

THE MOUNTAIN/COASTAL SEA FARMERS AND THE STONE WALLS OF THE TERRACES RESIST THE THREATS TO TERRACED LANDSCAPES AND CULTURES: ITLA—THE INTERNATIONAL TERRACED LANDSCAPES ALLIANCE

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ABSTRACT

The International Terraced Landscapes Alliance (ITLA) is a network of professionals and activists who want to protect, preserve and promote terraced landscapes in worldwide mountain/coastal sea regions. We outline the reasons to get active, explain the threats which the landscapes and its peoples and cultures confront and describe the main activity of International Conferences (China 2010, Peru 2014, Italy 2016) on Terraced Landscapes and Cultures. ITLA creates platforms for the terrace activists to voice their concerns, to dialogue with terrace farmers and constructors for the recovery of local and indigenous knowledge and to formulate defence policies and attitudes to regenerate right livelihoods in mountain/coastal areas by working and living with terraces for healthy food production.

Keywords: terraced landscapes, local and indigenous knowledge systems, mountain farming, international network, world heritage (Tangible – Intangible)

I CONTADINI DELLE MONTAGNE/DELLE COSTE MARITTIME E I MURI IN PIETRA DEI TERRAZZAMENTI RESISTONO ALLE MINACCE NEI CONFRONTI DEI PAESAGGI TERRAZZATI E DELLE LORO CULTURE: ITLA—L'ALLEANZA INTERNAZIONALE DEI PAESAGGI TERRAZZATI

SINTESI

L'Alleanza Internazionale dei Paesaggi Terrazzati (ITLA) è una rete di professionisti e attivisti che desiderano proteggere, conservare e valorizzare i paesaggi terrazzati delle aree montane/e costiere del mondo. L'Alleanza motiva le ragioni della necessità di diventare operativi, spiega i pericoli affrontati dai paesaggi terrazzati, dalle loro genti e dalle loro culture, descrive le sue attività principali come l'organizzazione delle Conferenze Internazionali dedicate ai paesaggi terrazzati e alle loro culture (Cina 2010, Perù 2014, Italia 2016). L'Alleanza crea delle piattaforme di confronto per gli attivisti dei paesaggi terrazzati utili a dar voce alle loro preoccupazioni e al dialogo tra i contadini delle aree terrazzate, tra i costruttori del recupero delle conoscenze locali ed indigene, per formulare politiche di difesa, per rigenerare l'attitudine al diritto alla vita nelle aree montane/costiere resa possibile attraverso il lavoro e la vita con i terrazzamenti per la produzione di cibo salutare.

Parole chiave: paesaggi terrazzati, sistema di conoscenze locali ed indigene, agricoltura di montagna, rete internazionale, patrimonio mondiale materiale ed immateriale

INTRODUCTION TO ITLA

ITLA is the international terraced landscapes alliance founded in China in 2010. The second ITLA international conference was prepared in Cusco, Peru, in 2014 and the third world encounter will be organised in Italy in 2016.

About 50 enthusiasts and visionaries met in Yunnan Province in the Red River Prefecture (Honghe) in November 2010 at the first Conference about Terraced Landscapes (Figure 1). By the end of the conference, some participants formed the *International Terraced Landscapes Alliance* (ITLA) to work for the protection, preservation and promotion of terraced landscapes and related cultures worldwide and they signed the Honghe Declaration (Figure 2). At present, there are more than 100 activists, farmers and researchers from the Americas, Europe, Africa and Asia, who are dedicated to promote the voices of the guardians of the terraces and demonstrate the significance of terraced landscapes for food production. ITLA founders have proposed to make inventories of the existing terraces and show their ecological, cultural and food characteristics on maps; to compile and select annotated bibliography of terraced landscapes and cultures; to undertake case studies about terraced landscapes and cultures; to identify the most experienced guardians, stonemasons and farmers

of the terraces and to involve them in the necessary dialogue about knowledge systems essential for the maintenance and construction of terraces and the recovery of biodiversity. Finally, the aim of ITLA members is to engage in actions to preserve, protect and promote the terraces in order that they can recover their role in the history of agriculture of humankind. Members of ITLA are an alliance in favour of supporting the inclusion and voices of the marginalised and powerless farmers, men and women guardians, giving them a fuller life.

