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THE USES OF ORAL HISTORY IN CYPRUS AND BORNEO: MEMORY AND IDENTITY

Abstract

For thousands of years, borders and boundaries have sprung up all over the globe, have been violated, crossed, abolished and re-established. People(s) have moved within them and came from the outside and settled, continuously displacing already established communities and being displaced in turn. The current paper focuses upon people's memories concerning recent unsettlings in the Eastern Mediterranean. The data stem from two Oral History Projects conducted in Cyprus and Sarawak. During interviews life and language experience of borderline residents of different origins was shared. The interview samples turned out to demonstrate all the three different modes of oral history narratives each with certain linguistic peculiarities: the institutional, the communal and the personal, although the personal memory dominated. Reactions to interviewer questions and lexical units used in the interviews demonstrated different degree of willingness to speak about traumatic experience connected with borderline unrest. The interviews obtained can be widely used for further research in the fields of discourse analysis and corpus studies.

Keywords: borderline residents, oral history narrative, discourse, corpus studies.

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