

Ethnographic Descriptions of “*Land und Leute*” in the Alps-Adriatic Region in the 19th Century

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Ethnographic accounts from the 19th century, including “*Land und Leute*”, statistical reports and travelogues, provide insight into how ethnographers (broadly defined) presented and investigated the transformations occurring in the multicultural Alps-Adriatic region. An examination of these documents elucidates “in-between” practices among diverse languages and cultures, and facilitates an exploration of how individuals negotiated complex national and cultural identifications.

▪ **Keywords:** in-between, traveller reports, state science, ethnography, identification

V etnografskih zapisih iz 19. stoletja, kot so »*Land und Leute*«, statističnih poročilih in potopisih, lahko vidimo, kako so etnografi (širše definirani) predstavljali in raziskovali spremembe, ki so se dogajale na večkulturnem alpsko-jadranskem območju. Z raziskovanjem teh dokumentov lahko osvetlimo prakse vmesnosti med različnimi jeziki in kulturami ter raziščemo, kako so se posamezniki uspevali usklajevati in prilagajati v zapletenih nacionalnih in kulturnih identifikacijah.

▪ **Ključne besede:** vmesnost, potopisna poročila, državna znanost, etnografija, identifikacija

Numerous scholars, including Eric Hobsbawm (1990), John Breuilly (2013), Tomasz Kamusella (2008), Pieter Judson (2016a), and Tara Zahra (2008), have examined the significant social, political, and cultural transformations that occurred during the long 19th century, which fundamentally altered societies and nations in Europe. New forms of social relations and hierarchies emerged, while cultural and ethnic identifications became important. This period is characterized by discovery and emancipation, as reflected in (everyday) life. Social status underwent redefinition, gender relations began to evolve, industrial labour presented challenges associated with highly unfavourable working conditions, and labour unions were established.

A growing awareness of multiple ethnic groups and their self-affirmation arose, mostly as a response to the emergence of nation-states. Peasant emancipation (cf. Bugge, 2007; Petersen, North, 2009), industrialization, urbanization (cf. Good, 1984; Johnston, 2005), and the associated greater autonomy and emancipation movements in general, contributed to the collapse of existing hierarchies and forced individuals and communities to reconsider their position in the existing social order. All of these movements, that is, for the liberation of peasants, workers, and women, were simultaneous with the

rise of national elites and their identifications (Hroch, 1985), which shook established power relations and encouraged new identifications and feelings of belonging.¹

In the Alps-Adriatic region² of the Habsburg Empire, these transformations were particularly complex. Known for its ethnic and linguistic diversity, the region was subject to overlapping and often conflicting identification narratives (cf. Moritsch, 2001). This complexity was amplified by the various ways in which writers, researchers, bureaucrats, and others involved in state affairs documented and responded to these changes. Their writings – whether ethnographies, official reports, memoirs, or political tracts – offered a range of perspectives on the changing social landscape, influenced by the authors’ professional roles, personal biases, and the specific contexts in which they operated.

The variety of genres employed by the authors to try and capture these changes is remarkable. Ethnographies often revolved around documenting cultural practices and social structures, whereas bureaucratic accounts focused their observations on governance and administrative frameworks. Memoirs and political writings, on the other hand, allowed for more personal or speculative reflections on the changes experienced and witnessed by the authors. Regardless of the genre, these writings were embedded in longstanding rhetorical traditions that shaped their narratives and also in many ways determined what was considered worth describing or recording. The records were framed by prevalent rhetorical traditions guiding narrative patterns and determining the contents of observation and remembering.

The research on which this volume of *Traditiones* is based began during a joint railway journey by the two authors of this article from Klagenfurt to Vienna. In deep conversation, as the Carinthian landscape rolled past our window, we discussed the challenges of addressing the complexities of historical anthropology in a region so profoundly shaped by cultural intersections. This very railway line connecting Ljubljana (Laibach) with Klagenfurt (Celovec) serves as a vital link between urban centres where social, ethnic, and linguistic boundaries were constantly shifting. Our discussion led us to establish the great importance of these historical connections, and to the question of how individuals and groups navigated the dynamic socio-political landscape of their time. Within this historical and intellectual framework, the FWF/ARIS-Weave project, *Discourses and Practices of the In-Between in the Alps-Adriatic Region: Klagenfurt, Ljubljana, and Trieste 1815–1914*, takes place. By analysing ethnographies, bureaucratic documents, and personal writings from a range of genres, the research seeks to uncover

¹ “Identification turns out to be one of the least well-understood concepts – almost as tricky as, though preferable to, ‘identity’ itself; and certainly no guarantee against the conceptual difficulties which have beset the latter” (Hall, 1997: 2).