What unites activists, farmers, researchers and other members of ITLA? The vision of a future where the guardians of the terraces can continue to enjoy the cultural diversity and biodiversity of their external landscapes and where they are able to transform the internal landscapes of multiple identities. Members unite by a vision in which the guardians can create democratic spaces where they can defend their seeds and crops, their resources like land and water, and their livelihoods, and one which enables the world to hear their voices in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas.

Why does ITLA focus on terraces? The ecological conditions of mountain areas have served as one of the natural bases where humans domesticated plants. The prominent Russian botanist Nikolai Vavilov identified eight centres of origin for the domestication of plants in different continents (Vavilov, 1935; Hawkes, 1997).



Figure 1: Yi Terraces from Yuanyang County in Honghe Prefecture in Yunnan, China.

These were areas where a high diversity of domesticated plant varieties and their wild relatives co-existed for thousands of years as a patrimony of humanity. The practices and the knowledge of the local communities about the natural conditions and about the behaviour of plants have contributed to the survival of humanity. The Vavilov centres of domestication maintain their significance as plant conservation spaces until today. Not surprisingly, they often overlap with tropical and subtropical mountain areas, which have both the natural and cultural conditions favourable for plant domestication. These centres are invaluable treasures of humankind, which are endangered by the process of the modernisation of agricultural production and the threats to the rural life. We confront a loss of domesticated plants, but still the potential of wild relatives of food crops survives (Hawkes, 1997).

Local wisdom and practices

Terraced landscapes where humans have cultivated the soil for thousands of years and have domesticated the food crops of humanity are found in all mountainous regions of the world (Donkin, 1979). The terraces were built on mountains, on coastlines and on islands, each one with its own unique wisdom and practice. Each illustrates multiple uses where men and women, the elderly and the young, through the wisdom of their cultural heritage manage the water, the soils and climates in order to nurture biodiversity. Thanks to their particular social organisation and technologies, which have resulted from long-time experimentation over generations combined with local cultural values (reflected also in their food culture), they have constructed these

incredible landscapes. Their joint knowledge combines observation, tradition and innovation, and harmonises the dialectics of humans and nature.

Multiple identities

The interior landscape of the guardians, i.e. their identity, is based on their understanding of and dialogue with nature. The soil, the mountains, the rocks, the rain, the spring waters, and the plants and animals form part of the community of living beings. This is particular in each place, for each culture.

The social reciprocity found within the communities, and their dialogue with nature, allow for the evolution of the climate to be communicated through the yearly calendar and over decades from generation to generation. Each year the climate in each place of the world, where terraces exist (arid or humid regions) is special—not one year is the same—and, the local people understand the changes because their lives depend on their knowledge of nature. Each system of terraces constitutes its own universe of dynamic interactions between natural elements and humans and their cultures. The common trait, however, is the vertical management of terraces, which takes maximum advantage of the variability of climates, the changing soils and the adapting plants, which have been domesticated by people in accordance with their needs, interests and creativity. The future of terraces is to continue to produce a diversity of crops with quality—even if in small quantities—to provide a decent and good living.

Right Livelihood and Ways of Life

A healthy life and peaceful rural terraced landscapes are associated values, and are recognised by people



Figure 2: ITLA foundation meeting with 50 terrace lovers and activists.

who do not come from the land. For the locals, agrobiodiversity comes first, and to enjoy good food in accordance with their food culture. Second, local people value exchanging and selling food crops in local markets, an action which reinforces social bonds. The quality of food coming from terraces has an extraordinary value. This is a unique trait for consumers who strive for personal wellbeing.

The young generations learn how to innovate

The mountain communities in these vertical landscapes have generated their own ways of knowing and learning through rituals, ceremonies or social activities. By doing so, the young generations can be incorporated into the culture, and learn the technical and spiritual secrets of dealing with nature, which includes terraces, water, soil and plants. The terrace communities in dif-

ferent continents are as creative and solid as their stone-walls. Even if outside forces repress these communities, and consider them anti modern and enemies of modernisation and development, the communities, like the walls resist and endure. Nowadays even those terraces, which were abandoned, are, after decades, adopted by members of the young generation who seek to live in harmony with nature, and to recover the utility and beauty of the mountain regions. New forms of communities are emerging and these local communities are organising to defend their rights to land and water against the interests of extractive industries supported by “export oriented” political systems.

