THE BANQUET OF (CULTURAL) COMMONS

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ABSTRACT
“...the absence of the motive of gain; the absence of the principle of laboring for remuneration; the absence of the principle of least effort. But how, then, is order in production and distribution ensured?” K. Polanyi (1944) tried to answer this question in The Great Transformation.

Cultural Commons are cultural resources shared by a community that, like other situations of collective action, also reproduce social dilemmas. In these cases, as indicated by Olson, rational, self-interested individuals could not act to achieve their common or group interests. In that sense, the tragedy of Cultural Commons would mean its disappearance due to free riding behavior. However, many cultural commons are maintained over time because reciprocity, reputation, and trust can overcome self-interested behavior. The inhabitants of Villastrada (Italy) have achieved it for decades. Every summer, they work voluntarily to organize the festivities of this small village.

Keywords
cultural commons, social dilemmas, collective action, cooperation, social interaction

Bio
Raúl de Arriba is PhD in Economics and associate professor in Economic Policy at the University of Valencia (Spain) since 2000. He has written about international economic policy, pluralism and creativity in teaching economics and art and economics. He has been visiting researcher in École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (France) and Research Center in Political Science and International Relations (Portugal), among others.

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