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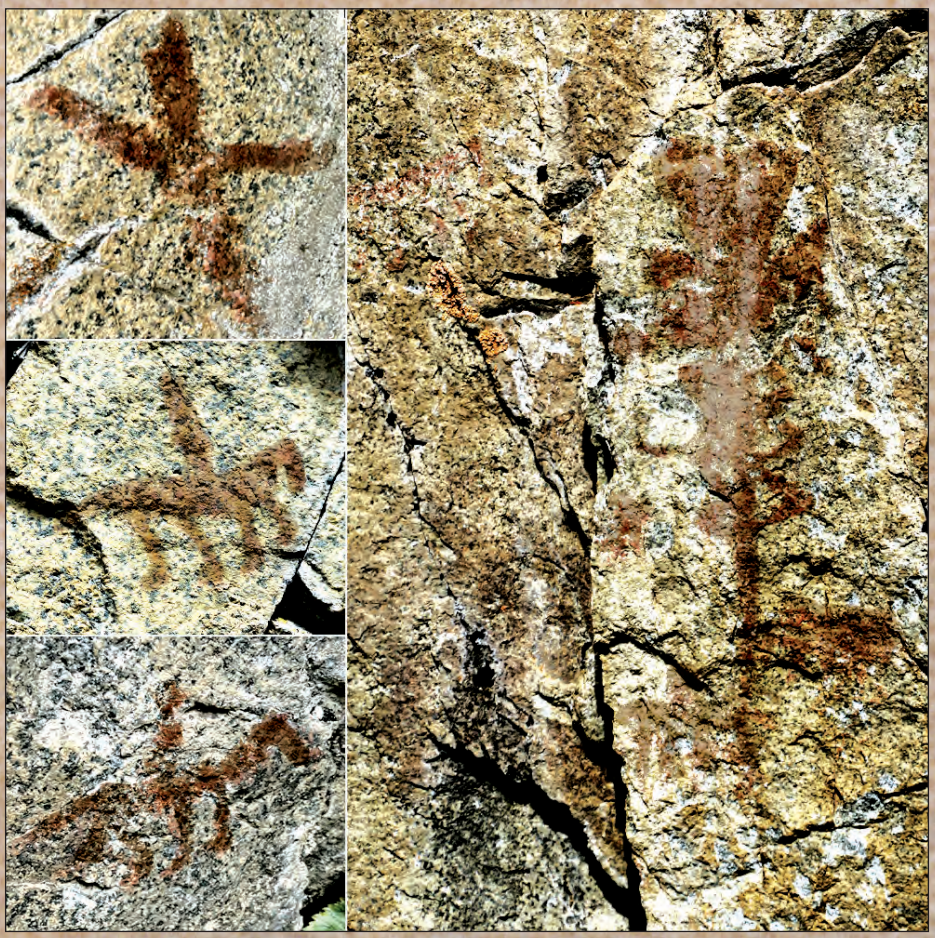

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Conference Report on *Facing Foreigners in Urban Early Modern Europe: Legislation, Deliberation, Practice,* 27–29 November 2024, Maribor, Slovenia

The international conference organized by the University of Maribor, Faculty of Arts, Department of History and the Institute IRRIS for Research, Development and Strategies of Society, Culture and Environment was part of COST Action CA22149 *Research Network for Interdisciplinary Studies of Transhistorical Deliberative Democracy* (CHANGECODE) supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) and the research project J6-4603 *Facing Foreigners Between the Medieval and Early Modern Period in the North Adriatic Towns*, co-funded by the Slovene Research and Innovation Agency (ARIS). The meeting addressed the historical aspects of foreigners and foreignness in urban communities in early modern Europe.

