

## **Transregional Connections in the History of East-Central Europe**

# **Dialectics of the Global**

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Edited by  
Matthias Middel

**Volume 9**

# **Transregional Connections in the History of East-Central Europe**

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Edited by  
Katja Castryck-Naumann

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## On the Series

Ever since the 1990s, “globalization” has been a dominant idea and, indeed, ideology. The metanarratives of Cold War victory by the West, the expansion of the market economy, and the boost in productivity through internationalization, digitization and the increasing dominance of the finance industry became associated with the promise of a global trickle-down effect that would lead to greater prosperity for ever more people worldwide. Any criticism of this viewpoint was countered with the argument that there was no alternative; globalization was too powerful and thus irreversible. Today, the ideology of “globalization” meets with growing scepticism. An era of exaggerated optimism for global integration has been replaced by an era of doubt and a quest for a return to particularistic sovereignty. However, processes of global integration have not dissipated and the rejection of “globalization” as ideology has not diminished the need to make sense both of the actually existing high level of interdependence and the ideology that gave meaning and justification to it. The following three dialectics of the global are in the focus of this series:

*Multiplicity and Co-Presence:* “Globalization” is neither a natural occurrence nor a singular process; on the contrary, there are competing projects of globalization, which must be explained in their own right and compared in order to examine their layering and their interactive composition.

*Integration and Fragmentation:* Global processes result in de- as well as reterritorialization. They go hand in hand with the dissolution of boundaries, while also producing a respatialization of the world.

*Universalism and Particularism:* Globalization projects are justified and legitimized through universal claims of validity; however, at the same time they reflect the worldview and/or interests of particular actors.



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Katja Castryck-Naumann

# **1 Introduction: Moving from Transnational to Transregional Connections? East-Central Europe in Global Contexts**

This volume examines the history of East-Central Europe as perceived through the study of transregional connections; it introduces developments that embody region-transcending entanglements by demonstrating how people from the eastern and central parts of Europe positioned themselves in a world growing closer together since the middle of the nineteenth century and how they shaped this entangled world.<sup>1</sup> This volume follows how actors embraced global dynamics and challenges as well as how they expressed their concerns in these constellations, thus creating their own connectedness. The contributions sketch out how these entanglements changed over time and which reciprocal effects they had in the region as well as in sites, spaces, and regions to which actors in East-Central Europe were tied. We trace the space-making quality of these multidirectional interactions, among others, by showing how East-Central Europe became a distinct region in the process of transregional interaction. While the contributions offer conceptual reflections and critically discuss long-standing narratives about the region's global positions, above all, they present original empirical work, with research findings that encourage enhancing the study of East-Central Europe's connectivity by augmenting the transnational angle with a transregional stance.

Why transregional connections? The observations of three developments encouraged us to examine these. First, while exchange and interactions have been treated as subjects within research concerned with East-Central Europe, the focus here has been so far on links between single societies or countries and on entanglements within the region, while relations with other parts of the world and global contexts have sparked much less interest. Second, while world-wide relations and global processes are at the core of global history, and lately a distinctive transregional approach is being advanced, entanglements are explored, above all, for world regions, such as continents or major empires. Smaller regions, including East-Central Europe, and their specific connectivity have received little attention.

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<sup>1</sup> The following reflections are based on lively discussions with the authors included in this volume about the arguments and empirical findings they present in their contributions here as well as those arising from many years of debates with colleagues who work at the crossroads of regional and global history. Among them, special thanks go to Antje Dietze, Frank Hadler, Matthias Middell, Uwe Müller, and Geert Castryck.

Because global historical narratives are imbued with these imbalances, many regional formations, sub-national and supra-national, are not dealt with and thus appear disconnected and marginal. Third, within the field of transnational history, conceptual reflections have recently moved in new directions that differentiate between the various scales of entanglements, and which shift the attention away from connections across state borders, be they national or imperial, to the many other spaces and localities from which they unfolded. This offers inspiration for both histories about East-Central Europe and global histories.

This volume presents history, revealing dimensions of the past so far rarely seen, and it aims to show the potential of the analytical category “transregional” for understanding historical connections. Yet, the category is not restricted to the study of historical developments; it can also be used to better understand current processes. The realm of international politics is changing, as are politics in East-Central Europe, including politics of history. It seems that in research, connectivity is used to reach for more inclusive histories, while in politics a nationalistic backlash and the rise of populist movements occur, not only in East-Central Europe but globally. Nationalism does not reappear, however, in the form of cutting of all ties to the outside world. Rather, we see a revision of which historical connections are used as reference and legitimization of political agendas and which ones are filtered out. These processes are their own topics for future research, and we think that the study of transregional connections of East-Central Europe can contribute much to that research.

In the following, we will briefly review in greater detail the mentioned trends in historiography and explain how we, in this volume, understand “transregional”. The second part outlines the discussion about transregional connections in the field of global history and brings to light what can be gained when the study of sub-regions in general, and of East-Central Europe in particular, is integrated. The third part presents new works on the history of East-Central Europe that paves the way towards transregional inquiries, and the last part introduces the articles in this volume.

## **1 Three Historiographical Observations**

### **Transnational History of East-Central Europe**

The largest share of the historiography on East-Central Europe has been intimately associated with the nation(-state) and scholars who have moved away from the national paradigm have first of all explored the border-crossing

biographies and dynamics for particular countries.<sup>2</sup> The primary goal has been a loosening of the fixation with the national framework<sup>3</sup> by tracing concrete connections that cut across it. Many of the characteristics of East-Central Europe – multiethnicity, multilingualism, religious diversity, the meshing of cultures, and migrations, as well as shifting borders and the many border regions – have actually paved the way towards this transnational studies approach. The unpacking of these characteristics has yielded intriguing new knowledge and one should note that bringing the connected German-Polish and German-Czech histories to the fore was also tremendously important politically and in terms of reconciliation.<sup>4</sup> Be that as it may, connectedness that stretches beyond the lands of the region has been addressed only in passing, including the questions of the region's entangled position in global processes. So far, transnational histories of East-Central Europe have been mostly written from an inward-looking perspective; relations to the wider world remain neglected.

This transnational orientation, however, leads to some challenges. Earlier than other regional specialists, historians working on East-Central Europe reflected on the constructed character of their subject. After all, we are dealing with a space that is neither clearly bounded by natural demarcations nor defined by territory or institutions; instead, it is a space that in many ways is open, fluid, and changing. In particular, the various political and scientific contexts during the eighteenth to early twenty-first centuries, as well as the related widely differing interests and agendas that created East-Central Europe as a distinctive space, have contributed to a departure from essentializing notions.<sup>5</sup> Yet

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2 On this ongoing tendency of bilateral studies, see P. O. Loew, "Leistungsfähig cum grano salis. Deutschsprachige Polenforschung. Ein Überblick", *Osteuropa* 70 (2020) 12, p. 157. For this reason, the question was posed how transnational relations can be studied in ways that differ from earlier research on bilateral relationships, see J. Hackmann and P. O. Loew, "Einleitung", in: J. Hackmann and P. O. Loew (eds.), *Verflechtungen in Politik, Kultur und Wirtschaft im östlichen Europa: Transnationalität als Forschungsproblem*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2018, pp. 7–29. See also Ph. Ther, "Deutsche Geschichte als Transnationale Geschichte. Überlegungen zu einer Histoire Croisée Deutschlands und Ostmitteleuropas", *Comparativ* 13 (2003) 4, pp. 155–180.

3 F. Hadler, "Drachen und Drachentöter. Das Problem der nationalgeschichtlichen Fixierung in den Historiographien Ostmitteleuropas nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg", in: Ch. Conrad and S. Conrad (eds.), *Die Nation schreiben. Geschichtswissenschaft im internationalen Vergleich*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002, pp. 137–164.

4 M. Schulze Wessel, "Nationen sind keine Monaden. Zum Tod des Historikers Jan Křen (1930–2020)", *Bohemia* 60 (2020) 1, pp. 102–103.

5 L. Wolff, *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining of Eastern Europe*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2020; F. B. Schenk, "Eastern Europe", in: D. Mishkova and B. Trencsényi (eds.), *European Regions and Boundaries. A Conceptual History*, New York: Berghahn, 2017, pp. 188–209; M. Sapper and V. Weichsel (eds.), *Zeit im Spiegel. Das Jahrhundert der Osteuropaforschung*

by far, not all scholars share such constructivist methodologies. There are those who insist on stable entities, above all on the nation(-state) as the main framework for research, and not only in East-Central Europe. The debate goes on.<sup>6</sup> A focus on border-transcending dynamics within Eastern Europe, reflections on the role of connections in the making and remaking of the entire region can be instructive here, and the term “transregional” – in the sense of transforming and transcending the region – can be of good use.

Second, transnational histories of East-Central Europe call into question narratives that make strong assumptions regarding the region’s fixed position in international relations and global processes, such as the notion of an area in-between “East” and “West” or of “Orient and Occident”. It has been described as rim-lands or bloodlands and as a buffer zone or semi-periphery, and as has been subsumed in a homogenous Eastern bloc during Soviet control in the post-1945 period.<sup>7</sup> Notwithstanding the explanatory power of these descriptions, actor-centred transnational historiography has revealed spaces for manoeuvring that cut across cultural and geopolitical divides. The multitude of hitherto-unknown contacts, exchanges, and circulations destabilizes ideas about East-Central Europe as a region designated as belonging to formations imposed from the outside, leaving little room for self-directed developments and proactive participation in world affairs. Nevertheless, how can these two strands of research be linked, and how can the region’s position in the world be grasped in a way that recognizes both the global hierarchies to which people from East-Central Europe were persistently exposed as well

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(thematic issue of *Osteuropa* 63 [2013] 2–3); M. Górny, *Science Embattled. Eastern European Intellectuals and the Great War*, Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2019; S. Seegel, *Map Men. Transnational Lives and Deaths of Geographers in the Making of East Central Europe*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2018. Highly critical on the concept “East-Central Europe”, see M. Krzoska, K. Lichy, and K. Rometsch, “Jenseits von Ostmitteleuropa? Zur Aporie einer deutschen Nischenforschung”, *Journal of Modern European History* 16 (2018) 1, pp. 40–64. See also the responses to this article in *Journal of Modern European History* 16 (2018) 3.

<sup>6</sup> See the productive intervention in the debate by B. v. Hirschhausen, H. Grandits, C. Kraft, and D. Müller, “Phantom Borders in Eastern Europe. A New Concept for Regional Research”, *Slavic Review* 78 (2019) 2, pp. 368–389.

<sup>7</sup> L. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994; T. Snyder, *Bloodlands. Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, New York: Basic Books, 2012; M. Levene, *Devastation – The European Rimlands 1912–1938. The Crisis of Genocide*, vol. 1, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013; M. Levene, *Annihilation – The European Rimlands 1939–1953. The Crisis of Genocide*, vol. 2, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013; I. Kacandes and Y. Komska (eds.), *Eastern Europe Unmapped. Beyond Borders and Peripheries*, New York: Berghahn, 2017; S. Marung, U. Müller, and S. Troebst, “Monolith or Experiment? The Bloc as a Spatial Format”, in: S. Marung and M. Middell (eds.), *Spatial Formats under the Global Condition*, Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019, pp. 275–309.

as their capacity to deal with such conditions for their own sake and interests? It seems that we need an approach that is flexible enough to explore possibilities of action within specific fields of action, whether in the economy, culture, or in international settings, and from there to reconsider structuralist narratives. This calls for actor-centred studies that take as their starting point neither seemingly given spaces nor predetermined positions in global affairs, but which follow strategies of positioning in global processes. These studies include topics such as, among others, visions and practices of region-related politics: for example, the Little Entente; voting blocs in international organizations; or, more recently, the formation of the Visegrád Group. The development of distinct regionalisms can offer inspiration here,<sup>8</sup> and there are many more aspects of regionalization that have led to the creation of smaller or larger spaces in East-Central Europe.

Without doubt, new research fields have emerged that take up such a perspective (which we will return to later). Ultimately, in many societies, political cultures seem to change, and colonial and imperial pasts – which even in the countries that were once major empires had vanished from the centre of concerns – are recalled.<sup>9</sup> The history of colonialism and its attendant racism, however, can be less aptly discussed in the terminology of the transnational, which can be seen by the previous focus on transnational entanglements within each world region facing accusations for having marginalized colonial projects, ties, and related transregional entanglements for far too long.

Still, the focus of the transnationally oriented historiography on East-Central Europe is on one type of traversal – the trans-imperial, transnational, or transcultural – which blends out other simultaneous crossings. The study of the plurality of scales along which entanglements unfolded and the multiplicity of spaces established by interactions and exchanges is conceptually prepared; empirical works that explore these intricacies are still few in regard to East-Central Europe. Yet, the study of connections from a transregional perspective is instructive to understanding not only the historical trajectories in the region but in a wider sense: it enables a critical intervention into global history.

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<sup>8</sup> On this line of research, which has been established with a focus on other world regions and often with a contemporary perspective, see U. Engel et al. (eds.), *The New Politics of Regionalism. Perspectives from Africa, Latin America and the Asian-Pacific*, London: Routledge 2017; see also M. Frey, “Concepts of Region in International History”, in: L. Hönnighausen (ed.), *Regionalism in the Age of Globalism*, vol. 1: *Concepts of Regionalism*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005, pp. 15–26.

<sup>9</sup> On the fundamental shift in historical cultures as a reaction to a globalizing world, see C. S. Maier, “Consigning the 20th Century to History. Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era”, *American Historical Review* 105 (2000) 3, pp. 807–831.

## Global History and its Focus on World Regions

While regions and their interactions have already been central topics among world and global historians for a few decades, the focus is on a specific type of region, i.e., continental areas, such as Africa, South America, or Asia; hegemonic entities, like the major empires; and sometimes institutionalized spaces, including the Eastern bloc or the non-aligned states. World regions outside Europe and their interdependencies with Western European empires are intensively investigated, and the history of Russia and the Soviet Union in its global dimensions has also become an object of research. It is recognized in principle that regional spaces of action differ from each other, notably in terms of location and size, and that some are located within nation-states, that others emerged around borders, and that others are constellations within the so-called world regions, for example, sub-Saharan Africa or East Asia. The awareness of this variety, however, rarely translates into related research activities. The empirical study of the entire plurality of regional spaces beyond the local level is still an open task. All too often, the term “region” is used in non-specific ways, for everything that took place between the local and the global; “region” is rarely used as an analytical category.

Linked to that, entanglements and connections are often described as “global” even when they are, in fact, not world-encompassing but stretch along smaller spaces. There is an ongoing debate about the relation between the “local” and the “global”, which has opened up many stimulating insights. However, historical spaces and connections that lie “in between” have not in the same way moved into the centre of interest, and approaches that take these as a starting point are less fleshed out.

One of the consequences is that the differentiated regionality of Europe is seldom recognized; at best it is treated in its “East-West” division, and East-Central Europe, as other subregional spaces, does not figure prominently in global historical research. These are rarely viewed in terms of their connectivity with the wider world and their role in global dynamics. These limitations constitute a severe epistemological gap because it is impossible to understand the world when only certain regional spaces of actions are considered.

Added to that, although global history deals in detail with asymmetric global relations and aims to view world regions in their own right that were for long neglected in world historical writings, in general, it continues to approach marginality and subordination either as conditions that warrant explanation as to their development or as inappropriate characterizations employed in older research, which can be rectified by showing the historical agency of actors in these regions. Yet, in both cases marginal or peripheral positions in world-wide relations or constellations of ongoing subordination are rather treated as stable, structural, and unchanging. A

closer view into (sub-)regions, such as East-Central Europe, that seemingly fall into this category, shows something different. Marginality is not a consolidated ‘state of being’ or a historiographical construction; it rather is a position in worldwide entanglements which can be transient; that is to say, time matters. In certain historical constellations, East-Central Europe, and other parts of the world, were indeed in an unfavourable position and could not leverage connectivity to their own advantage; at other times this was not so. By examining the historical position of East-Central Europe, we can gain a more refined understanding of marginality.

In this context, research into the history of sub-regions such as East-Central Europe and their transregional connections bear much potential for decentralising global history: East-Central Europe was and is a key part of the world and thus needs to be taken into account for the newly emerging global historical narratives that focus on the connectedness of regions. In doing so, the understanding of developments in other parts of the world and in processes that are global in nature is deepened while allowing us to understand “region”, in all its dimensions, both as a research category and as a historical space of action.

## New Trends in Transnational History

Since the early 2000s, the potential of ideas, patterns, and processes that operate “over, across, through, beyond, above, under or in-between politics and societies”,<sup>10</sup> and which help to counter the enduring fixation with nation-states and ethnocentrism, have been recognized. The word “transnational”, initially an umbrella term, provides a means for following everything that has moved away from, beyond, and against the sharply delineated field of the nation-state; all sorts of cross-border linkages and mobilities, and initially, in particular, those that do not span the entire globe, were in the centre of attention.<sup>11</sup> This gave many historians working on spaces smaller than continents or transcontinental empires an opportunity to contribute their knowledge to the rise of connected histories. The transnational not only came into fashion empirically, it was also

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**10** A. Iriye and P.-Y. Saunier (eds.), *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History. From the Mid-19th Century to the Present Day*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009, p. xviii.

**11** Different strands of discussion can be identified for the transnationalization of North American, German, and French history, to mention only these three examples. It would go too far here to discuss these different paths, but it should at least be pointed out that the debate cannot easily be brought down to a common denominator.

conceptualized as a category, especially by social scientists.<sup>12</sup> However, the term also drew opposition very early on because it seems to presuppose the existence of nations and nation-states<sup>13</sup> – even if advocates of a transnational historiography rejected this with pragmatic arguments or tried to add nuance to it by pointing to the possibility of transnational interconnections before the founding of nation-states.<sup>14</sup> The question, however, of whether we do not need additional approaches was in the air early on.

In the course of the debate, the understanding of transnational history has become more differentiated, and conceptual reflections have moved in new directions. Ultimately, entanglements unfold on a plurality of scales; they exist simultaneously and create a multiplicity of spaces. Transregional or global interactions reveal themselves as different from those brought to light when looking at specific localities. Strictly speaking, this is what Ulrike Freitag and Achim von Oppen have pointed out when introducing the concept of trans-locality. This approach – set apart from transnationalism – emerged as a consequence of the study of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. In these regions, the existence of the nation-state accounts only for a small part of the historical development despite having been shaped by connections for a long time and in a variety of ways. Starting at the local level, studying trans-locality reveals how transgressions have taken place across various spatial boundaries. Localities turn into prisms with

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**12** Among many others, see T. Faist, *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Spaces*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000; L. Pries, *Die Transnationalisierung der sozialen Welt. Sozialräume jenseits von Nationalgesellschaften*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2008; S. Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, London: Routledge, 2009; W. Fluck, D. E. Pease, and J. C. Rowe (eds.), *Re-Framing the Transnational Turn in American Studies*, Hanover: Dartmouth College Press, 2011.

**13** K. K. Patel, *Nach der Nationalfixiertheit. Perspektiven einer transnationalen Geschichte*, Berlin: Humboldt Universität, 2004, <http://docplayer.org/29589170-Kiran-klaus-patel-nach-der-nationalfixiertheit.html> (accessed 30 April 2021), as well as the discussion forum on transnational history in *geschichte.transnational* (today: *Connections. A Journal for Historians and Area Specialists*). More on the foundations of the field in the section “Conversation on Transnational History”, *American Historical Review* 111 (2006) 5, pp. 1441–1464; G. Budde, S. Conrad, and O. Janz (eds.), *Transnationale Geschichte. Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006; M. G. Müller and C. Torp, “Conceptualizing Transnational Spaces in History”, *European Review of History* 16 (2009) 5, pp. 609–617; B. Struck, K. Ferries, and J. Revel (eds.), *Size Matters. Scales and Spaces in Transnational and Comparative History* (thematic issue of *International History Review* 33 [2011] 4).

**14** P.-Y. Saunier, “Learning by Doing. Notes about the Making of the Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History”, *Journal of Modern European History* 6 (2008) 2, pp. 159–179; P.-Y. Saunier, *Transnational History*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.



which to observe interaction and entanglement processes of vastly different scope and scale, only some with global reach and impact.<sup>15</sup>

Others have argued, that also the concept of the transregional offers more flexibility than the transnational lens. Here connectivity is viewed through the prism of the region (to which we will return).<sup>16</sup> Both approaches examine entanglements at the specific points where these started or coalesce, and both see connections as integrated into a multi-layered time- and space-specific web of interactions stretching from the local to the global level. With this perspective we can see that the integration of connections into these webs of interactions is at the root of how both localities and regions are created.

## **Transregional History: Reconstructing Connections with a Focus on Multiple Scales, Simultaneity, and Spatialization**

What such a perspective on connections can do for the understanding of East-Central Europe is what this volume aims to outline. It is in this sense that our perspective is transregional: We look at the multidirectional interactions of actors from the region with other parts of the world; we study the spaces these entanglements created, within and beyond the region, as well as how these entanglements produced “East-Central Europe” as a frame of reference, meaning, and action; and we follow the reciprocal effects of developments inside and outside of the region. Distinguishing these three dimensions of “trans-regionality” – transfers, (trans)formation of spaces, and region-transcending dynamics<sup>17</sup> – helps us to recognize the broad spectrum of connections<sup>18</sup> that emerged in and shaped East-Central Europe.

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<sup>15</sup> See especially U. Freitag and A. v. Oppen, “Introduction. ‘Translocality’. An Approach to Connection and Transfer in Area Studies”, in: U. Freitag and A. v. Oppen (eds.), *Translocality. The Study of Globalising Processes from a Southern Perspective*, Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp. 1–21; A. Dietze and K. [Castrick-]Naumann (eds.), *Situating Transnational Actors* (thematic issue of *European Review of History* 25 [2018] 3–4).

<sup>16</sup> M. Middell, “From Universal History to Transregional Perspectives. The Challenge of the Cultural and Spatial Turn to World and Global History in the 1970s and Today”, *Cultural History* 9 (2020) 2, pp. 241–264.

<sup>17</sup> On this notion of “transregional”, see M. Middell (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Transregional Studies*, London: Routledge, 2019, and in particular the volume’s introduction as well as the article by Geert Castrick on “Colonialism and Post-Colonial Studies”.

<sup>18</sup> Such a perspective was lately explored among others at a workshop organized by M. Krzoska and J. A. Turkowska devoted to “Reimagining Polish Worldwideness. Cross-Local Encounters and Global Arrangements”, Marburg, September 2019.

Accordingly, the transregional perspective, as we understand it, does not contradict or undermine interest in the inner-regional connectedness; it complements and contextualizes it. Ultimately, entanglements are spatial in nature: they take on different scales, stretch across localities, empires, nation-states, cultures, and regions. What we see of this spectrum also depends on the chosen scale of enquiry. Different ties and interactions come to light depending on the entrance point into the densely and multi-layered connectedness that emerges under the global condition.<sup>19</sup>

By examining transregional connections in the history of East-Central Europe, we hope to open up an empirically broad and conceptually fascinating research field which is relevant for the understanding of not only the region but also the history of the world. What follows is intended as an introduction to the subject, as a spark to arouse curiosity to keep on reading, as an opening to the new knowledge provided by the chapters that follow, and as a trigger to think further after having read them.

## 2 Regions in Global History and Transregional Studies

For a few decades, interactions across the world and between regions have been the core concern in the field of global history. With this focal point, scholars have thought to overcome two long-standing orientations in world history writing: on the one hand, the postulation of fixed entities, such as civilizations, empires, and nation-states, and, on the other hand, the Eurocentric orientation that older world histories have so often been imbued with. Over the course of a long process involving conceptual innovation and an empirical turn,<sup>20</sup> scholars have become devoted to interpreting and explaining historical processes in open ways, without reverting to seemingly pre-given container-like entities; this makes history accessible outside of closed systems of orders and develops decentred perspectives in which “Europe” or the “West” are not treated as the prime references.

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<sup>19</sup> On the global condition, see Marung and Middell, *Spatial Formats*.

<sup>20</sup> D. Sachsenmaier, *Global Perspectives on Global History. Theories and Approaches in a Connected World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011; K. [Castryck]-Naumann, *Laboratorien der Weltgeschichtsschreibung: Lehre und Forschung an den Universitäten Chicago, Columbia und Harvard 1918 bis 1968*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018.

Among the pivotal elements to the current understanding of global historians, which is centred around entanglements, are subaltern and post-colonial studies: reflecting on processes of decolonization, scholars have demonstrated the intellectual and cultural construction of the dichotomy between the “Orient” and “Occident” and all its markers of difference. They have revealed that colonialism is a set of reciprocal relations that shaped the colonized (regions) as much as the colonizers (Europe). Empirical investigations of European power trajectories have not only shown structural inequalities within European relations with other world regions, they have also demonstrated that colonized people have agency. This work has drawn attention to the huge impact that colonial encounters had on major European cities while providing a powerful impetus for exploring the complicated interactions between Western and non-Western societies in greater depth. Overall, it has been found out that processes of colonization and decolonization cannot be equated with Europe exerting a unidirectional influence or with other regions (simply) “catching up”. Instead, colonial relations must be seen as entangled, reciprocal, and yet asymmetric histories.

To substantiate this point, global historians today concentrate – unlike their precursors – on developments in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East in their asymmetric global contexts. This focus was also a response to the fundamental criticism of traditional area studies. This criticism had multiple dimensions, one of which was the prevailing tendency to see regions as unchangeable, self-contained spaces shaped by internal relations. Contrary to this, different sides have argued since the 1990s that regions are characterized by very different entanglements and that it is therefore important to investigate not just internal but also external relations. A lively discussion about reforming area studies and regional histories has arisen, with the general tenor being that regions should be understood in their global contexts by using comparative studies and relational approaches.<sup>21</sup> This perspective has also initiated reflections on how research in East-Central Europe can be expanded from the viewpoints of concepts and methodologies currently being in used in area study research.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> For current interventions, see K. Mielke and A.-K. Hornidge (eds.), *Area Studies at the Crossroads. Knowledge Production after the Mobility Turn*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017; C. Derrichs, *Knowledge Production, Area Studies and Global Cooperation*, London: Routledge, 2017; A. I. Ahram, P. Köllner, and R. Sil (eds.), *Comparative Area Studies. Methodological Rationales and Cross-Regional Applications*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

<sup>22</sup> Y. Kleinmann, “Über die Substanz polnischer Geschichte: Polen als Gegenstand von Area Studies?”, in: J. Heyde et al. (eds.), *Dekonstruieren und doch erzählen. Polnische und andere Geschichten*, Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2015, pp. 248–255.

Without a doubt, these new research orientations brought about exciting new bodies of knowledge, especially on the trajectories of world regions “outside” of Europe. They have by now become so multifaceted and dynamic that older narratives have been shattered. At the same time, it has become a critical task to develop alternative narrative frameworks that take this empirical wealth and related arguments into account.<sup>23</sup> Lately it has also been argued that research scope needs to be broadened to include disconnections and dynamics of disintegration.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, simply turning to the opposite is not sufficient for grasping the complex processes that evolved in a world tied closer together. We need to amalgamate trends towards and against entanglements and to find ways of conceptualizing and researching this intertwinement.

Two other challenges have received less attention – although they are equally pressing. Anglo-American research especially tends to study entanglements in the perspective of *world* regions, such as Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Pacific, etc., with Eastern Europe also gradually coming to the fore.<sup>25</sup> Even though regional spaces of action and identification with different scopes and scale have been addressed in these works, they have sparked little interest in how these might modify the general understanding of what “region” can mean in global historical studies. Partly linked to this, entanglements under investigation are often described as world-encompassing or as expressions of global processes, although these are, upon closer look, rarely universal, to use an older term. This leaves other connections aside and creates new imbalances, new centres of attention.

The situation is different in the German-speaking research context, where a transregional perspective has recently been advanced that explores connections that are neither global nor enfolded only within world regions and that aims to

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<sup>23</sup> M. Middell and K. Castryck-Naumann (eds.), *Narrating World History after the Global Turn. The Cambridge World History (2015)* (thematic issue of *Comparativ* 29 [2019] 6).

<sup>24</sup> J. Adelman, “What is Global History Now?” *Aeon*, 2 March 2017; “Discussion. The Futures of Global History”, *Journal of Global History* 13 (2018) 1, pp. 1–21; S. Gänger, “Circulation. Reflections on Circularity, Entity, and Liquidity in the Language of Global History”, *Journal of Global History* 12 (2017) 3, pp. 303–318; J. Osterhammel and S. Gänger, “Denkpause für Globalgeschichte”, *Merkur* 74 (2020) 855, pp. 79–86; see also the critique of Sebastian Conrad on the overemphasis of mobility: S. Conrad, *What is Global History?*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016, pp. 224–228.

<sup>25</sup> Among the first to emphasize interaction for the understanding of historical regions and global dynamics was Jerry Bentley; see, among his other works, “Regional Histories, Global Processes, Cross-Cultural Interactions”, in: J. Bentley, R. Bridenthall, and A. A. Yang (eds.), *Interactions. Transregional Perspectives on World History*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2005, pp. 1–13.

move these entanglements into the centre of definitions of regions.<sup>26</sup> This goes hand in hand with an awareness that regions within the field of geography are often tied to the multifaceted process of territorialization. Yet, from a historical perspective it is clear that transgressions are not only caused by state-formations (imperial or national), but that there are also connections leading to sub-state and supra-state regions, entanglements, and spaces above and below the level of statehood.<sup>27</sup> Regions can be parts of empires or parts of nation-states; they are not necessarily tied to processes of nationalization. This recognition was, on the one hand, strengthened by the reception of the spatial turn that initiated a constructivist and relational understanding of space<sup>28</sup> and that slowly (albeit unevenly and inconsistently) spread across the various humanities, social sciences, and area studies. On the other hand, historical research on how differently regions and regional studies have been conceptualized in scholarship underscored a revision of older understandings.<sup>29</sup>

Our volume contributes to the interest in the transregional by addressing a region that is often described as a *sub-region*, that is, a region within a world region. While it has been argued, rightly so, that global history has the potential for leading regional history out of its separation from general history, which is still often European or Western, and that regional histories are of central importance for global history,<sup>30</sup> we advance the point and argue that taking the entire plurality of regional configurations into account is essential for global histories that focus on regions and their entanglements. We substantiate this in view of the potential of sub-regions as historical spaces of action and interaction.<sup>31</sup>

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**26** The discussion forum “All things transregional? A Conversation about Transregional Research”, edited by the Forum Transregionale Studien and the Max Weber Foundation in 2019 (available online at the TRAFO Blog for Transregional Research), provides a good introduction to the debate as well as Middell, *Routledge Handbook*.

**27** M. Middell, “Transregional Studies. A New Approach to Global Processes”, in: Middell, *Routledge Handbook*, p. 8.

**28** D. B. Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994; John Allen et al., *Rethinking the Region. Spaces of Neoliberalism*, New York: Routledge, 1998.

**29** S. Marung, “Area Studies, Regionalwissenschaften, Aires culturelles. The Respatialization of Area Studies from a Bird’s-Eye View”, in: Middell, *Routledge Handbook*, pp. 46–57; K. [Castrick-]Naumann et al. (eds.), *In Search of Other Worlds. Essays towards a Cross-Regional History of Area Studies*, Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2019.

**30** On the mutual potential between regional and global history, with a focus in world regions, see C. Büschges and S. Scheuzger (eds.), *Global History and Area Studies* (thematic issue of *Comparativ* 29 [2019] 2).

**31** For a similar approach, see G. Castryck, A. v. Oppen, and K. Zöller (eds.), *Bridging Histories of East and Central Africa* (special section in *History in Africa. A Journal of Debates, Methods, and Source Analysis* 46 [2019]).

The study of the transregional connections of a sub-region underlines and advances several of the arguments that have crystallized: the most basic might be that connectivity is not a historical marginal phenomenon or a symptom of a crisis but was created and used by an overwhelming number of people. Interrelations have brought about the emergence of spaces of perception, experience, and action whose geographies stretch across boundaries imposed by political orders and beyond established historiographic divisions. Looking, for example, at the histories of Asia and Africa from a transregional perspective while focusing on the inhabitants of these regions and their mobilities, the Indian Ocean and the regions around its rim emerge as an entangled space of action. The same is true for Europe; from a transregional perspective we can recognize its internal structuring, consisting of, among others, East-Central Europe, South-East Europe, the Baltic region, and other usually less visible spaces.<sup>32</sup> In all of them, entanglement with the world at large developed, and all were shaped by global contexts, though to different degrees. These connected histories are profound parts in the spatialization of the world and essential for re-evaluating Europe's process in world-wide relations.

In addition, however, through the study of sub-regions we can better understand what makes a region and reconsider separations and hierarchies that are reinforced in current global history, although it programmatically aims at the contrary.

First, the study of sub-regions – which are often neither clearly bounded by natural demarcations nor defined by territory or institutions, but which are fluid and changing – allows us to trace the fact that regions manifest on different levels and, above all, how they do, that is to say in discourses, within perceptions and experiences, in everyday actions, and sometimes in efforts to create political order. We can explore in detail exactly where, and in which situations, the “region” shaped thoughts and lived reality of historical actors and how these configurations changed. By understanding which spaces have historically evolved into a region, we can see more clearly the relationships between regions and other spatial contexts, including global dynamics. This again enables us to grasp processes that integrated and fragmented the world in a more complex way.

Second, considering approaches to transregional connections from the perspective of sub-regions facilitates new comparative perspectives. Much like in East-Central Europe, the nation-building processes in many parts of the world were traditionally considered as delayed, weak, and incomplete. This has often led to the conclusion that all these regions played, and still play, a subordinate

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<sup>32</sup> See, e.g., L. Elenius et al., *The Barent Region. A Transnational History of Subarctic Northern Europe*, Oslo: Pax, 2015.

role within global contexts – being (seemingly) less involved and less integrated. However, there is another side to the fact that organizing territories into nation-states with distinct borders was – on account of multiethnicity, multilingualism, and the aftermaths of their integration into imperial contexts – a difficult process for all these regions: connectivity and interactions with different scopes have continued to shape both East-Central Europe and large parts of Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East. It therefore makes sense to compare different regional and subregional spaces with each other, in particular with regard to the depth of their entanglements. This is by no means an easy matter, but the growing knowledge about transregional connections in all of these regions will help to pave the way.

Last but not least, examining the transregional entanglements of East-Central Europe allows us to challenge the notion that certain regions occupy seemingly unchangeable marginal and peripheral positions within global contexts. There are good reasons to assume that the development and global spread of capitalism has led to a highly asymmetric global division of labour and a hierarchy of spaces. We are used to thinking in the dichotomy of centres and peripheries, but viewed empirically, global centres and (semi)peripheries are not static spaces. Marginality comes and goes, and peripheral positionings are temporary. They are the results of the actions of actors who, first and foremost, were striving to position themselves as best as possible in the global context, but whose strategies did not always succeed in defying overpowering economic and political forces. In addition, at times, leading actors were able to mobilize resources derived from unequal global interactions and could use their subordinate position for their own advantage.<sup>33</sup> Taking into account this open and dynamic process of marginalization and successes in pushing back against it, as well as the intricacies of handling of subordination, we can gain a more nuanced understanding of marginality.

While global history often works with seemingly set marginal regions and is guided by a universalist ambition to integrate them, studying the historical trajectory of ostensibly peripheral regions reveals that marginality is, in fact, the (temporary) result of a contested process. Being in a marginal position thus implies, first and foremost, being firmly positioned within global interactions in which access to power runs along twisted lines of exchange and communication. The result is that the region's room for manoeuvring is limited but not permanently eradicated. We can therefore enhance our understanding of

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<sup>33</sup> J.-F. Bayart, "Africa in the World. A History of Extraversion", *African Affairs* 99 (2000), pp. 217–267.

regions by examining them in the context of globalization processes. Regardless of their specific positions in globally asymmetric relationships, regions reveal themselves as being intricately embedded in and shaped by larger webs of structures, networks, and discourses – thanks to the actors who have independently interacted with these larger structures.<sup>34</sup> Recognizing this very fact advances both global history and regional histories by adding an understanding of region that foregrounds their connectivity.

### 3 Points of Departure: Concepts for and Studies of the Transregional History of East-Central Europe

East-Central Europe is shaped by transregional entanglements and is therefore a globally integrated region – this line of argument, although relatively new, has been formulated through conceptual reflections and by a number of empirical studies. In the following section, this research will be sketched out while considering major trends, with the main purpose of situating the volume in the historiography on East(-Central) Europe, which shares the same interest in relational perspectives. Reflecting on its share in the overall writing about the region would go beyond the scope of this introduction.

Two general aspects are important to note. First, the agenda to study the connected history of East-Central Europe emerged from debates going back to the early 2000s and originated from different points of interventions into the existing literature. Second, over time what has been commonly referred to as “transnational history” has been expanded to include not only nation-crossing and inner-regional entanglements but also the degree to which connections span the world and to their global contexts as well as effects in regard to East-Central Europe’s spatiality. The volume aims to advance these trends, and we can identify three developments that have paved the way.

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<sup>34</sup> F. Cooper, “Networks, Moral Discourse and History”, in: T. Callaghy, R. Kassimir, and R. Latham (eds.), *Intervention and Transnationalisation in Africa. Global-Local Networks of Power*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001; J. C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed. An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.



## Towards Connecting and Integrating Central European History

For some time now, a bridge is being built between research that is genuinely focused on East-Central Europe and other research fields. While at first the potential of the region's past in unpacking European history was outlined, as interests have for long focused on Western Europe,<sup>35</sup> later, insights from neighbouring research fields have been welcomed, specifically from new imperial and (post-)colonial history as well as from works inspired by the spatial turn.

The reception of new approaches in imperial history gave fresh impulses for the study of the Habsburg Monarchy and for the Russian and Ottoman Empires: among others, actors who moved within and across the imperial spaces have received attention, internal mechanisms of political regulation have been seen in a new light, and the long-lasting relevance of imperial structures when the empires cease to exist has become clear.<sup>36</sup> Now, much better than before, we are able to analyse the differences and similarities found in imperial configurations elsewhere and can thus situate East-Central Europe's imperial past in larger historical processes.

In parallel, approaches from colonial and postcolonial studies have been received. For example, the Danube Monarchy has been reframed under the epithet "Habsburg postcolonial", even though it did not actually have overseas colonies in the conventional sense. Such a reframing led to the emergence of multiple new perspectives, including not only analyses of the Habsburg Monarchy's colonial

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<sup>35</sup> The investigation of mental maps, in particular, opened new integrative perspectives, see F. B. Schenk, "Mental Maps. Die kognitive Kartierung des Kontinents als Forschungsgegenstand der europäischen Geschichte", *Europäische Geschichte Online*, <http://www.ieg-ego.eu/schenkf-2013-de> (accessed 30 April 2021); J. Kocka, "Das östliche Mitteleuropa als Herausforderung für eine vergleichende Geschichte Europas", *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 49 (2000) 2, pp. 159–174; for a comprehensive history of Europe that takes its eastern parts into account, see, among others, W. Eberhard and C. Lübke (eds.), *The Plurality of Europe. Identities and Spaces*, Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2010, and the editorial by Stefan Troebst on the topic "Zur Europäizität des östlichen Europa", *Themenportal Europäische Geschichte* 2006, [www.europa.clio-online.de/essay/id/fdae-1381](http://www.europa.clio-online.de/essay/id/fdae-1381).

<sup>36</sup> T. Buchen and M. Rolf (eds.), *Eliten im Vielvölkerreich. Imperiale Biographien in Russland und Österreich-Ungarn (1850–1918)*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015; M. Aust and F. B. Schenk (eds.), *Imperial Subjects. Autobiographische Praxis in den Vielvölkerreichen der Habsburger, Romanovs und Osmanen im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert*, Köln: Böhlau, 2015; J. Arend (ed.), *Science and Empire in Eastern Europe. Imperial Russia and the Habsburg Monarchy in the 19th Century*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2020; J. Osterkamp (ed.), *Kooperatives Imperium. Politische Zusammenarbeit in der späten Habsburgermonarchie*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018; P. Miller and C. Morelon (eds.), *Embers of Empire. Continuity and Rupture in the Habsburg Successor States of 1918*, New York: Berghahn, 2018; P. Becker and N. Wheatley (eds.), *Remaking Central Europe. The League of Nations and the Former Habsburg Lands*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021.

policies and Vienna's participation in the expansion of European colonies into Africa and parts of Asia but also a re-evaluation of asymmetric constellations and patterns of power within the Habsburg Empire as expressions of an internal colonization. With this research, we can recognize similarities between the pluralistic and heterogeneous nature of the Habsburg Monarchy and manifestations of colonialism, and we can think of its internal structures as being the result of compensating for its lack of overseas colonies. These comparative perspectives make it possible to contextualize features that are supposedly specific to the Habsburg Monarchy, such as the interplay between homogenization and differentiation, and to rethink relationships previously considered dichotomous, such as the concepts "centre" and "periphery".<sup>37</sup> From this, a promising line of investigation of colonial discourses, practices, policies, and colonizing missions has emerged that also deals with other parts of the region while demonstrating how much can be discovered if East-Central Europe is integrated into the history of colonization and decolonization, as well as what a post-colonial approach can bring to light.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> W. Sauer (ed.), *K. u. k. kolonial. Habsburgermonarchie und europäische Herrschaft in Afrika*, Wien: Böhlau, 2002, or more recently: J. Feichtinger, U. Prutsch, and M. Csáky (eds.), *Habsburg postcolonial. Machtstrukturen und kollektives Gedächtnis*, Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2003; J. Surman and K. Kaps, *Galicja postkolonialnie. Możliwości i granice* [Galicia postcolonial. Possibilities and limits] (thematic issue of *Historyka. Studia Metodologiczne* 42 [2012]); J. Feichtinger and H. Uhl (eds.), *Habsburg neu denken. Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in Zentraleuropa. 30 kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte*, Wien: Böhlau, 2016.

<sup>38</sup> See, e.g., M. Skulimowska, *Polish Colonial Aspirations in Africa. The Maritime and Colonial League in Angola and Liberia, c. 1920–1939*, PhD thesis, University of Kent, 2019; M. Grzechnik, "‘Ad Maiorem Poloniae Gloriam!’ Polish Inter-colonial Encounters in Africa in the Interwar Period", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 48 (2020) 5, pp. 826–845; L. A. Ureña Valerio, *Colonial Fantasies, Imperial Realities. Race Science and the Making of Polishness on the Fringes of the German Empire, 1840–1920*, Athens: Ohio University Press, 2019; P. Puchalski, "Polityka kolonialna międzywojennej Polski w świetle źródeł krajowych i zagranicznych. Nowe spojrzenie (1918–1945) [Interwar Poland's Colonial Policy in Light of Domestic and Foreign Sources. A New Look (1918–1945)]", *Res Gestae. Czasopismo Historyczne* 7 (2018), pp. 68–121; M. Rhode, "Zivilisierungsmissionen und Wissenschaft. Polen kolonial?" *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 30 (2013) 1, pp. 5–34; Z. Ginelli, "The Clash of Colonialisms. Hungarian Communist and Anti-Communist Decolonialism in the Third World", *Critical Geographies Blog*, 23 December 2019; R. Born and S. Lemmen (eds.), *Orientalismen in Ostmitteleuropa. Diskurse, Akteure und Disziplinen vom 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Bielefeld: Transcript, 2014. With a comparative perspective: C. Kraft, A. Lüdtke, and J. Martschukat (eds.), *Kolonialgeschichten. Regionale Perspektiven auf ein globales Phänomen*, Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2010; M. Reinkowski and G. Thum (eds.), *Helpless Imperialists. Imperial Failure, Fear, and Radicalization*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013; A. Sproede and M. Lecke, "Der Weg der postcolonial studies nach und in Osteuropa", in: D. Hütchker and A. Kliems (eds.), *Überbringen, Überformen, Überblenden. Theorietransfer im 20. Jahrhundert*, Köln: Böhlau, 2011, pp. 27–66.

## Toward the Constructedness and Relationality of East-Central Europe

Even though a tension continues to exist between scholars who approach East-Central Europe as a construct and those who postulate it as a stable structure, borders and demarcation lines of the region have become harder to define. Specifically, the research group comprising Béatrice von Hirschhausen, Hannes Grandits, Claudia Kraft, and Dietmar Müller has explored situational contexts and the extent of identification with the region. Their research was motivated by the observation that political borders and territorial divisions persist even after they have nominally been abolished and that they continue to structure societies at later points in time. In order to analyse which former territorial borders have endured and which have disappeared, they propose the concept of “phantom borders”. These are defined neither as unchangeable structures nor as purely discursive constructions, but instead as the products of several inter-related dimensions: imagination, experience and perception, as well as everyday practices and political-administrative interventions.<sup>39</sup> Their approach, however, is interested not only in understanding the manifestations of borders, but also in rethinking the category “region”. Instead of understanding regions as entities that follow linear developments, as firmly established at a certain point and as spaces with generally distinct borders, they consider them the results of constant situational – and therefore specific to both location and time – references and actualization processes. By recognizing the “ephemeral and non-deterministic nature of the examined regions: their ‘phantom-like nature’”,<sup>40</sup> it becomes possible to actually trace how regions develop and change without essentializing them. In consequence, this concept leads to an understanding of the term “region” in which relations with other spaces are key, and in which, in turn, “region” is one specific entity providing spatial orientation.

Although in the context of a different debate, the one about historical mesoregions, in which East-Central Europe features prominently, Stefan Troebst took this argument further, arguing that region-transcending dynamics are constitutive of regions: “transregional relations and interregional interactions complement

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<sup>39</sup> H. Grandits et al., “Phantomgrenzen im östlichen Europa. Eine wissenschaftliche Positionierung”, in: B. v. Hirschhausen et al. (eds.), *Phantomgrenzen. Räume und Akteure in der Zeit neu denken*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2015, p. 18ff. This was the first volume of the series “Phantomgrenzen im östlichen Europa” (Wallstein).

<sup>40</sup> Von Hirschhausen et al., *Phantom Borders in Eastern Europe*, p. 372.

the internal structure of a historical meso-region".<sup>41</sup> At the same time, he points out that research into this transregional dimension is still in its infancy. New questions, for example regarding the relationship between meso-regions and macro-regions, have been raised, but they are yet to be examined empirically. These two examples must suffice to show that recent reflections on the spatial character of East-Central Europe have advanced to a degree that challenge the long-term focus on inner-regional structures and in turn broaden this focus by considering the various external contexts that constitute a region. This brings East-Central Europe's relations with the wider world to the fore.

Another line of investigation has turned to insights gained from the spatial turn, which has opened up new agendas in many humanities and social sciences in the last two decades.<sup>42</sup> A few years ago, Peter Haslinger reviewed the importance of these perspectives for examining well-established subjects in the historiography on East-Central Europe, outlining topics that are inspired by them.<sup>43</sup> These include research on borders, border regions, and border cities as well as on contact zones, multiculturalism, and multiethnicity, including questions regarding the overlapping of imperial, national, or other spatial patterns. The various demarcations, both political-administrative and sociocultural, and the constant altering of state borders in East-Central Europe, he argues, provide "a whole string of research perspectives that can be paradigmatic for European history and to some extent for global history".<sup>44</sup> In turn, border regions in East-Central Europe are being re-evaluated and are no longer being seen primarily as "disputed territories and objects of national competition" but rather as "spaces

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41 S. Troebst, "Historical Mesoregions and Transregionalism", in: Middell, *The Routledge Handbook*, pp. 169–178; for an earlier version of the concept see S. Troebst, "Historical Meso-Region. A Concept in Cultural Studies and Historiography", *European History Online*, [www.ieg-ego.eu/troebst-2010-ed](http://www.ieg-ego.eu/troebst-2010-ed) (accessed 30 April 2021). For a broad analysis of European mesoregions, see D. Mishkova and B. Trencsényi (eds.), *European Regions and Boundaries. A Conceptual History*, New York: Berghahn, 2017.

42 J. Döring and T. Thielmann (eds.), *Spatial Turn. Das Raumparadigma in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2008; B. Warf and S. Arias (eds.), *Spatial Turn. Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, London: Routledge, 2009; M. Middell and K. [Castryck] Naumann, "Global History and the Spatial Turn. From the Impact of Area Studies to the Study of Critical Junctures of Globalization", *Journal of Global History* 5 (2010) 1, pp. 149–170. For an early reception of the historiography on Eastern Europe, see K. Schlögel, "Die Wiederkehr des Raums – auch in der Osteuropakunde", *Osteuropa* 3 (2005), pp. 5–17; F. B. Schenk, "Das Paradigma des Raumes in der Osteuropäischen Geschichte", *zeitenblicke* 6 (2007) 2, [http://www.zeitenblicke.de/2007/2/schenk/index\\_html](http://www.zeitenblicke.de/2007/2/schenk/index_html) (accessed 3 December 2020).

43 P. Haslinger, "Der Spatial Turn und die Geschichtsschreibung zu Ostmitteleuropa in Deutschland", *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 63 (2014) 1, pp. 74–95.

44 Ibid., p. 83 (own translation).

of intercultural entanglements and overlap”.<sup>45</sup> Spatial perspectives have also been developed in the research on nationalism, one of the most well-established research fields within East-Central European history. Processes of nationalization are being contextualized instead of being considered isolated from the complex nature of historical events. This innovative potential for studying the region, in principle, also encompasses transregional entanglements even though they have so far rarely been investigated specifically.

It is interesting and thought-provoking to note that such a perspective has inspired a revision of the historiography of South-Eastern Europe to a larger extent than in the region we deal with.<sup>46</sup> Added to that, transregional entanglements of East-Central Europe have recently been addressed in the context of global history as part and parcel of efforts to integrate the eastern part of Europe into world-wide relations.<sup>47</sup> There is exciting new research on the connections between the so-called East and the Global South, and inner-regional entanglements are linked with the regions’ impact on processes of globalization. The focus is mostly on Russia and on the Soviet Union, but other countries of the former Soviet bloc have come into consideration as well.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 84 (own translation).

<sup>46</sup> U. Brunnbauer (ed.), *Transnational Societies, Transterritorial Politics. Migrations in the (Post-)Yugoslav Region 19th–21st Century*, München: Oldenbourg, 2009; U. Brunnbauer, *Globalizing Southeastern Europe. Emigrants, America, and the State since the Late Nineteenth Century*, London: Lexington, 2016; S. Rutar (eds.), *Beyond the Balkans. Towards an Inclusive History of Southeastern Europe*, Münster: Lit, 2013; R. Daskalov and D. Mishkova (eds.), *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, vol. II: *Transfers of Political Ideologies and Institutions*, Leiden: Brill, 2014; M.-J. Calic, *Südosteuropa. Weltgeschichte einer Region*, München: C. H. Beck, 2016.

<sup>47</sup> M. Aust and J. Obertreis (eds.), *Osteuropäische und Globalgeschichte*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2014; M. Aust (ed.), *Globalisierung imperial und sozialistisch. Russland und die Sowjetunion in der Globalgeschichte 1851–1991*, Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2013; B. Hock and A. Allas (eds.), *Globalizing East European Art Histories. Past and Present*, New York: Routledge, 2018.