What mobilises ILTA members? Food Sovereignty (Desmarais, 2010; Nyeleni, 2010) is a basic fundamental human right, which starts with the control over one’s own seeds and land. It recognises the decisions of fami-



Figure 3: Doña Flora presents the diversity of maize varieties she is nurturing in Cabanaconde, Arequipa, Peru.

lies and communities to favour their local food cultures as regional traditions, which are linked, in turn, with language and ethnicity. It opposes the threat of globalisation of the food industry and its uniformity (Figure 3).

Members of ITLA aim to create an alternative to mainstream development, one that offers autonomy and self-determination to the local peoples to cultivate their own specific livelihoods. By promoting terraced landscapes in mountain/coastal areas, the rural populations are able to continue their history of sustainable and viable livelihoods for the future and to defend their rights.

METHODOLOGY

The food industry produces an addiction in consumers for processed food, and a dependence among producers for things such as hybrid seeds or GMOs, chemical poisoning linked to expensive credits, promoting export and the predominance of markets. How can we return to the local production of healthy food for local consumers?

What needs to be done?

Make the diversity of terrace production visible.

These are the achievements of the guardians of the terraced landscapes, which are small scale and contain special qualities inherent to its traditions. An international movement that is conscious about value and not price needs to be fortified, supporting the space for food sovereignty and the Right Livelihood in each cultural setting (Figure 4), local initiatives, intergenerational dialogue and cooperation, which allows the fulfilment of human beings in harmony with nature (Figure 5). Finally, terrace supporters need to organise itinerant exhibitions, which highlight the threats and the potential of the



Figure 4: Terraced landscapes near Paro in Bhutan.

future of terraced regions, and strengthen local cultures and peasant organisations.

Support the construction of peasant organisations to promote their solidarity, and mobilise them to defend the rights of the terrace guardians and producers against external threats. Doing so will allow stronger identity of the people and strengthen the wellbeing of the terraced mountains.

Have dialogue with politicians with the aim to strengthen the voices and the initiatives of the guardians of the terraces. These spaces of democratic debate and the visibility of peasant knowledge (Figure 6) will lead to the creation of new frameworks to defend the territorial rights of those who preserve and protect the terraces.

Create alliances with conscientious and committed academics. The complexity of terraced systems calls for a multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach of the sciences. It stimulates the need to do research differently. It should include the wise farmers. They are the guardians of terraces who have a long history of experimentation, and whose minds resonate with nature and the challenges of the mountains. Issues such as the consequences of climate change should involve young researchers. They are enthusiastic, creative and they will

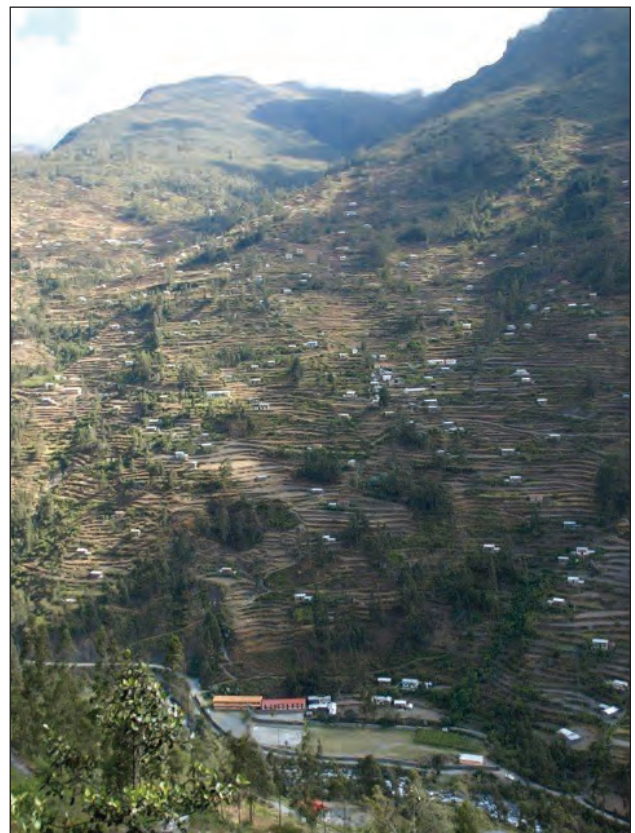


Figure 5: Domesticated Mountains in Sandia, Puno, Peru.