Immigration and population mobility due to natural disasters, climate change, economic growth or decline, wars, epidemics and religious upheaval have presented a relevant topic in discussions throughout the centuries. Hence, the speakers sought to illustrate the historical aspects of addressing the 1) changes in the definition of foreignness and the pertinent customs and laws from the medieval to the early modern period; 2) economic, cultural, demographic and political importance and role of foreigners, why they immigrated and types of their mobility; 3) aspects of immigration policies and attitudes towards foreigners, integration and assimilation policies towards newcomers; 4) changing identities and cultural transfers; 5) categories of foreigners, their social status and relations with natives depending on the sociopolitical situation; 6) attitudes towards the policies of inclusion and exclusion between newcomers and natives; 7) relations between the new and the old populace; 8) changes in urban structure and landscape due to foreigners, such as ghettos or monasteries; 9) integration policies: from foreigners to neighbours, neighbourhoods; 8) values of hospitality; 10) foreigners' support networks, such as religious orders, confraternities, hospitals or guilds; 11) health aspects: quarantines and barbwire border-fences during epidemics; 12) the marginal as foreigners: crime and custom: exiles, bandits, vagrants, smugglers and the right for asylum. The conference topics were closely observed and adhered to by the Cost Action CHANGECODE members whose task was to look for and interrogate transhistorical aspects in deliberation regarding foreigners at local and national levels in contemporary sociopolitical contexts.

The first day of the conference was organised into five panels covering some of the above topics. First, there was a need to define a foreigner as such. In medieval and early modern cities and towns, everyone who was not a member of the local urban community, i.e. not a citizen (*cives*, *Bürger*), was regarded as a foreigner, even inhabitants without citizenship (*habitatores*).

The first panel Categorisation I, chaired by Angelika Ergaver (Institute IRRIS, Slovenia), offered some insight into medieval and early modern concepts of foreigners and the conditions on becoming a citizen. The paper by Darja Mihelič (Institute IRRIS; Milko Kos Historical Institute, ZRC SAZU, Slovenia) *Foreigners in the Statutes of Trieste, Muggia, Koper, Izola and Piran (Fourteenth to Eighteenth Century)*

exposed different terms that were used to address non-citizens in the statutes (*forensis, extraneus, alibi habitans, advena*) as well as similar expressions that categorised settlers and citizens (*vicini, cives*) or people with permanent residence (*vicinitas et habitatio perpetua*) who were yet to become full citizens by obeying the city law and taking an oath that granted them permanent citizenship. Marriages could also contribute or speed up the process of gaining citizenship, which may have worked for men integrating into communities, but perhaps not so much for women.

According to the paper *Women, Foreigners in Their Urban Communities?* by Veronika Kos (Institute IRRIS) studies that have focused on the urban experiences of women in pre-modern cities have also drawn attention to the relative foreignness of women compared to male citizens. While normative sources generally do not treat women in pre-modern European cities as foreigners, their lives may have been somewhat similar to those of foreigners and other (established) city dwellers who were associated with a particular kind of foreignness because of the relative restrictions or exclusions imposed by law, religion, science, etc. Her paper dealt with the status of urban women during the transition from the Late Middle Ages to the early modern period, with a special emphasis on the region between the Upper Adriatic and the Eastern Alps and an analysis of the urban statutes of coastal communes (Izola, Koper, and Piran) and of the mainland Ptuj.

The paper by Izidor Janžekovič (Central European University, Austria), *Ethnic 'Stereotypes' in Early Modern Europe: Russian and Ottoman National Costumes*, addressed the modern age strategies of Central European monarchies, using charts with images, such as the Styrian *Völkertafel* or Table of Nations, depicting stereotypical 'traditional' garments and characteristics of foreigners. Janžekovič argued that the Eastern and Southeastern European peoples were lumped together with the supranational or imperial identities, that is, the Russian and Ottoman Empires. In the early modern period, as in later eras, ethnic identities were formed along state and imperial lines.

Next, Stephan Sander-Faes (University of Bergen, Norway) in his paper *How to Make a "Foreigner". The Creation of "Foreign-ness" in the Habsburg Empire, 1750–1820* spoke about the methods that the Empire covertly used to instil the sense of 'foreign-ness' among the rural population in the Age of Enlightenment. Using the example of wanted notes for criminals, the extensive characterization of foreignness was also used in the state-building process, the distinction among inhabitants of different regions in the Empire.

