

2005

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Ismael Vaccaro
University of Washington

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Recommended Citation

Vaccaro, Ismael. "Property Mosaic and State-making: Governmentality, Expropriation and Conservation in the Pyrenees." *Journal of Ecological Anthropology* 9, no. 1 (2005): 4-19.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/jea/vol9/iss1/1>

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ARTICLES

Property Mosaic and State-making: Governmentality, Expropriation and Conservation in the Pyrenees

ISMAEL VACCARO

Abstract

This article identifies the current explosion of conservation policies in the Pyrenees as the most recent wave of a long-standing tradition of state-driven territorial policies. The very existence of these policies cannot be understood without taking into account the consequences of two hundred years of territorial rationalization, land expropriation and natural resource control. Depopulation, agricultural involution and forest recovery are partial consequences, not necessarily intended, of the expansion of the modern Spanish state. In addition to identifying a similar ideological background for the four phases of the model presented here (municipalization, disentailment, expropriation and parks implementation), I also argue that the territorial composition of the current protected areas would be impossible without the synergistic effects of the preceding state actions. This article establishes a deep historical political genealogy of territorial appropriation that has consequences at all levels of the local landscape.

Introduction

For natural resource managers, environmentalists and other individuals situated in the thick of controversies over conservation and the management of landscapes, a state-centered historical perspective is last on their list of concerns. The conservation discourse is one in which the recent past is often conceived singularly as a period of unmitigated natural loss, and the orientation is fixed toward future possibilities for reclamation and redemption. Nevertheless, a historical perspective is often an overlooked means of understanding the broader picture of the relationship between state and landscape. The comprehension of this historical relationship dismantles the divide between the natural and the social. It explains landscapes as the result of the interaction between biophysical reality, human inhabitation, productive practices, and policies. Particularly, but not solely in the European context, an analysis of conservation policies within a much larger, state-centered historical and political process helps to explain how land tenure regimes came to be, and gives insight into the current management of the landscape. By locating ownership, we locate decision-making capability. By recording land uses

and ecological status, we develop an understanding of practical, everyday life in the territory (Cronon 1983). Phenomena such as enclosure, imposition of strict land use regulations, forced evictions, extinction of local land use rights, sudden changes in ownership or uses and environmental shifts serve as windows into governmental technologies and their consequences (Darby 2000).

The Pyrenees lie within the northern strip of Catalonia along the French border. At the northern end of the Barcelona province, nestled within a thicket of protected areas, we find the mountainous district of Berguedà. The two municipalities where most of the land at the end of the upper watershed of the Llobregat River is concentrated—la Pobla de Lillet and Castellar de n'Hug—have 70 percent of their territory under the jurisdiction of some sort of environmental policy designed to protect environmental values. As in most of the Pyrenees, this region is characterized by rural depopulation, economic decline, a high proportion of public and common land, relatively undisturbed ecosystems and a disproportionate presence of conservation policies compared to elsewhere in Spain.

Why is it that landscapes in the hinterlands of many industrialized societies are currently dominated by those few key elements: depopulation, a conflictive transition from primary to tertiary sector uses, a disproportionate amount of public land and the marked presence of conservation areas? In order to explain this familiar situation and the connection between state-making and landscape formation, I focus on modern Spanish policies and the historical data-rich upper Llobregat region of Catalonia, Spain.

My research on these topics focuses on three surviving villages in the Valley of Lilet: la Pobla de Lillet, Castellar de n'Hug and Sant Julià de Cerdanyola (Figure 1). In this article, these three villages are also referred to as la Pobla, Castellar and Sant Julià. The Spanish policies in question deal specifically with the ordering of the upper Llobregat region's space. It follows from this analysis that subsequent conservation policies are the last wave in a historical succession of reterritorialization approaches to the Spanish hinterland.