Figure 6: Yi farmer from Red River Valley draws the crops of her fields before the dialogue with the Conference participants—highlighting the role of women of maintaining terraces and biodiversity.



Figure 7: Collecting ideas about the defense of seeds in Cusco.

help to revitalize the ways of knowing of the male and female farmers.

Decolonise our minds. This is a call for revision of the concepts that orient the ideas and policies about mountain/coastal areas coming from different ecological and social conditions, which have influenced the mainstream paradigms. We further need to construct a new paradigm of mountain development based upon the long history of the domestication of plants, animals and landscapes by the traditional societies of the mountain regions.

Organise events like The Second International Conference¹ in May 2014 in Cusco.

Process

The Conference of ITLA 2014 in Cusco had two parts:

Parallel field trips to four different terraced landscapes regions in Peru from May 13 to 18. The trips visited: (i) Yauyos, in the department of Lima, (ii) the southern parts of Ayacucho to the Sondondo Valley, which has an old tradition of building and using terraces, (iii) the areas in the Pampa de Anta near Cusco; and, (iv) the Sacred Valley in the Cusco region. The field trips were organised by local project directors, and the communities that were visited also sent their delegates to the

Conference. The participants of the field trips in Peru provided their impressions and results of dialogue with the local communities during the inaugural session of the Conference

The Conference itself, which went from the evening of May 18 to May 22. It began with an Andean spiritual ceremony at the Casa Campesina, where the 80 delegates from Peruvian peasant communities stayed during the days of the Conference, and where they met every evening to discuss their concerns and political positions. These were communicated to the plenary sessions of the Conference, which had up to 280 registered participants.

Methodology and Programme

An interactive and participatory methodology was applied to achieve a process of dialogue between activists, researchers and community members. The program was created using a step-by-step process².

Among other activities, conference organisers prepared a three-step Peasant forum.

First, the farmers exhibited food crops from their terraced fields in the different regions; second, there was discussion and dialogue between farmers and other conference participants about the issues identified dur-

1 The organising team in Peru was formed by John Earls from Catholic University, Hilda Araujo, CITPA, Mourik Bueno de Mésquita from Centre Bartolome de las Casas and was supported by ITLA International. During the three years prior to the conference, this team convened large numbers of researchers, and private and public institutions to design and realise the Second International Conference in Cusco. As part of the preparation work, the team organised several workshops with community leaders (male and female) in Cusco to discuss the issues of the terrace farmers in Southern Peru. Their testimonies were presented during the Second International Conference.

2 After the ceremony and welcome toast (Spa. *brindis*) at the Casa Campesina, early next morning the Conference started. The 280 participants arrived at the Municipal Congress Building in the historical centre of Cusco, where were welcomed by two Conch players (Spa. *Pututeros*) from a Quechua community.

In the morning of the first day, we listened to the welcome words by organisers, local authorities and a woman farmer from the Peruvian highland. The organiser (Pei Shengji) of the First International Conference from China detailed the situation of the terraces in his homeland. The Italian organiser of the future conference (Mauro Varotto) gave an overview of the diverse efforts to rehabilitate the terraces in the Italian Alps, and the project leader of the Terraces Project of BID Antonio Lambruschini in Peru introduced the ongoing inventory of terraces in eleven regions of Peru.

ing the preparatory farmer workshops (Figure 7); and, third, identified representatives presented the results of these discussions (Figure 8).

During second and third day, four parallel dialogue tables (Spa. *mesa de diálogo*) were held. Small teams consisting of a coordinator, a facilitator, visualizer and a technician facilitated them. After introducing the methodology and topics, all participants divided into working groups. Each working group presented to the Plenary subsequently with introductory keynote presentations. The latter provided food for thought for the four working groups. These groups were:

1. Water, soils and climate change.
2. Agro-biodiversity and Food Sovereignty and Food Security.
3. Land management, social organisation and local cultures.
4. Traditional and modern technologies and tools.