The second panel, Categorisation II, was chaired by Ona Vila i Palacín (University of Barcelona, Spain) and it offered some further insight into specific practices on foreigners. The late medieval and early modern periods were marked by many wars and territories which consequently contributed to the social mobility of people emigrating to newly acquired territories. In this aspect, Jose María Lozano Jiménez (University of Naples "Federico II", Italy; University of Valencia, Spain) presented the paper *Palermo Facing a Hispanic Population. What Kind of Foreigners Were They?* His paper discussed the Spanish population in Palermo after Sicily was acquired by the

Spanish Crown. The Senate of Palermo had to continuously negotiate with the Spanish Crown to preserve its privileges, among which was the ability to determine who became a *cives Panormi*. Were the Spanish able to gain Palermitan citizenship or were they perpetual foreigners in the city under Spanish rule?

Similar aspects were exposed on other migrant groups in large early modern cities, such as Bruno Pomara's (University of Valencia) contribution, *Moriscos as Ambiguous Strangers in Venice (Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries)*. Venice granted asylum to the Moriscos exiled from the Iberian Peninsula. There was an interesting consideration given to the Moriscos in Venice, due to them being Muslim and the Venetian *bailo of Constantinople* hoped for diplomatic benefits by Venice assisting the exiled Moriscos. They attempted to identify themselves as Christian Spaniards, but have established a Crypto-Muslim minority in Venice.

Throughout the centuries, the natives and the foreigners were addressed with different terms, to enforce the medieval tradition of categorization. The paper by Andrej Hozjan (University of Maribor, Slovenia), *Native (nativus) and Newcomer, Foreigner (advena). Categorisation of Peasant Serfs in the 1714 Census of the Beltinci Estate*, addressed precisely this underlying continuity. Even in early eighteenth century, there was a clear distinction between natives and those born outside the village or the territory of the manor, which showed the perpetual need to segregate the inhabitants and consequently enforce socio-economical differences.

The third panel, Newcomers I, was chaired by Žiga Oman (Institute IRRIS), and was dedicated to the attitudes of the town authorities towards different types of foreigners in their communities. This was well presented in Tone Ravnikar's (University of Maribor, Slovenia) paper *Attitudes towards Foreigners in Towns in Medieval Lower Styria*. It exposes a colorful composition of the non-citizens of the cities, namely nobles with their entourages, ecclesiastics, Jews and foreigners. Non-citizens were facing restrictions or were required to gain permits for activities otherwise only granted to citizens, such as trade, storage of goods, use of roads, property purchase, etc. Foreigners were regulated and economically controlled by the city authorities to benefit the town and townspeople and the town trade.

Trade in the late medieval and early modern periods was not only local but also long-distance trade, which was locally further developed by the presence of *Florentines in the upper Adriatic around 1400*, as presented by Katalin Prajda (University of Vienna, Austria). The banking and money lending activities, refined by the Florentines made them welcome newcomers in Koper and Trieste as well as in other towns of the Upper Adriatic that were keen to learn new crafts and perfect their trade.

Similarly, refugees could prove to be valuable bearers of information and military intelligence and were welcomed with open arms. Gennaro Varriale (University of Granada, Spain) addressed the benefits of Levantine refugees providing information on Ottomans to the Kingdom of Naples after the Greek Albania and the Balkan Peninsula had been conquered. His paper *Greek-Albanians in Naples: spies, Stradiotis and Independent Women* addressed the fascinating and important roles that these newcomers were given to benefit their protectors.

The fourth panel of the day, Newcomers II, chaired by Umberto Cecchinato (University of Trento, Italy), exposed some potential issues in accepting the newcomers. The maritime merchants as well as refugees coming by sea were frequent carriers of infectious diseases and therefore city authorities needed to quarantine the incomers. *Health and Gate Control in Early Modern Barcelona (Seventeenth Century)*, the paper by Víctor Joaquin Jurado Riba (University of Barcelona), addressed and strategies and protocols used by port cities to avoid outbursts of disease in towns.

