Malinowski and the Alps – Anthropological and Historical Perspectives

Elisabeth Tauber, Dorothy L. Zinn (Eds.)

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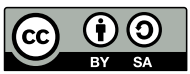

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Prologue

The Malinowskis in the South Tyrol

Patrick Burke and Lucy Ulrich[1]

Bronislaw Malinowski and Elsie Masson arrived at Tilbury, east of London on the Thames, after a two-month-long journey by ship from Melbourne, on April 24, 1920.

For the next two years and more they led a "wandering life" (Wayne, 1995, p. 24), mostly together, sometimes apart, spending longer and shorter periods in different parts of Europe: at first, London and the countryside near Oxford; then, from June 1920, Edinburgh, where their first daughter, Jozefa, was born on August 8. Elsie remained in Edinburgh with the baby, while Malinowski divided his time between Edinburgh, London, Cambridge and Oxford. In November they sailed for the Canary Islands, where, on Tenerife, Malinowski – with Elsie as his "aide and critic" (Wayne, 1984, p. 196) – completed the manuscript of what would be published in 1922 as *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. From there, in September 1921, they sailed to Marseilles, and set up house in nearby Cassis, where their second daughter, Wanda, was born on January 1922. In late July 1922 the Malinowskis travelled to Poland; and, although Malinowski was offered an associate professorship in ethnology at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, they "made the fundamental decision not to take up life there" (Wayne, 1995, p. 27).

In September, while visiting their close friends, Paul and Hedwig Khuner, in Vienna on the way back from Poland, the Malinowskis took the advice

1 Patrick Burke and Lucy Ulrich are the children of Helena Wayne (née Malinowska), the youngest daughter of Bronislaw Malinowski and Elsie Masson.

of a friend of the Khuners, Hans Busch, to visit the South Tyrol. Busch recommended a particular village: Oberbozen, which stood on a plateau on the Ritten, above the regional capital Bozen (Bolzano).

Here, the Malinowskis decided, would be their next home. From October 1922, they lived in a rented apartment in an old stone house – the Kinsele Haus – next to the small church of Maria Schnee. In January 1923 Malinowski was offered a permanent post as Reader in Social Anthropology at the London School of Economics (LSE); and was allowed to take up the appointment in 1924. Our mother's account suggests that this offer was what allowed Malinowski and Elsie to make the decision to remain on the Ritten: "He and Elsie foresaw that they could now stay in Oberbozen" (Wayne, 1995, p. 27).

The following summer they bought, and had renovated, the house across the fields from their rented apartment; in September 1923 the family moved into what would later become known as the Villa Malinowski. For the next six years Oberbozen represented home. Though there would be much travelling by both parents and children, the "wandering life" had come to an end.

For more than two years from their arrival at Tilbury the Malinowskis had not settled. What made them now choose Oberbozen? Why would a cosmopolitan, intellectual couple want to make their home in a small village in the South Tyrol, a good two days by train and boat from London, where Malinowski's immediate academic future lay, and a day's travel from Vienna, the nearest capital city?

Oberbozen and the Ritten had, in fact, many attractions. The area was "renowned for its beautiful views over the Dolomite range"; and Oberbozen was "quiet and peaceful, a good place in which to work" (Wayne, 1995, p. 28). Nor was Oberbozen physically isolated: the village was connected to the centre of Bozen by a cog railway (opened in 1907); and Bozen itself lay on the route of a main north—south train line that connected Rome, Verona, Innsbruck and Munich. By the early 1920s the Ritten was already a "gentle tourist resort" that attracted visitors from Vienna (including Sigmund Freud); from Czechoslovakia, the USA, and Britain (Young, n. d.); and from Berlin: writing to Elsie from the First International Congress for Sexual Research, held in Berlin in October 1926, Malinowski wrote that, "'Oberbozen is almost like a suburb of Berlin. I met lots of people who knew it …[one of] the Secretaries [of the Congress] claimed to have walked often with our dogs'" (Wayne, 1995, p. 83).

The climate on the Ritten was also an attraction. Both Malinowski and Elsie were "so aware of their states of health" (Wayne, 1995, p. 27). The climate in Poland, with its "severe winters", had been one reason why they had decided not to settle there (Wayne, 1995, p. 27). In their later correspondence Malinowski and Elsie touch on the unattractiveness of the English climate and the immediate environment in London: "'I am not so glad to be sailing into those damp grey mists again'", Malinowski wrote while en route to London in May 1928 (Wayne, 1995, p. 118). In 1927, when a move to England was in prospect, Elsie – who, "brought up in Australia, hated English weather" (Wayne, 1984, p. 198) – wrote of the British capital as a "'dirty hole'" (Wayne, 1995, p. 90). In 1929, she "still favoured somewhere away from the pavement, smuts and soot of London" (Wayne, 1995, p. 145).

Writing in late 1922 to the director of the LSE, Sir William Beveridge, Malinowski emphasized how two years in a mountain climate would restore his health, which was poor after the trip to Poland (Young, n. d.). The Ritten was indeed renowned for having a "benign climate that helped those suffering from lung complaints" (Wayne, 1995, p. 28). (Whether or not Malinowski actually had a lung complaint is another matter. He had certainly suffered from "wretched health" all his life [Young, 2004, p. 37]. But he was also a hypochondriac; and he was at times convinced that he had illnesses where none existed. One such illness was tuberculosis: a "medical examination in his later life" revealed "no evidence of previous t.b. infection" [Wayne, 1995, p. 243]. That the bracing mountain air would attract him does not surprise.)

Malinowski may also have been drawn by the various reminders in Oberbozen, Bozen and elsewhere in the South Tyrol – the streets and buildings in Bozen, for example, the woods on the Ritten, the high Dolomite mountains themselves – of the world of his childhood in Krakow, Zakopane and the Tatras. "'I dream of our being once more in Bozen'", he wrote to Elsie during his six-month visit to the USA and Mexico in 1926. "'Bozen … seems a real paradise. Probably its old-fashioned atmosphere, the vague associations with Cracow and my youth which it gives me'" (Wayne, 1995, p. 68). Until 1918 Krakow and Zakopane, in Galicia, and the South Tyrol, had been part of the Habsburg Empire; the end of the empire saw Poland regain its independence and the South Tyrol ceded to Italy. The Malinowskis must have been very good at adapting to new surroundings; living in a former part of the empire

would surely have made this easier, at least for Malinowski. We have speculated in the family that the Malinowskis would have fitted fairly easily into the society of the South Tyrol, as Malinowski's position in the social hierarchy of the former Habsburg empire would have been been recognised by people of all classes, both in Oberbozen and Bozen. This is only speculation.

The Malinowskis' financial situation in 1923 may also have prompted them to choose Oberbozen. In London in 1920, they had found it "impossible to rent a house or flat they could afford"; and their plans at that stage had included moving to an "inexpensive place in which to live" (Wayne, 1995, p. 3). In Oberbozen they could afford to buy, renovate, and redecorate a 3-storey house with seven bedrooms, a balcony and a veranda, each of which ran the width of the house, and two large fields (though for this they still needed a sizeable loan from Paul Khuner [Young, n. d.]).

Additionnal attraction to Malinowski in particular may have been precisely the fact that, because Oberbozen was two days' journey from England, he could pursue his career at the LSE unencumbered by the demands of family life with two, then three, young children.

In the autumn of 1924 a new arrangement began, which in its basic pattern held until all the Malinowskis moved to London in October 1929: Malinowski spent every term in London, living in boarding houses in central London, and later in a rented flat, while Elsie and the girls remained in Oberbozen or Bozen. Elsie joined him in London when she could. In the holidays Malinowski would return to his family in the South Tyrol. From late 1926 until their departure for London in October 1929, Elsie and the girls (joined by Malinowski in the holidays), spent about eight months of each year – October to June – not in Oberbozen but in Gries, "something of a health resort" in the western part of Bozen. The principal reason for the move was Jozefa and Wanda's need for "schooling and companionship" (Wayne, 1995, p. 78). With this move the villa in Oberbozen in effect became a holiday home.

That same autumn (1924) Elsie experienced the first symptoms of what would in January 1928 be diagnosed as multiple sclerosis. Despite the many and varied treatments she received, her health declined; by 1929 she was "confined to couch and wheelchair" (Wayne, 1984, p. 198). Nevertheless, Elsie maintained her active life in Oberbozen and Gries: she "went on … as centre of the household … supervising the maids and cooks and nannies, but al-

ways in charge of her children's upbringing" (Wayne, 1984, p. 197); and she welcomed and entertained visitors – students of Malinowski, amongst them Raymond Firth and Isaac Schapera, members of the family from Edinburgh and Australia, and her own friends from Australia, Germany and England. She also continued to observe and describe the spread of Fascism in the South Tyrol.

Shortly after the Malinowskis' arrival in Oberbozen, Elsie had written two articles on Fascism (Young, n. d.). In one, published in the Australian Magazine *The Forum*, she offers a vivid account of the Fascist regime as it took control of South Tyrol. She contrasts what a group of Fascist activists marching through Bozen looks like to "the foreigner" – "a party of silly boys turning real life into burlesque" – with the actual threat that the Fascisti ("apt as they were to use violence of a very nasty kind against individuals of whose views they disapproved") posed to the local population (Masson, 1923). In the following years descriptions of the impact of Fascist policies on life in South Tyrol are a theme in her letters to Malinowski.

One Fascist policy affected the family directly: Italianisation, under which the use of German was forbidden by law. Schooling in German, at all levels, became illegal, with even "'underground' or 'catacomb' nursery schools … liable to police raids". Italian-language schools, for their part, were required to spread Fascist propaganda. In 1926 Jozefa "started private lessons, in German, with some other children"; and Wanda attended a "kindergarten also run in German" (Wayne, 1995, p. 86).

How did Elsie and Malinowski feel about life in Oberbozen and Gries? Before they moved into the new house, Elsie had written affectionately about it to Malinowski: "'some things won't be perfect, but it will be a very nice little house, all the same … I love the view more and more'" (Wayne, 1995, p. 30). Three years later, on a day on which "'Oberbozen was unattractive … the roads absolutely feet deep in mud'", she nevertheless had a "'passion of affection for our little house. It seemed to me a wonderful and miraculous thing that it really belonged to us'". The house seemed intertwined with their lives: "'saturated with the happy and even unhappy times we have had there'" (Wayne, 1995, p. 88).

Yet despite this sense of attachment, the visiting friends and family, and other demands on her time – managing the household, bringing up three

daughters (Helena was born in May 1925) – Elsie's letters indicate that her life in the South Tyrol became also one of comparative isolation and loneliness. While she made "'friends both local and foreign, predominantly women'", her description in 1925 of her social life as one of "'aimless amiabilities and un-amiabilities'" (Wayne, 1995, p. 48) does not suggest that this life was particularly stimulating. Some two years later she compared her life in Bozen and Oberbozen negatively with that of her old friend Jean Campbell in Cassis. Campbell was "'very satisfied with life and herself because Vanessa Bell … and Duncan Grant … live near them and are great friends'"; Elsie tells Malinowski that she wondered "'why I was so friendless and was not given a "beautiful time" by any circle, here or in London'" (Wayne, 1995, p. 123). One reason may have been that, unlike the south of France, the South Tyrol was not well-known in the English-speaking world. Three years later – in marked contrast – when the Malinowskis are living in Tamaris, east of Cassis along the Mediterranean coast, "a great many visitors came and went", and the family's "friends and acquaintances from the locality" included Aldous and Maria Huxley and Edith Wharton (Wayne, 1995, p. 161).

Above all, Elsie missed her husband. She loved him; and she feared what the part-separated life would do to their marriage. In early 1925 – shortly after Malinowski's three-times-a-year residences in London had begun – there are "'pangs of apprehension that these separations will really separate us, when they come so often and communication is rare'" (Wayne, 1995, p. 35). There was no telephone in the house – and would not be until the mid-1960s – so all communication between the Malinowskis had to take the form of letters. Towards the end of the 1925 summer term in London: "'I have an attack of melancholy and forebodings, as if I were alone in the dark, and I want you near me. I feel tonight as if I could not bear it one day longer without you'" (Wayne, 1995, p. 45). An invitation to Malinowski at the end of 1925 from the Rockefeller Foundation, which he accepted, to spend a good part of 1926 working in the USA, produced something close to despair: "'Existence seems all wrong and I am not at peace without you … This separated life is horrible. We didn't marry for this, surely … I simply dare not look ahead and think of all those months – from March to June – alone in Oberbozen'" (Wayne, 1995, pp. 53—54).

Her sense of isolation – in the South Tyrol, away from Malinowski and his busy life, which should also have been hers – stands out in a letter in November 1927: "'I felt I should have been in London seeing [Raymond] Firth off, taking my place with you and in our circle'"; the next day, in "'deserted Oberbozen'", she has a "'curious feeling …: 'What have I to do in this forlorn little place perched on the top of a mountain that has nothing whatever to do with me, my past, my real life?'"" (Wayne, 1995, p. 107).

Elsie's health was worsening, increasingly affecting her mobility. She began to spend time trying cures in Bozen, Austria, Germany and Czechoslovakia. Some may have brought her temporary relief, but nothing more than that.

There is comparatively little in Malinowski's letters about his feelings about Oberbozen, Gries and the South Tyrol; but in places he expresses his affection for them – an affection that is intertwined with his feelings for Elsie. From America in May 1926 he told Elsie, that "'I have dreadful pangs for you and for idyllic Europe … and for our dear little home'" (Wayne, 1995, p. 68). In spring 1928, on the train journey back to London, he tells her that it "'has been a wonderful holiday … in the narrow but so beautiful corner of the world which we had for ourselves we were so happy, weren't we? … when I think of our weather and landscape from our dear balcony I am glad to think of you there'" (Wayne, 1995, pp. 117—118).

In October 1929 Oberbozen and Gries ceased to be home: The Malinowski household moved to London. Malinowski needed to have permanent residence in the UK if he was to get British citizenship, which the LSE authorities were pressing him to obtain; Elsie's health had deteriorated to the point where living in Gries and Oberbozen was impractical; and the girls' schooling was "becoming inadequate and dominated by the political question." Even Wanda's school had been the target of a police raid (Wayne, 1995, p. 126). In 1930 and 1931 the family again spent the summer months in Oberbozen. From there, in the autumn of 1931, they moved to the South of France, to a rented villa in Tamaris near Toulon. Malinowski had taken a leave of absence from the LSE to finish *Coral Gardens and their Magic*, his last monograph to draw on the material from his fieldwork in the Trobriand Islands. In the summer of 1932 the family appears to have remained in Tamaris.

They returned to Oberbozen in the summer of 1933. This was Elsie's last visit and the last time the family was there together. Elsie's health continued to deteriorate, reaching the point where the houses in Oberbozen and London became too difficult for her to negotiate. At the suggestion of Elsie's Austrian assistant, Rosa Decall, who had come to work for the Malinowskis in 1932, Elsie and Rosa moved to Natters, a village near Rosa's hometown of Innsbruck in North Tyrol. Natters was close to Innsbruck and easily reachable by car, whereas Oberbozen was connected to Bozen only by the cog railway that took an hour for the journey.

The three girls, now all at boarding school in England, spent their holidays in Natters with their mother in 1934. Their father spent the months from May to October of that year in various parts of southern, central and east Africa, visiting Elsie in Natters on his return. In 1935, the family was reunited in Natters during the summer holidays.

Elsie's condition worsened during those weeks and she died on September 18, some two days after her daughters were sent back to England to return to their boarding schools.

From 1934 onwards, the house in Oberbozen was rented out to a couple from Bozen, the Schulzingers. The Malinowski family spent the summers of 1937 and 1938 in Oberbozen, but the Schulzingers continued to rent the house throughout the Second World War and for several years thereafter. Family legend says, possibly incorrectly, that they pretended to have bought the house, which may be why it was never seized as the property of an enemy alien.

Malinowski was in the United States of America when the war broke out; Yale University had offered him a position and he brought his daughters across the Atlantic to join him.

By the time the war in Europe came to an end in May 1945 Malinowski had been dead for just under three years. His older daughters, Jozefa and Wanda, were by then both married to Americans; Wanda had had her first child.

Helena, the youngest, was still unmarried. She returned to Europe as soon as she was able to book a berth on a ship and made her way to the South Tyrol to reclaim the Villa Malinowski for herself and her sisters.

The house is still owned by Bronio and Elsie's descendants – now their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Although we grew up in different countries and continents, the house in Oberbozen has remained a much-loved focal point for the family.

Acknowledgement

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Malinowski and the Alps: An Elusive Historical-Ethnographic Footprint

Introduction

Elisabeth Tauber and Dorothy Zinn – Free University of Bozen-Bolzano

The initial impetus for this book, as with all of the work conducted by the Malinowski Forum for Ethnography and Anthropology, lies in the fact that South Tyrol – precisely Oberbozen-Soprabolzano and Gries, Bozen-Bolzano – was a home to Malinowski and his family between the 1920s and 30s, and the family connection to the area remains to this day (see the prologue by Burke and Ulrich). However, we were intrigued not simply by the presence of Malinowski in the Alps, but to think about how he might have left a mark on Alpine anthropology. At first glance, the idea of a collection of essays on Malinowski and Alpine anthropology would appear to be rather paradoxical. We might have been tempted, indeed, to save a load of paper and gigabytes by simply noting that, despite all the time he spent in South Tyrol, Malinowski never made the Alps an object of study, and therefore never really had an impact on the Alpine anthropology: The End. Yet, as we considered the question more carefully, a number of subtle traces emerged that suggested the value of reconsidering Malinowski's presence in the Alps, both as a part-time inhabitant and as a disciplinary master, a scholar whose work is necessarily to be reckoned with by any up-and-coming anthropologist.

It remains unclear why Malinowski never actually conducted research in the Alps, though Gingrich and Knoll (2018) as well as Viazzo and Colajanni (in this volume) offer some conjectures. The Malinowski-Alps missing link is all the more intriguing if we consider the importance he attributes to his early experiences of an Alpine area in Poland. In his prodigious biography of Bronislaw Malinowski, Michael Young (2004) relates how, in various self-presentations, Malinowski would invoke his childhood experience in the

mountains of Southern Poland. In a first example from a fragmentary autobiographical note, Malinowski writes:

> Brought up in the R.C. faith and owing to early illness, in Tatry Mountains age fr. 4–10. From child[hood] Polish, French & and their dialects. A double life, at least … Mixed with the mountaineers, speaking their gwara (dialect) looking after sheep & cows, running away for days, learnt fairy tales, legends of good old days of banditry. (Malinowski, as cited in Young, 2004, p. 14).

In a second example that Young (2004, p. 15–16) presents, in the context of the introduction to a textbook on anthropology he was commissioned to write in the 1930s, Malinowski recalls this early experience in the Polish mountains in greater detail. In this case, however, he connects this childhood memory to the sort of experience of diversity that ignites sociocultural anthropological reflection. To cite an excerpt from the text of the introduction reported by Young:

> By the time I was eight I had lived in two fully distinct cultural worlds, speaking two languages, eating two different kinds of food, using two sets of table manners, observing two sets of reticencies and delicacies, enjoying two sets of amusements. I also learned two sets of religious views, beliefs and practices, and was exposed to two sets of morality and sexual mores (see Sex and Repression [sic]).

Young observes that Malinowski produces such representations of his early years as a justification for his calling as an anthropologist. We see a similar pattern in yet another autobiographical text by Malinowski written in the third person:

> After graduating his health gave way and the next three years he spent on the shores of the Mediterranean, visiting North Africa, Asia Minor, and the Canary Islands. With the practical gift for languages of his countrymen, he spoke from childhood, in addition to Polish and its various peasant dialects, German, French and Russian. During these three years he acquired Spanish and Italian & was thus everywhere in his travels able to study the peoples among whom he lived. He had, moreover, like his distinguished countryman, Joseph Conrad, whose ac-

> quaintance he was afterwards to make, an enthusiasm for the exotic that led him at this time to desert the sober sciences of mathematics, physics and chemistry for the humanistic study of anthropology. It was not altogether a new interest; in his childhood, spent in the Carpathian mountains, he had lived among the rude mountaineers and shepherds who … (as cited in Young, 2004, p. 43)

The seeming contradiction between Malinowski's precocious "participant observation" among the Tatry peasants and shepherds – one that purportedly helped spark his anthropological capacity for reflecting on cultural difference – and his later disinterest for South Tyrolean *Bauern* begs reflection.

So far, this absence remains a conundrum, as the contributions in this volume also show. Yet this contradiction manifests itself in the rather hidden traces Malinowski has left behind in the Alps: for example, in the work of the young historian Lucie Varga or in the community studies conducted in the Alps in later decades, often without explicitly referring to his method of participant observation. Thus, Malinowski's somehow hidden presence in the Alps is reflected in the following chapters. We encounter female researchers who were rediscovered late and methodological reflections that preoccupy historians and folklorists, while American and British anthropologists in the Alps rarely made a methodological treatise with explicit reference to Malinowski. Of course, Pier Paolo Viazzo (in this volume) is right when he says that Malinowski's methodological canon was such an established, so to speak, core business of the discipline that anthropologists did not need to refer to it explicitly.

In his essay, Pier Paolo Viazzo works through the history of Malinowski's epistemological legacy in the Alps, which is not always straightforwardly visible. The enigma surrounding the lack of interest shown by Malinowski – but also by the illustrious guests from anthropology who visited him in Oberbozen – for the differences between the German *Bauer* and the Italian *contadino*, which were so plainly evident, and which were brought into view in a groundbreaking contribution by Cole and Wolf (1974) four decades later, also surprises Viazzo. The previous assumption about Malinowski's skepticism towards folklore, its closeness to nationalist ideas, as well as his strategic demarcation from historical scholarship, is somewhat relativized by Viazzo through his description of the rich, interdisciplinary exchange at the

London School of Economics (LSE) of his time, in which historians are equally involved. So, although Malinowski did not inspire any of his students to work ethnographically in the Alps, Viazzo sees Lucie Varga, (re)discovered by Peter Schöttler – the editor of her essays – as the real pioneer of ethnographic research in the Alps. Varga – who has remained unforgivably unnoticed not only by historians but also by anthropologists for decades – and Cole and Wolf, whose work, in contrast, has made the Alps known as a valuable ethnographic research region – could then be seen as the true pioneers in Alpine anthropology.

As an aside, it is interesting to note that Hortense Powdermaker, Eric Wolf's mentor from his days as her student at Queens College, herself studied under Malinowski at LSE, and she was among the group who would spend summers in Oberbozen with Malinowski and his family (Powdermaker, 1966). Powdermaker remained a family friend long after Malinowski's death and continued to visit the Oberbozen villa in the 1950s and 60s, even spending time there for her writing (Powdermaker, 1966; Malinowski grandchildren, personal communication). Powdermaker, who died in 1970, had remained friends with Wolf and his second wife, Sydel Silverman. It is difficult to know if and how her own connection to South Tyrol through Malinowski may have influenced Wolf, who would go on to publish *The Hidden Frontier*, together with his own student, John Cole.

In any case, Paolo Viazzo wonders widely what would have happened if Varga's work had been familiar to the anthropologists who began researching in the Alps after World War II. And he explores the question of how Malinowski might have reacted to this unusual woman with her modern questions. Finally, he reflects on "what if" two women – historian Lucie Varga in the Alps and anthropologist Charlotte Gower in the Mediterranean – had been given the place in academia they deserved for their modern methodologies during their lifetimes. Both women adopted the Malinowskian approach in their research. In Viazzo's text we continue to read how the tension between local researchers and outside researchers was articulated – *Amerikaner in den Alpen* were welcomed as innovators and skeptically viewed when they disregarded the historical dimension or ignored local sensitivities. For Viazzo, this raises the question of whether there is still a need for a Malinowskian anthropology in the Alps: one that stays on the ground, familiarizes itself

by learning the language, grasping the inside point of view, a method that has been somewhat neglected in the light of developments in the last twenty years, but which, according to Viazzo, still has its say and relevance for doing research in the Alps.

Historian Margaret Lanzinger likewise addresses the scientific significance of Lucie Varga's work. In her chapter, Lanzinger encompasses in a broader sense the questions and methodological approaches that historical science has taken over from cultural anthropology and, on the other hand, those that anthropology has taken from historical science. She highlights how Lucie Varga, inspired by Bronislaw Malinowski, differs from, for example, an author like Hermann Wopfner, for whom historical folklore with its focus on collective identities and the idea of a "folk soul" that historically has changed little, is paramount. Lanzinger directs her focus to the developments of modern historical research, which is increasingly interdisciplinary and, for example, appropriates fieldwork in Varga's sense in order to be able to comprehensively deal with research questions. She shows how anthropological research in the Alps has influenced social and microhistory with its questions referring to social practice and change. Using the example of the work of Cole and Wolf (1974), who also adopted a historical perspective, she illustrates that historical research in the archive follows a completely different practice for anthropologists than that of historians. Nevertheless, Lanzinger considers *The Hidden Frontier* a central work that started the process of historicizing anthropology, since historical data provided the basis for explaining the two different cultural-ecological systems in the same environment. At the same time, this work asked questions that were not the focus of folklorists and historians of its time. Thus, this work, and anthropology as a whole, has revealed the tension between cultural ideology and social practice, stimulating and leading historical research – especially microhistory – to look more closely at the contradictions between rules and norms. Lanzinger shows how it was only through ethnographic questions that the historical research could be opened up to non-linear complexity. According to Lanzinger, Malinowski did not directly influence historical research in the Alps, but his methodological plea "to grasp the inside point of view", his influence on Lucie Varga, as well as his critical reflection in his diary entries on the subjectivity of data, anticipated the discussion in historical science by decades.

In her contribution, Daniela Salvucci focuses on the traces of the Malinowski family in Bolzano and Oberbozen – the very reason for the existence of the Malinowski Forum and the publications that emerge from it. As part of her research project, she delves into the historical circumstances of these places, all in South Tyrol, whose historical fate at the time of the Malinowski family's stay in Bozen and Oberbozen was determined by the trauma of the 1919 Saint-German Peace Treaty, which established the new border between Italy and Austria along the Brenner Pass and determined the separation from Austria. In this context, Salvucci looks at the family's networks of social relations, and their cosmopolitanism expressed in a context of liberal intellectuals equally interested in art and science and attracted as travelers by "exotic" places and a certain standard of living. In her descriptive essay, Salvucci goes into detail about places of residence, flats, and houses occupied by the Malinowski family. According to Salvucci, the Malinowskis' residences in Bozen and Oberbozen contributed to a cosmopolitan culture in South Tyrol.

Finally, Peter Schöttler introduces the two essays by Lucie Varga (1936, 1939), widely discussed in this volume and translated here, one for the first time from French into English and the other newly translated. It should be noted that George Huppert made a first translation of the 1936 essay available. However, in accordance with Peter Schöttler, the editors have decided to present a new translation of the essay in order to adjust some finer points of the previous translation, especially with regard to the ethnographic subtleties. The importance of Varga's work also becomes clear in Huppert's introduction, where he writes full of respect for Varga:

> The article presented here speaks for itself. No other historical journal would have published anything like it. It took someone like Febvre, an aging rebel who had thundered at the timidity and the lack of imagination of his colleagues since before 1914, to see that "Madame Varga-Borkenau" represented an astonishing assault against traditional scholarship and a successful demonstration of what could be achieved when the methods of the historian were combined with those of the ethnographer. To be sure, it took an exceptional mind and an exceptional personality to get the results described in the pages that follow. (Varga, 1936/2006, p. 253)

Moreover, Varga's immersion in the respective local contexts of Vorarlberg and Gadertal, her descriptive and narrative style, and her detailed observations came together in a holistic analysis that can be seen in direct connection with Malinowski's methodological and stylistic legacy. In this volume, Schöttler takes an in-depth look at Malinowski's influence on Varga. For Schöttler, there was most likely more than one encounter between Bronislaw Malinowski and the young, unknown historian Lucie Varga. However, a detailed documentation of their (mutual?) inspiration is hardly possible due to a lack of data. Lucie Varga – whom he discovered in an unpublished correspondence between Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch as part of his research on the *Annales* (Schöttler, 1991, p. 13) – is a pioneering author of historical anthropology on totalitarian movements before Malinowski and others. Her now-acknowledged importance for opening up new historiographical avenues (p. 78) is also underlined by Margaret Lanzinger and Pier Paolo Viazzo in this volume.

This promising historian, the only woman of the early *Annales* to die very young and be forgotten for many years, turns to the current issues of her time through a historical and ethnographic perspective. Varga exchanges ideas with Malinowski on this new method, which is becoming established in scientific discussion: She thanks him for it in a footnote that has since become famous among anthropologists (see Varga "In a Valley in Vorarlberg", 1936, here p. 111); and she opens her essay on the Montafon valley with a plea for the interaction between historiography and ethnology. Schöttler assumes that Varga saw Malinowski frequently and was also influenced by his ethnographic ideas through her husband Franz Borkenau, who attended Malinowski's LSE seminars in London, mentioned also by Viazzo in this volume. For her research in contemporary history, which Schöttler considers to be her most important, this Jewish woman travels in the 1930s to National Socialist Germany and to two Alpine valleys to talk to people on the ground. According to Schöttler, Varga can be seen as a precursor for later research on both National Socialism and women's studies because of her novel questions and methodological approach. Is it any coincidence that also her writing style resonates with Malinowski's work? Her contributions seem at first glance like light travelogues and only on closer reading turn out to be careful analyses of the emergence of modernity (Schöttler in this volume): light travelogues that

resemble Malinowski's genre, which in turn was significantly influenced by his first wife, Elsie Masson (see Salvucci, 2021, Tauber & Zinn, 2021).

The volume concludes with an afterword by Antonino Colajanni, a fine connoisseur of British anthropology, who recently published an article on Malinowski, applied anthropology, politics and colonialism in the anthropological journal *Anuac* (see Colajanni, 2022). As Colajanni comments on the various contributions to this volume, among other things he recalls the figure of Leopold Pospisil, an anthropologist who conducted work in an area adjacent to South Tyrol. Pospisil is another example of an anthropologist who could hardly escape engagement with Malinowski's work, especially since he also conducted research in Papua New Guinea, the area of Malinowski's first, groundbreaking fieldwork.

Finally, by way of our conversation with Pier Paolo Viazzo, we would like to respond to the criticism of an anonymous reviewer who was struggling with Malinowski's thin scholarly presence in the Alps: Asking why, for example, Lucie Varga's acknowledgement of Malinowski should play such a major role, and why finding out that Malinowski lived in South Tyrol should be the reason for his scholarly interest.

> It was known from the beginning that Malinowski did not do research in South Tyrol or in the Alpine region, but to explore in a volume on Malinowski and the Alps the direct or indirect relations between Malinowski and Alpine anthropology did not seem and does not seem to me to be an idle undertaking. (Viazzo, personal communication, 2022)

One might think that the repeated reference to Varga's gratitude to Malinowski made in each chapter is exaggerated. But if one considers that Varga's article was ignored by historians as much as by anthropologists and thus had no concrete impact, the reference takes on a different meaning:

> Personally, I believe that this "hint", which is not even too "thin", helps to provide insights and stimulate reflections on the relationship between anthropology and history, or on the history of Alpine anthropology, which are not entirely vain and useless. (Viazzo, personal communication, 2022)

This points to a problematic described by Cole (1977):

> Malinowski even maintained a villa at Oberbozen in the South Tyrol where he and his students regularly vacationed. An entire generation of British anthropologists experienced invigorating walks in the mountains and enjoyed what Malinowski is said to have regarded as the finest scenery in all of Europe … But the discussions on these vacations were of research conducted far afield, and while all enjoyed the scenery, their professional gaze was across the seas, among the black and brown inhabitants of the dominions and colonies of the British Empire. (p. 350)

Cole's remark is taken up again by Viazzo in his reflection on the reviewer's criticism:

> Malinowski and his students, on holiday in Oberbozen ... kept their eyes fixed firmly on the "black and brown inhabitants of the dominions and colonies of the British Empire" ... without noticing what was literally happening before their eyes and was anthropologically relevant. I think that Cole might retort – to take the comparison to its extreme – that it would be surprising and regrettable for a twenty-first-century Malinowski to holiday on Lampedusa, for example, and not notice barges of migrants arriving on the island, or to deliberately ignore this (and not recognise its anthropological relevance) because his professional interests lie elsewhere in the world. (Viazzo, personal communication, 2022) [1]

Even though Malinowski never made the European Alps his field of research, it would be difficult to regard his stay in South Tyrol as a purely private affair. It makes sense to ask about what impressions, observations, comments and reflections he and his visiting scholars gathered and made while they were in South Tyrol. After all, this region was described forty years later (Cole & Wolf, 1974) as exemplary of the fact that the same environmental conditions do not necessarily produce the same cultural models.