Each dialogue table went through a sequence of issues related to their specific topic. During the first day, the participants of each dialogue table began by taking a look into the history of each topic, then discussed cases, the present situation, and problems confronted by the local communities. Note the focus of most of the topics

was on the situation in Peru, as the majority of participants joined from different areas in Peru. On the second day of the working groups, the participants, according to their origin, drew up their vision of the future of the terraces in accordance with the specific topic assigned to the group, and collected actions which could lead to a sustainable and just use of the terraced landscapes.

The final conference day was divided into three parts:

The participants split again into different subgroups to discuss the results of the previous deliberations in order to contemplate future policies. They then formulated recommendations on policies for water justice, watershed management, science and technology, food sovereignty, world heritage management as well as constructed development models, which would favour peasant economies.

The different subgroups of the conference presented their conclusions in the Plenary.

A formal closing ceremony accompanied by music and dances, as well as with the intervention of Mauro Varotto, who announced the Third Conference to be held in October 2016 in Italy. Outstanding activists from Peru were also honoured.

THE THREATS TO TERRACED LANDSCAPES AND CULTURES

Based on the dialogue with mountain communities in SE-Asia and the PR China, and together with the testimonies of the guardians of the terraces in Peru, Ifugao (Figure 9) and Bali (Figure 10), we have listed and collected a series of threats to terraced landscapes and their cultures. These threats are also valid for traditional societies in other ecological regions, but they are specific to terraced livelihoods. This is because, in mountain areas, the impact may be more extreme, even producing catastrophes, which affect the survival of mountain peoples.

Climate change

The mountain peoples of the world have been able to domesticate the landscape, i.e. by managing soils, climate, water, plants and the human and natural communities, for their survival and wellbeing. Their predictions of the climate were based on long-time observation of nature in the reduced spaces of mountainous micro-climates (Tillmann, 1997). This was the key for being able to experiment, domesticate, produce and survive as human beings and as also as ethnic cultures. Climate change affects the capacity of the rural communities and their indigenous experts to predict the climate, and to cultivate successfully their terraced fields within a range of variability of the climate. Recently, the climate has turned unpredictable. The mountain dwellers feel that is more extreme. There are droughts which kill the crops, torrential rains which produce flooding and landslides, and frost and hail which destroy the young cultivars. The usual signs found in nature read by the farmers, and their knowledge about the agricultural calendar no longer coincides with



Figure 8: Local community member from Tauca explains the representation of the vision of the future of the terraced landscape in Cusco.

the reality of the fields. However, fortunately, the terraced landscapes provide special advantages regarding climate change when compared with agriculture in flat lands and slopes, both of which are affected seriously.

Extractive industries and mining companies

The impact of the extractive industries on the lives of terraced communities is both harmful and disastrous. Traditional agricultural systems are affected when the mines usurp water resources and contaminate the locally produced food crops by polluting the irrigation water. This in turn harms not only the health of local villagers, but also urban consumers. Often the mining companies take away the water because they have more economic power, and can influence authorities who propose exporting minerals as solution to national development needs. In the process, they neglect the needs of the small rural populations whose electoral votes do not count. Terraces in local mountain communities require intensive labour. However, when the mining companies enter an area they hire people, both men and women. Especially the younger villagers

abandon their fields in order to receive low wages. If the community opposes the concessions of the mining companies, the companies use many different mechanisms to convince the members of the community (*Spa. comuneros*). They bribe authorities; attack strong leaders, even to the point of killing them or their family members; establish contracts with the community and give them low paying jobs; and offer financial support to build the social infrastructure needed to modernize the mountain communities. Sometimes they even contract anthropologists to convince the villagers to accept this “invasion” phrased in the cultural terms of the villagers. In exchange, the terraced landscapes are debilitated, the healthy, traditional food production declines, and the market with its junk food invades the local food culture.

Social organisation and migration

As the urban official systems marginalize rural communities, and promote urban development and modernization, there are few incentives to stay in rural areas. This situation is even worse in mountain areas with terraces.



Figure 9: *Batad in Ifugao, Philippines. Proud villagers show their terraces.*

This is because terraced landscapes require adherence to a strict agricultural calendar and their maintenance is very labour intensive. Terraced agriculture traditionally requires a young labour force as well as the creative intelligence of the female seed keepers. Terraced agriculture cannot be mechanised easily. Community members are now migrating and young people search for jobs in the cities or in industrial agriculture and abandon the villages in remote mountain areas. Elderly people, and often more women and children, stay behind. They are less able to maintain the systems that produce the food from the fields. The social organisation weakens, and traditional wisdom fades as the generational links are broken.