In the Upper Adriatic, Istria suffered a substantial decimation in population, precisely due to epidemics of plague and malaria as aftermaths of wars and poor harvests. The Venetian Senate developed the policy of the repopulation of Istria, and newcomers from the Lower Adriatic can be inspected based on the records in the parish books. Angelika Ergaver (Institute IRRIS) opened this research problem in her paper, *Foresti – Foreigners and Newcomers in the Statibus Animarum of Sixteenth- to Eighteenth Century Piran, Koper and Izola*.

Parish records can also be used to analyse the socio-economic status of newcomers. Predicated on marital records, David Hazemali and Aleš Maver presented a paper co-authored with Mateja Matjašič Friš (all University of Maribor) on *Foreigners in Maribor in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century in the Marriage Records of the Parish of St John the Baptist*, wherein a substantial increase of newcomers from German lands, the Italian Peninsula, and the Kingdom of Hungary can be detected. The authors exposed the strategy of guild-masters' widows to marry a foreign guild master to preserve their social status and expand the trade of their guild.

The overall impression is that urban legislation was designed to control the population and the long-term economic position of the city. The panel Law and Control, chaired by Àngel Casals Martínez (University of Barcelona) addressed some legislative means of control of the population.

Umberto Cecchinato (University of Trento) presented his study *Fearing the "Poors' Multitude". The Regulation of Migrants in Early Modern Venice*. Protected by Christ on Earth, the medieval poor enjoyed protection in hospices, but as their early modern influx to bigger cities rose, there was a need to protect the socio-economic position of citizens and prevent price increases, thereby preventing the worsening of the city's overall prosperity.

On a similar note, by protecting their common weal, town authorities could make full citizens into foreigners if they were breaking the law. Žiga Oman (Institute IRRIS) presented an elaborate study about *Neighbours to Strangers: Banishment in Early Modern Ljubljana*. It addressed the customary practice of short-term banishment and its evolution from the medieval practice into an instrument of social control at the hands of the state authorities which in the early modern period developed the punishment of perpetual exile.

However, the rites of banishment have customarily been connected to the rites of asylum. Darko Darovec (Institute IRRIS; University of Maribor) in his paper entitled *Bandits as Foreigners, Foreigners as Bandits and the Right to Asylum in Early Modern Venetian Istria* elaborated on some cases from Istria, and concluded that from the

sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth century, the right of exiles to asylum was practically nullified, as anyone providing refuge to them was themselves banished. Only with the Enlightenment did new contours of punitive policy begin to appear across Europe, including deliberations and measures concerning the right of exiles to asylum.

The second day of the conference offered three panels that focused on the integration of newcomers and offered some viewpoints on newcomers by their integrative communities.

Starting with the panel Integration I, chaired by Katalin Prajda (University of Vienna), the auditorium was treated to the study of Branka Grbavac (Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Department of Historical Research), *The Integration of Members of the Surdis Family from Piacenza in the Zadar Commune in the Fourteenth Century*. The highly influential family integrated into Dalmatian communes through notary service in Zadar, Split, and Dubrovnik, and relocated to Zadar, where the family stayed until the Hungarian conquest. Thereafter, the Surdis family bore bishops, *comes*, and a royal *vicarius* in Dalmatia.

Not only notaries, but also merchants were required to change their posts several times in their careers. Such a case was presented in the paper by Marijan Premović (University of Montenegro) (read in his name by Aleš Maver), *Zeta Merchants in Dubrovnik in the Late Middle Ages: From Foreigners to Citizens*. To control the income of the city, some wealthy and successful merchants were required to settle in Ragusa with their families, buy property, and fulfill all the duties and obligations of citizens.