As noted above, this book has drawn on the continued efforts of the Malinowski Forum for Ethnography and Anthropology (MFEA), founded by the editors in 2016 at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano not only to promote

1 For a broad and controversial discussion on Malinowski and colonialism see Colajanni (2022) and Bassi et al. (2022).

knowledge about the Malinowskian presence in South Tyrol and create conversations about ethnography and anthropology that foster critical reflection and innovation, but also to serve as a reference point for Alpine anthropology. Indeed, we have conceived this volume as a concrete contribution in terms of one of the Malinowski Forum's missions: to draw attention to Alpine anthropology, with its fascinating history within the discipline. A companion volume is currently underway (Schneider & Tauber) that will highlight the vibrancy of Alpine anthropology today by presenting a number of contributions on doing ethnography in the Alps.

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Malinowski and the Anthropological Study of the Alps: Really a Missed Encounter?

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Abstract

In spite of his familiarity with the mountains of South Tyrol and their peasant population, Bronislaw Malinowski neither engaged himself in anthropological research in the Alpine area, nor did he encourage any of his pupils to do so. This should not be seen, however, as proof of a totally missed encounter between Malinowski and the anthropological study of the Alps. For one thing, Malinowski exerted a direct influence on the ethnographic investigations carried out by the historian Lucie Varga in two Alpine valleys in the 1930s. Indeed, a short piece of counterfactual history of Alpine anthropology suggests that if Varga's works had not been so long overlooked, post-war anthropological studies might have avoided some of the theoretical and ethnographic shortcomings that plagued them. In addition, although a systematic search of the literature reveals that Malinowski is only very rarely referred to by Alpine anthropologists, there can be little doubt that his methodological approach decisively shaped the community studies conducted in the Alps especially by American anthropologists in the second half of the 20th century. It is actually one of the contentions of this chapter that a Malinowskian approach is still badly needed today to counteract a tendency to settle for hasty and fatally superficial short-term research. On the basis of some evidence presented in the chapter, it is also contended that Malinowski's attitude to both history and folklore should be reconsidered.

1. Malinowski, Oberbozen, and Alpine Anthropology

In October 2006 the Polish journalist and writer Ryszard Kapuscinski visited Bozen/Bolzano to give a public lecture. If we are to believe the local press (Gelmini, 2006), it was during this short stay in South Tyrol that he discovered, much to his surprise and not without emotion, that between 1923 and the early 1930s his compatriot and acknowledged master, the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski, had spent with his family large portions of his life in a villa in Oberbozen, in the Ritten/Renon area not far from the city of Bozen. It would seem that Kapuscinski actually already knew about the house in Oberbozen. What is certain is that he insisted on making a pilgrimage to it: "with a camera crew and a group of students from Trento in tow, he paid homage to the compatriot whom he regarded as an inspiration for his own signature brand of journalism, characterized by long-term dwelling among different peoples that informed his poignant, engaged descriptions of them" (Tauber & Zinn, 2018, pp. 16–17).

It is also certain that before Kapuscinski's visit this close biographical link between Malinowski and South Tyrol was almost completely ignored locally. It had instead been fairly common knowledge among anthropologists for several decades. Reminiscences of summer vacations as Malinowski's guests in his villa in the Alps are to be found in the writings of two of his first pupils in London, Raymond Firth (1957) and Hortense Powdermaker (1966), and it is mainly on the basis of these reminiscences that in the 1970s Adam Kuper (1973, p. 34) could tell the readers of his bestselling history of British anthropology that when Malinowski "moved to his Tyrolean retreat in the summer some students would go with him", while John Cole (1977, p. 350) noticed that "Malinowski maintained a villa at Oberbozen in the South Tyrol where he and his students regularly vacationed". Since then, many more details have emerged from the publication of the correspondence between Malinowski and his wife Elsie Masson by their Bozen-born daughter Helena (Wayne, 1995) and, more recently, from contributions that offer a fine-grained contextualization of the relationships between the Malinowskis and Oberbozen (Tauber & Zinn, 2018; Salvucci et al., 2019).

It has been rightly emphasized that "in order to understand the political context of the 1920s and 1930s, the years in which Malinowski and Masson

lived in Oberbozen, it is vital to consider how the Italian Fascists sought to create a 'total act of submission' (Lechner, 2011, p. 52) in which the German speaking South Tyroleans were to concede that they had been defeated on the Alpine Front during World War I" (Salvucci et al., 2019, p. 7). Glimpses of this oppressive atmosphere are offered by Elsie Masson in her letters to Malinowski, where she frequently refers to such impositions by the Fascist government as the banning of newspapers and schools in German (Wayne, 1995; Salvucci et al., 2019, p. 7). Malinowski himself, according to Firth's testimony, "reacted strongly against local injustices, as he saw them in the South Tyrol (Alto Adige) under Italian fascism" (Firth, 1988, pp. 21–22). In addition, cultural boundaries were clearly visible between the Italian farmers who in those years "were struggling to drain swamplands in the broad Etsch (Adige) valley near the old market town of Bozen/Bolzano … and the self-sufficient German peasants living up on the Ritten plateau, where Oberbozen was located, [who] worked on dry and often steep land, with family and domestics organized around the head of the farmstead, the *Bauer*" (Salvucci et al., 2019, pp. 7–8).

It is this complex bundle of political, cultural and linguistic differences and tensions that in the late 1950s spurred Eric Wolf to start his pioneering research in two villages only a mile apart but located on the two sides of the linguistic and administrative border that separated Romance-speaking Trentino from German-speaking South Tyrol. Continued and complemented between 1965 and 1967 by Wolf's pupil John Cole, this research led to the publication of Alpine anthropology's first classic, *The Hidden Frontier* (Cole & Wolf, 1974). It is worth noting that Wolf's inquiry sank its roots in a visit he had paid to South Tyrol as a tourist in 1934, therefore in the same years in which the Malinowskis lived, or at least spent their summers, in Oberbozen[1]. At that time Wolf was just an eleven-year-old child, but "even a boy could not help but become sensitized to the conflicts of ethnicity and nationalist loyalties left unresolved by the collapse of the Habsburg Empire" (Cole & Wolf, 1974, p. 4). Long before he became an anthropologist Wolf had developed a keen interest in a set of thorny and fascinating questions to which he decided to

1 Malinowski commuted between London and South Tyrol from 1923 to 1929, when the family moved to London and the house in Oberbozen became a holiday home, visited in 1930, 1931 and 1933 (Salvucci et al., 2019, p. 10).

come back as a full-fledged scholar when he selected South Tyrol as a setting to explore them in an historical-anthropological perspective: the local reverberations of long-term processes of nation formation, the wounds left by the two World Wars and by the Fascist period, but also the roles of ecology and ethnicity in moulding local social structures and the cultural salience of the contrasting figures of the German *Bauer* and the Italian *contadino*.

The anthropological significance of these issues seems to have escaped completely both Malinowski and the young scholars he had hosted in his villa, who included, in addition to Firth and Powdermaker, the likes of Edward E. Evans-Pritchard, Isaac Schapera, Meyer Fortes, and Audrey Richards, among others. Nor was their interest apparently caught by the peasant costumes, festivals, and dances that are often vividly described by Elsie in her letters to her husband (Salvucci et al., 2019, pp. 8–9). Yet, Malinowski obviously did not ignore that Alpine peasant communities had long been investigated by practitioners of a discipline that bordered on social anthropology, namely folklore studies. The Alpine region, Adolf Helbok wrote in the 1930s, was "das Dorado der Volkskunde" (Helbok, 1931, p. 102). Nevertheless, Malinowski did not encourage any of his students to do some fieldwork in the surroundings of Oberbozen or elsewhere in the Alps. A disappointed John Cole was forced to conclude that "an entire generation of British anthropologists experienced invigorating walks in the mountains and enjoyed what Malinowski is said to have regarded as the finest scenery in all of Europe … But the discussions on these vacations were of research conducted far afield, and while all enjoyed the scenery, their professional gaze was across the seas, among the black and brown inhabitants of the dominions and colonies of the British Empire" (Cole, 1977, p. 350).

Seen in retrospect by one of the great names of post-war Alpine anthropology, this had been a lamentably missed encounter, probably due to a presbyopic inability by Malinowski and his pupils to focus their professional gaze on the anthropologically highly relevant issues that were so close to their eyes. We now know, however, that Cole's statement must be at least partly qualified. Peter Schöttler's painstaking excavations into French, German and Austrian historiography (Schöttler, 1991, 1992, 1993) have unexpectedly brought to light two forgotten articles written in the second half of the 1930s by Lucie Varga, a refugee Austrian historian who had moved to Paris and

become part of the nascent *Annales* group. In 1936 Varga published an article in which she ably combined history and ethnography to reconstruct the economic, social and cultural transformations undergone by the Montafon, a valley in Vorarlberg, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Varga, 1936). This was followed three years later by another article in which she reported the results of a predominantly ethnographic research on witchcraft beliefs in a South Tyrolean valley, the Gadertal/Val Badia (Varga, 1939). What is most relevant, and intriguing, to us is that right at the beginning of the first article Varga expresses her gratitude to "Mr le Professeur B. Malinowski (School of Economics, Londres)" for his useful suggestions in designing the project of the researches she had conducted in the Montafon (Varga, 1936, p. 1).

Both published in historical journals, these two studies went totally unnoticed by anthropologists, suffering the same fate as another article by Varga on the origins of National Socialism (Varga, 1937), which was also mostly based on the use of quasi-ethnographic techniques and could be today cited, according to Schöttler (1992, p. 106), "as a contribution to cultural anthropology". But they were soon obliterated by historians as well. It was only half a century later that Varga's name and works first caught the eye of Natalie Zemon Davis, who was then investigating the composition and gender style of two circles of vanguard historians in the period between and immediately after the two World Wars, the social and economic historians of the London School of Economics and the *Annales* group. What she found was that, whereas female historians such as Eileen Power were central figures in the mixed world of the LSE, the interdisciplinary team of the *Annales* had much less of a place for women and appeared to be a sodality of French brothers. Partial exceptions were confined to a footnote where Davis noted that apart from the medieval historian Thérèse Sclafert, who had published an article in the first volume of the *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* (1929), the journal of the nascent group, "the only other woman writing for the *Annales* was Lucie Varga, a refugee from Austria, who contributed an ethnographic study of an Austrian valley (*Annales d'histoire économique et sociale, 8* [1936]) and an interesting account of the German support for Nazism (9 [1937])" (Davis, 1987, p. 23). The publication of Schöttler's biographic works on Varga made Davis realize that she had been wrong:

> I mistakenly thought only one of them was a historian: Thérèse Sclafert, who contributed an article on medieval trade routes to the first number of the journal. Lucie Varga's two fascinating articles in 1936 and 1937 I attributed to an ethnographer because of their twentieth-century content and Varga's expression of gratitude to Bronislaw Malinowski (of Eileen Power's LSE) for his help in designing the research for her study of the folk culture of Voralberg. (Davis, 1992, pp. 122–123)

Malinowski may not have directly encouraged Varga to do ethnographic research in the Alps, but he certainly gave her advice that Varga deemed methodologically precious. It is therefore not unjustified to say that before the outbreak of World War II at least one, or indeed two Malinowskian studies were conducted in the Alps. It is no less remarkable that these studies were the outcome of an interchange between Malinowski and a professional historian. Moreover, we should not forget that Varga focused her research on "the study of folk culture", to use Davis's phrase. This invites us to briefly reconsider Malinowski's attitude to both history and *Volkskunde*. We will then engage in a small piece of counterfactual history by wondering about what might have happened if Varga's contributions had not been ignored by anthropologists in the post-war period when they started to flock to the Alps.

2. Rethinking Malinowski's Relationships With History and *Volkskunde*

A symptomatic analysis of the reasons why Natalie Zemon Davis mistakenly thought that Varga was not a historian but an ethnographer is instructive. The first one was that both articles had a "twentieth-century content", which points to a surprisingly rigid dichotomy between study of the past and study of the present – precisely the distinction Varga was attempting to overcome in her article on the Montafon, where she advocated for a "history of the present" capable of shedding light on questions of primary historical significance the simple study of the past was unable to answer or properly address (Varga, 1936, p. 1). The second reason was that Varga expressed gratitude to Malinowski for his help in designing a field research, whose aim was to investigate – third diagnostic feature – the "folk culture" of an Alpine valley. In

guessing that Varga must have been an obscure *Volkskundlerin* seeking advice from a prominent anthropologist, however, Davis was forgetting that in the 1930s folklore studies and social anthropology were separated by a boundary whose trespassing was by no means usual, or thinkable.

It would be very interesting to know Malinowski's reaction when a trained medieval historian put forward her intention of using "la méthode de l'ethnologue" (Varga, 1936, p. 1) to study the folk culture of an Alpine valley. What we know for certain is that neither Malinowski nor his direct pupils ever engaged in folklore studies in the Alps. We cannot exclude that Malinowski thought that their orientation was too antiquarian: According to Helbok (1931, p. 102), the Alps were "the Eldorado of folk studies" because they were a sort of reliquary of old customs, sayings and artefacts long disappeared in most other parts of Europe. It is more likely that Malinowski had political reservations and was wary of the risks of nationalist drift to which folklore studies showed a sinister propensity. Indeed, Helbok published his article only a couple of years before joining the Nazi party. Although recent studies have attempted to reassess his role in Austrian folklore studies before and after World War II (Kuhn & Larl, 2020), for younger generations of students of folklore Helbok was "*der nationalsozialistische Volkskundler*" par excellence (Bausinger, 1971, p. 69). Nevertheless, there is a little-know piece by Malinowski which suggests that his view of *Volkskunde* was not utterly negative. It is his short 1938 introduction to *Facing Mount Kenya* by Jomo Kenyatta, the future first president of independent Kenya, who had completed under Malinowski's supervision a Ph.D. dissertation based on anthropological research "at home", in his case among the Kikuyu, the "tribe" of central Kenya to which he belonged. The opening words tell us something one would not expect from Malinowski:

> "Anthropology begins at home" has become the watchword of modern social science. Mass-observation and "Northtown" in England; "Middletown" in U.S.A.; the comprehensive studies of villages and of peasant life carried out in Eastern Europe ... all these are directing the technique, method, and aims of anthropology on to our civilization. Even *Volkskunde*, the study of the German people by German scholars, though partly mystical and largely misused, is none the less an expres-

> sion of the sound view that we must start by knowing ourselves first, and only then proceed to the more exotic savageries. (Malinowski, 1938, p. vii)[2]

These words suggest that in the late 1930s Malinowski was approvingly foreseeing the growth of peasant studies in Europe which took place after the end of the war. A growth, however, which was largely fed by studies conducted by American rather than European anthropologists.

As to Malinowski's attitude to history, it is generally described as one of generalized and increasing hostility. To quote one of his pupils: "Malinowski's well-known position on the value of history for anthropological studies was originally taken up in opposition to that of Rivers in whose *History of Melanesia Society* a whole series of past events were assumed to have occurred to account for contemporary social organization" (Mair, 1957, pp. 240–241). Especially after the success enjoyed by his new style of ethnographic fieldwork, this position developed into a tendency to explicitly or implicitly argue that no past event was of interest to anthropologists, and culminated in his well-known statement that for anthropologists it is only "the history surviving either in live tradition or in institutional working which is important" (Malinowski, 1945, p. 37). As Andre Gingrich and Eva-Maria Knoll (2018, p. 29) have rightly noted, "key strands of this established narrative continue to be valid, but certain elements in it require refinement and differentiation if they are to remain useful". In particular, they contend that institutional and political reasons also lay behind Malinowski's strict separation between history and anthropology. The institutional reason was that he sensed that insisting on this separation could favour the establishment of social anthropology within universities. In addition, Gingrich and Knoll (2018, p. 31) suspect that Malinowski had misgivings about the ease with which history (like folklore studies) could be harnessed for nationalist purposes and that he therefore "attempted to keep the dangers of political instrumentalization at bay by keeping history at a distance".

2 "Middletown" is the pseudonym of Muncie, the town in Indiana classically studied by Helen and Robert Lynd (1929), whereas "Mass Observation" was an independent social research organization which at that time was starting to document the attitudes, opinions, and everyday lives of the British people through a combination of ethnographic fieldwork, opinion surveys, and written testimony solicited from hundreds of volunteers (Hinton, 2013).

While these hypotheses are definitely worth exploring, a look at the "mixed world" of the LSE discloses other unsuspected, and relevant, dimensions of Malinowski's relations with history and historians. From Maxine Berg's fine intellectual biography of Eileen Power, we learn not only that anthropology was one of Power's major interests, but also that from 1929 onwards she "co-operated with Bronislaw Malinowski or projects in history and anthropology" and that this co-operation broadened out to larger group discussions on history and the social sciences. Correspondence between Power and Malinowski extending from 1931 and 1937 demonstrates that Power frequently "talked with and wrote to Malinowski about anthropological approaches to her own research on medieval miracles and medieval women" (Berg, 1996, p. 163). And Power was not the only LSE historian to be in friendly terms with anthropologists and to keep anthropology in high esteem. In his 1932 inaugural lecture as newly appointed Professor of Economic History, Richard Tawney emphasized the contribution anthropology could make to economic science. His argument was that economic phenomena cannot be studied in isolation and that the only adequate historical approach appeared to be what he called *l'histoire intégrale*. "Such history is, doubtless, remote", he was forced to admit. "But there is no reason", he claimed, "why savages should have all the science. It is possible to conceive economic historians and sociologists preparing the way for it … in some modern period with the same detachment and objectivity as anthropologists bring to the investigation of similar phenomena in more primitive societies" (Tawney, 1933, p. 20). Although their names are not explicitly mentioned, he was clearly referring to the studies of "primitive economics" recently conducted by Malinowski and Firth[3]. No less revealingly, a photograph published by Berg (1996, p. 188) in her biography of Eileen Power portrays the distinguished economic historian Michael Postan as a young scholar picnicking with three postgraduate students in anthropology, one of them being that Hortense Powdermaker who had been hosted by Malinowski in his villa in Oberbozen. Written and visual documentation of this kind give an idea of the intellectual and social life at the London School

3 A few years earlier Tawney had applauded Firth's *Primitive Economics of New Zealand Maori* as an antidote to "a kind of economic fundamentalism [which] regards the institutions and habits of thought of its own age and civilization as in some peculiar sense natural to man", thereby dignifying "with the majestic name of economic laws the generalisations which describe the conduct of those who conform to its prejudices" (Tawney, 1929, p. 13).

of Economics of the 1930s. It is an atmosphere Varga could herself breathe in 1935 when visiting her second husband, Franz Borkenau, who attended the legendary Malinowski seminars while spending some time in London. It is likely that it was on that occasion that she was introduced by her husband to Malinowski (Schöttler, 1992, p. 120).

Power and Varga, two medieval historians both seeking advice from Malinowki. The crucial difference was that, whereas Power looked for ethnographic inspiration to interpret her historical materials, Varga resolved to throw herself into first-hand ethnographic research abiding by Malinowski's precepts. Her fieldwork in the Alps resulted in two perceptive articles where we find not only theoretical insights which are sadly missing from at least a part of post-war Alpine anthropological studies, but also ethnographic evidence which would have been very helpful to save these studies from some of their shortcomings. One may not help wonder what course Alpine anthropology might have taken if Varga's work had not been so completely overlooked.

3. What if …

> The most interesting tales are often the ones that might have been (Handler 2000). There are many such 'what-if' histories, glimpses of fascinating intellectual journeys not taken. What if Franz Steiner, Czech refugee and author of an influential work on taboo, had not died at the tender age of 44? How might he have influenced the intensely humanistic turn of Oxford anthropology in the 1950s? What if Gregory Bateson, philosophical anthropologist and partner of Margaret Mead, had been offered – and then accepted – the Edinburgh professorship in the 1940s? (Mills, 2008, p. 15).

It is significant that in his study of the political history of social anthropology David Mills refers, when suggesting that "the most interesting tales are the ones that might have been", to Richard Handler's edited book *Excluded Ancestors, Inventible Traditions. Essays Toward a More Inclusive History of Anthropology*. It is even more striking to discover that two of the most engrossing among these essays are devoted to excluded ancestresses, whose field studies subterraneanly predated the arrival of "modern anthropology" in the Mediterranean and in the Alps: Charlotte Gower and Lucie Varga.

Their professional stories were of course very different. Varga was a trained historian and an almost impromptu ethnographer: the inclusion in Handler's book of an essay on her work as an ethnographer of both Nazism and changing communities in the Alps (Stade, 2000) amounts to a disciplinary recognition of a scholar who during her lifetime was neither considered nor considered herself to be an anthropologist. Charlotte Gower had received, on the other hand, a proper anthropological education. Born in 1902, she began graduate work in 1924 in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Chicago and earned an anthropology Ph.D. in 1928, in the same year that Robert Redfield did. Whereas Redfield based his dissertation on fieldwork carried out in Tepoztlán, a village in the Mexican valley of Morelos, Gower's thesis stemmed from a study of Sicilian immigrants in Chicago. This turned out to be the first leg of a research which led her to settle for eighteen months in Milocca, a small town in the south-west corner of Sicily. The two phases of her research are vividly described in 1929 by a famous journalist, Frank Thone, in an article on anthropology female students at the University of Chicago:

> For there are young women who have undertaken this arduous but fascinating first-hand study of human beings of other lands. One of the most interesting of these field problems has been tackled by the decidedly attractive Miss Charlotte Gower, who has been appointed to a fellowship of the Social Science Research Council. She has gone up into the mountains of Sicily, to a remote and inaccessible village where railway trains and automobiles are known only by hearsay, and where one gets about either on muleback or on foot. But even before she crossed the Atlantic, Miss Gower had been in Sicily, even in this village. Out in Chicago's crowded South Side, in the heart of Little Italy, lives a close-knit group of the townsmen of this place, held together by ties of blood, language, home memories … . Miss Gower took up quarters among these people, made friends with them, gossiped with the women, played with the *bambini*, learned their particular dialect of Sicilian. (Thone, 1929, p. 203)

While her research in Chicago was pursued by Gower to obtain her Ph.D., she planned that her research in Sicily would become a book, side by side with Redfield's *Tepoztlán: A Mexican Village*, which had been promptly published

(Redfield, 1930). The writing of the book, however, took more time than originally hoped, publication was therefore delayed, and eventually the manuscript became lost just before World War II (Lepowski, 2000, pp. 139–159). It was only thirty years later that "the brittle and yellow pages of a carbon copy"[4] accidentally re-emerged from the archives of the University of Chicago and at long last went to print as *Milocca: A Sicilian Village* (Gower Chapman, 1971), a book which was saluted as an especially valuable contribution to the then burgeoning literature on the anthropology of the Mediterranean region.

What is most relevant to us is that perhaps the chief reason why Gower's book was able to rapidly gain its rightful place in this literature is that it looked methodologically akin to the field studies that after the war had marked the origins and growth of the anthropology of the Mediterranean as a new research domain. As Gower writes in her preface to *Milocca*, her own field study was intended to be "the second application of anthropological methods, in imitation of Robert Redfield's work in Mexico, to the investigation of a semi-literate society" (Gower Chapman, 1971, p. vii). There can be little doubt that by "anthropological methods" she meant the style of field research that only a few years earlier had been successfully pioneered by Malinowski in the Trobriand Islands. We know from Maria Lipowski's accurate biographical essay on Gower that she actually met Malinowski in 1935 – the very same year in which he met Varga – during a visit he made to Wisconsin, where Gower taught from 1930 to 1938 (Lipowski, 2000, p. 145). Her correspondence reveals that she was not favourably impressed by Malinowski's manners, especially his propensity to use "language of dubious acceptability", but they discussed functionalist theory and "if Gower had not been fired", Lipowski speculates, "perhaps Malinowski's intellectual influence … would have survived at the University of Wisconsin". Gower certainly shared Redfield's view that Malinowski had established a pattern of ethnographic research which was suitable to be exported from the study of primitive populations to that of peasant communities (Wilcox, 1956, p. 172).

Gower's research in Milocca was the first "modern" (i.e. Malinowskian) anthropological study to be conducted in the Mediterranean region, twenty

4 This quote is from the back cover of the paperback edition of Gower's book (1971).

years before Julian Pitt-Rivers (1954) started his fieldwork in Andalusia. The same can be legitimately said of Varga's studies for the Alps. Gower's stay in the field was of course much longer, but Varga's approach was similar and clearly bears the imprint of the methodological advice received directly from Malinowski:

> Observer pendant un certain temps, avec les méthodes familières à l'ethnologue, la vie d'un groupe d'hommes relativement simple de notre société contemporaine. … Tout est à noter et à enregistrer: la structure de la famille aussi bien que le mode d'éducation des enfants, les catégories de la pensée aussi que les modalités de la foi, les idées sur le luxe et la misère, tout comme le rythme du travail et des loisirs… (Varga, 1936, p. 1)

This was basically the methodological recipe that anthropologists from Britain and the United States brought along when they started their ethnographic exploration of the Alps in the 1950s and 1960s. In Varga's work we find, however, an additional ingredient: what we would today call an acute sense for time and temporalities. Post-war anthropologists such as Frederick Bailey (1971) and John Friedl (1974), to cite two representative examples, one from each side of the Atlantic, mostly assumed that for a long and indefinite time mountain communities had been isolated and economically and culturally closed and that they had been left almost intact until World War II, which had ignited a more or less complete transition from a traditional past to a modernizing present. By contrast, Varga (1936, p. 3) reports that in the Montafon change had begun a few years after the end of the First World War and that her conversations with the locals invariably revolved around comparisons between life before and after the war, "das Früher und das Jetzt". Even more important, Varga found that already in the prewar years the Montafon had not been isolated from the surrounding world and that its economy had been prosperous and by no means confined to mountain farming. It had been after the war that the gap had broadened and the village had been forced to resort to a largely autarkic economy (Varga, 1936, p. 17). If Anglophone anthropologists had read Varga's article, they would have perhaps avoided the easy generalizations phrased in the terms of modernization theory that so often distort their interpretations of change. The self-sufficient economies

they came across in the villages they studied were often the recent and paradoxical product of a process of "peasantization" triggered by the interwar crisis (Viazzo, 1989, pp. 117–120). These "changing communities" looked far more closed, traditional, peasant and autarkic than they had possibly ever been before. An obvious question arises: were "native" anthropologists or students of folklore less prone to such mistaken perceptions than their colleagues coming to the Alps from across the Atlantic (or the Channel)?

4. *Amerikaner* in the Alps

Most accounts of the history of Alpine anthropology (e.g., Anderson, 1973, pp. 69–78; Viazzo, 1989, pp. 49–66; Sibilla, 1997, pp. 19–24; Minnich, 2002, pp. 55–60) seem to agree that the anthropological study of the Alps started properly in the 1950s and 1960s, when a number of fieldworkers from the United States headed for the high Alpine valleys. A telling common feature is that all these accounts, when they look for European forerunners, show a definite preference for researchers who cannot be easily lumped together with local folklorists. A favourite ancestor is Robert Hertz, whose study of the cult of Saint Besse, a martyr saint worshipped in a cluster of communities in the Western Alps (Hertz, 1913), had already been commended by Evans-Pritchard (1960, p. 10) as an early example of genuine anthropological fieldwork.

Such an exclusionary procedure is inevitably reminiscent of the distinction between modern and backward varieties of anthropology made by John Davis (1977, pp. 3–4) in his influential book on the Mediterranean, when he remarked that in some southern European countries "the work of providing scientific basis for nationalist claims took on such symbolic significance that anthropology ceased to be a developing academic activity altogether": it had become so fossilized that "a contemporary ethnographer from France or England or America, carrying the very latest lightweight intellectual machine gun in his pack, may be suddenly confronted by a Tylorean or Frazerian professor appearing like a Japanese corporal from the jungle to wage a battle only he knows is still on". As is well known, such vignettes were not taken lightly by many anthropological readers from southern Europe, where this attitude generated resentment and mistrust not only, or not simply, between "native"

and "foreign" scholars, but also between those "native" scholars who were at best diffident about the new approaches coming from "France or England or America" and those who were more inclined to adopt them. It is remarkable that as early as 1953 the opening issue of a new Italian anthropological journal hosted an exchange between Tullio Tentori (1953), who had studied with Robert Redfield in Chicago and advocated the use of the community-study method in southern Italy, and Ernesto De Martino, who was wary of American anthropology and bitterly critical of his own fellow-countrymen who were "approaching Italian ethnology or folklore without knowing anything at all about this tradition, infatuated with American 'applied anthropology' and eager to transplant it into Italy" (De Martino, 1953, p. 3). Was it the same for Alpine anthropology?

Signs of tensions are easily detectable also on the Alpine scene. One example is the scathing attack on Bailey's study of a village in the Italian Alps launched by Dionigi Albera (1988) in his article "Open Systems and Closed Minds: The Limitations of Naïvety in Social Anthropology – A Native's View", where he severely criticized Bailey's disregard for history, which had led him to depict the Alps as an area which had just begun to get out of isolation and backwardness. As implied by the article's subtitle, this was a trap that conscientious native anthropologists were more likely to avoid.

The initial reaction of many Swiss *Volkskundler* to the methods and theoretical pronouncements of their Anglo-Saxon colleagues was also one of puzzlement, diffidence and, at times, "resented astonishment" (Centlivres, 1980, p. 40). As Arnold Niederer (1991) once recollected, his first meetings with Robert Netting had made him quite suspicious of the American's ecosystemic models and he could not understand his guest's excitement about the new vistas opened up by historical demography (Netting, 1981). In Austria, too, perhaps more than in Italy and France, there was debate about the costs and benefits of the research styles adopted by foreign anthropologists in the Alps, as testified by an essay by Norbert Ortmayr entitled "Amerikaner in den Alpen" (1992), and, very explicitly, by Reinhard Johler's article "The Idea of an 'Alpine Society', Or: Why Do We Need the Americans in the Alps?" (1998). It is worth noting that the "Americans" Ortmayr and Johler talk about are by no means all American. Rather, they use it as a label that stays for "modern" anthropology vs. folklore studies and may also cover British social an-

thropologists like Bailey or even anthropologists from Alpine countries like Switzerland and Italy who had been trained or had taught in "Anglo-Saxon" universities

Michał Buchowsky (2004, p. 10) has made reference to Ortmayr's and Johler's pieces to suggest that the encounter between foreign and native anthropologist in the Alps produced a "hierarchy of knowledge" which in turn generated "a vibrant discussion on the presence of Anglo-Saxon anthropologists in the Alpine region and the value of their scholarly output". Although this is undeniable, as we have just seen, there are reasons to believe that tensions were not as strong as in Mediterranean anthropology or, later, post-socialist studies. Although it is significant that he decided to emphasize his status of native anthropologist, Albera's attack was more on the transactionalist and anti-historical paradigm incarnated by Bailey than on the presence of anthropologists from outside. Indeed, he praises Cole and Wolf's 1974 book for its ability to combine "history and ethnography as interdependent elements in a single unified analysis" (Albera, 1988, p. 436). Similarly, if one goes beyond the titles and reads attentively the careful assessments made by Ortmayr and Johler, it becomes apparent that their verdict is that on balance the arrival of the "Americans" was beneficial because they helped enliven the stagnating world of Austrian folklore studies and to rescue them from a pernicious tendency towards a celebration of Alpine values and ways of life at times bordering on racism. Volker Gottowik (1997, 1998) went so far as to argue that their arrival had at last allowed the natives to be "othered" by anthropologists from outside. A comparable attitude can ultimately be detected in Switzerland, where Robert Centlivre (1980, p. 43) praised the Americans' "fresh look at the Alps" and was quick to realize that their studies were filling an "empty niche" in Alpine studies, while Niederer eventually came to recognize the value not only of Netting's work but also of the "alien" tradition he represented, and to complain that "Swiss and Austrian students of folklore know very little, or nothing at all, about Anglo-American or even French research in the Alps" – adding that "this is a general feature of European *Volkskunde*, which has long been conceived of as a national science" (Niederer, 1996, p. 286)[5].

5 For a more critical view about the studies conducted by American anthropologists in Canton Valais, and by extension in the Swiss Alps, see Antonietti (2013).

