

Knowledge of Tyrolean Migrants about plant species.

The transmission and transformation of knowledge of Tyroleans migrants and their descendants in Australia, Brazil and Peru



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Marching band in Treze Tílias, Brazil (Foto: Kuhn 2008)

Introduction

Migration is a worldwide phenomenon which has an impact on local knowledge of plants used in a specific region. Local knowledge is dynamic and transforms due to changing ecological, social and economical factors, incoming information and information and influences from people, literature and media. In this project, the transformation and transmission of knowledge of Tyrolean migrants in Peru, Brazil and Australia is studied. Our research focuses on the local knowledge of plants used in 1) cuisine (Fig.1), 2) medicine (Fig.2), 3) customs and festivities (Fig.3). The Tyrolean migration to Peru (1859) and to Brazil (1933-1938) took place in groups, whereas the Tyroleans studied in Australia immigrated individually since the 1950s.



Fig.3: Blessed and dried palm frond in Pozuzo. (Foto: Haselmair)



Fig.6: Homegarden of a Tyrolean migrant in Brazil

Methods

The project lasts from 11/2007 – 01/2011. Following methods were used:

- Cultural Domain Analysis: Free Listing as a tool to detect the kinds of plant species used in cuisine, medicine, customs and festivities
- Social Network Analysis: Visualization of ego networks and complete networks to show sources of knowledge about the used plant species (Fig.4)
- Documentation of the menus of local restaurants and bars, plants sold in supermarkets, markets (Fig. 5) and pharmacies, and plants cultivated in home gardens (Fig.6)
- Semi-structured interviews on the basis of photographs (Fig.7)
- Participant observation



Fig.7: Showing photographs of plants to a Tyrolean in Australia to elicit information



Fig.4: Tyrolean in Brazil doing the visualization of an Ego-Network, showing his sources of knowledge about plant usage in cuisine (Foto: Kuhn 2008)

Objectives

The project aims

- to describe knowledge of Tyrolean migrants and their descendants about plant species used in cuisine, medicine, customs and festivities
- to understand how knowledge about plants is transmitted among Tyrolean migrants and their descendants
- to understand how transmission of knowledge differs between different domains: e.g. knowledge about medicinal plants versus knowledge about cuisine
- to understand mechanisms leading to the transformation of knowledge
- to contrast the results among different migration groups
- recognized by elderly farmers.

Publications/ Presentations

Posters presented at following conferences

- 19th Conference of the Society for Ecological Restoration International, Aug 23-27, 2009, Perth, Western Australia (Pirker)
- 50th annual meeting of the Society for Economic Botany, May 30 - June 8, 2009, Charleston, South Carolina, USA (Pirker, Kuhn)
- Meeting of the Society of Economic Botany, 14-15 March 2009, Ghent, Belgium (Kuhn)
- Centre for Migration Research, Workshop "Food and Migration", Feb 2-3, 2009, SOAS Food Studies Centre, London (Pirker)
- VIII Simpósio Brasileiro de Etnobiologia e Etnoecologia, 8.-12. November 2010, Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil (Kuhn)

Talks presented at following conferences

- Sunbelt, June 29 - July 4, 2010, Riva del Garda, Italy (Haselmair)
- 6. Tagen der Kultur- und Sozialanthropologie, 22. - 23. April 2010, Wien, Österreich (Kuhn)
- Visualisierung Sozialer Netzwerke, May 1-2, 2009, München (Haselmair)
- 11th Congress of the International Society for Ethnopharmacology, 20. - 25. September, Albacete, Spain (Pirker)
- Biodiversity: 2010 and beyond. Nov 22-25, Dunedin, New Zealand (Pirker)

Publications

- Haselmair, R.; Kuhn, E.; Pirker, H.; Vogl, C. R. (2010): Interdisziplinarität - Beispiel einer wissenschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit. Paradigmata, Wien.
- Kuhn E, Haselmair R, Pirker H, Vogl C R (2011): Veränderung von Wissen Tiroler Migranten und Migrantinnen in Peru, Brasilien und Australien. In: Tiroler Heimatblätter 1/11, Tyrolia Verlag
- Haselmair R. et al (2011): Palmuschchen – Tiroler Brauch fern von Tirol. In: Tiroler Heimatblätter 2/11, Tyrolia Verlag



Fig.5: Plant parts sold in an organic market in Australia (Foto: Pirker 2008)



Fig.2: Flowers of Macela (*Achyrocline satureioides*), collected and dried by Tyroleans in Brazil (Foto: Kuhn 2008)



Fig.1: „Tiroler Knödel“ - Tyrolean cuisine, in an Austrian restaurant in Australia (Foto: Pirker 2008)