Similarly, pilgrims were a group of people that town authorities needed to keep a close eye on and regulate their activities. However, contrary to the merchants the pilgrims were not supposed to become citizens. Sandra Toffolo's (Italian-German Historical Institute in Trento, Italy) paper *The Reception of Pilgrims in Early Modern Venice: Between Regulations and Practice* analysed the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Venetian regulations on pilgrims who entered the city to embark on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and all the activities the travellers engaged in before their departure. Among other aspects, her paper expounded on the general attitude and caution towards dealing with travellers in the early modern period.

There were also other social structures that regulated the integration of foreigners, other than the city council or senate and influenced their legislation. Jan Figueras i Gibert (University of Barcelona) in his paper *Deliberating on Foreignness. Migrant Integration and Deliberative Practices in a Late Sixteenth-Century Catalan Craft Guild* focused on the wool weavers' guild of Terrassa, a small town near Barcelona, between 1580 and 1600. Sixteenth-century Catalonia received large amounts of migrants from the French Midi, which, in some towns where the manufacture of woollen textiles was blooming, became an important part of the artisanal workforce. One would assume that foreigners were restricted from higher job-positions until acquiring full citizenship, however, the progressive legislation (*insaculació*) gave the foreign members of the guild council deliberative powers as it required that half the guild's council members were foreigners.

The second panel of the second day Integration II, chaired by Sandra Toffolo (Italian-German Historical Institute in Trento), hosted papers that further elaborated on the processes of integration of newcomers into their new communities.

The paper by Marija Mogorović Crljenko and Danijela Doblanović Šuran (Juraj Dobrila University of Pula), *From Foreigner to Neighbor – the Case of Rovinj at the End of the Sixteenth and in the Seventeenth Century*, focused on the study of demographics of Rovinj, based on population censuses and parish records that offer insights into people's origin and profession. Some highlights of the study were the marriages and marital agreements between citizens and prosperous newcomers.

Similarly, the second speaker analysed marriages as a strategy for foreigners to obtain citizenship in order to have a better social predisposition to work in Barcelona. Ona Vila i Palacín (University of Barcelona) investigated the *Naturalization and Integration Strategies of French Immigrants in Sixteenth-Century Barcelona: An Approach to Marriages with Foundlings from the Hospital de la Santa Creu*. Many French newcomers sought marriages with orphaned girls from Barcelona to integrate into Catalan society.

Such processes of integration and naturalization were also present in the Adriatic. Salvator Žitko's (Institute IRRIS) contribution, *The Arrival, Role, and Importance of the Genzo (Fumée) Family in Koper from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* analyses the genealogy of this family of French origin from their arrival in Koper. The focus was on the process of their economic growth and integration into the Koper bourgeoisie and their eventual name change to Genzo.

The last panel of the second day was entitled Towards a New Age and chaired by Žiga Oman (Institute IRRIS).

The first paper, by Anja Mlakar (University of Maribor; Institute IRRIS), was *The Ottoman Turks: Between Folklore Imagery and Media Realities of Nineteenth-Century Slovenia.* The folkloristic tradition depicted the traditional image of the savage and demonic Turks and installed constant fear of 'Islamic infidels' into the minds of keen Christians, enforcing the archetypal imagery of the 'dangerous Other'. The political situation of the nineteenth century allowed the printed media to characterize the Ottoman Empire as the declining force and 'the sick man of Europe'. In her paper, Mlakar presented the contrast between the collective memories inherited from the first encounters with the Turks and historical realities.

Similarly, the paper by Anjeza Xhaferaj (The European University of Tirana, Albania), *Mythologized Borders: The Role of Foreign Entities in Shaping Albanian National Identity*, focused on foreign entities in Albanian mythology during the early modern period, particularly on depictions of Ottoman invaders and Venetians. The presence of foreign elements contributed to channelling the heroic epics into fostering a sense of unity and distinct identity among the Albanian people, which later contributed to forming the national identity and pillars of Albanian statehood.