The skein to be untangled is intricate, as attitudes towards the Americans depended very much on the different histories of anthropological studies in the various countries, and also on individual propensities. The German anthropologist Werner Krauß, who in the mid-1980s studied a tiny village in the Canton of Grisons, has recently written that, while many of his Swiss colleagues considered the Americans as intruders, "Niederer's openness towards ethnographic methods made him the ideal host for the American anthropologists who came to the canton of Valais in the late seventies" (Krauß, 2018, p. 1026). In particular, his collaboration with Netting proved very fruitful since the interests, skills and competences of these two scholars came to nicely complement each other: "Both Netting and Niederer served as a guidance when I started to conduct fieldwork in Switzerland" (p. 1027). This testimony prompts us to conclude that the answer to Johler's question is that the Americans and their methods, although not always and immediately welcome, proved ultimately innovative and inspiring and were therefore "needed". There is, however, another partly related and final question to be tackled: do we (still) need "Malinowskian" anthropologists in the Alps?

5. Do We Need a "Malinowskian" Anthropology in the Alps?

References to Malinowski in the anthropological literature on the Alps are few and far between. Interestingly, one of these rare references is to be found in a critical survey of Swiss folklore studies by Werber Krauß, where Niederer is lauded for his use of a functionalist perspective "in Malinowski's sense" (Krauß, 1987, p. 36). The main reason for such a dearth of references is in all likelihood that Malinowski's methodological legacy has long been taken for granted. For Anglophone anthropologists, the adoption of a basically Malinowskian approach was axiomatic (and therefore unnecessary to mention) for nearly half a century, from the pioneering community studies started in the 1950s up to the ones conducted in the 1990s by such scholars as Patrick Heady (1999) and Jaro Stacul (2003). A British-trained Italian, Stacul is in no

doubt that Malinowski's legacy "played a central role in ethnographic fieldwork training until very recently" (Stacul, 2018, p. 96). As a doctoral student in Cambridge, he was given methodological recommendations that are strikingly reminiscent of the advice Varga received from Malinowski back in the 1930s. This may be no longer true today, though. As Stacul himself points out:

> whereas "classic" ethnographic research largely involved focusing on groups of people with a connection with a place, with a locality, movements of peoples and the widespread use of electronic communication have had dramatic consequences on anthropological research … One question that such developments raise is how far the fieldwork style pioneered by Malinowski remains a valuable tool at a time when people, goods, money, and knowledge travel with a speed and frequency that were unthinkable until a few years ago, and the spread of electronic communication has challenged commonly-held ideas about the connections between people and places. (Stacul, 2018, p. 97)

These changing global scenarios certainly contribute to explaining why in the past two decades the Alps have witnessed a sensible decline of community studies based on prolonged and intensive fieldwork[6]. In the Alpine region, however, other factors must also be taken into account. Throughout the second half of the twentieth century the Alps were frequently chosen by Ph.D. students for their dissertations, which involved the use of community-study methods and the classical stay of one year in one place. The use of English as an academic *lingua franca* was instrumental in giving Alpine anthropology an international breath and putting the Alps on the world anthropological map. Since the beginning of the new millennium – at least on the Italian side of the crescent, but probably also in the rest of the Alps – the *Amerikaner* have virtually disappeared and an opposite tendency towards a de-internationalization and "nativization" of research can be observed (Zanini & Viazzo, 2020, pp. 21–22).

Mountains may well be almost conventionally "remote areas", as Edwin Ardener (1988, p. 41) once suggested in his contribution to a volume on anthropology at home, but the Alpine valleys are close enough to allow "native" anthropologists (mainly working in universities located in nearby cit-

6 There are of course a few notable exceptions: see e.g., Zanini (2015) and Giliberti (2020).

ies) to opt for relatively brief visits repeated over time or short-term research spells targeted on specific issues of practical relevance to the territories that are investigated. Often funded by regional or local governments and public or private institutions, Alpine studies are therefore shifting, or returning, to what Berardino Palumbo (2018, p. 111) has termed "fieldwork Italian style". It is noteworthy that this "hit and run" approach – ultimately rooted in the approach to field research favoured by De Martino in opposition to the community-study method supported by Tentori – has been explicitly and unfavourably compared by Palumbo with an alternative, fatally more time-consuming but eventually more fruitful style he calls "Malinowskian"[7]. Spatial (and linguistic) closeness to the field may be an advantage, but it can turn into a serious risk if it lures anthropologists into settling for short-breathed and inevitably more superficial researches[8]. As a corrective to this insidious risk, it would therefore seem that the Alps still need a Malinowskian anthropology.

7 See Palumbo's recent intervention to a round table on ethnographic research in Italy (Mirizzi, Palumbo, Resta & Ricci, 2019, p. 633).

8 It is only fair to emphasize that this was definitely not the case with *Volkskundler* working in the Austrian and Swiss Alps, where the "Americans", as rightly noted by Krauß (2018, p. 5), "met researchers who literally inhabited their fields for huge parts of their life" and understandably regarded the studies conducted by their colleagues from across the Atlantic as short, hasty and therefore inevitably superficial. There was, however, a tendentially beneficial trade-off between the intensiveness of the community studies carried out by the Americans and the extensiveness of their Austrian and Swiss colleagues' long-term investigations. It remains a moot question whether the "classical stay of one year in one place" may be sufficient to solidly combine ethnographic and historical research, especially when the latter is not limited to exercises in historical demography or other varieties of analytical history.

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Anthropology and History in the Alps. Intricate Chronologies and References

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> Maitland [1899] has said that anthropology must choose between being history and being nothing. … I accept the dictum, though only if it can also be reversed – history must choose between social anthropology or being nothing. (Evans-Pritchard, 1961, p. 20)

> For both disciplines, it is necessary to leave behind those dichotomies that have juxtaposed the objective, material, structural or institutional factors with the subjective, cultural, symbolic or emotional ones. (Medick, 1984, p. 318)

Abstract

The contribution aims to trace the relationship between field research and history in the Alps beginning with Lucie Varga. Varga wrote two texts on the Alpine region – the Montafon in Vorarlberg and the Val Badia in South Tyrol. She was influenced by the French *Annales*, which represented new approaches to historical research, and she was in contact with Malinowski during this time. The main interest is directed towards connections between field research and history in the following decades, which start from different angles. These connections can be established through people who practised both, like Lucie Varga or – albeit with a completely different approach – Hermann Wopfner, through research concepts and methods as represented by the *Annales*, *histoire totale* and microhistory and opposed to the history of events. These links can be found not least in the anthropological studies of villages and regions in the Alps which became noticeably intense in the 1960s and 1970s. These mainly American anthropologists asked different questions, introduced new socio-historical, demographic and ecological approaches and perspectives and, last, but not least, brought the computer into this research.

Bronislaw Malinowski (1884–1942) stands for the paradigm shift that made field research the methodological kingpin of anthropology. The focus of analysis was subsequently on the observable and, in particular, on social structures and relationships. History was out of the picture for decades. This paradigm shift was marked by the publication of two books based on field research in 1922: Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown's *Andaman Islanders* and Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. Although history is omitted in these publications, this fact was not declared programmatically by Malinowski (Viazzo, 2000, p. 36). And it is important to ask which history did the exclusion refer to? Above all, "contingent happenings" were excluded (Thomas, 1996, pp. 19–21). Historians were also critical of event history at this time, especially Marc Bloch (1886–1944) and Lucien Febvre (1878–1956), who represent the first generation of the *Annales*, founded in 1929. They were much more interested in long-term processes, social and economic contexts, and also mentalities (Schöttler, 2015a, p. 26). Thus, there are potentially lines of connection. Pier Paolo Viazzo, anchored in both disciplines, places anthropology's move towards history in the 1950s (2000, pp. 66–67)[1] – 30 years after the exclusion of history. There is no sign of an influence by anthropology on historical research in the German-speaking world until almost 30 years later. In 1978, a first meeting of a circle of anthropologists and historians took place in Göttingen, in 1980 a second one in Paris, and in 1981 and 1983 in Bad Homburg. The resulting volumes had a pioneering character for the orientation of social history towards historical anthropology: one volume dealt with "classes and culture from social anthropological perspectives" (Berdahl et al., 1982), the other with family research under the aspect of "emotions and material interests"; the volume saw itself as a bridge between social anthropological and historical approaches (Medick & Sabean, 1984). The third volume (Lüdtke, 1991) treated "governance as social practice".

But that is not the whole story. As early as in the 1930s, there was an Austrian historian, Lucie Varga, whose work was influenced by ethnology. She is, as it seems, one of the few, from whom a connecting line can be drawn to

1 Pier Paolo Viazzo (2000, pp. 66–67) mentions as context a lecture by Edward Evan Evans-Pritchard in 1950, debated and reprinted in several issues of Man, the most important journal of British social anthropology, in which Evans-Pritchard argued that a society cannot be adequately understood without knowledge of its history (Evans-Pritchard, 1950).

Malinowski and to the Alps.[2] The way there led her via the French Annales. Hence, this contribution aims to trace the relationship between field research and history in the Alps starting with Lucie Varga. The main interest is directed towards connections in the following decades, which will be worked out from different angles. These connections can be established through people who practised both, like Lucie Varga or – albeit with a completely different approach – Hermann Wopfner, through research concepts and methods as represented by the *Annales*, *histoire totale* and microhistory and opposed to the history of events. They can be found not least in the – in many cases American – anthropological studies of villages and regions in the Alps which became noticeably intense in the 1960s and 1970s.[3]

1. Lucie Varga: *Annales* and Ethnology – Montafon and Val Badia

Lucie Varga (1904–1941) had gone into exile in Paris at the turn of the year from 1933 to 1934 through the mediation of Alfons Dopsch to work with Lucien Febvre. She had studied with Dopsch at the Seminar for Economic and Cultural History at the University of Vienna where she completed her doctorate (Schöttler, 1991; 2015b, pp. 152–155; Schöttler, 1993; Kunde & Richter, 2019, pp. 424–438). As a group and journal, the *Annales* represented innovative historical scholarship. They were driven, as Peter Schöttler characterises them, by a "boundless curiosity" and "boundless ambition" (Schöttler, 2015a, pp. 24–25). They made problems the central starting point of their research and thus differed from the mainstream, which was oriented towards a positivist-hermeneutic historicism. Lucie Varga combined ethnology with history in an

2 In the first chapter of her book *Pouvoir, identités et migrations dans les hautes vallées des Alpes occidentales (XVIIe–XVIIIe siècle)* Laurence Fontaine (2003, p. 17) refers not only to Bourdieu but also to Malinowski in connection with the question of strategies of groups and individuals against the background of family dynamics and his book *Crime and Custom in Savage Society*, first published in London in 1926. She draws parallels to the "primitive societies" he studied in terms of the logic that rules are broken when it is in one's own interest to do so but does not refer methodologically to his field research approach.

3 Anthropology and history are closely linked in the books by Pier Paolo Viazzo (1989) and Dionigi Albera (2011); a decisive and comparative historicisation of the Alps is the book by Jon Mathieu (1998/2009).

interdisciplinary way following the *Annales* approach, as in the two texts she wrote on the Alpine region. She was in contact with Malinowski when she stayed in the Montafon in Vorarlberg and in the Val Badia in South Tyrol in the summer months of 1935 and 1936 for her ethnological research (Schöttler, 2015b, pp. 160, 170, n. 100; Varga, 1939/1991b). She explicitly referred to this in a footnote.[4] Her second husband Franz Borkenau, a historian, philosopher of history, sociologist and publicist, with whom she had gone to Paris, worked "in the haze" of Malinowski and participated in his London seminar. Varga knew him through this connection (Schöttler, 2015b, p. 165). Malinowski himself stayed frequently at his house in Oberbozen between 1922 and 1935 (Tauber & Zinn, 2018; Schöttler, 2015b, pp. 170–171).

The influence of the *Annales* and ethnology is clearly visible in the way Lucie Varga conceived her research subject.[5] For example, in the introduction to the text on the Montafon, she wrote that it is difficult to shed light on questions such as the "relationships between economy, society and ideas … on the basis of the past". She concluded: "That is why we should perhaps turn to the present." For this, she explicitly proposed "methods of ethnology", albeit – in the tenor of the time – assuming that she was dealing with "a group of relatively simple people". Her ethnologically inspired methodological approach sounds astonishingly "modern": nothing is "natural", nothing is "self-evident". In a second step, she also reflected on the generating of material as a prerequisite of such an approach. "Every detail must be noted and recorded: the family structure as well as the forms of child rearing, the thought patterns as well as the forms of belief, the ideas of luxury and poverty as well as the rhythm of work and leisure." However, this required a certain way of describing: "The ethnologist … does not translate", he records what is said without "imposing his own terms" – "as a precautionary measure" to avoid anachronisms (Varga, 1936/1991a, p. 146). Decades later, historical anthropology and, most recently, symmetrical anthropology as well as historical se-

4 She writes: "I would like to take the opportunity to thank Professor B. Malinowski (London School of Economics) for the useful suggestions he made to me in preparing this research" (1936/1991a, p. 169, n. 1).

5 Peter Schöttler calls her article on the emergence of the National Socialist mass movement (Varga, 1937), which was also published in the Annales, a "social-anthropological analysis" and thus a "pioneering study of a special kind" (1995, p. 212).

mantics were based precisely on this procedure of making things unfamiliar, even seemingly familiar things.

For Lucie Varga, the path to new insights in history is closely linked to an ethnological approach:

> As far as the past is concerned, we can only question documents and interpret texts. In contrast, a good ethnologist who conducts field research and has psychological empathy will never be satisfied with initial findings and the spontaneous statements of his subjects. He will note the accent and gesture that accompany a statement and sometimes the words will even have the least significance among all the epistemological elements. He will not simply conduct direct interviews, but live with his "tribe" and put himself in their conditions of life. (Varga, 1936/1991a, p. 169, n. 2)

For Lucie Varga, history and ethnology were interrelated, complementary.

2. Hermann Wopfner: *Landeskunde* and Historical *Volkskunde*

At about the same time as Lucie Varga, Hermann Wopfner (1876–1963) wandered the Tyrolean valleys, in fact *all* the valleys of North and South Tyrol.[6] He had first studied history in Innsbruck since 1896. The remark in a lecture that there was still no historical study on Michael Gaismair, the Tyrolean peasant leader of 1525, aroused Wopfner's interest in the Peasants' War and later in economic history. In this context he came across the book by the Leipzig historian Karl Lamprecht *Deutsches Wirtschaftsleben im Mittelalter* (*German Economic Life in the Middle Ages),* published in 1885/86, which motivated his desire to continue his studies with Lamprecht. His path led him first to Vienna in 1897/98, especially to the Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung (Institute for Austrian Historical Research). Wopfner had been disappointed by Viennese economic history. Alfons Dopsch was still teaching Austrian history at the time; the Seminar for Economic and Cultural History, where

6 As a precursor, Wolfgang Meixner and Gerhard Siegl (2019) name Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl (1823–1897) and his *Wanderbuch* (1869).

Lucie Varga would study, was not founded until 1922. In 1898, Wopfner went to Leipzig to Karl Lamprecht and also heard lectures by Karl Bücher, a representative of the Historical School of National Economy (Grass, 1995, pp. VIII–IX). In Leipzig, Wopfner was "confronted by his fellow students with the view that a student should not just sit in his room", but that he "must 'mingle with the people'" (Meixner & Siegl, p. 99). In 1900, he received his doctorate in philosophy in Innsbruck and initially entered the archival service. At the suggestion of Hans von Voltelini, a jurist, historian and legal historian from a noble family of the Italian Tyrol, he also took a doctorate in law. In 1904, he received the authorisation to teach (*venia docendi*) at the University of Innsbruck, and at the end of 1908 he was appointed associate professor there, and in 1914 full professor of Austrian history and economic history (Meixner & Siegl, 2019, pp. 101–102).

After 1919, Wopfner "increasingly included historical *Volkskunde*" – a discipline that dealt with folk life and folk art – in his lectures and subsequently began his hiking tours. There are traces in his estate that he had already begun collecting material before the First World War, but increasingly so from the 1920s onwards (Meixner & Siegl, 2019, pp. 115–116). Comparable to Lucie Varga, he saw this as a way of supplementing written historical sources. He developed a questionnaire for this kind of research and also documented what he saw on photographies (Meixner & Siegl, 2019, p. 105). Unlike Varga, his approach was very immediate. His wanderings were dedicated to the search for "age-old economic forms and economic implements" in order to gain "insight into the economic spirit of past times". He saw the mountain farmer "as the preserver of old traditions handed down by his ancestors" (1995, pp. 7, 9–10)[7]. His aim was to "describe the economic life of the Tyrolean mountain farmer in the past and present", to show the "difficulties with which the mountain farmer had to struggle economically and thus also in his whole life and still does" and how "our mountain farmers have led this quiet but hard struggle with the 'mountain' in honour". His guiding princi-

7 A total of twelve Hauptstücke or "deliveries" were planned, three of which were published in 1951, 1954, and 1960. Together with a new edition of these first three in one volume the Hauptstücke IV to VI were published in a second volume in 1995 posthumously.

ple was: "If you want to get to know a *Volk*,[8] you have to go and see them at work." He himself came from an Innsbruck merchant family.

With his recourse to the "age-old" (*uralt*) and "handed tradition" (*überkommene Überlieferung*), Wopfner represents – in comparison with Lucie Varga and the *Annales* – a completely different approach, an approach that empirical cultural studies decidedly turned against from the late 1960s. Previously, the focus of *Volkskunde* was on "folk realities and traditions – that is, the ascribed simple, constant and natural", which it contrasted with "the dynamics and supposed destructive energy" of its present. The preservation of tradition, the (traditional) order of things and relationships guaranteed clarity (Korff, 1996, pp. 23, 19–20; Langreiter & Lanzinger, 2003, p. 15). Wopfner's approach, which is reminiscent of the history of mentality, is also connected with this idea, and he explicitly brought "historical *Volkskunde*" into play as a complement to economic history (Wopfner, 1932, p. 1). One context was his dissertation topic, the Peasants' War, which he continued to deal with decades later, as he did not consider its causes to have been sufficiently clarified. He drew the following conclusion:

> Without knowledge of the mental state of the people, knowledge of their economic, social, political or religious condition cannot fully explain the states of agitation that emerge in each case. … To ascertain the mental attitude of the German peasants towards the situation of the time, this most difficult task, however, must play a role in the historiography of the Peasants' War more than it has hitherto.

In his view, historical *Volkskunde* was an "indispensable aid to gaining insight into peasant thinking and feeling". However, he assumed that thinking and feeling "have changed little in landscapes with little traffic or where a self-confident peasantry has been resident for a long time" (Wopfner, 1936, pp. 97–98).

By emphasising the "people's soul" (*Volksseele*) and the unchanged, he represented the idea of a "basic psychic structure" and a "collective totali-

8 His "folk-historical" focus, from which he discussed the peculiarity of the German Tyrolean or Alpine Volkstum in various contributions of the 1930s, nevertheless made him "compatible with the emerging National Socialism", even though he rejected it (Meixner & Siegl, 2019, pp. 106–109, 118). For a critical discussion of the concept of Volk, see the book by Michael Wildt (2019).

ty" that was inseparable from the search for historical "origins" (*Ursprünge*) and "archetypes" (*Urformen*) (Jeggle, 2001, 56). In this way, Wopfner produced precisely the kind of anachronism that Lucie Varga – supported by ethnology – considered necessary to avoid in order to be able to research a society historically. The objections to the history of mentality at the end of the 1980s, as formulated by Peter Burke, for example, also go in this direction: consensus in historical societies can, firstly, easily be overestimated if the historian treats "all sorts of attitudes that are foreign to him as homogeneous parts of a uniform mentality". Secondly, "the problem of change arises", which is difficult to explain on the basis of mentality as a closed structure of thought. Mentalities thus effectively become a "prison" (Burke, 1989, pp. 133–134). Historicising, in the sense of contextual situating, is subsequently the claim and the claim to avoid anachronisms.

3. Interdisciplinarity and *histoire totale*

Hermann Wopfner's approach can be characterised as a "mixture of *Landesgeschichte* and *Volkskunde*" (Meixner & Siegl, 2019, p. 97), with economic history always playing an important role. Wopfner attributes the first attempts to approach thinking and feeling to Lamprecht's school, such as the volume by Franz Arens *Das Tiroler Volk in seinen Weistümern* (*The Tyrolean Folk in its Village Statutes*), published in 1904 in the series *Geschichtliche Untersuchungen* (*Historical Studies*) edited by Karl Lamprecht. Assumptions have repeatedly circulated that bring the *Annales* into close connection with German *Landesgeschichte*. Among others, reference is made to the works of Karl Lamprecht. Peter Schöttler (1995, p. 201) takes a sound look at the argument that Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch "received their most important stimuli at the time from Germany". Bloch had studied in Leipzig for a semester in 1908, where he was particularly impressed by Karl Bücher. He was, however, disappointed by Karl Lamprecht (Schöttler, 1995, pp. 203, 205). The broad interdisciplinary approach may superficially appear to be a common feature between German *Landesgeschichte* and the *Annales*. However, as Schöttler states, the *Annales* historians practised an interdisciplinarity of "a different kind". They worked with terms that they drew "primarily from sociology and ethnology". How-

ever, these terms were unsuitable "for ethnically or racially bound concepts such as 'folk and cultural soil' or a vague 'folk history'" (1995, p. 216).[9] Likewise, decisive differences lay in the *Annales*' decided interest in the "innovative methodological way" (Schöttler, 1995, p. 210) and in the *Annales* historians' problem-oriented approach as opposed to the very descriptive *Landesgeschichte*.

Interdisciplinarity was also characteristic of the *Annales* in the form of a *histoire totale*. Conceptually, it goes back further, for example to Émile Durkheim, and was taken up by Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre. It entered a new dimension in the 1970s, when the technical prerequisites for quantifying methods were available, offering entirely new possibilities for analysing serial source material (Schöttler, 2015a, pp. 25–26). Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie took a pioneering path in this sense.[10] His book *Montaillou, Village Occitane de 1294 à 1324*, published in Paris in 1975, is also considered a classic of early *ethnohistoire*, "historical field research" (Hohkamp, 2021, pp. 151–152). The focus is on the Cathars, who were interrogated and persecuted as heretics – and were also already an important topic in three essays by Lucie Varga. Le Roy Ladurie, a student of Fernand Braudel and thus member of a younger *Annales* generation, stood for *histoire totale*; in a biography published in 2018, he is treated as "historien total" (Lemny, 2018). Sections of Le Roy Ladurie's book are concerned with ecology, archaeology, sociology, ethnology and psychology. Robert Fossier (1977, p. 196) states in his detailed review at the beginning: the book demonstrates: "L'histoire totale est possible" – *histoire totale* is possible.

In the context of the *Annales*, *histoire totale* did not mean simply dealing with everything, but with everything that contributes to the understanding

9 As an example, Schöttler cites Lucien Febvre's discussion of the Rhine in the 1930s and thus in a politically very tense period of Franco-German relations: Febvre questioned the concept of the "natural border" and thought of the Rhine as "a product of human history". He deconstructed "the historical and historiographical myths" and opposed "any retrospective identification of Germans and Germanic peoples, of Germany and the Empire" and saw the history of the Rhine primarily as "a history of cities". He thus implemented the concept of a "comparative social and mental history" that had no equivalent in German *Landesgeschichte* of the time (Schöttler, 1995, pp. 217–219).

10 In other respects, there are clearly also points of criticism to be noted, methodologically, for example, insofar as Le Roy Ladurie assumes the immediacy and authenticity of the statements in his work with court records. More refined analytical tools were only formed over time.

of the subject under investigation, starting from research questions. *Histoire totale* represents an interdisciplinary and broadly contextualising method. On the blurb of the American edition, *Montaillou* (Le Roy Ladurie, 1979) is accordingly praised by Keith Thomas as a "wholly successful demonstration of the historian's capacity to bring together almost every dimension of human experience into a single satisfying whole" and, with reference to the *London Times Literary Supplement*, described as "a masterpiece of ethnographic history". In this broad perspective, Le Roy Ladurie basically also coincides with a concept of field research advocated by Malinowski. Montaillou lies at 1,399 metres, but in the Pyrenean highlands – not in the Alps.

4. Anthropology and History: Between Field and Archive

The image of the Alps as traditional – Alfred Helbok (1883–1968) had characterised them in an article of 1931 as "one of the most important European and the most distinctively German relic landscape, the strongest preserver of old forms" (p. 102) – was enduring beyond the Second World War. Historians and *Volkskunde* academics still saw the Alps primarily as a "tradition-preserving relic landscape" in the first post-war decades (Johler, 1995, p. 420). In a sense, the counterpart to such an approach is the work of the anthropologists John W. Cole and Eric R. Wolf: their book *The Hidden Frontier* (1974) on two neighbouring places – the German-speaking St. Felix in South Tyrol and the Romansh-speaking Tret in Trentino – and the articles they published on them in the years around 1974. Their research was conducted in the context of anthropological studies on peasant societies, which were now perceived as complex societies. Their history thus became an integral part of anthropological research. William A. Douglass, for example, took some local studies on southern Italy in a commentary as an opportunity to "raise questions about the methodology of conducting fieldwork in Europe, as well as the relationship between anthropology and history". He pleaded for the complementarity of anthropological and historical approaches (1975, pp. 620, 625). A corresponding mission statement can also be read in the first lines of Cole and Wolf's preface, where they declare, "we believe that anthropology cannot do without

history" (1974, p. XI). However, this also confronted anthropologists with the question of how to use historical sources.

Pier Paolo Viazzo sees working with archival sources as a key moment in the encounter between anthropology and historiography, requiring an engagement with the concepts of the "others", the historians. From an anthropological perspective, however, the archive is often a *locus horribilis*, a daunting, dark and dangerous place that can easily lead one astray from the "right" path. He writes this at the very beginning of his introduction to historical anthropology (p. VII) published in 2000. *The Hidden Frontier* by John W. Cole and Eric R. Wolf is still a fascinating book today (Lanzinger & Saurer, 2010; Lanzinger, 2018). On a closer look archival sources remain very undefined in Cole and Wolf's book, although in their acknowledgements they thank "many archivists who allowed us to examine the documents in their charge, notably P. Tito on the Capuchin monastery in Cles and Don Alessandro Sartori" (Cole & Wolf, 1974, p. XIII). In the introductory first chapter they state: "In addition to interpersonal interviews, we also worked to some extent with archival records." The following is very vague about what exactly was involved:

> Wolf consulted the church records in St. Felix and Tret and the archives in Fondo, Unsere Frau, and Trento. He also worked in the holdings of the Ferdinandeum and the University of Innsbruck. Cole consulted the registry offices in Fondo, Meran, and Cles, as well as the library of the Capuchin monastery in Cles. Both of us made extensive use of the holdings in the library of the Südtiroler Kulturinstitut in Bozen. (Cole & Wolf, 1974, p. 16)

In the fifth chapter, in the section on rentals, payments and services that the peasants had to provide since the Middle Ages, the authors mention at one point "documents" from the years 1396 and 1495, "in which the head of the monastic establishment at Gries grants" a specific "homestead" to a peasant (1974, pp. 105, 108). In chapter 7, in the section "Rights in Estates", there is mention of "property deeds to land" with the explanation that "the deeds registry office for all the Upper Anaunia villages was located in Fondo until the mid-1960s, when records for the German villages were transferred to Meran" (1974, p. 155). There are no footnotes with references to sources, how-

ever. It is therefore not clear which material the two anthropologists actually used and what kind of information came from where.

Nevertheless, *The Hidden Frontier* impressively documents the process of historicising anthropology. As a result, it was history that provided important explanatory potential for differences between the two villages, especially for the question of how interethnic complexity is achieved and organised. In its consequences, the formation and practice of the legal-political status of peasants in German-speaking Tyrol since the late Middle Ages and the beginning of the early modern period proved a particularly effective historical process – in contrast to the neighbouring Romansh-speaking area. Cole and Wolf see the striking "connection to the political sphere" in the fact that the peasantry in the German-speaking Tyrol, which had been represented in the regional assembly (*Landtag*) from the end of the Middle Ages, secured various privileges and showed loyalty over the centuries. Cole and Wolf interpret this in terms of state integration. In contrast, Italian communities were primarily oriented towards the city: "the state is weak. It is the social network that is real." In between there would be "an army of middlemen, go-betweens, brokers – especially lawyers –" who would represent the interests and claims of certain "parties" vis-à-vis the state and lend emphasis to them (Cole & Wolf 1974, p. 267).

> From the very beginning, the St. Felix pauer has a dual role: he is the patriarch within the domestic realm, and public representative of an organizational unit within the community. That is, he plays a certain role within the juro-political domain because of his private status in the social and economic sphere. (Cole & Wolf, 1974, p. 265)

Cole and Wolf establish a connection between the "patterns of authority within the domestic group" and "the wider political field", which was taken up decades later also in historical kinship research. "Not long ago, anthropologists tended to treat questions of kinship quite separately from questions of political organisation, and to interpret kinship structure as divorced from the political matrix. More recently, however, there has been greater interest in tracing the effects of political ordering upon kinship organization" – and vice versa, we would add from a historical perspective since the late 1990s.

The segmental family organisation in Tret, on the other hand, "bears no regular relation to the political field". The position that "all social relations are private" (1974, pp. 264–265) would not be supported by historical kinship research today – based on a broad concept of politics. The boundary between the disciplines that Cole and Wolf crossed with their study was one already breached by anthropology – conversely, permeability was not yet widespread to the same degree, especially at the "margins", especially in social history.

In their approach, Cole and Wolf (1974) set themselves apart from a history consisting of an accumulation of facts: "We are not interested in history conceived as 'one damned thing after another,' but in a history of structures relevant to the Anaunia, in their unfolding over time, and in their mutual relationships." (p. 21). Eric Wolf, in an interview published in 1998, positions history as a complement and alternative to functionalism, which "assumes that there is such a thing as stable structures or cultural organisms in which everything is connected to everything else," but it sidesteps the question of "in what way and to what extent the individual parts are interconnected" (p. 256). In their retrospect (*Rückblick*) in the German translation of *The Hidden Frontier* (1995), Cole and Wolf cite a specific point at which "anthropologists who were concerned with complex systems came into contact with historians who were in turn researching them": namely, where researchers had to "deal not only with the facts of social or but also with the ways in which this complexity is achieved and organized". First and foremost, these were "*social* historians or historically oriented sociologists whose interest was less in the history of events than in the history of social trends [*Strömungen*] and structure". They explicitly refer to representatives of the *Annales*, such as Marc Bloch, and to English Marxist historians, such as Eric J. Hobsbawm.

> They raised questions about relations of dominance and dependence in society, about the ways in which property relations regulated access to land, the role of classes in socio-cultural complexity, class formation and conflicts between classes, and the role of the state in organising society into classes. (Cole & Wolf, 1995, p. 14)

When Eric Wolf, for example, writes about inheritance practices – a key theme of the study – the point is not to establish that different patterns have a long history. In the Italian and Rhaeto-Romanic as well as the western, Rhaeto-

Romanic influenced parts of Tyrol, division of real estates among children prevailed. In contrast, in the more eastern German-speaking parts of Tyrol, the estates were transferred undivided to the next generation. In most cases, one child was designated as the successor, not infrequently the eldest son. It is rather about the "how", the logics behind it, and these logics are conceived as adaptive and changeable. The two different, historically determinable inheritance models are only the starting point, not the explanation, because:

> The story is, however, more complicated than this. … Patterns of inheritance are … historically variable, and not laid down once and for all in some original germ plasm. They constitute adaptive responses to a variety of conditions … I like to think of them less as customs, frozen into some template which replicates itself generation after generations, than as strategies employed by peasants and their masters towards the realization of certain ends. They are therefore variable as those ends themselves are variable. This is best seen in historical perspective. (Wolf, 1970, p. 104)

He thus places history and change at the center.

5. Microstoria and the Villages

An approach that focused on the implications of differences in inheritance practice on social relations made anthropology and explicitly the book *The Hidden Frontier* an important reference for Italian microhistory that had been forming since the late 1960s. In a programmatic contribution to the debate on the relationship between microhistory, social history and anthropology, which he wrote in the late 1970s, Edoardo Grendi locates two important impulses: one came from those anthropological studies that attributed relevance to history, the other from historical local studies in Europe.[11] The interest in

11 In 1972, Grendi edited a volume with important articles from social anthropology with an economic focus: P. Cohen: "Analisi economica e uomo economico"; P. Bohannan-G. Dalton: "Introduzione a Markets in Africa"; E. R. Wolf: "Tipi di comunità contadine latino-americane"; M. D. Sahlins: "Sociologia dello scambio primitivo"; R. Firth: "Capitale risparmio credito in società contadine"; M. Nash: "Contesto sociale della scelta economica in piccola società ..."; S. Epstein: "Efficienza produttiva e sistemi di retribuzione nell'India rurale del Sud"; T. F. Barth: "Circuiti economici in Darfur".

the "how" is methodologically the connecting factor to Cole and Wolf. From Grendi's point of view, two results of Cole and Wolf's study are particularly relevant: the modes of inheritance between ideology and practice and social relations (Grendi, 1977, p. 511).

