

ABSTRACTS

“BRÜNN IST NIT HIN; GOTT (UND DER KAYSER) HAT
HELDEN DARINN“ / “THEY COULDN’T CONQUER
BRÜNN, THANKS TO GOD’S (AND THE EMPEROR’S)
HEROES WITHIN”

How Recollections of Defending Brünn Against the Swedes in 1645 Altered Over
Time

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This is a long-term study concerned with the 350-year history of recollecting the fending-off, in 1645, of the Swedish forces which besieged Brünn (Brno). The author demonstrates that various groupings sought to capitalize on this event, be it for engendering loyalties or for building and stabilizing cultural identities or enemy images. Whereas for a long time it was mainly the Church which sought to instill with believers eternal gratitude to the Virgin Mary, around 1800 the citizen as a new player came increasingly to the fore. Citizens used recollections of 1645 as a legitimation for their demands that they be granted political participation. Starting at the end of the 19th century, interethnic tensions resulted in the image of the historic enemy being applied to the contemporary opponent. This nationalization of memory led to the topic being almost forgotten in the 20th century with Czech inhabitants of Brünn. Only after 1955, 350 years after the Swedes had been repelled, did ceremonies slowly restart which were devoted to the memory of the 1645 events. However, large parts of the memory of the Swedes are being overlooked in this attempt to construe and strengthen a more local outlook on history.