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, the new globally oriented historiography on socialism that has been done by an international research network centred at the University of Exeter (<https://socialismgoesglobal.exeter.ac.uk>), and among its publications, J. Mark, A. M. Kalinovsky, and S. Marung (eds.), *Alternative Globalizations. Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020; furthermore, L. Dallywater, C. Saunders, and H. A. Fonseca (eds.), *Southern African Liberation Movements and the Global Cold War ‘East’*, *Transnational Activism 1960–1990*, Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019; Q. Slobodian, *Globalists. The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018; U. Müller and D. Jajeśniak-Quast (eds.), *Comecon Revisited. Integration in the Eastern Bloc and Entanglements with the Global Economy* (thematic issue of *Comparativ* 27 [2017] 5–6); A. Calori et al. (eds.), *Between East and South. Spaces of Interaction in the Globalizing Economy of the Cold War*, Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019; P. Židek and K. Sieber, *Československo a sub-saharská Afrika v letech 1948–1989* [Czechoslovakia and Sub-Saharan Africa in the Years 1948–1989], Prag: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů,

## From Transnational Histories towards Global Contexts

For about two decades now, it has been advocated that the history of East-Central Europe should be studied from transnational perspectives. Initially, in passing, Jürgen Kocka, reflecting on the region's role in comparative European history, recognized that “the research programme of someone genuinely studying ‘East-Central European history’ [. . .] is transnational per se”.<sup>49</sup> Shortly after, Eduard Mühle demanded that the programmatic needs to be put into practice as empirical investigations were few and far between at the beginning of the 2000s.<sup>50</sup> This inspired, on the one hand, a debate about what kind of understanding of this region we might gain if it were viewed in transnational terms.<sup>51</sup> On the other hand, various approaches – entangled history, the study of encounters, or cultural transfers, to name just a few – have been taken up by and inspired, in particular, young(er) researchers to review what archives hold in terms of previously unknown dimensions of East-Central European transnationality. The scope and variety of this research has grown over the years: the circulation of knowledge and cross-border exchanges of expert groups is one emphasis in the field,<sup>52</sup> while also a whole

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2007; P. Zidek and K. Sieber, *Československo a Blízký východ v letech 1948–1989* [Czechoslovakia and the Middle East in the Years 1948–1989], Prag: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, 2009; P. E. Muehlenbeck, *Warsaw Pact Intervention in the Third World. Aid and Influence in the Cold War*, London: Bloomsbury, 2018; P. E. Muehlenbeck, *Czechoslovakia in Africa, 1945–1968*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016; J. Labov, *Transatlantic Central Europe. Contesting Geography and Redefining Culture beyond the Nation*, Budapest: CEU Press, 2019.

<sup>49</sup> Kocka, “Das östliche Mitteleuropa”, p. 170 (own translation).

<sup>50</sup> E. Mühle, “Ostmitteleuropa”, *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 52 (2001) 4, p. 57.

<sup>51</sup> F. Hadler and M. Middell, “Die Erforschung transnationaler Verflechtungen Ostmitteleuropas zwischen historiographischer Spurensicherung und Einbindung in das Konzept der *global condition* des späten 19. Jahrhunderts”, in: Hackmann and Loew, *Verflechtungen*, pp. 21–45; F. Hadler and M. Middell, “Auf dem Weg zu einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas”, *Comparativ* 20 (2010) 1/2, pp. 8–29; P. Haslinger (ed.), *Ostmitteleuropa transnational* (thematic issue of *Comparativ* 18 [2008] 2).

<sup>52</sup> M. Kohlrausch, K. Steffen, and S. Wiederkehr (eds.), *Expert Cultures in Central Eastern Europe. The Internationalization of Knowledge and the Transformation of Nation States since World War I*, Osnabrück: fibre Verlag, 2010; J. A. Turkowska, P. Haslinger, and A. Schweiger (eds.), *Wissen transnational. Funktionen – Praktiken – Repräsentationen*, Marburg: Verlag Herder Institut, 2016; K. Kreuder-Sonnen, *Wie man Mikroben auf Reisen schickt. Zirkulierendes bakterielogisches Wissen und die polnische Medizin 1885–1939*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2018; A. Hincú and V. Karady (eds.), *Social Sciences in the Other Europe since 1945*, Budapest: CEU Press, 2018, I. Dadej, *Beruf und Berufung transnational. Deutsche und polnische Akademikerinnen in der Zwischenkriegszeit*, Osnabrück: fibre Verlag 2019.

range of other actors have received greater attention.<sup>53</sup> A topic that was studied early on from a transnational perspective is the history of women and East-Central European women's movements.<sup>54</sup> The history of ideas in the region has also been reconsidered in the light of entanglements.<sup>55</sup> Added to that, crossings between Eastern and Western Europe in the period of the Cold War have been studied thoroughly – the Iron Curtain, once perceived as unsurmountable, has become porous.<sup>56</sup>

In the course of this trend, the understanding of what a transnational perspective encompasses has widened, from the focus on interactions across political borders and entities, be they national or imperial ones, to include the wider spectrum of entanglements and their simultaneity, as well as from inner-regional dynamics of exchange to interactions with the world.

The contributions of this volume build on an approach that concerns the study of connections through a transregional lens, that is to say in terms of region-transcending entanglements and of global contexts viewed in relation to the spaces this connectivity created, including bounded and territorialized spaces. The project group “Ostmitteleuropa transnational” (2006–2016) at today's Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO) has become a nucleus for a region- and space-related study of connections. Some of the authors in this volume were core members of this project group and, with input by colleagues, we re-examine here arguments that guided the empirical studies of the project group and rethink them one step further.

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53 M. A. Orenstein, S. Bloom, and N. Lindstrom (eds.), *Transnational Actors in Central and East European Transitions*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008; J. Eichenberg, *Kämpfen für Frieden und Fürsorge. Polnische Veteranen des Ersten Weltkriegs und ihre internationalen Kontakte, 1918–1939*, München: Oldenbourg, 2011; F. Kind-Kovács and J. Labov (eds.), *Samizdat, Tamizdat, and Beyond. Transnational Media During and After Socialism*, New York: Berghahn, 2013; R. Brier, *Entangled Protest. Transnational Approaches to the History of Dissent in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, Osnabrück: fibre Verlag, 2013.

54 See the investigations being done in context of the project “Women's labour activism in Eastern Europe and transnationally, from the age of empire to the late 20th century” under the direction of Susan Zimmermann, <https://zarah-ceu.org>.

55 B. Trencsényi et al., *A History of Modern Political Thought in East Central Europe*, vol. 1: *Negotiating Modernity in the 'Long Nineteenth Century'*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, as well as the second volume.

56 T. Dragostinova and M. Fidelis (eds.), *Beyond the Iron Curtain. Eastern Europe and the Global Cold War* (thematic section, *Slavic Review* 77 [2013] 3, pp. 577–684); M. Christian, S. Kott, and O. Matejka (eds.), *Planning in Cold War Europe. Competition, Cooperation, Circulations (1950s–1970s)*, Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2018; S. Mikkonen and P. Koivunen (eds.), *Beyond the Divide. Entangled Histories of Cold War Europe*, Oxford: Berghahn, 2015.

One argument relates to the observation that encounters and interactions across borders have not been a detached occurrence that shaped only individual parts of societies. Instead, entanglements were and continue to be very closely linked to territorialization processes and have thus profoundly shaped both societies and political orders in East-Central Europe. Even more than that, the creation of clearly defined spaces of political control is to a large extent a result of connectivity. Nationalization and transnationalization are parts of a dialectic dynamic: it is impossible to understand one without the other. Transnational entanglements therefore represent a fundamental characteristic of the region. Awareness of this allows us to not only examine specific transnational phenomena and transnational actors or the interplay of nationalization and transnationalization in individual states, but also explore a constellation that shaped the development of East-Central Europe, namely a complex relationship between national movements, empires, and nation-state-building in the context of a changing region-transcending connectivity.

Linked to this is the argument that the history of East-Central Europe is essentially a global story. Cross-border phenomena that can be observed both within the region and at its borders are part of a larger process, the globalization of Europe and the world, that has been ongoing since the eighteenth century in the form of two interlocking dynamics: territorialization and mobility across increasingly entrenched borders. A growing number of actors used these dynamics actively and to their advantage, in part so that they can play a role in shaping them. Numerous entanglements with different scopes, including transregional entanglements, have been created as a result. If we take this connectivity, including its global reach and global contexts, there is a lower risk of perceiving East-Central Europe as an entrenched, largely isolated, and peripheral region.

Finally, transnationality is multifaceted not just in terms of the scope and spatiality of connections but also regarding the actors that created, fostered, and sometimes severed entanglements. Transnationality should not be understood as a blanket response to territorialization and nationalization processes but rather as the result of reactions to specific challenges and interests. Merchants, experts, culture professionals, development workers, rural residents – essentially everyone – reacted differently to the territorialization dynamic and the possibilities opened up by mobility, which is why the question about differences in the quality of transnationality arises. One frequently used approach, which we also use, is to study individuals and groups that have created connections for specific fields, be they economy, culture, or international politics. Based



on three heuristic principles, the project group “Ostmitteleuropa transnational” has, as a first step, presented conclusions for the period between the middle of the nineteenth century and the First World War, and has outlined what a transnational history of East-Central Europe in its global dimensions might look like.<sup>57</sup>

In parallel, we draw on the research that is being done at the Leibniz Science-Campus “Eastern Europe – Global Area” (EEGA) and in the Research Centre Global Dynamics (ReCentGlobe) at Leipzig University. The research programme of EEGA, a research network comprising eight universities and non-university research institutes, analyses Eastern Europe’s shifting role in globalization processes by asking how Eastern European societies are positioning themselves in and towards global processes and conflicts.<sup>58</sup> ReCentGlobe is devoted to the interdisciplinary and historically informed study of globalization processes and globalization projects, with a particular interest in forms of regionalization and transregional entanglements.<sup>59</sup>

Moving from transnational to transregional histories is promising but not without prerequisites. Language skills are necessary, allowing various archives found inside and outside the region to be interlinked; wherever contacts and exchanges reached, there might be documents. Yet, international archival studies are time-consuming and costly. Additionally, there is a growing literature in the field of global history as well as in research on other world regions that is relevant for comprehending the wider contexts of East-Central European connectedness. Making use of this literature requires similar efforts as consulting relevant works in economics, sociology, cultural, and literary studies, which historians use to analyse economic, social, and cultural processes. It is, however, equally rewarding to cross the boundaries to global history and the different area studies when they study African, Latin American, Asian, and Near Eastern connections in a transregional

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57 See in particular the first of the three-volume “Handbuch einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas”, edited by F. Hadler and M. Middell, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017, but also the following works: S. Marung, and K. [Castricky-]Naumann (eds.), *Vergessene Vielfalt. Territorialität und Internationalisierung in Ostmitteleuropa seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014; M. Hidvégi, *Anschluss an den Weltmarkt. Ungarns elektrotechnische Leitunternehmen 1867–1949*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016; S. Lemmen, *Tschechen auf Reisen. Repräsentationen der außereuropäischen Welt und nationale Identität in Ostmitteleuropa 1890–1938*, Köln: Böhlau, 2018; F. Hadler and M. Middell (eds.), *Verflochtene Geschichten: Ostmitteleuropa* (thematic issue of *Comparativ* 20 [2010] 1–2); B. Hock, “Wozu ein transnationaler Denkansatz in der Kunstgeschichte Ostmitteleuropas”, in: Hackmann and Loew, *Verflechtungen*, pp. 131–150.

58 See the website <https://www.leibniz-eeega.de>. This research programme was addressed during the joint annual meeting of the ScienceCampus EEGA and GWZO (2018), which is also when the idea for this volume was conceived.

59 See the website [www.recentglobe.uni-leipzig.de](http://www.recentglobe.uni-leipzig.de) and the publications listed there.

perspective. Taking these works into account, we can compile fuller histories of the entanglements, disconnections, demarcations, and spatial constellations that emerged in Eastern Europe.

## 4 East-Central Europe Transregional: The Contributions of the Volume

In this volume, we take up this orientation and the transregional perspective as outlined at the beginning; we substantiate it empirically and highlight the potential for an unequivocally spatial understanding of entanglements. We start off from the vantage point of different spaces of action and different sectors, focusing on specific fields of action in which territorialization has quickly become a challenge because they are, at their core, based on exchange and interaction across borders. These fields include the world economy, cultures and their global relations, international law, expert knowledge of all types, cross-border cooperation, and migration. Individuals' everyday activities are covered as much as political practices are. In analysing these fields, we pose the question of how actors, in their specific circumstances and with their particular difficulties and concerns, created and influenced cross-border connections; how they established interregional connections; how far these connections reached; how long they lasted, and how they shaped the corresponding spaces of action and the form that East-Central Europe itself took. We show the existence of dialectic processes of trans-regionalization and regionalization as well as we underscore that the region is globally integrated and made by globality.

The contributions to this volume form a sequence that highlights three features of East-Central European and Eastern European transregional connections. Part I highlights the proactive participation and positioning of actors in global processes, such as in intensifying trade relations, migration dynamics, and cultural exchanges, as well as their changing patterns. Part II deals with participation in and impacts on international negotiations and global governance via the role of international narcotic regulations, the interventions of lawyers from the region in the orbit of the League of Nation, and Eastern Europe's profound impact on the making of modern international law. Part III zooms in on interregional constellations – on trade connections between Eastern European regions and the Spanish Atlantic, migration from East-Central Europe to South America, and development projects between the so-called East and Global South. Timewise, the chapters stretch from the eighteenth century to the Cold War period, with a focus on the period from the end of the nineteenth century to the 1980s. In terms of space, not only East-Central Europe – in its common understanding as covering

present-day Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, and Hungary – is dealt with but also other parts of Eastern and Central Europe. This approach reflects one of our central arguments, namely that we should not start with pre-given spatial entities but follow the historical actors and the connections they build. In this way we can better see the character of East-Central Europe as a multifaceted entangled region.

The first three contributions introduce us to changing patterns of positioning in global constellations. In his study of how producers, traders, and economic politicians dealt with the global wheat crisis between 1870 and 1939, Uwe Müller revises two prevailing views in global economic history. The first sees the history of economic globalization as a process in which a period of increasing global economic integration gave way to a deglobalization beginning with the First World War. The second holds that the emerging world market for agricultural goods at the end of the nineteenth century was a major setback for the development of economies in Central, Eastern, and South-Eastern Europe. Müller, by examining the role that Eastern European actors played within global wheat production and trade, paints a different picture. For a long time, these actors developed effective counterstrategies to the challenges that the globalization of the wheat trade presented them with and found ways to position themselves beneficially in the face of escalating global competition and a new global condition. It was only during and after the First World War that the Eastern European grain sector was hit by a crisis that left very little room for proactive responses. Nevertheless, this later period was more complex than general narratives indicate. For one thing, older concepts, developed in the context of empires, were replaced by new ones that rested on national regulation, and these concepts largely failed. For another thing, the actors started to fight for their interests in international contexts, especially in the International Commission of Agriculture and at international conferences around the League of Nations in the 1930s, where delegates from East-Central Europe called for regulation of the global wheat market, doing so *en bloc* and speaking with one voice. Overall, Müller points out that the grain economies of Eastern Europe were closely linked to the world economy between 1870 and 1939, when entanglement and global integration were taking new shapes.

Andrzej Michalczyk's contribution traces migration activity in two villages (Poppelau and Schalkowitz) in Opole County in western Upper Silesia over a period of one hundred years. A surprisingly large number of individuals and entire families emigrated from there not only to Russian Poland and the German Reich, but also across the Atlantic to Wisconsin and Minnesota and to the province of Paraná in southern Brazil. Michalczyk specifically highlights two aspects of this mobility. First, informal networks played a more important role among villagers than professional agents and interlocutors did, thus migration routes

and the resulting connections were typically of a bilocal nature. Second, increasingly a culture of migration emerged. Being mobile was soon considered part of the sociocultural repertoire, and this translated into economic, social, and cultural capital that had far-reaching repercussions in the places of origin. In the nineteenth century, Poppelau and Schalkowitz were still considered backward areas. This perception progressively changed after 1890. Crossing the border to work as a seasonal worker in agriculture in the German Reich was a recognized practice, but people also began to find work in cities. As a result, greater sums of money flowed back into the villages, and new, urban ways of life accompanied them. Returning migrants were increasingly regarded as cultural trendsetters as they implemented at home what they had observed abroad. Overall, Michalczyk shows how migratory patterns gradually became an indispensable aspect of local culture in these Silesian villages, and how rural areas in East-Central Europe evolved into spaces characterized by translocal and transregional entanglements.

Beáta Hock introduces another field of proactive transregional participation. She presents artistic networks and cultural exchange relationships between the 1950s and the early 1990s by using counter-cultural artists and official cultural diplomacy in socialist Hungary as examples. Looking at them through the lens of the New Cold War History allows her to challenge prevailing narratives and perspectives on the historicization of state socialism and communist art in Eastern Europe. In most cases, the focus is on dissident artists; official art, as a separate sphere, is seen as politically dominated. Also, socialist cultural production is typically framed in national contexts, even when the discussion is ostensibly about the “Eastern bloc”. This means that socialist Eastern Europe appears to be a special case – isolated from developments elsewhere and not comparable to other regions. Hock uses dynamics and geographies of international exchange to show how untrue that is, how artificial the idea of a strict separation between “official” and “unofficial” cultural worlds is and how even official and state-sponsored art and culture is intricately entangled with other parts of the world. She focuses, on the one hand, on the exhibitions that were organized by the Múcsarnok Budapest state art museum and sent abroad as part of Hungary’s programme of cultural diplomacy and, on the other, on international connections that individual artists formed through mail art. Diplomatic art exchange integrated Eastern Europe into asymmetric global cultural relationships, and through mail art, bottom-up networking took place around the world. Numerous Hungarian artists participated in and were integrated into transcontinental networks in which also alternative political ideas were exchanged and new solidarities developed, for example with anti-colonial freedom movements or civil rights movements. This made the Iron Curtain

permeable. Hock concludes that government-supported art and individual “unofficial art” in socialist Europe played an important part in cultural globalization.

The next three contributions in this volume present East-Central Europe’s transregional entanglements by examining international regulation and the juridification of international relations. In doing so, they show what we can gain from this perspective in our understanding of internationalism.

Ned Richardson-Little’s contribution explains how Germany’s attitudes towards the international control of narcotics production and trade changed between the end of the nineteenth century and the 1930s. In the German Empire, evolving worldwide narcotics regulation was rejected on the grounds that it was an encroachment upon national sovereignty and worked against economic interests. After the First World War, however, Germany’s attitude changed drastically. The country had lost the war and was politically weak and unstable at home and abroad due to demilitarization and its exclusion from the international community. Against the background of marginalization and reduced sovereignty, the German government joined the international narcotics control system. Its regulations as well as the liberal internationalism that it represented gave Germany the opportunity to play a role from the periphery, to re-establish itself on the international stage, and to fight for its own political and commercial goals. Activists and experts, just as much as diplomats, used the international narcotics control system as a backdoor to regain influence in international affairs. Remarkably, the strategy was maintained even when Hitler took power. Although the Nazi regime tried everything it could to undo the Treaty of Versailles, it did not withdraw from the international narcotics control system. Rather, it was further used to position the country in the international field, although from then onwards their position fell in line with the racist Nazi ideology and with the goal of persecuting all enemies. The continuity suggests that international narcotics control was so ideologically malleable that it could even be instrumentalized by the Nazis. Richardson-Little therefore demonstrates that we have to assume a fundamental tension within international narcotics prohibition between moral considerations, health concerns, the profits of pharmaceutical companies, instrumentalization in the name of national sovereignty, and the legitimization of repressive state power. By recognizing this tension, we can gain a more complex understanding of internationalism: liberal and illiberal elements are often blended, making it a multifaceted process and practice.

The contributions by Dietmar Müller and Gilad Ben-Nun examine the leading role played by lawyers from Eastern Europe in the development of international law in the twentieth century and explain it in terms of specific regional constellations, individual imprints, resources, and competences. Dietmar Müller traces the legal activism that originated in Eastern Europe after the First World War, diving

deep into transnational networks and into the various international institutions that discussed and negotiated conventions in the field. He focuses on three legal activists – Vespasian Pella, Raphael Lemkin, and André Mandelstam – and explores their resources, sociopolitical contexts, agendas, and modes of action in terms of the outcomes of their respective activities. Pella had a leading role in drafting a codification of international criminal law as well as in drafting the Convention for the Prevention of Terrorism and the Convention for the Creation of an International Criminal Court, which were adopted by the League of Nations. Lemkin and Mandelstam worked in the same field as Pella – Lemkin also advocated the establishment of an international criminal court and Mandelstam argued that government action can be bound to and sanctioned by international law, even demanding the codification of international human rights. Yet, their circumstances were entirely different. While Pella was able to present his concerns with the support of the Romanian government, Lemkin and Mandelstam were freelance legal practitioners and could not rely on diplomatic status or an official mandate. Müller demonstrates that intellectuals who pursued state-led agendas and whose agency was state-backed had much greater space for manoeuvre and could achieve more at that time than freelance legal practitioners – especially when those freelancers operated from exile and advocated for minority rights. This reminds us that, when trying to explain individual actions in international politics, we need to consider both the national contexts of the actors as well as their personal circumstances and trajectories, especially in terms of the differences in the resources they could rely on and the hindrances they met.

Gilad Ben-Nun starts by explaining the over-representation of Eastern European Jews among international lawyers. Jewish participation in the drafting of the world's most important international multilateral legal treaties was so substantial that it begs explanation. While other scholars stress the role of Jewish emancipation in the nineteenth century and postulate that their experience of discrimination and persecution as a minority has provided an impetus for them towards seeking to defend ethno-national minorities in general, Ben-Nun highlights the importance of these lawyers' polyglot linguistic competence. These skills were instrumental in drafting international legal treaties, which explains why their respective governments assigned them to the commissions concerned with drafting conventions. By using two examples – Jacob Robinson, who drafted the United Nations Convention on the Declaration of Death of Missing Persons, and Rabbi Isaac Lewin, who was key in drafting the non-refoulement principle in the Refugee Convention – Ben-Nun shows that the development of language skills was deeply related to the lawyers' education, which combined Talmudic law and modern international law, requiring a mastery of multiple languages. Due to their Eastern European background, they spoke Slavic and Germanic languages, while

studying modern international law required a good command of French, English, and Italian, and their Jewish upbringing, which included lessons on Talmudic law, required fluency in Hebrew and Arabic. This meant that they could draw on a range of languages in their careers, which not only enabled them to work in multilingual environments but also in fact rendered them indispensable when it came to drafting international treaties, where a change of language always represents a new departure with far-reaching political and legal implications.

Part III presents three examples of interregional constellations from the viewpoint of East-Central Europe.

Klemens Kaps investigates the trade with the Spanish Empire and its overseas colonies during the eighteenth century and shows that parts of the region were deeply embedded in the multi-layered web of connections that characterized the global economy of the time. Commodity chains, shipping traffic, and merchant networks are present not only at seaports linked to ports around the North Sea, the Mediterranean, and the Atlantic but are also marked by transregional ties on a much larger scale. On the one hand, maritime trade extended into the interior of Central and Eastern Europe as the main ports in the region involved in transatlantic trade were connected to places far beyond their immediate hinterlands, for example to key trading centres inland such as Cracow, Vienna, or Belgrade. These, in turn, were connected with smaller trading towns, which were centres of local and regional production and marketing. On the other hand, flows of commodities such as linen and glass bring to light a much more complex constellation than the common narrative holds, according to which the development of colonial markets overseas led to an intra-European division of labour that saw Eastern Europe become a provider of raw materials and food for the Western European empires. In fact, semi-finished and finished products made their way westwards, as far as to overseas colonial markets. These products were manufactured along chains linking Saxony, Silesia, Bohemia, and the outermost parts of south-western Poland, which brought Eastern European peasant households into global production and trade, spurring even a protoindustrial boom in some places. Kaps' in-depth look at these dynamics shows that parts of East-Central Europe had their share in the transatlantic trade and in turn were of vital importance to it. We can follow the emergence of a transregional space spanning and connecting regions in Eastern Europe and in the Spanish America.

Esch describes migration relations between East-Central Europe and South America from the end of the nineteenth century into the 1930s. Viewed in terms of raw numbers and compared with the mass migration into the USA, the movements seem irrelevant. However, Esch shows that the "southern" dimension of the North Atlantic migration system is very helpful for understanding global interdependencies and the processes of nation-state-building in both regions. While

migrant and non-migrant actors from East-Central Europe were, for the most part, not welcomed in other parts of the world, they were received in South America with open arms. By settling in rural and mostly undeveloped areas, they could contribute to the governments' internal colonization programmes and to their goal of "whitening" the national population, as they helped to displace and marginalize indigenous populations. On the other hand, many actors in post-imperial East-Central Europe, especially after 1918, also promoted and steered emigration, notably to Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, and used it to advance their own growth. It was hoped that transatlantic migration could provide a sort of external co-financing for the economic development of rural areas by granting the own population access to raw materials and securing new markets for domestic products. Social conflicts, linked to fears of overpopulation as well as the tension arising from ethnic homogenization, could be relocated to rural areas on the other side of the world. And if efforts to strengthen the connections between people living in new settlements abroad and their homelands were successful, then they would become something like colonial outposts of the new nation-state. This colonial dimension in the emergence of nation-states in Eastern Europe after 1918 demonstrates East-Central Europe's embeddedness in global labour relationships and reveals how closely intertwined economy, migration, colonialism, and nationalism became under the global condition.

Turning to the transregional economic entanglements in the second half of the twentieth century, Immanuel Harisch questions the powerful narrative that state-socialist economies and societies were (last for long) not participating in economic globalization or were not compatible, especially since the 1970s. This view refers to the fact, that due to an increase in world market prices for goods such as oil, coffee, and cocoa in the middle of the 1970s, combined with rising interest rates in the global financial markets, economies that imported these goods but did not have enough convertible currency found it difficult or impossible to retain access to them. Harisch shows, that at the end of the 1970s, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) developed a distinctive model: the strategy was to enter specific barter trade agreements with African countries with a "socialist orientation" in order to be able to source raw materials without needing convertible foreign currencies. One such agreement was the "coffee agreement" between the GDR and Angola, which provided the exchange of Angolan coffee in return for goods produced in the GDR. The example makes clear that at least in some cases barter trade agreements offered an alternative way of participating in global trade relations, which was of advantage for both sides. Yet, Harisch limits his study not to an analysis of trade structures, he also considers the actors, such as technical experts and the Friendship Brigades which were crucial for



maintaining trade infrastructures. Thus, we can see more than a simple exchange of goods – there was also a variety of encounters and interactions. Harisch traces the close relations that subsequently developed between the two countries, including their political and economic consequences, and he discusses the experiences both sides gained while working together. Overall, he interprets the efforts of the Friendship Brigades and experts as a project towards and within socialist globalization that combined socialist solidarity movements, development aid, and foreign politics in response to a highly unstable and politicized world. These developments once again show how actors entered transregional connections and asserted themselves in their own way within the dynamics of global processes.

## 5 Conclusion

Viewed empirically, as the contributions to this volume show, East-Central Europe is a space characterized by transregional entanglements. Various networking initiatives, transfers, and interactions with other parts of the world have their origins here. These connections vary in terms of the range of their influence, each has its own temporality, and each produces effects at differing depths – but taken together, they have shaped developments both inside and outside the region. This transregional connectivity allows us to see East-Central Europe as a globally integrated region and not as a peripheral space that was predominantly subject to external influences, forced to accept a subordinated position within the world, and thus limited in the possibility to connect and integrate globally, as widespread thinking would have us believe. In fact, East-Central European actors have been very able to define and position themselves on the world stage, and the central finding of this book is that these transregional entanglements are fundamental to our understanding of East-Central Europe.

This is consequential also in a wider sense – it allows us to situate East-Central Europe in established global historical narratives, which reveal very little about this area so far. In turn, the so perceived sub-region enables a critical intervention into global history. It broadens the predominant understanding of regions, which generally takes world regions as its basis, being that they are constituted by continents or hegemonic formations, such as the major empires. With a differentiated understanding of the plurality of historical regions, and the recognition, that regions are made by all sorts of actors, not only by the political elites in some parts of the world, in response to the concrete challenges they faced being confronted with processes of territorialization and dynamics of their

transgression, narratives of global history can become less centric in their social orientation as well as in their geographical outlook. Added to that, moving global history towards historical spaces of action that have so far been largely ignored despite being crucial for global dynamics is a strong reminder of the fact that connections differ – when looking at specific localities we see very different transregional connections taking part in global processes. It also becomes evident which places did not connect at certain times or retreated from connections built earlier, due to the lack of resources or because entanglement with the wider world seemed more of a threat than an opportunity. Since this is also a way of positioning towards other regions, it is hence not completely devoid of transregional dynamics.

If we take such an actor-related approach and study all sorts of regional formations, we can get beyond viewing certain regions as being consigned to marginality in global processes. Marginality is as much a fact, true for certain periods in history, as it is a construction by scholars and contemporaries, both using it to advance their own positions.

It is worth studying trans-regionality not just as a general tendency but to investigate specific questions about where transregional entanglements have developed and what consequences they had in terms of the three dimensions of trans-regionality – transfers, (trans)formation of spaces and region-transcending dynamics – because entanglements are still frequently considered to be a counter-reaction to being controlled and limited by nation-states. Even approaches which assume a dialectical relationship typically start by examining territorialization processes and adopt a nation-state-centred perspective. There is something to be said for this perspective: the importance of state control and (state) intervention is also reflected in the contributions in this volume. At the same time, however, it makes sense to start by openly considering which spaces of action are substantially shaped by transregional entanglements, what the dynamics were in which these entanglements played out, and what contours East-Central Europe revealed in the process. Viewing the contributions as a whole has added to our impression that networking happens both accidentally and strategically, and that many people who entered into cross-border and transregional connections wanted to change their environment, country or region, and to move into a more favourable position within global contexts.

Uwe Müller

## 2 Eastern Europe in the Wheat Crises of Globalization and Deglobalization (1870–1939)

### 1 Introduction

#### From Shortage to Overproduction: Changing Agricultural Crises

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, agricultural crises were understood to be phases of low-level food production that led to inadequate nutrition and famine. These crises were caused by crop failures due to natural factors, such as changes in climate and weather as well as plant diseases or livestock epidemics. The last major famine crisis of this kind occurred in Western and Central Europe in 1846/47, when potato blight and exceptionally cold weather caused an almost complete failure of the potato harvest in the summer and winter as well as below-average grain harvests.<sup>1</sup> In parts of Eastern Europe in the 1890s, supply crises still occurred mainly due to crop failures.<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding, these “old-style crises” were generally prevented in Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century. Expanded areas under cultivation increased agricultural productivity, and the so-called “transport revolution”, especially the expansion of the railway, made it possible to compensate for regional undersupply.<sup>3</sup>

The hunger crises of the twentieth century, on the other hand, were no longer caused by natural factors or the lack of agricultural productivity but were the consequences of wars and sometimes radical political interventions in agricultural structures. The defining features of agricultural crises have also changed since the late 1870s in large parts of continental Europe. Crises did not arise from a lack of food but, on the contrary, from the consequences of an increased supply of agricultural products on rapidly integrating world markets. It was no

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1 C. O'Grada, R. Paping, and E. Vanhaute (eds.), *When the Potato Failed: Causes and Effects of the 'Last' European Subsistence Crisis, 1845–1850*, Turnhout: Brepols Publisher, 2007.

2 T. Altpeter et al., “Hungersnöte in Russland und in der Sowjetunion 1891–1947”, in: A. Eisfeld, G. Hausmann, and D. Neutatz (eds.), *Hungersnöte in Russland und in der Sowjetunion 1891–1947: Regionale, ethnische und konfessionelle Aspekte*, Essen: Klartext, 2017, pp. 9–24, at 13–15.

3 This process is one of the most important economic contributions to the development of the global condition.

longer the consumers who felt a crisis but the producers – Europe's farmers – who were faced with growing competition from overseas as well as from Russia. The main symptom of the crisis was the fall in agricultural prices, especially grain prices. Consequently, this crisis has often been referred to as a grain crisis.<sup>4</sup>

The actual and supposed consequences of the grain crisis remained a determining element of political disputes from the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, influencing both the agricultural and foreign trade policies of the countries while affecting sociopolitical debates in general. The focus of these policies (as well as debates) was on the effects of globalization on rural society and ways of avoiding or, at least, minimizing those outcomes perceived as negative.<sup>5</sup> Following the turn of the century, grain prices stabilized somewhat, and food once again became a scarce commodity and, as a result, more expensive during the First World War and during the immediate post-war period. Such a change benefitted some farmers. However, the long-term trend from 1870 to 1939 of falling prices was only interrupted by exceptional events, such as war and crop failures.

From the mid-1920s onwards, farmers in all European countries, especially wheat producers, were again confronted with competition from overseas and with falling prices.<sup>6</sup> The fall in agricultural prices accelerated during the Great Depression, beginning in 1929. Many farmers faced ruin as the difference grew ever larger between their expenses for paying back loans and buying industrial goods, such as equipment, artificial fertilizers, and textiles, and the income from the sale of their products.<sup>7</sup> The agricultural crisis of the early 1930s was particularly dramatic from the perspective of economic history because various

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4 K. H. O'Rourke, "The European Grain Invasion, 1870–1913", *Journal of Economic History* 57 (1997), pp. 775–801; P. Gunst, "Agrarian Developments in East Central Europe at the Turn of the Century", in: P. Gunst (ed.), *Hungarian Agrarian Society from the Emancipation of Serfs (1848) to the Re-privatization of Land*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1998, pp. 23–49, at 43 f.

5 G. Mai, "Die Agrarische Transition. Agrarische Gesellschaften in Europa und die Herausforderungen der industriellen Moderne im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert", *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 33 (2007), pp. 471–514; U. Müller, E. Kubů, T. Lorenz, and J. Šouša, "Agrarismus und Agrariliten im östlichen Mitteleuropa. Forschungsstand, Kontextualisierung, Thesen", in: E. Kubů, T. Lorenz, U. Müller, and J. Šouša (eds.), *Agrarismus und Agrariliten in Ostmitteleuropa*, Berlin and Prague: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag – Dokořán, 2013, pp. 15–116, at 41–49; K. D. Barkin, *The Controversy over German Industrialization 1890–1902*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

6 W. Malenbaum, *The World Wheat Economy 1885–1939*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953, pp. 176–180.

7 R. Bideleux and I. Jeffries, *A History of Eastern Europe. Crisis and Change*, London: Routledge, 1998, pp. 437–440.

structural problems and cyclical developments overlapped, mutually reinforcing each other. Consequently, however, rural societies in Europe also fell into a severe social crisis, which became one of the most important causes of the strengthening of authoritarian and, in part, fascist forces.<sup>8</sup>

All this was particularly true in Eastern Europe because, firstly, the agricultural sector was much more important there than in other parts of the continent.<sup>9</sup> Secondly, many Eastern European countries produced food surpluses both before the First World War and since the mid-1920s so that not only the incomes of many farmers but also the foreign trade balances of the countries depended on the possibility of selling these products abroad as well as on the prices that could be achieved. It is, therefore, no surprise that it was precisely the Eastern European rural population, with its market-oriented economy, that perceived interdependencies with the global economy critically and considered them primarily as triggers for crises. In most (economic) historical accounts made by both historians as well as contemporaries regarding East-Central and South-eastern Europe or individual countries in the region, such as Poland, Hungary, or Romania, the globally caused agricultural crisis has been a core element of master narratives, which all assume an unfavourable external environment for the development of one's own national economy/economies.<sup>10</sup>

## Question

This interpretation is critically questioned in the following analysis in several respects. First of all, the crisis narrative is examined for the case of the Eastern European wheat economy. It is noticeable that agricultural production in Eastern Europe grew between 1870 and 1913 at an above-average rate by international comparison (see Table 1). At the same time, wheat was the most important agricultural export commodity in Eastern Europe and thus an important basis for the

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**8** M. Mann, *Fascists*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 48–64; A. C. Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World. The Politics of the Borderlands from Pre- to Postcommunism*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000, pp. 166–201.

**9** W. Fischer, “Wirtschaft, Staat und Gesellschaft in Europa 1914–1980”, in: W. Fischer (ed.), *Europäische Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte vom Ersten Weltkrieg bis zur Gegenwart*, Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, 1987, p. 93.

**10** Bideleux and Jeffries, *A History of Eastern Europe*, p. 436; C. H. Feinstein, P. Temin, and G. Toniolo, *The European Economy between the Wars*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 76–83; I. T. Berend and G. Ránki, *The Hungarian Economy in the Twentieth Century*, London: Croom Helm, 1985, pp. 101–103.

**Table 1:** Average Annual Growth Rate of Agricultural Production, 1870–1938 (percentage).  
 Source: G. Federico, *Feeding the World, An Economic History of Agriculture, 1800–2000*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005, p. 18.

Continent	Region	1870–1913	1913–1938
Europe		1.3	0.8
	North-western Europe	1	1.5
	Southern Europe	0.8	1.2
	Eastern Europe	2.1	0.4
Asia		1.1	0.6
South America		4.4	3
	“Western Settlements”	2.2	0.7
World		1.6	0.7

development of the individual economies.<sup>11</sup> Before the First World War, both Russia and the Danube countries – comprising the Habsburg Monarchy, and Rumania – were consistently among the three largest wheat exporters in the world (see Table 2). From the perspective of an analysis of macro-economic data, there is much to suggest that it was only the world war and its consequences that plunged the Eastern European grain economy into crisis. It is obvious to connect this finding with a narrative that is widely used in global economic history: this narrative assumes that a “first globalization” beginning with the First World War and marked by increasing interdependence and integration ended and that a phase of “deglobalization” marked by disentanglement and disintegration began. The latter became fully manifest with the Great Depression.<sup>12</sup> However, considering the development of commodity chains has placed this finding into perspective.<sup>13</sup> Here too, not only is the extent of trade reconstructed in the following analysis but also the degree of interdependence. The latter can be determined by examining the perceptions and actions of the actors involved in the

<sup>11</sup> I. T. Berend and G. Ránki, *Economic Development in East-Central Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1974, p. 150.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, R. Findlay and K. H. O'Rourke, “Commodity Market Integration, 1500–2000”, in: M. D. Bordo, A. M. Taylor, and J. G. Williamson (eds.), *Globalization in Historical Perspective*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003, pp. 13–64, at 37–49.

<sup>13</sup> S. C. Topik and A. Wells, “Warenketten in einer globalen Wirtschaft”, in: E. S. Rosenberg (ed.), *1870–1945. Weltmärkte und Weltkriege*, Munich: C. H. Beck, 2012, pp. 589–814, at 809.

wheat trade. This also raises the question for Eastern European historians of why agriculture developed better in the pre-war empires than in the post-war nation-states.

The contradiction between measurable positive developments of production and trade flows and the simultaneous crisis frame of mind in contemporary discourses proves once again the fundamental fact that actors and their activities can never be explained solely by “real” developments but are based on individual perceptions that are shaped by discourses in “society” or in certain social groups, parties, associations, and so forth. The concern about an agricultural crisis dominated public debates, especially in the eastern provinces of Prussia and in large parts of the Habsburg Empire. The “agrarians” took advantage of this to call strongly for state aid. Historical research has long followed their rhetoric. Less present, however, has been the effect of the crisis as a “creative destroyer”, that is to say as an occasion for various initiatives to modernize agriculture.<sup>14</sup>

**Table 2:** Distribution of Average Annual World Wheat Exports, 1854–1913 (percentage).

Source: R. M. Stern, “A Century of Food Exports”, *Kyklos* 13 (1960), pp. 44–64, at 58.

Country/Region	1854–1858	1884–1888	1909–1913
USA	25	36	14
Russia	12	25	22
Danube countries	10	19	16
Canada	6	1	13
India	3	10	7
Argentina	0	1	13
Australia	0	2	7
Others	44	6	8

Therefore, the focus of the chapter is – entirely in the sense of a culturally informed study of economic crisis processes – the question of what effects the

<sup>14</sup> J. A. Schumpeter, *Kapitalismus, Sozialismus und Demokratie*, Stuttgart: UTB, 2005; regarding the Prussian Eastern Provinces: O. Grant, “‘Few Better Farmers in Europe’? Productivity, Change, and Modernization in East-Elbian Agriculture 1870–1913”, in: G. Eley and J. Retallack (eds.), *Wilhelminism and Its Legacies. German Modernities and the Meaning of Reform, 1890–1930*, New York: Berghahn Books, 2003, pp. 51–59.

confrontation of a certain group of Eastern European actors with the world market had on their thinking and, above all, their actions. In our case, the actors are primarily wheat producers and traders, economic politicians, and representatives of interest groups. Thus, as in many other chapters in this volume, we start from the assumption that *globalization* is not a predetermined natural process of a constant increase in interdependencies but instead arises more from the interplay of a multitude of *globalization projects* of different actors or groups of actors.<sup>15</sup>

This is particularly true of economic globalization. Although the Eastern European protagonists of the grain trade were often able to draw on historical experience in exporting their products to Western Europe, they had to react to the new challenges of an escalating global competition by developing new strategies to position themselves. These strategies (described in more detail below) varied widely, ranging from defending Western European markets against new competitors to creating protected regional markets to switching to the production and the export of other agricultural goods that had better sales potential on world markets.

The analysis of this chapter is not primarily aimed at reconstructing the concepts that individual actors or interest groups developed in this situation. Such a procedure exceeds the scope of this text and is nearly impossible due to gaps in research. The aim is rather to identify the most important goals and measures for implementing these concepts and to assess the results of these actions. This structural historical approach allows statements to be made about the development from 1870 to 1939 in all parts of Eastern Europe. It will be shown that, as well as how, the political and economic elites in the period up to the First World War, within the framework of empires (the Habsburg Empire, the Russian Empire, and the German Empire) and of young nation-states (in particular, Romania), developed relatively successful strategies to adapt their wheat exports to new conditions. During and after the war, the internal conditions and external framework changed, which is why the old recipes for success proved unsuitable. New strategies based on the nation-state also failed for the most part.

In this situation, Eastern European actors, in particular, developed internationalist strategies to regulate the global wheat markets and minimize the negative consequences of the agricultural crisis for their domestic economies. These efforts to introduce global trade quotas and a system of European preferential tariffs were put on the agenda of the League of Nations and international conferences in the early 1930s. Initially, these efforts were only moderately successful, but

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<sup>15</sup> See the introduction to this volume.



they were taken up again at a global level after the Second World War and within the structure of the European Economic Community – an area to which Eastern European countries now had no access – and largely implemented.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the multiplication of activities at the international level proves that the thesis of a trend reversal from globalization to deglobalization (quoted at the beginning of this chapter) reflects the quantitative development of the flow of goods; however, a general “disentanglement” of national economies in the 1920s and 1930s cannot be supposed. On the contrary, in the case of the wheat trade, the interactions between national economic policies intensified, together with numerous efforts to regulate global markets and growing influence of international organizations on shaping economic policy.

## The Object of Study: The Global Wheat Market

In the following section, the positioning of Eastern Europe in the globalization process in the field of wheat trade is examined. The selection of this case study is due to not only the great importance the discourses place on the wheat crisis as the core of the grain crisis, but also the relevance of wheat according to the conviction of economic historians that globally integrated commodity and factor markets are the very essence of globalization:<sup>17</sup> “the commodity trade in wheat provides a particularly spectacular study of globalization”.<sup>18</sup> This is partly due to the fact that the consumption of wheat increased significantly in various regions of the world during the period under review.<sup>19</sup> The trade of grain made up more than 20 per cent of world trade in the time before the First World War, with more than 50 per cent of the grain being wheat. It had also become globalized since the 1870s much more

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**16** G. Thiemeyer, *Vom “Pool Vert” zur Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft: Europäische Integration, Kalter Krieg und die Anfänge der Gemeinsamen Europäischen Agrarpolitik 1950–1957*, Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2017.

**17** M. D. Bordo, A. M. Taylor, and J. G. Williamsom, “Introduction”, in: Bordo, Taylor, Williamsom (eds.), *Globalization in Historical Perspective*, pp. 1–2.

**18** G. P. Marchildon, “War, Revolution and the Great Depression in the Global Wheat Trade 1917–1939”, in: L. Coppolaro and F. McKenzie (eds.), *A Global History of Trade and Conflict since 1500*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 143. See also G. Federico and K. G. Persson, “Market Integration and Convergence in the World Wheat Market, 1800–2000”, Discussion Papers. Department of Economics, University of Copenhagen, 2007, pp. 6–10; Topik and Wells, “Warenketten”, pp. 684–690.

**19** Malenbaum, *The World Wheat Economy*, pp. 23, 65–88.

rapidly and intensively than the trade in rye, barley, or even rice.<sup>20</sup> The volume of world wheat export per year increased from 130 million bushels in 1873/74 to 748 million bushels in 1924–1929.<sup>21</sup>

Coping with the sharp rise in demand for wheat was only possible through improvements in the transport sector and through the increase in wheat production. As mentioned before, the transport revolution was able to compensate for regional undersupply, on the one hand, and also intensify competition, on the other hand. The increase in production was based on the development of new cultivation areas oversea and in Eastern Europe. This extensive form of growth, however, also considerably increased the sector's susceptibility to overproduction crises because, in the event of falling demand, producers were usually unwilling to stop using the previously laboriously developed arable land. Consequently, the wheat market developed into the most important scene of the agricultural crisis, or grain crisis, and it was not by chance that it became the object of the first attempts at global market regulation.<sup>22</sup>

## Strategy

In the following section, the development of the global wheat market up to the First World War and the role of Eastern Europe in this process is reconstructed. The focus is the actions of various Eastern European actors in this market and their reactions to the first signs of an overproduction crisis, which, in this study, are interpreted as elements of globalization projects. The section presents the difficult situation of Eastern European wheat exporters in the 1920s and during the Great Depression. An analysis of national crisis management strategies is then presented. The fourth section focuses on attempts to overcome the wheat crisis through international agreements. The chapter concludes with an outlook and a summary.

Concentrating on the analysis of structures has two consequences. Firstly, specific actors and groups of actors are rarely explicitly named; as a rule, the political and economic elites of a particular country appear as a single entity.

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**20** G. Aparicio and V. Pinilla, "International Trade in Wheat and Other Cereals and the Collapse of the First Wave of Globalization, 1900–38," *Journal of Global History* 14 (2019) 1, pp. 44–67, at 50–52.

**21** Topik and Wells, "Warenketten", p. 694.

**22** "If wheat is the product that historians use to show the progress of the process of international economic integration in the nineteenth century, in the 1930s it also exemplifies the collapse of the first wave of globalization" (Aparicio and Pinilla, "International Trade", p. 46).

Secondly, the analysis alternates several times between describing historical developments and explaining systematic connections, which should help one to understand the complex processes.

## 2 The Eastern European Wheat Economies in Global Competition until the Outbreak of the First World War

### The Dependence of the Eastern European Wheat Economy on Foreign Trade

As has already been mentioned, from a global historical perspective, a distinction is often made between a phase of increasing economic interdependence before the First World War, the so-called “first (modern) globalization” – which was driven mainly by the integration of food markets (especially for cereals) and was only weakened, not prevented, by the protectionism of most Western European countries – and a phase of economic “deglobalization” – which began in the First World War and greatly intensified as a result of the Great Depression and in which protectionism reached previously unknown dimensions.<sup>23</sup> Global trade in agricultural goods grew at an annual rate of 3.7 per cent between 1850 and 1900 and of only 1.4 per cent between 1903 and 1938.<sup>24</sup>

A comparison of the development of global agricultural production in these two periods shows that it grew more than twice as fast (by 1.6 per cent annually) during the period of the first globalization as it did between 1913 and 1938 (by 0.7 per cent annually; see Table 1, p. 40). This is why the increasing interdependence of the world economy tended to promote the production of agricultural goods, whereas the pace of growth slowed down considerably in a phase of deglobalization. This finding could be put into perspective by considering the inaccuracies of the data available, the negative effects of the world war, and with the argument that the low growth in the second phase could already have been a rational reaction of farmers to the commenced overproduction and its negative effects on the profitability of farms. It is precisely for this reason that it is important not only to consider the crisis as a phenomenon that can be described with the help

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<sup>23</sup> P. E. Fäßler, *Globalisierung. Ein historisches Kompendium*, Köln et al.: UTB, 2007, pp. 74–119.

<sup>24</sup> Aparicio and Pinilla, “International Trade”, p. 45.

of statistics but also to look at the perception of the crisis and at the reactions to the crisis by the affected actors.

Regarding Eastern Europe,<sup>25</sup> it is noteworthy that agricultural production between 1870 and 1913 increased more than in any other part of Europe, and the annual growth rate of 2.1 per cent was also well above the global average (see Table 1, p. 40). During the period marked by the First World War and the Great Depression, however, agricultural production in Eastern Europe grew less than in all other parts of the world. Per capita production even declined.<sup>26</sup> This is clear evidence that the development of Eastern European agriculture has been strongly influenced by global economic interdependence. This influence could apparently be both positive and extremely negative despite the almost permanent talk of crisis.

## The Eastern European Wheat Economy in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century

Trade relations on the European grain market intensified considerably in the middle of the nineteenth century. The most important structural cause of this was the increased demand for food in England and, a little later, in other parts of North-western Europe due to population growth, progressive urbanization, and industrialization.<sup>27</sup> The main institutional precondition for the reconstitution of the European cereal market was the strengthening of free trade through the abolition of the British Corn Laws (1846) and the establishment of a system of most-favoured-nation trade agreements between the main European states.<sup>28</sup>

European wheat-exporting regions were all located in the eastern part of the continent. Due to differences in development and because of the data situation, it is useful to distinguish between the following regions of origin, which can be roughly identified as “East-Central Europe” (Poland), “South-eastern Europe” (Hungary and the Balkans), and “Russia”:

<sup>25</sup> In these statistics (Federico), Russia and the Habsburg monarchy form “Eastern Europe”. The South-Eastern European states and the Ottoman Empire were apparently not taken into account.

<sup>26</sup> Berend and Ránki, *Economic Development*, p. 289; J. R. Lampe and M. R. Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550–1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982, pp. 337–340.

<sup>27</sup> The volume of wheat trade increased tenfold between 1846 and 1880. The most important importers in the 1870s were Great Britain, with six million tons; Germany, with three million tons; and France, with two million tons annually. Cf. Aparicio and Pinilla, “International Trade”, pp. 46 f.

<sup>28</sup> I. T. Berend, *An Economic History of Nineteenth-Century Europe. Diversity and Industrialization*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, pp. 288–292.

