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Community of Images
Zugehörigkeiten schaffen / Costruire appartenenze

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AUTONOME PROVINZ BOZEN SÜDTIROL · PROVINCIA AUTONOMA DI BOLZANO ALTO ADIGE · unibz

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Abstracts

Francesco Frizzera

Between valley, region, state and empire: spatial concepts and Trentine refugees in World War One

During World War One about 105,000 civilians from Trentino were displaced from their homes. The Habsburg authorities sent by far the greatest part of them to the hinterland of the empire; in addition, some 29,000 civilians were relocated to the interior regions of the Kingdom of Italy by the Italian army, which occupied the south of the region in 1915. The forced mobility imposed by the war and the resulting contact with people in other areas gave the war experience of Trentine refugees a particular character. This experience indirectly affected the relationship between the refugees and their geographic area of provenance. By analyzing approximately 30 diaries and memoirs, this article examines how spatial frameworks of reference changed for Trentine refugees during the war. In 1914, four different spatial spheres of reference could be identified in the diaries; these are often overlapping and do not hinder the presence of other frameworks of identification. By 1918, references to the state have disappeared from the diaries, the geographical area of Tyrol has vanished from written testimonies, and the protagonists' "imagined community" came to be limited to Trentino alone.

Markus Wurzer

Group belonging as a photographic event: group photos from the Italian-Abyssinian War 1935–1941

The article is concerned with multiple senses of belonging among colonial soldiers from the province of Alto Adige / South Tyrol during the Italian-Abyssinian War of 1935–1941. The author takes as a starting point Rogers Brubaker's criticism of 'groupism' and conceptualizes belonging as situational and as an event. Photographic group portraits constitute such moments: they imagine and construct a highly coherent "us". Close analysis of the photos reveals that: (1) a soldier can feel a sense of belonging to different groups; (2) the same group can be framed in different national and ethnic ways – according to the agenda of the actors in each picture. Furthermore, the analysis shows the performative character of belonging by investigating which codes soldiers activated when staging and using pictures, in order to frame groups in national, ethnic and "racial" terms.

Susanne Korbel

The Austrian refugee groups in Central Park. Identifications with and (spatial) perceptions of original Viennese 'cosy sociability' (Ur-Wiener Gemütlichkeit) in New York during the 1930s and 1940s

As a consequence of the emigration caused by Nazi persecution, in the 1930s and 1940s a number of cafés were established in New York's Central Park, which in different ways referred back to the Vienna of the preceding decades. This contribution discuss two forms of expression for the 'friendly' or 'cosy' sociability (Ur-Wiener Gemütlichkeit) linked with this phenomenon: on the one hand, the Viennese coffeehouses as spaces for the staging of so-called Ur-Wiener Gemütlichkeit, and on the other hand, the shows and performances put on in these cafés. These shows drew on and dealt with images or imaginings of 'Old Vienna', including figures of discourse (such as the suburb of Grinzing or favoured locations for summer holidays outside Vienna) and musical shows or plays that had achieved cult status (e.g. Im weißen Rößl, Die Klabriaspartie). The author considers how the refugee community was constructed in this way and looks at which images und identifications were selected for this purpose. At the same time, the article indicates which functions the networks among the refugee community could fulfil in mediating (Jewish and non-Jewish) conceptions and perceptions of Ur-Wiener Gemütlichkeit.

John Starosta Galante

Buenos Aires and the making of italo-argentinidad, 1915–1919

This article explores the ways that different groups with Italian origins residing in Buenos Aires during the late 1910s expressed and deployed notions of solidarity built around their dual identifications with Argentina and Italy. It reviews the experiences of immigrants from Italy and children of Italian immigrants through their participation in a mobilization drive in favor of Italy's involvement in World War I, a corresponding movement against the Italian war effort, an increase in Italian contributions to Argentine politics via the Radical Party, and a transformation of working-class activism in Argentina with the rise of Syndicalism. The article argues that each of these were representations of italo-argentinidad, a hyphenated or hybrid notion of belonging that connected residents of Buenos Aires to countries of residence and origin, but also set them apart from formulations of both Argentine and Italian national identifications.

Sabine von Löwis

Confessional spaces in West Ukraine: convergences, demarcations and overlaps

The article is concerned with continuities and changes in identities in communities that have repeatedly experienced – and still experience now - restructurings and new orderings. The focus lies on two village communities in what is now West Ukraine, a region which in the past was exposed to various proposals for 'community building' in terms of integration into empires and nation-states; the region has been confronted with such questions of identification in renewed fashion since Ukrainian independence in 1991 and the conflict in East Ukraine from 2014 onwards. The case study illustrates the different communities of images, which overlap, blend and compete with each other. Every structural caesura, every collapse or foundation of a state, and the current crisis in East Ukraine bring with them new assignations of meaning, representations of space, and restructurings of mental maps – the maps inside people's heads, which develop through their actions in social spaces and provide a structure for them.

Michael M. Hammer

The 'Women's House' in Bozen / Bolzano. A case study of institutions of prostitution in the late Middle Ages

In this article, the 'Women's House' (Frauenhaus) in Bozen / Bolzano serves as a case study for houses of prostitution in German-speaking central Europe towards the end of the Middle Ages. The municipal authorities in Bozen / Bolzano set up a women's house in the fifteenth century and placed its personnel under the authority of the mayor's office. Alongside economic considerations, the aim of this regulatory measure was to secure peaceful order in the town. The author uses town council protocols, accounting books and court records to reconstruct the history of the women's house in Bozen / Bolzano from its foundation until its closure in the sixteenth century, thereby adding another piece to the wider historical mosaic of houses of prostitution in German-speaking central Europe. In doing so, the author combines approaches from institutional history with those of 'the history of the everyday' (Alltagsgeschichte), in order to focus on the impact of political and social developments on the lives of the women involved, as well as changing ethical and moral perceptions.

Liliana De Venuto

Franz Gottfried Troilo: From the Lagarina valley to the court of Emperor Rudolf II
In this article, the author aims to provide a contribution from the Italian side
to the historical research carried out in Germany and several Slavic countries
on various members of the Troilo family. From their role in the district court
(Pretura) in Rovereto, they travelled to towns in Germany to engage in com-
merce and even came as far as Cracow. One member of the family, Giovanni
Nicolò, settled in Breslau / Wrocław in Silesia, where – through his marriage
to a young noblewoman from a family of local landholders – he founded the
Silesian branch of the family. Giovanni Nicolò Troilo soon asserted his posi-
tion within the local elite, thanks to the family's solid economic resources, the
recognition secured by family members at the Habsburg court and the Roman
Curia, as well as the relationships they built up in the political and cultural
spheres. The family's successive integration into local society in Breslau /
Wrocław and then Prague was accompanied by ennoblement, which raised the
house of Troilo into the ranks of the Bohemian nobility. Aside from the histo-
riographical literature, the research for this article is based on documents held
in the notarial archives in the State Archive in Trento, letters in the Lodron
archive of the Rovereto civic library, and findings in the Mercantile Archive
of Bolzano / Bozen.