² The term ‘Alps-Adriatic region’ is employed here as a metaphorical and descriptive framework, rather than a historically defined concept. While the phrase did not exist in a clearly delineated form during the period studied, it effectively captures the region’s diverse linguistic, cultural, social, economical, and historical interactions. This choice allows us to emphasize the interconnectedness and complex dynamics of the area, extending beyond the specific urban centres under investigation. By using this term, we aim to reflect the broader scope of our research and the cross-regional influences shaping the development of Klagenfurt, Ljubljana, and Trieste.

how different actors perceived, interpreted, and negotiated the shifting social, ethnic, and national boundaries of the period. These texts not only reflect diverse viewpoints but also highlight the practices of navigating the “in-between”, as individuals and groups grappled with multiple, and often conflicting, affiliations and identifications.

The everyday life of historical subjects who lived in ethnically mixed regions in the course of the formation of nation-states in the long 19th century has hardly been studied to date, as the narratives of the nation, of *Volk* and ethnicization dominated for a long time. An increasing number of studies (e.g. Almasy et al., 2020; Kirchner-Reill 2012) are now addressing the fact that life in such regions was characterised by transitions and interdependencies, for example with regard to the use of languages, mobility, and cultural exchange.

This is where our epistemological interest sets in when we inquire into the sometimes contradictory, conflicting and incoherent practices of the in-between. After all, the historical subjects did not subject themselves to the idea of the nation-state as such, nor did they think or act according to ethnicizing attributions.

There are many indications of how the subjects reacted situationally to the respective demands of their everyday lives, positioning themselves in seemingly contradictory ways and acting in an entirely “obstinate” (*eigensinnig*) manner. Theoretically, this “life in between” has so far been summarised with concepts such as pluriculturalism (Feichtinger, Uhl, 2016), hybridity (Johler, 2023), indifference (Judson, 2016b; Zahra, 2010), or polyphony (Strutz, 1996).

Based on this and with reference to the concept of *Eigensinn* (Lüdtke, 1994), we would like to reconstruct a mode of subjectivation that is expressed through practices of the in-between. We assume that this was widespread in the long 19th century. The ‘in-between’ refers to a coexistence of different situations and practices that occurred under a variety of aspects, and serves as an umbrella term combining gender, class, religion, language affiliation and, towards the end of the 19th century, ethnic or national affiliation as well (see Schemmer, Schönberger, 2024).

To design a meaningful sample, we utilized key studies concerning sites with central functions (cf. Christaller, 1980 [1933]; Lefebvre, 1991; Turnock, 2005). We therefore selected cities central to their respective languages and, by extension, to the nationalities associated with them. Geographically, the research focuses on the three urban centres of Klagenfurt, Ljubljana, and Trieste within the Alps-Adriatic region, which represent a unique mixture of linguistic and cultural influences. Each city exhibits distinct characteristics: Klagenfurt with a predominantly German-speaking population; Ljubljana, emerging as the centre of Slovenian cultural identity; and Trieste, a cosmopolitan hub with a dominant Italian influence. These cities were central to social, economic, cultural, and political life in their respective regions, serving as the capitals of *Kronländer* (crown lands) in the cases of Klagenfurt and Ljubljana, while Trieste functioned as the key urban centre of the Austrian Littoral. They played pivotal roles



as sites of communication, influence, and innovation within the Habsburg Empire. The research also incorporates the surrounding rural areas, displaying the intensive interplay between urban centres and their rural peripheries. The complexity of both perspectives – the urban and the rural – provides a more nuanced view of the social, cultural, and political interactions that shaped the region during this period.

The research has provided a more complex understanding of how individuals and groups negotiated national affiliations and attributions in the Alps-Adriatic region in the 19th century. Its approach transcends national or ethnic boundaries, considering different understandings of life and examining practices of the in-between across language, networks, and mobility:

- a. Language: Examining linguistic practices, including multilingualism and code-switching, to understand intentional and unintentional practices of the in-between and their evolution over time.
- b. Networks: Identifying transversal networks that include members of varied social and ethnic groups, often unaffected by nationalizing discourses.
- c. Mobility: Investigating various types of mobility that signify in-between practices, such as socio-economic, territorial and migration-related movements, considering urban-rural dynamics and the influence of growing nationalisms.