Social relations as an essential anthropological topic came into greater discussion in social history in the wake of E. P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963) – not, however, in the sense of structures, but as a counter-concept to structures that were increasingly seen as schematising. This was above all a reaction to the confrontation with quantifying historical-social scientific, historical-demographic and family-historical research, which experienced a boom in the wake of the new technical possibilities, created typologies and ultimately wrote a history without people. The limits of quantitative approaches were at the same time linked to theoretical-methodological as well as conceptual problems, especially with regard to the classifications of social groups and strata through quasi-automatic allocations – according to age, gender, wealth, occupation, place of residence, choice of partner, etc. – and the abstraction that inevitably resulted from this. In contrast, microhistorians, as Edoardo Grendi wrote in his commentary, raised the call for case studies (1977, pp. 505–510). Such an approach can make social relations visible in their dynamics and logics by analysing processes in specific situations and their specific contexts and by relating different sources to each other: church records that identify married couples, parents and children, witnesses to marriage, godparents, files on notarial negotiations of property and assets, on conflicts and criminal cases, on taxes and administration, purchases and sales, loans and debts, etc. Inspired by social and cultural anthropology, Grendi names a whole series of topics that should be dealt with in a microhistorically and historically anthropologically informed social history: family and kinship – beyond household typologies –, all forms of social relations including patronage and clientage relations, the socially and always also legally shaped practice of inheritance and bequest, dowry, kinship marriages or credit relations.

To be able to historically examine the network of interpersonal relationships and social and legal practices from a perspective of proximity – which is a central criterion of Italian microhistory – Grendi (1977, p. 518) considered the peasant village (*villaggio contadino)* a particularly suitable field of inves-

tigation. This was undoubtedly also anthropologically inspired. As a result, microhistory was often equated with the study of villages. Giovanni Levi opposed this in a twofold sense. On the one hand, he made it clear: "Historians do not study villages" – meaning in their totality – "they study *in* villages" (Levi, 1992, p. 96). He took over this sentence from Clifford Geertz (Levi, 1992, p. 98), who was otherwise heavily criticised with his approach of thick description, above all because of the ethnologist's unlimited interpretative authority and power. Geertz already stated in 1973: "The locus of study is not the object of study. Anthropologists don't study villages (tribes, towns, neighbourhoods ...); they study in villages." (Geertz, 1973, p. 22) There were thus convergences on this central question. Basically, this is also a certain demarcation from *histoire totale*.

On the other hand, Levi repeatedly and resolutely opposed the equation of microhistory with village and local history. This was "certainly not it, and above all: a course of life, a document in need of explanation, a ritual, a street, a house, an event – all these can be microhistory" (Levi, 2017, p. 115). According to Giovanni Levi in the introduction to the special issue of *Quaderni storici* on the topic of villages (*villaggi*) with the subtitle *Studi di antropologia storica – Studies in Historical Anthropology –*, working in a village is an artifice that brings with it practical research advantages in terms of the reconstruction possibilities and contextualisation of a thematic complex in the densest possible network (Levi, 1981, p. 9). The special issue is introduced as the publication of a first group of research on communities (*ricerche di comunità)* in connection with a micro-analytical approach. Levi opposes a history that a priori assumes certain causal connections and then finds them in the result – in this way, no new explanations can be arrived at. A micro-historical study, on the other hand, does not yet know "the name of the murderer" and examines the manifold relationships – horizontal and vertical. The relationships worked out in this way can provide very helpful explanations about social logics and how a society was organised. Explicitly, the problem of the structural-functionalist interest in the rule-like is also addressed here, while microhistory is interested in the contradictoriness of rules and norms, in the adopted strategies and in choices at the personal level or of certain groups.

Grendi sees a direct connection between a holistic approach and fieldwork: the latter enables him – but he probably sees this too simply and too

optimistically – to grasp the connections between different phenomena very quickly – *immediatamente* – whereas historians have to put series of analyses side by side (Grendi, 1977, p. 511). In any case, Cole and Wolf (1974, p. 12) present their fieldwork quite differently. "Though we have talked to all the people in both communities and participated in many different events during more than three combined years of fieldwork, we shall be quite content if we can explicate the more formal and structural aspects of village life."

With a view to the formation of *microstoria* and, somewhat later, of historical anthropology, Pier Paolo Viazzo (2000, p. 17) comes to a conclusion that may seem paradoxical at first glance: now even the "enemies of history", above all Malinowski and Claude Lévi-Strauss, would be appointed precursors. But the new orientations of the time, which defined themselves as counter-concepts to mainstream history, are comparable to those of Malinowski at the point where he defines the goal of the ethnographer as "to grasp the natives' point of view" (1922, p. 25). Thus, Edoardo Grendi (1977, p. 520) sees the task of microhistorical social history as establishing the cultural distance to contemporary society, grasping it through its relational content and reconstructing the dynamics of social practice[12]. This was also the aim of the approach of a history of mentality which had great significance for the first *Annales* generation.[13] The central issue was, "not to rashly reduce the foreign to the familiar" (Schöttler, 1991, p. 71). This can be made equally useful methodically for societies that are spatially as well as temporally "distant".

Malinowski's diary (1967, p. 114) contains an extensive entry from 13 November 1917 in which he ruminates on the relationship between (diary) writing and observing and on the fact that what is observed changes in trained writing: "experience in writing leads to entirely different results even if the observer remains the same". This led him to the conclusion that there were no "objectively existing facts", instead "theory creates facts". And further: "There is no such thing as 'history' as an independent science. History is observation of facts in keeping with a certain theory; an application of this

12 For the term translated here as "practice", he uses *comportamento*, which means behaviour, conduct, and in any case includes the level of action.

13 The history of mentality brings with it the problem that mentality intended in terms of prefigured attitudes and viewpoints ultimately has the effect of putting people in a "prison" and that change cannot be explained. This approach was therefore criticised in the context of the New Social History and the cultural turn in the 1980s and 1990s.

theory to the facts as time gives birth to them." Such a constructivist and theory-guided approach was to shape German-language historical scholarship only one or two decades later, and only in some fields.

6. Anthropologists in the Alps

It was a distinctive and innovative feature of the approach in *The Hidden Frontier* that Cole and Wolf grasped ethnicity not only as a political category in the narrower sense, but as an anthropological category, for the understanding of which aspects such as the organisation of social relations – labour, family and kinship relations – inheritance practices and ecology became the focus of attention. In this respect, in the 1960s and early 1970s, they asked very "different questions … than *Volkskunde* academics and historians from Europe have done" (Ortmayr, 1992, p. 133). The disregard for *The Hidden Frontier*, which stimulated and helped to shape Anglo-Saxon discourse, "in the place of the investigations, in South Tyrol and in Trentino itself" is evidenced not least by the fact that it was not translated into German and Italian until twenty years later (Johler, 1995, p. 420; Kezich, 2020). Thus, it was mainly anthropologists who conducted innovative research on villages in the Alps in the 1960s and 1970s.[14]

Fifteen years after Edoardo Grendi's programmatic contribution, Norbert Ortmayr (1992) took stock under the title *Americans in the Alps*. Although, as Pier Paolo Viazzo notes in his contribution to this volume, not all of the authors mentioned by Ortmayr were Americans, they were nevertheless influenced by Anglo-Saxon research approaches. In contrast to the historians of the time, anthropologists in the Alps analysed, as Ortmayr states (1992),

> not local customs in the course of the year, but asked about the social function of ritual acts, they did not reconstruct local historical details, but asked how open or closed local societies in the Alps were, nor were they content with research-

14 Just published Philipp S. Katz's, *„Du, Forscher, du!" Ein Amerikaner im Bergdorf Stuls. Über den sozialen Wandel der 1970er Jahre* [„You, Researcher, You!" An American in the Mountain Village of Stuls. On Social Change in the 1970s], based on his unpublished dissertation *Social and Economic Change in a South Tyrolese Community* (University of Massachusetts Amherst, 1975), which he did with John Cole.

> ing the number of inhabitants of Alpine settlements over the decades, but asked about the relationship between natural resources and population size, developed ecosystemic models that depicted this relationship, investigated those regulatory mechanisms that peasant societies had developed to maintain a balance between ecosystem factors, population and environment.

He attributes the fascination of the Alps to cultural diversity and refers to Eric Wolf's view of a "magnificent laboratory" (Ortmayr, 1992, p. 134; Wolf, 1972, p. 201). Note 5 in Ortmayr's text includes a page of references to American or American-inspired anthropological studies from the late 1960s and the 1970s on French, Swiss, Tyrolean and Styrian villages and valleys in the Alps. Ecological anthropology is very well represented with several contributions; others are devoted to social processes and changes, local and familial organisation, property and property transmission. Overall, a wide range of approaches, topics and theoretical-methodological reflections is evident. Malinowski does not appear in the references of the articles viewed.

Ellen Wiegandt (1977), for example, deals with the type and composition of inheritance shares in the Swiss mountain village of Mase in the Canton of the Valais, where real division among all children was common. She calculates the Gini coefficient based on a sample for the period between 1850 and 1875. The aim is to gain insights into the (in-)equality effect of inheritance divisions among siblings. Robert McC. Netting (1979, pp. 195, pp. 201–205) explores the economic and political background of "permanent patrilines" in Törbel, whose existence he comments as "surprising": 12 out of 21 patrilineal kinship groups were able to continue from 1700 into the 1970s. Unlike the others, he published his text in German and in a historiographical journal. George R. Saunders (1979), in his study of a village "in the Maritime Alps of northwestern Italy", focuses on "psychocultural aspects of family life" and addresses particularly conflictual configurations in his field research: father and son, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

Ortmayr also lists essays by Eric R. Wolf and John W. Cole, which they published on Tret and St. Felix. Among other things, Eric Wolf (1962, 1970) concentrates on the foundations of property and inheritance law since the Middle Ages and discusses the logic and consequences of inheritance law and real division, especially the relationship between norm, ideology and

practice. As in *The Hidden Frontier*, he refers to Alfons Dopsch's *Herrschaft und Bauer in der deutschen Kaiserzeit – Rule and Peasant under German Emperors* – of 1964 and emphasises the concept of "mutual dependence between lord and peasant" (1970, pp. 106–107). He also refers to Hermann Wopfner's *Bergbauernbuch* (1970, p. 105). The historical approach includes extended periods of time and, above all, focusses on change. From John W. Cole's point of view, "the social analysis of change appears to be a central concern of modern anthropology. The question is not whether change can be analysed, but rather how to do it." In the article on Tret and St. Felix, Cole (1973) is interested in social process – here in the singular – "instead of structures" and how "social process in the communities we study are interwoven with their 'biological, ecological, and social environments'" (p. 784). In addition, there is the integration "into larger scale political-economic processes" which, among other things, help to determine inheritance practices. He describes inheritance practices as "intermediate patterns, with some degree of division of estates and varying degrees of inequality of shares … in seemingly endless variations" (Cole, 1977, pp. 123, 131).

Eric R. Wolf (1972) also includes law as a flexible instrument: "The property connexion in complex societies is not merely an outcome of local or regional ecological processes, but a battleground of contending forces which utilize jural patterns to maintain or restructure the economic, social and political relations of society" (pp. 201–202). What is striking and important here is that the focus is not only on change but also on "maintain". Not everything can be grasped through social change and maintain does not happen by itself. Maintain also does not mean the "age-old" of the *Landesgeschichte* and *Volkskunde*, the question is rather: How can something be kept in the status quo in a constantly changing world? Who does it, how and for what interest? Equally important is the notion of "restructuring" as a form of change that relates new demands or possibilities to what already exists.

Looking at the references, a discursive field of anthropologists in the Alps becomes clear, since the authors refer to each other in their texts. They discuss at symposia – for example on the topic of "Dynamics of Ownership in the Circum-Alpine Area". This resulted in a special issue of the *Anthropological Quarterly* in 1972. The symposium took place in New York City in November 1971 as part of the 70th annual meeting of the American Anthropologi-

cal Association. Gerald Berthoud,[15] the editor of the special issue, comments: "The emphasis was on one or several aspects of the complex relationship between property rights and social organisation." In the introduction he refers to Marx – and also to Marc Bloch and his book *Les caractères originaux de l'histoire rurale française*, published in Paris in 1952, with regard to "common lands" and "seigneural rights" (Berthoud, 1972b, p. 120). In his own contribution, he draws on court records from the period between 1883 and 1967 for his study in Vernamiege, an Alpine community of the Swiss canton Valais. Gérald Berthoud wanted to find out "different kinds of social change, based on the type and frequency of conflicts related to the use, possession and transmission of landed property", which are considered as indicators. He chose three different time periods for his study in order to be able to show clear shifts: possession-related court cases are decreasing, from 63 per cent in 1883 to 1930, to 57 per cent in 1931 to 1950 and finally 20 per cent in 1951 to 1967. At the same time, the percentage of "inheritance and joint property disputes" is increasing in comparison to "damages to real estate and encroachments upon landed rights disputes" (Berthoud, 1972a, pp. 178, 180, 185–186, 193–194). Wolf (1972, p. 202) mentions the "rules governing the distribution of decision-making power in the family" as another important aspect in his commentary on one of the contributions. John W. Cole wrote about cultural adaptations in the Eastern Alps, including "the organisation of village resources", the community lands and high pastures in some Nonsberg communities.

The comments also identify points of criticism: John J. Honigmann (1972) mentions the anthropologists' preference for "rural cultures" in his commentary with a critical undertone. Although they make the interdependencies with "national societies" visible, "we still frequently leave field study of the urban or actively urbanising scene to sociologists" (pp. 196, 199).[16] And he

15 He comes from French-speaking Switzerland, studied in Paris and spent time in Berkeley and Montréal before becoming professor of cultural and social anthropology at the Faculté des sciences sociales et politiques of the Université de Lausanne in 1972. https://www.unil.ch/ssp/fr/home/menuinst/formations/enseignantes/professeures-honoraires/berthoud-gerald.html (10 February, 2022).

16 John J. Honigmann and Irma Honigmann themselves examined, for example, contracts in the Styrian Altirdning: labour contracts of farmers, rental contracts and intergenerational property transfer or retirement contracts, for which they use the German terms *Übertragung, Übertrag* – transfer.

missed "knowing what the Alpine people themselves think and feel about farming, work in factories, tourism, inheritance, litigation, and other subjects" (p. 200). For historians, this again raises the question of whether sources exist that can provide an answer like diaries or letters? For historical anthropology and social history oriented to contemporary history, oral history offered an approach to such questions from the beginning of the 1980s. Lucie Varga already had a special sensitivity in this field in the 1930s and at the same time an open approach. She addressed seemingly paradoxical situations resulting from the overlapping of rural space and urban "modernity", which already met in Alpine valleys in the 1930s and resulted in mutual appropriation processes, but also dependencies. Thus, she stated: "The wives and daughters of tourists dress peasantly, while the peasant youths adopt urban fashion." And even then, "the folkloric expectations of foreigners are increasingly disappointed." She asked the women why they exchanged their traditional costumes for "city dresses". Not stopping at their arguments that they were more hygienic and cheaper, she went deeper in her analysis and showed that fashionable dress also had something to do with the expectations of young men towards young women (Varga, 1936/1991a, pp. 156–157). In the 1970s, the transformation of communities was an issue, but rather subordinate and mainly economically defined.

The historicisation of anthropological research in a historical perspective since the 1950s had the effect of bringing to the fore surprisingly long periods of time from the point of view of historiography, which was dissected into epochs: The Hidden Frontier goes back to the Middle Ages and so do various articles published by Cole and Wolf in its setting; Robert K. Burns Jr. places it in the Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages (1963, pp. 133–134). This was also common practice in *Landesgeschichte*. Hermann Wopfner (1951/1995) begins his explanations in the *Bergbauernbuch* with the history of settlement in the third millennium BC. However, anthropologists were always concerned with specific questions.

One important voice is still missing: In his article, Pierre Centlivres (1980) spoke of a "new 'rush'" of American anthropologists towards the Alps, especially the Valais valleys, from the mid-1960s onwards (p. 35), taking a critical look at a number of studies from the perspective of an anthropologist trained

in Switzerland.[17] He states that the American scholars worked with different approaches, but that often unquestioned assumptions about Swiss federalism, liberalism and the autonomy of the communities were also in play. He points out that the search for a model uniting pluralism and political consensus was at stake – for example, in wide-ranging comparisons with regions of what was then called the "third world" (pp. 40, 43–44). This, however, did not take into account local and regional differences, resulting in a random picture, for instance when comparing different levels of adaptation (p. 54). Critically Centlivres notes, among other things, that these American studies explored the villages in a manner too detached and isolated from the broader political-administrative environment. On the positive side, he credits the Americans in Valais for introducing theoretical and conceptual frameworks that had not been applied to research on the Alps before. Furthermore, they contributed to renew the methodological and technical toolbox by processing documents that covered long periods of time and by using computers, especially in the field of historical demography (p. 53).

7. Conclusions

After reading texts on villages in the Alps from the 1970s by American or American-inspired anthropologists, it is clear that German-language historical scholarship was very sluggish and cumbersome. The anthropologists who researched the Alps posed questions, applied concepts and presented empirically innovative, methodologically reflective and problem-centred research. In the mid-1980s, everyday history, historical anthropology and microhistory still had to fight for recognition of all this in the German-speaking world: the historians' dispute between the historical social science of the Bielefeld School on the one hand and everyday history and historical anthropology on the other at the Deutsche Historikertag – German historians' main conference – in 1984 may suffice here as an indication. The dispute flared up over a paper by Hans Medick (1984) entitled "Missionare im Ruderboot" – "Missionaries in the Rowboat" –, in which he addressed methodological ap-

17 I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers of this volume for this important hint.

proaches of ethnology as a challenge and stimulus for social history (Lindenberger, 2003). And historians first had to laboriously develop the vocabulary necessary to adequately express a new way of thinking about history in a historical-anthropological approach. This had long been common in America, opening up exciting research perspectives.

In the 1980s and 1990s, it was representatives of different fields of research and approaches in social history – the history of the family, the history of everyday life, historical anthropology – who focused on historical actors and their perceptions as well as social groups, social logics and processes, and who also oriented themselves towards anthropological themes, questions and methods. As the spotlights of this article have shown – starting from Lucie Varga and her reference to Malinowksi – social, economic and cultural history as well as social and cultural anthropology have their own internal dynamics and chronologies. There were various moments of a certain rapprochement, which were also shaped by the textures of the time, but decisively by certain personalities who were open to "other" approaches, who sought exchange, who were internationally networking, who read and discussed the studies of the 'others' and drew inspiration for their own work from them and who saw themselves as belonging here and there. However, important debates and orientations in anthropology and in social, cultural and economic history have been and continue to be mostly time-delayed and were and are at the same time always anchored in the history of their own discipline. Thus, the question remains whether and how a transdisciplinary dialogue on approaches, concepts and topics could be organised and established in the long term. In this context, it is not "the" history that can be addressed, but subfields – such as social history and historical anthropology. Personal exchange as well as joint projects and research cooperations are probably the best way.

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On the Tracks of the Malinowskis in Oberbozen and Bozen

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Abstract

Using biographical bibliographical sources, especially Wayne (1995b), in the frame of the history of anthropology, this chapter contributes to trace the presence of Bronislaw Malinowski (1884–1942), his wife Elsie R. Masson (1890–1935), and their children in Oberbozen and Bozen in the 1920s and 1930s. It focuses on the houses where the family lived, such as the villa they bought in Oberbozen, and the flats they rented in Gries (Bozen), highlighting the historical and sociocultural context of these places. Drawing on the correspondence of the couple, published by their daughter Helena Malinowska Wayne (1925–2018), on some of their writings, and on newspaper articles of that period, this article describes both the local and the cosmopolitan social networks in which the Malinowskis were involved during the time they spent in Oberbozen and Bozen. It reconstructs the relations of the couple with friends, relatives and colleagues who used to visit them, as well as those with new friends, acquaintances, and neighbours in Oberbozen and Bozen, paying special attention to Elsie Masson's relationships and to her critique of the Fascist regime, looking at the Malinowskis' family story within the context of the history of this Alpine region.

1. Family Stories Within the History of Anthropology

In line with a biographical (Carsten et al., 2018; Lohmann, 2008) and relational theoretical frame (Salvucci et al., 2019; Strathern, 2018), this chapter looks at life trajectories, family stories, and social networks, highlighting the collective, material, and narrative dimensions of the history of sociocultural anthropology. Through the correspondence of Bronislaw Malinowski and his wife Elsie R. Masson, published by their daughter Helena Malinowska Wayne

in 1995, it follows the family's presence in Oberbozen and Bozen[1] in the 1920s and 1930s, retracing the social network of the couple within the reconstruction provided by Wayne (1995b). These networks are both connected to the territory, thereby including new friends, acquaintances, neighbours, and employees in Oberbozen and Bozen, and international, involving Malinowskis' friends, relatives and colleagues who lived in different cities throughout Europe and Australia, and used to join the family in holiday.

Following the tracks of the Malinowskis in Oberbozen and Bozen, therefore, means to deepen into the history of these territories and contextualize at a social and historical level the places dwelled by the family and its networks, such as the upper-class village of Oberbozen with its *Sommerfrischhäuser* (holiday houses) on the Ritten-Renon plateau, and the *Kurort* (spa town) Gries in Bozen-Bolzano. Such an attempt also entails looking at local social environments and class relations, those between upper-class and peasant neighbours, and between local people and cosmopolitan visitors of the Malinowski family. The Malinowskis have been considered as cosmopolitans themselves (Gellner, 1998), according to their international biographies, connected to the Polish territories of the Habsburg Empire in the case of Malinowski and to the British Commonwealth and the migration from Scotland to Australia in the case of Masson. Cosmopolitanism also refers to the lifestyle of the Malinowskis and their international visitors. These upper and middle-class people used to move throughout Europe, visiting each other, meeting in Paris, London, Vienna, gathering for holiday in Southern French Riviera or in the Alps. As a network of liberal intellectuals, they shared a "romantic" imaginary and a kind of "bourgeois-bohemian" sensibility, as we would say nowadays. They praised science as well as arts, literature, and music, and appreciated travelling by being both fascinated with "exoticism" and pleased with comfort, being part of that "culture of cosmopolitism", which has been developing in the Alps through middle and upper-class tourism since the second half of the 19th century.

1 In their private correspondence, Malinowski and Masson usually referred to Bozen-Bolzano and Oberbozen-Soprabolzano using the German names. Nevertheless, Malinowski used the Italian names in the address as we can see in several letters he wrote to friends and colleagues, which are held in the archives at Yale University (Bronislaw Malinowski papers (MS19), Sterling Memorial Library, Yale, CT, United States.

This chapter is based on ongoing research on the tracks of the Malinowskis in Oberbozen and Bozen, which aims to contribute, on the one hand, to the debate on the biographical approach within the history of anthropology. This approach underlines the production of "anthropological data" (Lohmann, 2008) through the study of life stories and family stories of anthropologists, stressing parallels with the biographic approach as an ethnographic resource in anthropology (Carsten et al., 2018). On the other hand, this research promotes the study of the local society and history through the lens of personal and family stories, looking at the interconnection between local networks and cosmopolitan ones.

As a first step of this research, I retraced the Malinowskis' network of both local inhabitants and international visitors in Oberbozen and Bozen following the biographical reconstruction produced by Helena Malinowska Wayne (1995b). In fact, the most important documents testifying to the presence of the Malinowskis in Oberbozen and Bozen are the letters they exchanged in the 1920s and 1930s, a wide selection of which were edited and published by their youngest daughter in two fundamental volumes (Wayne, 1995a, 1995b). Drawing on these as well as on other letters exchanged by Elsie Masson and her relatives, Selleck (2013) too reports on the story of the Malinowskis in South Tyrol within his consistent reconstruction of the story of the Masson family (Selleck, 2013, pp. 285–286, 288–291, 307–330). References to the presence of the Malinowskis in Oberbozen can also be found in the writings of Malinowski's students, such as Raymond Firth (1957, p. 10) and Hortense Powdermaker (1966, pp. 43–44), who used to visit Malinowski in Oberbozen, together with other colleagues (Cole, 1977, p. 350; Kuper, 1996, p. 20; Wayne, 1985, p. 536; 1995b). Other extremely valuable biographical sources on Malinowski and Masson do not tend to focus on the period the couple spent in South Tyrol (Drucker-Brown, 1988; Ellen et al., 1988; Gellner, 1998; Gross, 1986; Richardson, 2016; Skalník, 1995; Stocking, 1995; Young 2004; 2018).[2]

2 At a local level, in the past years, several attempts to document the presence of Bronislaw Malinowski in Oberbozen and Bozen have been made, since a symposium was organized in October 1993 in Lengmoos (on the Ritten plateau, above the city of Bozen) to honour his memory. In that occasion a commemorative plaque was attached to the façade of Malinowski's house in Oberbozen. Helena Malinowska Wayne took part in the symposium, speaking on "an English-Polish couple in Oberbozen", together with local intellectuals and

As we know from the letters they exchanged (Wayne, 1995a, 1995b), Elsie Masson and Bronislaw Malinowski, who referred to each other as "Elsie" and "Bronio" (Bronislaw's nickname), met in Melbourne in 1916, after he had come back from his first fieldwork in the Trobriand Islands.[3] They then started working together[4] and socialised with the same group of friends that included Hede and Paul Khuner, an Austrian Jewish couple who had been stranded in Australia during the First World War, Marnie Masson, Elsie's sister, their close friend Mim Weigall, and others. This group used to call itself

other scholars from Budapest and Innsbruck (*Dolomiten*, 1993, October 15, p. 20; October 16, p. 7). In 2006, the Polish journalist and author Ryszard Kapuscinski was invited to visit the city and give a talk at the Centre for Peace of the Municipality of Bolzano. In his public speech, he referred to Malinowski and to his stay in Oberbozen and Bozen, revealing this story to a wider local audience as well as to the local press. Kapuscinski also went to Oberbozen and visited Villa Malinowski. To commemorate the anniversary of Kapuscinski's death, in January 2017 the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano organized a conference entitled "Kapuscinski and Malinowski: on the traces of the other", and the Municipality placed a plaque in memory of Malinowski in front of the old Municipal house in Gries, the Bozen neighbourhood where the Malinowskis lived from 1926 to 1929. The Municipality also dedicated a tree to the famous social anthropologist on the "Hill of the Sages", a public park area in the southern part of Bozen-Bolzano, which celebrates the memory of prominent personalities connected to the city who were committed to improving knowledge and common good (*Alto Adige*, 2017, January 22, https://www.altoadige.it/cultura-e-spettacoli/a-bolzano-sulle-tracce-di-malinovski-1.365225). Although these efforts aimed to celebrate Bronislaw Malinowski as a great and well-known anthropologist, they omitted reference to his wife, Elsie Masson. Since its foundation in 2016, the MFEA-Malinowski Forum for Ethnography and Anthropology (https://mfea.projects.unibz.it/), coordinated by Elisabeth Tauber and Dorothy Zinn at the Free University Bozen-Bolzano, has aimed to investigate the story of the Malinowski family in South Tyrol, paying special attention to Masson and to her work, highlighting her role in Malinowski's own scientific production (Salvucci, 2017, 2021, 2022; Salvucci et al., 2019, 2022; Tauber & Zinn 2018, 2021).

3 In line with the biographical sources (Wayne, 1995a; Young, 2004), Orme Masson, Elsie's father, a Scottish professor at Melbourne University, together with other colleagues, introduced Malinowski to the University's social environment and to the families of the University scholars. At that time, Elsie Masson, who had already visited the Northern Territories and written her book (Masson, 1915), was attending a training course as a nurse at Melbourne hospital. As Malinowski had already read her book, having been himself interested in Australian aboriginal cultures (Malinowski, 1913), he asked her for help to process the ethnographic material he had collected in the Trobriand Islands during his first fieldwork.

4 According to several sources (Firth, 1988, 2004; Malinowski, 1967; Selleck, 2013; Wayne, 1985; 1995a, 1995b; Young, 2004) and to the already mentioned MFEA research project (Salvucci, 2021; Salvucci et al., 2019; Tauber & Zinn, 2018, 2021), there is evidence that Masson supported her husband's successful career, assisting him as a reader, a discussant, and a copy editor of his manuscripts. Before meeting Malinowski in 1916 and then moving to Europe with him in 1920, Masson travelled throughout the Australian Northern Territories in 1913–1914, taking part in explorations, and writing newspaper articles on her travelling, which were later collected in a book (Masson, 1915). Her work focused on colonial society and the colonization process of this part of the country, looking at the situation of aboriginal people, and fostering a new humanitarian concern toward them (Lydon, 2016).

"The Clan" (Selleck, 2013, p. 202; Wayne, 1995a, p. xvii; Young, 2004, pp. 457–460) and remained closely linked even after most of its members left Australia to move to Europe. They kept in touch by letters and visited each other in Vienna, where the Khuners lived and where Mim Weigall moved to after marriage, or in London where Malinowski worked or in Oberbozen where the Malinowskis chose to make their home in the 1920s. After the couple moved to South Tyrol in 1922–1923, as early as 1924, Malinowski started living between Oberbozen and London, where he taught at the London School of Economics, whereas Masson resided permanently in Oberbozen, and later in Bozen, together with their three daughters. Although the Malinowskis moved from Oberbozen to London in 1929, they continued to holiday in Oberbozen and to host their friends there in the 1930s.[5] After the Second World War, the daughters took on the management of the house in Oberbozen, where they and their families holidayed and even lived for longer periods. Today, the Malinowsksis' grandchildren take care of the family house in Oberbozen. Their social networks in the village include some of the offspring of their parents and grandparents' friends, neighbours, and acquaintances.

2. Houses and Neighborhoods in Oberbozen: A Social and Historical Contextualization

The Malinowskis arrived in Oberbozen following a suggestion of the Khuners' friend, Hans Busch (Wayne, 1995b, p. 27), who became a close friend of the Malinowskis too, together with his wife Berta (Wayne, 1995b, p. 245).[6] In Oberbozen the Malinowskis rented an apartment in a house near the little

5 In this period Masson went to Oberbozen when travelling to spas in central Europe, where she attempted to cure her serious illness, diagnosed as multiple sclerosis, which led to her death in 1935 in Natters, near Innsbruck. A few years later, in 1938, Malinowski went to the USA as a visiting Professor, and at the outbreak of the Second World War he decided to remain there, where his daughters and his new partner, then second wife, Valetta Swann joined him. He was appointed to teach at Yale University, where he died prematurely in 1942.

6 As reconstructed by Wayne (1995a, p. 169) Elsie Masson visited the Khuners as well as the Buschs in Vienna in November 1925. They corresponded with each other and after the rise of Nazism in 1933, she kindly wrote to the Buschs supporting them and the Jewish cause. When Masson, already seriously ill, stopped in Vienna in May 1935 during her trip to a spa town on the border between the Czech Republic and Germany, the Khuners, the Buschs and Mim Weigall together with her husband, Hans Pollak, visited her at the hotel where she stayed (Wayne, 1995b, p. 225).

church of Maria Schnee for the winter of 1922–1923. As they liked the place very much, they decided to buy the cottage they could see from their window, which was for sale. In 1923 they bought this house "with meadow and pasture" from Dr. Benedikt Pobitzer, a lawyer in Bozen, for 35,000 Lire[7], as reported by the local newspapers.[8] The Malinowskis could afford this purchase thanks to Paul Khuner, who came to visit them in Oberbozen and supported them financially (Wayne, 1995b, p. 29). They also had to refurbish and fix some parts of the house. The firm Gebrüder Bittner from Bozen made the work for a final cost of 18,787.90 Lire, according to the invoice dated November 27, 1923 (Bronislaw Malinowski papers [MS 19]).

The house, which was called "Villa Amalia" (Bronislaw Malinowski papers [MS 19]) and then became known as "Villa Malinowski", was an example of a S*ommerfrischhaus*, a holiday cottage for the upper class. According to Malinowska Wayne, it has changed very little over the years, with a veranda on the ground floor and a balcony on the first floor, both looking towards the Dolomites, a sloping roof, white-painted walls (today they are painted in light pink), and green-and-white wooden shutters (green today), according to the local style (Wayne, 1995b, p. 29).

In the 1920s, Oberbozen was an upper-class resort, well connected, since 1907, to the city of Bolzano by a cog train, where the *Bauernhöfe*, the peasants' houses and farms, were close to the aristocracy and affluent bourgeois holiday cottages. Indeed, since the 16th century at least[9] the upper-class members of Bozen had started building their summer residences, the so-called *Sommerfrischhäuser*, on the Ritten-Renon plateau, in the villages of Klobenstein, Maria Himmelfahrt, and Oberbozen (Hoeniger, 1968; Hosp, 2005; Rampold, 1970; von Braitenberg, 1994).