Seed erosion

The agricultural traditions are affected by the invasion of modern seeds, technological packages of the green revolution and a weakened ecology. Local wisdom (Figure 11) fades away and the urban consumption transforms the local food cultures and weakens the nutrition of rural families. Traditional plant varieties and animal races linked with the ethnic cultures in the

mountain valleys are lost, and the agro-biodiversity is depleted. Family agriculture is no longer a priority in official policies, which now prioritises agro-exports.

Chemical agriculture and mechanisation

Chemical agriculture refers to the fertilisers and pesticides that were invented after World War II as an option for the arms industry to reutilise their chemical weapons for the production of food (Carson, 1962). The US government in particular established agricultural extension systems with former army members to promote chemical agriculture as part of a policy of development and growth (Tillmann, 1994). This affected the health of producers and of consumers because water, air, and food were polluted with harmful chemicals. As the chemicals destroyed the natural capacity of the soil to produce tasty and healthy food, the natural production systems of family farmers were weakened and even destroyed. In addition, agricultural development coming from the North imposed mechanisation to free the labour force for industrialisation. However, this resulted mainly in creating slums and poverty.



Figure 10: Sacred landscape in Bali.

In terraced landscapes, mechanisation destroys the terraced fields; their well-designed irrigation systems, the family mode of production, and affected the natural qualities of the terraced fields. For example, the wine terraces of *Kaiserstuhl* in Germany were restructured but they show less defence against frost attacks, because the terraces are wider than those built in the traditional way. Family labour was replaced by farm specialists, and farms become dependent upon external inputs, for example, petroleum. If the terraces are dismantled, soil erosion sets in, and this debilitates the mountains.

Money and market

The link to the market economy affects negatively traditional cultures and local production systems. Instead of producing food for self-consumption and local markets, the local communities are transformed into folkloric elements for tourism expecting monetary gifts, which, in turn, eliminates family food production. Global markets require uniform and constant production in huge quantities, which destroys agro-biodiversity. Money forces migration to the cities, and weakens intergenerational cooperation. Money corrupts the authorities; profit interests exploit and depress the natural resources,

which are traditionally in hands of the local communities. The rich gain from the poor who have no power.

Colonised minds and Domination from outside forces

Governments and development projects institute development models far away from the needs of local communities. Policies are designed in the cities and the world centres of development where the policy makers are disposed towards growth, industrialization, and modernization. Traditional ethnic societies are perceived as an obstacle to Western type urban, industrial and scientific development. The transnational industries fund and control the generation of knowledge, and influence the agendas of agricultural research and the interests of science. By doing so, they create options, values and visions which are alien to and against the local people. There is no intercultural dialogue in development, the ideas and proposals are unidirectional, and one-sided; local people are instrumentalised and subjected to the monologue of outsiders, and to the transfer of technologies and models. Dominant systems colonise the communities with their models (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1981). The formal education systems, and, finally, public opinion and the media reject traditional lifestyles and food cultures. Development imposes investment projects that do not benefit the mountain people, but instead increase the profits of industries. Rational and positivist science denies the dialogue between humans and nature which is found in traditional cultures, and denies the spirituality of the respect for Mother Earth and for all living beings like plants, animals, landscapes, mountains. This dominant system threatens the survival of life on planet Earth (Escobar, 1995; Gudynas, 2011).

The history of mountain valleys

The history of mountain regions is filled with the imposition of values and attitudes derived from an external rationale. Development and societal models are imposed, no dialogue occurs about the future visions of local people, and the opinions of the indigenous and rural communities are not included in the design of their own future by urban planners. External political and economic powers occupy their land, displace their habitats, fields and crops, and destroy their traditional ways of life, producing the poverty and destitution of the majority. Development projects come, and leave again. They propose, and often impose, their modernisation schemes. They divide local communities, create parallel organisations, and manipulate, facilitate or even instrumentalise their ideas, knowledge within their own external logic.

DISCUSSION - CONTINUING WITH ONGOING AND MUTUAL LEARNING

The terraces are diverse with collective uses worldwide. They represent an inexhaustible source for learning and inspiration.



