

Abstracts

Rolf Graber

“Genuine symbols of mountain wild men or actual Swiss sans-culottes”: protest movements in the Napoleonic period as pathways to a different modernity

Opposition to the French Revolution and to Napoleonic rule has come under increasing scrutiny, as recent historical scholarship has shown how problematic it is to employ the term ‘counter-revolution.’ Supposedly counter-revolutionary revolts can in fact be interpreted as opposition to a particular modernization path, by those losing out from it. This kind of scenario applies especially to opposition on the part of the lower classes who, while welcoming the Revolution itself, nevertheless rejected the form of modernization prescribed by the revolutionary elites. In taking popular unrest in the Zurich countryside as an example of such ambivalence, the question arises as to why contemporaries compared these revolts to those of the Parisian sans-culottes of Year II. By reconstructing the mental world of the historical actors and the ‘social logic’ of the revolts, it is demonstrated that the lower classes constructed a revolution of their own, with the revolts displaying both an anti-feudal and an anti-capitalist character. Under the influence of the French Revolution, traditional conceptions of the ‘moral economy of the poor’ had evolved into general demands for a more humane existence. In particular, opposition was expressed against the place of labour in capitalist processes of production. The revolts by the lower classes should therefore be seen not only as a catalyst for the cycle of bourgeois revolution, but also as independent movements with autonomous social revolutionary ambitions.

Martin P. Schennach

“Fuit igitur rusticorum bellum illegitimum et illicitum”. On the legitimisation of uprisings around 1800

Taking the extensively discussed case of ‘Tyrol 1909’ as an example, the author examines the forms of legitimization and propaganda strategies evident in uprisings against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France and its allies in the period around 1800. These prove to be remarkably homogeneous and are consistently based around two main issues: firstly, a ‘secular’ legitimizing route was directed towards the preservation of old (partly corporative) rights and freedoms, which had been disregarded or removed by the new ruler; as a result, uprisings were often presented as a struggle in the name of a previously, (and presumably) legitimately ruling dynasty. A second, ‘religious’ strategy sought to legitimize the uprisings as necessary for the maintenance of a religion whose very existence was threatened.

Reinhard Stauber

“Taught by Tyrol?” Models and consequences of administrative integration in the Alpine region during the Napoleon period

Whether or not he had been ‘taught a lesson by Tyrol’ – this was a rhetorical question which the Bavarian Crown Prince Ludwig already directed at the all-powerful chief minister Montgelas in the first phase of the Tyrolean uprising in May 1809. The article takes up this question by looking first of all at the most important administrative measures by the new Bavarian ruler in the years 1806–1808, set within the context of a ‘lengthy pre-history’ of Tyrolean resistance against centralising projects since the epoch of Joseph II. It is further shown that, in 1810, Montgelas was prepared to make a number of symbolic concessions to the Tyroleans, but made no adjustments to the most substantial of the reforms made before 1808 (in the fields of ecclesiastical and religious policy, as well as conscription). Using also the examples of the department of ‘Alto Adige’ (established in 1810 in the Kingdom of Italy) and the ‘artificial state’ of the Illyrian provinces, the article brings out the main pattern – and variations thereon – of this centralising course of administrative integration, which was typical of Napoleonic-style rule in Europe (and was seamlessly continued by the Metternich regime after 1814).

Mauro Nequirito

The people of Trentino and the Tyrolean uprising of 1809: from the deprecatory evaluations of the age of national sentiment to contemporary reconsiderations in an autonomist key

The insurgency of 1809 against the Kingdom of Bavaria, then allied with Napoleon, has been an event full of meaning for the identity of the Tyrolean population. As such, it has also attracted in various ways the attention of historians from the Italian-speaking part of the region (an area which only officially became known as ‘Trentino’ after its acquisition by Italy in 1918). Between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Trentine intellectual elites, involved as they were in demarcating everything that distinguished their territory from ‘German’ Tyrol, minimized or denied the adherence of local Italians to the revolt led by Andreas Hofer. Only after the Second World War did a more objective re-examination of that event slowly begin to make headway, but the literature on the role of Italian Tyroleans in the 1809 revolt remained caught between new interpretations and the weight of previous local historiography. In recent decades, often within the ambit of contemporary claims to regional autonomy, the events of 1809 have been appropriated above all by a number of impassioned local and amateur historians, who have wished to demonstrate how the common participation in the revolt testified to a traditional coincidence of interests and ideals between the German and Italian populations of old Tyrol – ties which then entered into crisis amid the climate of nationalist conflict and opposition in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Hans Heiss

The politics of history: commemorative celebrations of the 1809 Tyrolean uprising 1909–2009

The year 1809 is a key year for the history of Tyrol and its sense of historical identity. The uprising that year of broad sections of the population under the leadership of Andreas Hofer has shaped the cultural memory of the alpine region up to the present day. The large-scale commemorative celebrations held in 1909, 1934, 1959, and 1984 decisively influenced views and perceptions of the events of 1809, creating a link between historical memory and the present. Contemporary concerns with the particular constitutional position of Tyrol (1909), the division of the land after 1918 and the Austro-Fascist dictatorship (1934), the South Tyrolean question (1959), and the loss of the 'spiritual unity' of the land (1984) ensured an ongoing relevance for the 'master narrative' of 1809 and the myth of Andreas Hofer. The article describes the changing functions of historical memory and the respective identity discourses manifested in these celebrations, before concluding with some considerations regarding the forthcoming bi-centenary in 2009.

Maximiliane Rieder

On transformations of territoriality: transnationalisation processes in the Alpine economic area since the establishment of the EEC

The EEC intensified cross-border interconnections in western Europe. In South Tyrol, for example, the creation of new industrial firms showed a strong foreign involvement, especially from (south) Germany. An essential precondition of encouraging the setting up of enterprises in this frontier region of the Italian state was the opening up of the alpine macro-region in terms of infrastructure. During the favourable economic conjuncture in the German Federal Republic, the growing demand for labour led a number of firms to set up branches abroad. Of the six original members of the EEC, Italy displayed a surplus of labour and the lowest wage levels; this provided a powerful incentive for the dispersion of wage and labour intensive production, along with the availability of German and Italian-speaking workers and comparatively low-cost energy resources. Relocation to this Alpine province was also attractive because of the lesser risks involved, thanks to a number of legislative initiatives favouring foreign investment. Once the Alpine transit corridor had been expanded, the region's situation astride one of the most important commercial routes in Europe created a platform for links to southern Europe as well. However, the global recession at the start of the 1970s led to a decline in the setting up of foreign firms when combined with an increase in wage costs and real estate prices in South Tyrol, a shortage of qualified labour, the removal of tax concessions, and a strike-induced fall in production levels. Only with the creation of the European Union's internal market after 1992 has German investment risen again, especially in the commercial centre of Bozen/Bolzano.