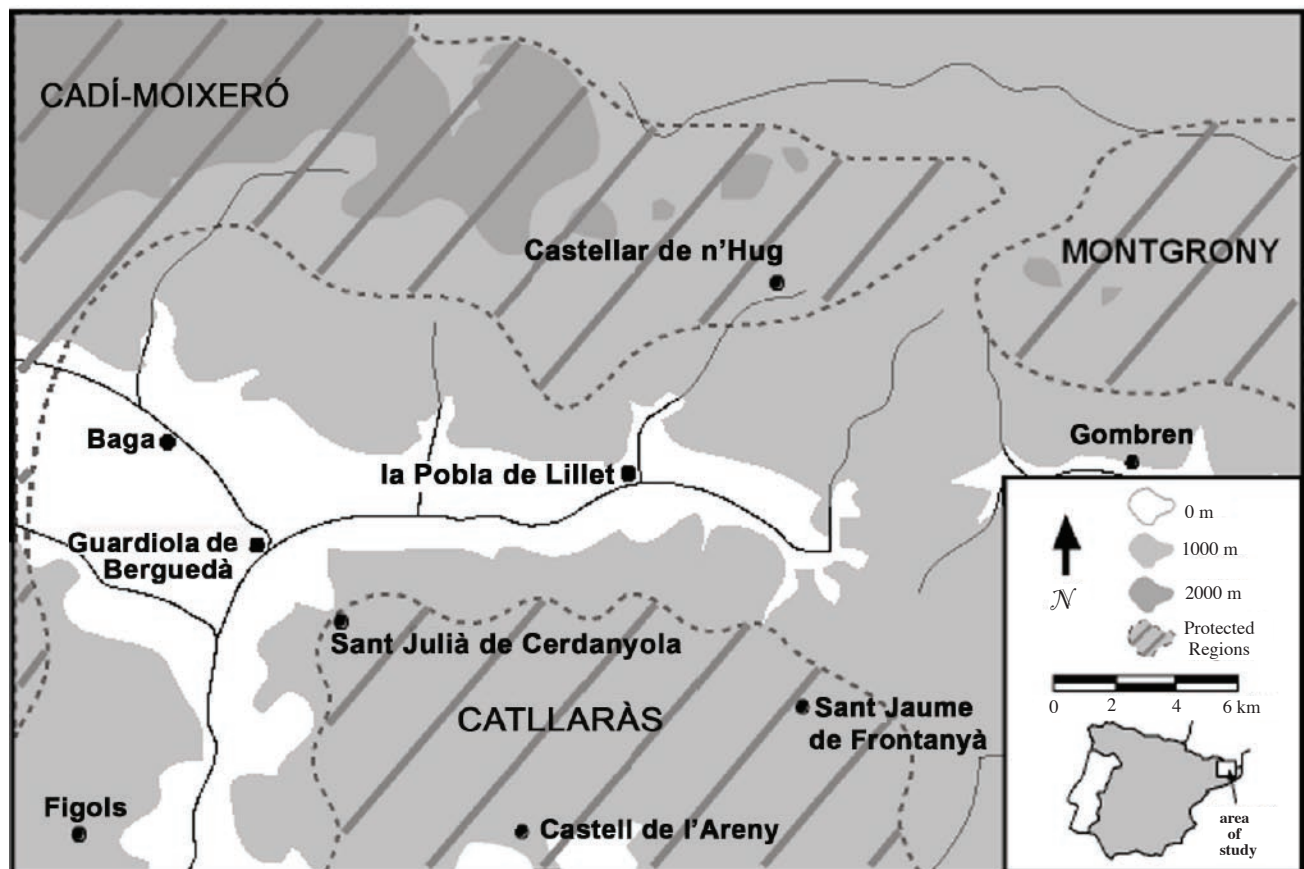


Figure 1. The Valley of Lilet, with the surrounding protected areas (map prepared by Jennie Deo).

The first section of this article creates a framework for understanding the relationship between state-making and conservation policy. The second section details the methodology utilized for this study. The third section describes the current status of property regimes in the Valley of Lilet and pays

special attention to the presence of public property. The final section, *political genealogy of the contemporary landscape*, is a historical review of the different waves of state reorganization of administrative jurisdictions and property regimes that have prepared the area for the current expansion of conservation policies.

Territorializing Like a State

In these pages, my goal is to discuss the historical impact of the state on the property structure of the study area and its consequences for the landscape. This goal has forced me to devote more attention to the activities of the state than to the local strategies for dealing with, opposing, or taking advantage of such public initiatives. Nonetheless, these strategies of resistance exhibit considerable diversity, and my understanding of local initiatives is that national sovereignty in this arena was, and still is, questioned and reworked at a local level.

In order to trace the historical conditions that produced the current situation, I have chosen as a starting point the turn of the 19th century, because that period witnessed the first steps of the emergence of the Spanish state and a major reorganization of Spanish political imagination. Although final implementation took more than a century, the upper Llobregat valley was already in a process of deep change.

The current combination of flourishing wilderness, demographic decay,¹ economic stagnation and state territorial management in the Spanish Pyrenees is not the random outcome of a playful mountain divinity, nor even the result of the machinations of a skilled cult of engineers and politicians, but rather an outcome of a multi-causal historical process. History in these mountains, as with everywhere else, is constrained, affected or conditioned by a complex set of endogenous and exogenous variables.

The landscape is at the center of a political process in which social actors collide in their discursive and practical quest to obtain comparative advantages in access to natural resources (Blaikie 1985; Bryant and Bailey 1997; Fairhead and Leach 1996). In western European societies, such landscape politics revolve around the future of decaying rural areas. As a consequence of this debate, the mountainous inland is becoming a patrimonial reservoir. This transformation is also changing the rules that manage access to, and use of, natural resources, thus redefining the concept of 'resource' itself. Every individual, group or institution with interests in the area has to adapt to and understand the new frames of reference in order to be able to advantageously participate in the appropriation process.

Spain's current environmental policies are a new way of reorganizing the territory, its inhabitants and its uses. However, they remain part of the modernist tradition of homogenization of people and territory through rationalization and control, mass production and connectedness to other units of governance. In order to master, collect and redistribute resources and wealth, states and markets rely on a particular reorganization of a territory and its individuals. They depend, to a large extent, on the exponential increase of territorial interconnectedness and interchangeability. This process of modernization occurs in the transition from a closed agrarian society to a mobile open industrial society (Gellner 1983).

Thus, conservation areas are one of the spatially oriented governmental technologies emerging from the consolidation of state sovereignty, and conservation areas serve to assert the monopolistic capacity of the state as sole managerial entity of the national territory (Hannah 2000; Scott 1998). To what extent is the rationale underlying this new state endeavor old, and to what extent does the rationale represent something new? I suggest that the social and historical conditions that allowed for the contemporary massive implementation of conservation policies in the Pyrenees, and in most of the other western European mountains, were installed by the process of implementation of the modern state and capitalism.

A fundamental step of modernization of the state was the municipalization of its territory through dismantling the old feudal administrative jurisdictions and creating small, uniform, administratively equal units linked together through centralized governmental networks. These administratively equal units were the first and smallest level of the administrative hierarchy in the state apparatus and are associated with access to education, courts, postal service and police. I argue that the rationale that framed municipalization later fostered state expropriations and those rationale are still informing decision-makers' choices in their design of conservation policies. When a new park is created today to protect the biophysical environment, there exists an awareness of the position of that territory in the national hierarchy, its potential to connect public territories and government initiatives,

the structure of the property regime in existence, and the political strength of the affected population (Aldomà 2000; Williams 1973).

