it was realised that this generous practice would cause a waste of wood.

Under the agrarian reforms during the first half of the nineteenth century, the royal authorities proposed stopping the timber supply upon dissolution of a lordship. But this met with tenacious protests from the peasants. The usufructuaries who were still obliged to labour finally gave up their entitlement to timber without any compensation, as a condition for becoming free from their labour obligations. The landowners already free from their labour obligations often succeeded in keeping their entitlement to the timber after all the other entitlements from and obligations to the authorities had been settled.

Takashi Iida was born in 1967 and studied European Economic History at the University of Tokyo and Prussian History at Humboldt University, Berlin. Since 2001 he has been teaching at Keio University, Tokyo, where he is currently the Professor of European Economic History. He is the author of *Ruppiner Bauernleben 1648-1806: Sozial- und wirtschaftsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen einer ländlichen Gegend Ostelbiens* (2010) and ‘Bäuerliches Beharren auf der ‘Holzberechtigung’: Die Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Gutsherrn und Bauern im brandenburgischen Amt Alt-Ruppin während der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts’ in *Jahrbuch für die Geschichte Mittel- und Ostdeutschlands* 55 (2009).

8.12 Adrián Zarrilli – Forest versus agriculture. The historical limits of Argentine forest sustainability in a context of capitalist exploitation (1880-1950)

At the end of the XIX century, there were in Argentina 160 million hectares of natural forests surfaces, for ends of the decade of 1930 that surface had decreased to 37 million hectares. The exploitation of the extraordinary forest wealth of Argentina is the starting point of this historical analysis that intends to study from an environmental history perspective, the evolution of the forest exploitation among 1880 to 1950 and its relation to the expansion of capitalist agriculture model.

The principal purpose is to analyse from an environmental history perspective the process of exploitation of the argentinean forest resources (specifically in the ‘Gran Chaco’ region) in the context of its incorporation to the capitalist market.

The loss of native forest resources of Argentina is directly related to the agricultural frontier expansion, a process that went beyond the limits of forest sustainability and that meant a growing demand imposed an extraction rate and a form of exploitation.

The problem statement then be structured on three main areas: 1) The explanation of the process deforestation and agricultural frontier expansion in Argentina; 2) the ecological changes linked and

interlinked with the same; 3) the actions of social actors committed in the historical process referred to the State, production companies and labour.

Adrián Zarrilli has a PhD in History. He was a Researcher at the National Council of Scientific and Technical Research of Argentina and is now Professor at the National University of Quime and a specialist in Environmental History and Rural History.