By integrating these categorial considerations, the research aims to illuminate the complex and often contradictory ways in which individuals and groups navigated national affiliations and attributions in the Alps-Adriatic region during the 19th century. Focus rests on the in-between spaces – geographical, cultural, linguistic, and social – where national identifications were fluid, contested, or overlapping. Instead of simplistic binary oppositions, this approach allows us to appreciate the nuanced realities of the historical actors who inhabited these liminal spaces.

We follow Judson (2016b: 153) in arguing that national ideas were not seamlessly integrated into everyday life. Our aim is to highlight that ambivalent discourses and practices can be observed across all individuals, regardless of their ideological stance. Therefore, we are focusing on questions that lend themselves to a historical-anthropological approach, including the analysis of multiple modes of identification and complex self-positioning. These cannot solely be understood in the context of the broader transformation processes toward bourgeois or nation-state societies. Our focus lies on situational actions and the historical actors' own sense of agency: "We conceptualise this *Eigen-Sinn* action or non-action as *doing in-between*. This opens up the possibility of a 'more-than-national perspective' (King, 2002: 122) by focusing on ambiguous practices, intentional decisions or non-intentional, situative actions regarding ideological attitudes in the Alps-Adriatic region, an area where micro-historical studies on this period are rare" (Schemmer, Schönberger, 2024: 23–24).

Historical anthropology, ethnography, and descriptions of “*Land und Leute*”

In our research, we adopt a broad understanding of ethnography, examining texts that describe the “land and people” (*Land und Leute*) of a territory in the widest sense. We include texts that draw a picture of a region (territory) or a landscape based on personal experience and edited for interested readers. Attempts at definition (Vermeulen, 2008) generally refer to *Völkerbeschreibungen* in the classical ethnological sense, attempting to systematically describe unfamiliar worlds. In this respect, we also consider travelogues or the statistics that emerged in the 19th century to be relevant sources.

In the 19th century, ethnography was significantly shaped by two intellectual traditions that influenced and defined methods and approaches. Ethnography was for the Göttingen Staatswissenschaft school of the 18th century simply a tool to gather detailed information about populations (cf. Lindenfeld, 1997). On the other hand, Johann Gottfried Herder emphasized the intrinsic value of every culture and highlighted each identity’s uniqueness (cf. Barnard, 2003). These two approaches, imperial administration as well as cultural appreciation, in many ways defined how ethnographers collected data and portrayed the communities they studied.

Ethnographic descriptions (*Land und Leute*) were published in a variety of literary forms, each shaping the portrayal of peoples and cultures differently. Traveller reports were typically in line with traditional *ars apodemica*, providing structured outsider views on foreign populations (cf. Stagl, 1995). Homeland (*Heimat- und Vaterlandskunde*) research, guided by extensive questionnaires or directives, documented local or national characteristics. The choice of genre significantly influenced narrative construction, affecting how information was gathered and presented, and as such played a pivotal role in shaping the view on culture.

The rise of nationalisms in the 19th century significantly impacted how ethnographers defined communities by linguistic and cultural affiliations. One of the important consequences of nationalization efforts was standardized language and the marginalization or even annihilation of regional dialects, therefore also simplifying the representation of cultural diversity. Ethnographers had to navigate multilingual contexts and most likely chose the language that reflected their personal, political, or pragmatic considerations. In cities like Trieste, Klagenfurt, and Ljubljana – microcosms of broader Central European transformations – many ethnographers balanced the image, namely local realities with prevailing nationalist ideologies. These decisions are key to understanding how ethnographers framed their narratives and the ideological impacts of their work.