During the birth of modernity, territorialization and reterritorialization strengthened the grip of the state over the national territory and occurred at the same time that modern borders with other nation-states were consolidating (Sahlins 1989; Tilly 1975) or while colonial domains were solidifying (Edney 1997; Griffiths and Robin 1997). Territorialization is the process of implementing policies about land tenure and territory that establish control over resources and people (Peluso and Vandergeest 2001; Soja 1989; Vandergeest and Peluso 1995). Reterritorialization (Braun 2000, 2002) refers to state-driven secondary reorganizations of space, resources and people. Conservation areas are thus reterritorialization technologies, and are the latest generation of disciplinary spatial governmental technology (Neumann 1998; Rangarajan 1996) that communicate rules about which activities and kinds of resource use are permitted in a territory and who is permitted such access (Vandergeest and Peluso 1995).

Methodology

From a methodological perspective, the research behind this article included a combination of ethnographic field methods and archival research. From the early Fall of 2001 to late Summer 2002, I sustained contact with several groups of landscape users in the Valley of Lilet. I wandered across the fields and ravines with shepherds, forest engineers, farmers and park rangers. The interviewees were selected through a process of snowball sampling (Bernard 2002). The collaboration of la Pobla de Lilet's local council was fundamental in order to identify key individuals able to trigger the snowball sampling procedure and identify ranchers, farmers and public officials of the area. Through participant observation, I realized that the territory was far from homogeneous in the ways that people compartmentalized and defined the landscape in their speech, particularly regarding gradient, wetness, soil, vegetation and history. However, I quickly recognized that one variable was operating as fundamental background for the rest: property (Behar 1986; Cole and Wolf 1999; Netting 1981).

In order to form a comprehensive analytical portrait of the property regimes locally, I examined the archives of the Department of Environment, the Generalitat de Catalunya, the Diputació de Barcelona, the property register in Berga, and the Municipal Archive of la Pobla de Lilet. It was in the dusty halls of these archives of property titles, expropriation documents, forestry corps memoranda, laws, and cadastres that I was able to piece together not only the recent but also the juridical history of every track of land. The main goal of the analysis was to draw ownership lines over the territory and to associate these lines with successive owners. These documents, ranging from late 18th century until late 20th century, provided a historic understanding of the formation of the current landscape.

Once I developed a picture of the general structure and historical development of the property regimes in place, I conducted extensive interviews designed to understand the contemporary consequences of the juridical structuring of the territory on the local property mosaic, local productive practices and resource use, and the ecosystems of the area. Informal interviews, conducted at the beginning of my fieldwork, helped to build the interview plan that I used to guide posterior and more formal unstructured interviews. The interview plan was mainly focused on clarifying productive practices, political jurisdictions and subjective perceptions of the landscape. These interviews were important because the ownership documents from the archival research do not offer, for example, information on managerial regulations, and only shepherds or the rangers of the park could tell me which animals, if any, were allowed in specific tracks of land. The old farmers had a first-hand insight on the effects that public expropriation had on the ecology of the area.

Property Regimes

The legal condition of the territory is a fundamental variable for studying the use of natural resources and the relationship of individuals with the environment. In modern European societies this condition is granted in terms of legal ownership; terms that determine rights over the territory. These rights are stratified in different layers that together

compose the absolute property over the land and its substrate: physical property of land, its resources and the different potential uses of the resources. Differences between universal property and use property are fundamental. An important portion of the territory is managed by those who, through rental contracts, are entitled to its usufruct—they live from the fruits of the land. They work the land, while absolute ownership is held by absentee owners.

At least in theory, modern societies have no *terra incognita*, no blanks on the territorial maps. Every piece of land, every tree, even the rocks that lie beneath the surface, have metaphorical tags with names on them, revealing ownership. The success of the modern state is sustained not only by taming the nation's territory, but also in the transformation

of the old labyrinth of lordly jurisdictions into the homogeneous net of the modern property regime (Burgueño 1995, 2000). Current property structure of Western European countries is based, in theory, on private property; that is, absolute individual ownership.² In the Valley of Lillet and the surrounding mountains, the combination of property regimes constitutes an intricate net of diverse tenures that deny this assumption. More precisely, in the Valley of Lillet, the presence of property regimes alternative to private property is extraordinarily high. These include municipal lands, group ownership and state property. A closer look at the property regimes of the three studied municipalities will exemplify the context in which environmental policies were implemented (Figure 2).