7 Nowadays, this could approximately correspond to 33,600 €, according to the purchase power convertor of Il sole 24 ore https://www.infodata.ilsole24ore.com/2016/05/17/calcola-poteredacquisto-lire-ed-euro-dal-1860-2015/

8 *Bozner Nachrichten*, 1923, August 7; *Volksblatt*, 1923, August 11, p. 6; *Der Burggräfler*, 1923, August 11, p. 6.

9 In a document dated 1237 a place called "Oberpoazen" is mentioned, and it seems possible that the custom of moving to the plateau for the summer was even more ancient than the 16th century (Hoeniger, 1968, p. 169; Rampold, 1970, p. 330).

2.1 The Summer Residences

As a strategic point of connection between the Southern German regions and the Northern Italian ones, Bozen had been developing since the Middle Ages as a trade and mercantile city, where annual fairs were held and valuable products such as wine, oil, and textiles were exchanged. In a city map drawn in 1645, the merchants' warehouses, overlooked by their houses, appear following one another along the city streets, between the convents of the various religious orders, including the Teutonic Order, the Franciscans, the Dominicans, amongst others, with their own vineyards and gardens.[10] Since the city was bordered by two rivers, as it is today, which had not been reclaimed at that time, the air often became unhealthy in the summer due to the floods, the swampy areas, and the sultriness. After the various plague epidemics of the second half of the 16th century, the wealthy merchants of the town, many of whom obtained titles of nobility, began to move to the plateau for the summer, building their holiday houses, the *Sommerfrischhäuser*, there, first in Klobenstein and Lengmoos, on the other side of the Ritten plateau, near the ancient *Kaiserstraße*[11], and then in Oberbozen.[12] At that time, these territo-

10 City map of Bozen by Matthäus Merians "Topographia Provinciarum Austriacarum", 1649 (Hoeniger, 1968, p. 177), see also Museo Mercantile Bolzano.

11 The "Emperor's way" through which the German Emperors used to travel southward to be crowned by the Pope in Rome, until a new shorter way along the Eisacktal (Eisack/Isarco valley) was opened in 1314.

12 "So finden wir schon im Jahre 1584 die Bozner Tuchhändler Elsasser, 1588 die Rottenbucher, 1590 die Eyrl, 1607 die Trojer, 1611 die Familie Eberschlager, Postmeister in Bozen, 1633 die Giovanelli, dann 1653 die Kauftleute Gumer, 1666 die Mayrl, 1699 die Atzwanger, alle aus der Elite des Bozner Bürgertums, als Besitzer eigener Sommerfrischhäuser in Klobenstein, von denen aber bald darauf die drei letzteren Familien ihre Sommeraufenthalt nach Oberbozen verlegten, das, obgleich ohne jeden besonderen Anziehungspunkt, gleichsam als Neuschöpfung typisch boznerischen Patrizierkreise im 17. Jahrhundert einen unglaublich raschen Aufstieg nahm. … Schon Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts treffen wir die ganze gute, das heißt reiche Bozner Gesellschaft, die Zallinger, Menz, Mayrl, Eberschlager, Gumer, Graff…" (von Braitenberg, 1994, pp. 15–16). Translation by the author: "Thus, as early as 1584 we find the Bolzano cloth merchants; the Elsassers, 1588 the Rottenbuchers, 1590 the Eyrls, 1607 the Trojers, 1611 the Eberschlager family, postmasters in Bolzano, 1633 the Giovanellis, then in 1653 the merchants Gumer, 1666 the Mayrls, 1699 the Atzwangers, all from the elite of the Bolzano bourgeoisie, as owners of their own summer residences in Klobenstein, but soon after, the latter three families moved their summer residences to Oberbozen, which, although without any particular point of interest, was a new creation of the typical Bolzano patrician circles in the 17th century which took an unbelievably rapid rise. … Already at the end of the 17th century we meet the whole well-to-do, i.e. rich, Bolzano society, the Zallingers, Menzs, Mayrls, Eberschlagers, Gumers, Graffs ... "

ries were mostly administrated by the Teutonic Order to whom the dwelling peasants had to pay a fee (von Braitenberg, 1994, p. 15).

The members of the upper-class society from Bozen used to spend 72 days on the Ritten plateau, from the Day of St. Peter and Paul (June 29) to the Nativity of Mary Day (September 8) in their "fresh" summer residences, which they reached travelling by horse-driven or oxen-driven carts, called *Pennen* (Hoeniger, 1968, p. 171; von Braitenberg, 1994, p. 16).

In 1668, one of the richest merchants and summer residence's owners, Matthias Kreizer, funded the building of the Maria Himmelfahrt church, dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin, which gave the name to this neighbourhood of Oberbozen (Hoeniger, 1968, p. 169; von Braitenberg, 1994, p. 17). That same year, on July 5, the neighbours[13] founded the "*adelige Schützen Gesellschaft*", the aristocratic shooting society, for "the preservation of good friends and neighbours" through "the knightly exercise of target shooting" as they wrote in the foundation protocol.[14] Since then, the aristocratic shooting society has promoted the consolidation of close relationships amongst the dwellers of the summer houses in Maria Himmelfahrt in Oberbozen, strengthening friendships, fostering marriages, as well as business and political alliances amongst the families. Since the foundation of the shooting society, its members started the custom of commissioning painted shooting targets to be given to the society, which they then used to shoot at together as a sign of good luck when celebrating family events, such as marriages and births. All these precious painted targets, the *Schützenscheiben*, are still collected in the Pavilion of the aristocratic shooting society, which was built in 1777. Close to the holiday residences, the Schluff tavern opened in 1778 (Hoeniger, 1968, p. 170), becoming an important meeting and networking place for the upper-society members and their guests; which continues to this day.

The aristocratic lifestyle of the *Sommerfrische* people has therefore produced a very exclusive social group, stressing its "distinction" from the lower social sectors of the city. The *Sommerfrische* people would relax together and

13 Amongst these, there were Matthias Kreizer, four members of the Zallinger family, two members of the Menz family, the City Mayor von Atzwanger, and later also the Eberschlagers, the Graffs, the Gummers, and the Mayrls (Hoeniger, 1968, p. 170, von Braitenberg, 1994, pp. 16–17).

14 „zu Erhaltung böster Freundt und Nachbarschaft diß Ritterliche Exercitium des Scheiben Schießen angefangen" (von Walther, 1994, p. 7).

visit each other, play sport, and the men would hunt together. They would also organize parties and other events such as concerts and theatre plays, and celebrate the *Kirchtag*, the festival celebrating the patron saint on August 15, dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin[15]. For this occasion, the shooting society still organizes a procession with the clergy, and the *Sommerfrische* people dress in their distinctive *Ritten Mantel*, a white woolly cloak with a black or red collar, depending on whether they own a summer residence in Klobenstein (black collar) or Oberbozen (red collar).[16] According to the Malinowskis' grandchildren[17], Wanda Malinowska, the Malinowskis' second-born daughter, who holidayed and lived for a period in the family Villa in Oberbozen after the Second World War, used to wear her Ritten Mantel and participate in the Kirchtag procession.

For a magazine article published in August 2021, the journalist Verena Pliger interviewed some of the current owners of the *Sommerfrischhäuser* in Maria Himmelfahrt. As she reported, in most of the cases they are the offspring of the ancient patriciate of the city, even though there are also a few new owners who have bought their houses from the older ones. According to one of the interviewed inhabitants, interested in local history and genealogy, most of the ancient family names have been disappearing due to the custom of usually giving the holiday residences on the Ritten plateau to the daughters as a part of their inheritance[18], whereas the sons inherited the family house

15 As Inga Hosp (2005, pp. 60–70) has highlighted, descriptions of the lifestyle in Oberbozen as a *Sommerfrische* resort at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century were offered by the medical doctor Karl Kreutschneider in a text collected in the local Journal of history and folk studies *Der Schlern* in 1937, as well as by the writer Hans von Hoffensthal in his novels *Abschied von Oberbozen* published in 1907 and *Moj* (1915).

16 This *Ritten Mantel*, which still today is perceived as a sign of distinction and prestige, is worn on several occasions through the year and seems to have originated from the local shepherds' cape, although other sources connect it to the cloak of the ancient Austrian Empire Dragoons' uniform (Rampold, 1970, p. 330) and to that of the Teutonic Order (Hosp, 2005, p. 60).

17 For this personal communication, as well as for many other insights and relevant information, for their helpful collaboration, their generous hospitality, and their supporting interest in this research, I sincerely thank Patrick Burke, Rebecca Malinowska Stuart, and Lucy Ulrich.

18 The complex relations amongst inheritance practices, kinship and family systems and gender in Medieval and Modern South Tyrol have been analysed in a critical and comparative approach by several scholars, such as in the case of the special issues on these topics published by the Journal *Geschichte und Region/Storia e Regione* (Clementi, 2010; Clementi et al., 2010; Clementi & Maegraith, 2018; Lanzinger, 2010; Mantl, 1992).

in the city (Pliger, 2021, p. 47). In line with this magazine article, the *Sommerfrische* people still form an exclusive upper-class group: holidaying in this resort they continuously visit each other, networking and promoting family and business relations, although they now spend shorter periods of time in the village than their ancestors, gathering in Maria Himmelfahrt-Oberbozen, as cosmopolitans from Vienna, Paris, London, New York, etc., just for a few weeks during the summer.

2.2 The New Visitors and Dwellers

Between the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, the "discovery" of the Dolomites (Gilbert & Churchill, 1864) as a holiday place for mountain walking and trekking brought to Oberbozen, as well as to other villages on the Ritten plateau, several upper-class visitors, and tourists especially from Vienna, Zurich, Berlin, and other European cities. Probably the most famous among them is Sigmund Freud who holidayed in Klobenstein, where he wrote part of the texts collected in his book *Totem and Taboo*, published in 1913 (McGuire, 1974, pp. 436–442).

In this period, also thanks to the new railway, new hotels and new *Sommerfrischhäuser* were built, especially for the new urban burgeoisie from Bolzano, also by transforming older local buildings such as haylofts and peasant houses, combining traditional aesthetics and the new modernistic style of the Arts and Crafts movement, such as in the works by the architectural firm from Bozen Amonn & Fingerle, including architects Marius Amonn, his wife Hedwig Amonn-Fröhner, and August Fingerle. In Oberbozen, they designed and built Villa Emil Amonn in 1911, which Marius made for his brother Emil, the Gloriette for Walther Amonn in 1918–1920, the cemetery in Maria Himmelfahrt, Villa Staffler in 1929 and the Holzner Café in 1931, near the Villa Malinowski (Mayr-Fingerle & Mascotti, 1985; Mayr-Fingerle & Mayr, 2019). Marius Amonn (1879–1944) also worked on the extension of his family house, Villa Marienheim, in Gries, which had been built by the German architect Sebastian Altmann, who also had planned a new neighbourhood in the ancient city of Bozen in 1875 (Obermaier, 2009, p. 24). In 1928, the Malinowskis rented a flat in this villa and, as highlighted by Malinowska Wayne (1995b, pp. 124, 248), the owner of the Villa, Mrs. Amonn, became one of their friends.

3. The Malinowskis' Apartments in Gries, Bozen

Although very close to Bozen, the village of Gries had been an autonomous municipality until 1925, when it was attached to the main city. In the first half of the 19th century, since the Aufschneiter family had built a villa to host foreign well-to-do people, followed by other local owners who opened new exclusive auberges (Malfér, cit. in Tiefenbrunner, 2008, p. 25), Gries rapidly became a health resort where the aristocracy from the Hapsburg Empire and beyond gathered to enjoy the warm climate, the mountain landscape, and a new offer of health treatments. To improve this trend, a local spa committee was founded in 1850s to raise funds and provide the village with a new infrastructure, such as a proper road, a spa hotel, promenades along the vineyards, and gardens with both local and exotic plants, making it more attractive for upper-class tourists and promoting it as a Kurort-spa town through advertisements and publicity throughout Central Europe. In the second half of the 19th century, several affluent foreign visitors started building their own holiday residences in Gries and investing there in building hotels and spa. Amongst the new villas built in this period, there are the two in which the Malinowskis rented a flat some years later: villa Elisabeth (Wayne, 1995b, pp. 78, 86), where the Malinowski family lived from 1926, and Villa Marienheim, where they lived from 1928 (Wayne, 1995b, pp. 115, 119, 124–125). Villa Elisabeth (in via E. di Savoia) was built in 1896 by architect Josef Jrschara in the garden of the Pension (Villa) Bellevue, a "luxury hotel" owned by Elisabeth Überbacher [19] (Malfér, as cited in Tiefenbrunner, 2008, p. 27)[20]. Villa Marienheim (in via della Torre) was built in 1875 and renovated in 1885 by the architect and owner Sebastian Altmann[21]. The Villa belonged to Altmann's heirs

19 She is named Else Überbacher in the building plan of the villa, in the Bauakten, Stadtarchiv Bozen (p. ed. 505, Gries, b 5, fasc. 47, prat. 2, n. 474/1895), whereas in the „Häuserverzeichnis der Marktgemeinde Gries" 1901 (1905, pp. 26–27) she is named Elisabeth Überbacher.

20 Both a historical photo and a recent one of Villa Elisabeth could be found in Tiefenbrunner, 2008, pp. 140–141.

21 „Plan für den Umbau der Villa Marienheim" (1885). Stadtarchiv Bozen. Altmann Sebastian, p. ed. 131, Gries, b 4, fasc. 36, prat. 2, n. 1/1885.

until Emil Amonn bought it in 1911 and asked his brother Marius to extend it[22] in 1912[23].

Although, after the First World War and the annexation of South Tyrol to the Italian Kingdom, Gries lost most of its aristocratic visitors and some of the spa hotels converted into bourgeoisie residences, it maintained several aspects of a winter spa town, such as the presence of private clinics, holiday residences and promenades which are still in use, such as the Guncina promenade.

4. The Malinowskis' Network in Oberbozen and Bozen

In a newspaper note on the symposium organized in 1993 in Lengmoos to celebrate the memory of Bronislaw Malinowski in Oberbozen, Helena Malinowska Wayne recalled that her parents made friends in Oberbozen and in the little neighbourhood of Maria Himmelfahrt, as did she and her sisters, as children. When they were children, she recalled, they used to play with the children of their neighbours and would take part in the religious procession on August 15 every year, dressed in white according to the local code, despite their non-believer parents.[24] As reported in the newspaper interview, according to Malinowska Wayne, her mother Elsie Masson considered Oberbozen to be the very family's centre and her first true home.

Immediately after the move to Oberbozen, Masson was able to build relationships with the local inhabitants of the same upper-class and intellectual middle-class, although she also seems to have criticized some aspects of this social environment. Referring to 1925, Malinowska Wayne underlined that "Elsie had by now build up a social life with friends both local and foreign, predominantly women, a life she described as one of "aimless amiabilities and un-amiabilities" (Wayne, 1995b, p. 48).

22 Stadtarchiv Bozen. Amonn Emil, p. ed. 131, Gries, b 17, fasc. 63, prat. 44, n. 2719/1912. Anbau.

23 Both a historical and a recent photo of Villa Marienheim can be found in Tiefenbrunner, 2008, pp. 117-118. More historical photos of Villa Marienheim are published in Faustini 1981, p. 115.

24 "Bronio und Elsie fanden Freunde in Oberbozen und Maria Himmelfahrt, die Kinder fänden [sic] die ihren, nahmen auch an kleinen Spielen in Himmelfahrt teil und gingen trotz ihrer nichtreligiösen Eltern in korrekten weißen Kleidchen bei den Festprozessionen des Jahreslaufs mit". (*Dolomiten*, 27 November, 1993, p. 9).

As reported by Helena Malinowska, when Elsie went to Feldthurns, near Klausen-Chiusa, along the Eisack-Isarco Valley, together with her daughters to visit the family of her maid, Maria, at the end of February 1925, she "contrasted the place favourably with Oberbozen which had, since the arrival of the cog railway, become something of a tourist resort". Writing to her husband on this excursion, she recalled the perplexities shown by their upper-class neighbours regarding her purpose of visiting her maid's family in a peasant farm: "Of course the Oberbozners and Bozners think I am simply mad to come here but it is a madness you would share, I am sure." (Masson, from Gasthaus Oberwirt, Feldthurns bei Klausen, 24/02/1925, Wayne, 1995b, p. 39, underlining by the author). The generous hospitality and the simple and pleasant manners of the local people in the rural village reminded her of those of the Australian peasants she had appreciated in her youth: "Maria's family spread us each a slice of bread with thick butter in the nice, simple way that Australian farm people would do…" (Masson, from Gasthaus Oberwirt, Feldthurns bei Klausen, 28/02/1925, Wayne, 1995b, p. 40).

Some months later, she warmly and explicitly stressed her feeling of sympathy toward her domestic helpers Maria Dorfmann[25] and Theresa, as well as toward Franz, Maria's fiancé, asking Bronio to bring them some presents from London: "They are all three awfully nice and decent, and lay the family interest to heart and I feel are the only people I care a damn about in O.B." (Masson from Oberbozen on 18 June 1925, Wayne, 1995b, p. 45).

Two years later, Elsie organized another excursion with the two elder children to visit their former maid Anna, married von Feckel, in Birchabruck-Ponte Nova, a little village in the Eggental-Val d'Ega Valley. They stayed in the house of Anna as special guests and visited the peasant farm of Anna's mother. Elsie reported enthusiastically on this experience, highlighting the warm attention they received and the intimacy of the whole situation:

> Anna seems to have a very tender feeling for us and all Oberbozen. She gave us an enormous and very well cooked meal in her little kitchen and that night we slept in the best bedroom. In the evening, which was moonlit and smelt deliciously of evergreens and hay and river, we visited the old peasant mother in a picturesque

25 *Bronislaw Malinowski papers* (MS19, Box 32), Yale University Library, CT, United States.

> farmhouse overhanging the Eggentaler Bach [stream] … Von Feckel himself comes from an old peasant Stamm [clan] which has been in that neighbourhood since 1500. (Masson, from Gries, June 8, 1927, in Wayne, 1995b, p. 94)

Bronio replied highlighting his disagreement with these practices of "fraternizing with peasants" (Wayne, 1995b, p. 95), and Elsie had to clarify that social distance was anyway maintained. It seems he was much more concerned with social distinction than she was, as appears from a letter he wrote to her in 1929, saying he prevented their daughter Jósefa, who had left Oberbozen that year to attend school in England, from writing letters to the maids of Villa Malinowski (Wayne, 1995b, p. 136)[26]. Malinowski, it seems, had confidence in Anton Friedl, the owner of the Hofer Hotel in Oberbozen (Bronislaw Malinowski papers [MS 19]).

Elsie also established good relations with the neighbours of Villa Malinowski, such as the Eccel family, and Luise and Hans Pattis, who rented out rooms to tourists. They visited and supported each other, such as when Elsie, who was supposed to move to Gries together with the children at the beginning of October 1927, had to remain in Oberbozen due to a sudden sickness. While she stayed at the Villa in Oberbozen with her younger daughter, Helena, and the maid, Maria, assisted by the local doctor, Dr. Kuhn, (Wayne, 1995b, p. 97), the elder children, Jósefa and Wanda, were sent to Bozen to attend school, in the company of the governess, Paula Tomasi, a relation of the Pattises, previously involved in hotel management (Wayne, 1995b, pp. 153–154). When the children went back to Oberbozen, Frau Pattis also took care of them.[27] These forms of support, as well as visits amongst neighbours in Oberbozen were frequent. Even the night before Masson was eventually able to move to Gries in October 1927, she invited the Eccels to her home, whose children used to play popular music in front of the door during summer, thereby disturbing Malinowski's work, as she recalled to her husband with

26 "J. [Jósefa] told me about the letters she wrote to you and Maria, and I warned her not to write to Pepi and Mitzi [the other maids] any more. In a way I appreciate her general democratic kindness, in another, I would like her to get to realize social distinctions and distances early …" (Malinowski from London, February 1, 1929 in Wayne 1995b, p. 136).

27 "The children and Frl. Paula were here … Of course, once they had greeted me and shown me their school books they had not much to tell me, and are now off to have their supper with Frau Pattis. …They began Italian yesterday…" (Masson from Oberbozen, October 5, 1927, in Wayne, 1995b, p. 99).

both fun and nostalgia (Wayne, 1995b, p. 247)[28]. In the summer of the previous year, in 1926, Elsie had written to Bronio about these "musical efforts of all Oberbozen" (Wayne, 1995b, p. 77), likely referring to the new foundation of the village *Musikkappelle*, the music band[29].

It was in that year, 1926, during the summer, that the Malinowksis made the decision to move down to Bozen and rent a flat in Villa Elisabeth, in Gries, for the winter, also because Elsie had manifested symptoms of illness since the birth of her third daughter in 1925. Then from October 1926 they started living in Gries. The elder daughters begun learning German; Józefa took private lessons, whereas Wanda was sent to a German kindergarten, one of the so-called *Katakombenschulen* of that time, since the teaching of the German language had been forbidden by the Fascists (Wayne, 1995b, p. 86). Fräulein Rosa Rudolf, Wanda's German teacher, became an acquaintance of the Malinowskis.[30] They also remained in touch with "Tante" (Aunt) Käte Helm, who was also a teacher in Gries (Wayne, 1995b, p. 177).

Despite her love for her little home in Oberbozen, Elsie seemed to have enjoyed life in Bozen-Gries too, as she reported in her letter to Malinowski, in which she gave the following description of the pleasant atmosphere in the neighbourhood.[31]

> I am writing now on the balcony…The sun is just over Kohlern, the Rosengarten begins to glow slightly, the air is warm, still and mellow, the deep-toned bell of Gries cloister is giving tongue. It is really marvellous here; on the balcony I think of your pleasure in it … The children are very amused with life and so easy to manage. (Masson from Gries, October 11, 1927, in Wayne, 1995b, p. 101)

28 In her letter to the husband, Masson nostalgically writes: "The last night in our little home for a good long time! how I love it. When the last remaining Eccel plays 'Rum-tum-tum-tum-tiddy-tum-tum ' I could have tears in my eyes for the ghost of our summer together. So a last goodnight from Oberbozen, my beloved" (October 7, 1927, in Wayne, 1995b, p. 100).

29 See the website of the Musikkappelle Oberbozen: http://www.mk-oberbozen.it/de/geschichte.htm

30 For instance, in 1927 she lent Elsie a book, *Goethes Liebesleben*, which then Elsie discussed with Bronio by mail (Wayne, 1995b, p. 92).

31 Although a few days later, after having returned to Gries from a visit to Oberbozen, Masson confessed: "I had a curious feeling as I went about deserted Oberbozen: 'What have I to do in this forlorn little place perched on the top of a mountain that has nothing whatever to do with me, my past, my real life? '" (Wayne, 1995b, p. 107).

In October 1927, Elsie started a new treatment of electric baths at the Grieserhof, the clinic of Dr. Fritz Rössler, who had already attended her in 1925 for an eye problem, after her third child's birth, (Wayne, 1995b, pp. 45–46). She felt attracted to him as her correspondence with Bronio, based on an agreement of reciprocal openness, shows, although she was disappointed quite early (Wayne, 1995b, pp. 104, 105). In a letter written from Gries in November 1927, Elsie told Bronio about Dr. Rössler.

> We have quite cultured talks from time to time … and he makes the impression of a non-Boznerisch person, with aspirations to a wider culture. At other times … I have the feeling that he resents the war and its consequences with a deeply beleidigt [offended] bitterness. (Masson from Gries, November 15, 1927, in Wayne, 1995b, p. 108)

In 1927–1928, the Malinowskis gathered in Gries for a winter holiday, then Elsie went to London with Bronio until March 1928 for a complete medical examination, which was when her illness was diagnosed as multiple sclerosis (Wayne, 1995b, p. 110). In March and April Bronio was back in Gries and helped Elsie to find a new flat, choosing one in Villa Marienheim, on the ground floor and with a terrace, which could be more comfortable for Elsie's worsening health conditions (Wayne, 1995b, p. 115). The family moved to Villa Marienheim in June 1928, then Elsie went to London for medical treatment and came back to Oberbozen and Bozen to continue the treatment with Dr. Rössler at the Grieserhof. It seems that Elsie enjoyed her time in Villa Marienheim, where she made new friends, such as Frau Amonn (Wayne, 1995b, p. 124) and Frau Weidenhaus (Wayne, 1995b, p. 154). Helena Malinowska wrote that when Bronio decided to buy a house in London, to gather all the family there, as Jósefa too had been in England since January 1929 to attend a boarding school, Elsie "gave up the flat in Villa Marienheim with regret" (Wayne, 1995b, p. 146).

In June 1929, Bronio bought a house in Oppidans Road 6, in Primrose Hill, Hampstead, near Regent Park, in London, thanks to the financial support of some friends, amongst them Paul Khuner and Helen Sexton (Wayne, 1995b, p. 146). For the summer he went to Bozen and up to Oberbozen, while Elsie remained in Gries to complete her treatment. The Malinowski family moved to

London in early October 1929. They employed Fräulein Paula Tomasi to accompany them, whereas Maria eventually decided to not move to London. At that time, Elsie started needing to use a wheelchair. Nevertheless, as Helena Malinowska put it, "her London life was busy with friends and activities" (Wayne, 1995b, pp. 146–147).

The Malinowskis' Visitors in Oberbozen and Bozen

The Malinowskis used to receive many visitors, above all in the summer periods, and amongst them there were relatives, friends, colleagues, and many of Malinowski's students. I will retrace these visits following Wayne's reconstruction (Wayne, 1995b).

In the summer 1923 Paul Khuner's visit was decisive for the purchase of the Villa Malinowski (Wayne, 1995b, p. 29). The next summer, in 1924, Orme Masson and Mary Stuthers, Elsie's parents, visited the family in Oberbozen (Selleck, 2013, pp. 290–291; Wayne, 1995b, p. 31). In the previously mentioned newspaper article on the symposium in 1993, Helena Malinowska Wayne recalled her grandparents' visit to Oberbozen, saying that her grandfather, Orme Masson, had bought a travel guide of the Dolomites there, which was then passed down to her, and in which, as a word game, he nicknamed his grandchildren Jósefa and Wanda, Helena's elder sisters, "the Dollymites".

In the winter of 1925 Elsie received a visit from Doretta Wilson, the niece of a London friend, with her family, and a visit from Doris Gaggin, an old friend of Elsie's from the Melbourne Hospital where they trained and worked together as nurses (Wayne, 1995b, p. 36). That same year, in March, Raymond Firth, Malinowski's student and later his assistant and successor at the LSE, came to Oberbozen together with a friend from New Zealand, staying at the parish house in Maria Himmelfahrt (Wayne, 1995b, pp. 38, 41). In the spring of 1925 Helen Sexton, an Australian family friend and a medical doctor who was living in Europe, arrived to help Elsie with her third childbirth in May 1925 in Bolzano, together with Elsie's aunt Lucy (Wayne, 1995b, p. 42). In the summer of 1925, other friends, such as the Khuners, Malinowski's students and colleagues came to Oberbozen to visit the family (Wayne, 1995b, p. 48).

The Malinowskis also used to visit their friends around Europe. In autumn 1925, Masson went to Vienna with her two elder daughters until the

second half of December to receive medical treatments. There, she socialised with the Khuners and the Buschs and visited Aunt Lucy who was living in Vienna at that time (Wayne, 1995, p. 48).

In June 1926, a family friend from North Germany, Gräfin Asta Münster, who was in South Tyrol for improve her health, came to Oberbozen to visit Elsie, and lived in Villa Malinowski for a month (Wayne, 1995b, p. 76). Elsie's Aunt Lucy and Aunt Tina came from Edinburgh to visit their niece in that period, staying at a guesthouse in Oberbozen, until Aunt Tina became ill and had to move to Villa Malinowski, as described with a certain amount of humour by Elsie.

> There was a very funny scene when she (Aunt Lucy) had to be brought here. Franz and Karl Ramoser [heir to a large farm] came direct from Fronleichnam procession [Corpus Christi] in full Tracht [costume] and carried her up the road on a rigged-up stretcher with Aunt Tina in her full black following behind and myself carrying a flask of brandy and medicine glass following in the rear. It looked like the tattered remnants of the real procession Madonna della Sedia and caused some astonishment among the passerby… (Masson from Oberbozen, June 6, 1926, in Wayne 1995b, p. 76)

In the summer of 1926, Raymond Firth visited the Malinowskis again, as did Hortense Powdermaker, a student of Malinowski's, since the beginning of September (Wayne, 1995b, p. 77).

After the winter holiday 1926–27, Elsie went to London together with Bronio from the middle of January to the end of February 1927, whereas her friend Asta Münster stayed in Oberbozen to look after the Malinowski children (Wayne, 1995b, p. 89). In the spring and summer of 1928, family friend Dr. Helen Sexton visited Elsie from Florence (Wayne, 1995b, p. 123).

During the winter holidays in 1928, Bronio came to Bozen from London together with a friend, Dr. Paul Wilkinson (Wayne, 1995b, p. 127). In January 1929 he went to London again together with his eldest daughter Jósefa, who had to start attending school in England (Wayne, 1995b, p. 128). In late February, Elsie's Australian friend Doris Gaggin visited her for a second time, and even accompanied her to Innsbruck for a medical treatment (Wayne, 1995b, p. 137) and then back to Bozen, to Villa Marienheim (Wayne, 1995, p. 142).

In July 1930, once again in her house in Oberbozen, Elsie wrote to Bronio about her feelings of being at home at Villa Malinowski in Oberbozen: "I have such a feeling of relief and joy to be in my own house, and in this little one, so perfect from my point of view" (Masson from Oberbozen, July 8, 1930 in Wayne, 1995b, p. 155). In that summer 1930, Bronio arrived in Oberbozen via Vienna together with Paul and Hede Khuner at the end of July 1930. Then, in August 1930, Edith Clark, Bronio's research assistant from Jamaica, Doris Gaggin, and Lucy Mair, Bronio's student at the LSE, also came to Oberbozen on holiday (Wayne, 1995b, p. 156).

The Malinowskis came back to Oberbozen the next year (1931) for the summer vacations, when Bronio worked on his volume *Coral Gardens and Their Magic*, eventually published in 1935 (Malinowski, 1935), together with his research assistant Edith Clark and his Polish student Jósef Obrębski, before the family moved to Tamaris in Southern France for Bronio's sabbatical year 1931–1932 (Wayne, 1995b, p. 159).

In February 1932, Fräulein Rosa Decall from Austria joined the Malinowskis in Tamaris "to be Elsie's companion and to help with the children" (Wayne 1995, p. 161) as a governess, on the recommendation of a friend. She and Elsie matched very well as Elsie wrote to her sister Marnie: "she (Rosa) is the most devoted creature (…) [there is] material for a life-long family friend in her" (Masson, November 2, 1932, in Selleck, 2013, p. 321). Rosa accompanied Elsie in the following years, supporting her in managing the house in London, as well as assisting her when travelling to visit spas and medical doctors for treatments in Germany, the Czech Republic, and Austria. In the last years of Elsie's life, due to the severe worsening of her health conditions, Rosa also helped her to write letters to Bronio and to the family, which Elsie dictated to her in English (Selleck, 2013, Wayne, 1995b). In a letter Rosa sent to Elsie's parents, after Elsie's death, Rosa wrote: "…She was my best friend and we got so used to each other…" (Rosa Decall to Mary Masson on November 15, 1935, Selleck, 2013, p. 329).