The analysis of specific 19th-century writers exhibiting ethnographic curiosity demonstrates how their texts reflect changes in the utilization of various genres, or in the perception of the described subject matter. These changes progress from the Enlightenment and the anational perspective based on the imperial logic of state governance, to the national which focused on discovering and affirming a distinct identity,



and finally to the transnational grounded in the emerging Marxist logic. Among early travel writers, the imperial censor Franz Sartori (1811) maintained imperial neutrality by emphasizing rationality and knowledge, prioritizing state cohesion over linguistic or cultural affiliation. Urban Jarnik in the year 1826 (1984) advocated for the preservation of Slovenian culture against Germanization pressures and, influenced by Herder, emphasized the significance of language and tradition in asserting Slovenian identity in Carinthia. In the mid-19th century, writers such as Pietro Kandler (1848a, 1848b) employed both imperial and nationalist logic in Trieste. Kandler emphasized Italian cultural superiority and national glory while encouraging loyalty to the empire. Carlo Combi (1886) already in the sixties utilized nationalist narratives to affirm Italian identity and marginalize the Slavic population. Also noteworthy are writers such as Karl von Czoernig and Adolf Ficker in the mid-19th century, who developed “statistical ethnography” and predicted cultural assimilation under stronger national elements in the interests of imperial unity. At the end of the 19th century, monumental editions, such as the *Kronprinzenwerk* (1885–1902), merit mention as the final attempt to integrate all the peoples of the country (cf. Erzherzog Rudolf, 1887). Finally, particular attention should be directed to Angelo Vivante (1912), who offered alternative perspectives by adopting a transnational, Marxist-socialist narrative.

By integrating these historical approaches and acknowledging the influence of nationalism, our research seeks to provide an understanding of how ethnographic descriptions were shaped by intellectual traditions, state interests, and cultural movements. We recognize that at the heart of these approaches lies the question of how people perceived themselves and others – whether through the eyes of an outsider traveller, the lens of state-driven inquiry, or the appreciation of cultural uniqueness.

On the possibility of reading ethnographies “in-between”

In engaging with ethnographies, we delve into the notions of in-between as a central concept and a guiding principle that leads us to examine situations and practices hinting at ambivalent or contradictory affiliations or identifications. Our research hypothesizes that early ethnographic descriptions of peoples (*Völkerbeschreibungen*) at the onset of nation-state formation, despite potential inherent biases, could reveal contradictions and issues in the implementation of nationalism. The Alps-Adriatic region is considered a border area and can be understood as an in-between space. In fact, many European border regions can be seen as in-between spaces which are “more than a marginal phenomenon” (Ther, 2003: xii), where not all multilingual actors necessarily adopt national self-identifications (ibid.: x). These regions lie “between the core areas, i.e. on the fringes of the respective nations”, and “are linguistic, cultural, and ethnic transition zones where various influences intersected and often merged” (ibid.: xi). Central Europe

in particular is characterized by the “diversity of regions” (Csáky, 2002: 38) and the characteristic “shifts between different cultural patterns and value systems” (ibid.: 40).

At the heart of our research is the hypothesis that the process of nation-state formation and the production of national subjectivities was not without contradictions. While there is no doubt that the idea of the nation-state gained momentum throughout the 19th century – especially with the rise of the bourgeois classes, leading parts of the population to identify as Italians, Austrians, Slovenians, or Croats – this was not always the case, particularly not during the Habsburg Monarchy in the first half of the 19th century. This period is precisely when the processes of ethnicization and nationalization began. In retrospect, it became a veritable triumph, rendering other forms of social organization almost invisible. This raises questions about who was dominated, and how forms of subjectivation that could not relate to an ethnic or national understanding of state and nation were marginalized. This is where our research’s interest lies.

Simultaneously, there were attempts to establish a specific ethnography of the Habsburg Empire. The idea of an ethnically, linguistically, and culturally mixed “National Austrian” was propagated in the late 19th century within a disciplinary environment that Brigitte Fuchs (2003: 153–164) personified through the statistician Karl Freiherr von Czoernig, referring to it as the “Austrian ethnography of ‘mixture’”.

We are particularly interested in the contradictory and unstable forms of subjectivation and the agency of historical actors during the period from 1815 to 1914, when nationalism and the idea of ethnically based nation-states emerged but were far from hegemonic. The numerous ideological efforts, such as those by school associations (Judson, 2006: 16–17), attest *ex negativo* that there must have been a need for action. We assume that ethnicizing and nationalizing discourses that started to pervade public and political debates after 1850 were only one manifestation amongst non-nationalist narratives.

To carve out the behavioural logic and structures of meaning, we analyse contemporary communication and discourses. Textual analysis (Mayring, 2015) allows us to engage with “a multitude of documents, texts, or images and their common and different categorical or discursive patterns, which place them in context and in relation to each other” (Averbeck-Lietz, 2019: 92–93). Analysing spatial and temporal structures, actor constellations, and *topoi* reveals the different layers inherent in nationalizing patterns of discourse (ibid.).