1. The Polish lands had already exported large shares of their wheat production in the sixteenth century to Western Europe via Gdańsk and Amsterdam. After the partition of Poland and the Napoleonic Wars (1799–1815), the Polish agriculture from Masovia and the upper reaches of the Vistula was separated from the ports and its traditional foreign markets: “Ultimately Polish lands ceased to be the European granary.”<sup>29</sup> The non-existence of a Polish state in the nineteenth century complicates the statistical reconstruction of the declining but still existing wheat export from the Polish lands. The Prussian partition area of Greater Poland and Pomerania had the most productive agriculture and direct access to the Baltic Sea ports – partly due to the capitalist agricultural reforms that were initiated relatively early on. Of the total wheat and rye production, exports accounted for the highest share.<sup>30</sup> The Kingdom of Poland, which belonged to the Russian Empire, still exported grain to Western Europe, amounting to 20 million roubles in 1874.<sup>31</sup> Since being connected to the railway network in the 1860s, Galicia had changed the main destination of its grain exports from Western Europe (via Gdańsk) to the territory of the German Customs Union or the German Empire and, finally, mainly to the Bohemian lands and Austria.<sup>32</sup> Similar to the Polish provinces of Prussia, the large estates in Galicia, which were heavily based on the cultivation of grain, delivered their products to the industrializing centres of the Habsburg Empire. The Galician agricultural producers, however, faced stiff competition from Hungary.

2. Hungary had also been supplying surpluses of its agricultural production to the West, mainly to Austria and other parts of Central Europe, with varying intensity for several centuries. After a decline in trade relations, a result of the Napoleonic Wars and falling prices for agricultural goods from 1815 onwards, Hungary’s trade relations with neighbouring regions to the west grew again in the 1830s as they increasingly demanded Hungarian grain and wool.<sup>33</sup> At the same time, the defeat of the Ottoman Empire by the Russian Empire and the freedom of

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29 P. Koryś, *Poland from Partitions to EU Accession. A Modern Economic History, 1772–2004*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 96–109, at 102.

30 M. Kopsidis and N. Wolf, “Agricultural Productivity across Prussia during the Industrial Revolution: A Thünen Perspective”, *Journal of Economic History* 72 (2012) 3, p. 639.

31 N. Wolf, “Local Comparative Advantage. Agricultural and Economic Development in Poland, 1870–1973”, in: P. Lains and V. Pinilla (eds.), *Agriculture and Economic Development in Europe since 1870*, New York: Routledge, 2008, pp. 255–285, at 268.

32 K. Kaps, *Ungleiche Entwicklung in Zentraleuropa. Galizien zwischen überregionaler Verflechtung und imperialer Politik 1772–1914*, Vienna: Böhlau, 2015, pp. 137–165, 342–349, 413–415.

33 Z. Kaposi, *Die Entwicklung der Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft in Ungarn 1700–2000*, Passau: Schenk Verlag, 2007, pp. 36–38, 46–48.

navigation through the Black Sea and the Dardanelles Strait, laid down in the subsequent Treaty of Adrianople (1829), enabled grain exports from the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia (both later joined to become Romania) to Western Europe.<sup>34</sup> Between 1855 and 1873, both Hungary and Romania again increased their exports of cereals (especially wheat), which went mainly to Central and North-western Europe. The corresponding increases in production were based mainly on a significant expansion of arable land, while labour and soil productivity increased only slightly. Since the 1860s, Serbia had also exported grain, but more importantly, it traded in other agricultural goods such as pigs and plums.<sup>35</sup>

3. Russia had been active on the European wheat market since the early nineteenth century and had mainly ousted Polish competitors. Around 1850, the export of wheat came almost exclusively from the European Black Earth provinces: over 90 per cent was shipped via ports on the Black Sea (especially Odessa) and the Sea of Azov, and over 50 per cent was sold in Great Britain.<sup>36</sup> The abolition of serfdom in Russia initially led to numerous instabilities and reduced Russian wheat exports in the early 1860s, especially because wheat traders from the northern states of the USA during the American Civil War (1861–1865) were also selling their grain to Europe. After just under a decade, the situation improved, and Russian wheat exports increased again. Decisive factors in this were a new agrarian structure, the development of arable land on the lower river Volga, and, above all, the ongoing construction of railways. The new routes reduced the cost of transporting grain to ports on the Black Sea and made it possible to deliver it to those on the Baltic Sea as well. The disproportionately high expansion of wheat cultivation in Russia, compared with other cereals, was mainly caused by external demand.<sup>37</sup>

This new aspect of the influence of external markets on the decision-making processes of agricultural producers in a country that is usually characterized not only as backward but also as peripheral is an important indication of an often overlooked fact: as early as the 1870s, processes began that led to the fact that

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<sup>34</sup> C. Ardeleanu, *International Trade and Diplomacy at the lower Danube. The Sulina Question and the Economic Premises of the Crimean War (1829–1853)*, Braila: Editura Istros, 2014, pp. 100–103, 265–267.

<sup>35</sup> M. Palairet, *The Balkan Economies c. 1800–1914. Evolution without Development*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 103–108.

<sup>36</sup> Topik and Wells, “Warenketten”, p. 688; C. H. Harley, “Transportation, the World Wheat Trade and the Kuznets Cycle, 1850–1913”, *Explorations in Economic History* 17 (1980), p. 218.

<sup>37</sup> M. E. Falkus, “Russia and the International Wheat Trade, 1861–1914”, *Economica* 33 (1966) 132, pp. 416–429; B. K. Goodwin and T. J. Grennes, “Tsarist Russia and the World Wheat Market”, *Explorations in Economic History* 35 (1998) 4, pp. 405–430.

the Russian economy before the First World War was interwoven with other regions of the world economy with above-average intensity and diversity.<sup>38</sup>

## The Emergence of the Global Condition in the Wheat Trade and the Role of Eastern Europe

The increase in Russian wheat production for export is also an indication of a radical change that took place in the 1870s: within a few years, a literally global market for cereals, especially wheat, had emerged.<sup>39</sup> The expansion of the reach of the market mainly affected the side of the suppliers. In addition to the USA, Canada and Argentina, and later Australia and India, also entered the market as new “oversea” participants. They competed with the Eastern European exporting countries as well as with the respective local farmers for the sale of grain on the markets in Western and Central Europe and increasingly in the Mediterranean region.

The most important structural causes for the creation of the global condition in the wheat trade, which is exemplary for other commodity markets, were revolutionary changes in transport and communication. The former led to a significant reduction in transport costs in both ocean shipping and rail shipping. The railways made it possible to develop large fertile areas in temperate climates that were well suited for growing grain and, through the settlement of immigrants, were often preceded by the displacement or extermination of the indigenous population. In the case of oversea production, it was then possible to transport the cereals to ports by the new land routes and from there across the Atlantic to Europe.

Within a few decades, the share of transport costs in the price of grain fell from 75 to 30 per cent.<sup>40</sup> Initially, this benefited farmers in the USA, who were able to farm extensively due to low land prices as well as who had high labour

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38 P. R. Gregory, *Before Command. An Economic History of Russia from Emancipation to the First Five-Year Plan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994, pp. 77–80.

39 Cf. for linkages with the intensification of foreign trade in rice between Asian regions, see A. J. H. Latham and L. Neal, “The International Market in Rice and Wheat, 1868–1914”, *Economic History Review* 36 (1983) 2, pp. 260–280.

40 Transport costs on a global scale fell more than ever before between 1870 and 1910 and not even later. For example, see Findlay and O'Rourke, “Commodity Market Integration”, pp. 35–37; R. Aldenhoff-Hübinger, “Agrarhandel zwischen Integration, Desintegration und transnationaler Kooperation, 1850–1914”, in: C. Henrich-Franke, C. Neutsch, and G. Thiemeyer (eds.), *Internationalismus und Europäische Integration im Vergleich. Fallstudien zu Währungen, Landwirtschaft, Verkehrs- und Nachrichtenwesen*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2007, pp. 193–202, at 194; Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, p. 155; Marchildon, “War”, p. 4.

productivity thanks to advanced mechanization. This made them superior to their European competitors and increased their market shares, especially in Great Britain.<sup>41</sup> In Great Britain, the “industrial revolution” had already led, since the late eighteenth century, to massive urbanization and expansion of the secondary sector with a simultaneous strong population growth so that the demand for the import of agricultural goods was very high.

The reduction of transport costs was a necessary but not a sufficient enough condition for the globalization of the wheat market. Equally important was a general reduction in transaction costs, being the technical prerequisite for the establishment of a global telegraph network. Information on prices, grain transports on the world’s oceans, and stocks and harvest prospects elsewhere in the world was available within minutes at any location in the world connected to the network. The standardized determination of wheat quality characteristics made the global wheat market more transparent. Corresponding institutions were established primarily in Chicago and Liverpool, which were the main transshipment points for wheat exporters and importers;<sup>42</sup> the grain exchanges with the highest turnover were there and in Winnipeg. Since 1880, future business dealings and trade were also carried out in these centres, which, 100 years later, were to become the hallmark of a process of globalization that could barely be regulated and were also the subject of a criticism of globalization as early as in the late nineteenth century.<sup>43</sup>

The situation of local spaces of interaction in the international wheat trade has probably contributed to the fact that global and economic historians have mostly described the problem of “grain invasion” and the subsequent protectionist reaction of continental European countries, especially France and Germany, as a North Atlantic entanglement; meanwhile, actors from Argentina, Australia, and Eastern Europe have, so far, hardly been considered.<sup>44</sup> However, if we look at the shares of the individual world regions and countries in the international wheat trade, a different picture emerges – despite certain uncertainties regarding the accuracy of the data (see Table 2, p. 41).

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<sup>41</sup> J. Foreman-Peck, *A History of the World Economy. International Economic Relations since 1850*, Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1983, pp. 102–106; Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, pp. 127–153; Marchildon, “War”, p. 144.

<sup>42</sup> M. Bühler, *Von Netzwerken zu Märkten. Die Entstehung eines globalen Getreidemarktes*, Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2019, pp. 103–153.

<sup>43</sup> Topik and Wells, “Warenketten”, pp. 692, 712–715.

<sup>44</sup> O’Rourke, “The European Grain Invasion”; Findlay and O’Rourke, “Commodity Market Integration”, pp. 40–43.



Even before 1870, the USA was the largest wheat exporter in a market that was much smaller but had more participants. In the course of the transport and communication revolutions in the 1870s (described above), US farmers not only multiplied the volume of exports to Europe but also increased their market share. Argentina and Canada almost caught up with the USA in the course of the two decades before the First World War. At the same time, Russia and the Danube countries<sup>45</sup> developed into the largest wheat-exporting regions in the world. Their market shares, 22 per cent and 16 per cent, respectively, were actually larger than before the globalization surge of the 1870s.

These data show that both Russia and the Danube countries have achieved considerable success in the fight against non-European competitors. They developed and implemented successful strategies to overcome the crisis. Therefore, it was not their positions on foreign markets that were considered problematic but rather the consequences of their dependence on foreign trade. This finding invites us to take a closer look at the Eastern European discourse on the wheat crisis and the different reactions to the intensified competition on the world market.

## **Positioning Strategies of the Politics and Economy of Eastern Europe in the Process of Globalization of the Wheat Market**

Russia's success on the European grain market, similar to its oversea competitors, was initially based on falling transport costs and expanded cultivation areas – not only in the south-eastern part of European Russia (the so-called New Russia) but also now in the North Caucasus and West Siberia. The Russian state pursued an export-oriented globalization project with its railway construction policy and the expansion of ports on the Black Sea and Baltic Sea as well as the promotion of internal colonization. Although labour productivity and incomes in agriculture also rose in Russia between 1870 and 1913, the successes on world markets were largely based on low labour costs by international standards.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> This category included the nation-states of South-Eastern Europe, especially Romania, as well as the Habsburg monarchy.

<sup>46</sup> Gregory, *Before Command*, pp. 27–49, rejects Gerschenkron's thesis, predominant in older literature, of a Russian agricultural crisis existing in the late nineteenth century and argues, amongst other things, by calling attention to export successes. Similarly, see V. P. Timoshenko, *Agricultural Russia and the Wheat Problem*, Stanford: Food Research Institute, Stanford University, 1932, pp. 140–150.

The activities of wheat traders in Russia (e.g. the Greek traders in Odessa) have not yet been sufficiently investigated.<sup>47</sup> But without a doubt, information about the global wheat market also reached Russians province through the parallel expansion of railway and telegraph networks. An American traveller reported from Nikolaev that the “peasants on arrival at the market with their grain were asking ‘What is the price in America according to the latest telegram?’ And what is still more surprising: they know how to convert cents per bushel into kopecks per pood.”<sup>48</sup> Therefore, the world market price also influenced the price formation on the domestic market in Russia. At the same time, Russian cereal traders were trying to avoid the centralization of trade processing in Chicago and Liverpool. Thus, after the settlement in 1894 of the Russian-German customs war, direct trade between these two countries increased.<sup>49</sup> Russia became the most important supplier of wheat, animal feed, and many other agricultural products to the German Empire.<sup>50</sup>

The export opportunities led to the fact that grain was still grown on 75 per cent to 90 per cent of the arable land – despite a certain diversification of production, for example by growing vegetables and oilseed near cities in central Russia and Ukraine. The share of wheat in the grain area increased to 32 per cent by 1913, exceeding that of rye (29 per cent), oats (19 per cent), and barley (12 per cent). The positive experience with wheat exports from 1880 onwards led to an increase in exports of other cereals, for whose cultivation the conditions in large parts of Russia were more favourable and the competition on foreign markets was much less intense. In 1913, 40 per cent of all Russian exports consisted of grain.<sup>51</sup> Between 1909 and 1913, the Russian share of world wheat exports was 25 per cent. The shares for rye, oats, and barley were 37 per cent, 43 per cent, and even 71 per cent, respectively.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Aparicio and Pinilla, “International Trade”, p. 48.

<sup>48</sup> Cited in Goodwin and Grennes, “Tsarist Russia”, p. 408.

<sup>49</sup> Bühler, *Von Netzwerken zu Märkten*, p. 104. On the German-Russian trade conflict, see R. Weitowitz, *Deutsche Politik und Handelspolitik unter Reichskanzler Leo von Caprivi 1890–1894*, Düsseldorf: Droste, 1978, pp. 228–299.

<sup>50</sup> R. Jasper, “Die regionalen Strukturwandlungen des deutschen Außenhandels von 1880 bis 1938”, PhD thesis, FU Berlin, 1996, pp. 240–245.

<sup>51</sup> P. Gatrell, “Poor Russia, Poor Show: Mobilising a Backward Economy for War, 1914–1917”, in: S. Broadberry and M. Harrison (eds.), *The Economics of World War I*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 235–275, at 248.

<sup>52</sup> Goodwin and Grennes, “Tsarist Russia”, p. 406; Aparicio and Pinilla, “International Trade”, p. 51. See also Timoshenko, *Russia*, pp. 139–150.

Romania's political and economic elites pursued a similar globalization project to Russia's and managed to make the country the fourth-largest wheat exporter in the world before the outbreak of the First World War.<sup>53</sup> The decision to increase export production, despite falling world market prices, was based on various motives and constraints. Due to the protectionist policies of the potential target countries, especially Austria-Hungary, it was only possible to a very limited extent to switch to livestock exports, which would have been more lucrative in terms of trade.<sup>54</sup> Income from the export of raw materials and grain was also considered indispensable for the development of their own industries in the medium term. In the opinion of the National Liberals and the "industrialists", the problem of rural overpopulation could also be defused in the long term.<sup>55</sup> For the time being, however, the exploitation of the so-called sharecroppers had enabled grain production and exports to increase. These sharecroppers were formally independent farmers who had to work regularly on the estates. This was a consequence of the partial revision of the 1864 agrarian reform following a coup in 1866 against its initiator Alexandru I. Cuza. Although the farmers remained free from feudal fetters in the legal sense, they received only very small holdings, the yield of which was insufficient to support their families. In addition, they were obliged to pay compensation to the former landowners in the form of work due to the lack of money.<sup>56</sup>

Similar to Russia, Romania's possibilities of increasing productivity within this system were limited. The per capita production of wheat and corn in Romania had stagnated since about 1890. By tapping the last available land reserves, total production was increased until the world war. And thanks to relatively low labour and transport costs, Romanian wheat was competitive on the European markets. This led to an intensive economic integration of this Balkan state with other parts of the continent. Around 1910, Romania exported about one-quarter of its national income and thus had a very high foreign trade quota compared to

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53 Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, p. 170.

54 In 1882, Austria-Hungary introduced prohibitive duties against Romanian livestock imports. See R. Preshlenova, "Austro-Hungarian Trade and the Economic Development of South-eastern Europe Before World War I", in: D. Good (ed.), *Economic Transformations in East and Central Europe. Legacies from the Past and Policies for the Future*, London: Taylor and Francis, 1994, pp. 231–260, at 237.

55 A. Harre, *Wege in die Moderne. Entwicklungsstrategien rumänischer Ökonomen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2009, pp. 70 f.

56 Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, pp. 159 f.; Gunst, "Agrarian Developments", pp. 29–34; D. Turnock, *Aspects of Independent Romania's Economic History with Particular Reference to Transition for EU Accession*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, pp. 7–15; D. H. Aldcroft, *Europe's Third World. The European Periphery in the Interwar Years*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006, p. 29.

other countries in Europe or even worldwide.<sup>57</sup> Almost 80 per cent of exports were grain deliveries. Romanian foreign trade proved to be very flexible in opening up sales markets. Until the early 1880s, the Habsburg monarchy was the most important export market. However, due to the protectionism that began there, the British market and, since the turn of the century, the Belgian market had gained in importance.<sup>58</sup>

Romania was a particularly extreme example, but not the only country with a strong orientation towards exporting cereals, especially wheat. Immediately after Bulgaria became independent in 1878, the local farmers, most of whom were small- and medium-scale farmers, also began to significantly increase their exports of grain and wheat, which had previously been impeded by the Ottoman tax system. Around 1910, 20 per cent of the Bulgarian national income was exported, with only one-quarter of it to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>59</sup>

Wheat producers in Hungary, almost all of whom had large estates, reacted to the increasing competition on the European wheat market with two strategies. The first and most important countermeasure was an agricultural protectionist foreign trade policy started in the late 1870s, which was maintained until the First World War.<sup>60</sup> It was in the common interest of the Austrian and Bohemian industrialists and the Hungarian landowners to maintain the monarchy's trade and customs union and the policy of protective tariffs. Although the protectionist turnaround made their wheat exports more difficult, it largely shielded the Habsburg monarchy's sales market from grain imports. The consequence of this strategy was that the share of "genuine" Hungarian exports of grain and flour that crossed the borders of the Habsburg monarchy, which had still amounted to

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<sup>57</sup> Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, p. 164; A. Nützenadel, "A Green International? Food Markets and Transnational Politics, c. 1850–1914", in: A. Nützenadel and F. Trentmann (eds.), *Food and Globalization. Consumption, Markets and Politics in the Modern World*, Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2008, p. 154.

<sup>58</sup> Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, pp. 161–174. It should be noted that London's importance as a hub for the European wheat trade declined, while Antwerp's importance increased. Exports to Belgium were often transported on to Great Britain and neighbouring countries, especially Germany. Cf. Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, p. 104.

<sup>59</sup> Palairot, *The Balkan Economies*, pp. 188 f.; Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, p. 174.

<sup>60</sup> H. Matis, "Leitlinien der österreichischen Wirtschaftspolitik 1848–1918", in: A. Brusatti (ed.), *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918, Vol. 1: Die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung*, Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 1973, pp. 29–67, at 51f.; I. T. Berend and G. Ránki, "Ungarns wirtschaftliche Entwicklung 1849–1918", in: *ibid.*, pp. 462–527, at 492–499.

two-thirds in the 1880s, fell to one-fifth in the 1890s, and was only one-tenth after 1900.<sup>61</sup> It is no coincidence that this was almost exclusively flour.

Indeed, the second crisis management strategy of the Hungarian large-scale farmers was to develop the milling industry and export flour instead of unprocessed wheat. The terms of trade here were much more advantageous. Austro-Hungarian foreign trade policy supported this strategy by allowing mills to import duty-free wheat if a certain quota of flour was later exported.<sup>62</sup> This was used to import wheat varieties that were not sufficiently available in Hungary from the Balkan states and then to process them into high-quality flour and sell it at some profit in Austria and further abroad.

Similar to the Habsburg monarchy, the German Empire also initially introduced grain protection tariffs, thereby curbing the import of foreign grain and the fall in prices. At the same time, the grain economy also had an interest in certain foreign wheat varieties. After Germany had ended the customs conflict with Russia by concluding a trade agreement in 1894 in the interest of its export industry, grain duties were temporarily reduced. The politically influential East Elbian large landowners were compensated by removing the proof of identity (*Identitätsnachweis*) and introducing export subsidies in the form of a grain import certificate system (*Getreideeinfuhrschein*). This meant that it was now possible to mix Russian grain and domestic grain, especially rye and wheat (imported as duty-free), and profitably export product to Scandinavia.<sup>63</sup>

The large landowners in the Polish provinces of Prussia also benefited from this mix of protection and subsidies. The Galician wheat exporters, however, had a hard time asserting themselves against Hungarian competition. The grain exports of the Kingdom of Poland neither were in a favourable market position under the Russian Empire nor were they promoted by politics. Since the 1890s, the kingdom had become a net importer of grain, mainly from Russia as well as from the Prussian eastern provinces.<sup>64</sup> The development in the Kingdom of Poland was linked to strong population growth, rising per capita consumption, and the rapid industrialization of some regions. For industry, in contrast to agriculture,

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61 M. Szuhay, "The Capitalization of Agriculture", in: P. Gunst (ed.), *Hungarian Agrarian Society: From the Emancipation of Serfs (1848) to the Re-Privatization of Land*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1998, pp. 99–124, at 120.

62 Ibid., pp. 118–120.

63 M. Steinkühler, *Agrar- oder Industriestaat. Die Auseinandersetzungen um die Getreidehandels- und Zollpolitik des Deutschen Reiches 1879–1914*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992, pp. 164–184; R. Aldenhoff, "Agriculture", in: R. Chickering (ed.), *Imperial Germany. A Historical Companion*, Westport: Greenwood, 1996, p. 49.

64 Wolf, "Local Comparative Advantage", pp. 256, 280.

membership of the Russian Empire was a positive, sometimes even decisive, factor in development, particularly in the areas around Warsaw and Łódź and along the Silesian border.<sup>65</sup>

## Development Economics and Historical Evaluation of the Globalization Projects of Eastern European Wheat Producers

From the perspective of developmental economics, the expansion of industry in response to the declining competitiveness of domestic agricultural products on domestic and foreign markets is the most promising strategy in the medium and long term, but it is often difficult to implement. An alternative or complementary strategy is the substitution of cereal cultivation through the production of other agricultural products for which the competitive conditions are more favourable and whose processing allows entry into industrialization supported by the development of a food processing industry. Such a diversification strategy is more sustainable from an agro-economic point of view and reduces dependence on individual markets and customers.

For example, the Hungarian milling industry mentioned above and the sugar beet industry, which also expanded rapidly between 1870 and 1914 in the Bohemian lands and the Prussian eastern provinces, prove that regional industrialization, supported by the food processing industry, took place not only in the Netherlands and Denmark but also in East-Central Europe.<sup>66</sup> This path can initially be interpreted as an evasive reaction to the escalating competition on the grain markets in the first phase of globalization. However, unlike the protectionist reaction by implementing a protective tariff, mill and sugar manufacturers soon successfully penetrated the external markets and developed alternative globalization projects.<sup>67</sup> Farmers who, as a result of the grain crisis, switched their production to livestock and dairy farming or vegetable growing remained

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<sup>65</sup> U. Müller, “East Central Europe in the First Globalization (1850–1914)”, *Studia Historiae Oeconomicae* 36 (2018), pp. 71–90, at 82 f.; Koryś, *Poland*, pp. 181–185.

<sup>66</sup> U. Müller, “The Concept of Regional Industrialization from the Perspective of the Economic History of East Central Europe”, in: J. Czipka, K. Oerters, and N. Thorade (eds.), *Regions, Industries and Heritage. Perspectives on Economy, Society, and Culture in Modern Western Europe*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 90–115.

<sup>67</sup> U. Müller, “Transnationale Verflechtungen der Wirtschaft in Ostmitteleuropa”, in: F. Hadler and M. Middell (eds.), *Handbuch einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas, Vol. 1. Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, Göttingen: V&R Academic, 2017, pp. 308–314.

more locally or regionally oriented. Credit cooperatives provided the necessary investments. Global competition triggered impulses for modernization and led to an institutional innovation that enabled a “combination of agrarian individualism with the expanded facilities of large-scale operation”.<sup>68</sup>

The German Empire and the Habsburg monarchy offered better conditions for the development of favourable strategies than those of Russia and the Balkans. The practice in Russia and the Balkans of concentrating on the export of a few primary goods is not regarded as an optimal strategy by development economics. The main argument of this critical assessment is the dependence of a large part of the economy on often highly volatile markets.<sup>69</sup> In Russia and Romania, unlike in Hungary and the Polish lands, not only the landowners and farm workers but also large parts of the peasantry were connected with the grain industry. It is no coincidence that revolutionary unrest and uprisings occurred in Russia and Romania between 1905 and 1907, especially in rural areas.<sup>70</sup> At the same time, there were greater risks in the cultivation of export-oriented monocultures, which meant that the domestic markets could no longer be supplied if harvests failed and stock was insufficient.<sup>71</sup>

Economic theories are useful for evaluating the positioning of contemporary actors in the globalization processes, but their importance should not be overestimated. Firstly, many of the world’s richest countries were net exporters of food around 1900. This was the case in Argentina, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, and the USA.<sup>72</sup> The fact that the Eastern European agricultural exporting countries were not amongst them was, therefore, not due to their position on the world market. Secondly, economic and political decisions depended, most importantly, on traditional patterns of action, the scope for decision-making, and the existence of alternatives as well as general interests and power structures.

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**68** Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, p. 156.

**69** The situation of Serbia was similarly precarious. Although it was less dependent on grain exports, as it exported various agricultural products, about 90 per cent of these were delivered to Austria-Hungary until the Customs War (1906). Cf. Preshlenova, “Austro-Hungarian Trade”, pp. 241–243; M.-J. Calic, *Sozialgeschichte Serbiens 1815–1941. Der aufhaltsame Fortschritt während der Industrialisierung*, Munich: Walter de Gruyter, 1994, p. 127.

**70** Gunst, “Agrarian Developments”, pp. 43–45.

**71** Indeed, in 1891, after several years of an export boom in Russia, a famine occurred due to a bad harvest. Unlike in the 1840s, this did not have any pan-European effects because the other regions of Europe and the USA had average to good harvests, allowing supply and price levels there to remain stable. At the same time, Russia was not in a position to compensate for regional deficits. Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, pp. 176–180; G. B. Robbins, *The Famine in Russia 1891–1892. The Imperial Government Responds to a Crisis*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1975.

**72** Topik and Wells, “Warenketten”, p. 686.

The export of grain to Western Europe was traditionally of great importance to the large landowners in Eastern Europe and was now also becoming more relevant for farmers in Russia, Bulgaria, and Serbia. The expansion of the export of primary goods, especially in backward economies, was often the only, or the most obvious, strategy to turn foreign trade into an “engine of growth”.<sup>73</sup>

The export revenues generated in this way flowed, to a considerable extent, into state and private investment in industry and infrastructure, albeit often as a detour and not in an optimal way, consolidating the economic and political power of large landowners. The concentration on wheat cultivation resulted primarily from external demand, and interestingly, this was criticized primarily by contemporaries in Hungary, where the diversity of production and exported agricultural goods was relatively high.<sup>74</sup>

From an Eastern European history perspective, the balance of the social, economic, and political consequences of the constitution of the global wheat market is certainly ambivalent. From a global historical perspective (and this has hardly been noticed by researchers so far), the economic and political elites of Eastern Europe played a decisive role in shaping the global wheat market.<sup>75</sup> Around 1910, none of the globalization strategies developed in Eastern Europe had failed. Almost half of the world’s wheat exports still came from Europe.<sup>76</sup> Accordingly, there could be no talk of a crisis in the corresponding foreign trade relations. The outbreak of First World War fundamentally changed the situation and endangered the previously successful Eastern European globalization projects.

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73 J. Riedel, “Trade as the Engine of Growth in Developing Countries, Revisited”, *Economic Journal* 94 (1984) 373, pp. 56–73.

74 Z. Kiss, “Gesellschaftshistorische Aspekte der Getreidekrise gegen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts”, in: M. Keller, G. Kövér, and C. Sasfi (eds.), *Krisen/Geschichten in mitteleuropäischem Kontext. Sozial und wirtschaftsgeschichtliche Studien zum 19./20. Jahrhundert*, Vienna: Institut für Ungarische Geschichtsforschung 2015, pp. 144–147. In 1910, the respective shares of grain and wheat in total exports were 78 and 53 per cent in Romania, 54 and 25 per cent in Bulgaria, 40 and 13 per cent in Serbia, 18 and 5 per cent in Hungary. Cf. Berend and Ránki, *Economic Development*, p. 150.

75 Cf. Topik and Wells, “Warenketten”, pp. 687–728; Bühler, *Von Netzwerken zu Märkten*; Foreman-Peck, *History*, pp. 102–106.

76 Cf. Table 2. See also Topik and Wells, “Warenketten”, p. 698; Aparicio and Pinilla, “International Trade”, p. 55.



### 3 Eastern Europe in the Global Wheat Trade between 1914 and 1939

#### The First World War and its Consequences

The outbreak of the First World War divided the globalized markets for agricultural products along the borders of the military blocs. The first bottlenecks in the food supply became particularly evident for the Central Powers of Germany and Austria-Hungary as early as the end of 1914. There was a shortage of labour in the course of mobilization. Fertilizers from Latin America and animal feed, which had been sourced mainly from Russia, were no longer available, and there were complications in agricultural and food policies.<sup>77</sup> After the Triple Entente's blockade measures worked better from 1916 onwards, also preventing deliveries via neutral countries, the food supply of the population and of the army of the Central Powers deteriorated to such an extent that hunger riots broke out, which contributed to capitulation in 1918.

In Russia, hostile sea blockades in the Black Sea and in the Baltic Sea prevented the export of grain. Notwithstanding, Russian agriculture suffered less than Central Europe from labour shortages during the war, and the decline in production was also less severe. However, the now “surplus” grain was mainly used for consumption by farmers, and only a small proportion found its way to urban consumers and the army. Since no income could be generated through exports, grain production declined significantly until 1917 and more sharply than agricultural production as a whole.<sup>78</sup>

Romanian wheat exports almost came to a complete standstill after the outbreak of the war mainly due to the massive disruption of shipping traffic on the Black Sea. It was only at the beginning of 1916 that the then still neutral state succeeded in selling parts of the good wheat harvest from the previous year to the Central Powers and Great Britain. Romania's entry into the war on the side of the Entente, the rapidly following military defeats, and the subsequent German occupation caused considerable damage to agricultural production and, above all, to grain cultivation. In the end, the German Empire was not able to efficiently exploit the conquered granaries, either in Romania or later in Ukraine. As a result, the Central Powers lost the war because they could no longer feed their

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<sup>77</sup> U. Müller, “Landwirtschaft und Agrarpolitik”, in: M. Boldorf (ed.), *Deutsche Wirtschaft im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2020, pp. 343–369.

<sup>78</sup> Gatrell, “Poor Russia”, pp. 241 f., 256–259.

own population adequately.<sup>79</sup> The production and export of agricultural goods declined in occupied territories such as Romania because no seeds were sown, the rural population passively resisted, and the country's infrastructure was destroyed.<sup>80</sup> Several years after the end of the war, agricultural production was still lower than it was before the war.

On the Entente side, however, the war also led to a sharp decline in domestic agricultural production – particularly grain production – especially in France and Italy.<sup>81</sup> However, in diametric contrast to the Central Powers that were actually “in the middle” – Germany, and Austria-Hungary – the Western European states had unlimited access to the world markets. Large parts of North and South America and Australia increased their agricultural production year after year during the war, in some cases by double-digit rates, in order to supply France, Great Britain, and Italy in particular.<sup>82</sup> This growth in production was primarily based on an expansion of the area under cultivation, which increased by 50 per cent in Canada and even doubled in Australia.<sup>83</sup>

## Extensive Growth Strategies in Wheat-exporting Countries as Factors Exacerbating Crises

The war was a catalyst for, not the cause of, the dominance of extensive growth strategies in wheat production. Throughout the period under review, there was a close link between the development of wheat acreage and wheat production, both at the global level and for each major exporting country. This observation is only trivial at first glance. Although other ways of increasing production, such as breeding new varieties or improving soil quality through amelioration and fertilization, were also used, they were almost everywhere of secondary importance compared to the expansion of acreage. The only exception was the wheat-importing countries of Western and Central Europe, where it was nearly impossible to convert fallow or pastureland into arable land. However, these countries had modern agricultural sciences and applied their findings to increase yields per hectare.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> H. Münkler, *Der Große Krieg. Die Welt 1914–1918*, Bonn: Rowohlt Taschenbuch, 2014, p. 582.

<sup>80</sup> Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, pp. 344–346.

<sup>81</sup> A. Offer, *The First World War. An Agrarian Interpretation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

<sup>82</sup> Aparicio and Pinilla, “International Trade”, p. 52.

<sup>83</sup> Marchildon, “War”, p. 145.

<sup>84</sup> Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, p. 101.

In Eastern Europe, in contrast, the amount of arable land increased, especially for the cultivation of wheat: “Wheat acreage expanded from less than 14 million [acres], 1885–89, to more than 25 million, 1935–1939. In general, this represented a movement to poorer wheat lands.”<sup>85</sup> Consequently, the per hectare yields of European exporters – which, in the period between 1885 and 1895, were still at the same level as in the European importing countries and significantly higher than those of oversea exporters – fell in relation to their competitors.<sup>86</sup>

The dominance of the extensive growth strategy rose significantly from 1914 onwards. This had important effects on the grain and wheat markets. Contrary to a central assumption in the market model of the classical economy, changes in demand, which are usually expressed in prices that reflect shortages, had almost no effect on the volume of production. The development of land for cereal cultivation was usually not motivated by economic considerations in the narrower sense but was part of politically or geostrategically motivated projects of territorial expansion. It partly served national political objectives and was often the result of more or less controlled migration and colonization processes.<sup>87</sup> For this reason, developments in wheat production and demand were only loosely linked. Moreover, it was extremely difficult to reduce production when demand fell, because this would have meant no longer using the land that had just been developed. Only a few Western European countries in the 1920s and the USA managed to do so in response to the 1929 crisis, and in both cases, there were attractive alternatives.<sup>88</sup> According to calculations by Wilfred Malenbaum, the difference between the area required for wheat cultivation and the area actually cultivated rose to over 10 per cent in the late 1920s. This led to increasing production for industrial processing and rising wheat stocks but not to restrictions on production.<sup>89</sup>

Neither the demand for cereals and especially wheat nor the consumption of products that derived from cereals and especially wheat follow the theoretical models of the free market. In global terms, wheat consumption continued to increase after 1918 because the population grew. However, per capita consumption stagnated and even declined under certain circumstances. In Western and Central Europe – in the regions with the highest wheat imports – population growth was also relatively modest, unlike the substantial rise during the nineteenth century. Here, neither rising incomes nor falling wheat prices led to an

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., pp. 23–29; 49–51, 91–100, 153; Topik and Wells, “Warenketten”, p. 695; Marchildon, “War”, pp. 145 f.

<sup>88</sup> Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, pp. 112–125, 187.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 173.

increase in wheat consumption. In good times, more vegetables and meat were consumed, and in times of crisis, rye, potatoes, or rice were the main sources of income. Accordingly, wheat lacks a correlation between price development and supply and the “demand [for wheat] is exceptionally inelastic”.<sup>90</sup>

## The Wheat Market in the 1920s

The special (in some respects) market for wheat still held an important position in world trade in the 1920s. The volume of the wheat trade was increasingly and precisely recorded in world statistics, the only difference being the extent of Soviet foreign trade: “The trade in wheat grew from an annual average of 686 million bushels for the 1909–1913 crop years to an annual average of 777 million bushels for the 1922–1926 crop years.”<sup>91</sup> Most contemporary studies on the global wheat trade distinguish between five groups of countries. On the exporters’ side, firstly, the so-called “Big Four” from overseas – Argentina, Australia, Canada, and the USA – together accounted for more than 80 per cent of net exports; secondly, the six European exporting countries – Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia (Soviet Union), and Yugoslavia – had a share of 10 to 15 per cent; and thirdly, a number of non-European countries – such as India as well as North African and South American countries – together accounted for about 5 per cent of wheat exports (see Table 3). On the net importers’ side, a distinction was made between European countries from the west, north, south, and centre of the continent and non-European countries; the former accounted for about 25 per cent of world production but could only cover about 75 per cent of their own needs and were therefore the most important group of importers.<sup>92</sup>

The most important change in the order of exporting countries compared to that from the pre-war period was the increasing importance of the “Big Four”, especially Canada, and the decreasing importance of the Eastern European exporting countries. After the end of the First World War, all the countries of Eastern Europe were confronted with diverse and serious challenges, often very different in detail.<sup>93</sup> However, the aim everywhere was to rebuild agricultural

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., pp. 65–90, at 70. See also V. P. Timoshenko, *World Agriculture and the Depression*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1933, pp. 562–565.

<sup>91</sup> Marchildon, “War”, p. 145.

<sup>92</sup> Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, pp. 62–64; Marchildon, “War”, pp. 145 f.

<sup>93</sup> Aldcroft, *Europe’s Third World*, pp. 39–56, 68–93, 106–126; A. Teichova, *Kleinstaaten im Spannungsfeld der Großmächte. Wirtschaft und Politik in Mittel- und Südosteuropa in der*

**Table 3:** Distribution of Average Annual World Wheat Exports, 1909–1938 (percentage).Source: R. M. Stern, “A Century of Food Exports”, *Kyklos* 13 (1960), pp. 44–64, at 58.

Country/Region	1909–1913	1924–1928	1934–1938
USA	14	22	8
Russia (Soviet Union)	22	2	4
Danube countries	16	4	8
Canada	13	35	28
India	7	2	2
Argentina	13	17	19
Australia	7	11	16
Others	8	7	15

production and politically stabilize the “new states” by making social concessions to the newly dominant ethnic groups.

Land reforms – the division of large estates and the handing over of plots of land to former farm workers, being landless or land-poor farmers – were based on social and nationality policy motives. The extent to which interventions in ownership and farm size structures inhibited or promoted agricultural production was as controversial amongst contemporaries as it was in agricultural history research.<sup>94</sup> It is clear that smaller farms tended to grow less wheat than large farms before the war and that the share of wheat consumed on a farm was much higher; therefore, less grain was available for export. Moreover, improvements in the productivity of wheat production were mostly driven by large estates.<sup>95</sup> For this reason, land reforms are often cited as the reason why Eastern European countries were unable to regain their strong positions on world wheat markets.<sup>96</sup> This view is contradicted by the fact that land reforms have been

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*Zwischenkriegszeit*, Munich: Oldenbourg 1988, pp. 15–25; Feinstein et al., *European Economy*, pp. 20–32; Turnock, *Aspects*, pp. 181–190.

<sup>94</sup> U. Müller, “The Impact of Land Reforms on the Constitution of ‘National Economies’ in East Central Europe during the Interwar Period”, in: C. Kreutzmüller, M. Wildt, and M. Zimmermann (eds.), *National Economies. Volks-Wirtschaft, Racism and Economy in Europe between the Wars (1918–1939/45)*, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015, pp. 181–195.

<sup>95</sup> Aparicio and Pinilla, “International Trade”, pp. 49–52.

<sup>96</sup> D. Müller, *Bodeneigentum und Nation. Rumänien, Jugoslawien und Polen im europäischen Vergleich. 1918–1948*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2020, p. 97. See also I. T. Berend, “Agriculture”,

implemented with very different degrees of consistency. In Hungary, for example, the large land holdings traditionally producing mostly wheat remained almost untouched. Nevertheless, neither Hungary nor the Soviet Union, whose agriculture was organized in large operating units after collectivization in the 1930s, were able to redevelop their grain exports in a sustainable manner.

In principle, all Eastern European states, including the Soviet Union, tried to tie in with the development strategies of the pre-war period and to generate investment funds for the implementation of national industrialization plans through income from agricultural exports. The fact that this not quite succeeded until the outbreak of the world economic crisis was due less to changes in the size of farms than to the long duration of the reconstruction process in agriculture, which, after 1918, suffered from continuing armed conflicts, the disintegration of the Eastern European economic area, and the practices of economic nationalism that shaped foreign trade relations and large parts of everyday economic life.<sup>97</sup>

The situation was made more difficult by the fact that overseas competitors wanted and were able to maintain the positions on the Western European markets they had acquired during the war. Experts from the Food Research Institute, founded at Stanford University in 1921, noted: "The decline in Russian, Danubian, and Indian exports being much more than offset by increases from Canada, Argentina, and Australia."<sup>98</sup> The war had also changed the attitudes of many Western European politicians towards their agricultural sectors. Countries such as Germany, Italy, and France were striving for a higher share of self-sufficiency or even complete self-sufficiency, especially in the field of wheat production. The ultimate goal was now to increase wheat production, even if this required considerable investment in breeding new varieties and in improving the soil through fertilization or amelioration. Many grain-importing countries began to subsidize their farmers, increase customs duties, and erect other trade barriers even before the outbreak of the global economic crisis.<sup>99</sup> However, the Eastern European countries that exported agricultural goods reinforced the trend towards protectionism by also pursuing a policy of protective tariffs, mostly in the interest of their young industries.

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in: M. C. Kaser and E. A. Radice, *The Economic History of Eastern Europe 1919–1975, Vol. 1. Economic Structure and Performance between the two Wars*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985, p. 162.

<sup>97</sup> Bideleux and Jeffries, *A History of Eastern Europe*, pp. 422–434; H. Schultz and E. Kubû (eds.), *History and Culture of Economic Nationalism in East Central Europe*, Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2006.

<sup>98</sup> Stanford University, *Wheat Studies of the Food Research Institute* 1 (1924) 1, p. 26.

<sup>99</sup> Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, pp. 101, 157–161, 169 f.; Aparicio and Pinilla, "International Trade", p. 53 f.

## The Wheat Market in the Global Economic Crisis

As a result of the structural features of the wheat market mentioned above and the growing supply from oversea producers, wheat prices fell below pre-war levels as early as 1920–1922, although the reconstruction of agricultural production at that time was not yet complete in many parts of Europe, and food was still lacking in some regions. From 1923 to 1925, agricultural prices rose, and between 1925 and 1929, they fell again, while almost all industrial prices rose, which worsened the terms of trade at the expense of agricultural goods exporters.<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, the size of the “world wheat area” increased by 13 per cent between 1924 and 1929. The “Big Four” even increased the area producing wheat by 20 per cent.<sup>101</sup> This led to a significant drop in wheat prices, whereas, at the same time, stock increased, especially after the good global harvest of 1928.<sup>102</sup>

This analysis of wheat prices shows that the world economic crisis from 1929 to 1933 further reinforced the already existing downward trend. In East-Central and South-eastern Europe, the relationship between industrial and agricultural commodity prices also changed to the disadvantage of the rural population.<sup>103</sup> From 1930 to 1934, the index of all agricultural prices declined by 45 per cent in Poland and by 35 per cent in Romania. Domestic wheat prices fell by about 50 per cent in all Eastern Europe. The corresponding declines in the indexes of prices paid by the peasants were 29 per cent in Poland and 16 per cent in Romania.<sup>104</sup>

The reason for this development was that the grain sector, which was already in a structural crisis, was additionally confronted with a general recession in which consumption stagnated or even declined. Moreover, virtually all countries continued to hamper foreign trade through protectionist measures. Countries such as Germany, France, and Italy increased tariffs on agricultural imports many times between 1929 and 1933, with wheat tariffs particularly being raised to a great extent. Countries such as Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Belgium, which had previously practised mostly free trade, introduced import duties

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**100** Berend, “Agriculture”, pp. 171–174; Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, p. 106.

**101** Timoshenko, *World Agriculture*, p. 553.

**102** Ibid., pp. 565–569; Aparicio and Pinilla, “International Trade”, pp. 56–58; Marchildon, “War”, pp. 147–149.

**103** Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, pp. 8–11. Cf. also J. W. F. Rowe, *Primary Commodities in International Trade*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965; Teichova: *Kleinstaaten*, pp. 177–179.

**104** H. Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe, between the Wars, 1918–1941*, Cambridge: Westview Press, 1945, pp. 80–84.

on agricultural products. At the peak of the crisis in 1933, even countries that had been advocates of economic liberalism since the middle of the nineteenth century controlled their foreign trade through central government institutions. The grain trade was in the hands of state monopolies, and domestic agriculture received state subsidies.<sup>105</sup> However, European importers were not initially able to significantly increase their degree of self-sufficiency, which was around 70 per cent, despite the significant rise in economic nationalism and protectionism. As a result, they remained the most important market for wheat exporters even in the crisis years, as they had amassed 73 per cent of all (global) wheat exports.<sup>106</sup>

In addition to falling demand for wheat on the most important markets, wheat exports from the countries of Central and South-eastern Europe suffered from the fact that the Soviet Union during the global economic crisis made more concerted attempts to tie in with the export traditions of the tsarist empire. In its early years, the Soviet Union had been neither willing nor able to export wheat in the face of wars against external enemies and against civil war at home as well as under the conditions of war communism and the famine of 1920/21. This was first achieved in 1923, with the Soviet leadership accepting supply shortages on the domestic market – which was similar to tsarist Russia.<sup>107</sup> The volume of Soviet wheat exports remained relatively low in the 1920s, as harvests fluctuated widely and production was mostly below pre-war levels, while domestic consumption increased. In addition, even in the period of the New Economic Policy, farmers had little interest in export production because the state-fixed prices were not lucrative.<sup>108</sup> It was not until the good harvests of 1930 and 1931 that Soviet wheat exports of 2.3 million and 5.2 million metric tonnes, respectively, were made possible; however, due to the low world market prices, these brought in considerably less foreign exchange for the state treasury than the leadership around Joseph Stalin had hoped for.<sup>109</sup> In the following two years, wheat exports fell as production plummeted due to poor natural conditions and the consequences of forced collectivization. There was a great famine during this period, which claimed several million lives in the Soviet wheat-growing regions, particularly in Ukraine.<sup>110</sup>

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**105** Timoshenko, *World Agriculture*, pp. 627–629; Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, pp. 12 f.

**106** Marchildon, “War”, p. 147.

**107** Wheat Studies, Vol. I, p. 47.

**108** Timoshenko, *Russia*, pp. 93, 98; Aparicio and Pinilla, “International Trade”, pp. 56 f.

**109** Marchildon, “War”, pp. 144, 146 and 151; Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, p. 56.

**110** R. W. Davies and S. G. Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931–1933*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.



## European Crisis Management Strategies of the “Big Four” and the Countries of Eastern Europe

All in all, the world economic crisis reinforced the global imbalance between rising production and stagnating consumption of wheat, which had already existed before 1929, and thus accelerated the fall in prices. As a result, the wheat crisis was mostly interpreted as an overproduction crisis and is regarded as one of the causes of the extraordinary severity of the Great Depression.<sup>111</sup> The wheat-importing countries reacted to this by strengthening their respective national protectionism, creating incentives to raise domestic prices and, consequently, to increase their own agricultural production. They adopted a policy of economic nationalism as a means of keeping people on the land or of making the nation more self-sufficient in food in the event of war. For example, in the five years from 1927 to 1931, Germany produced 137.2 million bushels and Austria 11.9 million. In 1938, Germany, including Austria, produced 221.2 million. In corresponding periods, Great Britain increased its production from 47.1 to 73.3 million.<sup>112</sup>

It was much more difficult for wheat-exporting countries to find a strategy to protect their farmers from ruin. Farmers in the “Big Four” states had been able to serve a growing market for decades, only being forced to compete since the First World War. They were now faced with a shrinking market. While the wheat trade averaged 808 million bushels per year between 1927 and 1931, which was a slight increase, the amount fell to 572 million bushels between 1932 and 1936.<sup>113</sup> The bad harvest of 1930 also made it clear how important wheat exports were for foreign trade, and in the case of Argentina, Australia, and Canada, also for the entire national economy.<sup>114</sup> It gradually became evident that a further increase in production would only exacerbate the problem. At the same time, only the state seemed to be able to break the vicious circle of procyclical action.

Even if the measures taken by the individual states differed considerably in detail, some common features can be identified in retrospect. Firstly, it now

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**111** Marchildon, “War”, pp. 147–152; F. G. von Graevenitz, *Argument Europa. Internationalismus in der globalen Agrarkrise der Zwischenkriegszeit (1927–1937)*, Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2017, pp. 67f.

**112** P. Hevesy, *World Wheat Planning and Economic Planning in General*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940. Cf. also Marchildon, “War”, p. 153.

**113** *Ibid.*, p. 145.

**114** While the USA had a much larger domestic market for wheat and the highly diversified foreign trade structure of a leading industrialized country, Argentina’s exports consisted primarily of wheat and beef, in the case of Australia wheat and wool, and in the case of Canada exclusively of wheat. Cf. Marchildon, “War”, p. 146.

became blatantly clear that the cereal crisis could not be tackled by national measures alone, instead requiring global solutions; moreover, the creation of regional alliances was also seen as possibly helpful.<sup>115</sup> Secondly, attempts were made everywhere to regulate the market or even to shut it down completely. Both objectives were related. For example, an international agreement on production quotas or the sharing of markets necessarily presupposed control over production or, at least, trade in each individual state. This could not be achieved in the agricultural sector of the economy, which was characterized by a large number of producers by cartel agreements of large private companies; but only through institutions that were either state-owned or were acting on behalf of the state. Thirdly, the “Big Four” states tried to support farmers affected by falling prices or production restrictions by means of subsidies. These state interventions not only burdened national budgets, which were already strained during the global economic crisis, but also often did not meet the expectations placed on them.<sup>116</sup>

Unfortunately, there is no comparative study of crisis management measures. However, there are indications that subsidies for farmers affected by the wheat crisis in the USA and Canada often served as an incentive to increase production as well as tended to exacerbate the crisis.<sup>117</sup> In Australia, wheat acreage continued to grow, and the Australian Wheat Board bought wheat at a guaranteed price, which forced the government to depreciate the currency, making wheat more competitive on external markets but worsening the balance of payments.<sup>118</sup> The Argentinean government took a similar course, buying up three-quarters of the grain harvest in 1933/34. Canada succeeded in reducing the supply, with the government buying up and storing wheat. However, this caused the country to lose its leading position in the wheat market, as it was overtaken by Argentina and Australia. After the crisis seemed to have bottomed out and prices had risen slightly in 1933, the Canadian Wheat Board returned to export promotion.<sup>119</sup>

Despite declining demand, significantly lower prices, and correspondingly low profitability, all the players associated with wheat exports in Eastern Europe also attempted to continue, or even increase, exporting wheat during the Great Depression. The farmers were concerned with making enough income to ensure the subsistence of their families and to be able to meet financial obligations to creditors and the state. Converting production to other crop cultivation

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<sup>115</sup> See under section 4.

