

ABSTRACTS

Selina BENTSCH

“How I shudder at the thought of becoming a useless old woman”: Strategies for coping with Old Age and Aging Processes in the Diaries of a Swiss Woman Anna Maria Preiswerk-Iselin (1758–1840)

Female age and aging around 1800 are often associated with the role of the grandmother and social seclusion. This article presents Anna Maria Preiswerk-Iselin, a citizen of Basel in Switzerland, as a counterexample. She kept a diary for 44 years until shortly before her death in 1840 at the age of 82. In her writings, she shows herself not only as a grandmother, but also as an active, socially interested and committed aging woman. As she aged, she developed strategies to remain a useful member of society and engage in meaningful activities. However, not all her plans were successful. Preiswerk-Iselin’s writing is contextualized and analyzed on the basis of contemporary norms, bourgeois socializing practices, Reinhard Koselleck’s concept of the sense of time around 1800, and the concept of growing autonomy from established norms, social obligations and expectations in old age.

Key words: female aging, female education, autonomy of old age, diary writing, 19th century, Switzerland

Dragica ČEČ

Characteristics of Poor Elderly People in the Early 19th Century Included in the System of Formal Care – the Case of the Provincial Centre of Ljubljana

Newer approaches to the analysis of old age, shaped by the cultural turn, emphasise the individual's perspective and the experience of ageing "from below." An examination of the life trajectories of applicants for poor relief in Ljubljana confirms the hypotheses that elderly people combined various sources of subsistence and sought to maintain independence, yet those who entered the system of formal care were generally physically weak and almost invariably without a kin network that could support them. Nevertheless, some applicants possessed a highly developed social network. The analysis shows that in the context under study, old age was not understood as a chronological category but primarily as a matter of work capacity, physical strength, and the ability to support oneself.

Key words: poor-relief, old age, 19th century, Ljubljana, gender differences, economy of makeshifts

Filip DRAŽENVIĆ

Old Age in 18th-Century British Health Regimens

The text analyses eighteenth-century British health regimens and their views on aging and longevity. Grounded in the Galenic concept of the six non-naturals, these regimens emphasised prevention, moderation, and personal responsibility rather than medical cure. Old age was understood as a natural, inevitable condition characterised by bodily coldness and dryness, best managed through regulated diet, gentle exercise, sufficient sleep, emotional balance, and restrained passions. Moral conduct and medical advice were closely intertwined, and cheerfulness, temperance, and self-knowledge were presented as key virtues for a healthy and prolonged old age.

Key words: old age, temperance, British health regimens, six non-naturals, longevity, self-governance, medicine, 18th century

Urška BRATOŽ

**The Burden of Ageing: Old Age, Poverty, and Attitudes
toward Social Issues in the 19th-Century Austrian
Littoral**

The paper examines attitudes toward ageing and the elderly in Istria and Trieste in the second half of the nineteenth century. It takes as its starting point the perceptions associated with old age, which in the nineteenth century inevitably included, on the one hand, the inability to work—often leading to the economic dependence of the elderly and to their being regarded as a burden on the family or the state—and, on the other hand, their physical frailty, whether biologically or socially conditioned, which could to some extent be both a cause and a symptom of their social deprivation. Elderly people can be traced among the residents of almshouses and recipients of poor relief, among patients in hospitals for infectious diseases, and among those who died of age related wasting. Medical imperatives directed at the elderly were tailored primarily to the bourgeoisie and stood in stark contrast to the actual experience of ageing among the lower classes, which could not be associated with rest and self care but rather with prolonged physical labour, bodily pain, and economic insecurity.

Key words: old age, Istria, Trieste, 19th century, diseases, mortality, poverty, social measures

Otto GERDINA

The Stereotype Content Model Approach to the Study of Ageism in History

The phenomenon of ageism is a ubiquitous one, evident in all societies where age-based hierarchies are tacitly accepted. Ageism manifests in various forms, contingent upon the age stereotypes and prejudices that are prevalent within a given social group at a specific point in time. In this chapter, the author links the stereotype content model to a typology of four forms of ageism: positive, compassionate, envious and hostile ageism. Based on a brief outline of the attitudes of historical societies towards the older people, he illustrates the applicability of the stereotype content model to identify the most likely manifestations of ageism in different historical periods. The chapter concludes with the identification of six theoretical assumptions about ageism throughout history that could be considered for future empirical research.

Key words: ageism, old age, Stereotype Content Model, historical research, typology

Tomislav VIGNJEVIĆ

Images of Old Age in the Paintings of Ivana Kobilca

This paper explores a wide range of depictions and preparatory studies of elderly figures within the artistic oeuvre of the Slovenian painter Ivana Kobilca (1861–1926). In the middle of the second half of the 19th century, she created a series of physiognomic studies of old people, which confirmed and highlighted her mastery of a realistic pictorial language, which was in many respects determined by the painting principles of Leibl's Munich circle. In this concentration on psychological expression and realism, her work differs greatly from that of other Slovenian artists of the time, who most often visualised anecdotal genre depictions of the elderly. The paper thus highlights and analyses the exceptional importance of this group of paintings of elderly people that Kobilca created in the 1880s and 1890s.

Key words: Ivana Kobilca, old age, realism, painting, genre, portrait

Urša MARINŠEK

Narratives of Old Age: Decline, Burden, and Defiance in Representations of Care Home Residents in Contemporary Slovenian Literature

In cultural age studies, we have at least three major cultural narratives of aging in the Western societies: the decline narrative, the burden narrative, and the defiance narrative. As aging studies scholars and literary gerontologists have shown, these cultural narratives can be found in literary works across various linguistic and cultural contexts (e.g., Barry & Skagen and Falcus, Hartung & Medina). This paper explores literary representations of old age and aging in three Slovenian books, all with the care home as a setting or a theme. Literary works depicting care homes and care home residents, touching upon topics such as aging, institutionalization, memory, isolation, fall under the care home genre. The selected and analysed works in chronological order are the novel *Dom dom* (*Home Home*, 2008) by Tone Partljič, the short story collection *Kavni krog* (*Coffee Circle*, 2021) by Barbara Hanuš, and the crime novel, *Umor v domu za ostarele?* (*Murder in a Care Home?*, 2022), by Vito Komac.

Key words: age(-ing) narratives, decline, burden, defiance, literary representations, contemporary Slovenian literature