Figure 11: Mountain farmers Flora and Martina meet in Cabanaconde, Arequipa, to exchange seeds and with coca leaves share their knowledge and perform a ritual.

The main achievement of the Second International Conference on Terraced Landscapes³ was that the women and male farmers of the Andean communities of Cusco, Puno, Arequipa, Tacna, Abancay, Ayacucho and Lima became the protagonists of the Conference. They organised the Terraces Exhibition, intervened in the Peasant Forum, and within the dialogue tables expressed their ideas and concerns on equal standing with the professional participants. In this way a dialogue was possible.

Their conclusions were growing since the first workshops in the two years before the Conference and their debates were critical to come up with motivating ideas to protect and to promote the terraced landscapes in Peru. They proposed to start at individual and family level to involve the younger generation to learn the techniques, rituals and values of terraced agriculture. At the community level the farmer participants will mobilise the communities and their local education systems to value their natural resources and their food culture.

At the national level the Peruvian farmer delegates proposed to organise themselves as a Federation of Terraced Communities whose objectives are to: stop damaging policies; defend their rights with support from outside organisations (NGOs, lawyers, activists); work with scientists for the rehabilitation of traditional crops (seeds) and the reconstruction and revival of abandoned terraces.

Internationally, the national delegates of terrace communities want to be linked to other movements and farmers worldwide. They further want, if possible, to participate in ITLA 2016 in Italy in order to have the chance to exchange their concerns, interests and experiences with fellow communities in other parts of the world.

Follow up

The Peruvian ITLA group agreed to undertake the following activities in advance of the 2016 conference:

- Strengthen the organization of the Peruvian ITLA which right now has only 20 members.
- Support the terraced communities of Peru to organise a Terraces Defence Committee or a Federation of Communities to voice their concerns and defend their land and water rights against external aggressions.
- Continue collating the bibliography of publications on terraced landscapes in Peru.
- Take note of the efforts of the official terraces program of Agro rural and the inventories of terraced areas in Peru.
- Collect information about ongoing activities, for example, the school of terrace constructors. This school has both a manual and instruction video produced by the Cusichaca Trust and supported by IDB (Interamerican Development Bank)

- Support young researchers and student groups to produce case studies about terraces, and to do volunteer work in communities interested in rehabilitating and promoting their historic terraces
- Support the organisation of ITLA 2016 in Italy, and stay linked to the international cooperation team and the Italian division of ITLA.

Ongoing learning

The next, Third International Conference on Terraced Landscapes in Italy will provide a powerful impetus for international efforts to protect and value terraced landscapes, a special inside look not only in Italy—a country that is widely characterized by terraced landscapes, dating back over hundreds and of years—but in the surrounding countries of the Mediterranean and of central Europe. It offers participants from other continents a profound insight into the remarkable heritage of terraced landscapes in Italy and in Europe. The Italian Branch of the International Terraced Landscape Alliance was legally founded in November 2011 in Arnasco (Savona) following the First International Conference on Terraced Landscapes held in Yunnan Province of the People's Republic of China. Our five founder bodies are the Cooperativa Olivicola di Arnasco (SV), Arnasco Municipality, Consorzio della Quarantina (GE), Veneto Region and University of Padua. The Association has a continuously growing number of associate members who represent—through their personal status as citizens, farmers, artisans, public and private institutions, associations and researchers—the multidisciplinary richness linked to terraced landscapes.

The Italian Branch of the Alliance believes in the active implementation of the Honghe Declaration and in the sharing of its commitment—to keep alive the interest in terraced landscapes—through offering to become a point of national reference for gathering the vast existing, diverse traditional knowledges; the written and audiovisual documentation. Through promoting the inventory of terraced landscapes at national levels; organizing workshops with farmers, activists, researchers, supporting and disseminating good practice case studies about terraced landscapes and communities. The central topic for the next conference on Terraced Landscapes and Cultures is *Choosing the future* about the “Future of Right Livelihood of terraced landscapes worldwide, observing, analysing and sharing experiences on Agriculture, Food and Peasant livelihoods”. Participants will study the perspectives of ecology, landscape and food qualities, as well as the social and economic models for a sustainable future of the terraces and its people. The aim of the conference is to map the values of terraced landscapes, highlighting the combination of technological and cultural traditions with scientific, economic and social innovations towards local and global policies for

3 The results of the Second International Conference on Terraced Landscapes have been published by the organising team with funding support from JICA (Japanese International Cooperation Agency) (Tillmann, 2015).

the recuperation, protection, preservation and promotion of terraces in the mountains of the world.