<sup>116</sup> Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, pp. 16–20.

<sup>117</sup> Foreman-Peck, *History*, p. 208.

<sup>118</sup> Marchildon, “War”, p. 151.

<sup>119</sup> Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, pp. 14 f.

or to livestock farming did not seem possible in the short or medium term. The Eastern European states had a great interest in the continuation of agricultural exports, as they had taken out relatively high loans and increased imports of industrial products in the years 1924–1929 and, consequently, mostly had a negative balance of payments. Poland, Romania, Hungary, and Yugoslavia were already the most heavily indebted countries in Europe at the beginning of the crisis. The interest and dividend payments of these four countries rose from USD 71 million in 1926 to USD 134 million in 1929 and finally to USD 163 million in 1932.<sup>120</sup> While the value of imports from these countries rose from USD 754 million to USD 922 million between 1925 and 1928, export earnings stagnated, falling to USD 700 million.<sup>121</sup>

In 1930, the wheat harvest in Eastern Europe – unlike overseas – was exceptionally good and offered an opportunity to generate much-needed export revenue by increasing volume despite falling prices.<sup>122</sup> In fact, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia tripled the volume of their grain exports from 1928 to 1933. At the same time, the respective export quotas fell; consequently, the share of agricultural products in exports rose to 80 per cent in Bulgaria, 60 per cent in Hungary, and 50 per cent each in Poland and Romania.<sup>123</sup> This development was based on a large number of government measures designed to promote the export of agricultural goods in general and often of wheat in particular. Producers received subsidies that were intended to enable them to offer wheat on external markets at dumping prices. At the same time, interventions in domestic markets ensured that prices were higher there than on world markets.<sup>124</sup>

These measures could only be implemented through the forced cartelization of agricultural trade, the establishment of state monopolistic trade organizations, and the management of foreign exchange.<sup>125</sup> In Hungary, for example, the export of flour was subsidized by the state, and all agricultural trade was controlled by semi-governmental agencies in the form of cooperatives or joint stock companies.<sup>126</sup> In addition to the state buying up products and subsidizing exports, Romania and Bulgaria, and later Poland and Yugoslavia, enacted laws in 1934 that cancelled part of the debts of many farmers.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Timoshenko, *World Agriculture*, pp. 542 f., 583–591, 596 f.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 603 f.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 607 f.

<sup>123</sup> Teichova, *Kleinstaaten*, pp. 177 f.

<sup>124</sup> Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, pp. 17–20.

<sup>125</sup> Teichova, *Kleinstaaten*, pp. 178f.

<sup>126</sup> Aldcroft, *Europe's Third World*, p. 124.

<sup>127</sup> Berend, "Agriculture", pp. 176–182.

All these measures taken by the countries of Central and South-eastern Europe could only dampen the consequences of a structural agricultural crisis exacerbated by the economic slump for their farmers and farm workers. These measures were also connected with serious side effects and inefficiencies, creating an enormous burden on already strained national budgets as well as operating at the expense of domestic consumers. As national measures in each case, they caused ruinous competition between the Eastern European states. In this situation, it became increasingly clear that only internationally coordinated measures could overcome the procyclical vicious circle of Western European protectionism and Eastern European export promotion.<sup>128</sup> The depth of the crisis and the obvious unsuitability of nation-state policy instruments meant that national elites were prepared to hand over competences in the field of economic policy, especially agricultural policy, to Europe.<sup>129</sup> If the Eastern European states wanted to achieve a result favourable to them at an international or European level, they had to recognize their common interests and act together despite all other political differences.

## 4 Internationalization as a Crisis Management Strategy

### Before the First World War

The globalization of the wheat markets was linked to diverse processes of the internationalization of politics and science. The most important institutions in this respect in the period before the First World War were the International Congresses of Agriculture (ten congresses between 1889 and 1914) and the International Institute of Agriculture, which was created in 1905 and based in Rome.<sup>130</sup> The problems of Western and Central European agriculture, which resulted from the competition between America and Russia, were on the agenda at the first agricultural congress, initiated by the French agricultural politician Jules Méline and organized in Paris. Amongst other things, the pros and cons of protectionism and state agricultural subsidies were discussed. The congresses in The Hague

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<sup>128</sup> Graevenitz, *Argument Europa*, pp. 67–69.

<sup>129</sup> A. S. Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, London: Routledge, 2000.

<sup>130</sup> K. Naumann, “Verflechtung durch Internationalisierung. Die ostmitteleuropäische Partizipation an Internationalen Organisationen”, in: Hadler and Middell (eds.), *Handbuch einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas*, pp. 327–329; Nützenadel, “A Green International”.

(1891) and Brussels (1895) focused on “internal” counterstrategies, such as improvements in agricultural credit and the establishment of cooperatives. The congresses in Budapest (1896), Lausanne (1898), Paris (1900), and Rome (1903) focused on demands for restrictions on futures trading by regulating stock exchanges and for a bimetallic currency system as an alternative to the gold standard. German representatives put forward these demands, often supported by representatives from the Habsburg monarchy and Switzerland.

The congresses were therefore not only places for professional dialogue between agricultural experts from different countries but also arenas for the representation of economic interests and forums – where the shaping of globalization, according to its own rules, was promoted. At the Budapest agricultural congress, criticism was directed primarily at the conditions on the wheat market. For example, the chairman of the German Association of Farmers (Bund der Landwirte), Berthold von Ploetz spoke of a “stock market Moloch” dominated by “international big business”.<sup>131</sup> In order to protect agriculture on the European continent, the creation of a European customs union consisting of France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Austria-Hungary and the establishment of an international organization to regulate the grain trade were discussed, which was advocated in particular by the Swiss Ernst Laur. Neither initiative was implemented partly because Germany lost interest in the agricultural congresses from 1903 onwards, as they were considered to be dominated by France. The congresses now concentrated more on technical and agricultural topics again.<sup>132</sup>

The creation of an international organization to deal with the global grain trade was also discussed elsewhere. In 1903, the agricultural societies of Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, and Serbia founded an international commission to coordinate the wheat and flour trades. The aim was to encourage European producers to cooperate in marketing their own products in order to strengthen their position in global competition. However, the commission was ineffective because farmers only cooperated cautiously. The regulation of the sugar market by the International Sugar Convention (1902), which was signed in Brussels by all major European countries except Russia, was more successful. It provided for the abolition of import restrictions and export subsidies and for the equal treatment of cane and beet sugar. The International Sugar Council would

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**131** Cited in R Aldenhoff-Hübinger, *Agrarpolitik und Protektionismus. Deutschland und Frankreich im Vergleich 1879–1914*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002, p. 53.

**132** Ibid., pp. 42–70. See also R. Aldenhoff-Hübinger, “Landwirtschaft im Spannungsfeld von Nationalisierung und Globalisierung. Getreidehandel und Agrarkrisen in Westeuropa, 1850–1914”, *Themenportal Europäische Geschichte* (2007), <http://www.europa.clio-online.de/2007/Article=206>.

monitor its implementation. In fact, this international agreement ended the subsidy race between the main producers of beet sugar: Germany, the Habsburg monarchy, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands.<sup>133</sup>

The hope for an international order of the grain market played a decisive role in the founding history of the International Institute of Agriculture. David Lubin – who was born in the Russian part of Poland in 1849, came to the USA as a child, later searched for gold in California, then successfully built up a mail-order business, and, from 1885, grew cereals and fruit – had already presented his idea of an international chamber of agriculture at the Budapest agricultural congress. Lubin, unlike many European representatives of agricultural interest groups, especially from Germany, was less concerned with state intervention. In agreement with the American anti-trust movement, he considered an international association of farmers to be urgently needed, which, on the one hand, was to form a counterweight to industry and trade organized in large companies and international cartels and syndicates. On the other hand, he hoped that this would balance the interests of American and European producers of agricultural goods, especially wheat, and of all producers and consumers who suffered from price fluctuations caused largely by speculators. He promoted his ideas on a trip to Europe until he finally received support in Italy.

In 1905, a conference attended by governments and agricultural organizations from 41 countries decided to establish the International Institute of Agriculture in Rome (the predecessor of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). Contrary to what Lubin and the Italian government had sought, the institute was not given instruments to effectively protect farmers from cartels and speculation. Accordingly, even if the institute was not able to intervene directly in the agricultural market, its collection of data from all over the world on agricultural production, prices, farm workers' wages, credit opportunities, and so on had improved the functionality of the market through greater transparency.<sup>134</sup>

Both the history of the agricultural congresses and of the International Institute of Agriculture are told in the historiography as part of a Western intertwining process. The Habsburg monarchy – particularly Hungary, which was the leader in agricultural and agrarian policy issues – played a constitutive and important role everywhere. However, there is some evidence that other actors

<sup>133</sup> Nützenadel, "A Green International"; Graevenitz, *Argument Europa*, pp. 56–59.

<sup>134</sup> M. L'Eplattenier, *Die Träger der internationalen Zusammenarbeit auf dem Gebiete der Landwirtschaft*, Winterthur: Keller, 1961, pp. 47–55; W. Kaiser and J. Schot, *Writing the Rules for Europe. Experts, Cartels, and International Organizations*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 49–58.

from Eastern Europe also sought solutions to the agricultural, or wheat, crisis in an international context at an early stage. The Hungarian landowner and politician Sándor Károlyi, for example, organized an international agricultural congress in Budapest as early as 1885, which was not (as had been customary) limited to descriptions of the situation in various areas of agriculture but resolutely sought ways out of the “international agricultural crisis”. Only a few years after the introduction of protective tariffs by some states, experts argued that long-term stable trade agreements or even a customs union including Germany, France, and Austria-Hungary would be a more effective instrument in the competition against North America.<sup>135</sup> Jenő Gaál, an economist at the Technical University of Budapest, proposed a different solution at the same congress. He warned of the agronomic and economic consequences of a cereal monoculture – taking little account of crop rotation, being detrimental to livestock farming, and making the crop too dependent on export markets – and pleaded for the reduction of wheat production.<sup>136</sup>

Russia, as an emerging wheat exporter before 1914, was interested in international regulatory measures of a very different kind. In 1896, Ernst von Kotzebue, the Russian envoy to the USA, proposed a bilateral agreement to Richard Olney, the US secretary of state, to “withhold from the market the wheat not needed for domestic consumption in their countries, thereby raising the price to a level corresponding to the standard rate”. He reported a positive Russian experience with intervention in the wheat market and expressed the conviction that these measures would be in the interest of the two largest exporters of grain. Citing their liberal principles of trade, the USA rejected these measures.<sup>137</sup>

The examples above confirm the thesis that internationalist initiatives often came from business circles.<sup>138</sup> In the case of agriculture, its protagonists were often supported by governments, although actors from Eastern Europe were also involved. The motives and goals for the development of international solution strategies were manifold. They ranged from sealing off global market interdependencies to attempts to create cartel-like alliances for joint market dominance and the establishment of regulatory mechanisms to order the market.

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**135** A. Vári, *Herren und Landwirte. Ungarische Aristokraten und Agrarier auf dem Weg in die Moderne (1821–1910)*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2008, pp. 145–150.

**136** Kiss, “Gesellschaftshistorische Aspekte”, pp. 145 f.

**137** *Monatliche Nachrichten zur Regulierung der Getreidepreise*, ed. by G. Ruhland, 1. Jg. (1900/1901), pp. 46f.

**138** Nützenadel, “A Green International”.

## Internationalist Strategies to Fight the Wheat Crisis in the Interwar Period

The First World War naturally represented a massive setback for all international institutions and projects aimed at economic cooperation and integration. At the same time, a more intensive cooperation within the Entente and between the Entente and its oversea food suppliers was established. Numerous networks established during this period continued to operate in the post-war period and influenced various bodies of the League of Nations (LoN). After 1918, both the victorious powers and the LoN, dominated by the winners of the war, pursued an apparently plausible goal in terms of the world economy: a return to free trade and the gold standard.<sup>139</sup> Only the confrontation with the Great Depression and the growing economic nationalism everywhere made it clear to the experts of the Economic and Financial Organization in the LoN that these goals did not meet the complex requirements of the post-war situation.

In the course of preparations for the World Financial and Economic Conference, held in London in 1933, advisors of the LoN, who had previously been strict free traders, developed flexible responses to the protectionism of nation-states. They now advocated a combination of international solutions, regional agreements, and bilateral negotiations that would at least reduce customs duties and other trade barriers, as their complete abolition was considered completely illusory. Agreements to regulate global commodity markets by setting quotas for production and trade, for example for coal, meat, and especially wheat, now also seemed desirable or, at least, the lesser evil.<sup>140</sup>

If now “the invention of international market intervention [. . .] was the central element of internationalism in the world agricultural crisis” of the interwar period,<sup>141</sup> this was not primarily due to a departure of liberal economists from the ideology of free trade. The fact that the representatives of national agricultural protectionism also took up international cooperation from the pre-war period as early as the mid-1920s was just as important. The International Commission of Agriculture (Commission Internationale d’Agriculture, CIA), founded in 1889 on the fringes of the first International Congress of Agriculture (mentioned previously), played a central role in promoting international cooperation.<sup>142</sup> Even

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<sup>139</sup> A. Tooze, *Sintflut. Die Neuordnung der Welt 1916–1931*, Munic: Siedler, 2015, pp. 17–27.

<sup>140</sup> P. Clavin, *Securing the World Economy. The Reinvention of the League of Nations, 1920–1946*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2013, p. 104 and passim; Graevenitz, *Argument Europa*, p. 81–86.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 107–130.



then, an alliance of Europe's agricultural stakeholders against competition from overseas was being sought, as the Polish social scientist Sigismund Gargas emphasized in retrospect.<sup>143</sup> The division of Europe by war, which the victorious French power continued to pursue after 1918, and the general shortage of food temporarily put the advocates of European protectionism on the defensive.

However, developments in the cereal markets encouraged a return to common agricultural interests in Germany and France. In 1925, the CIA was re-established at a conference in Bern. It involved representatives of 68 agricultural associations, coming from not only large Western states, such as Germany, France, Italy, and the USA, but also Eastern European states, namely Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. At the first official meeting of the CIA in Paris in March 1927, the 6 countries from Eastern Europe were represented amongst the 21 states attending.<sup>144</sup> The CIA was soon called the Green International, that is to say an institutionalized alliance of agricultural interest groups that opposed the liberal orientation of the first World Economic Conference, organized by the LoN in Geneva in 1927.

This orientation was not only based on "politics of interests" but also the expression of a sociopolitical model of "agrarianism", which emphasized the special features of life in the countryside and work in agriculture. The aim was to create a society of small owners in which the rules of rural family economy determined the values of an inwardly rather weak state that had to protect the rural population from the dangers of globalization.<sup>145</sup> The interest groups from Eastern Europe, that is to say farmers' and agrarian parties, played a much greater role than in Western Europe, especially in the 1920s, and they undoubtedly had a strong influence on the CIA's agrarianist model. They also formed an essential basis for the strength of the Green International due to their membership numbers.<sup>146</sup> To what extent Eastern European representatives at the CIA, such as the Pole Stanisław Humnicki and the Czech Vladislav Brdlík, determined political action alongside well-known agrarians, such as Ernst Laur, Jules Gautier, and Andreas Hermes, has not yet been investigated.

In terms of trade policy, the CIA aimed at the creation of European agricultural protectionism – a shielding of national markets through coordinated measures, such as the levying of import duties and the introduction of non-tariff trade barriers – and a global organization of agricultural markets through production

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**143** S. Gargas, *Die Grüne Internationale*, Halberstadt: H. Meyer's Buchdruckerei, 1927, pp. 14–20.

**144** Thus, the Soviet Union, Romania, Bulgaria, and Lithuania were missing.

**145** Müller et al., "Agrarismus", pp. 16–22, 94–100; Graevenitz, *Argument Europa*, pp. 130–134.

**146** *Ibid.*, pp. 137f.

and foreign trade planning by means of international commodity agreements.<sup>147</sup> The cartels established in some industrial sectors, which also combined protection and intergovernmental cooperation, served as a model. The Eastern European member associations linked these two objectives with their demand for an intra-European system of tariff preferences.<sup>148</sup> Their support for the protection of Western European markets against cheap cereals from overseas was made conditional on the creation of privileged access for their exports to these markets. The willingness of the Western European associations to respond to this demand depended on how they assessed the attitude of domestic farmers and the chances of being able to enforce their own demands against overseas grain exporters.

The stability of the alliance between national agricultural lobbyists in the CIA also depended on substantive and institutional competition – between the Economic and Financial Organization of the LoN, together with its previously dominant anti-protectionist experts, and the International Institute of Agriculture. The International Institute of Agriculture had intensified its activities since the mid-1920s particularly because the leadership of fascist Italy had recognized that the institute, with its global orientation, could be a valuable instrument for foreign policy and foreign trade interests and therefore the government significantly increased its influence in the organization. With the foundation of the Permanent International Commission of Agricultural Associations (Commission Internationale Permanente des Associations Agricoles, CIPA), an organization under the control of the International Institute of Agriculture was created, which was in direct competition with the CIA. The main focus of the commission was exerting influence on the LoN as well as representation of the agricultural interest groups at the international congresses organized by the LoN.<sup>149</sup> Although the CIA was able to assert itself against the CIPA, the CIA came under National Socialist influence from 1933 onwards. Parts of the agrarianist ideology and the idea of international commodity agreements were attractive to National Socialist Germany. Conversely, organizations represented in the CIA were interested in German concepts for the organization of the agricultural market and the preservation of the peasantry, such as the *Reichsnährstand* as a statutory corporation of farmers and the *Reichserbhofgesetz*, which was a law linking farm succession to the principle of racial origin.

The competition between international agricultural organizations is not just an interesting part of the history of internationalism. Its results had a great

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., pp. 143–145.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., pp. 149f.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., pp. 161–165.

significance for the conditions of the international agricultural markets and also for the Eastern European wheat exporters. Between 1930 and 1933, 20 international conferences on the agricultural crisis took place, at which appropriate multilateral solutions were sought and compromises were reached in the face of conflicting interests. If one asks about the role of the Eastern European countries in this process, it must first be pointed out that the Soviet Union was initially excluded. Nevertheless, the other Eastern European countries, which, in contemporary sources, were mostly summarized as the Danube countries, played an important role from the beginning. Amongst the 20 conferences, 7 alone were used by representatives of the Eastern European countries for internal communication. The core was formed by the four wheat-exporting countries, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Bulgaria, as well as Poland, which exported very little wheat, instead trading rye and barley as well as various other agricultural products. Polish agricultural policy-makers had recognized that the problems of the wheat trade were particularly serious and that regional alliances and international solutions in this area could serve as a model for other commodities.

Since the World Economic Conference in Geneva, the LoN had attempted at various conferences to reach agreements to reduce or at least freeze customs duties. However, France did not want to accept any restrictions on its customs policy sovereignty regarding agriculture in the country. The Eastern European states also rejected any of these measures.<sup>150</sup> First, they represented the interests of a large part of the Eastern European industries, which lacked international competitiveness. Second, they rejected these on principle because customs policy was a political instrument that could be used as a means of exerting pressure in foreign relations. Third, and perhaps ultimately the most decisive reason for rejecting the LoN's trade policy initiatives, was that they envisaged no, or only minimal, opening of the Western European agricultural markets.<sup>151</sup>

In March 1930, after numerous failed attempts, the LoN asked its member states by means of questionnaires for proposals for measures to improve relations between industrial and agricultural states. The Romanian minister of trade and industry, Virgil Madgearu, endeavoured to find a common position amongst the Eastern European agricultural-exporting countries and invited his colleagues from Yugoslavia and Hungary to a meeting in Bucharest. Madgearu had studied economics at Leipzig University, was the leading head of a left-wing agrarianism

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>151</sup> W. Szulc, "Die Warschauer Agrarkonferenz (August 1930) und die Formierung des Agrarblocks in Ostmitteleuropa", *Studia Historiae Oeconomicae* 20 (1993), pp. 169–170.

in Romania, and sat on the cabinet as a representative of the Peasants' Party.<sup>152</sup> Madgearu wanted to achieve the taking out of the most-favoured nation clause contained in most of the trade contracts for the grain trade. He argued that deleting this clause would not harm Western European farmers and would only minimally reduce the sales of the oversea cereal exporters who dominate the market while greatly helping Eastern European cereal producers. Madgearu's demand was rejected by an overwhelming majority at the Geneva Conference for a Tariff Truce in February 1930 because many saw it as an attack on a fundamental principle of free trade policy. In Bucharest, however, he managed to persuade his colleagues from Hungary and Yugoslavia to agree to his aim and to return the questionnaires with uniform demands to Geneva. However, he did not succeed in eliminating the competition between the Eastern European wheat exporters, which was also his aim.

At the end of August 1930, Poland organized in Warsaw an international conference of agricultural countries, in which almost all Eastern European states took part.<sup>153</sup> The regionalist character of the conference is reflected in the participation of Czechoslovakia, which was the only industrialized country in Eastern Europe, and in the observer status of Finland. Once again, it was a question, firstly, of cooperation between the states themselves and, secondly, of joint action at an international level. The states agreed to facilitate mutual trade by amending or abolishing veterinary regulations in particular, which had mainly served as non-tariff barriers to trade. An agreement to abolish export subsidies mainly affected the wheat trade and was a first measure against ruinous competition in the form of mutually outbidding subsidies. In addition, in Warsaw and at the now regular meetings of the Eastern European agricultural states, measures were agreed on for mutual information and coordinated action on export markets, which helped to ensure a certain regulation of the market and, above all, a stabilization of prices. Nevertheless, these objectives were only achieved to a limited extent due to conflicting interests and technical reasons, such as the lack of storage capacity.

The demand originally made by Romania and then again by Yugoslavia and Hungary for a general deletion of the most-favoured nation clause was modified in Warsaw, with supporters seeking only a temporary preference to be granted to European agricultural products, especially cereals, on all European

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<sup>152</sup> R. Daskalov, "Agrarian ideologies and peasant movements in the Balkans", in: R. Daskalov and D. Mishkoca (eds.), *Entangled History of the Balkan, Vol. 2. Transfers of Political Ideologies and Institutions*, Leiden: Brill 2014, pp. 314–321.

<sup>153</sup> Apart from the Soviet Union, only Lithuania was missing, whose relations with Poland were very tense.

markets. In this form, preferential tariffs were also accepted by conference subjects who, like Czechoslovakia, had no direct interest in this point. This increased the assertiveness of the Eastern Europeans in the international arena because the members of the “agricultural bloc” formed in Warsaw jointly stood up for the demands decided on in the conference.<sup>154</sup>

Subsequently, the CIA leadership took up the idea of preferential tariffs for grain. Through their growing influence in the Agricultural Expert Commission, founded in 1929, the preferential tariffs became an important element of the strategies discussed at the LoN to overcome the agricultural crisis and the world economic crisis. Therefore, in 1931, the LoN, which until then had been a major proponent of the principles of free trade and thus also of most-favoured nation status, founded a Committee to Study the Problem of the Export of Future Harvest Surpluses of Cereals, which promoted the development of a European preference system.

The concept received further impetus after the British Empire Economic Conference, held in Ottawa in 1932, introduced a system of “imperial preference” in trade policy, which privileged the exchange of goods between Great Britain, the autonomous dominion, and colonies over trade with third countries. This step, which was exceptional for the traditionally free-trading Great Britain, would not have come about without the predicament of the Great Depression, but it was made easier by the historical heritage of the empire. Similarly, Eastern European farmers justified their aspired privilege on Western European markets by referring to the centuries-old intra-European trade relations.<sup>155</sup>

There are also references in some European plans of the late 1920s to the idea of a common and protected market for Western European industry and Eastern European agriculture.<sup>156</sup> Amongst the many reasons for their failure and for the triumph of nationalism in the 1930s is the fact that major Western actors always sought pan-European customs alliances when it seemed certain to them that either their own state or, at least, no other state would be given a hegemonic position in these alliances.<sup>157</sup>

The climax and turning point in the movement initiated by the Eastern European states for a European grain market protected from the outside world was the Stresa Agricultural Conference in September 1932, where delegates from all the major European states, except the Scandinavian countries, Spain, and the

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154 Szulc, “Die Warschauer Agrarkonferenz”, pp. 169–177.

155 Marchildon, “War”, pp. 155–157.

156 Graevenitz, *Argument Europa*, pp. 247–263.

157 This applies more or less to the trade policy aspects of the European policy concepts of Aristide Briand and André Tardieux, but also to the plan for a German-Austrian customs union.

Soviet Union, were to agree on proposals with which the Study Commission for the European Union, founded in 1930 by the LoN, was to represent a common European position at the World Financial and Economic Conference in 1933. The crisis in the Eastern European agricultural states was at the centre of these proposals. In retrospect, the Stresa conference represents an extremely ambivalent event. On the one hand, proposals were made to combat the wheat crisis at an international level, which had a considerable impact. In addition to a large number of foreign trade agreements, which were to constitute an intra-European preference system, there were various credit programmes that were to benefit both indebted agricultural states and their farms as well as the establishment of a fund for the improvement of economic structures in agricultural Eastern Europe, which was to be financed by all participating states. On the other hand, Stresa's internationalism was not global but exclusively European, in other words, regionally oriented. In addition to economic and European policy approaches, power policy objectives played a central role. France particularly tried to attract the Eastern European states through generous offers, thereby reducing the influence of Germany and Italy. After this succeeded only to a limited extent, because states like Romania did not want to give up important sales markets, the French lost interest in the European project.<sup>158</sup>

Before regional solutions of a different kind, such as the *Großwirtschaftsraum* (greater German economic area), prevailed, attempts to solve the wheat crisis through a global approach reached their peak. The International Wheat Conference in London in 1933 is considered "the first global effort by major wheat producers to manage the world trade in wheat by setting export quotas and reducing the volume of land seeded to wheat".<sup>159</sup> In fact, all major wheat-exporting and -importing countries participated in this conference. The Soviet Union was also present, although it was not yet a member of the LoN and had not yet been recognized by other important participating states under international law.

The wheat-exporting countries agreed at the conference on two measures to stabilize wheat prices and to avoid overproduction in the future. Firstly, the volume of wheat trade was to be reduced to 560 million bushels in 1933/34 and to only a slightly larger quantity in 1934/35.<sup>160</sup> To this end, appropriate quotas were set for the individual exporting countries. Canada was allowed to export 200 million bushels, Argentina 110 million, Australia 105 million, the Danube

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<sup>158</sup> Graevenitz, *Argument Europa*, pp. 274–296.

<sup>159</sup> Marchildon, "War", p. 152.

<sup>160</sup> One bushel corresponds to 27.2 kilogrammes. In 1931 and 1932, the global wheat trade was still more than 800 bushels. Cf. Marchildon, "War", pp. 157 f.

countries 50 million, the USA 47 million, and other states, including the Soviet Union, 48 million. Secondly, the acreage used for wheat cultivation should be reduced by 15 per cent in a few years. However, only the “Big Four” committed themselves to this. The Danube countries again justified their strict refusal to reduce their own wheat cultivation area by even a single acre by referring to their historical rights to Western European markets. In doing so, they referred to the loss of their once very good position in the world market caused by the world war. In their view, “[a]creage movements in the Danube countries were not of international concern so long as their exports were below the prewar level”. Consequently, “acreage reductions should be made by countries where the greatest expansion over prewar acreage had taken place”.<sup>161</sup>

Other criteria discussed in London for determining shares in the global wheat trade and for the obligation to reduce cultivated areas were the respective production costs, the importance of the wheat economy in the respective economies, and the existence of alternatives to wheat production. Taking these criteria into account, the aim was to force US farmers in particular to reduce their production and export of wheat. This was also done in the 1930s, flanked by the economic policy of the New Deal (1933–1939). However, all other wheat-exporting countries, after a short time, had only partially or not at all fulfilled the commitments they had made in London. This also applied to the wheat-importing states, which had promised not to expand their own production, to gradually reduce customs duties, and to promote wheat consumption. The Wheat Advisory Commission, also founded in London in 1933, was unable to prevent the violations of the agreement, but it did document them.<sup>162</sup>

## 5 Summary

We found that Eastern European wheat exporters were able to hold their own very well until the First World War in one of the first truly global markets. This was based on extensive production growth, especially observable in Russia and Romania. The Eastern European cereal monoculture naturally represented a structural disadvantage for modern Eastern European agriculture in the medium and long term. On the other hand, it formed an irreplaceable basis for the intensive integration of Eastern Europe with the world economy. In Hungary in

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<sup>161</sup> Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, p. 188.

<sup>162</sup> Marchildon, “War”, pp. 157 f.

particular, there were also attempts to counter the increasing international competition on the wheat market with a mix of protectionism, increasing the degree of processing of export goods, and the diversification of agricultural production and exports. In the Kingdom of Poland, on the other hand, a constellation occurred that was rather rare in Eastern Europe, in which the declining international competitiveness of agriculture promoted the industrialization of some subregions.

In the 1920s, the tendency towards overproduction on the global wheat market increased significantly. One reason for this was that exporters from overseas had taken over a large part of the wheat supply of Western European countries under the conditions of the First World War and tried to maintain this position after the war. In this constellation, the structurally induced inability of wheat producers to react to changes in market conditions unfolded. During the Great Depression, the Eastern European states intervened in the grain trade with previously unimaginable intensity, despite their high level of debt, and tried to prevent a decline in agricultural exports through subsidies. They also took up approaches to internationalist strategies from the pre-war period and developed the concept of a European system of tariff preferences. This was transferred to the LoN by the International Commission of Agriculture, where it replaced older market liberal concepts. A decisive prerequisite for this development was the establishment of an Eastern European agricultural bloc, which had a great deal of influence in the CIA, a fact that has, so far, been given little attention by the historiography on European integration.

Considering the failure of European and global attempts at market regulation and the limited effectiveness of national measures to cope with the wheat crisis, it is not surprising that Eastern European wheat exporters were quite willing to assume the role assigned to them within the framework of the *Großwirtschaftsraum* that was formed from 1933 onwards.<sup>163</sup> In the following years, they increased their share of world trade and, due to the barter trade system, were less affected by the renewed fall in prices on the global wheat market in 1939 than the overseas producers were.<sup>164</sup> In the same year, however, the Second World War began, again with catastrophic consequences for Eastern European farmers.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized once again that the Eastern European grain economy was extraordinarily closely intertwined with the world economy between 1870 and 1939. It is true that, as a result of war, revolution, and political

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<sup>163</sup> Cf. from the rich literature S. G. Gross, *Export Empire. German Soft Power in Southeastern Europe, 1890–1945*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2015.

<sup>164</sup> Malenbaum, *World Wheat Economy*, p. 212.



transformation in the years after the war, Eastern Europe's share of the global wheat market declined dramatically. In the world economic crisis, foreign trade in general and the wheat trade in particular collapsed. However, this does not mean that one could speak of a general deglobalization. Both the Soviet Union and the Danube countries made different efforts to revitalize and to restructure the wheat trade and increasingly made use of international organizations.



Andrzej Michalczyk

### 3 Informal Networks and Ordinary People's Agency: A Microhistory of Global Migrations from Upper Silesia, 1830s–1930s

If one looks at a map of the Oder basin in Silesia published in 1896 (see Figure 1), one notices on closer inspection an inconspicuous but unusual place that is part of the large Oder village of Schalkowitz not far from Poppelau: Zadupie.

In Polish, this name is not pleasing. The direct German translation, which does not sound very attractive either, is “Am Arsch der Welt” (which literally translates as “in the arse of the world” and means “far off the beaten track”). Those who came from the hamlet probably did not have as easy life. For Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who travelled through the region in 1790, Upper Silesia was already “far from educated people, at the end of the empire”, but he still visited the industrially progressive, developed townships. In the perception of Prussian travellers of the nineteenth century, Upper Silesia and its population were uneducated and backward as well as had problems with alcohol consumption.<sup>1</sup> Coming from this “primitive” region was like a social stigma. We can assume that the origin of Zadupie inspired even less respect. In this regard, it is astonishing that in the 1910s and 1920s lavish, modern houses were built in rows along the road between the highly regarded, at least locally, Schalkowitz village centre and remote Zadupie. The street, which until then had received little attention, was renamed Berliner Straße in the vernacular;<sup>2</sup> the elevation of inhabitants living far off the beaten track to “Berliners” is unmistakable. But what contributed to this surprising turnaround? What helped the “ordinary” people from disadvantaged places such as Zadupie to build up an economic, social, and cultural capital? An analysis of migration and mobility in this local area with a microhistorical perspective is highly revealing here.

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1 See H. Dobbelsmann, V. Husberg, and W. Weber (eds.), *“Das preußische England”: Berichte über die industriellen und sozialen Zustände in Oberschlesien zwischen 1780 und 1876*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993.

2 D. Dobrowolska and D. Myrcik-Markowska, “Zróżnicowanie klasowe i społeczne wsi Siolkowice Stare i Nowe od połowy XIX w. do 1955 r.” [Class and Social Differences in Siolkowice (German: Schalkowitz), 1850–1955], in: M. Gładysz (ed.), *Siolkowice Stare*, Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1958, pp. 37–69, at 60.



**Figure 1:** Map of the Oder basin in Silesia, 1896 (<https://polska-org.pl/904052,foto.html>; <http://www.turze.net/historia/map/os1896-1.jpg> [accessed 28 April 2019]).

The neighbouring villages of Poppelau and Schalkowitz and the surrounding villages in the northern of Oppeln County are outstanding examples of a culture of migration in the entire Upper Silesia region. Inhabitants migrated from here in all directions and developed bilocal transmigrant routes to Russian Poland, the province of Posen/Wielkopolska, the cities of the German Reich, the US states of Wisconsin and Minnesota, and the South Brazilian province of Paraná. The high mobility of the people from Poppelau and Schalkowitz was made possible by the gradual emancipation of serfs, which followed similar processes in other regions of Upper Silesia. By abolishing serfdom and the landlord's right of residence, this mobility increased massively in many parts of the region from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards. The different routes and complex backgrounds of these migrations have hardly been explored to this day, although the settlement of the people from Poppelau and Schalkowitz in extremely different places offers an unusually complex insight into the phenomenon of migration in a broader, even global, context.

In the following chapter, I will therefore discuss my methodological approach against the background of current research findings and show the need for a microhistorical drilling down into the past that combines different levels of analysis – from local to global. In the next step, this drilling down will make it possible to systematize the sometimes surprising migration cycles and to discuss their socio-cultural contexts of origin in a very small space. This will unlock the dynamics of migration systems and the social, cultural, and political repercussions of migrants on their places of origin. Finally, I can show the connection between informal migrant networks and the state's claim to control and manipulate it. Only against this background does the power of the historical actors become visible, even if they come from such modest areas as the inhabitants of Zadupie.

There are two new studies on global migration and mobility from East-Central and Southeast Europe in English. According to Tara Zahra, who authored *The Great Departure*, we know far too little about “the situation the migrants sought to escape”, “the impact of their departure on their homelands”, and “the role of their own governments in keeping them home”.<sup>3</sup> The author focuses mainly on the third aspect, analysing migration as an “instrument of policy [for] both domestic and international goals” and the expansion of state power for manipulating and controlling migration. Since the first two aspects are usually viewed from a macro perspective, being cursory and rarely considering the local conditions of the migrants, the knowledge gained is rather limited.

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3 T. Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2017.

Oppositely, there is the outstanding book by Ulf Brunnbauer: *Globalizing Southeastern Europe*.<sup>4</sup> The exemplary analysis very convincingly comprises three levels of investigation (macro, meso, and micro) and also considers in detail the interactions between them – an approach that I will make use of. Brunnbauer regards migration as “an opportune lens through which to study historical change in the region” and follows the research credo of Leslie P. Moch: “If we focus on the macroeconomic level alone, we lose the actors who are essential to this drama, dismissing their agendas and denying the factor of human agency. If we focus on the personal alone, we miss the opportunity to connect migration with historical change.” Consequently, the history of European migration is “the history of European social life” and is “embedded in collective patterns of familial and communal social practice”.<sup>5</sup> Brunnbauer also uses the concept of transnational in a very productive way and draws attention “to the agency of migrants (and their non-migratory interlocutors), to the ties they build, and to the dynamic changes in social configurations engendered by migration”.<sup>6</sup> This conceptualization enables him to present and explain the “dynamics of migration systems”, which includes rapid adaptation to new framework conditions and opportunities as soon as migration becomes established as an economic strategy as well as the repercussions brought about by migrants in changing the prevailing local value system. Only in this way can the close interactions between regional, seasonal, and transatlantic migration systems and their deep integration into local life plans and career expectations be demonstrated in a very small space. This is the only way to understand how migration becomes an indispensable element of local culture – a migration habitus. Brunnbauer’s approach also focuses on the complex repercussions of migration processes on sending communities, something that has seldom been done in research thus far. Finally, the interactions between emigration policy, state-building, state control, and political intervention ultimately occupy most of the space of his book.

Based on Brunnbauer’s approach, I would like to shift the focus away from the increasing state control and emigration policy to the human agency and multivector migration networks. I am more interested in the migrants themselves and how they dealt with governmental policies. Why did they seek to leave their homelands? And to what extent did their decision to migrate impact their home communities? Accordingly, what comes next is based on a bottom-up, microhistorical approach focusing more on “ordinary people” and their agency than on

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<sup>4</sup> U. Brunnbauer, *Globalizing Southeastern Europe: Emigrants, America, and the State Since the Late Nineteenth Century*, New York: Lexington Books, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2, 7.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

the governmental policies. Against this background, two more migrations studied are highly inspiring.

In contrast to the geographically broad monographs discussed above, Krystyna Duda-Dziewierz microsociologically investigated a single Galician village and the migration behaviour of its inhabitants as early as the 1930s.<sup>7</sup> Her study opened up completely new perspectives on the culture of migration in the most confined spaces (central versus peripheral districts) and on local social life (old residents versus newcomers), making the (global) movements and networks of the villagers comprehensible in the first place. Matthias Kaltenbrunner achieved similar results in his investigation of multilocal migration movements from the surroundings of the East Galician Sniatyn.<sup>8</sup> His analysis of informal, transnational networks of migrants (as multivector networks) along a longer historical timeline is methodologically inspiring.

In my study, I have also been able to use Michael Esch's summarizing reflections on transnational practices, effects, and paradigms in East-Central Europe to hone my terminology. With these instruments, it has become possible to study the phenomenon of transmigration in its transnational, transregional, translocal, and, last but not least, transcultural facets over a period of 100 years based on the experiences and lifeworlds in the county of Oppeln.

## 1 Emigration Boom from Schalkowitz and Poppelau

The first destination of the emigrants from Schalkowitz and Poppelau was Russian Poland. The first departures to the area about 15 kilometres north of Częstochowa took place in 1837, where at least 66 families (over 300 people) settled in the parish of Biała in the neighbouring villages of Kuznica Kiedrzyńska, Czarny Las, Kamyk, Tylin, and Wola Hankowska.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, several dozen

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7 K. Duda-Dziewierz, *Wieś Małopolska a emigracja amerykańska: Studium wsi Babica powiatu Rzeszowskiego* [US-American Migration from Małopolska Villages. The Case of Babice, Rzeszów District], Warszawa/Poznań: Polski Instytut Socjologiczny, 1938. Also see the current continuation of the local study conducted by J. Kulpińska, "Multigenerational Migration Chains of Families from the Village of Babica: An Attempt to create a Typology", *Polish American Studies* 75 (2018) 2, pp. 77–94.

8 M. Kaltenbrunner, *Das global vernetzte Dorf: Eine Migrationsgeschichte*, Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2017.

9 P. Wiśny, "Zapomniana emigracja" [The Forgotten Migration], 17 January 2015, <http://stare.siolkowice.pl/zapomniana-emigracja/> (accessed 28 April 2019).

families headed for the district of Wielun, bordering Upper Silesia. Both cases were bilocal chain migrations – a process by which migrants from a particular place follow others from that place to a particular destination – that lasted for decades. The departing families still had just enough means to lease or acquire a small farm directly on the other side of the border, in the even poorer areas, from parcelled-out farms, and often a destitute young person was taken along as a servant or maid. It is noteworthy that the applications for dismissal as subjects of the Prussian king (an important source of information for the research) were practically always made after the fact, that is to say a few years after the departure. Moreover, this dismissal only was made official when the settlement in Russian Poland had already been successfully completed and when the permanent condition of the move was confirmed, which was particularly necessary for young men in view of their compulsory military service. Nevertheless, the bilocal, intensive contacts continued. Amongst the later emigrants from Schalkowitz to Curitiba, we find at least ten families in which one or both spouses were born in the parish of Biała.<sup>10</sup> These included, for example, Nikolaus Wos, a brother of the Curitiba pioneer Sebastian Wos, or Lorenz Mainka, who was born in Kuznica near Częstochowa in 1849 into a Schalkowitz emigrant family but later returned to Schalkowitz (where he married) and made his way to Brazil with relatives in 1875.<sup>11</sup> From Teofil Rudzki, a Warsaw journalist who visited Paraná in 1882, we learn that Sebastian Wos attracted several Upper Silesian families from Wola Kędzyska from the Częstochowa region to Brazil.<sup>12</sup> We also find some widowed women and men who were looking for their next spouse not only in Częstochowa but also in the marriage market in general, which had been extended to include their places of origin: these widowers found what they were looking for in their places of origin. Nevertheless, the marriage behaviour was hermetic amongst the children of the first emigrant generation in Russian Poland; they married almost exclusively amongst themselves, with only one marriage to a local inhabitant being documented.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., information based on the parish registers of Biała compiled by P. Wiśny.

<sup>11</sup> "Weggezogene aus dem Kreis Oppeln 1874–1878", in: *Archiwum Państwowe w Opolu*, Regierung Oppeln I/12295, p. 240, ed. in M. Richau, "Von Oberschlesien nach Amerika. Quellen zur Auswanderung aus dem Kreis Oppeln in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts", *Herold-Jahrbuch* 10 (2005), pp. 151–196, at 177. M. Kutyma, *Siołkowice: Zarys dziejów wsi opolskiej* [A Concise History of Opole Villages], Opole: Instytut Śląski, 2007, p. 248, mentions further contacts between related families from Schalkowitz and the Polish parish of Biała.

<sup>12</sup> K. Groniowski, *Polska emigracja zarobkowa w Brazylii 1871–1914* [Polish Work Migration to Brazil, 1871–1914], Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1972, p. 24.

<sup>13</sup> Wiśny, *Zapomniana emigracja*.



In March and April 1855, almost 20 years after the first departures to neighbouring Polish territories in the tsarist empire, 25 people, mainly from Poppelau and Chrosczütz, applied for departures to America – most probably to Texas, where the first wave of emigration from the counties of Groß Strehlitz and Tost began only a few months earlier.<sup>14</sup> The news from the first emigrants must have been promising because there were already 87 applicants in the spring of 1856, this time mostly from the forest colonies of Brinnitz, Grabczok, Tauentzinow, Murow, and Horst.<sup>15</sup> We find the majority of those willing to emigrate on the emigration lists of the agent Julius Schüler, who apparently was successful in helping migrants plan and execute their migration plans not only in Groß Strehlitz and Tost but also in the whole administrative district of Oppeln.<sup>16</sup> A broker was obviously necessary for the very first groups of overseas emigrants. The agents represented the major shipping companies from Bremen and Hamburg and provided the necessary organizational know-how.<sup>17</sup> But we will see that the later migrant supply was mostly self-organized. The Upper Silesians were practically the last Prussian group from the German Reich to be “infected” by the migration fever before the US Civil War (1861–1865). Migrating from 1854 to 1856, they only entered the migration process after hundreds of thousands of people had already migrated from German states to the USA.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, however, they were the first Polish-speaking pioneers to find their way to America in large emigrant groups. The first Upper Silesian migrants in Texas have become an integral part of the Polish national master narrative, which has also been spread through research. Without taking a closer look at the context

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<sup>14</sup> See A. Michalczyk and D. Skrabania (eds.), *Migrationsgeschichte Oberschlesiens: Globale Migration in regionaler Perspektive* (forthcoming in 2021).

<sup>15</sup> “Ausgetretene aus dem Kreis Oppeln 1851–1857”, in: Richau, *Von Oberschlesien nach Amerika*, pp. 157–158.

<sup>16</sup> Silesian Profiles Committee (ed.), *Silesian Profiles: Polish Immigration to Texas in the 1850s*, vol. 1, Panna Maria, TX: Panna Maria Historical Society, 2005, p. 180. For the year 1856, Schüler reported that he sent 239 people almost exclusively to Texas. See T. L. Baker, *The First Polish Americans: Silesian Settlements in Texas*, College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1979, pp. 28–29.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. A. Bretting, “Funktion und Bedeutung der Auswanderungsagenturen in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert”, in: A. Bretting and H. Bickelmann (eds.), *Auswanderungsagenturen und Auswanderungsvereine im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart: Steiner, 1991, pp. 11–90.

<sup>18</sup> R. Cohn, *Mass Migration Under Sail: European Immigration to the Antebellum United States*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 15; P. Marschalck, *Deutsche Überseewanderung im 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Beitrag zur soziologischen Theorie der Bevölkerung*, Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1999, pp. 45–48.

of their different origins, they are regarded as “the first Poles in America”.<sup>19</sup> The major surveys on transatlantic migration also follow this national affiliation.<sup>20</sup>

A multitrack emigration pattern emerged in the 1850s. Russian Poland got a new competitor but was not in last position in the list of possible destinations. Simon Patrzek, a relatively wealthy half farmer (*Halbbauer*) from Brinitz with 600 reichstalers in assets, first applied for emigration to America in December 1855, but in 1858 he bought a mill in Russian Poland, where he was obviously able to establish himself successfully, as noted in the personal documentation of his departure in 1865.<sup>21</sup> It seems that neighbouring Poland attracted many more Upper Silesians willing to leave the country than distant Texas. Emigration to the east clearly dominated between 1857 and 1867, as evidenced by the applications for emigration. In October 1861 alone, about 60 families emigrated from the county of Groß Strehlitz, with about 150 to 200 families for the entire year. In the county of Rosenberg, 270 people were released as subjects of the Prussian king to Russia in the spring of 1864. In the county of Leobschütz, 1,136 persons were already registered in 1865, and in the county of Rosenberg, 643 applicants were made in 1868. It is noticeable that the places of origin of the outbound wave to Russian Poland were much more widely scattered than the places from which the “Texas fever” was fed. In the 1860s, the district president of Oppeln reported on legal and illegal departures from almost all Upper Silesian counties to the part of Poland administered by Russia.<sup>22</sup>

The monopoly position of Russian Poland as an outlet for ambitious emigrants who could not afford a small farm in their villages can be explained, on the one hand, by the US Civil War and, on the other hand, by Brazil’s unknown

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<sup>19</sup> See J. Przygoda, *Texas Pioneers from Poland: A Study in Ethnic History*, Waco: Texian Press, 1971; A. Brożek, “The Roots of Polish Migration to Texas”, *Polish American Studies* 30 (1973) 1, pp. 20–35; Baker, *The First Polish Americans*.

<sup>20</sup> Walter Nugent, for example, repeats the designation of “the first Poles in America in the settlement of Panna Maria” in his book *Crossings: The Great Transatlantic Migrations 1870–1914*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992, p. 92. Also see K. Bade, *Europa in Bewegung: Migration vom späten 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart*, München: Beck, 2000, or C. Langenfeld et al. (eds.), *Enzyklopädie Migration in Europa: Vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart*, Paderborn: Schöningh, 2007.

<sup>21</sup> “Ausgetretene aus dem Kreis Oppeln 1851–1857”; “Weggezogene aus dem Kreis Oppeln 1858–1867”, in: Richau, *Von Oberschlesien nach Amerika*, pp. 157, 160.

<sup>22</sup> A. Brożek, “Emigracja zamorska z Górnego Śląska w II połowie XIX wieku” [Oversees Migration from Upper Silesia, 1850–1900], in: Instytut Śląski w Opolu (ed.), *Konferencja popularnonaukowa “100 lat polonii brazylijskiej”* [Conference Papers from “100 Years of Polish Migration to Brazil”], conference report, 23–24 October 1969, Opole, 1969, pp. 1–34, here p. 17.

status as an emigrant destination. Furthermore, it was not the Upper Silesian industrial district that attracted the mostly young emigrants – the greatest wish was to acquire land and live independently as a farmer, an occupation from which social capital could be made. To possess a farm was regarded as a much more prestigious way of life than to earn dependent wage labour in the mines or to work as an iron or steel worker. Considering the number of migrants as well as prevalent migration processes, the fact that the direction of emigration to the east is still a blank spot today in research on Upper Silesia is surprising.

Much better documented, though with considerable gaps, is emigration to the US states of Wisconsin and Minnesota. Of the 19 families who applied for departure “to America” in 1855/56, we find 4 pioneer families from Poppelau who did not settle in Texas but in the north of the USA: Albert Baucz, a 29-year-old cottager (*Angerhäusler*) with a wife and one child; his brother Lorenz (27), also a cottager with a wife and one child; Peter Sura (33), a cottager with a wife and three children; and Peter's brother-in-law, without any property, Leopold Kachel (31). They boarded a ship for Quebec, Canada. From there, they reached Milwaukee in Wisconsin by water, where, after stops in Watertown and New Lisbon, they purchased land not far from the settlement of Independence.<sup>23</sup> During their Prussian military service, the four Poppelau pioneers possibly learned about the promising possibilities in North America. In western Wisconsin in particular, settlement was only just being organized, and the state distributed a lot of farmland based on the Homestead Act (1862), with only a few restrictions and at very reasonable prices.

The US Civil War broke out immediately thereafter, and the subsequent migration from the home village came to a standstill. However, as Peter Marschalck convincingly shows, this only slowed down the migration flows from the German states. One can even speak of a pent-up demand in the first five years after the war because the emigration rate was above average.<sup>24</sup> People from Poppelau also followed this Central European trend. It was not until the spring of 1867 that Valentin Baucz, a 36-year-old farm labourer, set off with his wife and two daughters to start a new life with the help of his brothers. In the autumn of the same year, he was followed by four (possibly more) other people from Poppelau, who made it to the USA without an exit permit. Contact with the home village by letters obviously remained active and motivated other late-comers: 210 people, almost exclusively from Poppelau, applied for emigration

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<sup>23</sup> S. S. Peter and Paul Catholic Church, *Independence, Wisconsin: One Hundred Years 1875–1975: A History and Parish Directory*, Wisconsin: S. S. Peter & Paul Church, 1975, p. 30.

<sup>24</sup> Marschalck, *Deutsche Überseewanderung*, pp. 42–44.

to America between February and May 1868. Apart from emigration by official ways, considerable illegal emigration was certainly also an available option. More than 200 further exit permits from Poppelau, Schalkowitz, and the surrounding area were issued in 1869 with the aim of reaching America. At the same time, we find only a few applications to Poland; obviously, America now attracted more people.