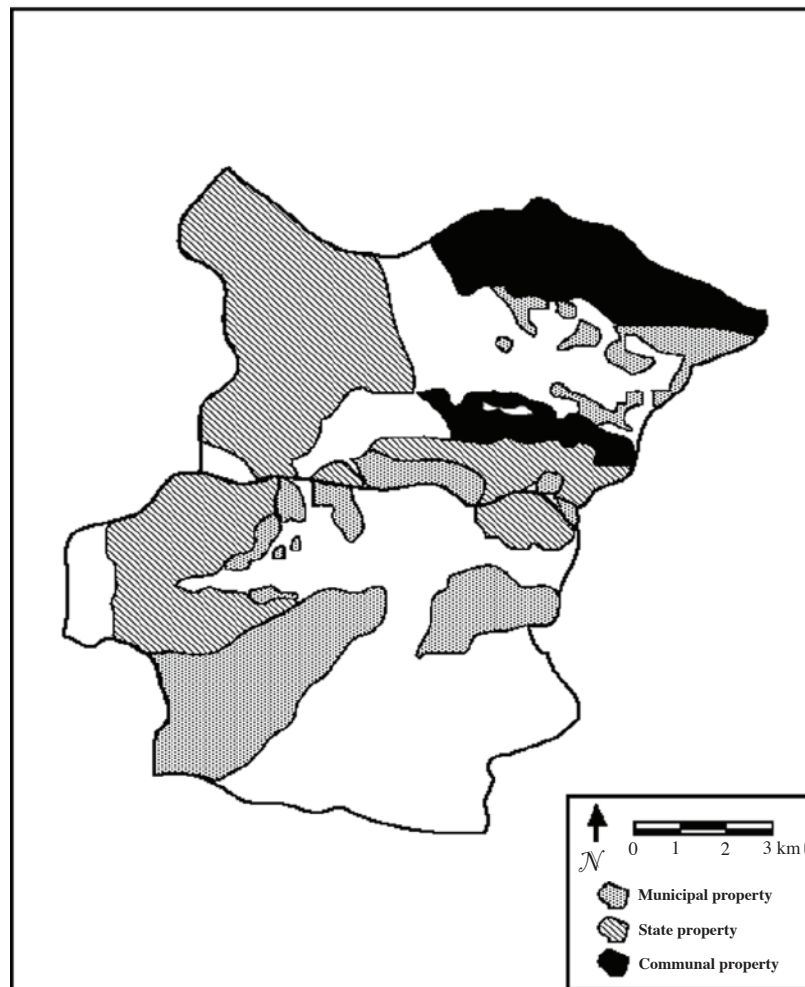


Figure 2. Collective property in the municipalities of la Pobla de Lillet and Castellar de n'Hug (map prepared by Jennie Deo). Data extracted from the property register, cadastre and personal interviews, 2001.

Municipal lands are old communal lands progressively integrated by municipalities as public lands and thereby modernized. These lands belong to the village, and thus to the state institutional network. They are managed by the local council, and the monetary benefits are destined for the municipal coffers. The final jurisdiction over sensitive matters like dirt road construction or lumbering belongs to the Generalitat—the Autonomous Government of Catalonia—which retains environmental and territorial planning powers, among others, which were transferred from Madrid's central government. In la Pobla 1,313 ha are owned and managed by the local council. They represent 26 percent of the municipality's surface. In Castellar these lands constitute six percent of the village territory.

State property is under direct management of the government of Catalonia. Diverse public agencies or departments manage state property. An important contingent of these lands is part of the Cadí-Moixeró Natural Park administered by the Department of Environment. The village of la Pobla has 654 ha managed by the Generalitat de Catalunya. This land is 13 percent of the municipality. In Castellar, this percentage rises to 21 percent with 969 ha.

A third and more rare form, *group property*, is officially called neighborhood ownership. The two examples in the study area are "Board of Capmassats and Magallers" in Sant Julià de Cerdanyola and the "Castellar de n'Hug Owners Community." The proprietors' assemblies have jurisdiction over management, and these groups are regulated by private internal statutes. These institutions were the local answers to particular historical situations. This form is not present in la Pobla but encompasses 870 ha of Castellar de n'Hug, and 1,100 ha of Sant Julià de Cerdanyola: 19 percent and 80 percent of their lands, respectively.

The final property form, *private property*, shows a high degree of concentration. At la Pobla de Lillet, for instance, with an official population of 1,422 inhabitants in 2002 (2,779 in 1960), 79 percent of private property belongs to 16 owners,³ 13 of which are absentee owners.⁴ In la Pobla, 61 percent of the municipality is private property. In Castellar de n'Hug the situation is even more exaggerated with 54.6 percent in private hands, and 26 percent of private land owned by two individuals.

Transformation of the Spanish state and the dismantling of the ancient regime affected land ownership in specific ways. This transformation became a process of territorial re-creation. The changes implemented by the state resulted in reconfiguration of the basic administrative units, direct expropriation of large areas and the creation of public monopolies over specific resources.

Political Genealogy of the Contemporary Landscape

The main goal of the section is to establish a four-phase chronological model linking four waves of Spanish public territorial policies as part of a continuous historical process of state-making (cf. Sivaramakrishnan 1999).

Municipalization

At the beginning of the 19th century, the valley of Lillet and the neighboring areas, from Guardiola at its westernmost point at the mouth of the valley to Castellar de n'Hug and Sant Jaume de Frontanyà bordering the eastern ramparts, had eight taxpaying inhabited local entities recognized by national authorities.⁵ Currently, only five remain.

The modern state began to reorganize its geography at the beginning of the 19th century. The main purpose of this process was for the state to expand and take control of the nation's territory. This process links space with power through territorial expansion and through systematic assessment of national geography and population involving census-taking, administrative subdivision, and mapping territory and resources (Hannah 2000:115; see also Scott 1998).

The first of the Spanish nation's initiatives, aimed at reconfiguring the state in a modern way that could overcome the ancient regime divisions, was reflected in the 1821 *Report of the Commission for the Spanish Territory Division*. The report made official a series of aggregations and suppressions that began in 1813 and, overall, established the new division of the nation into provinces, which was implemented in 1822. This commission recommended a series of changes, using so-called 'objective' criteria such as population size, geographical extension and topography, which were all related to the degree of connectedness between existing population centers.

The 1840s witnessed a new wave of aggregations and suppressions. Although the original documents related to these years have not been located, we know that at this time, Sant Vicenç de Rus ceased to exist as an entry in census and tax records, and its numbers were added to Castellar's records.

The 1860 municipal rationalization commission was in charge of screening the national territory and localizing every village with less than two hundred villagers and finding an institutional alternative that would allow its declassification. After the Commission works were finished in 1867, Sant Genís de Gavarrós disappeared forever as an official entity—as did its associated rights. It is also interesting to highlight that the 1860 Commission recommended the dismantling of the local councils of Castellar de n'Hug and Sant Jaume de Frontanyà.⁶ Only the impossibility of finding a reasonable alternative village with which to be associated kept these municipalities alive.

This long process of administrative reorganization is very important in an area where municipalities own and manage substantial amounts of public land. These properties were part of the traditional commons upon which local subsistence depended. When a village loses its official status, it is integrated into another municipality. The immediate consequence of this integration, besides a centralization of public services, is that the new local council gains control of the common lands of the ex-village, and the benefits

extracted from those lands will revert to the new local council. This is especially significant since the local use of common lands is usually limited to household-based activities such as grazing, wood gathering and small-scale agriculture, while municipalities, centered on obtaining cash, may initiate activities such as large-scale timber extraction.