CONCLUSION

The participants, activists, ITLA members and others will get acquainted with the situation of terraced landscapes in Italy and Europe. This will enable the work methodology, which combines interactive conference sessions, exchange of experiences in a visual form, dare-to-share fair and dialogue with the specialists, debates in small groups, workshops and village conferences. Field work and dialogue will be held with local communities in different regions of Italy. Ten regions and thematic workshops are foreseen:

- Triestean Coast—Ecology and Biodiversity;
- Topolò-Dordolla—Artistic and cultural communication;
- Canale di Brenta—Agronomic and social innovations;
- Valpolicella & Valdobbiadene—Quality of Food, Quality of life;

- Trentino—Rules & Policies;
- Ossola—Construction and Maintenance Techniques of Dry Stone Walls;
- Alto Canavese-Valle D'Aosta—Landscape and Tourism;
- Chiavari-Lavanga-Vernazza in Liguria—Environmental and hydrogeological risks;
- Ischia & Amalfitana Coast—Heritage and historical rural landscapes;
- Island of Pantelleria—Water harvest, resilience and arid agriculture.

These sites will illustrate a diversity of problems, potential, and uses of terraces. During the conference, deliberation, an exchange of experiences, and the collection of proposals for action at local, national, regional and global levels which favour the future wellbeing of terraced landscapes, societies and cultures will take place.

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POVZETEK

V prispevku je predstavljen proces, kako je nastala ITLA – Mednarodna zveza terasiranih pokrajin, kakšni so njeni cilji, kdo so njeni člani in kakšne so prednosti terasiranih pokrajin v gorskih regijah/na obalnih območjih po svetu. Terasirane pokrajine so ne le najpomembnejša območja, kjer so se rastline prilagodile, ponekod ekstremnemu, podnebjju, ampak so tudi območja kmetovanja v malem obsegu, ki ga kmetijski poslovni krogi zanemarjajo in ki je potisnjeno na obrobje vladnih politik. Obstoj terasiranih pokrajin ogrožajo številne nevarnosti, zaradi katerih prihaja do njihovega opuščanja: podnebne spremembe, industrijsko kmetijstvo in njegove škodljive tehnologije, migracije mladih ljudi v mesta zaradi večjega trga dela, onesnaževanje rudarskih in drugih ekstraktivnih industrij. ITLA si prizadeva s posebno metodologijo organizacije mednarodnih konferenc doseči priznanje bogatega lokalnega znanja o terasirani pokrajini in njeni biotski raznovrstnosti, o izvirnem in iznajdljivem načinu rabe pobočij ter o izraziti skrbi kmetovalcev in graditeljev teras za ohranitev terasirane pokrajine. Cilj skupnega delovanja tako kmetovalcev kot znanstvenikov in vseh drugih je vzpostavitev skladnega svetovnega akcijskega načrta, ki vključuje številne elemente, za promoviranje terasirane pokrajine in njenih kmetijskih kultur, ki pomembno prispevajo k ublažitvi posledic podnebnih katastrof, ter obnova prehranske suverenosti za tisoče pridelovalcev in porabnikov hranilne in kulturno sprejemljive hrane v zadostni količini in primerne kakovosti. Delovanje članov mednarodne zveze naj bi prineslo spremembo sodobnih predstav o terasirani pokrajini, ki so pripeljale do njenega opuščanja, obnovo terasnih tehnologij in kultur na terasah ter opustitev pojmov, ki temeljijo na razvojnih modelih neoliberalizma (gospodarske rasti in privatizacije). Vse to je mogoče doseči s spodbujanjem dialoga z lokalnimi kmetovalci, s pomočjo katerega se lahko spremeni dojemanje terasiranih pokrajin in prizna pomen lokalnega znanja, ki temelji na stoletjih vzajemnega delovanja z naravo.

Ključne besede: terasirane pokrajine, lokalni in avtohtoni sistemi znanja, gorsko/priobalno kmetijstvo, mednarodna omrežja, svetovna dediščina (oprijemljiva - neoprijemljiva)

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