Nevertheless, both destinations were equally attractive for migrants for the years between the 1840s and 1860s. A multitrack group emigration pattern emerged with Russian Poland, Texas, and Wisconsin as the favourite destinations. We tend to think the USA must have been a “default option” and more attractive than the allegedly “poor” European East. However, the migration routes from the supposedly “rich” west (here, from Prussia or “from Germany”) between the 1840s and 1860s led rather to the poor east, *mutatis mutandis* from the USA to Central America, and continued the west-east migration that had prevailed until then as a continental migration system.<sup>25</sup> At the end of the 1860s, a very attractive option was added – Brazil. There were 16 families, mainly from Schalkowitz, who decided to leave for South America in June 1869. Another 16 families followed one year later.<sup>26</sup> But how did the remarkable change of direction come about? The role of the pioneer and chance is crucial here.

Sebastian Wos, born in Schalkowitz in 1844, the second son of a local, wealthy farmer, provided the impetus for emigration to Brazil. His family had spent money for several years on the education of their son in Oppeln, which was a symbolic act within the community – very few village boys enjoyed further, expensive education in the town. Wos probably had a similar upward mobility, both socially and physically, in mind as Leopold Moczygemba, the pioneer of the Texas emigration of the Upper Silesians. Moczygemba also came from a wealthy farming family and was sent to the town to attend a high school (*Gymnasium*), which enabled him to study theology and become an ordained priest. For a Polish-speaking Upper Silesian boy from a village, the priestly vocation was the only possibility for social advancement outside the local community.<sup>27</sup>

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25 See M. Esch, “Zugänge zur Migrationsgeschichte und der Begriff des Transnationalen in der Migration”, in: F. Hadler and M. Middell (eds.), *Handbuch einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas: Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017, pp. 457–487, at 466.

26 M. Kutyma, “Przyczyny wychodźstwa ze Śląska Opolskiego na przykładzie wsi Siołkowice w powiecie opolskim” [Push-factors for Migration from the Opole-Region. The Case of Siołkowice, Opole-County], in: Instytut Śląski w Opolu (ed.), *Konferencja popularnonaukowa “100 lat polonii brazylijskiej”*, pp. 1–12, at 10–11.

27 See A. Michalczyk, “Josef Jagło (1872–1949)”, in: J. Bahlcke (ed.), *Schlesische Lebensbilder*, Innsingen: Degener, 2012, pp. 449–460.

This soon led the young Moczygamba far away: he joined the Franciscan order and studied in Italy for five years before moving to the Oggersheim monastery in the Palatinate. In his homeland, he enjoyed extraordinary esteem: through his studies in the vast, uncertain world and as a representative of the highly esteemed Catholic Church, Father Leopold became the figurehead of the Moczygamba family.<sup>28</sup>

Wos, on the other hand, probably did not finish high school but stayed in town and got a modest job at the Oppeln post office. Perhaps he saw no prospect for himself to be accepted into the state service; first, he would have to have completed his Prussian military service anyway. Therefore, he decided to avoid conscription and fled Oppeln, landing in the port of Hamburg. It is unclear whether Wos went overseas as early as 1864 or only one or two years later, and when and why he decided not to emigrate to North America to his Poppelau neighbours in Wisconsin but to South America are unknown. His decision against the USA could well have been due to the US Civil War raging there and to his flight to avoid conscription, which did not allow him to wait for a more favourable development in North America. What is certain is that he landed first in Uruguay, then in Argentina, and, only after these stops, in 1867 in the Brazilian province of Santa Catarina. In the meantime, he changed his name, perhaps to escape the fate of the soldiers: Sebastian Wos became Edmund Saporski.<sup>29</sup> In Brazil, he completed a course for land surveyors and oversaw the colonization process in the German colony of Blumenau: the parcelling out of the land as well as the arrival and rise of German emigrants – just like Father Leopold had done 15 years earlier in Texas. Wos remained in correspondence with his relatives and neighbours and obviously drew a picture of great opportunities in the southern hemisphere. Moczygamba and Wos enjoyed high prestige in their

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28 T. L. Baker, "The Reverend Leopold Moczygamba, Patriarch of Polonia", *Polish American Studies* 41 (1984) 1, pp. 66–109, at 66–69.

29 A. Brożek, "Z badań nad początkami osadnictwa polskiego w Brazylii: Emigracja z Górnego Śląska do Parany" [The Beginnings of Polish Settlement in Brazil. Migration from Upper Silesia to Paraná], in: R. Czepulis-Rastenis (ed.), *Między feudalizmem a kapitalizmem: Studia z dziejów gospodarczych i społecznych. Prace ofiarowane Witoldowi Kuli* [Between Feudalism and Capitalism. Historical Economy and Social Studies for Witold Kula], Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1976, pp. 167–179, at 170; E. Miś, "Losy i rola Siołkowiczów w Brazylii ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem działalności Sebastiana Edmunda Wosia Saporskiego" [History of People from Siołkowice in Brazil and their Leader's Sebastian Edmund Wos Saporski], in: Instytut Śląski w Opolu (ed.), *Konferencja popularnonaukowa "100 lat polonii brazylijskiej"*, pp. 1–11, at 1; K. Smolana, "Sebastian Edmund Saporski (Woś-Saporski, pierwotnie Woś)", *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* XXXV (1994), [www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/sebastian-edmund-saporski-wos-saporski-pierwotnie-wos](http://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/a/biografia/sebastian-edmund-saporski-wos-saporski-pierwotnie-wos) (accessed 28 April 2019).

village communities despite their young age, and they represented highly respected farming families, enjoyed an urban education, and were successful in the far, unknown outside world. However, both were only “trendsetters” in their village contexts. Wos was an ordinary postman in the town; only back in the village could he “brag” and enjoy esteem. Moczygemba was also an ordinary priest/monk in the town and could only gain recognition and authority in the village. But both are important because they motivated the first group of emigrations overseas; both promised a successful new start, and both were trusted. Later, they were followed by other pioneers (the Baucz brothers to Wisconsin and the Swiatek family to Minnesota) from the lower classes of the village. Amongst the first 32 families to venture to Brazil were strikingly many young men the same age as Wos, including three men from farming families related to Wos – potential leaders amongst the emigrants.<sup>30</sup>

At this point, the relevance of historical contingency must be emphasized. The pioneers, whether Father Leopold, Wos, or the Baucz brothers, landed in their “final destinations” simply by chance. This contingency, as well as human agency, is underestimated in migration research and in major structural theories.

In the decade between 1868 and 1877, Poppelau, Schalkowitz, and the surrounding villages were all plagued by an American fever. It is remarkable, however, that specific bilocal routes developed here too. People from Poppelau mainly went to Wisconsin, in the area around Independence. Those from Schalkowitz followed their leader, landed in Brazil, and settled close together around the city of Curitiba. As the US frontier moved further west, an emigrant from the nearby village of Dammratsch began to direct his relatives and neighbours to Minnesota, in the vicinity of North Prairie. Group emigrations were common, so that people from Poppelau, destined for Wisconsin, and people from Dammratsch, destined for Minnesota, made their exit applications together, started the train journey to Hamburg, boarded a ship there to New York, and finally travelled by train to La Crosse, situated along the Mississippi. Only there did they part ways but maintained contacts between the new settlers. Bilocal marriage patterns, for example, between Independence and North Prairie still existed for decades.<sup>31</sup>

The annual number of applications for emigration was very high, without us knowing the number of unrecorded cases of illegal emigration. In the spring of 1870, almost 200 people applied to be released as subjects of the Prussian king. However, only 40 people applied between February and May 1871; this

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<sup>30</sup> Kutyma, “Przyczyny wychodźstwa ze Śląska Opolskiego”, pp. 10–11.

<sup>31</sup> See M. Richau, *Familienchronik Richau*, Berlin: s. n., 1993, pp. 133, 144.

drop in number was related to the Franco-German War (1870/71) – the authorities did not want potential recruits to leave the country. Illegal emigration possibly increased at the same time. Between 1872 and 1876, the district government of Oppeln recorded continuously high numbers of applications: applications for emigration of 268 people to Wisconsin and Brazil in 1872, 139 to America in 1873, 263 to Minnesota in 1874, and 256 in 1875. The number of unreported illegal departures must have been similarly high. In 1876, the authorities received applications for the release of 241 people, but there are 333 names on the passenger list of only one steamship, the *Salier*, which went from Antwerp to Rio de Janeiro and on to Santa Catarina on 31 July, with Schalkowitz, Poppelau, and the surrounding area as places of residence.<sup>32</sup>

From 1868, however, there were only a few applications for release to Russian Poland; North and South America clearly dominated. Regular departures to North and South America continued until the end of the 1880s. The number of applications for release was not as high as in the 1870s, but, at the same time, the number of illegal departures increased. In 1886, the district president of Oppeln reported that 213 people had emigrated in April from Schalkowitz, Kaniow, and Chroszczütz to Curitiba without permission.<sup>33</sup> The authorities were at a loss; they could not control the flow of people, let alone steer it.

Characteristic perceptions of the migration behaviour of the “poor people of the village” by the urban elites were revealed. The public prosecutor’s office in Oppeln, for example, was looking for an organized network of secret emigration agents. To the official’s own astonishment, he was unsuccessful in uncovering one. In my opinion, the role of agents is also disproportionately emphasized in current research, for example, in Zahra and Brunnbauer. Nevertheless, a closer look reveals the importance of informal networks: the supposedly uneducated, rural lower classes have repeatedly been able to take their fate into their own hands without professional brokers. We know, for example, that Anton Wosch, a 36-year-old cottager from Schalkowitz and leader of the group of Curitiba emigrés in 1876, which consisted of more than 330 people, was in contact with the shipping company Lobedanz, in Antwerp. Since he obviously could not write well enough in German, he had his letters written by the brother of the community secretary (*Gemeindeschreiber*) and regularly exchanged information with a

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<sup>32</sup> Passenger list of the *Salier* from Antwerp to Santa Catarina from 31 August 1876 (copy from the National Archives Rio de Janeiro provided by Domiciano Spisla from Curitiba).

<sup>33</sup> H. Kokot and J. Moczko, “Emigracja do Brazylii z Siołkowic, Popielowa i okolicy w latach 1875–1886: Opracowano na podstawie dokumentów w Archiwum Państwowym w Opolu” [Migration from Siołkowice and Popielów, 1875–1886. Sources from the State Archive in Opole], 9 March 2013, <http://staresiolkowice.pl/emigracja-do-brazylii> (accessed 28 April 2019).

representative of the company in Antwerp. Carl Maciossek, from Schalkowitz, and Franz Psiorz, from Poppelau, even went to Antwerp themselves to clarify the details of the Atlantic crossing directly on site. The people who wanted to leave the country met in the Schalkowitz tavern and were informed about the current status of the process. The emigration to Curitiba in 1876 was well-organized. However, those wishing to leave were able to find out even more about the situation in Brazil and the trip there, as some of those who had already emigrated returned home and brought with them the latest information as well as several letters from relatives. The letters then circulated around the village, spreading practical advice on how to organize the departure. They were written in local Polish and difficult for German-speaking local officials to understand. At the request of the county commissioner of Oppeln; the head forester Kaboth, from Poppelau; the head of the Schalkowitz community Schmid; and the chief guard Miensopust, from Chroscütz, complained that obtaining information on the spot was difficult and that they encountered a lot of mistrust. At the same time, the “poor” and “uneducated” were grossly underestimated. For example, when Josef Prudlik, from Schalkowitz, who had already emigrated to Curitiba, visited his village in the spring of 1878 and organized the free departure of other relatives and neighbours, the county commissioner of Falkenberg reported that it was impossible for him to work as an emigration agent as Prudlik “could hardly write”.<sup>34</sup>

## 2 The Sociocultural Context of Emigration

But who decided to embark on the arduous journey overseas? Why did so many people take the risk of completely restarting their lives in an unknown place? To answer these questions, a look at the evolution of the social composition of American emigrants is revealing. There are, therefore, questions about “the particular situation those migrants sought to escape”, as Zahra puts it, without, however, thoroughly analysing the respective local emigration context. We have a great deal of reliable data for Schalkowitz (see Figure 2).<sup>35</sup>

In 1815, on the verge of rural structural change, 45 relatively wealthy farming families lived in the village. They were able to feed themselves from the agriculture they produced as well as through the farmhands, maidservants, and day labourers on their farms they employed. In 1865, at the threshold of the great

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Kutyma, “Przyczyny wychodźstwa”, p. 6; Dobrowolska and Myrcik-Markowska, “Zróżnicowanie klasowe i społeczne”, p. 43.



Population of Schalkowitz	Families owning a full-size farmstead/ full-time farmers ( <i>Bauernfamilien</i> )	Families with middle-size farms/gardeners ( <i>Gärtnerfamilien</i> )	Families with a small farm lot/ cottagers ( <i>Häuslerfamilie</i> )	People without land or property/day labourers ( <i>Einlieger, Tagelöhner</i> )
Around 1815	45 full-size farmsteads	32	53	approx. 300 of 1,000 inhabitants
Around 1865	53 half-size and quarter-size farmsteads	33	249	approx. 1,000 of 2,000 inhabitants

**Figure 2:** Social Structure of Schalkowitz, 1815–1865.

waves of migration, there were only slightly more farming families (53 families), although none of them had a full-size farmstead, instead having only half- or quarter-size farmsteads; that is to say, their possessions and therefore also their agricultural yields were significantly lower. This was a consequence of the division of inheritance. In the area of the next group of owners, the gardeners, who owned similar sized farms as the half- and quarter-size farmers, conditions remained stable – increasing from 32 to 33. However, the structural changes in the other two village strata were decisive: the number of those persons who only owned a very small house or a very small piece of land, the cottagers, increased almost fivefold from 53 to an enormous 249. The sons of the farmers, who were excluded from the division of the inheritance, often became a part of this group, often having new families and surviving only with great difficulty. Around 1800, the even poorer residents, who had no land or house and amongst whom the day labourers and generally the poorest in the village were recruited, made up 300 people in the village; in 1861, they were already half the population (1,018 out of 2,063 inhabitants). Demographic growth was related primarily to decreasing infant mortality, with more and more members of a generation cohort surviving infancy and childhood years and reaching adulthood.<sup>36</sup> At the same time, the number of young adults without land and means increased enormously because they could no longer make a living with their parents. The destruction of the rural subsistence economy by the increasing presence of a capitalist market economy accelerated, especially in the two decades between 1845 and 1865. The emigration first to Russian Poland and

<sup>36</sup> Still plausible: H. Medick, *Weben und Überleben in Laichingen 1650–1900: Lokalgeschichte als Allgemeine Geschichte*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996, pp. 295–378.

later overseas was an outlet for the increasing population and impoverishment. At the same time, the income gap between farming families and those who owned little or nothing continued to widen. This, in turn, increased the social distance within the village, the signs of which were visible in practically every area and segmentation of life.

The 30 to 40 farming families occupied the old village centre, settled only amongst themselves, and built the largest houses and farm buildings. They dressed up more elegantly, especially on Sundays and holidays, married almost exclusively amongst themselves, and then celebrated excessive weddings. At the same time, they occupied most of the positions in the local administration and in the pastoral council (although access had already been liberalized) and paid attention to the hierarchical distribution of seats during church services and the running order of processions. Accordingly, the social ranks were publicly and repeatedly displayed.<sup>37</sup> In many cases, the rapidly growing group of lower village classes was economically dependent on the peasant elites and, in turn, suffered only discrimination. The group of wealthy local peasants discriminated and exploited the poor – not necessarily undertaken by the “German” authorities. We tend to overestimate the political or even the nationally explained push factors. The oppression in everyday life was linked much more to local circumstances than to macro politics.<sup>38</sup>

Against this background, the step of starting a new life in a promising country with cheap farmland rich in social capital was not as huge as one would intuitively assume. Many researchers tend to describe the rural lower classes as fatalistic and sluggish. But their migration behaviour shows that they were willing to take great risks and that, as Brunnbauer puts it when analysing South-eastern European peasant migrants, “they enjoyed agency”.<sup>39</sup> Amongst the first 32 families to travel to Brazil, there were only 3 descending from farming families (mainly due to their relationship to Wos), but there were 12 families of cottagers, amongst which were 9 without any property, and 4 of poor artisans.<sup>40</sup> Village lower classes also dominated in the departure lists of the 1870s and 1880s. The prospect of going to Brazil seemed especially attractive and mobilized people to act. This was connected with the recruitment from the Brazilian side. The Brazilian government started a wide-scale policy to “whiten” and “Europeanize” the country with the help of white, Christian, European settlers and

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<sup>37</sup> Kutyma, “Przyczyny wychodźstwa”, pp. 8–9; Dobrowolska and Myrcik-Markowska, “Zróżnicowanie klasowe i społeczne”, pp. 45–49.

<sup>38</sup> See also Duda-Dziewierz, *Wieś Małopolska*.

<sup>39</sup> Brunnbauer, *Globalizing Southeastern Europe*, p. 38.

<sup>40</sup> Kutyma, “Przyczyny wychodźstwa”, p. 10. Four families could not be identified.

provided a free passage to Brazil, with cheap land and tax incentives for the new settlers. Therefore, many of the poorest preferred to leave for Brazil than for other destinations. Franz Kulig, from Schalkowitz, applied to emigrate to North America in March 1868. But he let the permission expire; possibly the promising news came from Brazil just at that time. Five years later, he again applied for an exit permit, this time for a free crossing to Brazil, and kept his savings for buying land in Curitiba.

The high numbers of migrants allegedly led to “villages that became ghost towns overnight”, as Zahra cites based on older literature.<sup>41</sup> The census results from Schalkowitz in 1905 – that is to say, after six decades of the most intensive emigration – do not, however, confirm such general statements. There were still 2,463 Catholics (42 German-speaking and 2,421 Polish-speaking) and 56 Protestants (55 German-speaking and one Polish-speaking) living in the village, meaning the number of inhabitants had continued to rise despite massive emigration, which was due to high birth rates and an extreme drop in infant and child mortality.<sup>42</sup>

### 3 Internal Migrations in the German Reich and their Repercussions on Places of Origin

The direction of migration changed again around 1890, having serious consequences on the people from the Oppeln county. After 20 years of mass emigration to the USA and Brazil, regions within the German Reich began to become attractive. Seasonal work on estates in Lower Silesia and Saxony had already existed since the 1870s; here too, the migration routes were very stable, and the additional demand for farm workers during the time of sowing and harvesting was met directly by migrant networks. This tradition of migration created the basis for mobility between 1890 and 1914. The participants had the necessary migrant know-how and knew that departure could be profitable, and being mobile was already part of their sociocultural repertoire – their “habitual imprint”. Thus, migration should not just be considered as a singular event as the emigrations facilitated the next migration decisions.

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<sup>41</sup> Zahra, *The Great Departure*, p. 26.

<sup>42</sup> Nor did the research villages of Krystyna Duda-Dziewierz and Matthias Kaltenbrunner become depopulated. See also W. D. Kamphoefner, *Westfalen in der Neuen Welt: Eine Sozialgeschichte der Auswanderung im 19. Jahrhundert*, Münster: Coppenrath, 1982, or J. Puskas, *From Hungary to the United States, 1880–1914*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982.

The approximate three decades of mobility before the First World War, however, had completely different goals, dimensions, and repercussions in regard to the home villages than the migrations taking place up to the end of the nineteenth century. The people from Poppelau and Schalkowitz took part in the major infrastructure expansion of the new German state. As bricklayers, carpenters, plasterers, painters, locksmiths, unskilled construction workers, and navvies, they found work in the construction of modern sewer networks and water pipes, industrial projects, and new settlements in Berlin, Hamburg, Leipzig, and Dresden and worked on the laying of new railway lines and roads between these metropolises. They worked much more rarely in the mining industry of the Ruhr area, where Upper Silesians from the surroundings of Ratibor and Rybnik dominated – this once again underlines the crucial importance of bilocal informal networks.<sup>43</sup> The Upper Silesian industrial district on their doorstep did not seem to be attractive either; wages were poor here because of cheap workers from Galicia and Russian Poland.

The new destinations had an impact on sociocultural relations in the home villages on several levels. In contrast to the earlier seasonal patterns of agricultural migration, more (young) women were now part of the movements to the large German cities as maids and workers, providing additional income for the poorest families. Together with the relatively good wages of their brothers and husbands, a hitherto unknown large amount of cash flowed into the village and turned social conditions upside down. The migrants began to build new, large houses and competed on an equal footing with the previous cultural trendsetters – the locally prominent farming families. The latter were able to increase their income through new fertilizers as well as were able to profit from the increasing sources available for building, in turn establishing brickworks and wood-processing businesses in the village. But this time, the mobile lower classes quickly caught up economically and fully relied on the profitable labour without completely reinvesting the profits in arable land.<sup>44</sup> In this way, symbolic capital slowly shifted from land ownership to modern urban consumption, which was observed in the large metropolises they worked in and implemented at home. The lifestyle of the workers in the village became worthy of imitation and some nouveau riche took over the role of local trendsetters. This is symbolized, for

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<sup>43</sup> See L. Budrass, “Von Biertultau nach Batenbrock. Oberschlesier in Bottrop”, in: L. Budrass, B. Kalinowska-Wójcik, and A. Michalczyk (eds.), *Industrialisierung und Nationalisierung: Fallstudien zur Geschichte des oberschlesischen Industriereviere im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Essen: Klartext, 2013, pp. 111–146; Michalczyk and Skrabania (eds.), *Migrationsgeschichte Oberschlesiens*.

<sup>44</sup> Dobrowolska and Myrcik-Markowska, “Zróżnicowanie klasowe i społeczne”, pp. 50–52; Kutyma, *Siołkowice*, pp. 255–257.

example, by the introduction of the first bicycle, brought from a German city, which began to revolutionize local communication and small local transport from 1900 onwards.

Despite the new trend, many still had the greatest desire to run their own farm. New opportunities arose for this in the province of Posen in the 1890s. A colonization commission appointed by the Reichstag in 1886 began a settlement action there. It bought up indebted estates with massive public funds and parcelled them out amongst new colonists. Obviously, it was not only “German” farmers from the interior of the German Reich who went to the province of Posen to buy a cheap farm and increase the size of the “German” population there. In 1894, several dozen families from Schalkowitz, Poppelau, and Chroscütz acquired farms in the district of Gnesen not far from each other, and these became starting points for new chain migration. Several families followed them, even directly after the First World War and in the interwar period, when the area had already become part of the re-established Polish state – the new political framework was obviously not an obstacle for those hungry for land.<sup>45</sup>

To this day, there are descendants of chain migrants from the surroundings of Poppelau and Schalkowitz in six distant regions of the world: in today's Poland near Czystochowa, Wielun, and Gnesen; on the German side of the border in Berlin; and on the other side of the Atlantic near San Antonio, Minneapolis, and Curitiba – an enormous spread!

From the 1890s onwards, the most frequently practised model of mobility was seasonal work from March to around November inside the German Reich, while construction and earthworks had to be suspended for the remaining months due to frost. As a result, the peripheral village settlements of the cottagers, craftsmen, and farm labourers seemed depopulated for a long time; only in the winter months did the entire village fill with life again. Some, who were mostly married men and whose families remained in the village, were already commuters around 1900 and visited their families once or even twice a month. Even if the wife found employment abroad, the children often remained in the care of their grandparents in their home village<sup>46</sup> – all circumstances that we know only too well from today's commuter migrants and “Euro orphans” from Eastern Europe or the Balkans. A look at the migration habitus of the Poppelau and Schalkowitz families around 1900 allows one more fundamental comment to be made.

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<sup>45</sup> Kutyma, *Siołkowice*, pp. 248–249; interview with Benedykt Kwosek from Schalkowitz, whose relatives live in Wielkopolska, on 15 September 2017.

<sup>46</sup> Dobrowolska and Myrcik-Markowska, “Zróźnicowanie klasowe i społeczne”, pp. 54–55.

Departure to the interior of the German Reich (Polish: *do rajchu*), has a clear beginning and is by no means a “supertemporal” practice beyond time. It is not true that inhabitants of Upper Silesia “always” went *do rajchu*. Mobility to the interior of the German Reich did not become popular until around the 1880s and did not become dominant until the 1890s. Previously, German cities and industrial districts competed with other attractive locations – in Russian Poland, the USA, and Brazil. This may also be surprising for researchers studying US immigration. The USA was obviously not the default option, especially for emigrants from German states; there were areas as well as phases in which a majority of the emigrants chose destinations in South America or Western and Eastern Europe.<sup>47</sup>

If emigration to the USA and Brazil functioned primarily as an outlet for the overpopulated village, the seasonal departures to the large conurbations of the German Reich changed the social and economic conditions locally in Poppelau and Schalkowitz. The system of norms began to shift in favour of urban values. A special charisma came from Berlin, where one could also get regular jobs in local companies, and, as a result, more and more families settled in the capital. “Double housekeeping” became popular with a small apartment in Berlin or Hamburg and a large house in the home village. The inhabitants of the rising marginal settlements, such as the Zadupie mentioned at the beginning of this chapter and their neighbours along Berliner Straße, began to write their economic and social success stories. In the 1920s and 1930s, an increasing polarization of the village could be observed. The relatively wealthy workers made themselves economically independent of the old peasant elites and increasingly set the cultural tone. They built large houses with rooms for subletting, which were especially popular with younger, still low-income, single people or families. Since the subtenants were also employed as workers, they preferred to pay monthly rents instead of paying for their accommodation by working for the farmer.<sup>48</sup>

In doing so, and this is central to my questions, the migration habitus began to become a dominant cultural pattern. Economically rising village underclasses did not invest their income into the education of children. A secondary school in the town had the reputation of conveying foreign cultural values, being open to new ideas, and thereby endangering the conservative Catholic view of the world. A young person from the village would be left on his/her own without the safety

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<sup>47</sup> See W. Kamphoefner, “Südamerika als Alternative? Bestimmungsfaktoren der deutschen Überseewanderung im 19. Jahrhundert”, *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 41 (2000) 1, pp. 199–215.

<sup>48</sup> Dobrowolska and Myrcik-Markowska, “Zróżnicowanie klasowe i społeczne”, p. 63.

net of relatives and neighbours. This was accompanied by the conviction that education was not a gateway to economic and social advancement. It was enough to attend the local elementary school with its German and arithmetic lessons and then to complete a technical apprenticeship. Professionally equipped in this way, young adults (mainly men) could find their first livelihood on construction sites and in industrial enterprises inside the German Reich and acquire further technical qualifications, which promised a higher income and finally a good life in their homeland. The mobile workers gained new experiences and broadened their horizons without, however, falling out of the village migration network and thus without alienating themselves from the community. Therefore, they were able to show off by imitating urban manners and also speaking better German, which was perceived as a valued language of the upper social strata. The “bricklayers”, as they were called in Poppelau and Schalkowitz, were respected and sought after on the marriage market.<sup>49</sup> Migration and mobility meant economic and social advancement for previously disadvantaged village classes.

## 4 Dynamics of Migration Systems, State Control, and Migrants' Political Impact, 1880s to 1930s

The local data show shifts in the dynamics of the migration systems. The two decades between around 1880 and 1900 were decisive here. Before 1880, most Upper Silesians focused mainly on rural migration in order to acquire a farm. From around 1880 onwards, a number of interrelated factors changed this migratory behaviour. First of all, the expansion of the railway network in the German Reich should be mentioned, with simultaneous acceleration, reduction in costs, and increased frequency of train journeys. This was accompanied by a higher need for labour for urbanization, industrialization, and the infrastructural expansion of the German Reich. At the same time, the German Reich developed increasingly into a welfare state with a health system, accident insurance funds, and increased worker protection and safety for insured workers. However, it required a distinction under state law between natives and foreigners. As Prussian citizens, the Upper Silesians were on the side of the beneficiaries. This created new possibilities for them (and other Polish-speaking Prussians), which led to

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<sup>49</sup> Kutyma, *Siołkowice*, pp. 304–305.

new migration systems “quasi as a network of technical possibilities”.<sup>50</sup> Building on the experience of seasonal migrations as agricultural workers, the new mobility into the German Reich became manageable and economically rewarding. The large cities were easily and quickly accessible from a transport point of view, and the welfare state reduced the risks. Temporary migration, aimed at saving up and returning, was the predominant form in the transmigrant everyday life of the Upper Silesians until the 1930s.

The increasing attractiveness of the German internal market for the Upper Silesians in the 1880s was accompanied by correspondingly restrictive migration regulations for Poles from the tsarist empire and Austria-Hungary. Within the framework of anti-Polish policies, attempts were made to reverse Polish migration and prevent any in the future. An obvious sign was set with the “expulsion of Poles” in 1885.<sup>51</sup> These measures were not necessarily successful but, nevertheless, had an impact on the decisions of Polish migrants. There were still hundreds of thousands of Poles coming to the German Reich, most of them migrating temporarily.<sup>52</sup> But a considerable group of their neighbours decided in the 1880s to take up (mostly temporary) employment in booming US cities. The German welfare state was closed to them anyway, if not hostile, and, simultaneously, the cheapening and acceleration of the Atlantic crossing allowed the circulation of labour on a large scale.<sup>53</sup> South America was the only attractive alternative left if one wanted to possess a farm.<sup>54</sup> For the Upper Silesians, as part of the German migration to America, the American and Brazilian inland colonization was only attractive until the 1880s, whereas the Polish-speaking migrants from the tsarist empire and Austria-Hungary were latecomers and occupied the remaining, less productive land in the hinterland from the 1880s onwards. Therefore, today, we find hardly any descendants of Upper Silesian chain migrants in Argentina or the industrial cities of Chicago, Detroit, or Pennsylvania. However, in time Upper Silesians abandoned the ideas of moving to the Americas in favour of relatively good, secure, numerous, and less competitive jobs in the German cities and industry.

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50 M. Esch, “Migration: Transnationale Praktiken, Wirkungen und Paradigmen”, in: Hadler and Middell (eds.), *Handbuch einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas*, pp. 131–187, at 147.

51 Ibid., pp. 182–183.

52 Bade, *Europa in Bewegung*, p. 87.

53 E. Morawska, “Labor Migrations of Poles in the Atlantic World Economy, 1880–1914”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31 (1989) 2, pp. 237–272; M. Wyman, *Round-Trip to America: The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880–1930*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993.

54 For waves of immigration, see Groniowski, *Polska emigracja zarobkowa*.



The change in sociocultural attitudes, orientations, and expectations caused by migration also had a direct impact on political developments in the Upper Silesian countryside. The hundreds of migrants provided not only transfers of money but also transfers of knowledge: they brought new experiences to the regions of origin. This was particularly evident in the plebiscite on Upper Silesia's state affiliation, which was mandated after the First World War by the Treaty of Versailles and carried out on 20 March 1921 (see Figure 3).<sup>55</sup>

Village	For Poland	For Germany	Migrants' votes (percentage of all votes)
Poppelau/Popielów	517 (25%)	1548 (75%)	592 (30%)
Kolonie Poppelau/Kolonia Popielowska	57 (21%)	213 (79%)	121 (45%)
Alt-Schalkowitz/Stare Siołkowice	506 (25%)	1522 (75%)	550 (27%)
Neu-Schalkowitz/Nowe Siołkowice	57 (20%)	236 (80%)	53 (18%)
Chroszczütz/Chróścice	816 (41%)	1177 (59%)	515 (26%)
Kaniow/Kaniów	175 (43%)	233 (57%)	100 (24%)
Horst/Świerkle	102 (31%)	223 (69%)	42 (13%)
Kupp/Kup	97 (10%)	828 (90%)	382 (41%)
Grabczok	97 (35%)	184 (65%)	67 (24%)
Murow/Murów	89 (11%)	686 (89%)	308 (40%)

**Figure 3:** Plebiscite Results in the Northern County of Oppeln, 20 March 1921.

In Poppelau, almost 600 votes (i.e., almost 30 per cent of all votes) were cast by “migrants”, that is to say, natives over 21 years old living in the interior of the country. Schalkowitz recorded similar figures: 550 migrant votes (27 per cent of voters). In Kolonie Poppelau, there were even higher figures – just under 270 votes (45 per cent) came from migrants. However, only 53 votes (under 20 per cent) came from migrants in Neu-Schalkowitz. The result of the referendum in these 4 villages was very similar: Germany received between 75 and 80 per cent of all votes. A clear polarization line is noticeable. Those who were supraregionally

<sup>55</sup> Plebiscite results in the northern part of the county of Oppeln, 1921 in “Odpisu urzędowego dziennika Komisji Międzysojuszniczej Rządzącej i Plebiscytowej na Górnym Śląsku w Opolu”, *Journal Officiel de Haute-Silesie* 21 (7 May 1921), <http://www.historycy.org/index.php?showtopic=14864> (accessed 28 April 2019).

mobile and pursued flexible working conditions on the metropolitan industrial market within the German Reich usually chose Germany. Many saw their transmigrant networks, as the basis for economic existence and social advancement, as being at risk if they joined Poland. On the other hand, support for Poland came primarily from the ranks of the old but shrinking peasant elites. As agricultural producers, they were anchored in the local market and had few supraregional links to the west. Rather, some large farming families represented a kind of Polish avant-garde and had been running since 1893 a local branch of the Polish Catholic society, *Oświata* (Education), headed by Alexander Psikala, a wealthy farmer. At the same time, a group of rich farmers organized themselves into a mutual aid loan fund, modelled on Polish farmers from the province of Posen.<sup>56</sup> The connections to the Polish territories were thus more active than to the interior of the German Reich and mostly led to support for Poland.<sup>57</sup>

This analysis also reveals another political aspect. It has already been described above how the district government of Oppeln helplessly observed human fluctuation and illegal departures to the USA or Brazil. In the 1880s, the number of applications for dismissal fell rapidly, but the number of actual emigrants did not decrease noticeably. The civil servants tried to get the matter under control and compiled lists of potential emigrants, but some of them included names of people who had long been on a transatlantic ship or had just settled overseas.<sup>58</sup> The state representatives operating in Poppelau and Schalkowitz were mostly recruited from outside the local milieu and had only limited access to sensitive information. Even in the plebiscite, neither the Polish nor the German government could be sure what the outcome would be. It was the large group of migrants who made the political yield unpredictable here (the proposal to include migrants in the vote came first from the Polish side). In the 1930s, the particularly high mobility of seasonal workers from the district of Oppeln to the interior of the German state became even less predictable and controllable, with Schalkowitz and Poppelau showing the highest fluctuation rates.<sup>59</sup> The National Socialists attempted to control the labour market better through legally enforced ties to companies and a predetermined demand for professions.<sup>60</sup> However, the

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<sup>56</sup> Kutyma, *Siolkowice*, p. 303.

<sup>57</sup> Stanisław Ossowski reports a similar situation in his analysis of the neighbouring village Groß Döbern in "Zagadnienie więzi regionalnej i więzi narodowej na Śląsku Opolskim" [Regional and National Bonds in Opole-Silesia], *Przegląd Socjologiczny* 9 (1947), pp. 73–124.

<sup>58</sup> Kokot and Moczko, *Emigracja do Brazylii z Siolkowic, Popielowa i okolicy*.

<sup>59</sup> A. Brożek, *Ostflucht na Śląsku* [Ostflucht from Silesia], Katowice: Wydawnictwo Śląsk, 1966, p. 94.

<sup>60</sup> Dobrowolska and Myrcik-Markowska, "Zróżnicowanie klasowe i społeczne", p. 58.

employment agencies had significantly less influence on the placement of jobs and thus on the control of labour demand than they wanted it to be. Most of the jobs went to relatives and acquaintances of the workers without official mediation, which was only partly in line with the economic goals and plans. This was deplored, for example, by the district president of Oppeln in the spring of 1938.<sup>61</sup>

The shift from legal emigration to illegal emigration in the 1880s and the uncontrollable human fluctuation in the 1930s under the National Socialists point to an extremely important phenomenon: with the constant expansion of the state even into the most remote places and with the rapidly progressing nationalization just after the foundation of the empire, it was the aim of the authorities to control and effectively administer more and more areas of life of the citizens. At first glance, they assumed that this project could be achieved without significant resistance from the inhabitants of Upper Silesia. It was assumed that the inhabitants were a “multiple disadvantaged” population: poor and uneducated, Catholic, and Polish-speaking. The Prussian elites, most of whom were Protestants, expected hardly any friction with the supposedly unassertive villagers in their forced modernization of the state. However, they had to realize that it was precisely this population that repeatedly eluded state control and made it difficult for the authorities to plan and govern efficiently. At the moment when the Prussian government wanted to ensure the booming economy of the German Reich continued to be strong for potential workers and therefore approved the applications for emigration less and less, the Poppelau and Schalkowitz citizens often began to leave the country illegally without any regard to the economic considerations of the politicians. At the same time, the authorities were not able to classify and fix Upper Silesians in national terms – Upper Silesians declared what they thought they were expected to declare in records and official documents, which made the statistics unreliable and confusing.<sup>62</sup> It was obviously not the case that the poor and uneducated members of society and/or members of linguistic minorities were exclusively objects of policies from Berlin and had to subordinate themselves to the decisions of “great men of history”. By acting in their own best interest, such as deciding to migrate where they wanted to and not where the authorities intended to direct them, they unsettled the authorities and made forecasting and planning difficult. Therefore, the agency of the individual is a stimulus for questioning the binary opposition between “high politics” and local “everyday life” and a boundary between the public (political)

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<sup>61</sup> Brożek, *Ostflucht*, p. 151.

<sup>62</sup> See A. Michalczyk, *Heimat, Kirche und Nation: Deutsche und polnische Nationalisierungsprozesse im geteilten Oberschlesien 1922–1939*, Köln: Böhlau, 2010, pp. 244–248.

sphere and private (allegedly apolitical) world of “everyday life”.<sup>63</sup> The same goes for people who were born in Zadupie – “Am Arsch der Welt”.

## 5 Conclusions

The microhistorical example from the northern county of Oppeln shows that a constantly new experience of migration led to the development of a culture of migration. Most migrants did not lose their ties to their home places, relatives, neighbours, and friends, instead supporting a new migration at their place of origin through informal networks. As a result, the actors possessed the necessary migrant know-how and knew that the departure could be profitable. Being mobile quickly became part of their sociocultural repertoire, their “habitual imprint”. Even at an early stage (from the 1870s at the latest), migration from the villages analysed was a widespread practice, which eventually developed into a sustainable life model over generations (and to this day).

Through an analytical combination of macro- and microhistorical processes, a dynamic of migration systems and interdependent interactions between regional, seasonal, and transatlantic migration systems become clearly visible. Moreover, their integration into local conditions is evident. Personal, family-focused, bilocal, or milieu-related relationships and the associated social practices reveal the actual core of migration behaviour. This requires a methodological rethink. On the one hand, an enormous expansion of the geographical radius of investigation is necessary and must cover North and South America (or other continents) as well as Western and Eastern Europe. On the other hand, local communities must be subjected to analytical scrutiny both in the regions of origin and in the regions of arrival. Both have so far been practiced far too little in historical migration research. However, the innovative proposal of a microhistory of global migrations has the great potential to explore the phenomenon of migration at micro, meso, and macro levels simultaneously. This is the only way to understand how migration becomes an indispensable element of local culture and a – sometimes globally oriented – migration habitus.

The challenge is to combine structural and microhistorical perspectives to reveal not only state migration regimes but also concrete social practices, such as migrant networks, kinship, marriage, and other individual and informal practices.

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<sup>63</sup> See T. Zahra, “Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis”, *Slavic Review* 69 (2010) 1, pp. 93–219, at 97.

The instruments of state regulation and control structure the conditions of migration. But it is the migrants themselves who interpret, sometimes undermine, and circumvent these framework conditions. It is, therefore, the *Eigensinn* of the not-always-controllable migrants who, through their behaviour, reveal gaps in the structures and possibly trigger structural adaptations and transformations of the migration regimes. Only a focus on the agency of “ordinary” people can contribute to uncovering holes and inaccuracies in structural abstractions. It is an approach that can provide motivation for the exploration of (East-Central) European history in the age of mobility and unlimited communication.



Beáta Hock

## 4 “162 Artists from over 50 Countries”: Artistic Networking in the Mainstream and on the Margins

This contribution takes the Cold War as a conceptual frame for exploring transnational artistic exchanges between the 1950s and early 1990s. More particularly, the chapter outlines the transnational strategies of both counter-cultural artists and of official cultural diplomacy in socialist Hungary. A globally informed Cold War framework is capable of rectifying certain narrative conventions that became naturalized in the course of recent years as state socialism has been gradually historicized. A set of dominant topics and narrative conventions emerged during this process of historicization to chronicle and remember communist art and culture in socialist Eastern Europe. These topics include the political control over the practice and the institutions of cultural production, the veneration of dissident “unofficial” artists, and the denigration of “official” art marked by the style of socialist realism. Methodologically, the historiographies of socialist cultural production have tended to be nationally framed, even when individual countries are considered *pars pro toto* as parts of a bigger entity: the “region” or the “Eastern bloc”. This approach tends to consider socialist Eastern Europe as being isolated from parallel developments at other geographical locations, thus elevating its research object beyond comparison. This sort of treatment obscures the degree and ways in which Eastern Europe in this period was deeply entangled with the world around it. The truly international and intercontinental reach of cultural exchanges among the “friendly states” of the socialist world have been, until recently, underrated, if not altogether ignored, in favour of comparisons with the more dominant Euro-Atlantic cultural arena.

Three research agendas feed into this study: contributing to the recently emerging study field of Cold War cultures, reclaiming the unofficial art of socialist Eastern Europe, and engaging seriously with the so-called official, state-supported cultural production under socialist times. The subject area of the cultural Cold War is perhaps the most established among these agendas, and exploring the unofficial art of socialist Eastern Europe can now also look back at two or three decades of research work. Most recent of them all is the scholarly engagement with the so-called official, state-supported cultural production under socialist times. These broad topics have several connecting points and partially overlap; nevertheless, they seem to constitute distinct research areas and are relatively seldom “thought together” – this is what the present chapter sets out to do. Transcending the strict

division between the “official” and “unofficial” in the cultural arena will have bearing on understanding individual national art worlds – in the present chapter, the Hungarian art scene – as imbricated fields rather than fields clearly divisible along specific politics.

My study investigates the dynamics and the shifting geographical orientation of international exchanges initiated by both cultural diplomacy and individual artists. I will pursue the former type of relations through taking the example of Műcsarnok (“Kunsthalle”), one of Budapest’s foremost venue to showcase current art while connections built between individual artists will be presented through the “world wide web” of Mail Art practice. As i<sup>1</sup> am charting a chronological line from the 1950s to the beginning of the 1990s, i will reflect at every turn the variety of rationales – artistic, diplomatic, and political – at stake in these interactions.

## 1 Cold War Cultures and their Geopolitics

The cultural dimensions of the Cold War came relatively late to complement more-traditional areas of Cold War studies: diplomacy, military affairs, and economics. Authors exploring the cultural Cold War have acknowledged that “cold warriors” on both sides of the Iron Curtain deployed culture as a powerful instrument in both international relations and diplomacy. Like Cold War studies at large, the explorations into the cultural aspects of the geopolitical tensions perpetuated for a long while a perception of the Cold War as a bipolar rather than a multiplayer global conflict. This also meant that whereas cultural diplomacy and exchange between the Soviet Union and the United States (or certain Western European countries) have received considerable scholarly attention, relatively little work has been undertaken, until most recently, on other countries of the Eastern Bloc.<sup>2</sup>

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**1** The usage of the lowercase “i” pronoun signifies my reservations about a unique convention in the English language. English capitalizes and, thus, prioritizes the first-person singular, which comes across as a remarkably self-centred disposition conveyed by the current lingua franca and, as such, may deserve to be denaturalized. My usage continues T.R.O.Y.’s practice in his essay, “The New World Disorder – A global network of direct democracy and community currency”, submitted for the Utopian World Championship 2001, organized by SOC, a Stockholm-based non-profit organization for artistic and social experiments. The text is available from <http://utopianwc.com/entries/entry.asp?ID=28&usrid=248> (accessed 20 May 2019).

**2** Publications making the first forays into this subject area include M. Siefert, “East European Cold War Culture(s): Alterities, Commonalities, and Film Industries”, in A. Vowinckel, M. M. Payk,



Another facet of this incomplete picture is that the government-sponsored cultural production of state socialist Eastern Europe has also been neglected for a decade or two, following the political system change of 1989. Both in the public imagination and in academic discourses, a narrow set of narrative constructs has been used to account for the cultural politics of the socialist decades. The crudest formulations have viewed the artistic output of the pre-1989 period as well-designed manipulation by the communist propaganda and ideology, which incapacitated art through censorship structures and the isolation ensured by the Iron Curtain.

As a result of this context, the majority of studies and publications produced in the 1990s, right after the political changes, focused on recapitulating the events and actors of the unofficial or semiofficial cultural sphere. This cultural underground in state socialist societies was referred to by various names: “counter-culture”, “avant-garde”, “neo-avant-garde”, or operations “in a grey zone” became umbrella terms to signify artistic activity that did not submit to official party directives. Whereas socialist realism, the official style to which artists were required to conform, represented an idealized realistic art with an aesthetically dull visual language, the (neo-)avant-garde favoured formal experimentation and a non-representational abstract idiom. Since members of the counter-cultural scene turned away from authorized public activity and instead relied on a parallel set of communicational channels, they saw themselves as operating in a second, or parallel, public sphere, and this self-presentation was all too readily accepted in research.

The strong post-1989 focus on the semiofficial cultural arena was a reaction to the fact that these activities had to go largely undocumented during state socialist times and were therefore missing from the existing cultural historiography of individual countries. However, this focus came with strong limitations. Only recently did curatorial and academic projects start to revisit the state-supported sphere of artistic life. As one of the first steps towards considering state-commissioned official culture and underground art within a shared historical-political domain, the exhibition *1971 – Párhuzamos különidők* (1971 – Parallel nonsynchronism) juxtaposed artists and artworks from both contexts in an effort to reconstruct the complex relationship between state power and artistic practice in the thaw period

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and T. Lindenberger (eds.), *Cold War Cultures: Perspectives on Eastern & Western Societies*, New York: Berghahn Books, 2012, pp. 23–54; B. Hock (ed.), *Doing Culture under State-Socialism: Actors, Events, and Interconnections*, Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2014 (thematic issue of *Comparativ* 7 [2014] 4); S. Hornyik: “Deconstructing Dreamworlds: Foreword to the *Long Sixties* Research Project”, *Acta Historiae Artium* 56 (2015) 1, pp. 323–332.

under Nikita Khrushchev.<sup>3</sup> Except for the one-year lens, my endeavour here is similar: “reading together” these two spheres of cultural life that have been contemplated as separate, if not mutually exclusive, for too long a time.

For this enquiry, i tapped material stored in the Artpool Art Research Center and in the institutional archives of the Múcsarnok, both located in Budapest. The holdings of the Múcsarnok store records on mainstream (as in state-administered) exhibitions and events organized by a governmental institution. The holdings of Artpool document the marginal practices of the artistic avant-garde in Hungary and, broader, in Eastern Europe and worldwide, thanks to the vital networking activity of many representatives of the avant-garde. It is important to keep in mind that i assign the adjectives *mainstream* and *marginal* to these two types of practices from the perspective of their visibility or accessibility for a general public during the socialist decades and not from a judgemental perspective concerning their status in art historical narratives today.

As i indicated above, the history of the neo-avant-garde has come to dominate the art historical canon of Eastern Europe’s recent art history, whereas official art under socialism has been generally regarded as uninteresting, politically tainted, and therefore unworthy of mention. I side with colleagues who do not share the opinion that whatever happened under the auspices of official cultural politics was altogether uninteresting;<sup>4</sup> neither do i recoil at the idea of political themes infiltrating art practice. Both official and mainstream art under socialism – its products, institutions, and events – can also be regarded as a reservoir of valuable records for cultural and social history. And for better or worse, as we will witness, mainstream and marginal channels were becoming closer and closer towards the end of the period.

New economic and political dependencies were taking shape after World War II, introducing new directions for international exchanges in various walks of social life. This reorientation is relevant for at least two reasons: it reflected the emerging and starkly divided new post-war world order and, decades later, came to impact an art historical discourse that was growing increasingly critical of its own Western- and Euro-centred traditions. The explosion of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist movements in the Third World in the 1950s and 1960s meant that a host of decolonizing and newly independent states were forging political alliances

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<sup>3</sup> Exhibition on view in Kiscell-Municipal Gallery, Budapest, October 2018–March 2019. Catalogue: D. Hegyi et al. (eds.), *Párhuzamos különidők/Parallel Nonsynchronism*, Budapest: BTM Kiscelli Múzeum-Fővárosi Képtár/tranzit.hu, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Whereas the broader – and especially social science – literature on global socialism has already assumed a less ideologically biased and less antagonistic attitude towards the period of state-socialism, a similar approach is still a novelty within the field of art history.

and economic partnerships worldwide. While the two competing superpowers made conscious attempts to draw these countries into their own sphere of influence, non-aligned (or not yet so) Asian, African, and Latin American states used their strategic positions to maintain good relations with both competing political camps and, in the meanwhile, were able to select from what was on offer on the global economic, ideological, and cultural market. The term *aid shopping* illustrates this most important resource acquisition strategy of developing countries.<sup>5</sup>

While the Second World had a lot less to offer in terms of economic assistance than the developed capitalist West – with its foreign development aid or good quality products – the Soviet bloc fared relatively well on the ideological market thanks to the Soviet Union’s non-involvement in the overseas colonization of earlier centuries. Wealth, which the West often displayed as an indicator of the superiority of the capitalist system, was often considered by leaders from around the Third World as an indicator of inequality rather than freedom, the spoils of stealing and the colonial atrocities in the imperial past. The imperialism of the United States also appeared to many to be replacing European colonial powers as the repressor of movements for national liberation in the Third World.<sup>6</sup>

Culture was deployed as a diplomatic tool to initiate and keep up “harmless” relations across the blocs, especially when relations were to be built with not necessarily friendly states or when capacities to offer material assistance were lacking. For example, in the early 1970s, Egypt’s new president, Anwar Sadat (1970–1981), broke ties with the country’s long-time ally and aid giver, the Soviet Union, and expelled Soviet military from the country, pretty much interrupting political relations with other Eastern bloc countries as well. In such a situation, national cultural institutions and smaller cultural exchange agencies often remained the only and last field of contact between states, not so much in the hope of advantageous joint cultural enterprises but for the sake of maintaining a minimum of diplomatic ties.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, artistic and diplomatic objectives overlapped within these endeavours and jointly defined the concrete geographies of cultural connections.

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5 D. C. Engerman, “The Second World’s Third World”, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 12 (2011) 1, pp. 183–211.

6 Q. Slobodian, “What Does Democracy Look Like? (And Why Would Anyone Want to Buy It?) Third World Demands and West German Responses at 1960s World Youth Festivals”, in: Vowinckel, Payk, and Lindenberger (eds.), *Cold War Cultures*, pp. 254–275.

