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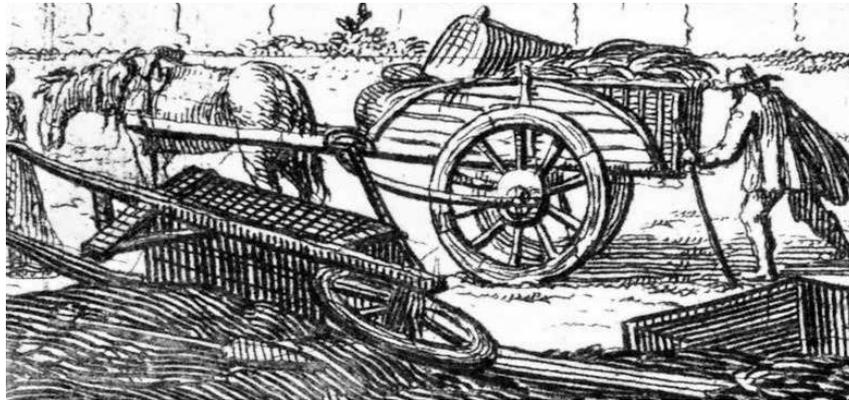
UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

– Workshop –

Meanings of Mobility among Peasants in Europe, 1300–1800

Prague

17th – 19th October 2019



This workshop aims at bringing together scholars from different parts of Europe with an interest in questions related to geographical mobility in the Middle Ages and/or the early modern period. Traditional views on peasantries notwithstanding, geographical mobility has been a fundamental feature of European village life for many centuries. Numerous empirical studies have confirmed this. But what does it tell us about medieval and early modern Europe, and peasant societies, beyond the simple fact that people occasionally moved, then as they do today? What does it mean?

The workshop wants to raise new questions and open up new perspectives on historical Europe by putting geographical mobility among peasants on the center stage. To what extent, and in what ways, does the ubiquitous presence of geographical mobility change our perceptions of peasant societies in the past? What does it say about, for example, varying conditions of serfdom and differences in land tenure, markets for labor and land, economic stratification and social mobility, the abandonment of old settlements and the establishment of new, or the character of local communities and cultural attitudes?

The workshop is supported by the European Regional Development Fund-Project “Creativity and Adaptability as Conditions of the Success of Europe in an Interrelated World” (No. CZ.02.1.01/0.0/0.0/16_019/0000734) and affiliated with the programme of Charles University Progress Q07 ‘Centre for the Study of the Middle Ages’.

Thursday 17 October

9.00 **Registration**

9.15 **Welcome**

9.30–10.45 **Panel 1**

Martin Andersson (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences)

Peasant Migration in Seventeenth-Century Sweden: New Data Demands New Interpretations

Josef Grulich (University of South Bohemia)

Peasant Mobility and Local Migration in Pre-Modern Time, South Bohemia between the 16th and 18th Century

10.45–11.15 **Tea/Coffee Break**

11.15–12.30 **Panel 2**

Mateusz Wyzga (Pedagogical University of Cracow)

Homo movens? Peasants' mobility in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 16th-18th centuries

Jonas Lindström (Uppsala University)

Understanding peasant economy through the lens of mobility: A Swedish parish in the early modern period

12.30–14.00 **Lunch**

14.00–15.15. **Panel 3**

Eugene Costello (Stockholm University)

Social role, economic function and ecological consequence: seasonal mobility to marginal land in north-west Europe

Eva Svensson (Karlstad University)

Moving up the hill? Peasant strategies in times of plague and climate change

15.15–15.45 **Tea/Coffee Break**

15.45–17.00 **Panel 4**

Tomáš Klír (Charles University)

Social mobility, migration and the abandonment processes in the Late Middle Ages. The Cheb region (1392–1469).

Jette Linaa (Moesgaard Museum)

In Migration. The movements of rural communities in early modern period in Denmark.