The paper by Brigitta Mader (Institute IRRIS), *In Foreign Eyes: Istria in the Official Description of Austria-Hungary from 1891*, showed that foreignness and diversity were not always necessarily negative aspects, but sometimes something

that should be noted, respected, and celebrated. In 1891, the tenth volume of *The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Words and Pictures* was published. A project initiated by Crown Prince Rudolf (1858–89) in the early 1880s with the aim of documenting and presenting the entire empire and its peoples in an encyclopaedic manner. The tenth volume is dedicated to the Imperial and Royal Littoral (*k. k. Küstenland*) and contains a very comprehensive and detailed description of Istria with several illustrations celebrating its diversity, without imposing German traditions into traditionally Slavic and Romance Istria.

To conclude the second day, we arrived at the core of the existence of newcomers and foreigners. For them to exist there needs to be some level of openness and acceptance of others, present in the ancient customs and rites of hospitality, offering protection or asylum. Peter Kyslan's (University of Prešov, Slovakia) paper discussed *Kant's Hospitality Today*, more precisely, the rights and duties of Kant's condition of hospitality and its possible update for the present, while being aware that Kant's proposal of hospitality is not fully functional for the current state of international relations and migratory movements.

The second day continued with workshops of the Working Groups of Cost Action CA22149 CHANGECODE where the deliberation on foreigners was discussed in past and contemporary contexts.

The conference's third day was wrapped up with the last panel, Transhistorical Deliberations: From Greek Ekklesia to Contemporary Risks, chaired by Darko Darovec (Institute IRRIS).

The first speaker was Aleš Maver (University of Maribor), with his contribution on *Dangerous Liaisons Between Democracy and (De)centralisation in Antiquity: Cleisthenes' Transformation of Athenian Polis Revisited*. Cleisthenes is known in Athenian and Greek history as the 'father of Athenian democracy'. But it has to be said that his life story and the intention of his project to reorganise the Athenian polis at the end of the sixth century BCE are relatively poorly known. Analysing the relationship between the democratization of the Athenian polis and Cleisthenes' new organization of the local units of the same polis, we cannot but overlook the question of whether these new units were instruments of the centralization or decentralization of power.

Realizing that one man's decisions can usher in autocracy and borderline dictatorship, contemporary evidence shows that extreme situations may also result in non-democratic solutions. Maruša Gorišek (Institute for Developmental and Strategic Analysis, Slovenia) spoke about the *Deliberation in the Context of the Pandemic: Integrating Scientific Evidence into Public Policy*. Her paper focused on reconstructing and analysing the relationship between politicians, medical experts, and the general public to identify effective deliberative practices during and after the pandemic.

The contribution of Marjan Horvat (Institute IRRIS), *Transhistorical Deliberation: Slovenia as a Case Study* aimed to employ the concept and method of transhistorical deliberative democracy as a theoretically and empirically supported framework to advance the norms of deliberative democracy within specific historical and socio-

cultural settings. In his paper, Horvat took Slovenia as a case study to develop a method for examining the influence of socio-historical narratives on contemporary decision-making.

The liberal thought, aspects, and political options needed some time to evolve. This process took more time in some regions, as demonstrated in İlkim Büke Okyar's (Yeditepe University, Turkey) paper *Negotiating Liberalism: Political Cartoons as a Medium for Deliberation in Early Twentieth-Century Ottoman Istanbul*. By focusing on Istanbul as a hub for media production and intellectual exchange, her presentation highlighted the unique ability of political cartoons to mediate debates about inclusion, exclusion, and national identity. She argued that through humour, symbolism, and emotional appeal, cartoons served as a platform for public deliberation, amplifying liberal ideals and shaping their reception within the urban Ottoman context.

The conference ended with a joint CHANGECODE working groups workshop on Foreigners in the Twenty-First Century, chaired by Sergiu Gherghina (University of Glasgow, UK). Focusing on *Inclusion, National Framing, and Reconstruction of the 'Other'* the speakers and the auditorium discussed further steps of developing the methodological basis for an interdisciplinary framework for transhistorical deliberative democracy to be able to adequately detect its aspects in contemporary (democratic) deliberative practices.

Angelika Ergaver