In late May 1933, after Bronio had come back from the USA[32], Elsie and Rosa went from London to Bad Oeynhausen, a spa in Northwestern Germany, for a month, although Elsie did not like going to Germany since she was

32 From late February 1933 to April 1933, Malinowski was in the USA for the second time to lecture in different universities in New York and Chicago (Wayne, 1995b, pp. 165–166).

very critical of Nazism (Wayne, 1995b, p. 169). From there, Elsie and Rosa went to meet Bronio in Brussels, where he had travelled to attend a conference, and came back to London together, from where they moved to Oberbozen for the summer in July 1933. This was the last time Elsie lived in Villa Malinowski. Two of Malinowski's students visited the family on that occasion, Sjoerd Hofstra from Holland and Günter Wagner from Germany, who stayed at the priest's house in Maria Himmelfahrt. During this vacation, Elsie became ill and had to go to Leipzig for treatment (Wayne, 1995b, p. 176). On September 29, 1933, Bronio wrote to her from their beloved house in Oberbozen for Elsie's 43rd birthday:

> This is a very sad birthday which I am celebrating in lonely autumnal weather and atmosphere, without you and with the thought of you all the time. I am using your room a great deal – I sleep with the door open and your window and balcony door also open. In the morning I have my breakfast in your room, at your bed and think of the many lovely mornings when we used to look at the landscape together.
> (Malinowski from Oberbozen, September 29, 1933, in Wayne, 1995b, pp. 177–178)

From September 1933, the Malinowskis lent the Villa in Oberbozen to Otto Schulzinger, a businessman from Bolzano, and his wife, until the next summer (Wayne, 1995b, p. 179, p. 250). In the meantime, the Malinowskis realized that it would have been impossible for Elsie to move again to Oberbozen for a holiday, due to the severe worsening of her health conditions and the many difficulties associated with the trip, as well as the lack of easily accessible medical help on the Ritten plateau (Wayne, 1995b, p. 187). As the Malinowskis were unable to spend any time in Oberbozen in the summers of 1934 and 1935, the Schulzingers rented Villa Malinowski, and they continued to do so in the following years, and even during the Second World War, apart from the summers of 1937 and 1938, when the Malinowski family, after Elsie's death went to Oberbozen (Wayne, 1995b, pp. 190, 251). The Malinowskis also had a lawyer in Bolzano, Anton Kinsele, who took care of the family interests there (Bronislaw Malinowski papers [MS 19]; Wayne, 1995b, p. 219).

For the summer vacations in 1934, Rosa suggested the village of Natters near Innsbruck as a holiday place (Wayne, 1995b, p. 187).

In May 1935, Elsie and Rosa went to St. Joachimsthal, a spa in the Czech Republic, stopping in Vienna for a day, where Elsie's friends came to visit her. They were Hede Khuner with her daughter Hilda, (Paul had died in November 1932), Hans and Berta Bush, Mim Weingall and her husband Hans Pollak. The Malinowski family gathered again in Natters in summer 1935, until Elsie died in September 1935, assisted by Rosa and Bronio (Wayne, 1995b, p. 236).

Villa Malinowski in Oberbozen was confiscated by the Fascists in 1940, which was also reported by the local newspaper[33], as the Malinowskis were of English nationality since July 1931 (Wayne, 1995b, p. 159). The house was administrated by a bank during the war and given back to the Malinowskis' daughters after the war (Wayne, 1995b, p. 242).

5. A Story Within a Troubled History

Living in Oberbozen and Bozen in the 1920s, Elsie Masson witnessed the politics of Fascism in South Tyrol and their dramatic consequences for minority groups (Gatterer, 1968/1999) on the local population.[34] Being close to the German speaking upper and middle class, as well as the peasant people who worked for the family in Oberbozen and in the neighbourhood Gries in Bozen, she, as well as her husband, sympathized with them and condemned the promotion of a "forced Italianization" of the region by the new regime.[35] After the First World War and the St. Germain treaty, South Tyrol, which had belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire until the war, was given to the Italian Kingdom, despite the majority of its inhabitants being German-speaking Tyroleans. Before the rise of Fascism and the rise to power of Benito Mussolini, the previous Italian government had left the ruling of this region in

33 *Dolomiten*, 1940, March 8, p. 3.

34 The fragments of the letters that Masson wrote to Malinowski in the 1920s and 1930s on the political situation and the abuses of Fascism in the South Tyrol, reported in this article, have been selected by the MFEA from Wayne's book and also publicly read (through reading recording) and presented together with pictures of Bolzano in the fascist period, taken from the City Archive, in an audio-visual installation produced by the researchers of the ABC collective at the Faculty of Design and Art of the Free University of Bolzano, with the scientific supervision of the MFEA, during the "Long night of research" in September 2019.

35 During the Fascist regime, not only the German-speaking Tyroleans, but also other local minorities have been subjected of discrimination and terrible violence, such as in the case the Sinti and Roma people (Tauber, 2005).

the hands of the local Tyrolean administrators, and was not concerned about the people speaking German and the local dialect, nor the running of German schools and the German-language press (Di Michele, 2003; Gatterer, (1968/1999); Steininger, 2019).

In an article she wrote for an Australian magazine, entitled "Viva il Fascio! Black Shirts at Bolzano", Elsie Masson (1923) described her first encounter with a Fascist in Bozen, underlining the new political attitude of the regime in comparison with the previous Italian government.

> My first sight of a flesh-and-blood Fascista was on autumn evening in the little Tyrolean town of Bozen, or Bolzano, as the young Black Shirt himself would certainly insist on my calling it. Bozen, once a proud part of the Austrian Tyrol, but, since the Treaty of Versailles, torn off from its motherland and given over to Italy, to the helpless indignation of its inhabitants. Nevertheless, the Italian rule has so far not lain heavy upon it. German is freely spoken … But the Italian Government was one thing and the Fascio another. … When I returned three weeks later to Bolzano (Bozen) things had gone much further. The Fascisti had seized the municipality, dissatisfied with the not sufficiently Italian way things were being carried on. … The statue of Walther von der Vogelweide, the famous Tyrolean Minnesänger, which looks down, inartistic and stiff, but not without a certain simple dignity, on the main place of Bozen, the Walther Platz, had two flags of red, white and green, thrust impudently through the passive arms. … Within a week came the Coup d'Etat, the proclamation of martial law, its withdrawal and the triumph of Mussolini.

Writing to her husband from Oberbozen, she reported on the censorship of the Italian newspapers (Wayne, 1995b, p. 46) and the new law which forbade any open and public criticism of Mussolini in 1925 (Wayne 1995b, p. 51). In a letter Elsie Masson addressed to her husband from Villa Elisabeth in Gries between late October and early November 1926, she gave a picture of the situation, underlining the new celebrations introduced by the Fascists as a form of propaganda, the censorship of the local press, the restrictions on passports, and also the worry of their friends about the general situation (Wayne 1995b, p. 86).

In 1927 she continued observing the transformations imposed by Fascism,

highlighting how much the prohibition of the teaching of the German language impacted negatively on the local people, and above all on the peasantry.[36] She also provided her husband with description of the new activities promoted by the regime, such as the sport events at the new stadium in Bozen:

> The *Turnhalle* [sports hall] was beset by balilla [Fascist youth movement] who lined the path to the door. There was a large crowd of officials at one end of the hall and various groups under their different masters performed before them. Every performance opened of course with the 'Roman greeting' [Fascist salute]. The balilla girls looked charming, like an operetta chorus, in their costume of white blouse with black tie, short black bloomers and white shoes. Outside they wear a dashing cap and cape, also black. But their gymnastics, under an Italian mistress, were footling …
>
> Every day the papers – obviously directly inspired – seem to be setting to work to inflame public feeling against Jugo-Slavia and set things in the direction of war. Is it possible to be so foolish nowadays? People here say it's the only way out for the Govt. in view of the amount of people out of work and general discontent. But what a way. Well, I know you hate me to talk politics to you … (Masson from Gries, November 25, 1927 in Wayne, 1995b, p. 109)

During her visits to different spas in Austria and Germany, Elsie wrote to Bronio on the abuses of Nazism, describing military parades, censorship in Germany, and the discrimination against Jewish people, including a brilliant medical doctor who attended her (Wayne, 1995b, pp. 172, 174, 176, 179, 181, 191, 192, 193).

From Natters, where she spent her last year, she reported to her husband about the news from Bozen she had gleaned from the press, feeling very depressed not only due to her illness but also due to the dramatic historical period they were involved in.[37]

36 "It is pathetic how everyone begins at once to speak about the schools and tells how even the smallest amount of private schooling in the mother tongue is forbidden – there is no doubt that step has touched the peasantry as no other would have done" (Masson from Gries, June 8, 1927 in Wayne, 1995b, pp. 94–95).

37 "The papers just now are so depressing I simply don't want to look at them. It seems to me war is absolutely inevitable within a few years – and it all depends on where you happen to be whether you are caught by it or not. Let us hope it coincides with your next sabbatical

> The Italians have now taken away the statue of Walther von der Vogelweide [the great medieval Minnesinger, native of Tirol] from Walterplatz in Bozen… they are moving it to the corner of via Roma and via Dante which is far down beyond the courthouse, known to me from the times I had to go there about my dogs, and is a spot where no foreigners ever go and few Bozners. … I feel I never want to go back to Bozen again. That statue is associated with our earliest time there when we used to go down from Oberbozen early and have breakfast at the Stadt Café. (Masson from Natters, March 18, 1935 in Wayne, 1995b, p. 222)

Through the published letters, it is possible to learn much more from Masson on the political situation in South Tyrol under Fascism than from Malinowski, because it was she who was living there, being in close contact and empathizing with the local people. These letters also show the asymmetrical gender relation within the Malinowski couple, as highlighted in previous articles (Salvucci, 2021; Salvucci et al., 2019): he was the university professor who travelled throughout Europe, USA and Africa, giving lectures and meeting colleagues, students and audience, while visiting his family only a few months a year. She was "the wife", who, although very intelligent, educated and also very "liberated" for the time, stayed at home, in charge of the children and the servants, socializing with the neighbours.

However, Malinowski too strongly condemned the violence and the danger of Fascism and Nazism in his last work, published post-mortem (Malinowski, 1944), and in his public conferences (Stone 2003). In the late 1930s he was also attacked within the Fascist Italian press for his support of the Jewish cause, as highlighted by his student, anthropologist Felix Gross.

> During the interwar period, he strongly opposed any form of totalitarianism. In the Italian fascist press he had an honorable place next to Freud, Hirschfeld, and others as a corruptor of youth. I remember there was an article in 1938 in the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera* by professor Cipriano Crispi entitled "Il Problema del Semitismo" in which Malinowski was very strongly attacked as a Jewish corruptor of society. The same charge, if I recall, appeared in *Il Popolo d'Italia*, a Fascist newspaper (on the right side in italics you could find short editorials by Mussolini). (Gross, 1986, pp. 562–563)

leave and that we can go away and spend it on some very unimportant island" (Masson from Natters, March 20, 1935 in Wayne, 1995b, p. 222).

After he had moved to the USA together with his daughters, Malinowski continued to support his Jewish colleagues in Austria and Poland, as well as helping Jewish refugees in the USA (Gross, 1986), as many letters collected in the Yale archive demonstrate (Bronislaw Malinowski papers [MS 19]).

6. Conclusion

Referring mainly to the correspondence between Malinowski and Masson, published by Malinowska Wayne (1995b), this chapter followed part of the Malinowskis' social relations in Oberbozen and Bozen, paying special attention to those involving Elsie Masson. She settled there while her husband was teaching in London and came back only for a few months a year for a holiday. According to Wayne (1995b) and Selleck (2013), Masson was active in the local socio-cultural environment, relating with her neighbours, such as the Pattises and the Eccels, the local inhabitants as the Ramoser peasant family, the domestic helpers, Anna and Maria and their families, the children's teacher Fäulein Rosa Rudolf, the medical Dr. Fritz Rössler (from when the symptoms of Masson's illness appeared), the owners of the rented flats in Bozen, such as Frau Amonn, and later also Fräulein Rosa Decall from Austria, Elsie's companion and nurse from 1932, among others.

Moreover, the story of the Malinowski family in Oberbozen and Bozen includes many of their relatives and friends, and even colleagues and students, who used to be connected to them, visiting them, and supporting them in several ways. In the 1920s and 1930, Villa Malinowski in Oberbozen became a meeting place for a wider network of cosmopolitan friends and relatives living in various other countries, being part of that culture of cosmopolitanism in the Alps, which has been developing since the second half of the 19th century. Amongst the Malinowskis' visitors there were many of Malinowski's students, some of whom later became protagonists within the discipline, such as Raymond Firth, Lucy Mair, Hortense Powdermaker, Audrey Richards, Isaac Shapera, amongst other. The houses in which the Malinowskis lived in South Tyrol acted as connection points between the family, its international social network, and the local society, which above all Elsie Masson was able to experience and even describe in her letters to her husbands (Wayne, 1995b) and her parents (Selleck, 2013).

Following the footsteps of the Malinowski family in Oberbozen and Bozen, and their social connections at both the local and the international level, contribute to highlight those aspects of the history of the anthropology connected to biographic trajectories, social networks, and local settings, in line with a biographical and relational theoretical framework (Carsten et al., 2018; Lohmann, 2008; Salvucci et al. 2019; Strathern, 2018). Moreover, although Malinowski and his students did not study society and cultures in South Tyrol (Cole 1977), and a specific alpine anthropology only started after the Second World War (Cole & Wolf 1974; Viazzo, 1989; Viazzo & Zanini 2022), their presence there influenced other scholars, such as in the case of Lucie Varga, who carried out an historic and ethnographic research in a Vorarlberg Valley, supported by Malinowski (Varga, 1936).

Finally, tracing the presence of the Malinowskis in Oberbozen and Bozen in the 1920s–1930s and recovering their comments on the local situation could help to reinforce the documentation of a dramatic historical period, looking at the history also through accounts of personal lives and family stories.

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Lucie Varga and Her Alpine Studies

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Abstract

Lucie Varga, née Rosa Stern (1904–1941), was an Austrian historian from a Jewish family who emigrated to Paris in 1933. For some years she became the first woman to collaborate on a regular basis with Lucien Febvre and the journal *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*. During her summer holidays of 1935 and 1936 and after consulting Malinowski she undertook fieldwork in two alpine valleys in Vorarlberg and in South Tyrol. In the resulting essays, which today appear as a kind of "historical anthropology" *avant la lettre*, she describes the gradual transformation of the valleys and the transition from the old mountain economy to the modern tourist business. However, she not only deals with economic change, but also with the difficult overcoming of the traditional world of beliefs, in which German Nazis or Italian Fascists appear as competitors not only to the catholic priests, but to witches and demons.

Lucie Varga, née Rosa Stern (1904–1941), was an Austrian and subsequently French historian from a non-practicing Jewish family.[1] After a doctorate in History at the University of Vienna, she moved to Paris in December 1933 – together with her second husband, the Marxist philosopher Franz Borkenau (1900–1957) – in order to escape rising anti-Semitism and the political crisis. In Paris she came into contact with Lucien Febvre and the journal *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* for which she became the first woman to collaborate on a regular basis. That was unusual, but even more unusual were the articles that she contributed to that journal and the *Revue de synthèse*, or the *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, through which she made an independent

1 For Varga's biography und a list of her publications, see Schöttler (1991, pp. 13–114, pp. 247–250). For the latest findings on Varga's feminism, on her work in the German and Austrian resistance etc. see Schöttler (2015, pp. 150–179).

contribution to the emerging *histoire des mentalités*. For a long time, however, this contribution was forgotten. Firstly, because Varga died in April 1941 aged thirty-six (from lack of insulin), so that most of her research projects remained unfinished and all her papers were lost in the chaos of war and occupation. Secondly, because she was a woman and involved in a love affair (with Lucien Febvre), which was not well received at the time: After the war, and especially after Febvre's death in 1956, all of Varga's letters were destroyed by his widow and a kind of *damnatio memoriae* imposed on her. It was only decades later that this unjust state of affairs was remedied and her work rediscovered.

Although Varga's academic focus was primarily on medieval heretics (the Cathars) and early-modern religious beliefs, three contemporary-history essays are without doubt her most important contribution to scholarship. The first, a lengthy study on National Socialism as a sociological and anthropological phenomenon, was written in 1936 and published in the *Annales* in 1937 (see Schöttler, 1991, pp. 119–140). While most analysts at the time emphasised either the political and economic or intellectual roots of the Hitler movement, Varga insisted that it was something "entirely new", which could not be explained by a single phenomenon. Rather, it involved transposed memories and of a conversion and illumination in the religious sense, leading people to enter what she called "experiential groups" (*Erlebnisgruppen*). By joining the brown shirt "movement" life took on meaning again, and even one that is revolutionary. The national-socialist revolution "means simplifying everything and imposing dualisms everywhere: Friend or foe, comrade-in-arms or adversary, strength or weakness, you or I, hunter or hunted" And, above all, it required a blind, fanatical faith in the Führer and his wisdom, total self-sacrifice.

Only a small minority escaped this totalitarian grip. In 1937, Varga could say very little that was concrete about the motivation for, and forms of, resistance. But, based on her experience of travelling in Germany and the anti-church propaganda of the regime, she suspected that resistance was particularly strong in Catholic circles because there was mental support there which could compete with the Nazis' worldview. By turning to Christianity, she thought, "the totalitarian political religion of national socialism could be countered by a divine totalitarian religion".

By opposing "divine totalitarian religion" and "totalitarian political religion", she refers to Erich Voegelin's distinction between "inner-worldly" and "super worldly" religion.[2] However, what appears with Voegelin to be a purely philosophical reflection and is not meant in a critical way, is for Varga founded in sociology (see Schöttler, 1997). At the same time, her project is altogether more modest: In place of Voegelin's universal theory of consciousness, in which Nazism is just an example of a gnostic mass movement and an *Ersatz* religion, she carries out empirical investigations, such as her field work on the transformation of two Alpine valleys, the Montafontal in Vorarlberg and the Ennebergtal in South Tyrol, where the Nazis, or the Italian fascists, appear as competitors to priests, witches, and even demons.

Lucie Varga's "Dans une vallée du Vorarlberg", published in January 1936 in the *Annales*[3], is an important (albeit little known) contribution, firstly, to the social, cultural, and political transformation of an alpine area in the early 20th century, and, secondly, to the emergence of Nazism in the Austrian Alps before the "Anschluss". Based on local investigations and interviews – "my mother found always people to talk to", said Berta Varga (letter to the author, January 7, 1990) – carried out in the Montafontal during the summer of 1935, the article shows the connections between modernisation (especially through small-scale industries and tourism after World War I) and the gradual transformation of local customs, rituals and beliefs which allowed Nazism, as an ideology and allegiance, to penetrate the region.

After a short but passionate plea for an alliance between history and ethnology – rather uncommon in a historical journal at that time – the article starts with a description of the valley in the Austrian region of Vorarlberg. The Great War turns out to be a watershed. Tourism transforms the villages and the villagers. A new "elite" of hotel owners and innkeepers and their families gradually prevails over the mountain farmers. The influence of the priest declines, while "progress" becomes the new slogan. Even in the upper valley, urban lifestyles from the towns of Bludenz or Bregenz (capital of Vorarlberg) are the examples to follow. But this does not mean that ancient

2 Voegelin, E. (1938). *Die politischen Religionen.* Bermann-Fischer. Translated as *Political Religions* (Lewiston NY, 1986). As if by chance, I found a copy of the first edition of this book in the remains of Varga's library in Viroflay near Paris (see Schöttler, 1994).

3 First (relatively free) English translation by George Huppert (Varga, 1936/2006). New English translation in the present book.

practices and conventions have disappeared, and there is still a big difference between locals and "foreigners".

Nazism proves to be a fundamental turning point. With the closing of the border, German tourists stay away and the whole valley is thrown into crisis. There are economic as well as cultural consequences. At the same time as the Austrofascist government in Vienna tries to discredit the Germans and restore confidence in the state and the church, the ideology of "progress" has fostered national socialism as a movement of the young and the "uprooted" (*déclassés*) whose social, economic and cultural "settings" (*cadres*) have been destroyed. In Vorarlberg, Nazism seems to be less antisemitic than anticlerical, and as a new political religion, it offers great expectations of progress and salvation.

In a way, Varga's second article "Sorcellerie d'hier. Enquête dans une vallée ladine" (1939) on the Ennebergtal and Val Badia in the Dolomites[4], forms a continuation of the first and yet takes a different approach. While the Montafon study examines social change from the more general perspective of social history and folklore, the second essay turns to her preoccupation with late-medieval witchcraft as a variant of heresy. The focus is on a remote village society with its own language (Ladin), rituals and religious opinions. Above all, Varga is interested in witchcraft beliefs, rudiments of which still exist: She notes down the spells and describes the imaginary and the social effectiveness of witchcraft as an antithesis to the Catholic church and its priests. Although these are terse, rather laconic notes, the author tries to immerse herself in the world of the women who have broken from the village order and to understand the practical rationality of their rebellion: "Belief in the witch has its place in the functioning of village society. What a relief to believe in the materiality of evil powers! In having the ability to accuse someone when you are unsuccessful, in being able to conjure up evil powers, the causes of these misfortunes, hope is reborn."

When the article was written, historical research on witches was still in its infancy. Interest focused almost exclusively on the history of the persecutions, while the belief of the witches was dismissed as an "obscure delusion" (Hansen, 1900). Only since the 1960s – beginning with Carlo Ginzburg's

4 English translation in the present book.

study of the Benandanti and promoted by the emergence of women's history – has a separate field of research been established that also encompasses the magical thinking of the present day: And questions and explanations stemming from cultural anthropology and psychoanalysis play an important role in this. Again, it is possible to say that Varga was a forerunner. Her essay does not merely report the superstitions of mountain people but outlines the cultural logic of witchcraft as a "profession", then gradually being supplanted by new points of reference such as tourism, the city and the state. And the author mischievously informs her audience that unfortunately her stay was too short to study all the witches' rituals and the remnants of their magic in more detail, so she was unable to learn the technique of bewitchment: "But I have no doubt that it is possible."

Unfortunately, we know relatively little about the genesis of both texts. Obviously, both are based on trips Varga took in 1935 and 1936 during the summer holidays with her ten-year-old daughter Berta and Febvre's slightly older son Henri. At times, her husband Franz Borkenau and her long-time friend Hilde Adelberg, a psychologist, joined them. Borkenau had already moved from Paris to London. There he was in contact with Malinowski whose LSE seminar he participated in and from whom he hoped for support in his search for a professorship somewhere in the world. As stated in the first footnote of the Montafon article, Varga had met with Malinowski at some point and acknowledged his "useful suggestions" in the preparation of her work. We also know from a letter from Henri Febvre to his parents that a meeting took place in Zurich in September 1935: "Mr. and Mrs. Borkenau have left for Zurich where they are to see a certain Malinowski, an ethnologist, of whom Mr. Borkenau speaks very highly."[5] But it is even possible that Varga had spoken to Malinowski earlier while visiting Borkenau in London. Since her Austrian passport has been preserved (in private collection), we know that she travelled quite frequently from Paris to England, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland and Italy. However, the border control stamps do not always provide sufficient information. For the summer of 1935, for example, there is

5 „Monsieur et Madame Borkenau sont partis pour Zurich où ils doivent voir un certain Malinowski, ethnologue, dont Monsieur Borkenau dit beaucoup de bien." Henri Febvre to Lucien and Susanne Febvre, Gargellen, September 5, 1935. Archives Nationales, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, Fonds Lucien Febvre. Varga's summer stays are also a topic from time to time in the correspondence between Febvre and Marc Bloch (see Müller, 2003, pp. 296 ff.)

little evidence for her movements, while for 1936 they show Varga travelled several times from Gries am Brenner to South Tyrol with the two children. The following year she crossed the Italian border again, via Sillian im Pustertal, for three weeks. These could have been the stays that formed the basis of her study of Val Badia.

At first sight, both articles have the appearance of light travelogues, but they turn out to be much more. In reality they are careful studies of the emergence of modernity in two Alpine valleys whose methodological approach the author has discussed with Malinowski, himself a fine connoisseur – he owned a summer house in Oberbozen – of the Alps. At the same time, these articles are an early attempt to analyse the rise of German Nazism in Vorarlberg and the growing impact of Italian Fascism in South Tyrol, highlighting their emotional attraction to underprivileged people of different origins. And while she criticises the old metaphor of *Basis und Überbau*, Varga suggests that Nazism especially – although the same is true for Fascism – has to be thought of as a kind of "political religion" and to be analysed via categories of conversion, worship and "magic". In retrospect one can say that even before Malinowski and others formulated arguments in that direction (see Stone, 2003), she made an important early contribution to the historical anthropology of totalitarian movements.

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In a Valley in Vorarlberg: From the Day before Yesterday to Today*

Lucie Varga

Translation by Francesca Bettocchi and Maria Lord

* Originally published in 1936 under the title "Dans une vallée du Vorarlberg: d'avant-hier à aujourd'hui" in *Annales d'histoire èconomique et sociale*, *8*, 1–20. The text has received one previous English translation by George Huppert in 2006. However, it was felt necessary by the editors of this volume to give a version following a different method, which preserves the original's approach to language use and ethnographic context.

We ask history a lot of questions. It cannot always answer them. We would like to ask it to give us an account of the relationship between the economy, social life and ideas. We would like it to tell us how the contact between lower cultures and more developed cultures takes place. These are big questions, among a myriad of others. The history of the past generally does not provide us with the means to answer them. Why not use the history of the present? Observing for some time, with methods familiar to the ethnologist, the life of a restricted and relatively simple group of people in contemporary society, may provide us with useful material for the type of in-depth investigations that are needed.[1]

The historian would benefit from using two principles of the method used by ethnologists. The first is the conviction that nothing is natural and obvious, that nothing is "self-evident". Everything is to be noted and recorded: the structure of the family as well as the way children are brought up; categories of thought as well as modes of faith; ideas about luxury and misery; as well as the rhythm of work and leisure….

The second principle is the scrupulousness and reserve with which the ethnologist, while recording what they can learn, avoids simply substituting

1 I would like to offer my thanks to Professor B. Malinowski (School of Economics, London) for the helpful suggestions he has made during the planning of this research.

their notions for those of the "subjects" they are studying, even if they find expressions in their language which seem to correspond to their ideas. They do not translate, they describe. This is a salutary precaution which would help the historian avoid anachronisms.[2]

We want to attempt a description of a group of Austrian – alpine – villages in this way. The Austrian village, over the course of the last few years, has been undergoing an economic crisis. It has undergone a profound transformation in its mentality and social structure. New elites have emerged. Previous authorities have been supplanted by others. Certain elements of urban provenance have been integrated into the previously exclusively rural environment. These are the subject matter of this piece of research. Let us try.

I

The valley in question is located in Vorarlberg, the small Austrian region bordering Switzerland, Germany and Tyrol. It rises from 750 to 1,600 m and is 10 km long. It has several villages, one of 1,200, one of 300 and one of 190 inhabitants. In summer and at Christmas, a bus now connects the valley to a small railway line that dates back to the end of the 19th century. This "rattletrap" leads in half an hour to the main line: Innsbruck–Bludenz–Zurich. The villages are 200 km from Innsbruck, 22 km from Bludenz (seat of the "Bezirkhauptmannschaft"), 70 km from Bregenz (where the "Landeshauptmannschaft" and the barracks are located), and 50 km from Feldkirch (where the hospital is located). In Innsbruck there are tertiary-level educational institutions for those who want to study, to follow courses at the polytechnic or to become artists. Goods are brought from the industrial region between Bludenz, Dornbirn and Bregenz: There are breweries, cheese factories, canning factories, chocolate factories, weaving and spinning mills, earthenware and porcelain factories, watch and furniture factories, and so on. There are people

2 For the past, we can only interrogate documents and interpret texts, whereas the good ethnologist working in the field, gifted with psychological intuition, will never limit themself to the immediate findings and data provided by their objects of study. They will note the accent, the gesture that accompanies the word – and words will sometimes, of all the elements of knowledge, be the least important. Rather than questioning subjects directly, they will live with the "tribe" and penetrate its ways of being.

who settled in the valley between 1890 and 1905, the period of the founding of these businesses.

Everyone in the valley knows the small and medium-sized towns and cities mentioned above. Everyone has been to them at least once. As for capital cities, Vienna is no longer an attraction; the big city to visit is Zurich. It should be noted, by the way – and we will come back to this later – that, if the distance in kilometres from these centres to the valley does not change, their remoteness does not cease to vary; it is sometimes more, sometimes less, depending on the economic and ideological changes that take place. One city comes closer, one city retreats, and it is not, in the final analysis, the means of transport that are responsible for such fluctuations.

Our valley is a mountain valley, which means there is no wheat. The properties are small with just enough to provide hay for the cattle owned by each one, usually 3 to 14 heads. In the lower part of the valley, apple trees still grow and produce bitter, green fruit. The peasants make sweet cider from them, or slice them and dry them; the latter are a great delicacy for children in winter. There are also small vegetable gardens with potatoes, some cabbages, lettuce, peas and beans. Wealthy families also have one or two pigs and a few chickens.

This distribution of land holdings has changed little or not at all in recent years. However, the village has been transformed from top to bottom. The peasants themselves have become acutely aware of this. No conversation takes place without them putting the past and the present into perspective, "das Früher und das Jetzt", highlighting the revolutions that have taken place in their valley. This "historical sense", or rather this sense of the times is striking: It is easy to believe that it is itself a consequence of the profound changes it records.

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The time that farmers refer to as "before" covers three different periods, which they themselves distinguish between very clearly.

First, the "Früher" is the generation of the grandfathers – and of all the centuries that have passed since. This time mostly provides anecdotes. It is

the age of traditional dress, old customs and folklore. And, for the people of the valley, it looks like prehistory: It is the absolute past.[3]

Second, the "Früher" is the time before the war. A time which, at this moment, is a living past, one of history. It was the time of their parents; the "normal" time, if you like, that of well-being, based on two elements: on the one hand, possession of land and livestock, on the other, paid work. A peasant's income was made up primarily of income in kind: milk, cheese, butter, bacon, fat and meat from pigs fed at home; eggs, chickens; some potatoes and vegetables; and, lower down, cider. Then there was the income in cash, first of all from the sale of the cattle at the big market in September: The breed of the valley was renowned and sought-after. However, there were also the salaries that the men earned during the summer, that is to say from May to September, by going to France, Belgium, Germany, Hungary, etc., working as carpenters, stucco workers or "Krautschneider" (sauerkraut cutters). Austrian geography books used to lament the sad fate of these "absentees" who accepted hard work abroad for starvation wages. In reality, the valley was living through its heroic period. For the mountain dwellers, certain of returning to their homes in the autumn, it was an adventure and, at the same time, a guarantee of well-being for the family. It was contact with that which was foreign; it was a struggle – a privilege of men – and it was victory: The trophies are still there, in the form of postcards from Nyon, Tours, Marseille, Ulm, Budapest and Kecskemet, fixed to the corners of the walls in the old houses.

What had been seen abroad? Countries that had no mountains, a wonderful thing. Food that was completely different. Drinks unknown in the valley, types of wines of which they were ignorant: French wines, Hungarian wines. Different mores and temperaments of women and girls: If we look at the past through the eyes of men between 50 and 60 years old, they were valiant knights and troubadours.

What was brought back from abroad, aside from money? What had been "learned" abroad? Absolutely nothing. In the valley, the old traditions continued unchanged. Not one temporary emigrant ever brought a foreign girl to

3 The present government has been trying to revive old customs, but it is not succeeding; people are being evasive. At displays of traditional costumes it is as if they are visiting an exhibition of something foreign. I recently heard a fiancé being reproached for not having put on his costume for the ceremony; he replied: 'Hey, do you think I'm here to play the fool in front of you?' ('Glaubt ihr ich bin da euch den Narren abzugeben?').

his homeland. Only two of them married in France, and one, having left as a stucco worker, now owns a large construction company in Paris.[4]

They would return in autumn on the eve of the big market. They had half of the wages they earned in their pockets; the other half had been spent on clothes, on the return journey, on expenses for lodging and cabaret, on "amusements". The house, the animals, the meadows were, however, looked after by the women, or, under their direction, by the children who remained at home. This was a sort of summer matriarchy whose consequences can still be seen today. For example, it is especially the wife's parents who are invited by the family; they are the ones whom it is preferred to help in the case of misfortune.

They were the good times of economic stability. Good times when money was heavy in people's pockets, blessed times when God provided necessities – and luxury. What was this "luxury"? First of all, nice clothes. For the men, clothes made of strong, durable fabrics. For the women, clothing with rich embroidery and silk aprons; in addition, shoes as they were worn in the city, woollen jackets, blouses. Added to this were beautiful pots for cooking, buckets, and "Zuber" in which to make cheese.

In the majority of families, money was plentiful enough, not only for the enjoyment of all these luxury purchases, but also for establishing new families. In fact, on the death of the father the eldest son traditionally takes over the paternal home; out of the money he has earned over the last few years, or which he is certain of earning in those to come, he pays his brothers and sisters their share of the inheritance. The other sons, when they are thinking of getting married, buy a plot of land and build their house on it. For "getting married" means having your own house. To marry and live with parents or in-laws is inconceivable for the people of the valley, now as it was before the war. Intimate relationships outside of marriage – no matter what the parish priest says – were and are considered much less "immoral" than a marriage without "funds", a marriage of misery. The girls were chosen from the villages of the valley. What was considered above all when choosing a wife, at the

4 For a long time he only employed workers from his valley. The non-renewal of their work permits will force them to return to Vorarlberg one of these days. Naturally, he will be one of the great men of the valley, one of its most popular figures.

time we are talking about, was the quality of her work and the social position of her family.

