

論文の内容の要旨

論文題目 : Analysis of policy-making process in grassland management in China
(中国草地管理の政策決定過程に関する研究)

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Recent years have seen a rise in public concern of grassland degradation, which was partly triggered by the 1990s sandstorms that blanketed the sky of Beijing. In response to this environmental problem, the central government issued the Grazing Ban policy in the early 2000s. Hardly being something new, this grassland policy is in fact a continuation of past and on-going projects that are aimed at transforming local communities and local grazing system. Those projects include the collectivization in the 1950s, privatization in the 1980s and sedentarization in 2000s. All these projects are characterized by a tendency to blame local communities for environmental degradation and an emphasis on the necessity to replace local traditional knowledge and practices with modern science and technologies. Against these official discourses and government intervention, many scholars have raised their criticisms. Some argue that previous grassland policies have interrupted local practices and affected local environment negatively; others point out the failure of governments to incorporate local knowledge into the design of grassland management. Despite these criticisms, the central government continues to implement its current grassland policies, showing no intention to change.

Previous studies on grasslands management tend to focus solely on the evaluation of grassland policies, paying little attention to the underlying political structures that give rise to and sustain these policies. If the grassland policies are problematic, the political institutions and scientist networks that have influenced the formation of these policies cannot be exempted from scrutiny. This study reveals the political forces that have shaped and are continually shaping grassland management in China. It is found that the institutional arrangement of grassland management and power dynamics inside scientist communities have sustained the biased policies and limited a comprehensive examination of grassland problems. Without changing these underlying structures, a fundamental policy reform is unlikely to occur.

In Chapter 1, a brief history of grassland management in China is reviewed, along with academic criticism of the grassland policies. In the early 2000s, the central government

issued a series of grazing bans to control the problem of overgrazing. This Grazing Ban policy is in fact a continuation of past grassland policies that are based on a mixture of scientific theories and models, including the Hardin's "tragedy of the commons", the Himalayan degradation studies and the ecologists' overgrazing model. Though these theories and models have been proved to be questionable, the central government continues to promote these scientific ideas as effective solutions for pastoral development and grassland conservation.

The institutional arrangement that has sustained the biased grassland policies is analyzed in Chapter 2. It brings to light the historical power struggle between two major government agencies—the State Ethnic Affairs Commission (SEAC) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MA). Both agencies were held responsible for the governance of nomadic/pastoralist communities in the 1950s. The ideological clash between the culture-oriented SEAC and the economic-oriented MA manifested itself in the political debates of how to understand pastoralism and the cultural differences between agricultural and pastoral societies. The declining status of the SEAC and the rise to power of the MA in the administration of pastoral development in the 1980s have eventually led the central government to abandon the claims of the cultural uniqueness of pastoralism. Since then, the traditions and practices of pastoral societies have been seen as the barriers to industrialization and modernization. The modern transformation of local communities has continued for more than three decades under the leadership of the MA.

Chapter 3 focuses on different scientist groups participating in the discussion of grassland degradation. Scholars debate with each other about the causes of grassland degradation and receive varying degrees of government support. Social network analysis is used to reveal the structural pattern of the scientist community that exerts a significant influence on the formation of environmental policies. It is discovered that the dominance of ecologists in the scientist network led to the prevalence of the overgrazing-causes-degradation narrative. Though anthropologists later questioned the narrative, their capacity to challenge the authority of ecologists was circumscribed by their small group size, weak intra-group connection, and limited political affiliation. This power dynamics have resulted in the persistence of the biased policies that continue to blame local communities and their traditional practices for overgrazing and other environmental problems. This Chinese network is then compared with its counterpart in the United States in Chapter 4. Interdisciplinary interactions are examined in the two countries. It is argued that the absence of a bridge group on the Chinese side may explain a limited knowledge exchange

among its scientist groups and, therefore, the lack of a comprehensive understanding of grassland problems.

After explaining the political forces behind the making of grassland policies, Chapter 5 goes on to evaluate the environmental impacts of the Grazing Ban policy. A case study of two villages—a farming village and a semi-grazing village—was conducted in Inner Mongolia. The two villages have adopted different adaptive strategies to cope with climate change and the grazing ban. The impacts of climate change, government intervention and human adaptation on local landscape over the past fifteen years are visualized and quantified by utilizing remote sensing analysis. The local adaptive strategies have led to an increase in irrigated farmlands and a fodder trade between the two villages. Although proved effective at the current stage, these strategies may threaten regional sustainability in long terms because of their tendency to overuse underground water. These findings raise questions about the Grazing Ban policy, which has limited the economic choices of the farming village and deepened the problem of fodder shortage in the semi-grazing village.

This study reveals that without transforming institutional arrangement and the associated scientist networks, changing policies at the surficial level is unlikely to bring any positive change. Understanding these structural factors can be the first step towards a policy reform. A truly inclusive grassland management should be able to allow not only interdisciplinary studies of grassland problems, but also the integration of local communities in the process of political decision-making.