7 B. Triebel, “Inhalte und Ziele von Kulturpolitik am Beispiel der Tschechoslowakei/Slowakei in Afrika und Asien”, paper presented at the XII. International Summer School of the Research Academy Leipzig: *The Socialist Camp and the Third World*, Leipzig, 17 September 2014. See also

## 2 The Dynamics of Official Exchanges

The archival records of the Kunsthalle on exhibitions that Hungary organized or sent abroad reveal a variegated set of undertakings. Beside shows with outspokenly propaganda purposes, there were also commercially oriented exhibitions, or shows featuring artists whose works were not willingly displayed at home. Some of the exhibitions were indeed hardly more than mere diplomatic gestures, which, however, followed a fairly conscious intention of cultural exchange.

Caricature or cartoons and folk art were especially deployed as propaganda tools. For example, caricatures sent on show to China in 1955 spoke to a set of ideologically laden topics. Individual pieces laid bare the military aggression and neo-colonialism pursued by “imperial forces” in the Far East behind a sham veil of pacifism: the United States’s neglect of its working-class population or the anti-communist propaganda and alleged “fake news” spread by the Voice of America (the US-sponsored international broadcaster). The official report accompanying this exhibition introduces a new subgenre growing out of the propagandistic slant: the affirmative or friendly caricature that praises rather than attacks.<sup>8</sup> The same report also explains, however, that “a good satirical drawing has always been oppositional and progressive”;<sup>9</sup> accordingly, the collection also included self-critical pieces, most typically cartoons mocking bureaucracy or how bureaucracy slows down socialist production.

The appropriation of folkloric traditions for the fine arts has served various purposes over time in history. The most obvious reason in periods of nation-building might be nationalism and the aspiration to endow national specificity to contemporaneously produced art. The early twentieth century and the post-World War I decades certainly represented such an era for many emerging East-Central European states, whose intellectuals and artists often harked back to vernacular culture. However, the historical avant-garde of the same period and its successor, the mid-century neo-avant-garde, had different motivations when deploying folk motives. Especially the representatives of surrealist or surrealism-

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B. Triebel, “Eine vielstimmige Imagepflege: Die tschechoslowakische Kulturaußenpolitik gegenüber Staaten in Afrika, Asien und Lateinamerika während der Normalisierungszeit”, *Bohemia* 53 (2013) 2, pp. 379–407.

<sup>8</sup> Múcsarnok Archives Budapest, Kína karikatúra-kiállítás, 1955 folder.

<sup>9</sup> Here, and successively, translations are by the author unless otherwise indicated. Note that in Cold War phraseology, “progressive” was used to refer to socialist values, aspiring for non-capitalist social development, whereas in current art historical jargon, “progressive art” denotes abstract avant-garde tendencies: the kind of creative style refused by official socialist cultural politics.

inspired trends drew on Sigmund Freud’s propositions to explore the unknown and the unconscious through folklore and non-European traditions that were purportedly located at the origins of human culture at large. Any such remnant of “bourgeois pseudosciences”, such as psychology and psychoanalysis, were esteemed by part of the traditional intelligentsia for their sustained links to European culture in early totalitarian countries, in which these disciplines were regarded as unnecessary and even unwanted.<sup>10</sup>

Folk art was not indifferent to socialist cultural politicians either, and its uses can be read in various ways. The official line referred to the revitalization of folk traditions, which purportedly vanished or faded away under the capitalist conditions of the interwar period, while, at the same time, folkloric traditions also came in handy for desecularizing and virtually repaganizing religious holidays inherited from previous regimes. Hungary’s national holiday, 20 August, is a case in point here: originally commemorating the death and deeds of Stephen I (975–1038), who founded the state and consolidated Christianity in his country, the date was made a Catholic feast in the fourteenth century by successive kings. The communist leadership could not possibly cancel this holiday because of its long heritage but could turn it into a feast celebrating the harvest and new bread and, simultaneously, the new Soviet-style constitution.

Official discourses emphasized both the distinctly international nature of the cultural encounters they initiated and, at the same time, insisted on the local-national particularity of what they put on display. Many press communications reiterated the Stalinist phrase of the era, proudly stating that the art they exhibited was “socialist in content and national in form”. The insistence on “national form” is often criticized today because the national is immediately linked to nationalism, especially in the light of the conservative-nationalist forces that have gained ground in Eastern Europe from the 1990s on. But the issue is more complex if one considers East European art history from a global perspective, taking into account the dual challenge of nationalization and transnationalization. Small Eastern European small nations recurrently faced the task of positioning themselves in a global network of politics, trade, and cultural entanglements. Possessing only limited degrees of self-governance, culture and the arts have historically played an important role in the international self-positioning of Eastern

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**10** M. Kovai, *Lélektan és politika. Pszichotudományok a magyarországi államszocializmusban 1945–1970* [Psychology and politics: The psycho-sciences under state Socialism in Hungary], Budapest: Károli Gáspár Református Egyetem/L’Harmattan Kiadó, 2016, pp. 220–259; É. Forgács, “Efforts for a European Integration of the Arts and the Art Discourse 1945–1948”, in: M. Dmitrieva, B. Hock, and A. Kempe (eds.), *Universal – International – Global. Art Histories of Socialist Eastern Europe*, Cologne: Böhlau, 2021.

European nations, sometimes even more important than direct political claims-making.

The early 1950s, too, was a period in which states encountered an irreversibly globalizing world. Official documents disclose a genuine enthusiasm regarding this context, and they consciously utilize the concepts of cultural contact or cultural translation. Calling attention to the staggering number of artists and countries participating at any event with an international scope is a recurrent highlight in these reports. “Forty-two countries from four continents” were, for instance, represented in Ravenna at the Dante Small Sculpture Biennale.

Regarding the orientation and international reach of the Kunsthalle’s outgoing exhibitions, the following dynamics can be observed: in the 1950s and 1960s, the Kunsthalle most frequently sent exhibitions to Eastern European and Asian brotherly countries – the latter including China, Korea, Mongolia, and India. From the mid-1950s on, exhibitions were also sent to Western European and extra-European non-socialist countries – among others, to Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, and France and, beyond the continent, to the United States and Japan. Towards the end of the 1970s, the proportion of transcontinental and Eastern European target countries decreased, whereas the frequency of exhibitions organized in Western Europe explicitly grew. What happened in these years that orientated art exhibitions back towards the traditional art centres of “old” Europe?

The death of Joseph Stalin in 1953 loosened the tight official doctrine on cultural matters across the Socialist bloc. In the aftermath of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, however, Hungary saw another wave of tight control. At the same time, the country needed to polish its international image after the violently crushed uprising, and the question of how to relate to Western exiles, including those who left in 1956, remained a constant dilemma. During the 1960s, domestic cultural policy underwent a gradual relaxation; socialist realism no longer exclusively dominated the art scene, and the Budapest art world was opening up to Western Europe.

These factors combined and culminated in inventing a peculiar kind of exhibition: in 1969 and 1970, the Múcsarnok brought home the work of exiled Hungarian artists who had integrated into the Western context and who, at the same time, openly declared loyalty to the Hungarian government in their new home countries, often countries with a strong political left (such as Italy or France). Inasmuch as they worked within the abstract artistic idiom, showcasing their work was meant to signal that Hungarian cultural policy was now open to a plurality of styles, although home-based artists could still not hope to display similar works in the major exhibition venues of the country. An

additional goal of these homecoming exhibitions was to link the concepts of modernism and, again, nationality.<sup>11</sup>

A case in point is the sculptor Amerigo Tot (1909 Fehérvárcsurgó, Hungary – 1984 Rome), who went through an abstract period but who, for the most part, created works in a traditional artistic idiom, both of which appeared to be an asset for the Hungarian cultural authorities. It is safe to assume that his name would not ring a bell today to any broad and well-cultured audience in Hungary, Italy (his second home of choice), or elsewhere internationally. At any rate, the exhibition held at the Műcsarnok in 1969 aimed to construct him for local museum-goers as a world-famous Hungarian-born artist.

Another example is Victor Vasarely (1906 Pécs, Hungary – 1997 Paris), who may sound more familiar: Vasarely is generally credited as the inventor and key figure of the short-lived op art (short for optical art) movement. Op art was a new form of abstraction playing with the ways in which the eye processes lines, forms, and colours. Vasarely was also given a prestigious solo exhibition as part of the official state programme. His homecoming show at the Műcsarnok in October 1969 attracted 88,500 visitors and received a lot of press coverage.

Both these events and their cultural-political backgrounds were recently reconstructed through exhibitions taking place in contemporary art spaces. Tot's affair with the Hungarian cultural authorities was revisited in Budapest's Ludwig Museum while Vasarely's case was on view in various venues, from Madrid, Budapest, and Leipzig to Paris, Vienna, and Zurich.<sup>12</sup> The latter endeavour was an artistic research project by contemporary artist Andreas Fogarasi (1977), who centred the reconstruction on an anecdotal moment. Fogarasi took his audience back to 1969 – to the opening of Vasarely's 1969 exhibition when ministers and cultural politicians had filled the Műcsarnok to welcome a leading figure of non-figurative art. János Major (1934–2008), a Budapest-based fellow artist, had also visited this memorable opening in 1969. He had prepared a small note for the occasion and was holding it ready in his pocket. Whenever he saw an acquaintance of his in the crowd, he took this message out of his pocket, cast a glance around to make sure that the uninitiated were not watching, and held it up: “Vasarely go

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<sup>11</sup> E. Sasvári, “Cultural Repatriation as Political Strategy – Victor Vasarely and Kádár-Era Hungary”, in: F. Zólyom (ed.), *Vasarely Go Home*, Leipzig: GfZK, 2014, p. 67; L. Bódi, “Domesticated Modernism: The Role of Western Emigre Artists in the Cultural Politics of the Kadar Era”, in: E. Sasvári, S. Hornyik, and H. Turai (eds.) *Art in Hungary 1956–1980: Doublespeak and Beyond*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2018, pp. 179–192.

<sup>12</sup> See *Amerigo Tot – Parallel Constructions*, Ludwig Museum Budapest, October 2009–January 2010, curated by J. Mélyi and A. Fogarasi; *Vasarely Go Home* (documentary film and exhibition), 2011, on view in various venues.

home!” Major himself was a member of the neo-avant-garde, and his one-person protest was, among other things, a reaction to the double standard that cultural authorities deployed towards Western-based or domestic artists working with abstract forms of expression at the time.<sup>13</sup>

About a year later, artist and art historian Géza Perneczky (1936) used a very similar method to disseminate his first self-made artist booklets: he visited opening events at the Műcsarnok to distribute this samizdat among his fellow artists.<sup>14</sup> This simple gesture pointed towards finding and establishing alternative routes of connecting and circulating material, despite the restrictions on communication channels in place.

### 3 Mail Art: Creativity through the Post

While cultural diplomacy and exhibition exchange were channels used to create official cultural connections, mail art was of extraordinary importance for non-mainstream artists having only limited access to cross-border exchanges. Mail art emerged globally in the 1960s and was, in fact, the subversive appropriation of a worldwide communication system: the post. It involved sending small-scale, inexpensive, and predominantly concept-based art objects through the international postal system, which easily allowed the sending of entire two-dimensional exhibitions around the globe at insignificant costs. The mail art network functioned independently of both the exclusive distribution channels of the Western-dominated art world and the censorship measures in the Second World or in the Global South – even if lots of correspondence never arrived. As Jorge Glusberg (1932–2012), the motor of the Argentinian mail art network, expressed in a text accompanying the exhibition *Hacia un perfil del arte latinoamericano* (Towards a Latin American profile of art) in 1972, mail art enabled the overcoming of certain conditions that made participation, let alone competition, in the global art world and art market largely impossible for artists working outside First World centres. Today, the captivating ways in which mail art anticipated the “world wide web” and its network-building are increasingly

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<sup>13</sup> For further anecdotal and analytical detail, see Zólyom, *Vasarely*.

<sup>14</sup> G. Perneczky, *Hogy van avantgarde ha nincsen – vagy fordítva* [How come there is an avant-garde if there is none – or the other way round], vol. II, Cologne: Edition Soft Geometry, 1983, p. 146.



studied.<sup>15</sup> Here i will only underscore three aspects of the “eternal network” that are relevant for my argument: the first is the breathtaking scope of the network; the second is the kind of marginality and oppositional character defining the movement at certain locations and periods; and the third is the collapse of the mail art “know-how” into mainstream institutional practices.

Mail art is generally seen as a “movement” – inasmuch as we can call it a movement – that emerged from the United States, where, in the early 1960s, Ray Johnson (1927–1995) and his circle founded the New York Correspondence School. However, as Hungarian art historians have shown, some Hungarian artists started to set up clandestine channels of communication even before mail art appeared as a recognizable genre in the country. *Expresszió önmanipuláló szétfolyóirat* (Expression: A self-manipulating spreadsheet)<sup>16</sup> was launched by Árpád Ajtony (1944–2013) and Béla Hap (1944) in 1971 and became a samizdat publication circulating within the underground art scene. Recipients of a journal issue were to reproduce it according to editorial principles reprinted in the introduction of each issue: one had a free choice to keep or delete parts of the original content and add their own material. This new “remixed” journal was to be mimeographed in five copies, and the copies had to be distributed to further individuals, two out of whom should not belong to the compiler’s close circle of friends.

In this way, upon receipt of an *Expresszió* issue, one became the journal’s reader and editor simultaneously. The goal was to create channels of communication and distribute relevant information (theoretical texts by international authors, translations, and one’s own textual or visual output) while bypassing existing institutions of cultural life.<sup>17</sup> Already at this point, the post was of great importance for disseminating works or exchanging information inside the country. Pál Bial links this activity to the irrepressible need of interacting within a society where publicly available forums were both restricted and controlled,

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<sup>15</sup> After source books, such as M. Crane and M. Stofflet (eds.), *Correspondence Art: Source Book for the Network of International Postal Art Activity*, San Francisco: Contemporary Arts Press, 1984, an early annotated bibliography also contained a couple of essays: J. Held Jr., *Mail Art: An Annotated Bibliography*, London: Scarecrow Press, 1991. The first academic publication to explore the histories, aesthetics, and directions of mail art was C. Welch (ed.), *Eternal Network. A Mail Art Anthology*, Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1995.

<sup>16</sup> “A self-manipulating diffusive journal” could be another attempt to translate the highly inventive title.

<sup>17</sup> For more on *Expresszió*, consult P. Bial, *Kísérlet a magyarországi mail art történetének felvázolására és kelet-közép-európai kontextusba helyezésére* [An attempt to outline the history of mail art in Hungary and place it in the context of Central and Eastern Europe], MA thesis, Eötvös Lóránd University Budapest, 2003.

whereas Géza Perneczky highlights how conceptual art inspired this “correspondence culture”, of which marginality and a non-official character were indeed defining characteristics.<sup>18</sup> And marginal they were indeed. The activities of Artpool (the art archive i have been consulting) go back to the 1970s when Artpool emerged as a major hub of mail art connections. While they were fairly visible within the global correspondence network in this capacity, they apparently went unnoticed for most residents of Budapest. After a visit to Budapest in 1989, Wally Darnell, a networker based in the United States and Saudi Arabia, wrote a postcard to Artpool: “I tried to contact you when I was in Bp in July. Nobody knew of Artpool.”<sup>19</sup> Similarly, G. Gutiérrez Marx (1945) added to her 1979 call for contributions:

Poetry is our utopian marginal resistance. [. . .] All of these actions will be carried into effect without any official support, neither authorization, nor propaganda of any kind. Documents and information will only circulate inside our marginal network.<sup>20</sup>

Perneczky also points to freshly forming contacts with some personalities of the West German, British, Argentinian, and Polish art scenes; the latter came up, as early as in 1972, with an address list and information forum, the NET, established by artists Jarosław Kozłowski (1945) and Andrzej Kostolowski (1940).<sup>21</sup> Alongside contacts with the North Atlantic “centres”, a range of periphery-periphery connections developed, including communication between Eastern European countries. These connections are not at all self-evident because, for centuries, the art critical gaze had been fixed on the West alone, and thus the neighbouring countries in Eastern Europe did not necessarily know much about each other’s art scene. This imbalance is captured in the often-repeated remark that a mail art networker based in, say, Prague might have had more knowledge about what was going on in the world at large than in another city of their own country.

Ever-expanding mailing lists and so-called exhibition catalogues have been the means to keep mail art alive and kicking. Every participant received the simple photocopied documentation of the shows and, thereby, also the mailing addresses of all contributors. Certainly, both the mailing lists and the catalogues

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**18** Perneczky, *Hogy van avantgarde ha nincsen*.

**19** Artpool Archives, “Saudi Arabia” folder, postcard.

**20** Artpool Archives, “Argentina” folder.

**21** NET has also received growing scholarly attention in recent years, see, for example the related chapter in K. Kemp-Welch: *Networking the Bloc: Experimental Art in Eastern Europe, 1965–1981*, Cambridge: MIT Press, pp. 97–124, or K. Röder, “Ray Johnson and the Mail Art Scene in Eastern Europe”, *Kunsttext.de/Ostblick* 3 (2014), <https://edoc.hu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/18452/8217/roeder.pdf> (accessed 14 July 2018).

were more valuable if they featured a long and variegated list of participants. A publication from 1979 of a certain Japanese Freedom Research Centre lists connections with Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Poland. The archival material suggests that contacts with Asian countries were relatively slow to develop (Japan was an exception), whereas relations between Eastern European and Latin American mail artists were thriving, leading to festivals of Polish and Hungarian vanguard art in Buenos Aires in 1971 and 1973 respectively.<sup>22</sup>

## 4 Travelling Political Topics

The question arises: what sort of an impact did global interconnectedness and communication have on artists in the Eastern bloc? The 1970s were marked by hot wars in the Cold War, the continuing process of decolonization, the beginnings of transnational terrorism, the threat of the atomic bomb as part of the nuclear arms race, environmental degradation in the wake of post-war industrialization, and the zenith of a host of civil rights movements from the Black Panthers to feminism to gay liberation. The fact that these topics hardly surface in the works of underground artists – who were subsequently also often referred to as politically critical, oppositional, or subversive – can be explained by a number of factors.

György Konrád (1933–2019) introduced the term *anti-politics* to capture Eastern European dissident thinkers’ political attitude during state socialism.<sup>23</sup> The term describes a method of dealing with reality that shuns confrontation. This thesis is transferable to the sphere of art, recognizing that the relationship between art and political dissent is never a seamless one anyway: artists often find the way to engage with political circumstances through non-political means.<sup>24</sup> Since the communications of the state virtually owned the topics of peace, disarmament, and anti-imperialist struggle in Vietnam and other parts of the Third World, many artists in the “second public sphere”, i.e., the unofficial cultural arena, found it difficult to relate positively to these issues without compromising their fundamental rejection of the communist establishment.

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<sup>22</sup> Connections between the two purportedly marginal art scenes are explored in a journal thematic issue: K. Kemp-Welch and C. Freire (eds.), *Artists’ Networks in Latin America and Eastern Europe* (ARTMargins 1 [2012] 2–3), Cambridge: MIT Press, 2012.

<sup>23</sup> G. Konrád, *Antipolitics: An Essay*, San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1984.

<sup>24</sup> This is the line of argumentation Klara Kemp-Welch follows in her book *Antipolitics in Central European Art: Reticence as Dissidence Under Post-Totalitarian Rule 1956–1989*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2014.

Without denying the value of anti-politics as a strategy of resorting to non-overtly political “small deeds” in a repressive political climate, it is important to note that another much-smaller niche of the non-official intellectual and cultural sphere has adopted more-solidly political attitudes than just “reticence as dissidence”. The recent exhibition *Left Performance Histories*,<sup>25</sup> held in Berlin in 2018, made the slightest of gestures towards exploring to what degree and how East European artists generally related to political topics of global relevance throughout the 1960s–1980s. The exhibition set out to track down those pockets of the East European cultural scene in which the critique of actually existing socialism did not exclude a degree of identification with communist-affiliated platforms for anti-colonial internationalism. As the exhibition demonstrated, several artists mingled with radical social groups, but it varied from case to case whether or not they also addressed these topics in their artistic work. The Dresden mail art group and the multidisciplinary Orfeo Group in Budapest were among the most vocally political and left-leaning artistic communities.<sup>26</sup>

Because Eastern European quasi-activists tapped transcontinental networks of political radicalism, they often found inspiration in extra-European models (like Mao’s China) and expressed solidarity with the anti-colonial or independence struggles of developing countries (the Vietnam War, the Algerian or the Palestinian cause, or the revolutions in Latin America)<sup>27</sup> as well as the civil rights movements of racial minorities in the Western world. Many of these issues were also taken up in the correspondence art arriving from Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Cuba, and the United States and, in later years, from individual Eastern European artists. Viewed through these pieces of mail art, the oppressive aspects of power wielding within both Cold War–era political blocs became visible. East German artist and publisher Lutz Wohlrab (1959) voiced the view that the shared experience of state repression, ideological pressure, and a degree of imposed isolation experienced by artists in both South America and the Eastern bloc created imaginary alliances between them.<sup>28</sup> On a

<sup>25</sup> On view in the neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst (nGbK), Berlin, February 2018–March 2019. Curators: J. Bodor, A. Czirak, A. Hackel, B. Hock, A. Mircev, and A. Richter.

<sup>26</sup> On the Dresden Group, see <https://www.jugendopposition.de/node/145325?guid=193> and [https://www.dhm.de/archiv/ausstellungen/boheme/katalog\\_zentren/dresden/dresd71.htm](https://www.dhm.de/archiv/ausstellungen/boheme/katalog_zentren/dresden/dresd71.htm) (accessed 11 December 2019), and on Orfeo M. Szarvas, “Orfeo’s Maoist Utopia”, MA thesis, Budapest, Central European University, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> See J. Mark, R. Gildea, and N. Pas, “European Radicals and the Third World: Imagined Solidarities and Radical Networks 1958–73”, *Cultural and Social History* 8 (2011), pp. 449–471.

<sup>28</sup> A more recent attempt to explain East European–South American affinities is provided here: C. Cytlak, “Transculturation, Cultural Transfer, and the Colonial Matrix of Power on the Cold War Margins: East European Art Seen from Latin America”, in: B. Hock and A. Allas

similar note, Wohlrab makes a distinction between the kinds of critiques voiced within the mail art communities of divided Germany: while West German mail artists often attacked the art market and the art establishment, East German artist-networkers addressed issues of politics proper. Beside the atomic bomb and world peace, topics circulating in the worldwide mail art community included the US embargo against Cuba and Nicaragua; the treatment of indigenous populations; the denunciation of multinational capitalism and US imperialism; and, most centrally, the torture, disappearance, and violence inflicted by Latin American governments. In later years, even glasnost and perestroika were touched upon, and the conviction that the “artist is at the service of the community or society” kept resurfacing.

## 5 The Mail Art Know-How Goes Mainstream

In 1984, the Young Artists' Club (Fiatal Művészek Klubja, FMK), Budapest's legendary hang-out for underground artists and oppositional intelligentsia, hosted the mail art exhibition *Magyarország a tiéd lehet! Nemzetközi Magyarország* (Hungary can be yours! International Hungary). The show was organized by György Galántai (1941), one of the most active mail artists and organizers of non-authorized art events within the Hungarian scene. The exhibition (originally conceived of as material solicited for the “Hungary” issue of the international mail art magazine *Commonpress*) had the frivolous goal to provide an alternative country image through pieces sent by 46 Hungarians and 58 other artists from 18 countries, responding to Galántai's call. The show was only open for a couple of hours, after which authorities closed it down, claiming that the works on display “mock and attack our state and our social order as well as the state security organs”.<sup>29</sup>

Galántai's exhibition has since been reconstructed several times inside and outside Hungary, and the same venue, the FMK, could frictionlessly showcase other less “politically problematic, destructively critic[al]” international survey exhibitions in the subsequent years: the neutrally titled *Experimental Art* in 1985 and *Art of Today* in 1986. A further edition under the latter title was planned for the spring of 1990, to be on view in the Buda Castle, a considerably more

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(eds.), *Globalizing East European Art Histories: Past and Present*, New York: Routledge, 2018, pp. 162–174.

<sup>29</sup> Secret agent's report submitted to the III/III-4-b-Sub-department of the Ministry of Interior, 30 January 1984; <https://www.artpool.hu/Commonpress51/report.html> (accessed 16 July 2018).

representational venue than the shabby downtown villa harbouring the FMK. This time, the call for contributions was sent out by FMK's director, who proudly referred to the previous international shows housed by her institution, in which several hundred artists from nearly 50 countries participated. The archival material reveals how, from the late 1980s on, the appropriation of the mail art method and the very mailing lists appear to serve as common tools for institutions eager to enter the emerging global contemporary art world from post-socialist Eastern Europe (e.g. the National Museum of Warsaw) through rural Brazil and New Caledonia to Egypt or the United Arab Emirates. Quasi-anonymous correspondence came to be the vehicle not only of making contact or gathering information but also of acquiring artworks for the respective institutions' collections.

In 1989, Paulo Herkenhoff (1949), chief curator of the Museum of Modern Art in Rio de Janeiro, requested material to be donated to their newly established Department of Photography. The museum's international collection was reportedly modest while funds were very restricted due to a fire in 1978 and the severe economic conditions in Brazil, hence the solicitation of artworks, possibly of valuable ones and donated as gifts. Replacing the earlier handwritten or mimeographed posts, similar requests to send catalogues or video works as well as regular calls for participation in various art shows started to arrive from, for example, the Ministry of Culture, the Amácio Mazzaropi Cultural Workshop, the Federal Public Service, or the Federal University of Santa Catarina, on ever more professionally designed letterheads.<sup>30</sup>

The occasions on which the engagement of the mail art community was solicited also started to be increasingly representational. In 1981, contributions were requested for a show called *Letters to Kobe* – part of the Portopia '81 Festival, which officially opened Port Island (an artificial 523 ha island near the Japanese city of Kobe). The call was signed by the president of the Kobe Port Island Expo Association and the mayor of Kobe, and the organizers explicitly wanted the “display [to be] based on the new form of artistic expression ‘Mail Art’”, and they set “The Sea” as the common theme of the exhibition.<sup>31</sup> The whole project was meant to create “a new cultural city on the sea”, harking back to the idea of “civilisation interchanged through the intermediary of the sea”.

When arranging for the 1990 edition of the “Sacred Run for Land and Life”, Dennis Banks (1937–2017), founder of the American Indian Movement and a hero of the Wounded Knee incident in South Dakota in 1973, also deployed the communication channels of mail art. Adopting the concept and practice of running, a

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<sup>30</sup> Artpool Archives, “Brasil” folder.

<sup>31</sup> Artpool Archives, “Letters to Kobe” exhibition, Japan folder.

part of the traditional Native American way of life to connect with Mother Earth through one's body, mind, and spirit, Banks carried out a sacred run from Hiroshima to Hokkaido in 1988 and was “planning a run around Europe for the purpose of cultural exchange”.<sup>32</sup> He planned to start the run in East Germany with subsequent stops in Warsaw, Cracow, Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), Kiel, Trier, Nancy, Marseille, and Paris. In this case, however, artworks were no longer asked for; Banks turned to mail artists for “support and help” of various kind, from joining the run to practical assistance.

The Uruguayan visual poet and networker Clemente Padín (1939) contributed the essay “Latinoamerican mail-art: A definition” to a publication by the Chilean/Venezuelan artist Dámaso Ogaz, in which he wrote that mail art had become, by 1989, institutionalized, verging on social integration.<sup>33</sup> As the above examples show, this was mail art's faith not only in Latin America: mail art was drawing very near to being co-opted worldwide and occasionally functioned as a vehicle of what we would call today gentrification.

## 6 Conclusion

*Globalization* has become a household term in contemporary politics, journalism, and everyday conversations since the mid-1980s, although the phenomenon itself had already been around for centuries. Rather than alleging that cross-border or longer-distance connections and movements were the novelty of the last decade of the twentieth century, the intensity and geographical reach of cultural exchanges charted in this chapter testify to the presence of such interconnections throughout the post-World War II period. While I fully endorse the relevance of a *longue durée* perspective pointing out that globalization has been taking place for hundreds of years already, my focus in the present text has been on the late twentieth century, recognizing the repercussions of the global past in my protagonists' present. My narrative ends in the early 1990s when the art world witnessed processes of convergence and homogenization as an outcome of the global spread of a Western-style concept of art with related artistic and curatorial practices. The term *the global contemporary* reflects the ubiquitousness, indeed-compelling presence, of the same set of artistic tendencies and emerging infrastructure across all continents. The “rise of new art

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<sup>32</sup> Artpool Archives, Mayumi Handa/Japan folder.

<sup>33</sup> C. Padín, “Latinoamerican Mail-Art: A Definition”, in: D. Ogaz (ed.), *Co(reo)arte*, Montevideo: sin, 1989.

worlds” in every pocket of a multipolar world was underpinned by the perception that art making is, and has always been, a universal human activity. It was not until the early mid-2000s that a reverse process of fragmentation started upon recognition that art has not always been a factor common to human societies and that modern art and contemporary art are themselves irredeemably Western-biased notions. After this point, a politics of difference was preferred, which widened the definition of art towards localized inflections and away from previously dominating Western definitions.

My mapping of cultural connections initiated by Hungarian institutional bodies and East European individual artists has showed that all these actors found great satisfaction in the internationality of the post-war decades. As part of an interiorized backwardness complex and as a function of the long-standing hierarchies of the art historical canon, the orientation of East European artists and intellectuals had been traditionally fixated on West European centres. The political and cultural diplomatic principle of socialist internationalism advocated in countries of the Soviet bloc apparently led to a short detour in this historically conditioned cultural affinity. Countries of the bloc were drawn into a newly configured set of cultural diplomatic relations and influences, also engaging the so-called friendly states beyond Europe. While this may have been an imposed rather than a freely chosen reorientation, it, by all means, inserted Eastern Europe and its cultural products into an international distribution structure as the outgoing and incoming shows of Budapest’s Kunsthalle attest.

The multidirectional channels of the worldwide correspondence network of mail art took shape independently of such top-down strategies; however, this does not mean that mail art networking remained entirely unaffected by their underlying ideals. Critically minded artists addressed the hot political topics of a Cold War through their artworks and circulated these across continents and ideological divides, managing to reach fellow artists in remote pockets of the world, with whom an actual physical encounter would not have been possible. Mail art communication empowered artists in the world’s peripheries and connected them without any necessary reliance on any traditional authorizing centre or regime. Although an alternative channel of global exchanges opened up to artist-networkers, their activities may have remained invisible locally for both the mainstream cultural arena of their domestic environment and their totalitarian governments or dictatorships, whose leading politicians deluded themselves into believing that they had successfully controlled the cross-border movement of information and ideas.

In the opening section of this chapter, i advocated adopting a global and transnational approach to replace the methodological nationalism and the isolationist treatment still predominating narratives on cultural life in the Eastern



bloc. In closing my study, i wish to acknowledge the relative lack of unbiased primary research on this subject and to add that recent explorations into how the cultural Cold War played out in communist Europe do have the quality and substance to act as groundwork, even in cases where they only offer nationally framed narratives. Nevertheless, investigations that retain a national focus in order to retrieve singular empirical material but, at the same time, situate their analysis in a transnational framework of references should set a desirable direction for future research.



Ned Richardson-Little

## 5 Transnational Drug Trafficking and the German Embrace of International Narcotics Law from the Kaiserreich to the Nazis

The Treaty of Versailles (1919) had wide-reaching consequences for Germany, which faced the loss of its colonial empire along with significant territory within Europe and which reduced sovereignty over its domestic affairs, in particular the curtailment of its armed forces. One little-remembered provision of this treaty was the imposition of a global regime of narcotics regulation, an international legal system that Imperial Germany had opposed and then had reluctantly agreed to before sabotaging it through non-compliance before the war. For the Nazi regime under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, undoing the effects of the Versailles treaty and restoring Germany to its previous position of pre-eminence was a primary goal and a central aspect of the National Socialist party's appeal. The Nazis soon withdrew Germany from the League of Nations, and, in the years leading up to the Second World War, there was "frenzied celebration [. . .] whenever one more plank was ripped out of the Treaty of Versailles – Saar, Wehrmacht, Austria, Sudetenland".<sup>1</sup> Reclaiming the territory lost in 1919 and reasserting German sovereignty defined Nazi foreign policy in the early years of the regime.

Yet in the field of international narcotics control, Nazi Germany did not roll back the domestic drug laws that were drawn up to conform to the international control system that had been imposed by Versailles. At the beginning of the century, Imperial German officials had rejected Anglo-American plans to use international law to tackle narcotics additions. Once forced into the system of international narcotics control after 1919, activists, experts, and state actors in the Weimar era had embraced the system in support of its spirit of liberal internationalism and with the aim to reassert Germany's place on the European diplomatic stage. Rather than return to the full rejection of the imperial era, the Nazis instead endorsed the emerging consensus that the narcotics trade needed to be regulated through international law and that illicit trafficking in drugs needed to be fought through international police cooperation, so long as it did so in conformity with National Socialist racial ideology.

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<sup>1</sup> P. Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009, p. 10.

The shift of international narcotics law from a threat to German sovereignty that should be sabotaged to a system that had widespread legitimacy across the political spectrum in the interwar period reflected a multifaceted internationalism that blended liberal and illiberal elements: one, idealistic and humanistic, grounded in medical and scientific expertise; the other, punitive and coercive, based on rising international cooperation in aid of nationalistic methods and goals.<sup>2</sup> Far from being separable phenomena, these two impulses were often intertwined, were overlapping, and could even be promoted by the same specialists and experts depending on the changing constellations of political forces.<sup>3</sup> Germany's representative in the League of Nations, the chemist-diplomat Otto Anselmino, worked to create a more scientific international narcotics system while also defending German national economic interests and working with liberal nationalists like Gustav Stresemann to restore Germany's diplomatic stature and its international influence. Influential police officials, such as Arthur Nebe and Werner Thomas, sought to foster international law enforcement cooperation against drug dealers in the later years of the Weimar Republic and then used the same tools to enforce Nazi racial oppression on a continental scale during the Third Reich. The ideologically malleable nature of international narcotics control that allowed it to gain support from a wide variety of expert groups also made it vulnerable to instrumentalization by the Nazis.

This evolution also reflected the changing meaning of international drug regulation itself: what began primarily as a form of moral internationalism driven by missionaries shifted to become most predominantly a liberal-technocratic system of international public health and medical commerce in the hands of scientists and regulators through the League of Nations. From the initial focus on restricting national commerce, it also served in the interwar period as a venue for the defence of state sovereignty in the hands of national diplomats and statesmen, and, finally, it became a platform for advancing international racial persecution in the hands of the Nazified police. The political meaning of international narcotics law changed as it was redefined by these different expert groups, each of which had

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<sup>2</sup> On the tensions between nationalism and internationalism in the interwar era, see G. Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013. On liberal internationalism in the interwar era, see also M. Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea*, New York: Penguin, 2012; P. Clavin, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> On the "mutual dependence of liberal and illiberal internationalism", see P. Hetherington and G. Sluga, "Liberal and Illiberal Internationalisms", *Journal of World History* 31 (2020) 1, pp. 1–9. On the role of experts in creating internationalism in this era, see D. Rodogno, G. Struck, and J. Vogel, *Shaping the Transnational Sphere: Experts, Networks and Issues from the 1840s to the 1930s*, New York: Berghahn Books, 2014.

their own understanding of drugs as a moral, social, economic, or criminal problem. The evolution of the German state's attitudes towards international narcotics control is not simply a narrative of the rise and fall of progressive liberal internationalism but one demonstrating that the architecture of the liberal-technocratic legal order could be transformed into a vehicle for the internationalization of Nazi ideology.<sup>4</sup> Even after the end of the Third Reich, the tensions within international narcotics prohibition between moral and health activism, profits of pharmaceutical companies, and the instrumentalizing of anti-drug laws for the purposes of asserting national sovereignty and legitimizing repressive state power.<sup>5</sup>

## 1 From Rejection to Forced Integration

At the start of efforts to regulate the international drug trade at the beginning of the twentieth century, the German state's attitude ranged from ambivalence to outright hostility. The international campaign to regulate the opium trade stemmed from the confluence of American missionary anti-drug zeal, imperial Chinese reformers seeking to re-establish order in the wake of the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901), and British officials who reversed the UK policy of using gunboats to open China to the opium trade, as mass addiction was now viewed as a threat to economic interests in East Asia.<sup>6</sup> The International Opium Commission in Shanghai was established in 1909, which in turn led to the first international narcotics agreement – the Hague International Opium Convention (hereinafter the Hague Convention) – created in 1912.<sup>7</sup> Imperial Germany took part in these negotiations and signed the Hague Convention, but Germany was also effectively responsible for sabotaging its implementation. The Hague Convention aimed to limit the international trade in opium, but it also targeted medical opiate products such as morphine, codeine, and heroin as well as cocaine.

German chemists had commercially developed both cocaine and heroin in the late nineteenth century, and pharmaceutical producers such as Bayer, Merck,

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<sup>4</sup> On the idea of an alternative “fascist internationalism”, see M. Herren, “Fascist Internationalism”, in: G. Sluga (ed.), *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, pp. 191–212.

<sup>5</sup> On the contradictions of the post-war narcotics system, see C. Boggs, *Drugs, Power, and Politics: Narco Wars, Big Pharma, and the Subversion of Democracy*, London: Routledge, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> H. Barop, “Building the ‘Opium Evil’ Consensus. The International Opium Commission of Shanghai”, *Journal of Modern European History* 13 (2015) 1, pp. 115–137.

<sup>7</sup> The International Opium Commission's participants included the USA, Austria-Hungary, China, France, Germany, the UK, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Persia, Portugal, Russia, and Siam.

and C. H. Boehringer Sohn reaped large profits from the manufacture and sale of both, as well as of codeine and morphine, as medications. The pharmaceutical giants of Germany had become globally dominant at this same time, and international sales and licensing were at the core of their business practices.<sup>8</sup> The largest firms engaged in intensive political lobbying in order to protect their intellectual property and to forestall regulation that would limit the use of their product. This influence extended well beyond the borders of Germany, reaching even the United States, where Bayer and other German firms were credited for killing the protectionist Mann Act (1904).<sup>9</sup> The chemical industry profited greatly from its dominance in the export market, so deflecting threats to this crucial national industry was a priority for state officials.<sup>10</sup>

Negotiations of the Hague Convention were handled by Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt) officials, who were highly sceptical of the need for a “global law” on drugs. Internally, the position of the German state was that the problem of narcotics was a national issue and that policy towards addiction and traffic should be determined by the affected states themselves.<sup>11</sup> Internationally, the problem of addiction in China was viewed as a crisis, but there was no sense within Germany that this was a domestic social problem, and there was no significant movement from civil society, medical experts, or law enforcement demanding more stringent import-export controls, let alone the international prohibition of opiates and cocaine products. This left diplomats a free hand to pursue a policy oriented towards defending against impingement into national sovereignty and the export-based profits of the major German pharmaceutical and chemical concerns.

The Foreign Office did not want to appear to callously disregard the humanitarian problem of narcotics addiction nor did it want to needlessly antagonize the other great powers by opposing the initiative, but it was not going to sacrifice pharmaceutical industry profits for the sake of Anglo-Saxon morality – and political economy. In the negotiations, Germany insisted that the Hague Convention would only take effect when all 34 nations involved in the narcotics

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<sup>8</sup> T. Cramer, “Building the ‘World’s Pharmacy’: The Rise of the German Pharmaceutical Industry, 1871–1914”, *Business History Review* 89 (2015) 1, pp. 43–73.

<sup>9</sup> J. McTavish, “What Did Bayer Do before Aspirin? Early Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices in America”, *Pharmacy in History* 41 (1999) 1, p. 14, fn. 69.

<sup>10</sup> On German chemical and pharmaceutical industry in the globalizing economy, see C. Torp, *The Challenges of Globalization: Economy and Politics in Germany, 1860–1914*, New York: Berg-hahn Books, 2014, pp. 55–57.

<sup>11</sup> See A. Hoffmann, *Drogenkonsum und -kontrolle: Zur Etablierung eines sozialen Problems im ersten Drittel des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2011, pp. 36–43.

trade had also agreed to its terms. Though intended to create a global system of controls, the Hague Convention was only agreed to by 13 states, and, since crucial actors such as Peru, Bolivia, Switzerland, Serbia, and the Ottoman Empire had not signed, the advance of the international drug control system was effectively halted.<sup>12</sup> The UK and US still lobbied for signatory nations to implement the terms of the treaty, but this was a non-starter with Germany so long as it meant unilaterally implementing controls that would make their nation non-competitive on the international market. Although the UK and US continued to pressure Germany to place its domestic cocaine production under international controls, the beginning of the First World War ended any cooperation between the belligerents on the problem of narcotics.<sup>13</sup>

The end of the First World War radically reorganized the international order, reducing the influence of Germany, the losers of the war and even to some extent the European victors, while elevating the United States to a new position of global power.<sup>14</sup> Although the earlier Anglo-American initiatives to bring about global drug control had failed, the 1919 peace negotiations created a unique opportunity to impose a new hegemonic conception of drugs, outside of medicine and scientific uses, as a source of immorality that needed to be dealt with through a global prohibition system.<sup>15</sup> Both the UK and US wanted not only to include the control of the opium trade in the responsibilities of the League of Nations but also to bind the losing powers to the terms of the stalled Hague Convention – in particular, Germany and the states of the former Ottoman Empire.<sup>16</sup> By blocking Germany from continuing its mass export of cocaine and the Ottoman Empire from its production of opium products, “the triumph of the civilized nations over these states could also be understood as a victory against the danger of drug consumption”.<sup>17</sup> The Allied powers aimed to use

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<sup>12</sup> The signatories included China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Persia, Portugal, Russia, Siam, and the UK (including its overseas territories). On the negotiation of the Hague Convention, see W. B. McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century: An International History*, London: Routledge, 2004, pp. 28–34.

<sup>13</sup> H. R. Friman, “Germany and the Transformations of Cocaine, 1880–1920”, in: P. Gootenberg (ed.), *Cocaine: Global Histories*, New York: Routledge, 2002, pp. 83–104, at pp. 91–95.

<sup>14</sup> A. Tooze, *The Deluge: The Great War and the Remaking of Global Order 1916–1931*, London: Penguin, 2014.

<sup>15</sup> E. A. Nadelmann, “Global Prohibition Regimes: The Evolution of Norms in International Society”, *International Organization* 44 (1990) 4, pp. 479–526.

<sup>16</sup> S. D. Stein, *International Diplomacy, State Administrators, and Narcotics Control: The Origins of a Social Problem*, Aldershot: Gower, 1985, pp. 120–123.

<sup>17</sup> M. Payk, *Frieden durch Recht? Der Aufstieg des modernen Völkerrechts und der Friedensschluss nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018, p. 390.

the Treaty of Versailles to realize “peace through law”, so the addition of progressive international legal reform of narcotics law was a logical step towards creating this better world. In the end, Article 295 of the Versailles treaty demanded that Germany implement the terms agreed to in the Hague Convention, and similar language was included in all other peace treaties.

## 2 International Narcotics Law and German *Erfüllungspolitik*

The end of the First World War left Germany in a state of political weakness. The revolution of 1918/19 had set off a bloody conflict over the type of state that would replace the fallen imperial monarchy, and the democratic Weimar Republic was created under the cloud of violent internal division.<sup>18</sup> The punitive terms of the Versailles treaty weakened the already shaky Social Democrat-run state by stripping Germany of its colonial empire alongside significant territorial losses within Europe. As a result, Germany was demilitarized, subjected to military occupation of its western borderlands, and excluded from the international community, including membership in the League of Nations. In order to comply with Versailles, the Weimar Republic passed its first comprehensive Narcotics Law (*Betäubungsmittelgesetz*) in 1920, including provisions limiting production, import, and export and updating medical prescription regulations.<sup>19</sup> The following year, the victorious allies met in London to determine the monetary terms of German reparations owed to the winners of the Great War and came to the figure of 132 billion gold marks to be paid in annual instalments of two billion in gold and foreign currency. German foreign policy elites knew that in Germany's weakened state it could not outright demand the revision of the terms of Versailles, so they aimed to fulfil the terms of the peace treaty and the ruinous repayment plan as a means to lobby for its alternation – what would become known to both mainstream supporters and right-wing detractors as *Erfüllungspolitik*.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> M. Jones, *Founding Weimar: Violence and the German Revolution of 1918–1919*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

<sup>19</sup> Germany had increased domestic regulation of drug distribution and manufacturing during the First World War due to increased usage of morphine products, see Hoffmann, *Drogenkonsum und -kontrolle*, pp. 79–81.

<sup>20</sup> See A. McElligott, *Rethinking the Weimar Republic: Authority and Authoritarianism, 1916–1936*, London: Bloomsbury, 2014, p. 38.



The problems of state sovereignty, border control, and Germany's pariah status on the international stage were central to the political crises of the early Weimar Republic. In the east, politicians of all political stripes saw the inability of the government to control the country's frontier with the newly established Polish Republic as an existential emergency. In its state of reduced power, Germany was forced to accept international arbitration by a Japanese nobleman to determine the exact boundaries of Silesia with Poland, and mass immigration stemming from the chaos in the former Russian Empire led to fears that the border was unmanageable.<sup>21</sup> In the west, the left bank of the Rhine river remained under allied occupation, and, when Germany was unable to pay its massive war debt, French forces moved to expand its occupation of the Rhineland to include the industrial Ruhr valley in 1923. Since Germany was not a member of the League of Nations, this unilateral military action by France was not under the purview of the international community. Domestic insurgents used the French intervention as an opportunity to challenge the state from within: in Munich, Hitler led the unsuccessful Beer Hall Putsch, while in Aachen, revolutionaries declared a short-lived breakaway Rhenish Republic.

For the influential liberal statesman Gustav Stresemann, first as chancellor (1923) and then as foreign minister (1923–1929), these crises demanded the revision of the Versailles treaty, the redrawing of Germany's eastern borders, and the restoration of Germany's status as a European great power.<sup>22</sup> As one of the losers of the First World War, Germany had been displaced as a global power and was in the same position of being a supplicant seeking revision of the Versailles order alongside other recently formed nation-states of Eastern Europe. In order to gain admission to the League of Nations and regain sovereignty, Stresemann first pursued a policy of economic reconciliation, agreeing to the Dawes Plan (1924) for a revised schedule of German debt repayment in an attempt to regain control over its finances. In this context of marginalization, reduced sovereignty, and exclusion from the halls of international power in the 1920s, Germany entered the international narcotics control system. Just as other Central and Eastern European officials sought to use the newly created international institutions to assert themselves from the periphery, Weimar diplomats aimed to

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<sup>21</sup> On Silesia, see Tooze, *The Deluge*, p. 5. On the eastern border and sovereignty, see A. H. Sammartino, *The Impossible Border: Germany and the East, 1914–1922*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014, p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> On Stresemann and his foreign policy, see K. H. Pohl, *Politiker und Bürger: Gustav Stresemann und seine Zeit*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002; J. Wright, *Gustav Stresemann: Weimar's Greatest Statesman*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; C. M. Kimmich, *Germany and the League of Nations*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976, p. 63.

use the nascent narcotics control system as a backdoor to regaining German influence in international affairs.<sup>23</sup>

Rather than merely complying with the now global drug control system, the Weimar Republic moved to take an active role in crafting the increasingly stringent international regulation of narcotics in order to re-establish their position in the international sphere, reassert German power over its own borders, and defend national commercial interests. This was part of a wider strategy of diplomacy through participation in international prohibition regimes, including alcohol prohibition, and efforts to limit arms trafficking and to abolish slavery.<sup>24</sup> The proliferation of medicinal opiates due to the First World War had created more widespread support for increased controls on addictive substances, but narcotics politics remained primarily the concern of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior. At the League of Nations, narcotics were part of the Social Section that covered “[o]pium, refugees, protection of children, relief after earthquakes, prison reform, municipal cooperation, alcoholism, and traffic in women”, led by Dame Rachel Crowdy of England, and controlling them were seen as part of the rise of idealistic internationalism of the 1920s together with other moral and pacifist causes of the era.<sup>25</sup> Yet while this section was considered the realm of the section for do-gooders, peace activists, and tee-totalers, the problem of narcotics regulation was closely intertwined with issues of commercial exchange, scientific-medicinal definitions, law enforcement, and the security of external borders. While the Allied powers jealously guarded their control over areas such as collective security and colonial governance, Germany was welcomed to take part in the international narcotics system as a major producing state.

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<sup>23</sup> On how states and experts from East-Central Europe strategically engaged with the League of Nations, see K. Naumann, “The Polycentric Remaking of International Participation after World War I: (Post-)Imperial Agents from East Central Europe in and around the League’s Secretariat”, in: P. Becker and N. Wheatley (eds.), *Remaking Central Europe: The League of Nations and the Former Habsburg Lands*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (forthcoming).

<sup>24</sup> Germany signed a bilateral agreement with the United States in 1924 as well as the Helsingfors Convention (1925) with the Scandinavian/Baltic Sea states on the restriction of the alcohol trade. See A. Mitter, “Rum Runners of the Baltic – The Rise of Transnational Liquor Smuggling Networks in Interwar Europe”, *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 68 (2019) 4, pp. 527–550. Germany also took part in the negotiations over the League of Nations Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War (1925) and the Convention to Suppress the Slave Trade and Slavery (1926).

<sup>25</sup> G. Sluga, “Women, Feminisms and Twentieth-Century Internationalisms”, in: G. Sluga and P. Clavin (eds.), *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017, pp. 61–84, at 68.

### 3 Germany at the League of Nations

Even though Germany was not a member of the League of Nations, it was invited in 1921 to take part in discussions over a prospective new agreement to deal with the loopholes and practical problems of implementing the Hague Convention. The main actor sent to the League of Nations to navigate this delicate problem on behalf of Germany was Dr. Anselmino, who sat on the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, the main body deliberating on the implementation and development of the international narcotic control system.<sup>26</sup> While most countries sent representatives from their ministries of justice or the interior, the Weimar Republic uniquely chose to send a chemist and pharmacologist. As the only national representative with a scientific background, Anselmino acted as the interpreter of the growing body of specialized medical research into narcotic addiction. This special expertise was valued by the other delegations who often turned to Anselmino to provide technical information and scientifically grounded standards. When the League sought to develop a unified formula to determine the total amount of all types of narcotics that would be needed by a nation based on its population, Anselmino was tasked with its creation.<sup>27</sup> Based on his work in providing technical legal guides to German drug laws, he wrote *ABC of Narcotic Drugs* (1931), the authoritative international reference guide to legal and illegal drugs, which was distributed by the League in English, French, and German.<sup>28</sup>

Anselmino was able to rise to a position of great respect as the objective man of science, but he was also a savvy political operator shaping the rules of the system on behalf of German industrial interests. The chemical industry continued to wield great political influence in the Weimar Republic, and Stresemann's party relied on financial support from its leaders.<sup>29</sup> Internal deliberations within the Foreign Office openly acknowledged the role of the German pharmaceutical industry in supplying black market sources – particularly exports of

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<sup>26</sup> On Anselmino's life and career, see P. Schendzielorz, "Die Anfänge der Betäubungsmittelgesetzgebung in Deutschland: unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Opiumstelle Berlin und des Pharmazeuten Otto Anselmino (1873–1955)", PhD thesis, Free University of Berlin, 1989.