The new administrative regime focused on pragmatic rationalism: administrative hierarchies and inter-village hierarchies were created with strict observance to demographic and geographic criteria. The ancient regime had relied upon tradition, sometimes resulting in anachronisms and complicated situations, but the constitutional order adopted this state of things as a point of departure and structured territorial and governmental services around the demographic importance of each village, the capacity of its markets, proximity to surrounding villages and, finally, the potential connectedness of its infrastructure.

According to successive waves of national legislators, the municipal structure emerging from this "constitutionalization" of settlement patterns inherited from feudal times was chaotic and irrational. The dimensions and distribution of hundreds of small villages, especially in the mountainous areas, made the task of expansion and distribution of public services, and the extension of the state itself, uneconomical. For this reason, several projects of territorial restructuring were undertaken by the government during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Table 1. Change in officially recognized villages 1750-1995.

	1750	1800	1820	1840	1870	1930	1945	1985	1995
Sant Jaume de Frontanyà	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sant Vicenç de Rus	x	x	x ^a	-	-	-	-	-	-
Castellar de n'Hug	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sant Martí de Brocà	x	x	x	x	x	x ^b	-	-	-
Sant Genís de Gavarrós	x	x	x	x ^c	-	-	-	-	-
La Pobla de Lillet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Guardiola de Berguedà	x	x	x	x	-	x	x	x	x
Sant Julià de Cerdanyola	x	x	x	x	x	x ^d	-	-	x

^aIntegrated into Castellar de n'Hug.

^bIntegrated into Guardiola in 1942.

^cIntegrated into Guardiola after a huge legal fight with Castellar de n'Hug, Sant Julià de Cerdanyola and the inhabitants of Gavarrós that preferred Castellar. They had been absorbed by Brocà in 1867.

^dIntegrated into Guardiola in 1942. It recovered its status in 1992.

In sum, under the new criteria, only la Pobla de Lillet, unquestionably the social and demographic center of the area, was perceived as a viable project by the state officials responsible for rationalizing the administrative network of Spain. Guardiola, not yet mentioned in the records, is a special case. During most of the 19th century it was a miniscule group of houses near the river at a crossroads. The final construction of the main road and the railway fostered its growth until it absorbed the jurisdictions of traditionally larger neighboring villages like Sant Julià and Brocà (Table 1).

The social failure that these abandoned villages represent must be related to lack of connectedness. An important part of the medieval Pyrenean trade followed range routes. The network of paths extended from east to west and vice versa. They had, of course, connection to the plains, but the closest villages were always in the next range or the next valley. The communication lines integrated the whole of the Pyrenees. They connected one valley to the other through the mountain passes. Castellar de n'Hug, Sant Martí de Brocà and Sant Genís de Gavarrós were located at the high points of these old infrastructures.

The modern state and the capitalist market followed a different rationality and were strictly controlled by urban centers. This new rationality fostered a new kind of connectedness concerned with production, distribution and mass consumption. It fostered radial connectedness with the urban centers at the nodules of the net. In the 20th century Pyrenees, this new conceptualization of communication translated into a radical shift in infrastructure from range paths to roads at the bottom of the valleys. The inter-valley connectedness was neglected in favor of the mountain-plain axis. In addition, the whole territory came to be reorganized through urbanization processes (Harvey 2001; Nello 2001; Williams 1973).

Those upper villages became communication dead-ends. Only Castellar de n'Hug survived, because it was large enough to endure external pressure and because of the extra income that contraband from France offered in that particular location. Even so, in the 1970s Castellar was close to the point of no return; the village was almost empty. At that point it

made a quantum shift, not only from a production perspective but also in terms of collective identity. The village succeeded in becoming a tourist attraction, a place to visit throughout the year and to spend summer holidays.

Gavarrós and Brocà did not fare so well. They could not take advantage of new uses of the landscape. They fell under crises brought first by the collapse of traditional agriculture and ranching, second by the attraction of the expanding industrial job market in the cities, and finally by the acute crisis of this very same market.

The inherent instability of the Spanish state during the 19th century makes it difficult to identify a specific moment in which to historically locate the completion of the Spanish territorialization process. Although the administrative reorganization of the state was formally implemented around 1850,⁷ the parameters established by the territorial commission had recurrent consequences until well into the 20th century.

*Disentailment*⁸

The state's mastery of the territory did not stop with its reclassification of feudal lands as state lands, nor did it stop with the reordering of its villages into modern bureaucratic municipalities. During the last one hundred fifty years, the state launched several waves of physical and territorial appropriation as well.

My reading of the development of the modern Spanish state requires wrapping appropriation moments, territorialization and reterritorialization into the same historical process. The disentailment campaigns were the beginning of the reterritorialization of the state: an institutional reassessment of the national geography with the explicit goal of identifying and taking physical control of the national resources.

The Spanish liberal state, pressed by a general economic crisis, decided to tackle the remnants of medieval property regimes in order to obtain abundant economic benefits from it. The plan was simple: confiscate non-private property and sell it. From 1836 to 1841 the Mendizabal program affected land in

ecclesiastical estates. In general, most of the parcels ended up in the hands of the growing bourgeoisie or were added to the legal possessions of the still powerful aristocracy (Bauer 1980; Gómez 1992).

In 1855, the General Expropriation Law brought on the next wave of disentanglement and affected what the state called the wastelands, which were mainly commons. This project, known as the disentanglement of Madoz,⁹ had direct repercussions on the study area. The mountain communities had experienced major successes preserving the common lands from previous division and privatization trends.