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Not only the valley, but the whole of Vorarlberg prospered then. It was the time of the founding of the factories. It was the heyday of the renowned Vorarlberg embroidery business ("Vorarlberger Stickerei Industrie"), with its centre in Lustenau near Bregenz. Embroidery was produced there which was sold as far away as America, China and Morocco, but also found markets in Austria and Germany. As the sayings went: "Proud as a young man from Lustenau", or, "She holds herself like a young girl from Lustenau".

The whole of Vorarlberg took part in the development of this industry; the whole of Vorarlberg envied its early successes. The farmers of Lustenau, Gotzis and Hohenems bought embroidery machines. They were entrusted to the daughters of the family; workers were only hired if that were not possible.

Embroidery had had its ups and downs even before the war; it was much worse afterwards, between 1920 and 1927. The whole province was shaken by this. For the past eight years, the industry has been in complete ruin. Ask the reason for this decline, and the answer will vary depending on the age of the respondent. Young people will tell you, "It's the crisis", a magic word that seems to explain everything. Older people have their own theory, a moral theory, where betrayal and greed play a big role. In the decline of their industry, they see a kind of punishment for the greed of men. A few Vorarlberg men, eager to earn even more, betrayed the secret of the embroidery machines and sold them, even in America. Needless to say, this myth does not refer to a real America, but to a symbolic America, the embodiment of "business", of great industry, of brutal and irresponsible capitalist forces. However, now being in possession of the Vorarlberg machines (simple machines – need it be said? – which betray their secrets in the blink of an eye), America produces Vorarlberg embroidery and makes double the profit.

Immoral and treacherous America; a myth of exactly the same order, and of the same lineage as other "anti-capitalist" myths or anti-Semitic theories.

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Politically, the region (with the exception of Bludenz, a railway centre and, as such, Social-Democrat) was "christlich-social". The "Christlichsocialen" here were the party of the well-to-do, happy with economic progress, but otherwise traditionalist and with strong conservative convictions.
However, the village's ideas were not organized around theories or national parties. Rather, its centre was "the religion" – Catholicism in its peasant form – whose representative was the parish priest. The parsonage, the "Pfarrhof", was, next to the church, the most prominent building in the village. It also usually housed the school. The priest's cook looked for herbs with numerous virtues and the women of the village would turn to her in the case of fever, difficult childbirth or accidents, to obtain medicinal herbal teas or soothing dressings. The parish priest was generally a jovial and indulgent man with human weaknesses. He only asked for one thing, which was granted to him without discussion, recognition of the power, which was in some way magical, of the Church. This was power of which he was the sovereign holder.

He was called when the cows were sick. He invoked the patron saints of cattle: Saint Martin, Saint Guandelin (Hendelin) and Saint Fridolin. He blessed stables. He blessed the mountain pastures, when the cows and bullocks were brought there in the spring. He blessed newly built houses, and his blessing protected them from disasters and avalanches. He blessed those who went out to do dangerous work, or those who went abroad: For his blessing ensured them work and good wages. They went to Mass at least every Sunday and they went to confession once a month, at least in winter. The women received communion every fortnight, but in the summer the men did not go to church.

The priest lived with the village. Usually there was no tension between him and his parishioners. He spoke their language. He was, more often than not, a peasant's son from one of the villages in the nearby valley. Materially speaking, he also had a close relationship with the village. He received his salary every month, but his table and cellar were supplied by the faithful: 800 eggs a year, 14 kg of butter, 700 litres of milk and 30 cheeses. This is what a village of 180 inhabitants was obliged to provide, and still provides today. In addition, the parish priest has the right to have repairs and work done to his house at the expense of the parish.

Next to the priest's house was the the inn, which was slowly gaining social importance. Before it was established, winter leisure time was spent at home or in a neighbour's house. Card games were played: "Jazzen" a clever and complicated game that required quick calculation of your options and a reliable estimate of your opponent's chances. The young girls of the village were courted, some people played guitar and accordion a little, and sometimes danced peasant dances in spacious rooms. They also chatted, talked a little politics, some economics, and told each other legends and old tales. In spring and autumn, they sometimes went to the mountains, especially to look for edelweiss. There were not many inns then. Young girls never went to them. They were suspicious places, often quite far from the village, and no-one owned a bicycle.

II

One gets the feeling that even after the war, life in the village went back to more or less the same as before. The war, for the old people who took part in it, is above all a memory of great tiredness and of nostalgia. They fought against Italy and against France, some of them in Poland, but they had active hatred only against Italy. The Italians were "traitors". At the moment, in Vorarlberg, there is feverish interest in the question of Abyssinia, and sympathies are with the Negus ….

So it seems that in the countryside, the war did not immediately change much; and it turns out, that once again, "after the war" is, above all, a convenient way of saying this. It was some time later, around 1920, that new elements came to be incorporated into the life of the village. These elements became more and more numerous and began to dissolve the old categories of thinking, already shaken by the events of 1914 to 1920. These new elements were German tourists.

First of all, they did not come for long stays. They only spent a few nights in the rare inns of the region: time to make a few ascents among the peaks of the Alps. However, they talked a lot, they told the villagers a lot: they imposed themselves; very proud of their homeland, they cited it as an example; they constantly made proposals for reorganization and transformation of the village; they flirted with young girls; and they did not go to Mass on

Sundays…. In the region, German tourists still have the reputation of being ideal tourists today. Insensitive to the comfort of the rooms and the delicacy of the menus, they ask for few comforts. All they need are two things: large portions and many newspapers. So, while seeking the joys of nature they brought the atmosphere of the cities to the countryside. They urbanised the village. They described and boasted of their ascents, and the number of ascents by young peasants multiplied. Skiing, already practised during the war, was slowly imported again by urban dwellers on holiday. The young men of the village adopted it themselves.

There was a shortage of hotels. The more enterprising of the village, the adventurous, those who had been considered moderate up until then, founded them. Being a hotelier was a new way to move up the ladder in peasant society. The inns prospered. Their owners began to speak out loudly in council meetings. What is more, the inns were improved, attracting tourists and inviting them to come back. They lost their character as bad places. Moreover, they were not hostile to outsiders. They brought money, money earned much more easily than it had been before. They were willing to listen and to be told how things should be. And the Germans were only too eager to teach. A German doctor arrived, made fun of the herbal teas of the priest's housekeeper and provided other remedies; this new magic was just as successful as the old. The German vet came as well, laughed at St Martin and gave learned treatments for sick cows. The peasants now gave their cattle two exorcisms: that of the priest and that of the doctor. Sometimes the cows recovered….

Should we draw a lesson from this and say that belief in magical rites is never shaken even though they do not produce satisfactory results? And that, in this situation, the peasants contented themselves with doubling the rites? On the contrary, one magic gives way to another when a new magician appears with all the attributes of greater power – money, knowledge, the ability to teach, the halo of success – all of which create confidence in the effectiveness of the new magic.

When tourists flocked to the village, the inns would hire people: two waiters, sometimes a cook. They expanded, and for that workers were also needed for a limited time. The village's consumption of agricultural products increased. The milk could be sold locally, the producers were no longer forced to consume the butter or cream themselves. If the inn was full, German tour-

ists stayed with farmers and only took meals at the hotel. Money flowed in and they bought land, an extra cow, a pig, and they ate more meat. They purchased "Maisäss", summer cottages higher up in the mountains, where part of the family go in May with some of the cattle…. As they expected to earn some money, they could borrow or buy using credit.

Who did the lending? Banks, or "Reifkassen", were rarely used, it was rather neighbours who advanced the money. These were neighbours who, for the moment, had cash and no plans. However, the sums involved were very small.

What marked the years before inflation came was the advent of tourism and its aftermath. Summer and then winter sports meant a reorganisation of leisure activities, but above all, with far greater consequences, a transformation of village society. This was the formation of a new elite, that of enterprising spirits such as innkeepers or hoteliers. In the village there was strong economic activity and an appetite for profit. Relations with the city became closer and closer. It was necessary to go to them to order provisions for shops, food for inns, the fitting out rooms etc. Thus, peasants sought them out. Above all, however, the city was taking over the village.

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Then came inflation. The losses, fundamentally, were not great. The only ones who were caught out were those who did not yet have sufficient means to buy land and a house, or those who had lent money to their neighbours. But inflation brought with it a fever of enterprise, a kind of excitement for profit, a state of mind for which the early days of tourism had prepared them well.

A new opportunity for profit initially began in the valley: smuggling from town to town in the valley of the border between Switzerland, Germany and Austria. It was based on imported goods – machinery, metals, etc. – and the smugglers collected large sums. Their contact with the city became stronger, and the earnings made so easily in the village ended up there. No-one bought land or a house with this money. They bought gold watches in Innsbruck, city clothes, fine shoes and gramophones. The money was squandered on absurd things, nothing, or almost nothing, was retained for the women or the family. It was all wasted in the city, with "women" of the city.

Another practice that worked to strengthen the contact with the city was that of lawsuits, with which the village was overflowing: lawsuits of rich elders against their successors; lawsuits over water; over the roads; over the right of way, etc. This happened over lighting too, for it is at this point that the region became electrified. The old peasant hierarchy only stepped back gradually before the hoteliers and innkeepers. Lawsuits over debt followed and a veritable avalanche of cases overwhelmed the lawyers and judges of the "Kreisgericht" in Bludenz. It almost collapsed under the burden.

During this period, the parish priest's influence was significantly reduced. He ceased to be "one of the village" and became someone apart. Criticism existed, although was rarely expressed. He opposed innovation and upheaval, and was judged as living on another plane according to laws that no longer governed this world. Many convents and some parish priests tried to participate in the new world and to get their hands on land or houses at a low price. The faithful reproached them for their overly secular lifestyle, their concern for earthly well-being, their lack of spirituality: ghosts of the Reformation which had never been able to win in this country. The old ideological frameworks broke down. Indifference took the place of practical religiosity. Life, moreover, became more and more oriented towards the city, and the village priest was powerless when faced with urban affairs.

On the other hand, a half-religious idea moved from the city to the village, a dynamic idea with revolutionary potential: the notion of progress. Progress meant new hotels, tourism, sport, money. Progress meant urban civilization: city clothes, gramophones, modern dances, cinema. Progress was being assimilated by the city. A refrain often heard then, as today, is, "The city is a hundred years ahead of us, just as Europe is a hundred years ahead of the barbarians". Progress meant being part of Europe, and Europe, for this region, is essentially Germany and Switzerland, to a much lesser degree, Austria. Red Vienna never seduced Vorarlberg, which was resistant to socialism. And the vision of imperial Vienna had been lost since that world no longer existed.

As a result, peasant costumes are disappearing. Sometimes strange situations result: The wives and daughters of tourists dress in peasant style, while the peasant youth adopt the fashions of the city. The foreigner is increasingly thwarted in their hopes of being a folklorist. If the women are questioned,

they immediately develop a whole list of arguments to explain the changes: city clothes are more hygienic; they are less durable, but also less expensive. City clothes do not represent a real investment, as a peasant's costume from the valley costs roughly 600 schillings, or 1,600 francs.

But the real reasons run even deeper. Ever since the city intruded into the village, young men have increasingly begun to turn away from the young girls of the valley. The servant at the inn who is an incomer, the tourist maid, is much more successful. A girl from the valley is only valued when she has seen "the world" and proved that she can cope outside the village. When she returns after a few years of service in the city or in another valley, and abandons her costume, she adapts to the desires of the young men who no longer want a peasant girl, but a girl from the city.

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Lured by the low prices, with inflation came tourists other than just Germans, in particular the Swiss. They came to the valley in the summer, praising the landscape and, with a gesture of the lord of the manor they bought land and built villas. They created small "Burschaften", small farming enterprises similar to those of the region. but they also set up poor peasants and gave them, in addition to a monthly salary, a litre of milk per person per day. It was understood that accounts would be kept of the operating revenue…. The experience of these Swiss, still strangers in the village after being present for twenty years, gives them a curious insight into the mechanism of mixing in the village.

In fact, in Vorarlberg, the Swiss have not found their way into the villagers' hearts. They are "Fremde", bosses, certainly very correct and there is nothing to reproach them for: "Es ist nichts zu klagen". They are Protestants without a doubt, but that does not matter. The villagers do not know how to explain their coldness towards the outsiders. But, for the observer, it is not difficult to see that these Swiss, who come from the city, who are irreproachable in the legal sense of the word, remain foreigners because they do not submit to the uncodified morality of the village. This morality, unshaken in the face of all the changes, still governs relations between neighbours and the

entire social life of the village, as it did in the past. I would call it the morality of the neighbourhood.

What does it consist of? Today, as in the past, a neighbour is a guarantor for an indebted neighbour; today, as in the past, a neighbour can count on a neighbour in case of emergency. If needed, they give hours of work helping to to build a house, harvest hay or lend a bull. It is the same in the world of women. A sum of money, saved for a long time for some much-desired luxury purchase, is sacrificed without hesitation for the childbirth of a sister or the clothing of nieces and nephews. Sick neighbours are cared for with exemplary devotion. This is social morality and not individual morality, but Christian charity? Not any more. The help given to a neighbour is not like alms given to strangers; I have seen the itinerant unemployed dismissed with two spoonfuls of milk soup in an unfriendly way. The help one gives a neighbour is a kind of insurance in case you need to be helped yourself. What you do to a person in the village, someone in the village would do for you when the day comes. This is not a Christian expectation, it is an economic reality.

The confederation of neighbours, this is what constitutes the village. Anyone who is not morally upright does not belong to the village, even if he or she appears on the administrative lists as "Standesbürger". However, tourists passing through may be admitted to this confederation if they understand its meaning and show a desire to participate: by bringing medicinal plants to an old woman who complains that she can no longer look for them herself; by writing letters or insisting on being invited to a wedding; by bringing chocolate to a sick child and giving them advice, etc. Once admitted, once adopted, you can be sure that everyone in the village will be ready to help you with all their strength. If, as a stranger, you demand someone does a job for money, it will be done badly and very slowly. But, if you ask a neighbour to do the same work as a favour, it will be done immediately and in the most conscientious way.

So, if we want to single out the characteristics of village life on the eve of the crisis and the National-Socialist revolution in Germany (which, in the peasants' conception, marks a new era), they are the following: material well-being, close relations with the city, a profound shaking of traditions and the old attitudes towards life. There is a inclination in favour of an "Anschluss" with the city. New notions are imported from the city, notably those

of progress among others, which is all very "18th century". There is no discussion, no hatred against the clergy, only indifference, with a relaxing of religious observance in the confessional, etc. Interests, partly opposed to Catholicism, absorb more and more of the energies of the village.

The crisis and Nazi propaganda occurred at almost the same time. The old ways, first shaken by material prosperity and its many consequences, were again disrupted by economic difficulties: firstly, because agricultural prices were falling; secondly, because there were fewer opportunities for paid work; and thirdly, because tourism was declining appreciably. With the closing of the German borders, German tourism disappeared completely overnight.

One could therefore say, any economic upheaval affects people's minds and any economic change, for good or for ill, prepares people's minds for the adoption of new ideas, which are welcomed initially by the social elites born through the course of economic transformation. But, does not the theory of the economic base and ideological superstructure actually create a historical short-circuit? It neglects the intermediate stages between the base and the superstructure through which the current of living history flows.

So the crisis is coming to our valley; it will have its effect on people's minds. What will be its ideological consequences? A revival of Catholicism, or conversions, and the resumption of the old authorities taking back control of people's souls? Repentance for having allowed oneself to be seduced by new things?

This can be seen, at least in part, in some of the valleys of Tyrol: "Let us return to religion, to tradition. Let us not discuss the authorities imposed upon us. With religion, with authority, we will go back to the good old days. We've been disobedient, let's go back to obedience. God and the authorities will reward us".[5]

Obedience is the essence of Catholicism in Tyrol. As far as can be seen, there is little personal religious experience at the bottom of the revival of Catholicism there. This renaissance, supported by the present government, gives work and benefits to those who "obey". But the Austrian tradition was strong in the Tyrolean valleys "won back" by Catholicism and the idea of an economic, social and ideological renaissance. Vorarlberg lacks this. It has al-

5 For example, in Stubaital and Ötztal; while Pongau, Pinzgau and Paznaun had opposing reactions.

ways been more closely linked to Germany and Switzerland than with Austria. It has always been jealous of Tyrol. It felt neglected by Austria, which was building roads in Tyrol and helping it with all the power at its disposal, without doing anything for Vorarlberg. Therefore, the region has always been prepared to listen to what the Germans say and to be influenced by them. Above all, it was the social structure which was not the same.

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In Tyrol, as in Vorarlberg, it was the "downgraded" who converted to National Socialism. It was not the poor or the destitute, these are are stagnated, absorbed in the struggle for their material existence. By downgraded we mean those whose social framework has been shattered. And, for example, in the Tyrolean village, these include: the owner of the inn or hotel (what are they, peasants or entrepreneurs?); the village shopkeeper and their employee; and, finally, the "intellectuals" of the village such as the doctor, the vet, the dentist, the notary, etc.

For these people, National Socialism came to give what every religion must provide: the revelation of the true path of salvation; a feeling of being initiated, of being part of a social community and of reaching a higher morality; the hope of a near victory; and, finally, the unveiling of the enemy's forces, forces which are undefinable. These prevent the small shopkeeper from succeeding, the employee from becoming an entrepreneur, and ensure the country doctor remains a half-peasant. National Socialist propaganda has revealed to its followers the cause of all these defeats: the Jew.

Those downgraded in the village took this propaganda to heart, and quickly encouraged some of the young farmers to follow them. For National Socialism is a youth movement and, in the Austrian village tradition, a movement of revolt and disobedience. They feel that they are the pioneers of progress. in Tyrol, they are also anti-clerical, but their anti-clericalism does not have the same fierce tone as in the Vorarlberg valley.

National Socialism in Tyrol – and this is due to the difference in the social terrain – mainly affects the urbanized elements of the towns and some of the young peasants from poor backgrounds. The rest, the mass of peasants who were comfortably off, and who had always remained more or less

on the sidelines of the movements of the last few decades, stayed aligned with the Christian Social Party, and were easily won over to the authoritarian, Catholic national programme of the government. Since urbanization was much more established in Vorarlberg, it was not anti-Semitism, but anti-clericalism that was at the forefront of National-Socialist propaganda from the very beginning. The first conversions to National Socialism were conversions to anticlericalism. The first apostles were, as in Tyrol, the downgraded, the sidelined, of the village.

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I have been able to follow the story of several of them. One of the very first converts was an orphan. His parents, peasants from a neighbouring valley, pursued by misfortune, had died in extreme poverty. Their house and land had been auctioned off and the boy placed with the priest. He was treated harshly. There was a lot of work and no joy, a perpetual feeling of being a burden, with hateful words about his parents and a lot of authoritarian morality administered without charity. From this came a deep sense of restlessness. Everything he applied himself to had no hope of success: All his rebellions had no hope of victory. His restlessness lacked a formula, his revolt lacked a programme. One Sunday, escaping from the parish priest's house after Mass, he attempted to climb one of the mountains and met a German tourist. He was a writer on mountaineering who had settled in the valley, attracted by the crown of peaks that surrounds the village. Because of his unquestioned mountaineering abilities, he became the boy's idol. The elder began to talk to the younger, he "opened his eyes". "Suddenly the scales fell from my eyes", said the young peasant. "I saw how I had been abused up to now, and questioned the morality I had been taught up to this point…. I recognized where I belonged…." This is the phraseology of conversion; Catholic as well as Lutheran, Marxist as well as National-Socialist.

So, for the neophyte, the world made sense again. He was no longer an outcast, he found his place once again in a social community… one that was fictitious in the long run, but welcoming at the beginning. It was no longer a question of the parish, the village, Catholic morality or service without a chance of success. The new convert belonged to the great German people:

he was lord by the very fact that he participated in it; he was superior to the majority of the inhabitants of the village; he was the chosen one, the initiated. Through political work the world would change its face. And the young man went out to preach in the village. Firstly, at some friends' houses where he told them about his guru, but also in secret gatherings which were held in his own home. The enthusiasm of the neophyte and the emotions he knows how to inspire (he is a good speaker when hate fires him up) soon give him an enviable social position. The priest chased him away but friends lent him money and today he owns a boarding house, a very pretty house place with all modern conveniences, land, cows, and clients who share his political convictions. His wife was a cook for a noble German family.[6]

Other conversions are more difficult to track. However, on all sides, new ideas were planted: by the teacher, by the students, by the peasants who visited their parents in the city, or by those who came to the village. Thus, National Socialism in the village is another stage in the urbanization of the countryside.

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In the villages of Vorarlberg, where the influence of the city had begun to make itself felt later than in Tyrol, but which happened in a quicker, more violent and deeply penetrating way, resistance to National Socialism was almost non-existent. The country was invaded. Each call was echoed multiple times. There was an atmosphere of expectation, that of a thousand-year-old dream being created.

1933: The German Revolution. The borders closed; the German tourists no longer came. The crisis worsened and there was no longer a market for cattle, milk and butter. The entire economic system of the valley, based on this triad of agricultural production, salaried work and tourism, was once again shaken to its roots.

6 Among those who visited the same teacher, there was another, the son of a large family who had been injured in a railway accident and had lost his position. He was then a hunter on a private estate, but was threatened all the time with unemployment. A third was the architect of the refuges of the region: restless and intelligent, he was not satisfied with what the village could offer him….

Money was lacking. Those who earned money from farming did not have enough to live on. Here is the budget of an average, relatively well-off peasant family in 1934. There is a father, mother, one daughter and two sons. They have 10 cows and enough hay to feed them. The daughter was a maid in a hotel: she was made unemployed; one of the sons worked in France: he was expelled. The family consumes the milk. Perhaps they give it to neighbours who are short of it, however, they are not paid in cash but sometimes with bacon, or with eggs, or with labour. In the autumn they try to sell a few cows; three out of the ten they own. They get 500 to 600 schillings per animal (1,400 to 1,700 francs). Let's say, in total, 4,500 francs, of which 900 francs must be deducted for tax, 300 francs for various fees, and the 600 francs that it costs for the cows to spend the summer on the alps. They want to continue to pay their insurance, another 300 francs per year. This leaves 2,400 francs for the whole family for the whole year. With that they have to buy meat, flour, all the pulses, coffee, sugar, shoes, clothes, soap, linen, wool, small sundries, needles, thread etc. Urgent repairs, sickness, childbirth, and luxuries such as tobacco also need to be paid for. For our family of five people and ten cows, that leaves about 160 francs a month. And the proportion between the number of children and the number of cows is generally reversed: three cows, but ten children.

In our accounts, heating and light seem to be omitted, but the wood really only costs the work of fetching it from the mountain and preparing it. Each house is allowed to use a sufficient quantity of the "Standeswald", a survival of the communal "Allmende". As for electricity, it is supplied to each house by a small private distributor set up during the years of prosperity.

So there is a need for economy. What are the first measures to be imposed? What are the priorities? First of all, they eat less meat: instead of three times a week, twice a week or even just once. Second, they no longer buy new clothes. The old ones must suffice. Then comes the bread. It is impossible to buy flour. And after the bread, the sugar goes. These are great hardships, but it is not yet complete destitution. Destitution is when you do not have coffee any more.

Economies, moreover, differ from one generation to the next. Older people do not give up their pipes, while younger people do without their cigarettes fairly easily. They go to the inn less often, but they keep their radios and subscriptions to newspapers.

It is a gesture of despair and anguish when they have to give up paying taxes. But then they experience something serious: the weakness of the state. It would have the right to seize houses and land, but there are so many debtors in arrears. And then the peasants issue an ultimatum, "If you take our houses from us, take care of our children", and families have ten, twelve, fourteen offspring. This is a fatal responsibility for the district. The conclusion is that, without access to funds, the state does nothing, and so the inhabitants despise it because it is powerless.

Meanwhile, the city retreats again. Nothing can be bought there; the village is reduced to a kind of autarchy. There are no more lawsuits, they cost too much and there is no trust anymore in the government courts. Disputes are settled among themselves. Nevertheless, the city remains very close via the radio. Broadcasts are transmitted from Zurich, Stuttgart and Innsbruck, and the cult of the city continues around the sets. They can hear the political news and listen to jazz and "modern" songs. The borders are closed, but German propaganda still crosses them….

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The fact that the borders are closed is, moreover, blamed by all as the great and sole cause of poverty. "When the borders reopen" is the mantra. The economic difficulties and the government's attempts to bring the population back to the church have only made opposition in the valley more fanatical. There is no anti-Semitism among the peasants. But there is no lack of the myth of enemy forces which work against "progress" for their own benefit, using every trick to maintain the stupidity of the people so that they can be exploited more efficiently. These are the clerical forces, "die Schwarzen", a nickname which still echoes the "Dunkelmänner" of the Reformation. Spontaneously, as during the Reformation, a new superstition is born: seeing the priest, or his cook, is a portent and cause of doom.

Anticlericalism is the obsession of the village. Anticlericalism, not as a religious controversy, but as a social and political polemic. In essence, the people live on a diet of deism and vague biblicism. But no conversation with them can take place without many mocking allusions to the Church and the priest. They talk about the greed of the parish priest and they talk about the

lessons he gives. Someone enquires, "How much does he ask?" The enigmatic answer is, "Oh, he would do it for a virgin…. Understand? Well, he would do it for the Virgin Mary". Everybody laughs and I finally understand: The virgin is the new Austrian 5 schilling coin with the image of the Virgin of Mariazell.

And there are more jokes on legendary themes. One boy shouts to the other, "Didn't you see the white deer with the cross on the mountain yesterday?" The other replies, "Oh yes, but with the swastika". Sometimes these jokes turn sacrilegious. Here is a scene I witnessed. Four cows fell ill on an alp at 2,200 m. and their owners, rich traditional peasants, called for the priest to perform an exorcism and bless the alp. So, the parish priest is there, on the pasture, in the middle of the owners and their family, giving the blessing in the names of St Fridolin and St Martin. However, a stone's throw away, in the "Stube" of the alp, there are two shepherds eating, the woman who keeps the refuge in order, the cowherd and a couple of visitors. At first, they do not pay attention to what is happening on the pasture. They continue eating. But soon they start to impersonate the priest. "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, won't you give us any more potatoes?" To which the old woman, beating her chest, answers, "Mea culpa, mea culpa, I have no more. Perhaps St Fridolin will provide us with some?" They take the statues of the saints down from their corner. "Dear Fridolin, we give you the rest of the juices of our potatoes: Bring us some more, we beg you from the bottom of our hearts", and they smear the statues with the leftovers of their meal. I take some chocolate out of my bag and offer it to this noble company of men. "It's a miracle, it's a miracle", they cry out, "Thank you St Fridolin, thank you St Martin, leave now, don't tire yourselves out". And they put the statuettes back in their corner. I ask the youngest of the guests, a bright boy of about 11, "And you, are you also anticlerical?" The little Nazi, who one might think is anti-Semitic, answers gleaming with pride, "Oh yes, I'm already completely Jewish" ("Ich bin schon ein ganzer Jud").

In opposition to the anticlerical majority, three families (out of 38) are fervent, fanatical Catholics. The women go to confession and attend Mass every day. These people, too, believe they are chosen, chosen from among the reprobates, their neighbours and Nazi relatives. They withdraw from village life, not believing in the possibility of making the world a better place. They

never go to the inn, they curse strangers, lock themselves in their homes, and see no one but the priest. How can this explain their attitude be explained? In one family, the eldest daughter was brought up in a convent. She had a lively personality and returned home at the advent of the anticlerical propaganda. In the home she fought this with success; neither her parents nor her brothers were seduced by modern ideas. The second family has been in disagreement and conflict with most of the people of the village since prehistoric times. Understandably, when the opportunity has arisen, they have always stood against the common ideas of the village. The third family is a family of priests.

Naturally, in the face of this wave of antipathy and hatred, the type of priest has changed too. The choice is already different. It is no longer the jovial, indulgent, fat and pink priest that we meet, but skinny, pale fanatics, the "Eiferer", who condemn the world and its sins and have no forgiveness for their "flock". And those who, perhaps, under an indulgent priest, would have continued to profess a rather detached Catholicism, turn away from it. The confessionals of the zealots are empty. Those who want to confess make a pilgrimage of two hours or more to find a priest who gives them an absolution with consoling words. "No, I'm not going to Father X", a gossipy villager told me, "No, not that one, he just makes me more frightened".

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In recent months, the economic situation has improved a bit. On the one hand, French, Dutch or English tourists are coming to visit the region instead of Germans. On the other, the most resourceful young people of the village are taking their exams as ski instructors and mountain guides, and at the same time work as carpenters, stucco workers, electricians, and hire themselves out for the hay harvest. With so many strings to their bow, they always have a chance of earning a few pennies.

Moreover, without wishing to idealize the village, it is notable that its work ethic is necessarily superior to that of the city. It is that in the countryside the best workers are sought after, and not the ones with the lowest prices. The differences in wages are enormous: a good hay farmer earns 6 schillings (15 francs) a day and his food; a bad one, one or two schillings (2.80 to 5.60

francs). The one earning 6 schillings will find work much easier than the other. Hay is "work that is in a hurry". It is important to take advantage of the good weather and not dawdle….

However, even if the most intelligent people in the village have found relief from the communal poverty, the crisis continues nonetheless. It is disrupting the whole structure of the village more profoundly than ever. Up until now we have seen leisure changing, the cycle of the year changing, one religion replacing another, old authorities being ousted, new ones asserting themselves, public opinion adopting other principles. But the circle of life, childhood, marriage, old age, has remained the same….

Now young people today cannot and do not want to marry. What they earn is barely enough for their existence and their small pleasures. They cannot buy land or build a house, and without a house, as we have seen, marriage is inconceivable. Since the crisis, the number of marriages has gone down by 70%, and, increasingly, young men are turning away from girls in the village. They fear being forced into a marriage against their will, they also fear alimony lawsuits; the only lawsuits that continue to be brought in the city…. Money is scarce, and the court has forced the fathers of illegitimate children to pay up to 30 schillings a month: That is more than an entire family has at their disposal in the village today.

With marriage, the whole framework of life falls apart. This is far more serious than all the changes that have taken place in recent years. Also the progressive optimism of the people of the village, their 1,000-year politics, the courage of the desperate, all of this liable to change from one moment to the next, into a disgusted apathy for life, into fatalistic pessimism. The consequences? We will see – we are not prophets – they will be seen in five, ten or twenty years.

Lucie Varga (Paris.)

Yesterday's Witchcraft: An Enquiry Into a Ladin Valley*

Lucie Varga

Translation by Francesca Bettocchi and Maria Lord

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The same problem faces all peasant civilizations: that of the city, of town planning. If the problem is general, the solutions are different, from region to region, from valley to valley. Depending on the geographical situation, depending on history, the transformation of ancient peasant traditions is multifaceted and the compromise between past and present has a thousand nuances.[1]

In most Austrian and German regions, the victory of the city – one that is economic and of moral enchantment – has almost destroyed the former framework of peasant life. As the latter fades into the past, it takes its place in memories, in legends, in fairy tales. All that remains, in a word, is a more or less artificial folklore. But in a few rare regions, the old peasant existence (in many ways reminiscent of the Middle Ages) has not yet been destroyed. It was only shaken after the war and the reconstruction of some aspects of the past can still be made. One can almost observe the functioning of some institutions which, for us, are historical phenomena.

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The Ladin valley of Badia, the old "Ennebergtal",[2] is one of these areas. This high valley of the Dolomites is narrow, inhospitable, flanked by bizarrely

1 Cf. Lucie Varga, *Une vallée du Vorarlberg* (*Annales*, t. VIII, 1936).

2 The Ennebergtal runs from Brunico in Pusteria to the Passo di Gardena, which is 34 km long and rises to an elevation of 1,100–1,600 m above sea level. It has eighteen villages.

shaped rocks, threatened by moraines, exposed, from September to May, to frost and snow and, in summer, to storms and thunderstorms. It is always under the threat of badly tamed waters that make the village fear disaster and flooding.

Theories have been established about the ethnic origins of the valley's six thousand or so inhabitants. The Etruscans have even been invoked… However, what seems to be most important for their present history is that they have occupied a land that has been colonised for a long time, that they are steeped in tradition, and that they have managed to keep their own language, the Ladin dialect of the valley, Badiot,[3] whose ramparts protect the individuality of this corner of the earth.