<sup>27</sup> S. K. Chatterjee, *Legal Aspects of International Drug Control*, Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2013, p. 157.

<sup>28</sup> O. Anselmino, *ABC of Narcotic Drugs*, Geneva: League of Nations, 1931. His earlier work on German drug regulations included O. Anselmino and E. Gilg, *Kommentar zum Deutschen Arzneibuch*, Berlin: Springer, 1911; O. Anselmino, *Das Opiumgesetz und seine Ausführungsbestimmungen*, Berlin: Julius Springer, 1924.

<sup>29</sup> L. E. Jones, *German Liberalism and the Dissolution of the Weimar Party System, 1918–1933*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017, p. 191.

cocaine and heroin that flowed illicitly to China – and the difficulties in complying with international reporting requirements without embarrassing important domestic firms.<sup>30</sup> In 1924, Anselmino reported to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the German strategy at the League's negotiations would focus on national interests but that

[t]his does not exclude cooperation on individual points with England-America or another group of states, as far as we regard this as an advantage for us. Of course, in defending our point of view, as desired by German industry, we must avoid the charge of not being loyal and disinterested in the pursuit of the common goal of combatting the abuse of narcotics. If we succeed in this, we shall not jeopardize our reputation, even if our attitude is fundamentally different from that of England.<sup>31</sup>

On the national level, the German government did institute a ban on exports of cocaine to Switzerland – a notorious hub for re-export to the black market – and also worked with China to create a stricter export-import licensing regime for narcotics trade between the two countries.<sup>32</sup>

At the 1925 Geneva Conference on the creation of a new International Opium Convention, Anselmino advised that, on the matter of regulating opium, Germany should “choose the mildest form of disinterested abstention” while also fighting hard to ensure that heroin was not banned outright and that codeine was not classified as a narcotic drug at all.<sup>33</sup> In the end, Germany was satisfied with the final text of the International Opium Convention, which aimed at regulating the drug trade – rather than limiting production or fully prohibiting narcotics – through the establishment of the Permanent Central Opium Board (PCOB) in Geneva, which would monitor international imports and exports. In contrast to China, which withdrew from the negotiations, and the United States, which refused to sign the International Opium Convention on the grounds that it was too lax, Germany was able to achieve its goals of protecting domestic production.<sup>34</sup>

After long negotiations, the Locarno Treaties (1925) secured political reconciliation in the West and paved the way for the end of the Ruhr occupation and

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<sup>30</sup> Hoffmann, *Drogenkonsum und -kontrolle*, pp. 135–36.

<sup>31</sup> Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (hereafter PA AA), R901/46373, Anselmino to Auswärtiges Amt (7 November 1924).

<sup>32</sup> H. R. Friman, *NarcoDiplomacy: Exporting the U.S. War on Drugs*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996, p. 31.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted *ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>34</sup> Y. Zhou, *Anti-Drug Crusades in Twentieth-Century China: Nationalism, History, and State Building*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999, p. 55; McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, p. 82.

German entry into the League of Nations with a new permanent seat on the League's Council. Yet even with this normalization of Germany with regard to its neighbours, it remained demilitarized and distrusted. France remained wary of German nationalist expansionism and only tolerated the readmission of the Weimar Republic into the international community as a means of containing the Bolshevik threat in Eastern Europe. While the Allied powers withdrew from occupying Cologne, France and Belgium actually increased the number of troops stationed in the occupied zones around Koblenz and Mainz. Germany was now in the position of having all the obligations to collective security like all other League of Nations members, even though it remained under occupation and without a significant standing army. On the international stage, Stresemann had fought for Germany to gain a mandate over some of its colonial territory upon joining the League of Nations, but this was not included in the Locarno Treaties due to strong resistance from British and French diplomats. By 1927, however, it was admitted to membership on the Permanent Mandates Commission, which oversaw the post-colonial system, signalling a partial normalization of Germany as a fellow "civilizing" country.<sup>35</sup>

At the League of Nations, Germany was able to generally maintain its reputation for acting in good faith when it came to narcotics control diplomacy, but Anselmino was often in the position of having to deflect accusations, usually levelled by the English, that German pharmaceutical companies were turning a blind eye to smuggling. In 1925, a report on problematic "discrepancies" between official export figures and the imports of the destination country called attention to the unusually large German export of 159 kilogrammes of morphine sent to Estonia, which was flagged as being likely diverted into the hands of international traffickers.<sup>36</sup> When pressed on such issues, Anselmino was quick to explain away such incidents, blaming untrustworthy middlemen and individual employees and excusing the slow reaction time of the German state as the product of federalism, which sometimes prevented rapid responses at the national level.<sup>37</sup> The British diplomat and central architect of interwar League of Nations narcotics law advancements, Sir Malcolm Delevingne, was convinced

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<sup>35</sup> S. Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, pp. 195–203; S. A. Wempe, "From Unfit Imperialists to Fellow Civilizers: German Colonial Officials as Imperial Experts in the League of Nations, 1919–1933", *German History* 34 (2016) 1, pp. 21–48.

<sup>36</sup> A. A. Block, "European Drug Traffic and Traffickers between the Wars: The Policy of Suppression and Its Consequences", *Journal of Social History* 23 (1989) 2, p. 320.

<sup>37</sup> See Anselmino's responses at the League of Nations, League of Nations Archives, C.393. M.136.1926 XI, Eighth Session, pp. 74–82.

that Germany was “very far from having clean hands in the matter of illicit traffic in drug” and believed that extensive use of forged labels was providing cover for firms that were knowingly trading with black marketeers.<sup>38</sup> The German government did not actively facilitate diversions to the black market, but it was slow to act or to enforce harsh penalties unless it appeared that they would face diplomatic repercussions. In one case from 1928, narcotics produced by the German firm C. H. Boehringer Sohn were sent to Chemische Fabriek Naarden of the Netherlands before being shipped to Japan, where they were diverted to the black market in China. In order to quell British outrage, Anselmino himself was sent to inspect the companies involved, where he found that, as with several other suspicious cases, “no offences against German laws and ordinances had taken place”.<sup>39</sup> Ultimately, the export licensing system was tightened in order to demonstrate that Germany aimed to prevent such incidents in the future.

Beyond defending domestic industrial interests, German officials also used their leverage to advance national diplomatic interests via the newly created International Opium Convention. Germany finally joined the League of Nations as a full member in 1926, but it still held out on ratifying the International Opium Convention that it had taken part in negotiating in the previous years. Stresemann told the League that Germany would sign the new agreement only on the condition that it would be guaranteed one of the seats on the Permanent Central Opium Board overseeing its implementation. Should the League refuse to grant Germany this position, it would revert to complying only with the Hague Convention. Although initially hesitant to make such guarantees – as PCOB seats were meant to be appointed based on expertise and independent of national government influence – the German government did not budge from its demands.<sup>40</sup> Ultimately, guarantees were made, and Anselmino moved from his position on the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs to the PCOB when Germany signed the International Opium Convention in August 1929. Domestic compliance with the International Opium Convention followed soon afterwards with the passage of the Opium Law (*Reichsopiumgesetz*) in 1929, which strengthened prohibitions on personal use and trafficking and included the first German controls on cannabis.

Outside of the influence of the League of Nations, however, medical and police experts were also decisive in reshaping how international narcotics law

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38 R. Davenport-Hines, *The Pursuit of Oblivion: A Social History of Drugs*, London: Phoenix, 2002, p. 218.

39 Friman, *NarcoDiplomacy*, pp. 28–31.

40 See Foreign Office correspondence in PA AA, R96847.

would be understood and enforced (and not just written) by elites within Germany. The widespread use of morphine as a pain killer in the First World War, as well as the resulting proliferation of addiction, led to increased attention to the problem of drugs by the German medical profession.<sup>41</sup> Already in the late nineteenth century, medical professionals had identified morphine addiction, but the spread of cocaine as a recreational drug during the Weimar era sparked a landmark study in 1926 on its addictive qualities.<sup>42</sup> In Germany, and internationally, medical experts were assuming an increased role in determining public policy and gained ascendancy within national bureaucracies, leading these developments to play a vital role in shaping elite consensus towards international drug policy.<sup>43</sup>

As the ongoing negotiations over the narcotics control played out between diplomatic representatives, a parallel process of international integration was taking place among police organizations and legal experts. In 1923, the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC) was founded in Vienna in order to tackle new forms of cross-border crime. A scandal involving revisionist Hungarians creating counterfeit francs as part of a plot to bring down the French government provided the initial impetus, but the purview of the organization rapidly expanded beyond crimes against currency.<sup>44</sup> Some legal experts, most notably the Romanian jurist Vespasian Pella (who himself sought to aid the cause of revisionism in Romania, as discussed by Dietmar Müller in his chapter in this book), responded to the internationalization of crime by calling for the unification of penal law as part of a progressive legal agenda that would stretch beyond national borders.<sup>45</sup> International legal cooperation was meant to be non-political, but this vision of international crime control had certain nationalist biases. The international criminal was seen as a “perpetrator without a fatherland”, which meant that they were outside the boundaries of civilized nations.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> J. Haverkamp, “Rauschmittel Im Nationalsozialismus. Die gesetzliche und therapeutische Entwicklung 1933–1939”, *Sozial Geschichte Online* (2012) 7, p. 42.

<sup>42</sup> H. W. Maier, *Der Kokainismus: Geschichte, Pathologie, Medizinische und behördliche Bekämpfung*, Leipzig: G. Thieme, 1926.

<sup>43</sup> Stein, *International Diplomacy*, pp. 123–139.

<sup>44</sup> D. Petrucci, “Banknotes from the Underground: Counterfeiting and the International Order in Interwar Europe”, *Journal of Contemporary History* 51 (2016) 3, pp. 507–530.

<sup>45</sup> M. Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice: The Internationalization of Crime and Punishment, 1919–1950*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

<sup>46</sup> J. Jäger, *Verfolgung durch Verwaltung: Internationales Verbrechen und internationale Polizeikooperation 1880–1933*, Konstanz: Universitätsverlag Konstanz, 2006, pp. 167–168.

Within the fields of law and law enforcement, narcotics ceased to be a problem of vice requiring local solutions and was now viewed as an issue to be handled by civilized states working in concert against a common transnational criminal enemy. The increasing effectiveness of international narcotics control meant that black market operators moved up the supply chain rather than continuing to divert supplies from legitimate firms, which led to the creation of a parallel illicit drug industry complete with manufacturing facilities and distribution networks.<sup>47</sup> Locally organized crime groups in the Weimar Republic – the so-called *Ringvereine* – capitalized on the public demand for cocaine and forged international links as far abroad as China.<sup>48</sup> For the police in the late Weimar Republic, this shift in illicit production and distribution repositioned the problem of drugs from one of domestic vice to an issue of transnational crime. In the recently founded criminal-science journal *Kriminalistische Monatshefte*, the Berlin police inspector Arthur Nebe – who had run the city’s narcotics division since 1926<sup>49</sup> – praised the Hague Convention and noted that “all modern states have recognized that the fight against drug abuse is necessary”. This was no longer a problem of mere morality, however, and Nebe warned that “the international narcotics trade, which is run by large organizations that have contacts in many countries and have considerable capital, is also flourishing”.<sup>50</sup> At this time, Nebe did not depict organized drug crime in an openly racialized manner. The rhetoric surrounding progressive legal alignment against such criminals did, however, dovetail with chauvinism directed against minorities. International police cooperation in the field of narcotics and the League of Nations anti-trafficking bodies in particular fixated on Jews as a target group of presumed delinquents.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> On this structural shift, see Block, “European Drug Traffic”, pp. 315–16.

<sup>48</sup> A. Hartmann and K. von Lampe, “The German Underworld and the Ringvereine from the 1890s through the 1950s”, *Global Crime* 9 (2008) 1–2, pp. 113, 120.

<sup>49</sup> W. Kiess, *Der Doppelspieler: Arthur Nebe zwischen Opportunismus, Verbrechen und Opposition*, Stuttgart: Gatzanis GmbH, 2011, p. 15.

<sup>50</sup> A. Nebe, “Kriminalpolizei und Rauschgifte”, *Kriminalistische Monatshefte* 3 (1929) 4, pp. 81–85, at pp. 83–84.

<sup>51</sup> On the antisemitic portrayals of drug trafficking by contemporary experts, see P. Knepper, “Dreams and Nightmares: Drug Trafficking and the History of International Crime”, in: P. Knepper and A. Johansen (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Crime and Criminal Justice*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 208–225, at 214–216. International police cooperation also targeted the so-called “gypsy plague”, with the very existence of the Sinti and Roma portrayed as a transnational criminal threat to public order that needed to be monitored and controlled. See G. Margalit, *Germany and Its Gypsies: A Post-Auschwitz Ordeal*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002, p. 32.



With illicit narcotics profits flowing to criminal elements and no longer expanding the market for major German firms, the incentive for the state to oppose controls waned, and, instead, German officials aimed to prevent further interventions into the licit trade. By 1930, as the last foreign troops were evacuated, ending the occupation of the Rhineland, the German government was conducting bilateral diplomacy with Turkey, Chile, and China on the matter of increased cooperation to control illegal narcotics traffic.<sup>52</sup> At the League of Nations, the UK delegation had initiated negotiations for yet another convention designed to close loopholes from the International Opium Convention. From the point of view of German Foreign Office officials, the top priority in these negotiations was to prevent “the solidification of English supremacy in narcotics control”. In public, however, German representatives spoke of their commitment to “the fight against contraband smuggling”, above all else in the name of humanitarianism.<sup>53</sup>

Although the fight against smuggling in the name of humanity was the rhetorical highlight of the negotiations, defending industrial interests continued to form the basis for Germany’s position, even if the shift away from grey market diversion meant illicit traffic was no longer a significant profit centre. By the late 1920s, some countries, mostly those without a significant pharmaceutical industry, began to call for the nationalization of narcotics production as a solution to the profit motive that they claimed was driving the illicit diversion of narcotics. In 1928, Estonia requested that all parties to the League agreements take control of all factories producing narcotics as a more practicable means of restricting illicit traffic than controlling the transit of raw coca and opium.<sup>54</sup> This was also supported by the Soviet Union, which began in 1930 attending negotiations over the new convention. The Soviets advocated total state monopolies over production and distribution of narcotics – a convenient position, given that this had already been achieved in the Soviet Union.<sup>55</sup>

These initiatives were rejected, but the Convention for Limiting the Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs (hereinafter Narcotic Drugs Convention, 1931) created the Drug Supervisory Board, which kept track of domestic stockpiles of regulated drugs to ensure that traffic was in line with medical necessity rather than illicit use.<sup>56</sup> The Narcotic Drugs Convention did

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<sup>52</sup> Hoffmann, *Drogenkonsum und -kontrolle*, p. 222.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>54</sup> Block, “European Drug Traffic”, p. 317.

<sup>55</sup> M. Bogomoloff, League of Nations Archives, C.509.M.214.1931 XI, p. 52.

<sup>56</sup> The 1931 Convention also targeted the evasion of international controls through shipping via non-signatory countries. See McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 76–77, 100.

include the recommendations that “[g]overnments should consider the desirability of establishing a state monopoly over the trade in, and, if necessary, over the manufacture of, the drugs covered by the Convention” and that they should “study the possibility of applying the system of international control provided in the Geneva Convention [the International Opium Convention] to every preparation containing any of the [regulated drugs], whatever the drug content of the preparation”. Of the 55 parties to the agreement, the only country to register a formal objection to these points was Germany.<sup>57</sup> The threat of required nationalization had been downgraded to a request to study the possibility of doing so, and, once again, German representatives were not able to prevent codeine from being labelled a narcotic drug, but they were able to keep it from being as strictly regulated as heroin or cocaine.<sup>58</sup> Active participation in the system prevented serious incursions on German sovereignty and economic activity while also enhancing the reputation of the country as an actor acting in good faith on matters of international health.

This international activity was reinforced by domestic law enforcement. By 1932, the warnings from German police had become even more dire. Thomas, another police officer from Berlin, wrote:

Organizations of dealers extend all over the world. The international solidarity of all participants represents their strength and assures them successes, despite occasional slip-ups. While the states that concluded the Geneva [International] Opium Convention, with their own legislation and often guided by economic considerations, try to achieve common control through an exchange of information on the League of Nations, their opponents work with all modern technical means in a very substantial and generous way.<sup>59</sup>

Like Nebe, at this time Thomas also refrained from racializing the figure of the international drug trafficker. While the spectre of narcotics traffickers loomed large for police as the Weimar Republic careened towards collapse, health officials viewed drug addiction as a social problem was on the wane. Only a month before Hitler’s rise to power, the Reich Health Office of the Ministry of the Interior stated that cocaine usage had peaked in 1927 and that “there is no illicit drug trade [neither opiates nor cocaine] in Berlin in a considerable amount as to

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<sup>57</sup> Convention for Limiting the Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs of July 13, 1931: Historical and Technical Study by the Opium Traffic Section of the Secretariat of the League of Nations, Opium and other Dangerous Drugs, Geneva: League of Nations/London: Allen and Unwin, 1937, pp. 230–231.

<sup>58</sup> McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, p. 97.

<sup>59</sup> W. Thomas, “Ueber internationalen Rauschgiftschmuggel”, *Kriminalistische Monatshefte* 6 (1932) 11, pp. 250–252, at p. 250.

pose a danger to the public”.<sup>60</sup> By this time, however, Germany had become established as a key figure in international prohibition diplomacy, and it had thoroughly entrenched the criminalization of non-prescription drug use into its domestic legal system. With the establishment of the Third Reich, the new consensus around drugs forged during the Weimar era would be adapted to Nazi ideology and foreign policy but would never roll back to the norms of the pre-Versailles period.

## 4 The Third Reich: A Culmination, not a Repudiation

Nazi attitudes towards narcotics drugs were multifaceted and contradictory. On the one hand, recreational drug usage and addiction were publicly associated with genetic weakness and racial impurity and deemed a threat to the health of the German nation. On the other hand, condemnation and persecution of those connected to narcotics was differentiated along racial lines as targeted minority groups were scapegoated, but the majority of society was permitted to indulge. The Nazis deemed alcoholism to be a clear sign of hereditary deficiency, but domestic law on drugs remained relatively permissive, and addiction among racially favoured citizens was treated as a medical, not a criminal matter. Narcotics trafficking, however, was depicted as a dangerous criminal enterprise that was inherently linked to Jewish subversion and had to be fought collectively through international law and police cooperation.

Within the police, those who had been most enthusiastic about tackling the international drug trade in the Weimar era advanced rapidly within the Nazified law enforcement structures of the 1930s. Nebe – the Berlin police inspector who, in 1929, had warned of the growing threat of international drug trafficking and the need for international cooperation – joined the Nazi Party and the Schutzstaffel (SS) in 1931, was promoted to head of the Criminal Police in 1936, and then made chief of the newly formed National Criminal Police (*Reichskriminalpolizei*) the following year.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, Thomas, who had echoed his concerns about international trafficking, became the first head of the Reich Central

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<sup>60</sup> J. Lewy, “The Drug Policy of the Third Reich”, *The Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 22 (2018) 2, p. 148.

<sup>61</sup> On Nebe’s rapid advance within the Nazi hierarchy and the police, see G. C. Browder, *Foundations of the Nazi Police State: The Formation of Sipo and SD*, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2015, p. 57.

Office for Combatting Drug Transgressions in 1935. The creation of the new office had been in the works since 1932 at the direction of the Foreign Office and the Ministry of the Interior to coordinate compliance with the Narcotic Drugs Convention.<sup>62</sup> Although this new narcotics department actually had very little power and influence, Thomas continued to publish regularly on the dangers of drug trafficking and to promote the new successes achieved against this scourge by his own office and the Nazi state as a whole.<sup>63</sup>

Narcotics had emerged as a social problem in the Weimar Republic due to increased use of morphine following the First World War and then the rise of recreational cocaine use. Under the Nazis, what had been deemed a problem of public health was largely transformed into a threat of racial contamination. The attitudes of the Nazi state, and the experts that supported it, closely linked the social problems associated with narcotics to racial ideology, but that did not mean that all aspects of drugs policy in the Third Reich were instrumentalized as a means of oppression.<sup>64</sup> Nazi-era doctors acknowledged that the addictive qualities of certain drugs were universal, but the intensity of addiction to various narcotics was racialized – it was claimed that Jews in particular were susceptible to morphine addiction.<sup>65</sup> Thus the use and abuse of narcotics was of comparatively little concern, particularly if users were “Aryans” in good standing with the regime.<sup>66</sup> In spite of concerns about restricted substances such as hashish, cocaine, and opiates, the widespread commercial success of the stimulant methamphetamine, under the brand name Pervitin, demonstrated that narcotics were not generally problematic for the Nazis. As Stephen Snelders and Toine Peters have argued, Western countries, including Nazi Germany, were

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62 Lewy, “The Drug Policy of the Third Reich”, p. 159.

63 See W. Thomas, “Der internationale Rauschgiftschmuggel und seine Bekämpfung”, *Deutsche Rechtspflege* 5 (1937), pp. 140–141.

64 On the entanglement of racial ideology with drug regulation and addiction treatment under the Nazis, see H. Mach, “Exclusion and Extinction – The Fight against Narcotics in the Third Reich”, *Journal of Drug Issues* 32 (2002) 2, pp. 379–394; T. Holzer, *Die Geburt der Drogenpolitik aus dem Geist der Rassenhygiene: Deutsche Drogenpolitik von 1933 bis 1972*, Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2007; Haverkamp, “Rauschmittel im Nationalsozialismus”; W. Pieper (ed.), *Nazis on Speed, Drogen im 3. Reich*, Münchenstein: Grüne Kraft, 2016; J. Lewy, “Vice in the Third Reich”, in: L. Pine (ed.), *Life and Times in Nazi Germany*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016, pp. 49–74; Lewy, “The Drug Policy of the Third Reich”.

65 K. Pohlisch, *Rauschgifte und Konstitution*, Berlin-Dahlem: Wacht-Verlag, 1937, p. 9.

66 Lewy, “The Drug Policy of the Third Reich”, p. 157.

“not drug-free, but rather societies where psychotropic drugs were highly integrated into everyday life, although still culturally ambiguous”.<sup>67</sup>

Although the consumption of drugs was not universally stigmatized, the Nazi world view built upon wider interwar prejudices that linked together drug crime with Jewishness, alongside other “alien” vices that corrupted the health and morality of the German volk.<sup>68</sup> Already in his autobiography *Mein Kampf* (1925), Hitler claimed that Jews were habitual criminals and responsible for “white slavery”, and this was expanded upon by the Nazified medical profession in the 1930s to claim that they had a “racial predisposition” to serious crimes, including “pimping, but also drug-dealing and pickpocketing”.<sup>69</sup> According to the Nazi-era police, a Jewish criminal was closely tied to drugs. In a 1933 issue of *Neues Volk*, the magazine of the Racial Purity Office, the Reich police chief Kurt Daluge explains how authorities could identify “the criminal Jew” on sight together with mug shots of a “pickpocket, confidence man, drug dealer, fence and passport counterfeiter”.<sup>70</sup> One judge declared that the domestic problem of alcoholism had been constrained, but “one must therefore systematically fight the narcotics scourge threatening from abroad”, and a senior police detective was convinced that France was a central hub for the international drug trade connecting sinister Jewish smugglers in the Levant with their compatriots in New York.<sup>71</sup> Even though Germany was still a leading producer of cocaine and heroin, and the recreational use of narcotics was seemingly widespread without serious repercussions, Nazi officials expressed an almost paranoid fear of the threat of foreign narcotics.

While Nazi Germany asserted that a “Jewish connection” lay behind the trafficking problems that it faced, the actual numbers of Jewish traffickers convicted in Germany were, however, very small. In 1938, there was only a single

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67 S. Snelders and T. Pieters, “Speed in the Third Reich: Metamphetamine (Pervitin) Use and a Drug History from Below”, *Social History of Medicine* 24 (2011) 3, p. 697. Although the use of methamphetamines was common among German civilians and armed forces in the Second World War, the impact of this has been exaggerated in sensationalist works such as N. Ohler, *Blitzed: Drugs in Nazi Germany*, London: Penguin, 2016.

68 M. Berkowitz, *The Crime of My Very Existence: Nazism and the Myth of Jewish Criminality*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

69 M. H. Kater, *Doctors Under Hitler*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005, p. 180.

70 C. Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003, p. 119.

71 Quoted in Mach, “Exclusion and Extinction”, p. 382; R. Thumser-Wöhs, “Vom Betschina Karl und dem Zahnluckerten Poldl: Einblicke in Drogensysteme, Drogenkriminalität und Drogenbiografien 1929 bis 1945”, in: R. Thumser-Wöhs et al. (eds.), *Außerordentliches: Festschrift für Albert Lichtblau*, Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2019, pp. 242–255, at 253.

Jewish perpetrator out of 20 convictions that Germany reported nationwide for drug smuggling. In this case, a Yugoslav citizen named Albert Meisel was caught smuggling 306 kilogrammes of opium into Austria on Christmas Eve the year before. He was convicted to ten months of hard labour, while his non-Jewish Swiss accomplice was simply released.<sup>72</sup> Although convictions were rare, accusations of drug peddling were often used as a pretext for the arrest of Jews. During the nationwide pogrom known as Kristallnacht, several thousand Jews in Berlin were arrested under the pretence of being part of an organized drug ring.<sup>73</sup> In spite of the criminalization of Jews as drug traffickers, German narcotics law under the Nazis was not significantly adapted to this purpose. As Jonathan Lewy argues, “none of the drug laws or amendments bore a trace of Nazi ideology. Racial policies failed to infiltrate the drug laws.”<sup>74</sup> Under Nazi rule, drug laws were regularly updated according to pharmaceutical innovations, but the basic legal architecture of the Opium Law remained unchanged. The racial disparities in enforcement came through the ideological projections of the police without the need for explicitly coded legal texts.

Although the Nazi regime did not see the reform of domestic law as being necessary to facilitate the use of the drug trade as a means of legitimizing racial persecution, the Nazi Party’s legal elite did embrace the role of international law as an essential tool in the fight against trafficking. Nazi legal theorists rejected Weimar liberalism and redefined law according to the Nazi Party’s ideology. Hans Frank – Hitler’s personal lawyer, legal counsel to the Nazi Party, and, after 1933, the director of the Academy for German Law – “declared that the law was what benefitted the German volk, and that whatever was to the detriment of the volk, by definition, constituted lawlessness”.<sup>75</sup> Frank argued that it would be impossible to accept an international legal organization that was based on the ideals of the Treaty of Versailles, but “we National-Socialist jurists are however ready to cooperate in any way in the setting up of an international structure of ideas in the sphere of penal policy within the framework of our own ideas and their effects”.<sup>76</sup> In keeping with imperial era experts, Frank argued that there was no need for a “world penal code” but that like-minded states could

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<sup>72</sup> Lewy, “Vice in the Third Reich”, p. 67.

<sup>73</sup> C. Dirks, “The Juni-Aktion (June Operation) in Berlin”, in: B. Meyer, H. Simon, and C. Schütz (eds.), *Jews in Nazi Berlin: From Kristallnacht to Liberation*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009, pp. 22–35, at 25.

<sup>74</sup> Lewy, “The Drug Policy of the Third Reich”, p. 157.

<sup>75</sup> J. Meierhenrich, *The Remnants of the Rechtsstaat: An Ethnography of Nazi Law*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, pp. 110–111.

<sup>76</sup> H. Frank, *International Penal Policy*, Berlin: Akademie für deutsches Recht, 1935, p. 14.

agree on the need to criminalize certain international crimes, including “offences against coinage, the white slave traffic”, as well as “the great crimes of international corruption”, such as “those who sabotage peace, spies, traffickers in drugs or patent sneaks”.<sup>77</sup>

In terms of diplomacy, Nazi-era narcotics diplomacy no longer had to concern itself with the profits of industry as the criminal underworld had transitioned away from grey market diversions. Although the Nazi definition of criminality was highly ideological, Nazi experts accepted the Weimar era framing of narcotics control as a field of technocratic regulation requiring international cooperation and did not revert to the imperial era’s perspective that international law in this field was inherently an assault on German industry and sovereignty.<sup>78</sup> Narcotics control represented an important avenue for advancing the legitimacy of the Nazi regime and maintaining Germany’s position in international affairs, but, in the case of narcotics control, this went further by also legitimizing the legal persecution of the Third Reich’s racial enemies.<sup>79</sup> Initially, it appeared as though the Nazi takeover would mean the end of German participation in the international narcotics system. Nine months after taking power, the Nazi government withdrew Germany from the League of Nations. In a letter protesting this decision sent to Berlin, Anselmino warns, “[t]he great significance of the withdrawal of Germany from the League of Nations for the policy of the Reich must be underlined by the cessation of all participation in the organs set up by the League of Nations.”<sup>80</sup> The Nazi departure from the League of Nations did not, however, end its relationship with the international narcotics control system. In cooperating with the League of Nations after its withdrawal, however, the Nazis followed the guidelines set out by Frank by ostensibly complying with reporting institutions in Geneva while also flagrantly violating its rules when it suited German national interests.

This underhanded Nazi engagement with the League after its formal withdrawal was made possible as officials in Geneva bent over backwards to prevent Germany from completely abandoning its adherence to the opium conventions. Mass compliance with the Narcotic Drugs Convention had only been possible

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., pp. 17, 19–20.

<sup>78</sup> On the continued success of the technical institutions of the League of Nations into the 1930s, see P. Clavin, “Conceptualizing Internationalism”, in: D. Laqua (ed.), *Internationalism Reconfigured: Transnational Ideas and Movements Between the World Wars*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020, pp. 1–14, at 10–11.

<sup>79</sup> See P. Wagner, “Urban Planning and the Politics of Expert Internationalism, 1920s–1940s”, *Journal of World History* 31 (2020) 1, pp. 79–110. The League’s “blacklist” of known drug smugglers was disproportionately filled with names of Jewish traffickers. See Knepper, “Dreams and Nightmares”, pp. 214–216.

<sup>80</sup> Schendzielorz, “Die Anfänge der Betäubungsmittelgesetzgebung in Deutschland”, p. 200.

because British diplomats had secured the immediate signatures of France, Germany, and Switzerland so that the major producers would not lose to each other.<sup>81</sup> Fearing that open defiance from Germany could bring down the system entirely, they decided it would be more effective to accommodate dishonesty from the Third Reich rather than punish it. As a result, the Third Reich diligently, though often fraudulently, filed reports to Geneva and technically fulfilled the reporting requirements of the International Opium Convention and the Narcotic Drugs Convention. In 1936, the Drug Supervisory Board determined that Nazi Germany was stockpiling drugs and using poppy stalks to produce heroin without the need for trackable imports. Rather than censure Germany, officials decided to tread lightly and hope for the best. The following year, when Italy left the League of Nations as well, holding onto German participation was seen as even more vital and precarious. In 1938, the chair of the PCOB, Herbert May, declined his position upon re-election as he feared his Jewish heritage would drive the Germans to leave the system. In the end, the Nazis continued to cooperate and even convinced fascist Italy to attend an international meeting in early 1939 of secret police services on the problem of narcotics.<sup>82</sup> Cooperation with the League's drug bodies only ceased at the end of 1939, soon after the invasion of Poland.<sup>83</sup>

In the field of international police cooperation, the Nazis went even further by hijacking the ICPC. Frank had praised the work of the ICPC, stating that "the criminal is international, hence the police who are to secure his arrest must also co-operate internationally."<sup>84</sup> Over the course of the 1930s, the ICPC had already taken a turn towards the authoritarian right and had turned its focus towards drug trafficking. It succeeded in lobbying for a new international narcotics agreement that would target smuggling rather than licit trade, which became the Convention for the Suppression of the Illicit Traffic in Dangerous Drugs (1936).<sup>85</sup> In Nazi Germany, the convention was not signed, but a dissertation produced at the University of Jena's School of Law declared that, with the creation of the recently drafted (though never actually implemented) agreement, "a common international foundation has finally been established that will enable effective and sustainable suppression of this global evil".<sup>86</sup> The ICPC had always been based in

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<sup>81</sup> McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, p. 110.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 128–29.

<sup>83</sup> Lewy, "The Drug Policy of the Third Reich", pp. 156–57.

<sup>84</sup> Frank, *International Penal Policy*, p. 18.

<sup>85</sup> D. Petrucci, "The Crisis of Liberal Internationalism: The Legacies of the League of Nations Reconsidered", *Journal of World History* 31 (2020) 1, p. 131.

<sup>86</sup> H. Werner, *Abkommen zur Bekämpfung internationaler Delikte*, Meuselwitz: Müller, 1937, p. 79.



Vienna, and the head of that city's police force served as its chief, so, after the German annexation of Austria in 1938, Nazi authorities were able to take control of the organization and install SS officers in charge of operations. The ICPC still maintained a membership of 35 police organizations after this and cooperated with the United States, but the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 caused all members not allied with Nazi Germany to leave the organization. The ICPC headquarters were moved to Berlin, and it was integrated into the Reich Main Security Office under the leadership of Final Solution architect Reinhard Heydrich.<sup>87</sup> Nebe was soon made director of the head office, and, in spite of the politicization of the organization, he enjoyed a productive working relationship beyond the Nazi sphere of influence, including the Danish justice minister and the head of police in Glasgow.<sup>88</sup>

After the outbreak of World War II, trafficking was disrupted, along with much of normal interstate commerce, but the Nazis who were outspoken in their support for combatting international narcotics traffic featured prominently in the racist atrocities of the regime. Nebe proved to be a fierce proponent of the Nazi euthanasia programme, the deportations of Sinti and Roma, and in 1941 he volunteered to lead the death squad *Einsatzgruppe B* as it advanced behind Army Group Centre into Soviet territory. After Heydrich's assassination in 1942, however, Nebe was appointed as president of the ICPC. Frank was appointed as governor-general of occupied Poland in 1939 and served in that position, where he oversaw forced labour operation and multiple death camps, until the end of the war. In 1946, he was executed at Nuremberg for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Late into the war, the Nazi security services continued to speak highly of international cooperation in the name of fighting drug trafficking. In a 1944 speech, SS Captain Erwin Kosmehl – successor to Thomas at Reich Central Office for Combatting Drug Transgressions – spoke proudly of “our work” before the rise of the Third Reich to cooperate with other countries on the problem of narcotics trafficking “so as to neutralize the international criminals, who often had their roots in Jewry”.<sup>89</sup> For the Nazis, the interwar period was now a golden era of international collaboration against the shared threat of Jewish narcotics smuggling that could be looked back upon with fondness.

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<sup>87</sup> C. Fijnaut, “The International Criminal Police Commission and the Fight against Communism, 1923–1945”, in: M. Mazower (ed.), *The Policing of Politics in the Twentieth Century: Historical Perspectives*, New York: Berghahn Books, 1997, pp. 107–128, at 115–17.

<sup>88</sup> R. Rathert, *Verbrechen und Verschwörung: Arthur Nebe der Kripochef des Dritten Reiches*, Münster: LIT Verlag, 2001, pp. 73–74.

<sup>89</sup> G. Feuerstein, *Suchtgiftbekämpfung*, Berlin: Neuland Verl. Ges, 1944, p. 34.

## 5 Conclusion

From the Kaiserreich to the Nazi era, German state policy toward international narcotics regulation focused on the protection of national industry, sovereignty, and security, but the methods by which this was achieved evolved depending on the interpretive lens of shifting expert groups. In the imperial era, officials viewed global legal controls over narcotics drugs as an external threat to state sovereignty, but, after being coercively integrated into the international system under the Weimar Republic, German officials discovered that such rules could be used to advance national interests, and, under the Nazis, it could be used to realize an ideological programme of racial oppression and terror. When international controls were first advanced from a moral perspective, Imperial Germany aimed to sabotage the implementation of a global legal system regulating narcotics. Once the implementation of the Hague Convention was imposed via the Versailles treaty, Germany turned to constructive engagement with the League of Nations to regain its position in diplomatic affairs. As Germany's representative, Anselmino leveraged his position as a scientific expert to shape rules to the advantage of Germany's pharmaceutical producers and deflect international blame for their quasi-criminal transgressions.

Once criminal organizations had taken over the illicit drug trade, police then sought to integrate Germany into regional cross-border police structures and to implement international narcotics law. The rise of illicit international networks promoted the realization of internationalized networks of police and law enforcement that had the means of securing controls over tenuous state frontiers and precarious national sovereignty through international cooperation to contain the threat of transnational crime. Under the Nazis, this process of engagement culminated with international narcotics law being used to legitimize the persecution of Jews under the cover of fighting transnational crime. The transition from moral to liberal-technocratic and finally a Nazified and illiberal internationalism in the field of narcotics control was not seamless, but each new phase built upon the structures of the old.

Dietmar Müller

## 6 In the Orbit of the League of Nations: International Law Debates and Networks in the Interwar Period

The transition from multiethnic empires to nation-states in Europe after World War I led to a multiplication of states and actors in the field of international law, a process whose scope has not yet been fully appreciated. In particular, the contribution of Eastern Europe to the development of international law and international organizations in the interwar period – through the proliferation of new states as well as international regional conflicts and new diplomats and international law experts – has been largely neglected as a cohesive structure of effects. Against the background of the professionalization of foreign offices – through the infusion of lawyers that began taking place since the 1890s in Western and Central Europe, such as France, Germany, and Great Britain – the appearance of new states at the international level must be seen as an enormous challenge to elites.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the regional elites were also confronted with problems of the new state authority in factual terms, such as territorial demarcation, separatism, and the minority protection system.<sup>2</sup> In these fields, the diplomats and international law experts of the new nation-states were challenged by political emigrants, minority representatives and lobbyists, and legal activists. By focusing on the new constellation of states in Eastern Europe, a hitherto largely neglected aspect comes into view. Small states – as all the states of East-Central and South-eastern Europe, with the exception of Poland, understood themselves – were greatly interested in international law as an authority above purely bilateral power politics, just as ethnic minorities were interested in improving their situation beyond national politics and jurisdiction. For different interests, the diplomacies of small states and representatives of ethnic and religious minorities invested considerable effort in international law and international organizations. These are not mere parallels but highly intertwined developments, for the many new states in Eastern Europe were also

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1 M. Payk, *Frieden durch Recht? Der Aufstieg des modernen Völkerrechts und der Friedensschluss nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg*, Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2018.

2 D. Müller, “Statehood in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe: The Interwar Period”, in: W. Borodziej, J. v. Puttkamer, and S. Ferhadbegović (eds.), *The Routledge History Handbook of Central and Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century. Vol. 2: Statehood*, London: Routledge, 2020, pp. 148–193.

the ones that had the highest proportion and number of ethnic and religious minorities in their territories in Europe.<sup>3</sup> This constellation caused debates in several aspects of international law and helped to create networks of legal activists, which provide ample material for a transregional legal and diplomatic history of Europe in the interwar period.

Parallel to the new constellation of states in Eastern Europe, the League of Nations (LoN) was founded and quickly installed itself as a hub of interaction in the field of diplomacy and international law. This field consisted of a number of organizations and commissions of the LoN itself, a large number of new non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and several established and new legal associations and institutes. However, the LoN became firmly settled as a field only through the daily interaction of the aforementioned actors since, by seeking to influence the legal agenda of the LoN, they confirmed the relevance of this international organization anew every day.

## 1 The League of Nations as a Legal Field

A research perspective focused on the actions of actors in organizations orbiting the LoN does not have a well-established tradition. For a long time, the LoN was approached and judged primarily from its less-than-glorious end. Accordingly, it was seen as a failed attempt to secure peace under international law and to institutionalize it permanently through the prevention of and ban on war as well as an unsuccessful collective security system based on peaceful dispute settlement procedures in the Council of the LoN, the International Court of Justice, and other arbitration and settlement bodies.<sup>4</sup> Only recently, under the paradigm of transnationalism, has the history of international organizations been written increasingly from the perspective of the actors, which allows a view to be taken that looks beyond the failures of the LoN.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> D. Müller, *Bodeneigentum und Nation. Rumänien, Jugoslawien und Polen im europäischen Vergleich (1918–1948)*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> S. Pedersen, “Back to the League of Nations”, *The American Historical Review* 112 (2007) 4, pp. 109–117; I. Löhr, “Völkerbund”, Europäische Geschichte Online (EGO), [http://ieg-ego.eu/de/threads/transnationale-bewegungen-und-organisationen/internationale-organisationen-und-kongresse/isabella-loehr-voelkerbund/?searchterm=V%C3%B6lkerbund&set\\_language=de](http://ieg-ego.eu/de/threads/transnationale-bewegungen-und-organisationen/internationale-organisationen-und-kongresse/isabella-loehr-voelkerbund/?searchterm=V%C3%B6lkerbund&set_language=de) (accessed 27 December 2019).

<sup>5</sup> P. Clavin, “Defining Transnationalism”, *Contemporary European History* 14 (2005) 4, pp. 421–439.

At the same time, historians of international history have pointed out the danger of overestimating the importance of transnational interactions within and between international organizations.<sup>6</sup> For it would be tantamount to nominalism to believe that every person who works in international organizations is also a liberal internationalist. Such a rash overestimation reveals the confusion of what may be desirable in comparison to what can actually be proven through historical work. Basically, the action of persons in the field of international politics must be questioned in relation to national contexts and to personal positions and imprints. Such a biographical basis for action opens up the possibility of analysing transnational interactions in the tension fields between ideals and interests, between resources and restrictions on action, and between different diplomatic, professional, and legal activist logics of action.

With reference to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of field and capital varieties, the French school of sociology of law has provided a theoretical approach for an integrated analysis of international law, legal actors, and international organizations.<sup>7</sup> In the legal-sociological conceptualization of the object of study, Bourdieu calls not for the legal system per se to be considered but for specific and specialized parts of it to be examined.<sup>8</sup> Some of his students have focused on the parts by analysing, for example, international humanitarian law, international criminal law, or the legal unification process of the European Union.<sup>9</sup> From a methodological point of view, the analysis is focused on the actions of

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6 M. Schulz, "Internationale Institutionen", in: J. Dülffer and W. Loth (eds.), *Dimensionen internationaler Geschichte*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 2012, pp. 211–232; D. Laqua (ed.), *Internationalism Reconfigured. Transnational Ideas and Movements Between the World Wars*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2011; C. Kraft, "Nationalisierende Transnationalisierung. (Inter)nationale Strafrechtswissenschaft in der Zwischenkriegszeit", in: D. Müller and A. Skordos (eds.), *Leipziger Zugänge zur rechtlichen, politischen und kulturellen Verflechtungsgeschichte Ostmitteleuropas*, Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2015, pp. 15–26.

7 Y. Dezalay and M. R. Madsen, "The Force of Law and the Reflexive Sociology of Law", *The Annual Review of Law and Social Sciences* 8 (2012), pp. 433–452; G. Sacriste and A. Vauchez, "The Force of International Law: Lawyers' Diplomacy on the International Scene in the 1920s", *Law & Social Inquiry* 32 (2007) 1, pp. 83–107. As an emanation of the French School of Sociology of Law, cf. M. R. Madsen and C. Thornhill (eds.), *Law and the Formation of Modern Europe. Perspectives from the Historical Sociology of Law*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

8 Dezalay and Madsen, "The Force of Law", p. 436.

9 A. Cohen, "Constitutionalism without Constitution: Transnational Elites Between Political Mobilization and Legal Expertise in the Making of a Constitution for Europe (1940s–1960s)", *Law & Social Inquiry* 32 (2007), pp. 109–135; J. Hagan and R. Levi, "Crimes of War and the Force of Law", *Social Forces* 83 (2005), pp. 1499–1534; M. R. Madsen, *La genèse de l'Europe des droits de l'homme: Enjeux juridiques et stratégies d'Etat (France, Grande Bretagne et pays scandinaves, 1945–1970)*, Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2010; A. Vauchez, "The

the actors in the respective field, a particularly attractive perspective for historical work, as it allows us to grasp the emergence and change of a field as a result of a more or less targeted agency of specific persons. The scope and impact of individual actions depend on a number of factors, of which academic qualities, state diplomatic functions, and membership in international professional associations, on the one hand, and social anchoring in national and international establishments, on the other hand, are of particular relevance in our context. Bourdieu offered the concept of different types of capital and their convertibility between social, professional, economic, and political spheres of life for the analysis of this aspect. Sociological and historical research on the legal professions have also contributed valuable theoretical elements, particularly regarding strategies for expanding and closing the jurisdiction of legal professionals in defining their profession.<sup>10</sup> The combination of these approaches provides the methodological and theoretical basis for the present analysis.

With a few exceptions, the development of legal-sociological theories and the presentation of international law history have been undertaken on the basis of empirical research coming from Western Europe and the USA. This occidental approach has been challenged for some years now as a consequence of political and mental decolonization from several supposed peripheries, Latin America being a particularly noteworthy example.<sup>11</sup> Eastern Europe has remained largely silent in this respect.<sup>12</sup> Individuals such as Raphael Lemkin or Hersch Lauterpacht have been addressed though; nevertheless, their personal, political, and religious backgrounds have long been ignored and have recently been used to glorify their work.

These selective approaches are contrasted here with an analysis that takes a multiperspective approach to the contribution of Eastern Europe to the further development of international law and the international organizations in the LoN and its orbit. Considering the context of this collective volume, this cannot

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Transnational Politics of Judicialization. Van Gend en Loos and the Making of EU Polity”, *European Law Journal* (2010), pp. 1–28.

**10** A. Abbott, *The System of Professions. An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988; M. Burrage, *Revolution and the Making of the Contemporary Legal Profession. England, France, and the United States*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 22–41.

**11** A. B. Lorca, *Mestizo International Law. A Global Intellectual History 1842–1933*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

**12** For an exception, see S. Troebst, “Lemkin and Lauterpacht in Lemberg and Later: Pre- and Post-Holocaust Careers of Two East European International Lawyers”, *Tr@nsit-Online* (2013), <http://www.iwm.at/read-listen-watch/transit-online/lemkin-and-lauterpacht-in-lemberg-and-later-pre-and-post-holocaust-careers-of-two-east-european-international-lawyers>.

be a synthesis but rather a series of historical and biographical case studies that results in a proposal for a de-occidentalized perspective on such central issues of the history of international law as international criminal law, international humanitarian law, legislation regarding terrorism, and the protection of minorities and human rights. Three people were selected: Vespasian Pella, Raphael Lemkin, and André Mandelstam. As *pars pro toto*, they stand for different types in terms of resource endowment, sociopolitical embedding, modes of action, and narratives of legitimacy. Their activities are generally analysed in the field of legal policy and diplomacy but with a focus on their activities in the International Association of Penal Law (Association Internationale de Droit Pénal, AIDP) and the International Diplomatic Academy (Académie Diplomatique Internationale, ADI).

The main results of this chapter bring new aspects to the relation between national diplomacies and transnational legal activism. The national diplomacies of the new states of East-Central and South-eastern Europe, after having reluctantly realized that the LoN was an important field of legal policy, invested heavily in their diplomatic staff's professionalization and visibility. International lawyer-diplomats, especially from anti-revisionist states, partook in professional lawyer associations in the orbit of the LoN and in its commissions for a legal agenda that would recast and strengthen the nation-state's role in international relations. In the medium term, during the lifetime of the LoN, this type of state-backed agency was more effective than freelance legal activists in transnational NGOs' institutes of higher learning and professional associations related to movements for peace, arms reduction, and human rights.

This chapter shares the scepticism towards the civil societies and NGOs' unilateral powers in boldly shaping international law and politics,<sup>13</sup> as well as international organizations' putatively universalist agenda,<sup>14</sup> and stresses rather a more complex nature of legal fields. The limited successes of legal activism for the limitation of absolute state sovereignty is perhaps the most clear example of the state bias in international law – a tendency that was, to some degree, reduced in the interwar period but was still resilient in the post-World War II and post-Cold War periods. But considering the massive arrival of actors from Eastern Europe in the orbit of the League of Nations first requires a historical grounding by looking at the working methods of diplomacy around 1900, which makes some interactions and strategies in the interwar period understandable.

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<sup>13</sup> T. Davies, *NGOs. A New History of Transnational Civil Society*, London: Hurst & Company, 2013; M. E. Keck and K. Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders. Advocacy Networks in International Politics*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998.

<sup>14</sup> M. Mazower, *Governing the World. The History of an Idea, 1918 to the Present*, New York: Penguin Press, 2012.

## 2 Approaches to the Juridification and Professionalization of Diplomacy around 1900

Comparative research on nationalism and state-building has shown that the states in South-eastern Europe, such as Greece, Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria, which became independent from the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century through secession, shared an important basic feature:<sup>15</sup> at the beginning of their secession, there were mostly uprisings, but they could only take important steps under international law on the way to internationally recognized independence depending on the European concert diplomatic context.<sup>16</sup> The history of international concert diplomacy abounds with examples of how South-eastern European diplomats were successful when they were able to win the goodwill and support of one or more of the major powers. Traditional virtues of the diplomacy of small states, such as concessions, yieldingness, and compromises, predominated, while insistence on legal positions or norms of international law had little success. This constellation had promoted a type of diplomat who was sceptical of universally valid international law, who tended to focus on narrowly defined national interests, and who, accordingly, had little knowledge of international law from a technical and legal point of view. The limits of this phenomenon can be seen in Romanian diplomacy around 1900.

The peace conferences at The Hague in 1899 and 1907 were the first international conferences that combined a more traditional field of participants composed of state delegates and diplomats with participants of peace societies and other organizations from an emerging global civil society.<sup>17</sup> For states like Romania – which united in 1859, adopted a constitution in 1866, gained sovereignty in 1878, and was recognized as a parliamentary monarchy in 1881 – the

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15 D. Müller, *Staatsbürger auf Widerruf. Juden und Muslime als Alteritätspartner im rumänischen und serbischen Nationscode. Ethnonationale Staatsbürgerschaftskonzeptionen, 1878–1941*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005; J. Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982, pp. 90–117.

16 S. Troebst, “Politische Entwicklung in der Neuzeit”, in: M. Hatschikjan and S. Troebst (eds.), *Südosteuropa. Gesellschaft, Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur. Ein Handbuch*, Munich: C. H. Beck, 1999, pp. 73–102; K. Clewing, “Staatensystem und innerstaatliches Agieren im multiethnischen Raum: Südosteuropa im langen 19. Jahrhundert”, in: K. Clewing and J. O. Schmitt (eds.), *Geschichte Südosteuropas vom frühen Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, Regensburg: Pustet, 2011, pp. 432–553.

17 J. Dülffer, *Regeln gegen den Krieg? Die Haager Friedenskonferenzen von 1899 und 1907 in der internationalen Politik*, Berlin: Ullstein, 1981.