The law also defined the case in which a patch of land or a mountain could be saved from expropriation. A village had to prove that a specific mountain was essential for the survival of the community and that it had not been producing monetary income. The territory that fulfilled these conditions was considered an exception and returned to the local community. However, there was a difference between the previous status of those lands and the situation that emerged in the aftermath of the 1855 law. The excluded mountains were, before the law, commons belonging to and regulated by the entitled neighbors of the local community through a set of traditional regulations. After the law, these same mountains became property of the municipality and were managed by the local council. In other words, these lands became integrated into the national public territory.

In the study villages of Sant Julià, la Pobla and Castellar, the amount of affected land was substantial, including almost one hundred percent of each village's commons. Both villages resisted this process fairly well. At the end of the 19th century, however, the state institutional network owned, for the first time, large patches of the mountain ranges that surround the Lillet valley. La Pobla, as a municipal entity, for instance, acquired 1,134 ha of public land, the same amount that the community, as a group of individuals, lost. Throughout the 20th century, small patches bordering on these public lands were progressively integrated into the municipal territorial pool. The reports describe the abandonment of parcels and the absence of a clear owner. In some cases the process was successful; in others, people resisted.

Expropriation

The beginning of the 20th century brought new preoccupations to state officials. The mastering of the territory and its government was influenced by environmental concerns. It was the beginning of the Forest Engineers Era during which the Foresters Corps developed an almost uncontested control over the mountainous landscape.

In the study area, the engineers started to take physical control of the land with the first expropriation in 1907 (the *Sidera*). The last of these 'forested'-oriented expropriations took place in 1969. The legitimization offered by the body of engineers was that they needed to ensure the safety of the upper watersheds by controlling erosion. They were concerned with protecting the new big dams that were being built downstream. This period was also the time of the deforestation obsession. What began as an isolated takeover became a solid expropriation trend that ended up, in the late 1960s, with most of the southern slope of the Cadí Range at la Pobla and Castellar in the hands of the state. It also affected the lower parts of the northern slope of the Catllaràs range, at the lower limits of the municipal forest.

Forest engineers participated as institutional agents in the redefinition of the Spanish mountains. Forestry, as a scientific and applied discipline, is connected to state-making. In other words, foresters are integrated into the bureaucratic network of the state as public officials, and are in charge of implementing schemes of territorial reorganization (Scott 1998; Sivaramakrishnan 1999). The formation of the School of Forestry in 1848 was the first step of the institutionalization of scientific forestry as a discipline in Spain. The Corps of Engineers, as part of the state's administrative network, gave scientific legitimacy to successive transformations of the property regimes of the mountains. In the process, they acquired managerial rights over significant areas of land throughout the country—control that lasted at least through the turn of the century. The underlying belief, pervasive in forestry theory, was that the forest was a fundamental element for sustaining hydrological cycles, and only public ownership could ensure its preservation (Gómez 1992).

[To reach their natural goal] and to ensure and guarantee its existence [it is necessary that] the public possession of the mountains, far from constituting an exception to the rules established by political economy and express contradiction to its accepted laws, comes, on the contrary, to harmonize them in a way in which the collective good supports the private without limiting the activity of the individual. (García Martino 1869)

Studies of how colonial powers embarked upon territorialization through declaring lands as State Forest in their colonies (e.g., Peluso and Vandergeest 2001; Sivaramakrishnan 1999) provide parallels to the way in which the nascent European liberal states of the 18th and 19th century reordered their rural hinterlands. Both the colonial and the national hinterland contexts are characterized by the presence of territorialization policies, the imposition of external priorities, and the enactment of disciplinary regimes and development schemes. The similarities between the colonial territorialization processes and territorial appropriation process studied here invite a reconceptualization of colonialism that does not necessarily rely on the old separation between developed and underdeveloped countries.

The contenders for control of the landscape—the private owners and collective traditional institutions—were seen by the state as threats to the national interest because private owners participate in the free market and thus could ravage the forests; state officials feared that the inevitable breakdown of traditional communal institutions might produce a “free for all” commons situation necessarily leading to an exhaustion of the natural resources under consideration.

The common uses, the villages uses, all these socialist practices must disappear and the irregular, confusing and primitive uses of the soil. It is good that this private property, nucleus of all progress, guarantee of all order may substitute this kind of peasant socialism. (Mountains Law Draft 1872)

The Ministry of Agriculture did not only choose vacant land for their forest experiments; numerous parcels had owners, settlers and dozens of uses that were altered by those policies. The new management closed farms and expelled cattle and people. However,

the expropriation of isolated farms in the ranges did not awaken resistance because peasant agriculture was already a fading way of life. The local population, with relatively limited connections to the urban way of life, was not organized for resistance. In many cases, they were renting houses and land from absentee owners residing in the lowlands that were happy to sell their lands to the state. Tenants, thus, had no legal basis for opposition. Since mountain agriculture and ranching are difficult occupations, the factories from the valleys quickly attracted this dispossessed population. The expropriated land was declared Forest Patrimony and Public Useful Mountains. The state progressively became the absolute owner of, by Catalan standards, a large extension of land. The dominant official discourse assumed that the farmers and their traditional agricultural practices were responsible for severe deforestation (García Pérez and Groome 2000; Gómez 1992). The documents show an effort by the state to be systematic in the confiscation, and to avoid leaving non-public patches amidst the newly formed estate.

The first measures taken by the new owners were to establish vigilance, to extinguish old contracts and uses, forbid tree cutting and start massive replanting. Landscapes were radically changed by the state—from productive farm terrain into growing forests. The assumption underlying this set of policies was that forested landscape was environmentally or socially more valuable than terraced, cultivated or grazing land. Institutions of the state, by intertwining science, managerial practices and national needs, proceeded to reconfigure the landscape and, along with it, its inhabitants (cf. Robbins 2001; Sivaramakrishnan 1999). New concepts of territory, resources, citizenry and state were being implemented (Guha 1989; Hann 2003; Pottage and Mundy 2004).

