

A Brewery as Assemblage of Various Documentations

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On November 15th and 16th, 2023, with the support of the Faculty of Arts, an international workshop entitled “*A Brewery as Assemblage of Various Documentations*” took place. The event, attended by 15 researchers from the Czech Republic, Malta, Macedonia, Croatia, Turkey, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, was organized within the European framework for supporting science and research internationalization, COST.

Specifically, it was organised within the “*COST Action CA21120 – History of Identity Documentation in European Nations: Citizenship, Nationality, and Migration (HIDDEN)*” gathering scholars in various fields including history, migration studies, geography, sociology, law, linguistics, postcolonial studies, and human rights. It explores the history of ID regimes in Europe and beyond, examining connections between the past and present. HIDDEN delves into how states either obstruct or assist citizens in accessing IDs, the role of technology in this context, and the ethical considerations surrounding access to historical personal data. It further explores issues of identity, citizenship, and migration by linking historical research on identity documents with contemporary digital forms of identification and the legislative frameworks that govern them.

The workshop was associated with Working Group 1 within this COST Action, titled “*Geography as Fortune*”, which focuses on issues related to geographical birth location as a determinant of fate concerning one’s possessed ID. Among its interests are questions related to forced migration/displaced people living in camps/border hotspots, passport ‘apartheid’ – the unequal differentiation between the possession of passport(s), birthright ‘lottery’, frontier states/island states, states that resist refugees, and LGBTQI migrants – rights to migrate/recognition of identity and family relationship status, among others.

During the first day of the workshop, members of WG1 presented brief summaries of their current research and its potential contributions to future collaborations. Additionally, two approximately hour-long lectures followed by discussions were delivered. The first, titled “*Strategy of Population Development of the Canton of Sarajevo*”, presented by Haris Gekić and Aida Bidžan-Gekić from the University of Sarajevo, focused on demographic indicators, depopulation concerns, and low birth rates in Bosnian territory, contrasting them with existing governmental migration strategies.

The subsequent lecture, “*Migrants Come in Different Forms: Or How the Czech Political Actors Generate Anti- and Pro-Immigration Narratives*”, presented by Vladimír Naxera and Petr Krčál from the University of West Bohemia, explored how Czech political figures (with an emphasis on former President Miloš Zeman and ex-Prime Minister Andrej Babiš) create diverse narratives concerning different migrant groups based on their geographic origins. The research situated these narratives within the broader political spectrum, highlighting that while several politicians expressed solidarity with Ukrainian refugees, they held notably racist views towards migrants from the Middle East and North Africa.

Further program on the first day included a roundtable discussion with local migration experts, specifically Nataliya-Mariya Mochernak from the University of West Bohemia, and field social workers Vladyslav Skyban and Viktor Davídek from the NGO Ponton. During the two-hour discussion, they shared their experiences concerning the daily lives of primarily Ukrainian war refugees in Pilsen. Topics of discussion included housing shortages, language barriers, legal issues, labor market precarity, school segregation, attitudes of state and municipal police and other governmental bodies, as well as narratives constructed by Pilsen residents. The second day, due to the event's location, was focused on the relationship between migration and brewing. The morning collaborative workshop mainly involved a wide-ranging discussion on the potential for scientifically grasping the relationship between these phenomena, using the specific example of Pilsen. From the perspective of the COST Action, the Pilsner Urquell brewery serves as an ideal research terrain, bringing together individuals at various levels (owners, management, specialized workers, manual laborers) with different IDs and origins while preparing the traditional Czech beverage. The diversity in IDs isn't solely linked to the production process but also consumption, such as extensive beer tourism. The outcome of this session is a plan for a co-authored text. The discussions concluded with field research in the form of a guided tour of the brewery.

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