The basis of its economy is that of any high altitude valley. Out of necessity, cultivation of the land is declining and livestock farming is taking over. This is a rather primitive form which does not seek to arrive at purebred cattle but is adapted, more or less, to the conditions of the neighbouring markets. Each farm prepares the butter and cheese it needs. Enough wheat is sown to provide the flour for domestic need. The grain is ground in the village mill in partnership with the three richest farmers. For bread, they have had very rarely and only recently recourse to the baker. Once a year, each family bakes round flatbreads laden with caraway in its own oven in the courtyard. There

3 The Ladin scholars pride themselves on the fact that their language is related to French, Portuguese, Spanish and Italian. Cf. C.J. Alton, *Die ladinischen Idiome*, Innsbruck, 1879. It derives directly from Latin, from which come the roots of its words. The pronunciation is very difficult and it has six different aspirated consonants. There are three declensions in five cases, and three conjugations in six tenses, the indicative and the subjunctive. It has a rich variety of idioms, but which are, alas, limited in vocabulary. There is a lexicon of barely 4,000 words, mostly designating objects of everyday life. Anything to do with livestock, food and farming can be expressed with absolute precision, but a sermon in Ladin 'would not work well', as one inhabitant told me. Half of the Ladin words in the artificial translations of German literature, undertaken at the end of the last century, are not known by the peasants. There is no fixed orthography. Letters that were exchanged in German, are now are written in Italian. As for literature, the "Volkslied" is fading away day by day and only its last vestiges can be gleaned. It is giving way, as elsewhere, to the verses of operettas and to the melodies of the cinema. Around 1900, it was the priests and high school teachers who sought to create a Ladin literature. This is a somewhat cold and artificial poetry, which tells of the joys of hunting and the beauties of the high mountains, and is still quite fashionable. Its authors, Freña Osopp and Frontull among others, are known throughout the valley. What still remains is a genre of occasional poetry. When a Ladin priest says his first Mass, his friends and relatives come from far and wide to congratulate him. Then poems of about twenty stanzas are recited, "beautiful enough to give you a fever", according to the peasants, but rather boring for us and all built on the same theme of cherishing old traditions, as well as old masters.

are still a few fields of peas, beans and, increasingly rarely, flax; only twenty years ago, wool was provided by the village sheep.

The cycle of the year follows the rhythms of the seasons. The initiative, the organization of work is left to the father, then to the son. The execution is in the hands of the women. The most solemn and joyful celebrations are, perhaps, those that mark the completion of a period of work: For example, the festival of "cut grass" which takes place when the hay is in the barns of the alps and the farmers come home. Similar, but less important, festivities take place every Saturday evening in summer. They are gatherings of singing and dancing, where young girls are courted freely, and these festivities seem necessary for moral wellbeing; they create a collective euphoria that helps people regain energy for the coming week… Festivals and leisure activities can be no more compared to our individual distractions in the big cities – they are collective festivals – than to the leisure activities organized by dictatorships or public authorities; for peasant festivals have an immediate end in themselves… Great festivity also occurs on market day, twice a year. On 6 January, the festival is picturesque and fun, interspersed with mask dances. It is, it is true, condemned to disappear in the face of the invading skiers whose season starts on this date.

Ladin peasants forget their parsimony and spend like great lords on the occasion of festivals. Saving during the year and spending during a celebration: Both attitudes also earn them the esteem of their neighbours. But the great opportunity to show off wealth is the wedding feast. Both the groom's and bride's families spend beyond their means. There are expensive rites to be followed, ransoms to be paid for fictitious kidnappings, copious meals, numerous guests, musicians, sleighs, etc. It is only in the last few years that a few have had the audacity to reject these traditions. The verse below reminds us of the costs involved in a wedding in a very pleasant way:

Cantia d'la Novicia
(Song of the Fiancée)

La lüna flores sön bank dalla küna
The moon shines over the cradle

se tes pa novicia co bona fortuna
When you get engaged, what good fortune

L'de della nocia, ban ballé (infinitive)
On the wedding day, one dances a lot

Domang della nocia, nia da gosté!
The day after the wedding, there is nothing for lunch.

L'de della nocia, mangé pan e vin
On the wedding day, one consumes bread and wine

Domang della nocia, nia te skrin.
The day after the wedding, there is nothing in the stomach (skrin: Ger.).

L'de della nocia, i calze dall tak
On the day of the wedding, heeled shoes

Domang della nocia, pié[4] ia col sak.
The day after the wedding, begging with the bag.

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This cycle of life and of the year took place, and still does, in the shadow of the bell tower, within the framework of the idea of a protective and merciful Catholicism overseen by the Ladin parish priests. To be pious is to follow Catholic rites conscientiously. There is no great difference in piety among the faithful. Everyone goes to Mass on Sundays; if there is a choice between two churches, one seeks out the one where the priest's sermon is the most moving. There was a Sunday when peasants came from far away to hear a dying priest, lying by the altar, stammering broken phrases in a faint voice about

4 Magpie = begging, probably derived from *piler, ia* = here and there.

heaven and hell… Four times a year people go to confession, four times a year they go to communion. A prayer is recited before and after meals. They say prayers morning and evening. God the Father recedes a little. The holy Virgin and baby Jesus are much closer to humanity. The images that are made of them are not very original. In fact, they are based on sweet lithographs and a 19th-century clichéd literature of edification. This is to such an extent that a peasant woman entering a tourist's room kneels down, taking a moment for the baby Jesus, on seeing on the bed a little boy with blond curls standing in his long nightgown and reciting I don't know what, with a serious and serene expression.

At present, the whole valley is discussing the miracle of Agordo. Agordo is about forty-five kilometres away. All the Ladins have gone there. It is not the possibility of miracles that is doubtful; what is doubtful is whether there was a miracle at Agordo. Three young girls between fourteen and seventeen years of age were guarding their flocks. The holy Virgin appeared to them in a white dress adorned with golden brocades, a crown on her head and roses at her feet. She was like one of those nineteenth-century Madonnas that can still be seen in some of the churches.[5] She ordered them to pray fervently. To one she promised wealth; to the other, health for her parents; to the third, marriage. She also told them that she would return to the same place, at the same time, for twenty-one days, except on Sundays. From that day on, an ever-increasing crowd has besieged the place, so that a member of the Carabinieri believed he was forced to put it in order. At that moment, a young girl cried out: "You are tearing off the Virgin's crown." "Where did the crown fall?" The girl pointed to a place. Then, according to reports, the official felt an electric shock (note, electricity has only been available in the valley for three years). This was the height of the enthusiasm. The bishop of Bressanone pronounced himself against the miracle. He wrote to the parish priests to calm the crowd, and they, in their Sunday sermons, complied with the orders they had received. What was more important was that, in the long run, it was generally agreed that the girl did not correspond to the type of "shepherdess

5 At present, in Grödnertal, another type of Virgin is being presented, a "modern" Virgin, very thin and disproportionately elongated, covered in a narrow wrap with few folds that also covers the head. But it is said that this type is not appealing to the peasants and is reserved for export.

seer" of St Bernadette of Lourdes. "But she isn't pale", the disappointed people said. "When she speaks of the Virgin, she does not tremble, she does not swoon." Finally – and this was also a factor that favoured the opponents of the miracle – the Agardo region does not have a very good press in the surrounding area.

It is a province that is already all Italian, very poor. The inhabitants travel around the country as itinerant merchants, beggars: shady, dishonest people, who are looked upon with a suspicious eye. It was widely believed that they were simply trying to make a profit from staging a miracle. The doubt, which was already creeping in, was strengthened before the twenty-first day, which was to be marked with a sign. The sign came, but in a gloomy way: a car accident on the road, with four dead. The Mother of God, it was said, had wanted to punish the brazen abuse of her name. The majority turned away from the miracle, but some continued to believe in it. In discussions, they were a little embarrassed to provide evidence of their conviction. All they could find to say – and I have often heard them say this – was: "A child has seen it too, a child cannot lie".

Alongside the Virgin and Jesus Christ, the saints have a large part in religious life. The facades of the region are decorated with Saint Florian, Saint Christopher and Saint Martin. This is not only an artistic decoration, an edifying ornament, it is more: an effective protection. Images of the saints can be found inside the houses and even in the barns to protect the cattle. Even today, on the first Wednesday of every month (Thursday is considered an especially dangerous day), the parish priest goes around the village to bless certain plants and the salt in the cowsheds. Today, the protection of the Catholic religion is requested, through the priest, against diseases, epidemics, disasters, catastrophes which afflict the valley. Against these misfortunes, they have recourse to insurance as well as to Saint Florian, Saint Martin and the veterinary surgeon. But, also, the peasant asks to be protected against specific occult powers, covered by different names, which were considered to be the cause of these misfortunes. But, above all, they asked to be protected against witches. Thwarting the ruses of the witches was one of the priest's main tasks. It was said of a parish priest: "He makes the witches obey him, he is strong against the storm", or, to the contrary, "El ne ve nia dalla tem-

pesta".[6] As, for 150 years the priests had almost all been natives of the valley, who would be surprised to see them share the beliefs of the Ladin peasants? Before the war, every village in the valley was home to two or three witches. Here and there, a few women still survive who, in their youth, were suspected of witchcraft. They no longer practice their trade. "The parish priest has made us powerless": This is their own observation, as well as that of the whole village.

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The domain of the witches of Enneberg was that of the storm and cattle. It is not believed that they were concerned with love spells. The concept of the seductive witch seems to be totally lacking. On the other hand, the cows they bewitched no longer gave milk, the oxen languished and roared painfully. The technique of their witchcraft is the classic one of charm by analogy: The witch stirs the water in a bowl with a spatula, whispering magic spells (my stay was too short to learn them, but I have no doubt that it is possible). To work the spell of the cattle, they hung shoelaces from the door of the stable and they pretended to milk them, whispering invocations. By these rites they firmly believed that they would succeed in passing to their own cows the milk of their neighbour's, who would despair of their empty buckets. It seems that the power of the witches was much greater on the days when they had taken Communion without confessing.

The tradition also contains the "Hexe sabbat". In the Ladin valley, it takes place on Thursdays, in cursed places, at night, after the "Betlaüten" [church bells calling people to prayer, see editors' note below]. Two of these cursed places, the "Plan de Stris" and the "Col Maledett", are still on show in the village. These are small plains in steeply descending valleys, well enclosed, surrounded by rocks of sinister aspect, but where grass grows as if by magic, while the surroundings are stony and deserted. They are enlivened, one by a spring, the other (a sort of volcanic cirque) by a small lake and a waterfall. The witches used to go there traditionally, riding on their broomsticks and reciting the following formulas: "sciara delle mura" (bowl with the remains

6 Alton, *op cit*. p. 15.

of fat); "quegora de chura" (goat's horns); "cacca de manin" (cat…); "fum su per camin" (smoke going up the chimney).[7]

When they met, they ate and drank copiously and danced lasciviously. Among them was a headless priest. He had murdered a woman while he was alive, cut off her head and buried her in that place. It was he who taught them to protect themselves from the priests who had once been his colleagues. The uninitiated were strictly forbidden access to these places. If anyone ventured there, they would recognize the peasant women in these witches, but the next day they would have forgotten them and have wandered the rest of their life, melancholy, vainly trying to remember.

How were the witches recognised? It was quite hard. But witchcraft came to be diametrically opposed to Catholicism, and the witches feared the priests, the Mass and the sacraments (conversely, the priests feared the witches). They did not dare not to attend the Holy Office, and they were recognized by the fact that, while they were at Mass, they were as evasive as possible. They closed their eyes, slept or pretended to sleep, they bowed their heads low and did not look up at the Host… "Les elies que cigno insci col ché tan i officie scialdi da sospetté"[8] (those who lower the head during Mass must be highly suspect).

They were not wrongly suspected. Based on what could be learnt from the stories – both gossipy and suspicious – of the older women, and from information gathered from their younger relatives, the witches themselves believed strongly in their power. They "made" hail and storms; that is, they knew formulas and used them for that purpose. They hoped to see the milk of the cows in the nearby barn fly by incantation. Perhaps they also tried to ride a broom and go to the meeting at the Plan se Stris. But none of those that I have been able to investigate a little were able to, not even in their dreams. They believed, however, that their sisters had been there and that they were missing a "secret", or that the priest had exorcised them. They too dreamed of the good old days, a golden age when the priests had not yet fought their charms and weakened their power. The village vaguely believed in a federation of witches, while the witches were unaware of the good fellowship and

7 Far from being meaningless rhymes, they seem to be more associated with rites for the preparations for the witches' flight.

8 Alton, p. 79.

intimacy that can exist between conspirators. They distrusted and watched each other, even in public. They remained attached only to their mistress, the one who had initiated them.

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Which women became witches and why? Perhaps, first of all, one should look for a certain revolt against the order of the village, a revolt against hard, slow, patient, regular work which demands asceticism and self-sacrifice. For the daughters of poor peasants, the road is long and hard until they have earned their dowry. For a peasant woman who owns two or three cows, it is a hard struggle to assert herself, to be valued in the community. There is an impatience with work, and a unease with Catholicism, for God, his mother and his saints seem to be only with the powerful of the village; a blasphemy that weighs on the conscience. Add to this the fact that at that time the opportunities to escape were very limited. On the one hand, there was turmoil and dissatisfaction, on the other, in a village that fiercely believed in the opposing powers of good and evil, sooner or later the temptation would present itself to become a "witch" who offered to transmit her knowledge.

The psychological attitude and the conversion of the initiate present all the classic characteristics of every conversion. There is anxiety, indecision and a tormented conscience. Suddenly there is a decisive event, which is perhaps petty but which does not lead to a renewal of an alliance with the divine and a sublime reconciliation with the world. On the contrary, it brings about a distance from heaven and its authorities, and triggers latent aggression and passionate vengeance against the social environment. Admittedly, this takes courage and a certain inclination to non-conformism.

Moreover, witches do not dispense with authority, but put themselves under another authority. They do not reject rites, they accept others which are part of a very ancient tradition. And so it is that people soon believe in the witch, she has social influence and, let us say, a social position in the village. Recently there have been no more lawsuits against them, but, as we have said, the villagers resort to the priests.

What were the services that the witch rendered to the village in normal times, i.e. when she was in balance with her environment, with her time,

when she was an integral part of the village? Higher, diffuse, vague powers are difficult to sustain. In the face of misfortune, Catholicism has a position: "Our misfortune is a punishment from God, our sins require penitence". But in the valley, a profound notion of divinity is missing which would have deepened the the idea of religion. For many centuries the village, taken as a collective unit, has been stable. Old traditions and certainties have have slowly crumbled away, and some urban elements elements welcomed – German newspapers, magazines, roads, post offices etc. – but without shock. There was no sudden abandonment of old traditions, creating uncertainty and unease and requiring a new religious orientation. The entrenched belief in witches spared the inhabitants the effort of developing a faith which had, in a way, remained quite primitive.

Belief in the witch has its place in the functioning of village society. What a relief to believe in the materiality of evil powers. In having the ability to accuse someone when you are unsuccessful, in being able to conjure up evil powers, the causes of these misfortunes, hope is reborn. I knew a peasant, once very rich, who claims that his stable had been "bewitched" in 1904. He had had to give up a large part of his property. "I couldn't do anything about it", and after thirty years this is still his justification: The witches clung to that stable and house, it was cursed. "I sold it, and I started over again, little by little, across the street. See my house is good again". "And the buyer, how did he free himself from the witches?" "He knocked down the barn and built a new one, had it blessed and changed cows. I couldn't go on, I was riddled with debt."

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Witches are not the only ones who represent evil powers in the life of the valley. There are others with pagan attachments, remnants of an ancient demonic mythology. In first place, we find the *Orco*. He is not the devil. He is much less important, but is rather a kind of evil spirit, a naughty "Waldschrat". He does not ruin the peasants, but he chases them, vexes them, attacks them. He disturbs daily work. He contents himself, it is true, with scattering the ducks and chickens here and there. He attacks ovens in which the fire does not burn, butter that does not form, and laundry that does not whiten well: "El é pa

propiro na miseria", that is to say, "He is the cause of little daily miseries". Indeed, it is in these that he is most to be feared. He leads poor people astray. If the peasants, after the Angelus, return home, which is often only a few miles away, without having recommended themselves to the Lord, they lose their way and wander all night in the mountains. Exhausted, they find their way only in the morning, after the Betalinte [presumably church bells calling people to prayer, editors' note, see also above], while the cattle they were driving have fallen into a ravine.

The Orco looks like a black, hairy man. He sometimes manifests himself in the form of a spirited horse. Someone who tries to mount him should take care, as the horse will gallop away at top speed, knocking over the rider, who, tired, stiff, dizzy, blooded and lame, will try to return home in the morning. The appearance of the Orco, according to the inhabitants, is becoming increasingly rare. The villagers explain this in the same way they explain the disappearance of the witches: the priests have exorcised him. "They put crucifixes in the places where he used to appear, it's much better now."[9]

Alongside the Orco, but even more retiring, is the Pavaro. Of the same species as the Orco, it once inhabited pea and bean fields. It had the head of a dog, burning eyes, a enormous mouth, teeth of fire, vulture's talons, a snake's tail, and the arms of a giant. Why did it have all these frightening characteristics? Just to scare children stealing some pods, to catch them and cut off their legs. Here are the verses he sang while sharpening his sickle: "Aguzzo, aguzzo ben" (well sharpened), "Taia les jamme ai mittons qui vegne" (I cut off the legs of the boys who come). As he knew how to imitate a crow, a vulture or a magpie, many young Ladins were often seized by an appalling terror.

On the other hand, there are a few surviving servant spirits, friends of people, ready to render them minor assistance. There is still, here and there, the legend of the "ganas" and the "salvangs", handed down from time immemorial. Scientific theory even links it to the first inhabitants of the valley who fled from the Rhaetians to the wild heights of the mountains; they were giant but gentle men and women, living in caves and dressed in animal skins.

9 Better, but not finished. Just the other day, the son of the owner of the "negozio" saw the Orco. The young man was coming home late at night on his motorbike from a ride in the city (it is said that the young man's conscience was not very clear that evening and that he had reason to fear violent reproaches from his father). The Orco frightened him terribly and he entered the shop in panic and terror.

In winter, sensitive to the cold, they would go down to the villages to warm themselves. They spoke little and only, when they were very hungry, would ask for "puca latte, puca pan", which showed that they were foreigners, for a good Ladin would have said "n pu de latt, n pu de pan".[10]

They did not harm anyone and, as a token of thanks, helped the peasants in their work. We find them already in the fourteenth century, where a chronicle of the region informs us: "Among the mountains of this country lived the people of the *gnana*, in the caves of the mountains; they ate with people, and played and danced with them".[11]

There are three or four men in the valley who flatter themselves that they have a "gana" among their ancestors, and poetic legends form around them.

Anyway, the ganas and silvangs have also disappeared. The inhabitants have a different explanation for this disappearance: "These wild and shy people were afraid of tourists…"

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After having questioned villagers, priests, witches, let us ask ourselves, in turn, as historians, how and when the notions of witches and those related to them, evil and servant spirits, disappear. But first another question arises, why, in the Ladin valley, have these beliefs been preserved for so long? This second is easier to answer and it has a double aspect.

On the one hand, our valley was settled three thousand years ago. On recently cleared land, transplanted ancient beliefs take root less easily.[12] On the other, its encounter with urban civilization, the culture between countryside and city, came much later. Tourists have been coming in increasing numbers in summer only for the last fifteen years, and in winter only for the last five. Under the Austrian regime, the decay of peasant civilization progressed much more slowly. Urbanization and "progress" merged less intimately than under Fascism, which in the valleys developed a cult of technology and modernity.

10 Alton, p. 67 no. 1.

11 In montanis suae regionis gens gnana in cavernis montium habitavit: cum hominibus vescebantur, ludebant, choreas ducebant… *Fontes Rer. Germ*., 1, 415.

12 This phenomenon can also be observed when we compare Montafon in Vorarlberg with an old Vorarlberg valley.

As for the other question, the answer is more delicate and lacks peremptory force. Let us confine ourselves to a few suggestions. It is true that the assault of the city is carried out, first of all, by tourism: mass tourism. When only one or two tourists ventured into the valley, mocking the beliefs of the inhabitants and trying, during their short stay, to sow their ideas of progress, the inhabitants would say of them, "Quel mat de todesc" ("that mad person from Germany"): Today they still tell tales of how the Orco punished some of them. It is not reasoning that causes changes, nor contact with other ways of life, nor even intimate contact.

In Vorarlberg, for example, in large families, when the yield from cattle and land was not enough to sustain life, the father or one of his sons would take up a position in the summer as a road builder or in town. They returned as they had left, believing in witches, the Orco and *Pavaro*, bringing back the money that was so lacking. But the change in beliefs was not the consequence of this money either; it had made its entrance without having changed anything. For this money had not destroyed the morality of peasant work; it had been hard earned, even harder than in the valley by working the land. It was not money per se, it was money earned with ease that changed the very basis of existence in Badia. Today, many fewer Ladins are forced to leave to earn a living: tourism has changed everything. Instead of one hostel, there are three; instead of one job for three, there are thirty, because you not only have to provide accommodation for the tourists, you have to wash, iron, knit. and sew. They buy shoes, stockings, boots and provisions. And, slowly, the inhabitants adopt a dual idea of value for work. The work sold to foreigners is much more expensive and they are still surprised to see the tourists pay without batting an eyelid.

That is not all. For some years now, there have been other job opportunities for the inhabitants of the valley: one a driver, another a ski instructor, a maître d'or porter. And it is no longer the effort that is paid for, it is no longer the perseverance and asceticism of work that is rewarded and leads to prosperity, it is physical dexterity, flexibility of mind, the ability to adapt or to move forward. And so it is that those in their twenties are different from those in their forties in their physical appearance: their steps are quicker, their gestures more relaxed. The notion of values has changed completely. It is no longer the well-established peasant who is envied and placed high up in

the village hierarchy, but the ski instructor, the owner of a big hotel. It is no longer the house with full cupboards that is the symbol of a man's worth, but the sports record achieved by a young person.

The phenomenon of effortless gain does not go without remark among the Ladins. A ski instructor who still looks after his land in the summer, once said to me, "I cannot understand this. Look at this meadow: When I am wrestling with it in summer I have little or no profit, when I am enjoying myself in winter, my purse is full". And the father replied, "Basically, that's right. In summer, the meadow is part of you, you can be proud of it, while in winter you play the fool". "But not at all, father, I am admired and greatly envied in winter". "By whom?", "My comrades!", "Then they're as crazy as you are."

It is no wonder that old people watch this transformation with a suspicious eye. For money earned easily, and by means they do not approve of, is also spent in a way they do not approve of either. It is not spent on buying land, on buying a house, not even on improving a house, but to buy a modern musical instrument, an accordion, a phonograph, a radio, a bicycle, a motorcycle, a new pair of skis, clothes, elegant shoes, things that finally wear out and disappear; they are happy when it is not wasted at a hotel, with friends, or on trips… And, instead of laying in supplies, the cupboards are emptying. "What good are so many things in the cupboard?" young people ask. New proverbs have been invented: "Winter money melts with the snow", "Skiing brings money, but you lose out", and others.

Under this new order of things, this new spirit, the disappearance of the witches and the good or bad spirits seems to us a natural thing. What remains of the farm work is more secure, there is the vet and insurance. The domain of the witches is shrinking, that of the Pavaro even more so; beans and peas are planted less and less often. Fears and uncertainties are now on a higher plane where evil powers have other names. The witch was blamed for hail. Other enemies are blamed for the fall in the price of livestock on the markets. These are "real" enemies, political or economic in appearance, but which soon reveal themselves as masked and pseudo-rational ideas. Among these are "the Austrian yoke" for some, "Fascism" for others, "the crisis", and, for all, taxes.Fascist education finishes the destruction of the old framework.

More and more Ladin teachers are being replaced by young Italians.[13]

13 The "irridenta" Ladin is mainly limited to the very thin layer of German, i.e. Austrian-trained, intellectuals; it is composed of teachers who studied in Innsbruck or Bolzano,

And what they give to their peasant pupils is an education in a strange dualism, made up of disparate and contradictory elements: adaptation to urban life, to the life of the state, hygiene propaganda, the cult of sport. The old people sharply criticize it: "It's not a school", they say, "It's just singing, drawing and doing gymnastics. In my day, children learnt something at school. We knew our catechism differently, by heart." Certainly, there are still long hours devoted to religion, but the first sentence that the little Ladins learn in school is no longer, "I am Catholic", but, "Io sono Italiano, io sono Italiana". The first song is no longer a religious hymn, but the hymn of the Ballila, which ends like this: "Son bimbi, ma bimbi gia fieri, gia forti – gia pronti a lanciare – Il sasso e il cuore".

During all the years of school, God is housed alongside another god: the State.

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Therefore, in this new state of affairs in the valley, the belief in witches is a matter of age. Between sixty and eighty years of age it is believed that, although weakened by the priests, witches have existed and always will exist. They are still present in the inhabitants' minds. Between the ages of thirty-five and sixty, they say to themselves: They once existed, but no longer, times have changed. They are happy to listen to the old stories, believe in the apparition of the *Orco* and presence of the witches, but other notions are now at the forefront of their concerns. Between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five, people do not oppose these beliefs, but they think about them only exceptionally. It is the eight-year-old who will tell you clearly, "Witches, it is all lies. The head of the Ballila said so".

Lucie Varga
(Paris.)

Ladin priests, grocers, traders, and those who used to read German newspapers. Then there are the old people, those for whom the good old days, the Austrian regime, Franz Josef, light taxes and pleasant memories of youth merge into the image of a golden age, all the more desirable as it remains imprecise.

Malinowski and the Alps

Afterword

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The essays featured in this volume on Malinowski's presence in the Alps, published under the umbrella of the Malinowski Forum for Ethnography and Anthropology (MFEA) clearly illustrate, from different points of view, the relationship between the Malinowski family and the beautiful villa in the village of Oberbozen, South Tyrol, in the twenties and thirties of the last century. The contributions integrate the extensive essays by Elizabeth Tauber, Dorothy Zinn and Daniela Salvucci, which have been known and appreciated from many years. Pier Paolo Viazzo clearly shows how Malinowski's distance from historical research should not be interpreted as radical hostility, but as an inevitable consequence of research concentration in the 'new anthropology' he proposes: on social relations, on symbolic-ritual expressions, investigated in the dynamics of continuity and intensity of fieldwork intended as 'participant observation' in a social context of limited dimensions.

The central theme of Viazzo's reflections is: "the possibility of applying the principles and methods of Malinowskian-inspired intensive research to communities in the Alpine regions". His conclusion strikes me as perfectly acceptable: "the Alps still need Malinowskian anthropology". It is certainly a fact that the Polish-English anthropologist's interests in the South Tyrolean villa were not aimed at a possible study of the Tyrolean region. His intense, festive gatherings in the beautiful villa with his many students and colleagues from the London School of Economics were devoted to pleasant and stimulating exchanges of ideas, comparisons of research in progress, discussions among the protagonists of a group that made a point of being recognised as solid and substantially united. And the environment in which they resided, the magnificent Renon plateau, was certainly admired and explored

on a few excursions, although, as it transpired from some interviews I conducted in England in the early 1970s (with Raymond Firth, Lucy Mair and Audrey Richards), it was considered less relevant than the stimulating daily exchanges in the life of the villa and its large tree-lined garden. As Peter Schöttler's and Daniela Salvucci's contributions show, contacts between Malinowski and specialists in the anthropology and history of the Alpine region occurred and had a certain relevance. First among these was the meeting with Lucie Varga, whose work on two Alpine valleys (Montafontal in Vorarlberg and Enneberg in South Tyrol) has been rightly re-evaluated, and certainly received stimuli and inspiration from her meetings with Malinowski.

Rather fittingly, the writings of specialists in the Alpine area have insisted on reconstructing the political and social events that characterised the Italian South Tyrol in the 1920s and 1930s, when the Malinowskis assiduously visited their villa in Oberbozen. It is mainly in some of Elsie Masson's writings, in her letters to her husband and in a few passages from Malinowski's *Diary*, that critical information and considerations against the politics of the fascist government appear. It was the era in which the fascist geographer and officer-intellectual Ettore Tolomei had distinguished himself for his tireless and inexorable promotion of the "Italianness of South Tyrol": even in the correction of the German surnames of the region's inhabitants, in the compulsory diffusion of the Italian language in schools, and in the modification of minor local history by eliminating or modifying the accounts concerning the area's Austrian authoritative figures. The recent studies conducted by Di Michele (2003), Bianco (2008), De Iasio, Gueresi (2012), and degli Uberti (2019) have richly illustrated and detailed this sad period of Italian history, which, while leaving painful traces among the inhabitants of the Tyrolean mountains, did not erase the valley's own identity, almost always characterised by an Italian-Germanic bi-cultural intertwining and compatibility.

Among the quality anthropological research works carried out in the Tyrol area, which have interacted with Malinowski's studies, I would like to mention those of Leopold Pospisil, a Czechoslovakian that later moved to the United States, who published a rich monograph in 1995 on a Tyrolean village very close to the Italian border (Obernberg). He accurately recorded the economic processes and characteristics of the region's peasantry, employing very accurate quantitative data and case studies on the mobility of moun-

tain people between different ecological levels, the differentiated production and circulation of goods in small local markets, and the complex relationship with more distant markets (Pospisil, 1995). This author was an expert in ethnographic studies of mountain peoples as he had worked for a long time in the Austrian Alps and before that in the mountains of the Central Highlands of Western New Guinea, among the Kapauku, also discussing traditional legal forms in accordance with Malinowski's well-known research (in his book *Kapauku Papuans and their Law*, 1958). We also owe Pospisil a short yet intense critical-comparative study on the theories of peasantry, which gives great importance to studies on the peoples of mountain areas and harshly argues against the classical theses of anthropological literature on peasant societies as opposed to urban and industrialised societies: equality as opposed to vertical stratification, poverty and struggle for existence, economic self-sufficiency or strong relations with markets, production of high surplus and, above all, great economic flexibility and no isolation or resistance to changes from the outside, and finally no connection with the famous "image of limited goods". All these well-known generalisations about peasants are challenged on the basis of the author's long empirical experience in various European, Oceanian and American regions (Pospisil, 2008).

Therefore, these studies provide us with a decisive contribution to the intensification of bi-disciplinary research, between anthropology and history, especially – but not exclusively – in the Alpine valleys, as also shown in Margareth Lanzinger's essay. This essay not only refers to the tradition of the *Annales*, up to the example of historical-ethnographic monographs such as *Montaillou* by E. Le Roy Ladurie, but also to Italian studies on micro-history. Furthermore, the reference to H. Wopfner's book, which presents a brilliant connection between *Landskunde* and Historical *Volkskunde*, is more than appropriate, also because of the continued insistence on the relationships between technical-practical and economic activities on the one hand, and "popular spirit", "basic psychic structure", "historical-cultural archetypes", "overall collective characters". Anthropological studies on Alpine communities are thus intensifying with this innovative ethnographic-historical approach, in view of some fundamental volumes: *The Hidden Frontier. Ecology and Ethnicity in an Alpine Valley* (by John Cole and Eric Wolf, 1974, translated into Italian in 1993) and *Alpine Communities. Environment, Population, Social Structure*

in the Alps from the 16th Century to the Present (by Pier Paolo Viazzo, 1989), but also the important book by Paolo Sibilla (1980), *Una comunità Walser delle Alpi. Strutture tradizionali e processi culturali*.

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Margareth Lanzinger is Professor of Economic and Social History from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century at the Department of Economic and Social History, University of Vienna. Her work focuses on kinship, family and marriage, property and wealth, inheritance practices and marital property regimes, cultural history of administration as well as the construction of heroes and heroines, and historiographic topics. Her publications include *Administrating Kinship: Marriage Impediments and Dispensation Policies in the 18th and 19th Centuries* (2023).

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Lucy Ulrich is a former journalist, editor and translator who worked at Swiss Radio International in Bern, the Bank for International Settlements in Basel and the International Monetary Fund in Washington D.C. She is now retired and lives in Switzerland, some seven hours' drive from the Villa Malinowski.

Lucie Varga, born 1904, studied history, art history and philosophy at the University of Vienna. 1931 doctorate with a thesis on the slogan of the "Dark Ages". In December 1933 emigration to France, collaboration with Lucien Febvre and the *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*. 1941 death in a diabetic coma. Publications: D*as Schlagwort vom "Finsteren Mittelalter"* (1932); *Zeitenwende. Mentalitätshistorische Studien 1936–1939*, edited in 1991 by Peter Schöttler.

Pier Paolo Viazzo received his PhD from University College London. Professor Emeritus of Social Anthropology at the University of Turin, he has conducted ethnographic and archival research mostly in the western Italian Alps. He is the author of *Upland Communities: Environment, Population and Social Structure in the Alps since the Sixteenth Century* (1989) and *Introduzione all'antropologia storica* (2000).

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