

WESTERN EURASIA AND ITS EMPIRES

Habsburg's Borderlands – Views on Galicia and Bukovina, -> U. Tanzer

In spite of its multi-nationality, the Habsburg Empire was more homogeneous than the Russian or the Ottoman Empire. At the World Exhibition of 1873, multi-ethnic crown lands such as Galicia and Lodomeria were presented to the Viennese public and to high-ranking international guests, as foreign and familiar at the same time. Two years later, a new German speaking university was founded in Czernowitz (Tscherniwzi), exactly a century after the Austrian annexion of Bukovina. Karl Emil Franzos (1848-1904), a liberal journalist and writer, reported about the opening ceremony, celebrating unity in a multinational state. Franzos, born in Podillja (Podolje) in Russia, near to his Galician hometown Czortków (Tschortkiw), reflected in his novels and feuilletons on Eastern European Jewish and German culture. In his articles, published in the „Neue Freie Presse“ from 1874 till 1876 he described the eastern parts of the Habsburg Empire and formed the image of „Halb-Asien“, a landscape, „where European education and Asiatic barbarism, European drive for progress and Asiatic indolence, European humanity and wild and cruel strife of nations and religious communities' meet. His travel reports about the borderland between Europe and Asia are ethnographical documents, presenting a Eurocentric point of view, expressing the liberal vision of progress of their Viennese audience. The research case study aims to analyse the image of Galicia and Bukovina in feuilletons and literary texts, with a special focus on Franzos, showing the process of intercultural contact and of forming a supranational identity, a vision that failed in reality, but was rediscovered in the novels of Joseph Roth, born in Brody.