

Letter from the Editors

At the close of the 1914 commemoration year, we present a special issue on a true *Itinerario* topic: colonial volunteerism and recruitment during the Great War, guest edited by Andrekos Varnava and Michael Walsh. The cover design by Anton Feddema pictures the Turkish Red Crescent marching in the desert south of Jerusalem during the early days of the war. Six research articles shed light on volunteerism and recruitment of both combatant and non-combatant forces from all corners of the British Empire. The issue also includes an interview with Frederick Cooper, who relates his intellectual journey from historian of Africa in the 1970s, to one of the leading scholars on colonialism and empires.

The issue opens with an article by Barton Hacker on coloured workers on the Western Front, both voluntary and coerced. Well over a quarter million of coloured troops, later joined by contract labourers, played a major role behind the lines from 1916 onwards. The magnitude of their contribution has only recently been acknowledged. The second article by John Connor looks at a very different source for troops: the Dominion expeditionary forces in the United Kingdom, which drew on the enlistment of expatriate Australian, New Zealand, Canadian, and South African men. Next, Alison Fletcher examines the recruitment and service of Māori soldiers. Her article explores the tensions that resonated within the Māori community around enlistment: Māoris who opposed recruitment believed that volunteering to fight in a foreign war distracted them from dealing with the difficulties in their own communities. Conversely, those who argued for participation in the war believed that only by including Māoris as soldiers, could all New Zealanders claim to belong to an authentic nation.

Andrekos Varnava looks at recruitment and volunteering in the Cypriot Mule Corps, in which 12,000 Cypriots from every religious group in Cyprus enlisted. His article explores the formation of the corps, the muleteer numbers, and the recruitment strategies. Trevor Harris takes us to Latin America, and in particular the Welsh colony that had been settled in Patagonia since the 1860s. By the outbreak of the War, the Celtic character of this colony could no longer be taken for granted: Argentine government pressures had increasingly integrated the Welsh-speaking colony into the nation-building process. Friction between the Welsh community and the Argentine government acted as one of the factors which sent Welsh

Patagonians back to Wales, and on to fight in the war. Steve Marti, finally, looks at the Allied expedition to Salonika, a controversial campaign that diverted resources away from the Western Front. To sustain this expedition, the Colonial Office approached the High Commissioners of Australia, Canada, and New Zealand and requested that each dominion consider raising a Serbian military contingent. South Slavs were settled in each of the Dominions, and the War Office hoped to exploit nationalist aspirations for a pan-Slavic state to mobilise them.

The Editors hope that this issue will make for a thrilling read over the upcoming semester break. Finally, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Laura Cruz, who has served as *Itinerario's* review editor since 2008. We are sad to see her leave; she has done a great job! Luckily we have found a worthy successor in Matthew Cook of North Carolina Central University. He has assembled the review section for the issue before you and we are happy to have him on board.

The Editors