

## **Eighth EUCALAND Workshop, Parada de Sil, Spain, October 18–21, 2015**

The Institute for Research on European Agricultural Landscapes e.V. (EUCALAND) is an expert network that deals with the agricultural landscapes of Europe to promote their consideration and use among the people that live there and preserve their cultural heritage in cooperation with international institutions such as UNESCO, CoE, and ECOVAST. The idea of the need for such a network arose during a working meeting at the UNESCO World Heritage Center in 2005. Currently, the network has more than thirty members from sixteen European countries. Geographers, landscape architects, pedologists, biologists, and experts from similar fields form the network, and together they shaped the idea for the program “**E**uropean **C**ulture expressed in **A**gricultural **L**andscapes” (or EUCALAND).

The first steps were taken parallel to the international EUCALAND project from 2007 to 2009, and the network borrowed (or rather took) the project’s name. One of its results was a list of agricultural landscapes, which is a basis for further research, in which an important role is played by efforts to use a uniform methodology and to conduct empirical research and pilot studies. The emphasis is on more detailed research on types of cultural landscapes already classified, defining new European agricultural landscape types, improving multilingual terminology, gathering information about agricultural landscape elements and then describing them, establishing a database and making it available online, and, as the final goal, preparing an atlas of European agricultural landscapes.

The eighth workshop took place in Galicia, Spain near Parada de Sil, a small settlement in the province of Ourense. We stayed in a secluded hostel that was once a small abandoned hydroelectric plant in the Mao Valley, just before the Mao River flows into the Sil River, a left tributary of Galicia’s main river, the Miño (Portuguese *Minho*). Ten participants from nine countries (two observers were from Mexico) shared a dorm room, dining area, and conference hall, and therefore it was not difficult for us to bond and to establish a suitable and stimulating working environment.

The beginning of the workshop was dedicated to reports on systematic examination of agricultural landscape types addressed so far. The first agricultural landscape discussed was wooded pastures, which include pastures in traditional orchards, plantations of fruit trees, olives, and cork oak, and agricultural land being overgrown by bushes or trees. This research is in its final stages, and a joint research article was already published in 2016. Research on water meadows and enclosed fields is still ongoing.

The majority of the workshop focused on a new topic: research on European terraced landscapes. Each participant prepared a detailed report based on his or her own country, which, together with the national detailed survey, constitutes a basis for further work. Reports from Spain, Italy, Germany, Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia, and Slovenia were presented, as well as terraced landscapes in the southern Netherlands and England that were previously not known in such detail—especially not those from the Netherlands, a country perceived as completely flat by most people.

Hay-making structures were chosen among the many topics proposed for further research on agricultural landscapes and their characteristic landscape elements. Hay-making structures are the main topic of the next workshop, which is planned for the spring of 2017 and will probably be held in Slovakia.

We had a one-day field trip to a traditional wine region covered with terraces along the central part of the Miño River and its tributaries, the Sil and Cabe, in northern Ourense and in the province of Lugo in the south (Figure 1-2.).



Figure 1. Sunny terraced vineyards in the Ribeira Sacra area, on a slope above the Sil River (Photo: Drago Kladnik, 19th of October, 2015)

1. ábra Napos teraszolt szőlők a Ribeira Sacra területén a Sil folyó fölötti meredek lejtőkön (Fotó: Drago Kladnik, 2015. október 19.)



Figure 2. Parada da Sil workshop participants on the field trip (Photo: Ribeira Sacra Consortium, 19th of October, 2015)

2. ábra A Parada da Sil workshop terepi programjának résztvevői (Fotó: Ribeira Sacra Konzorcium, 2015. október 19.)

Red and white wine are produced here, marketed under the designation of origin *Ribeira Sacra* ‘sacred shore’. Many hiking trails weave their way through this area. Single-row terraced vineyards dominate on the very steep terraced slopes. The terraces, known as *bancadas* in Spanish, were made while clearing stones that were then used to build stone walls. The terraces are narrow and steep, and therefore all of the work is performed by hand; access is difficult and in places only possible by river.

The majority of vineyards are owned by local winemakers’ families, and when Spain joined the European Union their situation improved considerably. Previously, viticulture had been regressing and the maintenance of vineyards was jeopardized due to unfavorable demographic changes. With the help of private initiatives and EU funding, modern wineries with beautifully furnished wine-tasting rooms were built. The wineries that were built in attractive locations are flourishing. The Ribeira Sacra Wine Center (*Centro do Viño Ribeira Sacra*), which presents the local viticulture in an attractive manner in the heart of the Monforte de Lemos region, is worth visiting.

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