17.00–17.15 **Tea/Coffee Break**

17.15–18.00 **Discussion**

Friday 18 October

9.30–12.30 **Exkursion: National Archives Czech Republic
Workshop for prospective projects**

12.30–14.00 **Lunch**

14.00–18.00 **Prague excursion**

Saturday 19 October

9.00–18.00 **Field excursion**

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ABSTRACTS

Martin Andersson

Peasant Migration in Seventeenth-Century Sweden: New Data Demands New Interpretations

Recently published migration data for early seventeenth-century Sweden (including present-day Finland and parts of Russia) show that approximately 5 per cent of rural households moved each year, most often to other nearby villages. Contrary to common belief, the feudal landholding regime did not significantly influence the migration rates of different peasant groups. However, the meaning of these migration patterns so far remains largely uninterpreted. Building on this empirical data in my paper, I will present a few ideas on how peasant migration in feudal societies might be understood. An important key to our understanding is regional comparisons, of which I will make one with regions in Northern Sweden and Finland, where peasant migration was largely absent. This difference shows how peasant migration may be viewed as one subsistence strategy that was preferred to others under certain social conditions.

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Eugene Costello

Social role, economic function and ecological consequence: seasonal mobility to marginal land in north-west Europe

This paper examines the evolving and multi-faceted meaning of seasonal peasant mobility to agriculturally-marginal landscapes in north-west Europe. Up until recently, many scholars tended to view the seasonal use of these uplands and outlands in simple terms of resource-exploitation, be it summer pasture for livestock, hunting and gathering, or industry. Undoubtedly, these fundamental economic reasons for moving cannot be ignored, but they were not static and they gave rise to other factors in the communities involved. For one thing, ethnoarchaeological research on transhumance in particular is showing that seasonal fragmentation of peasant communities could play a role in the reproduction of certain social structures. Furthermore, palaeoecological and geomorphological studies point to increasing environmental impacts in uplands due to human movement into those landscapes, much of which is likely to have been on a seasonal basis. Drawing from my on-going case-study research in south-west Ireland, and comparative examples from Scotland and western Sweden, I will trace the social and ecological meanings of seasonal mobility as its economic role changed during the rise of early modern capitalism.

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Josef Grulich

Peasant Mobility and Local Migration in Pre-Modern Time, South Bohemia between the 16th and 18th Century

Presented research of migration and mobility carried out in quantitative and qualitative level with examples of selected south-bohemian regions over a period from the 16th to 18th century. For the realisation were used wide foundation of sources, like lists of subjects, parish registers, land registers and release letters. With help of historical sources has been successfully proven

ordinal as well as extraordinary range of migration. Simultaneously, has been paid the attention to main and side reasons of permanent domicile change. Also has been analysed correlation between labour and matrimonial migration. The characterization of migrants, particularly age, sex, profession and social class has not been out of concern. Research has been also focused on the question of migration as an object of interest of whole families or for individuals. Mutually has been compare contemporary regulation and its enforcement in casual practise.

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Tomáš Klír

Peasants' migration in the Cheb Region in the Late Middle Ages.

The aim of the paper is to describe and explain mutual correlations between social mobility and the migration of peasants in the Cheb Region (Czech Republic). We show what the prospects were for poor and reach peasant's households and whether their movement from one farmstead to another was connected with social rise or fall. In other words, to what extent migration worked as a channel of social mobility. We are also interested in the question of the distances peasants moved, whether they stayed within their 'home' area or broke their ties and moved away over a longer distance. We use the annual land tax registers (1442–1456) and two detailed property valuation ledgers (1438, 1456).

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Jette Linaa

In Migration. The movements of rural communities in early modern period in Denmark.

Migration is a historically well-known fact in Denmark, but only recently has migration studies found a place within Danish historical archaeology. Nevertheless, in the last five years, several research projects have given significant new insight into the rapid movements and extreme mobility of members of urban communities in the late medieval and early modern period. However, the mobility of rural communities is less well understood. The aim of this paper is to give insight into the movements of the rural population, the economic and historical background for these movements and the material traces that indicate that movements took place within the rural areas and between towns and countryside. This includes studies of consumption in various rural and urban areas, and touches on movements in different stages of the life cycle, on social mobility, on the labour market and on the permeability of the urban-rural divide.