The Forest Patrimony of the State, and specifically its Forest Hydrologic Service on behalf of the Ministry, managed these lands for decades until the creation of the Instituto para la Conservación de la Naturaleza.¹⁰ The Institute was in charge of the expropriated area until its transfer to the Generalitat de Catalunya due to the new winds of democratization and decentralization brought by the death of the dictator Franco in 1975 and the advent of the new democratic constitution in 1978.

Conservation

As a final phase of land appropriation, coherent with the incremental activity of the state in the field of territorial planning and control, I want to consider the wave of environmental conservation policies implemented since the early 1980s in the interior of Catalonia. The new parks and reserves used the previously re-qualified or expropriated parcels as a territorial base for their implementation. The state land and the municipal land became the anchors allowing a net of conservation policies to be drawn across the landscape. Conservation policies, however, cover larger portions of the territory and have engulfed significant amounts of private land.

In 1973, the Hunting National Reserve of the Cadí was created. At this time, in accordance with the prevalent political climate, the rationale behind the policy was to regulate and improve hunting of large herbivores, mainly chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*) and later, through reintroduction, red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) and roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*). The reserve became the territorial nursery for what later became the Cadí-Moixeró Natural Park.

After the designation of the reserve, hunting became regulated by permits and controlled by guards. Local hunting groups had rights to a small number of hunting permits but most were sold to professional hunters from all over Spain and Europe at high prices.¹¹ This strict permit policy played a main role in the recovery of chamois population that, at the time, was nearly extinct from overhunting. The designation of the reserve and the strict enforcement of the hunting regulations increased the tangibility of the state in the area. In the following years the reserve became the seed around which the state grew a variety of protected areas.

By the end of the 1970s, changes in the political Spanish landscape included the introduction of environmental concerns through legislative initiatives at provincial, regional and national administrative levels. In pre-constitutional times, the jurisdiction over natural values were issued by the central Spanish government and were held successively by the National Parks Commissariat under the authority of the National Parks Law of 1916, the General Direction of Mountains under the Mountains Law of 1957, and

the Instituto para la Conservación de la Naturaleza under the Natural Protected Spaces Law of 1975 (García Pérez and Groome 2000; Gómez 1992).

The relevant legal documents currently in use are the Natural Spaces Law of 1985 and the Natural Interest Spaces Plan of 1992, both of which were promulgated by the Generalitat de Catalunya. They restate some of the concerns already included in the Territorial Policy Plan Law of 1983. In the general Spanish context, the legal framework is established by the Conservation of Natural Parks and Wild Flora and Fauna Law of 1989, issued by the Spanish central government. These laws highlight the need to consider the necessities of local populations:

... an important part of the spaces with natural values are localized in socio-economically declining areas suffering depopulation processes. In these cases protection should not result in additional burdens that may impair an already difficult situation. On the contrary, it must foster an effective improvement of life conditions Many times, man's presence perpetuates the ecologically adequate conditions of the territory. (Diari Oficial de la Generalitat de Catalunya 1985:2113)

Although local development is theoretically possible under conservation regulations, these regulations alter the conditions under which development may occur. In this case, regulations continue to protect an environment considered valuable for recreation and non-productive use by people residing in the overpopulated cities of the lowlands:

The goal of the Natural Interest Spaces Plan is the delimitation and the establishment of the basic conditions for the protection of natural spaces the conservation of which is considered necessary in order to ensure the scientific, ecological, dramatic, cultural, social, didactical and recreational values that they possess. (Diari Oficial de la Generalitat de Catalunya 1985:2115)

For people residing in the valley, mountains are considered not just a resource of natural value, but also their home. Economic life may experience a significant transformation under the development constraints imposed by a national park. Ecotourism seems to be the preferred field in which local development is encouraged. Agriculture, ranching and

forestry are acceptable but regulated, while urban and industrial development is viewed with the most hostility by the conservationist administration.

Art. 3.a. Traditional activities and the orderly use of resources are generally allowed in the natural spaces included in the Park, unless specific restrictions are established to reach protection goals. ... Art. 4.1. The territories included in the ambit of the Park where urbanization is restricted land will remain non-urbanized and will be the object of special protection. (Diari Oficial de la Generalitat de Catalunya 1983:2125)

Recall Figure 1, in which there are three protected areas comprising the valley that interests us: the Natural Park of the Cadí-Moixeró, and the Catllaràs and Montgrony Natural Spaces, both included in the Natural Interest Spaces Plan. They belong to two different levels of the hierarchy of protective policies and are managed very differently (Carceller 1995; Font and Majoral 1998). Natural parks come with their own staff, budget and strict regulations, while Natural Spaces do not have their own administrative apparatus and depend on regional officials with many responsibilities.

The 1983 Decree of Creation of the Natural Park of the Cadí-Moixeró was issued by the Generalitat de Catalunya and drawn up in explicit concordance with the 1975 Spanish Natural Protected Spaces Law. In June 2000, two resolutions were successively issued from the Department of Environment of the Generalitat of Catalunya that approved the initial delimitation for the Natural Interest Spaces Plans of the Montgrony Range and the Catllaràs Range in specific and explicit accordance with the Catalan Law of 1985 and the 1992 Decree.

The 1983 decree stresses the inherent natural value of the areas and the anthropogenic threats that menace them. State officials feel that they must respond to these disturbances and maintain or improve the natural status quo of the area.

Art. 1.1. This area represents the high mountain enclave closest to the populous area of Catalonia. Consequently this area suffers strong human pressure through urban development, tourism infrastructures, industries and mining exploitations.