However, research that seeks specificity in the sources risks generating bias. A perspective that is specifically focused on the search for the practice of in-between can thus contribute to the overlooked aspects that do not resonate with our expectations. But if we assume that both possibilities, being or doing in-between as well as its opposite (commitment in favour of a national idea) – can simultaneously be observed in the actions of subjects, we need not worry that contradictions and asynchronicities will be overlooked or ignored because we do not presuppose a clearly defined in-between identification.



On the contrary, the possibility of succumbing to bias in research is always a subject of discussion based on the available sources. In this sense, it should be emphasized that the analysis cannot be limited to searching for practices of in-between, but must consider all practices that correspond to both national and non-national agendas.

Building on this conceptualization of bias and identification complexity, the following section presents contributions by various authors that thematize the theoretical and empirical dimensions of “being in between” practices.

Theoretical and empirical approaches to the practices of in-between

In their theoretical approach ‘Doing In-Between in the 19th Century in the Alps-Adriatic Region’ Janine Schemmer and Klaus Schönberger (2024) attempt to theoretically define the concept of in-between practices. The authors adopt a historical-anthropological perspective, developing the concept of *doing in-between* in relation to an everyday history perspective that seeks to differentiate various forms of subjectivation (subjection, subjectivization, subjugation). Drawing on related concepts in Habsburg research, the goal is also to truly overcome methodological nationalism. To this end, they consider hybrid, polyphonic, fluid, and idiosyncratic self-concepts of historical subjects (Lüdtke, 1994), which imply something other and more than mere indifference, highlighting the ambivalent process of identification. The authors wish to contribute to sharpening the theoretical tools while simultaneously proposing an empirical perspective.

In the article ‘The Alps-Adriatic Region – an “Area of Transition”’: Doing In-Between in Travel Literature of the 19th Century’ by Ute Holfelder, Janine Schemmer, Christian Frühwirth, and Gabriele Brunner (2024), the sources of historical travelogues are scrutinised for indications of possible practices of doing in-between. Of particular importance is the aspect that the authors repeatedly conceptualise the Alps-Adriatic region as a border region, as a liminal space of encounter in terms of geography, climate, and culture. By reexamining historical travel descriptions, the study reveals everyday practices that demonstrate multiple affiliations among the region’s inhabitants. These include multilingualism, cross-border trade relations, and patterns of labour mobility. In the travel descriptions examined, the practices of in-between appear above all through the juxtaposition of one’s own assumptions and what is observed.

Gerhard Katschnig’s article ‘Indications of the In-Between in Works of W. Wabruschek Blumenbach and F. Umlauf: A Case Study of Two Habsburg Ethnographers’ (Katschnig, 2024) emphasizes the challenge of identifying in-between practices in ethnographies. Blumenbach and Umlauf wrote their ethnographies to support the imperial – economic and political – interests of the monarchy, as evidenced by their focus on the economic activities and land resources. With the comparison of two texts, written at different times, the author identifies implicit references to the practices of in-between.

In the article ‘Images of Peoples: Two 19th-Century “Ethnographies” of the Habsburg Empire’, Ingrid Slavec Gradišnik (2024) examines works of two authors, Karl von Czoernig and Adolf Ficker, who recorded “statistical ethnography” on the diverse peoples of the Habsburg Empire. She analyzes their approaches that shared a common objective: to systematically describe and categorize populations in service of the state. Ethnography thus reinforced dominant ideologies, supporting imperial objectives by managing diversity through simplification.

Aleksej Kalc in the paper ‘Trieste Ethnographies in the Eyes of Contemporary Observers in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries’ (Kalc, 2024) thematizes how five authors (Pietro Kandler, Pacifico Valussi, Josip Godina Verdelski, Ruggero Fauro Timeus, Angelo Vivante), living in the 19th and early 20th centuries, portrayed the city’s ethnography and highlighted different logics and views on in-between identifications. These writers predominantly perceive ethnic or national communities as discrete entities; however, they implicitly acknowledged the “in-between” spaces where identifications were fluid and hybrid. Conversely, national narratives in all the texts indicate the extent and nuanced evaluation of such in-between spaces and practices within varying historical contexts.