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Jonas Lindström

Understanding peasant economy through the lens of mobility: A Swedish parish in the early modern period

In this presentation I will revisit and reinterpret some results of my dissertation, which I wrote more than ten years ago. The dissertation started from the fact that resources were unevenly distributed among peasants in early modern Sweden. It used family reconstitution in

combination with data on economic resources and social positions. One major finding was that stratification was linked to mobility. I tried to capture this with the concept of uneven reproduction, which basically means that poor peasants were more likely to move than rich peasants (and, to a lesser extent, women were more likely to move than men).

In this presentation, I explore what happens if we instead start from the fact that mobility was widespread, but also unevenly spread, among the peasants in order to understand their system of reproduction. My previous analysis, I think, was too dependent on the idea of the household as a given unit of production. The constant flux of household member is one thing, the diverse relationships between land and labour in different social groups is another. Approaching the subject by asking questions about who moved, and who did not, calls for a more dynamic perspective on the peasant economy and one that also, perhaps, puts more stress on internal tension within the peasant community.

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Eva Svensson

Moving up the hill? Peasant strategies in times of plague and climate change

The late medieval agrarian crisis (c. 1350-1450) is mostly associated with desertion of settlements due to plague (the Black Death), (“negative”) climate change, other environmental deterioration, increased feudal pressure etc. Often so called marginal areas, such as hilly and forested areas, have been presumed to have been more vulnerable, and thus first deserted during the late medieval agrarian crisis.

However, during the last decades a number of areas with fossiled fields have been documented in upland settings, well above the traditional settlement areas by lakes and rivers, in hilly and forested areas in central Scandinavia. That is, in settings marginal both on regional and local levels. Archaeological and paleobotanical investigations have shown that many of them are dating to the late middle ages, post AD 1350. Some of these sites may have been outlying fields, but some of them are deserted farmsteads or hamlets.

At one of them, the deserted farmstead Ivarsbråten, ongoing (soon concluded) archaeological investigations have been conducted. The investigations show that Ivarsbråten appear to have been settled c. 1350 AD, and that the peasants had adopted to climate change and practiced risk diversification.

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Mateusz Wyźga

Homo movens? Peasants' mobility in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 16th-18th centuries

My research goal is to demonstrate the significance of mobility and migrations, and also their widespread occurrence, in the life of peasantry in the pre-partition Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, a social group formally bound to their place of residence. These referred to peasants' ability to move at the successive stages of their life cycles. Such formulation of the subject matter was determined by the availability of diversified, if fragmentary, and sometimes even incidental, source materials. Other objectives included identifying the geography of their daily life, the factors influencing migrations, and the existing controls regulating migration flows, as well as gaining insights into the functioning of migration strategies and the

assimilation of migrants. In consequence, it proved possible to demonstrate the significant role of the peasant family in devising migration strategies with respect to its members, and also positive developments in the manor lords' approach to the serf population, especially with regard to migration (especially internal, rural-to-rural, and rural-to-urban migrations). In my research I used a broad source base, primarily the books of the vogt's court in the city of Cracow, containing information provided by witnesses brought in to verify newcomers' backgrounds and trustworthiness. I also used craft guild books, the rolls of newly admitted burghers, criminal records, the records of duties levied on goods carried through the city, micro-censuses of the rural parishes from the years 1790–1791, church registers of marriages from rural and urban parishes, village court books, peasants' wills, and records of noblemen's litigations aiming to recover runaway serfs. I also used some auxiliary materials in the form of memoir literature and the earliest ethnographic sources. I used qualitative and quantitative methods (about 25,000 records pertaining to specific migrants) and conducted measurements of the distances travelled (the shortest pedestrian moves) in Google Maps (about 10,000 measurements).