This fact makes necessary the elaboration of a regulation that may articulate human activities and environmental protection since nowadays there is no protection regime valid in the area Art.1.2. The goal of this special jurisdictional regime is to protect its geology, vegetation, fauna, waters and atmosphere as well its ecosystems. (Diari Oficial de la Generalitat de Catalunya 1983:2125)

The Cadí-Moixeró Park, situated over a pre-existing high concentration of public land, was designed to protect mountain ecosystems and it is primarily limited to high mountain ecosystems. This leaves most of the cultivated or historically cultivated areas of the lower parts of the valleys outside the park. The annexation of upland areas, mostly common or municipal property, awakened less opposition than might have come from annexing the completely privatized agricultural fields that surround the rivers in the lower areas of the valley.

This implies that lowlands would be the cultivated, civilized and permanently inhabited landscape, and the latter would be protected wilderness—an ecosystem remnant of the ancient natural landscape. However, there is biological continuity between the different altitudinal strata of the area, as well as social and productive continuity. The agricultural and ranching activities performed in the valleys were only part of a larger system of production that included grazing on the upper pastures for a major part of the year. Without the montane resources, the valleys were incomplete (Bauer 1980).

Although the current administration of the park still follows the directives established in its foundational documents, the managers of the park understand and accept traditional ranching activities inside the park borders, not only to permit local economic development but also to maintain the subsistence patterns that supposedly created the current “natural” habitat. Nevertheless, the protective focus remains centered on mountain ecosystems. Due to rural depopulation and other factors, a traditional agricultural landscape is in rapid decline, and with it the high levels of human-nurtured biodiversity that accompany it. Ecological mosaics with transitional patches between forest and traditional agricultural fields harbor more biodiversity than any situation in

which the ecological matrix is homogeneously dominated by either mountain or agricultural ecosystems on its own (Foreman and Godron 1986). This richness is disappearing under the advance of the forest, but its preservation is not on the park's agenda.

The external imposition of a protected area and its associated set of regulations are usually perceived by local populations as an erosion of rights, dignity and possibilities for making a living (Neumann 1998; Rangarajan 1996). Answers, however, depend on the impact that the park has on individuals' lives. Although the park has not resulted in the total prohibition of ranching activities, it has become a significant player with which local people need to negotiate. Some residents, however, have recognized the potential that the park and environmental protection has to foster local development. Ecotourism is emerging as an important economic sector. Tourism, however, is an inherently seasonal activity devoted to cover the needs of an external population. The Valley of Lillet was once a powerful place, heavily industrialized, but it also had large herds and was covered with agricultural terraces. Its inhabitants do not necessarily like this productive shift.

Conclusion

In this article I demonstrate the inherent connection between the contemporary landscape of the mountains of the northeast Berguedà—the demographic, biological and property regimes of this area—and the historical actions of the Spanish modern state. My main argument is that to understand the current features of this landscape—its forests, its parks and its ruins—a fundamental step is to examine the process of expansion and implementation of the state across the nation's territory; this is not to say that state-making is the only element affecting the social processes of these valleys.

In this part of the Pyrenees, the historically direct influence of the state via spatial policies can be summarized in four phases: (1) territorialization of the nation's territory through rational administrative reorganization; (2) reterritorialization of resources through nation-wide disentanglement campaigns to sell land, resulting in territorial redistribution amongst public and private stakeholders; (3) reterritorialization

of resources to protect watersheds and forests, resulting in direct state expropriation and appropriation of territory; and (4) reterritorialization of resources through conservation policies to protect and restore ecosystems.

Spanish reterritorialization then, at least in this part of the Pyrenees, seems to be structured in three historical phases of resource appropriation with later redistribution or direct management. The first redistributive phase is characterized by the expropriations of mid-19th century, aimed at integrating large parts of the Spanish geography into a productive market and gathering monetary resources for the state. The second phase is principally designed to take direct control of sensitive resources, mainly hydraulic and forest resources. Finally, the third phase restructures the territories previously affected by merging them into protected areas.

To some degree, the currently protected and dramatic mountain wilderness landscape was created by the very hand of the state. The new uses and practices currently being deployed over the landscape—conservation policies, ecotourism, second residence or ski resorts, just to mention a few—are primarily answering the needs of the overwhelming majority of the Catalan population, those who live in cities. These needs are, in general, connected to momentary or seasonal leisure, not to permanent interaction with the rural or natural landscapes. In sum, although the implementation of a park opens a new set of developmental possibilities for local communities, it implies a redirection of the local economy and, with it, a redefinition of the local identity. This new socially empty landscape owes to a series of public policies implemented by the modern Spanish state during the last two hundred years.

Ismael Vaccaro, Department of Anthropology,
University of Washington

Notes

- ¹ Between 1960 and 2000 la Pobla de Lillet lost 51 percent of its population. La Pobla, with less than 2,000 inhabitants, lost 140 inhabitants from 1990 until 1995, and 268 inhabitants between 1995 and 2000.

² This does not mean that it is the exclusive form of property. Although predominant, it coexists with several forms of collective property.

³ 2,462 ha.

⁴ The village has 5,132 ha, 3,131 ha of which are privately owned. At least 1,982 ha are owned by ten individuals, which is 39 percent of the municipality and 63 percent of the private land of the village.

⁵ 1814th Direct Contribution tax records, divided into territorial, industrial and trade, show decent levels of economic activity in all of these villages.

⁶ Castellar had a fiscal deficit, and Sant Jaume was simply too small and scattered.

⁷ Territorial reorganization was legally formalized between 1848 and 1850.

⁸ Due to the lack of a better term, here I translated the Spanish word *desamortización* to 'disentailment.'

⁹ This was the first government official who promoted it.

¹⁰ Institute for the Conservation of Nature.

¹¹ The price depended on the category of the prey: size of the horns and symmetry.

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