

## Great War, Mighty Mountain: The Environmental Legacy of the First World War in the Alps

### 39. Minisymposium des Zentrums für Umweltgeschichte

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**Abstract:**

Although the Alpine Front receives less attention from historians than the Western Front, the environmental impact of the First World War was far greater in the Alps than Flanders Fields. In many ways, the war modernized the mountains. Army engineers drilled and dug into the mountainside to build barracks, tunnels and roads. Electric power stations made the high places hum, while telephone wires crossed the peaks and artillery marred the snowfields. The resulting deforestation led to a greater danger of avalanches in the winter and soil erosion in the spring and summer. This lecture will explore the environmental consequences of combat in the high Alps and how the war later encouraged mass Alpine tourism in the 1920s and 1930s.

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