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Etnografski opisi »Land und Leute« na območju Alpe-Jadran v 19. stoletju

V 19. stoletju so družbene, politične in kulturne spremembe bistveno preoblikovale družbe v Evropi. Nastajale so nove oblike družbenih odnosov in hierarhij, naraščal je pomen kulturnih identitet in etničnih pripisovanj. Raziskovalci, kot so Eric Hobsbawm, John Breuilly, Tomasz Kamusella, Pieter Judson in Tara Zahra, so osvetlili transformacije, ki so vplivale na vsakdanje življenje v celoti – od sprememb v družbenem statusu do oblikovanja nacionalnih identitet ter vloge emancipacijskih gibanj, ki so destabilizirala takratne hierarhije. V tem kontekstu so etnična pripadnost, socialni status in izobraževanje postajali osrednji dejavniki družbenega vzpona in novih identifikacij.

Na alpsko-jadranskem območju Habsburške monarhije so bile te spremembe še posebej kompleksne zaradi velike jezikovne in etnične raznolikosti. Raziskovalci, pisci, državni uradniki in drugi so v etnografskih besedilih, uradnih poročilih in političnih spisih dokumentirali in interpretirali te spremembe, pogosto

v skladu z osebnimi vlogami, predsodki in političnimi položaji. Njihovi zapisi so pripomogli k razumevanju in opredelitvi regionalnih identitet, vendar so jih največkrat določale ideološke izbire, ki so narekovala, kaj je vredno zapisovanja in kako je treba opisovati svet.

Raziskovalni projekt, katerega rezultat so v tem zvezku *Traditiones* objavljeni prispevki, se je začel med potjo z vlakom iz Celovca na Dunaj z razpravo o izzivih zgodovinske antropologije, ko sta avtorja obravnavala pomembnost kulturnih povezav na tem območju, kjer so se nenehno prepletale jezikovne in etnične meje. Sledenje zgodovinskim povezavam namreč omogoča boljše razumevanje družbenopolitične dinamike in dejstva, kako so posamezniki in skupnosti navigirali po kompleksni družbeni krajini.

Projekt *Discourses and Practices of the In-Between in the Alpine-Adriatic Region: Klagenfurt, Ljubljana, and Trieste 1815–1914* skuša premostiti metodološki nacionalizem, značilen za pretekle raziskave, ki so se osredinile na lastno kulturo in jezik ter bile v marsičem izključujoče. Da bi raziskali prepletenost nacionalnih pripadnosti na območju Alpe-Jadran, so v projektu zajete tri glavne dimenzije raziskave: etnografije, osebna pisma in zapisi ter kulturna društva, ki omogočajo pogled na vsakodnevne družbene prakse, ki so presegale nacionalne okvire.

Poseben fokus je na središčih Celovec, Ljubljana in Trst, ki predstavljajo mešanico jezikovnih in kulturnih vplivov. Vsako mesto ima svoje posebnosti: Celovec s pretežno nemško večino, Ljubljana je postala v tem času središče slovenske kulture, Trst pa je bil kozmopolitsko mesto s prevladujočim italijanskim vplivom. Pri raziskavi je upoštevano tudi podeželje, gre torej za preplet urbanih in ruralnih družbenih dinamik.

V tem kontekstu so bili etnografski opisi in tradicija pisanja »*Land und Leute*« v 19. stoletju ena od pomembnih metod za preučevanje družbenih identitet; ponujali so poglede na različnost in identitete. Po drugi strani je naraščajoči nacionalizem v 19. stoletju prispeval k standardizaciji jezikov in potisnil v ozadje regionalne dialekte, kar je dodatno zapletlo prikazovanje kulturne raznovrstnosti v etnografskih opisih.

Osnovna namera tega zvezka je raziskati prakse »vmesnosti«, torej kako so posamezniki živeli in se identificirali v večkulturnih okoljih. Namen je razumeti vsakdanje prakse, ki niso sledile strogim nacionalnim paradigmam. Z analizo jezika, mrež in mobilnosti skušamo pojasniti, kako je bil jezik uporabljen v različnih kontekstih, kako so se ljudje povezovali onkraj etničnih mej in kako je mobilnost prispevala h kulturnim spremembam. Pristop omogoča poglobljeno razumevanje vsakdanjega življenja v 19. stoletju in poudarja medsebojno povezanost skupnosti ter fluidnost nacionalnih in kulturnih identifikacij na obravnavanem območju.