1899 conference at The Hague was the first major international event its diplomats could attend, which did not have any Romanian problems on its agenda. Other than at the Congress of Berlin (1878), Romania's delegates considered themselves as relevant actors – alongside their colleagues from Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria – on the international scene and on a par with diplomats and politicians from the great powers.<sup>18</sup> Bucharest sent two of Romania's most senior and experienced diplomats to both conferences: Alexandru Beldiman and Ioan Papiniu.<sup>19</sup>

They were amongst the first generation of Romanian diplomats who enjoyed higher education: Papiniu had studied political science in Paris, and Beldiman had studied civil law in Paris and Berlin (doctorate). Furthermore, both entered diplomatic service before a formal competition for the vacant positions was declared mandatory by law in 1885. However, with an elite small in numbers and with heterogeneous professional backgrounds in the new states, the case of Beldiman was rather common for the phenomenon of professional multifunctionality. He began his career as a lawyer in civil law cases in Iași in 1878, the very year he joined the Romanian delegation to the Congress of Berlin.<sup>20</sup>

The main point about this widespread phenomenon is that professional multifunctionality can be regarded as the most important reason for a low level of differentiation and specialization. There was also little time and little prospect for lawyers from these new states to join prestigious international professional organizations, such as the Institute of International Law (Institut de Droit International), which was founded in 1873.<sup>21</sup> As a consequence, the Romanian delegation

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**18** R. Lüthi, *Die europäischen Kleinstaaten und die Haager Friedenskonferenz von 1899*, Winterthur: Keller, 1954; J. Dülffer, "Die kleineren Staaten auf den Den Haager Friedenskonferenzen von 1899 und 1907", in: M. Kröger, U. S. Soénius, and S. Wunsch (eds.), *Im Zeichen der Gewalt. Frieden und Krieg im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Cologne: Böhlau, 2003, pp. 79–88.

**19** L. Bieltz, "România la conferințele de pace de la Haga. 1899; 1907. Fotografii originale din Patrimoniul Muzeului Național de Istorie a României" [Romania at the Peace Conferences in The Hague. 1899; 1907. Original photographs form the Treasure of the National History Museum of Romania], *Muzeul Național* 9 (1997), pp. 113–116.

**20** A.-B. Ceobanu, *Diplomați în Vechiul Regat. Familie, carieră și viață socială în timpul lui Carol I (1878–1914)* [Diplomats in Old Romanian Kingdom. Family, career, and social life during the reign of Carol I (1878–1914)], Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2015, pp. 181–218; R. Dinu, *Diplomația Vechiului Regat (1878–1914)* [The Diplomacy of the Old Romanian Kingdom], Bucharest: Editura Monitorul Oficial, 2014, pp. 184–185.

**21** M. Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001; H. Mosler, "Das Institut de Droit International und die völkerrechtliche Stellung der menschlichen Person", in: W. Wengler (ed.), *Justitia et Pace. Festschrift zum 100jährigen Bestehen des Institut de Droit International*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1974, pp. 77–100; Sacriste and Vauchez, "The Force of International Law", pp. 93–105.

to both conferences in The Hague played only a minor role, as was the case with other delegations from South-eastern European states. The demographical fact of being a small country could have served as a bridge from the South-eastern European states to states such as Switzerland, Belgium, and the Netherlands; however, demography did not prove strong enough as a unifier. The small countries from Western Europe had enjoyed a tradition of neutrality – be it perpetual neutrality fixed by international law in the case of Switzerland and Belgium or long-term neutrality by internal decision in the case of the Netherlands – a tradition that had fostered a generation of diplomats well-acquainted with international law and, in some cases, active in the peace movement.<sup>22</sup> While demography did not matter, geography mattered to a great extent due to the fact that there was no common position feasible between the small states from Western and South-eastern Europe. Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece were particularly averse to arms reduction, the establishment of enquiry commissions, and an obligatory court of arbitration, hinting at their weak position between imperialistic great powers in the Balkans.

The ample correspondence of Beldiman, the Romanian ambassador to Germany since 1885, with Bernhard von Bülow, the deputy minister of foreign affairs, from The Hague in 1899 conveys the general impression that Romania had no confidence in the power-restraining quality of treaties under international law and sought rather for reassurance from a great power.<sup>23</sup> Nonetheless, Bucharest had to acknowledge that Romanian diplomacy was capable of organizing a negative consensus only amongst the South-eastern European countries, but it proved to be incapable of formulating a positive solution. The main reasons for this was the limited number of specialists in international law and lack of a professional network. Apparently, these were lessons learned that forced Bucharest to develop a new strategy of internationalism in the interwar period.

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22 M. Herren, *Hintertüren zur Macht: Internationalismus und modernisierungsorientierte Außenpolitik in Belgien, der Schweiz und den USA 1865–1914*, München: Oldenbourg, 2000; M. Herren, “Governmental Internationalism and the Beginning of a New World Order in the Late Nineteenth Century”, in: M. H. Geyer and J. Paulmann (eds.), *The Mechanics of Internationalism. Culture, Society, and Politics from the 1840s to the First World War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 121–144.

23 Dülffer, *Regeln gegen den Krieg?*, p. 199.

### 3 Vespasian Pella: International Criminal Law in the Service of Romania's Anti-Revisionism

The changed position of the country on the international stage after World War I can be recognized in Vespasian Pella and in his career as an international law expert and diplomat of Romania working within the orbit of the LoN. This applies not only to Romania's specific situation as an ally of the victorious Triple Entente but also, to the same extent, to its significantly changed possibilities for international action compared to 1900. An analysis of Pella's career as an international lawyer and diplomat with the instruments of legal and professional sociology suggests that Bucharest had deliberately invested financially and socially in the career of the young lawyer from a politically reliable house and provided him with capital so that he could effectively represent Romania's interests in the field of international criminal law.

Romania had emerged victorious from World War I on the side of the Triple Entente and was able to more than double its territory and population by adding the provinces of Transylvania, Bukovina, and Bessarabia. Southern Dobrudja had already been added in the Balkan Wars (1912/13). Accordingly, its elites pursued a strictly anti-revisionist foreign policy, which was secured by several treaties and alliances.<sup>24</sup> For instance, Romania concluded a military pact with Poland in 1921 against the Soviet Union and for the protection of Bessarabia.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, the Little Entente (1920/21–1938), comprising Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, was intended as a safeguard against Hungary while protecting Transylvania.<sup>26</sup> Lastly, the Balkan Pact (1934–1937), an alliance between Romania, Turkey, Greece, and Yugoslavia, was meant to provide protection against Bulgaria in regard to Southern Dobrudja.<sup>27</sup>

Romanian historiography has been unable to elaborate any other strategy of Romanian foreign policy in the interwar period beyond anti-revisionism, on

24 V. Moisiuc, *Premisele izolării politice a României 1919–1940* [Preconditions of Romania's political isolation 1919–1940], Bucharest: Humanitas, 1991.

25 F. Anghel, *Construirea sistemului "Cordon sanitaire". Relații româno-polone 1919–1926* [Romanian-Polish Relations 1919–1926], Târgoviște: Editura Cetate de Scaun, 2008.

26 M. Adam, *Richtung Selbstvernichtung. Die Kleine Entente 1920–1938*, Budapest: Corvina, 1988; M. Adam, *The Little Entente and Europe (1920–1929)*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993; E. Campus, *Mica Înțelegere* [The Little Entente], Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1968; R. Kiszling, *Die militärischen Vereinbarungen der Kleinen Entente 1929–1937*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 1959; R. Machray, *The Little Entente*, New York: H. Fertig, 1970.

27 E. Campus, *Înțelegerea balcanică* [The Balkan Pact], Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1972.

which a wealth of studies has been published. However, the foreign policy doctrine of collective security from the 1930s was rediscovered and implemented from the mid-1960s onwards, as demonstrated by the partial emancipation from Soviet domination in the communist alliance system. Furthermore, the most famous Romanian diplomat, Nicolae Titulescu, who had worked specifically within the framework of the LoN and gained international renown, was also rehabilitated in the course of this process.<sup>28</sup> Notwithstanding, the LoN was an institution on which the contemporary Romanian elites could not develop an unreservedly positive attitude, since the LoN imposed a minority protection system, which these elites perceived as a serious encroachment on the country's state sovereignty.

This view corresponds to today's mainstream historiography. The rediscovery of Pella in Romanian international law historiography after 1989 has not yet gone beyond the level of his glorification as a great man of European diplomacy and international law, who – as the “Romanian forefather of the idea of founding a permanent criminal court to punish international crimes” – “was far ahead of his time”.<sup>29</sup> Central questions and problems like the following have not yet been addressed: what was it that prompted Romanian diplomacy to promote the young Pella to participate in international legal congresses since the early 1920s and to entrust him increasingly with diplomatic missions, especially to the LoN and its attached networks? Did Pella's views on the criminal liability of state action not mean the same loss of full state sovereignty that was so vehemently rejected in the context of the protection of minorities?

Pella was born in Râmnicu Sărat in 1897 into a political dynasty. His father belonged to Romania's political elite; he was the mayor of Râmnicu Sărat and, as a member of the National Liberal Party, first deputy and later a senator in both chambers of the Romanian parliament. Pella followed in his father's footsteps and was elected to parliament at the tender age of 25, where he represented, just as his father did, the same constituency around Râmnicu Sărat from 1922 to 1928 for the National Liberal Party in the Chamber of Deputies.<sup>30</sup> Parallel to politics, Pella began a legal and diplomatic career in the mid-1920s.

<sup>28</sup> See the edition of Titulescu's most important speeches before the League of Nations: N. Titulescu, “Discursuri”, in: R. Deutsch (ed.), [Speeches], Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1967.

<sup>29</sup> J. Rinceanu, *Völkerstrafrecht in Rumänien*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2008, p. 251. See also M. Duțu, *Vespasian V. Pella (1897–1952). Fondator al dreptului internațional penal. Promotor al unificării dreptului penal. Artizan al justiției penale internaționale* [Founder of the international law. Promoter of the unification of the criminal law. Architect of the international criminal justice; transl. provided on book cover], Bucharest: Universul Juridic, 2012; G. Sbârnea, “Vespasian V. Pella – au service de la science du droit et cause de la paix”, *Annals of the Academy of Romanian Scientists. Series on History and Archeology* 5 (2013) 2, pp. 85–125.

<sup>30</sup> Duțu, *Vespasian V. Pella*, pp. 11–13.

After studying law in Iași and Paris, he published *La criminalité collective des États et le droit penal de l'avenir* (1925) with a Bucharest publishing house. His main work – both a solid legal study and a legal-policy recommendation – was edited by the Romanian group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and it was written directly in French. Pella's official diplomatic career began in 1927 when he became a Romanian delegate to the LoN, where he was particularly active in commissions dealing with criminal law. His previous lively activities and the memoranda he submitted to the Inter-Parliamentary Union and to several legal organizations now took on greater weight because they were attributed to a diplomat.<sup>31</sup>

The conversion of the social, professional, and political capital accumulated by Pella into Romania's international legal and political influence had begun. The prudence with which Romanian diplomacy organized this process is revealed by the way Pella's main work was handled. Immediately after his book was published in 1925, it was sent to numerous experts in international law – apparently with the request to return a commentary concerning the value of such a work. In the second edition of the book, in 1926, 50 of these comments were then prepended to the volume. In the same year, a prominent National Liberal Party friend of Pella, Senator Constantin G. Dissescu, a professor of law, nominated him for the Nobel Prize, with the most positive comments from his international colleagues serving as proof of his excellence in international law and his services to world peace.<sup>32</sup>

## The War of Aggression as a Crime under International Law

The most important issues of international law to which Pella was particularly committed intellectually and politically were war and terrorism. His work aimed to define a war of aggression and cross-border terrorism as offences under

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., pp. 35–36. See also M. Iacobescu, *România și Societatea Națiunilor 1919–1929* [Romania and the League of Nations], Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1988, pp. 192–194.

<sup>32</sup> See V. V. Pella, *La criminalité collective des états et le Droit Pénal de l'avenir*, Bucharest: Imprimerie de l'État, 1925 (here cited after the 2nd edn 1926). For the Nobel Prize proposal see: “Propunerea adresată Comitetului Nobel al Parlamentului Norvegian de către profesorului și senatorului Constantin G. Dissescu, în vederea atribuirii Premiului Nobel pentru Pace pe anul 1926 lui Vespasian V. Pella” [Proposal towards the Nobel Prize Committee of the Norwegian Parliament by the profesor and member of parliament Constantin G. Dissescu in regards awarding the Nobel Prize 1926 to Vespasian V. Pella], in: G. Sbârnea (ed.), *Vespasian V. Pella – în slujba științei dreptului și a cauzei păcii* [Vespasian V. Pella – in the cause of law and peace], Ploiești: Karta-Graphic, 2011, pp. 261–292.

international law and to prosecute them under criminal law. In political terms, the common denominator of the two issues under international law lies in the intention of Bucharest's foreign policy to prevent anything that might encourage a revision of the territorial status quo under the Paris Peace Treaties. Accordingly, Pella's writings, speeches, and actions are pervaded by fundamental anti-revisionism, albeit in the guise of historical-philosophical and international law claims to universality. The first sentence of his book *La criminalité collective des États et le droit penal de l'avenir* reads with the bold sentence: "La guerre d'agression est un crime!"<sup>33</sup> This would have become very clear after World War I, and now it was a matter of implementing this widely shared idea in norms, procedures, and institutions of an international criminal justice system.<sup>34</sup>

According to Pella's ideas, states and individuals can be guilty of a war of aggression. He links the two levels by drawing on more recent collective and older ideas of the psychology of peoples, according to which some peoples are endowed with an "esprit agressif",<sup>35</sup> but this could be mobilized by particularly active and influential individuals and groups (e.g. school teachers, officers, and clergy organized into associations, clubs, etc.) – in the sense of a nationalist escalation. Under certain circumstances, they would seize the state and prepare and commit crimes in its name, that is to say a war of aggression.

It is interesting here how Pella classified the state in terms of content and time. The basis of a future peace order must be "la reconnaissance de la nation comme l'élément fondamental de l'organisation politique du monde"<sup>36</sup> because the state is nothing more than the emanation of the nation, its legal expression. In the understanding of the Romanian elites during the interwar period, however, Pella understood the state as a nation-state and the nation as the titular nation of ethnic Romanians.<sup>37</sup> A peace order of equal nation-states must continue to include the elements of arbitrability (jurisdiction) in conflicts, disarmament, and

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33 Pella, *La criminalité collective des états*, p. 3. In doing so, he refers to the draft of the disarmament agreement discussed in the League of Nations in the early 1920s, which initially postulated that "aggressive war is an international crime". See O. A. Hathaway and S. J. Shapiro, *The Internationalists and Their Plan to Outlaw War*, London: Allan Lane, 2018, p. 117.

34 Pella expressly refers to American pacifists and liberal internationalists who would have prepared the ground for the criminalization of a war of aggression under international law (see Pella, *La criminalité collective des états*, p. 6). In descriptions of the genesis of the Kellogg-Briand Pact to outlaw war of aggression – which is not expressly discussed here – Pella's initiative is mentioned only in passing. The most recent monograph on the subject even dispenses with mentioning Pella altogether (see Hathaway and Shapiro, *The Internationalists*).

35 Pella, *La criminalité collective des états*, p. 3.

36 Ibid., p. 101.

37 Müller, *Staatsbürger auf Widerruf*.

security, whereby he spelled out security in an anti-revisionist manner: “la reconnaissance du *principe de la sécurité* de leurs possessions territoriales”.<sup>38</sup>

In these brief examples short paragraph, Pella’s argumentation strategy in terms of Bucharest’s foreign policy becomes clear. The point of reference regarding content and timing is the status quo following the Paris Peace Treaties, with the ethno-Romanian nation-state in the form of Greater Romania becoming normalized and all resources – not least international law – being mobilized for its political defence. Strategies of normalization are inevitably ahistorical, which becomes clear in the case of Pella’s definition of actions that are to be considered as preparations for a war of aggression and that will accordingly be punishable under criminal law in the future. Accordingly, he lists the following actions, amongst others, as actions of states that are incriminating:

- e) Preparing or permitting to be prepared on its territory attacks directed against the internal security of another State, or aiding or abetting bands of evil-doers making raids on the territories of other States.
- f) Interference by one State in the internal political struggles of another by supplying grants of money or giving support of any kind to political parties.<sup>39</sup>

With these actions, which are now to be interpreted and assessed according international law, Pella describes political strategies and actions that had been part of the standard repertoire of the South-eastern European national movements against the Ottoman and Habsburg empires in the long nineteenth century. The subtext of Pella’s argumentation was that what was legitimate in the age of national emancipation against the empires is no longer so in the age of nation-states. Pella thus attempted to bring political, military, and propagandistic action elements of irredenta, in general, and revisionism of the interwar period, in particular, conceptually close to the war of aggression and, at best, to integrate them into the definition of such a war of aggression, for example in the form of the preparation of a war of aggression.

Pella’s academic initiative for the criminalization of the war of aggression was flanked by legal policy activities. In August 1924 in Berne, for example, as a Romanian delegate to the conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a body of parliamentary representatives of various nations, he had argued for the criminalization of a war of aggression and proposed the development of an international

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<sup>38</sup> Pella, *La criminalité collective des états*, p. 103.

<sup>39</sup> V. V. Pella, “The Criminality of Wars of Aggression and the Organisation of International Repressive Measures”, in: Pella, *La criminalité collective des états*, p. 331.

criminal code.<sup>40</sup> He was then appointed rapporteur for the next conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to be held in Washington, DC, in October 1925, where he presented a memorandum along these lines.<sup>41</sup> In addition to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Pella also promoted his ideas on the juridification of international relations in international professional organizations of lawyers, such as the International Law Association (ILA).

But, the most effective platform for him was the AIDP, founded in 1924 and based in Paris. Under the aegis of France and Belgium, the AIDP developed into an international arena in which anti-revisionist states, primarily Poland and Romania, as well as Yugoslavia and Greece, were very active in bundling and pursuing common foreign and international law policy goals.<sup>42</sup> The AIDP advocated the creation of an international criminal law, either by unifying existing national criminal codes or by creating new international codification.<sup>43</sup> It also supported the creation of an international criminal court. In addition to French and Belgian international law experts, such as Henri Donnedieu de Vabres and Henri Carton de Wiart, Pella and the Greek Nicolas Politis continued to advance the plan to classify wars of aggression as crimes under international law, to bring states and individuals to justice, and to condemn them. In doing so, they sought to institutionalize the aim laid down in the Covenant of the LoN to prevent wars as a legitimate means of asserting interests (Article 11) by establishing a norm under international law.

An extremely confident tone emerges from the writings of Pella, considered here as a representative of the legally educated actors in the field of international relations who wanted to shape international law in the orbit of the LoN.

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<sup>40</sup> V. Pella, “Discours tenu dans le cadre des débats généraux sur le Compte-Rendu du Bureau de l’Union Interparlementaire de la 22e conférence déroulée à Berne du 22 au 28 Août 1924”, in: Sbârnă (ed.), *Vespasian V. Pella*, pp. 97–103.

<sup>41</sup> V. Pella, “La criminalité de la guerre de l’agression et l’organisation d’une répression internationale. Rapport présenté au nom de la Commission permanente pour l’étude des questions juridiques, 23e Conférence tenue à Washington du 1er au 7 octobre 1925”, in: Sbârnă (ed.), *Vespasian V. Pella*, pp. 111–144. For a description of its activities within the Inter-Parliamentary Union, see V. V. Pella, “L’Union Interparlementaire et le droit pénal international”, in: *L’union interparlementaire de 1889 à 1939*, Lausanne: Librairie Payot, 1939, pp. 101–121. For further preparatory work, see Pella, *La criminalité collective des états*, p. 9.

<sup>42</sup> C. Kraft, *Europa im Blick der polnischen Juristen. Rechtsordnung und juristische Profession im Spannungsfeld zwischen Nation und Europa 1918–1939*, Frankfurt on the Main: [Klostermann], 2002, pp. 290–311.

<sup>43</sup> M. Lewis, *The Birth of the New Justice. The Internationalization of Crime and Punishment, 1919–1950*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014; M. Lewis, “The History of the International Association of Penal Law, 1924–1950”, in: C. W. Ling, M. Bergsmo, and Y. Ping (eds.), *Historical Origins of International Criminal Law*, Brussels: Torkel Opsahl Academic EPublisher, 2015.



In keeping with the phrasing by Martti Koskenniemi of *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations* (2001), Pella claims for himself, as well as his peers, insights into the necessities of the new age, knowledge of the revision of legal norms, and the necessary non-partisanship in their institutionalization. He expressed this at the twenty-fifth conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, held in Berlin in 1928, as follows:

Monsieur le Président, Mesdames, Messieurs. Dans un exposé prononcé il y a un an devant la VIII<sup>e</sup> Assemblée de la Société des Nations j'insistais sur la nécessité pour les Etats de procéder à l'élaboration d'une déclaration de leurs droits et de leurs devoirs.

A cette occasion, j'exprimais le désir de voir non les organismes de la Société des Nations, mais au contraire des associations internationales non-officielles – élaborer une telle déclaration qui doit servir de base à la codification future du droit international et constituer en même temps la charte de la communauté des Etats.<sup>44</sup>

In the further course of his speech, however, he only mentions lawyers, for example those in the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as appointed actors for drafting a charter of the international community because they had the professional skills and the necessary room for manoeuvre. On the one hand, this would set the international lawyers apart from politicians, whose horizon in everyday life was often nationally restricted in the search for political legitimacy.<sup>45</sup> On the other hand, the legally educated international lawyers were usually delegates sent by the state to the commissions of the LoN, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and specialist legal organizations, such as the ILA and AIDP, and were therefore familiar with diplomatic practices. The latter qualification was implicitly directed against a large number of legal activists and NGOs, which – not legitimized or diplomatically secured by any state – nevertheless operated within the sphere of influence of the LoN. As analysed below regarding Lemkin and Mandelstam, persons and NGOs without a state mandate or diplomatic status acted in the same legal field as Pella, where the state-bound international law experts, however, sometimes pursued a markedly different legal policy.

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<sup>44</sup> V. Pella, "Discours donné lors de la XXVe Conférence de l'Union interparlementaire tenue à Berlin du 23 au 28 août 1928", in: Sbârnă (ed.), *Vespasian V. Pella*, p. 318.

<sup>45</sup> Regarding of Pella's continuous claim of scientificity as a necessary quality of dealing with international law, reference is made here to his speech at the meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Washington in 1925, see V. Pella, "La criminalité de la guerre. Rapport présentée à Washington du 1er au 7 octobre 1925", in: Sbârnă (ed.), *Vespasian V. Pella*, p. 115.

## Romanian Threat Perceptions

It was no coincidence that Pella began to campaign in the mid-1920s for the criminal liability of state action. On the one hand, the initial distance of Romanian diplomacy from the LoN gave way to the realization that this international organization was too important to ignore as a field of action. On the other hand, the diplomatic and irredentist activities of several revisionist-minded neighbours intensified against Romanian interests. Romanian diplomacy thus sought ways and means to measure various threats according to a common denominator. In addition to the criminal liability of the war of aggression, terrorism crystallized as a further field of action for Bucharest and for its busy international law expert and diplomat Pella. As early as 1926, Romanian diplomats had suggested that terrorism should be defined in such a way that it could be justified as being classified as an international crime.<sup>46</sup>

The early and subsequently sustained engagement of Romanian diplomats and international law experts in this matter is interpreted here as an attempt to provide a legal dimension beyond the purely political concept of revisionism to the manifold threats from several of its neighbouring countries. From Bucharest's perspective, the existence of Greater Romania was threatened by activities in the new provinces, which – depending on the respective minority and on the ideological self-description and foreign policy orientation of the revisionist states – had a different character. After the downfall of Béla Kun's Hungarian Soviet Republic, brought about by the intervention of Romanian troops, the situation in Transylvania in the mid-1920s was interpreted primarily as a lack of loyalty on the part of the Hungarian minority and as political revisionism on the part of Budapest.<sup>47</sup> Bucharest's perception of threats to the province of Dobrudja resulted not only from the alleged lack of loyalty of the Bulgarian minority and political revisionism in Sofia but also from a military component. Particularly in Southern Dobrudja, in the so-called Cadrilater, numerous organizations, such as the Internal Dobrudjan Revolutionary Organization (Vătreșna Dobrudžanska Revoljucionna Organizacija),

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<sup>46</sup> B. Saul, "The Legal Response of the League of Nations to Terrorism", *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 4 (2006), pp. 78–102, at 80. However, Ben Saul does not name the author of the suggestion.

<sup>47</sup> A. Kovács-Bertrand, *Der ungarische Revisionismus nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg. Der publizistische Kampf gegen den Friedensvertrag von Trianon (1918–1931)*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997; L. Leuștean, *România, Ungaria și Tratatul de la Trianon 1918–1920* [Romania, Hungary and the Treaty of Trianon 1918–1920], Iași: Polirom, 2002; L. Leuștean, *România și Ungaria în cadrul "Noii Europe" (1920–1923)* [Romania and Hungary in the context of „New Europe“ (1920–1923)], Iași: Polirom, 2003.

often operated from Bulgarian territory and attacked Romanian colonists and state institutions with armed force.<sup>48</sup> Finally, in Bessarabia, the Bucharest political class saw a third type of threat to the territorial status quo in addition to revisionism and armed bandit activity, namely the ideologically grounded questioning of the province's affiliation to Romania by the Soviet Union and the Comintern, according to which this was tantamount to bourgeois, large-scale landownership class rule.<sup>49</sup>

In practice, the above-mentioned revisionist actions overlapped considerably; an exact and selective definition was not possible regarding either bandit activity or political revisionism within the conventional state system or outside it. This conceptual uncertainty can be observed in security analyses and discourses of Romanian actors at all levels, including reports sent by the prefect, the police, or the secret service to the Bucharest headquarters, parliamentary debates on threats from ethnic minorities in the new provinces, or dialogue with the LoN on such issues.<sup>50</sup> The assessment of any activity of ethnic minorities in any new province, with or without demonstrable influence of the potentially interested "motherland", could vary between "irredentism", "revisionism", and "bandit activity", with the use of pejorative adjectives such as "subversive", "violent", or "terrorist".

The so-called rebellion of Tatar Bunar may serve as an example. In September 1924, in a Bessarabian region bordering the Soviet Union, the mostly Russian-speaking inhabitants of several towns took armed action against Romanian state institutions, very likely with the support of Bolshevik agitators, and could only be defeated after several days by units of the gendarmerie, the military, and the citizens loyal to the state.<sup>51</sup> A year later, after a thorough investigation of the events,

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48 A. Schmidt-Rösler, *Rumänien nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg: Die Grenzziehung in der Dobrudscha und im Banat und die Folgeprobleme*, Frankfurt on the Main: Peter Lang, 1994, pp. 101–119.

49 C. King, *The Moldovans. Romania, Russia, and the Politics of Culture*, Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2000, pp. 36–62; A.-M. Mironov, "Bessarabien in der Zwischenkriegszeit (1918–1940). Das politische Leben", in: K. Bochmann et al. (eds.), *Die Republik Moldova. Republica Moldova. Ein Handbuch*, Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2012, pp. 59–69.

50 Cf. the volume of sources on foreign policy by G. Sbârna (ed.), *Parlamentul și politica externă a României 1919–1940* [The Parliament and Foreign Policy of Romania], Bucharest: Editura Sylvi, 2000, as well as three source volumes on minority policy: I. Scurtu and L. Boar (eds.), *Minoritățile naționale din România 1918–1925* [The National Minorities in Romania 1918–1925], Bucharest: Editura Semne, 1995; I. Scurtu and I. Dordea (eds.), *Minoritățile naționale din România 1925–1931* [The National Minorities in Romania 1925–1931], Bucharest: Editura Semne, 1996; I. Scurtu (ed.), *Minoritățile naționale din România 1931–1938* [The National Minorities in Romania 1931–1938], Bucharest: Editura Semne, 1999.

51 M. Hausleitner, *Deutsche und Juden in Bessarabien 1814–1941. Zur Minderheitenpolitik Russlands und Großrumäniens*, Munich: IKGS Verlag, 2005, pp. 90–98; O. Schroeder-Negru, "Rebeliunea de la Tatar Bunar din 1924. Germanii basarabeni între anti-bolșevism și patriotism

the secretary of state in the Ministry of the Interior, Gheorghe Tătăărăscu, presented a detailed report to the parliament in December 1925. He opposed a trivialized description of the events as the “Tatar Bunar Rebellion”; it was rather a “fight against the stifling of [Romanian] national sentiment through assassination, assault and bandit attacks” by Russian Soviet terrorists and revolutionaries in Bessarabia.<sup>52</sup>

Politically, Pella’s initiative for outlawing war was superseded by the Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928), and his activism for the creation of an international criminal code with an attendant court brought no immediate result in the 1920s. Notwithstanding, his activities earned him high reputation both as an international lawyer and as an influential diplomat from the anti-revisionist camp. He reached the peak of his international career at the beginning of the 1930s, when he was simultaneously commissioned by all three organizations concerned with international criminal law in the context of the LoN – the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the ILA, and the AIDP – to prepare a draft for the codification of international criminal law.<sup>53</sup>

## The Marseilles Assassination in 1934 and the League of Nations Terrorism Convention

When the Yugoslav king, Aleksandar I. Karadjordjević, and the French foreign minister, Louis Barthou, were assassinated in Marseilles on 9 October 1934, many contemporaries felt reminded of the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, the Austrian heir to the throne, in Sarajevo 20 years earlier. Behind the external similarities – both political assassinations were carried out by shooting state dignitaries in automobiles – the possible political implications were interpreted in parallel: if the fatal shots in Sarajevo had initiated the end of empires

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românesc” [The Rebellion of Tatar-Bunar 1924. The Germans from Bessarabia between anti-Bolshevism and Romanian patriotism], in: S. Ihrig et al. (eds.), *Istoria între știință și școală – perioada interbelică și Basarabia. Studii, materiale, surse și sugestii* [History between science and school – the interwar period and Bessarabia], Chișinău: Editura Cartdidact, 2008, pp. 85–92. From the perspective of the Executive Committee of the International Red Cross, the events are presented by G. Stachovitch and N. Pfaff, 500: *Der bessarabische Bauernaufstand von Tatar-Bunar*, Halle: Georg Stolt, 1925.

<sup>52</sup> See doc. nr. 8, in: Sbârnă (ed.), *Parlamentul și politica externă a României*, p. 106.

<sup>53</sup> H. Ahlbrecht, *Geschichte der völkerrechtlichen Strafgerichtsbarkeit im 20. Jahrhundert. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der völkerrechtlichen Straftatbestände und der Bemühungen um einen Ständigen Internationalen Strafgerichtshof*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1999, pp. 52–53.

in Europe, then those of Marseille threatened to be the end of the territorial and political post-war order. The police and political clarification of the Marseilles assassination was to be just as great of a challenge for the post-war order as it was for the LoN was to punish terrorism under international law.

In a relatively short time, police investigations were able to clarify that the direct perpetrators came from circles of the Croatian insurgency organization Ustashe and the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (Vătrešna Makedonska Revoljucionna Organizacija).<sup>54</sup> Both organizations had Yugoslavia as a common enemy and were proactive in their actions with states that were also striving for a revision of the post-war order: besides Albania and Bulgaria, these were Hungary and Italy.<sup>55</sup> The two militant, anti-Yugoslav groups were able to plan the Marseilles assassination in Janka-Puszt, Hungary, and in Fontecchio and San Demetrio, both in Italy, where they ran training camps with the knowledge of Budapest and Rome.<sup>56</sup> While Yugoslav diplomacy opted to publish all the results of a mixed Franco-Yugoslav police group, Paris opposed this. French diplomacy only accused Hungary of aiding and abetting the assassination, while Italy was exempted in order not to damage an apparent rapprochement between Rome and Paris, particularly against the Third Reich, which was striving towards South-eastern Europe.<sup>57</sup> Bennett Kovrig characterizes the political solution of the international crisis in his still authoritative article from 1976 as “mediation through obfuscation” and continues to write:

[T]he League’s institutional role had been marginal at best. Apart from being a convenient meeting place, it served to publicly legitimize the outcome of secret diplomacy – “open covenants secretly arrived at”, to amend Wilson’s phrase, and as usually the covenants only partially reflected political reality.<sup>58</sup>

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54 For the presentation of the police investigations from the point of view of the Yugoslav acting in a leading position, see V. Milićević, *Der Königsford von Marseille. Das Verbrechen und seine Hintergründe*, Bad Godesberg: Hohwacht, 1959. The Third Reich did not play a direct role in this; for a description to the contrary, see V. K. Volkov, *Ubistvo Kralja Aleksandra. Hitlerova Zavera* [The Murder of King Alexander. A Hitlerite conspiracy], Belgrade: Nova Knjiga, 1983.

55 For Italy’s policy on South-eastern Europe and the terrorist Croatian-Macedonian cooperation that began in 1929, see S. Troebst, *Mussolini, Makedonien und die Mächte 1922–1930. Die “Innere Makedonische Revolutionäre Organisation” in der Südosteuropapolitik des faschistischen Italien*, Cologne: Böhlau, 1987.

56 Milićević, *Der Königsford von Marseille*, pp. 33–34.

57 B. Kovrig, “Mediation by Obfuscation: The Resolution of the Marseille Crisis, October 1934 to May 1935”, *The Historical Journal* 19 (1976) 1, pp. 191–221.

58 Ibid., p. 221.

In November 1934, at the request of Yugoslavia and with the support of France, the plenary assembly of the LoN dealt with the assassination attempt and the discussions culminated in the establishment on 10 December 1934 of a committee of experts on the “international suppression of terrorism”.<sup>59</sup> Under the chairmanship of Henri Carton de Wiart and with Pella as rapporteur, delegates from 11 states deliberated and finally presented 2 conventions in November 1937: the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism (hereinafter Terrorism Convention) and the Convention for the Creation of an International Criminal Court (hereinafter ICC Convention).<sup>60</sup> The intention of the Terrorism Convention, as well as a generic definition of terrorism, was laid out in Article 1 as follows:

1. The High Contracting Parties, reaffirming the principle of international law in virtue of which it is the duty of every State to refrain from any act designed to encourage terrorist activities directed against another State and to prevent the acts in which such activities take shape, undertake as hereinafter provided to prevent and punish activities of this nature and to collaborate for this purpose.
2. In the present Convention, the expression “acts of terrorism” means criminal acts directed against a State and intended or calculated to create a state of terror in the minds of particular persons, or a group of persons or the general public.

In Article 2, this generic definition was fleshed out with examples according to which actions against the following persons, institutions, and groups of persons should be considered terrorism:

1. Any wilful act causing death or grievous bodily harm or loss of liberty to:
  - a) Heads of States, persons exercising the prerogatives of the head of State, their hereditary or designated successors;
  - b) The wives or husbands of the above-mentioned persons;
  - c) Persons charged with public functions or holding public positions when the act is directed against them in their public capacity.

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<sup>59</sup> P. Kovács, “Le grand précédent: la Société des nations et son action après l’attentat contre Alexandre, roi de Yougoslavie”, *European Integration Studies* 1 (2002) 1, pp. 30–40; V. Marjanović, “Das Attentat von Marseille und die internationale Bekämpfung des Terrorismus”, *Zeitgeschichte* 13 (1986), pp. 197–204; F. Monier, “L’attentat de Marseille (9 octobre 1934): régicide et terrorisme dans les années trente”, *La Révolution française* 1 (2012), pp. 2–14.

<sup>60</sup> For the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism and the Convention for the Creation of an International Criminal Court, both adopted in 1937, see B. B. Ferencz, *An International Criminal Court, Vol. I: Half a Century of Hope*, London: Oceana Publications, 1980, pp. 380–398. See Saul, “The Legal Response of the League of Nations to Terrorism”; B. Saul, *Defining Terrorism in International Law*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 171–176.

Since the focus here is less on the legal and technical aspects of the Terrorism Convention and more on its political aspects, it should only be emphasized that the state and its representatives were clearly at the centre of the regulations as entities to be protected against terrorist acts, while individuals or population groups (i.e. society) were considered to be derived from them. This state centrality is particularly evident in the naming of heads of state, their successors and spouses, and state dignitaries.

The committee of experts, under the leadership of Pella, had also called for and initiated in 1937 the establishment of an international criminal court.<sup>61</sup> Although the committee did not conceive of the state as an aggressor against its own population, the prospect of an institutionalized international criminal justice system already represented such a massive encroachment on the sovereignty of most states that only 13 states signed the ICC Convention. In the end, 19 states signed the Terrorism Convention. Notwithstanding, neither of the two conventions came into force as only India and, to a limited extent, Mexico ratified the Terrorism Convention, and not a single state ratified the ICC Convention.<sup>62</sup>

## 4 Raphael Lemkin: From International Criminal Law to the Genocide Convention

At no time during the interwar period did Raphael Lemkin hold a comparably strong position to that of Pella.<sup>63</sup> As a public prosecutor, a lecturer at the Free Polish University, and as a member of the Polish Codification Commission, Lemkin was primarily involved in teaching and research at the university and in advising the criminal law section of the commission. He was also sent by Warsaw to AIDP conferences as an expert on international law issues – but not as a diplomat or a politician. The differences between Lemkin, whose international radius of action depended on the favour of Polish government agencies, and Pella, who

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<sup>61</sup> Pella promoted the establishment of an international criminal court even after World War II (see V. V. Pella, “Towards an International Criminal Court”, *The American Journal of International Law* 44 (1950) 1, pp. 37–68).

<sup>62</sup> Ferencz, *An International Criminal Court*, p. 53–54.

<sup>63</sup> C. Kraft, “Völkermorde als delictum iuris gentium – Raphael Lemkins Vorarbeiten für eine Genozidkonvention”, *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts* 4 (2005), pp. 79–93; M. Kornat, “Rafał Lemkin’s Formative Years and the Beginning of International Career in Interwar Europe”, in: A. Bieńczyck-Missala and S. Dębski (eds.), *Rafał Lemkin: A Hero of Mankind*, Warsaw: The Polish Institute of International Affairs, 2010, pp. 59–73; P. Sands, *East West Street. On the Origins of “Genocide” and “Crimes against Humanity”*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016, pp. 142–190.

acted as an international lawyer-diplomat, become clear in connection with the efforts made in the 1930s for an international criminal law code. Here, the paths of Lemkin and Pella probably crossed for the first time. Pella, born in 1897, was only three years older than Lemkin, who was born in Ozerisko in eastern Poland in 1900. As the son of a Jewish tenant farmer, Lemkin grew up in modest circumstances, with a feeling of individual legal insecurity due to the prohibition of Jews in the Russian Empire to settle in the countryside and to engage in agriculture.<sup>64</sup>

After the Marseilles assassination in 1934, the LoN had set up its own committee of experts and did not draw on the preparatory work of the AIDP. This indicates that the international legal investigation of the assassination was as politicized as the police investigations. The main reason for the LoN's own committee of experts may have been the fact that the AIDP was not consistently state centred, with delegates who clearly followed the respective reasons of the state and those with more professional ethics and a transnational horizon. The best-known example of the latter type is without a doubt Lemkin. At the fourth conference of the AIDP, held in Paris in 1931, Lemkin still appeared as a delegate of Poland and acted as one of the two rapporteurs, alongside the Romanian Andrei Rădulescu. While the latter, in line with Romanian threat perceptions, sought to define terrorism as a threat to public order posed by communists and anarchists, Lemkin's interventions aimed at a broader definition of terrorism.<sup>65</sup> By the time the next conference was held in Madrid in 1933, Lemkin apparently had fallen into disgrace in Poland; thus he was no longer nominated as a delegate of his country. Accordingly, his draft for Madrid was discussed only informally, but it was dropped from the agenda of the commission not least due to Lemkin's diminished status.<sup>66</sup> However, the real reason for this was of a substantive nature, as Lemkin had rejected a central premise of previous discussions and had taken a completely new direction.

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<sup>64</sup> D.-L. Frieze, *Totally Unofficial. The Autobiography of Raphael Lemkin*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013, pp. 3–24.

<sup>65</sup> C. Kraft, "Völkermord im 20. Jahrhundert. Rafał Lemkin und die Ahndung des Genozids durch das internationale Strafrecht", in: J. Höslér and W. Kessler (eds.), *Finis Mundi – Endzeiten und Weltenden im östlichen Europa. Festschrift für Hans Lemberg zum 65. Geburtstag*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1998, pp. 91–110, at 97. For the more national Polish context of Poland's legal policy developments in the 1930s, see Kraft, *Europa im Blick der polnischen Juristen*.

<sup>66</sup> D. M. Segesser and M. Gessler, "Raphael Lemkin and the International Debate on the Punishment of War Crimes (1919–1948)", *Journal of Genocide Research* 7 (2005) 4, pp. 453–468, at 458.



Lemkin broke with the received wisdom of defining terrorism primarily through the intentions of the perpetrators and through those persons and institutions attacked. Instead, his approach focused on universally conceived legal goods, such as “international means of transport and communication, which were indispensable for the functioning of a peaceful international order”.<sup>67</sup> He also mentioned works of fine art or libraries and members of a certain social or ethnic group as “goods” to be protected from acts of “vandalism” and “barbarism”. In his posthumously published autobiography, he summarized his thoughts on the subject:

Is not the destruction of a religious or racial collectivity more detrimental to mankind than destroying a submarine or robbing a vessel? When a nation is destroyed it is not the cargo of the vessel, that is lost but a substantial part of humanity, with a spiritual heritage in which the whole world partakes. These people are being destroyed for no other reason than that they embrace a specific religion or belong to a specific race. They are destroyed not in their individual capacity but as members of a collectivity of which the oppressor does not approve.<sup>68</sup>

While Lemkin’s autobiographical reflections are not free from a retrospective adaptation of his concept of terrorism in the 1930s to his concept of genocide in the late 1940s, it can nevertheless be stated that he reconfigured the relationship between states and individuals in several respects early on. Until then, but also still in the Terrorism Convention, international terrorism was defined as violent acts committed by individuals, possibly assisted by other states, against representatives and institutions of a state. Not explicitly, but by means of omission, the state as a possible aggressor, in Lemkin’s case, no longer only adopted an international approach but also employed a national one against its own citizens. For Lemkin, the previously functioning institutions of international criminal law were not sufficient to sanction acts such as the Turkish genocide of the Armenians, to which he refers repeatedly in his autobiography. Consequently, he called for the establishment of an international criminal court.

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67 Kraft, “Völkermorde als delictum iuris gentium”, p. 89.

68 Frieze, *Totally Unofficial*, p. 23.

## 5 André Mandelstam: From Minority Protection to General Human Rights

The protection of minorities in the Paris Peace Treaties and under the supervision of the LoN was actually an element foreign to the system within a modern, political understanding of the nation.<sup>69</sup> For if a state was truly based on a political understanding of the nation, all citizens – regardless of their ethnicity and religious denomination – were equal before the law and in the political arena. Their free cultural development and participation in political life and power would be sufficiently guaranteed by freedom of association and religion, by the right to freedom of expression, and by other general civil rights – there was no need for separate protection of minorities. Political practice in the new states, which understood themselves as nation-states, showed that their elites generally followed an ethnonational understanding of state and nation that the right of self-determination of peoples applied only to the members of the titular nation, not to those of the minorities. In the understanding of the minorities at that time (buttressed as such in much of the present-day research), the intention and effect of minority protection in the LoN can be summarized as follows: the minority protection may have been devised to protect the minorities from encroachments by the new states, but, in practice, it protected the new states from claims by the minorities.<sup>70</sup>

This political understanding of the relationship between state and citizen corresponded to the principle of international law according to which only states could be subjects of international law but not individuals. Until the interwar period, the idea that states could commit crimes against their own citizens, which could then be the subject of international law sanctions, was also completely marginal. Nevertheless, minority protection opened a discursive door to such an approach. Theoretically, minority protection could be conceived of as a group

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**69** D. Müller, “Staatsbürgerschaft und Minderheitenschutz. ‘Managing diversity’ im östlichen und westlichen Europa”, in: Themenportal Europäische Geschichte, 2006, [www.europa.clio-online.de/essay/id/fdae-1379](http://www.europa.clio-online.de/essay/id/fdae-1379); D. Müller, *Staatsbürger auf Widerruf*; J. E. Nijman, “Minorities and Majorities”, in: B. Fassbender and A. Peters (eds.): *The Oxford Handbook of the History of International Law*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 95–119, at 109–118.

**70** C. Fink, “The League of Nations and the Minorities Question”, *World Affairs* 157 (1995) 4, pp. 197–205; C. Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others. The Great Powers, the Jews, and the International Minority Protection, 1878–1938*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; M. Mazower, “Minorities and the League of Nations in Interwar Europe”, *Daedalus* 126 (1997) 2, pp. 47–63; M. Scheuermann, *Minderheitenschutz contra Konfliktverhütung? Die Minderheitenpolitik des Völkerbundes in den zwanziger Jahren*, Marburg: Herder-Institut, 2000.

right or as a general human right – the decisive factor in the new approaches was that civil rights were no longer solely a matter of national law.

André Mandelstam was one of the first and, in any case, one of the most persistent international law-educated legal activists in the interwar period, who pointed out the aforementioned aporias of minority protection.<sup>71</sup> Mandelstam was born in Russia in 1869 as the son of a Protestant family.<sup>72</sup> He studied law and began a diplomatic career, which initially took him to Constantinople. There, he became chief translator (dragoman) and legal advisor at the Russian embassy, and, after the liberal February Revolution (1917), he became director of the legal department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This steep career trajectory came to an end with the October Revolution (1917), and he preferred moving to Western Europe. In Constantinople, Mandelstam was particularly concerned with solutions to the Armenian question within the Ottoman Empire, and, in later writings, he was deeply shocked by the Turkish genocide of the Armenians.<sup>73</sup> His political motor in exile was the concern that the community of states, the LoN, and international law had not learned enough lessons from the genocide and that they were insufficiently equipped for further crimes committed by states against their own citizens.

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71 For a long time, André Mandelstam had not been the focus of research. Amongst the few exceptions are Mosler, “Das Institut de Droit International und die völkerrechtliche Stellung der menschlichen Person”, pp. 77–100; J. H. Burgers, “The Road to San Francisco: The Revival of the Human Rights Idea in the Twentieth Century”, *Human Rights Quarterly* 14 (1992) 4, pp. 447–477; J. H. Burgers, “André Mandelstam. Forgotten Pioneer of International Human Rights”, in: F. Coomans et al. (eds.), *Rendering Justice to the Vulnerable. Liber Amicorum in Honour of Theo van Boven*, The Hague: Brill, 2000. Recently, however, Mandelstam has enjoyed a rediscovery as an important legal activist in the interwar period, cf. H. P. Aust, “From Diplomat to Academic Activist: André Mandelstam and the History of Human Rights”, *European Journal of International Law* 25 (2015) 4, pp. 1105–1121; D. Kévonian, “Les juristes juifs russes en France et l’action internationale dans les années vingt”, *Les Belles Lettres* 34 (2001) 2, pp. 72–94; D. Kévonian, “André Mandelstam and the Internationalization of Human Rights (1869–1949)”, in: P. Slotte and M. Halme-Tuosaari (eds.), *Revisiting the Origins of Human Rights*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, pp. 239–266.

72 Dzovinar Kévonian put an end to conjectures in research that Mandelstam was Jewish by consulting Mandelstam’s death certificate issued in Paris (see Kévonian, “André Mandelstam and the Internationalization of Human Rights”, p. 245, fn. 20).

73 A.-N. Mandelstam, *Le sort de l’Empire ottoman*, Paris et al.: Payot, 1917; A.-N. Mandelstam, *La Société des Nations et les puissances devant le problème arménien*, Paris: Pedone, 1926. See also K. J. Partsch, “Die Armenierfrage und das Völkerrecht in der Zeit des Ersten Weltkrieges. Zum Wirken von André Mandelstam”, in: M. Dabag and K. Platt (eds.), *Genozid und Moderne. Vol. 1: Strukturen kollektiver Gewalt im 20. Jahrhundert*, Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 1998, pp. 338–346.

Since 1919, he had been a feverish lecturer and publisher on minority issues. Initially, he pleaded for a territorial extension of minority protection as a group right so that it would have universal validity.<sup>74</sup> He pointed out aporias of the new minority protection as early as the mid-1920s. According to his legal and political analysis, the Paris Peace Treaties, in the form of a minority protection system, had created a regional and fragmented doctrine of international law and institutionalized it in the LoN.<sup>75</sup> It was regional because only newly established or enlarged states in East-Central and South-eastern Europe were subject to it, but not Germany and the Soviet Union as non-members and certainly not Western European states, such as Great Britain and France, with their considerable colonial possessions. The new international law was fragmented because only members of ethnic and religious minorities could petition for access to organizations of the LoN and to international law, unlike other citizens of these states. The particular insult that such international law held in store for the elites in Eastern Europe consisted of the extension of an assumed cultural divide from West to East from the long nineteenth century to the period after World War I. As a result, the societies and states of Eastern Europe, like the Ottoman Empire in the past, needed humanitarian interventions to protect certain population groups because their level of civilization would not allow them to do so. With his criticism of the regional character of minority protection, Mandelstam responded to the sensibilities in Eastern Europe. At the same time, however, he greatly offended the state elites because he was convinced that the absolute sovereignty of states was diminishing:

la science juridique [. . .] évolue, sur un rythme accéléré, non seulement vers le dogme de la primauté du droit international sur le droit de l'Etat, mais aussi vers la reconnaissance à l'individu, du moins sous certains rapports, de la qualité du *sujet* du droit international.<sup>76</sup>

As we know, Mandelstam's optimism was premature regarding the insight of the elites of both Western and Eastern Europe that the absolute sovereignty of nation-states was a doctrine of the past that could easily be dispensed with. Nonetheless, it is significant in which circles his idea of the further development of the

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<sup>74</sup> A. Mandelstam, "La protection des minorités ethniques", *Séances et travaux* (Académie Diplomatique Internationale) 1 (1927) 1, pp. 17–38.

<sup>75</sup> A. Mandelstam, "Das Problem der Menschen- und Bürgerrechte im 'Institut de Droit International'", *Die Friedens-Warte* 28 (1928) 12, pp. 350–354; A. Mandelstam, "La généralisation de la protection internationale des droits de l'homme", *Revue de droit international et de législation comparée* 11 (1930) 2, pp. 297–325, and 11 (1930) 3, pp. 698–713.

<sup>76</sup> A. Mandelstam, "La généralisation", *Revue de droit international et de législation comparée* 11 (1930) 3, p. 698.

protection of minorities into general human and civil rights was gaining acceptance, namely not within the LoN itself but in specialist legal organizations, diplomatic-legal NGOs, and educational institutes in its orbit. Mandelstam was able to celebrate the zenith of his legal activism in the fact that his International Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the Institute of International Law during its plenary session in New York in October 1929.<sup>77</sup> Subsequently, he lectured on human rights at the Institut Universitaire des Hautes Etudes Internationales (Graduate Institute) in Geneva and at the Hague Academy of International Law. His International Declaration of Human Rights was also discussed sympathetically at the International Institute of Public Law and endorsed by in 1931 the International Federation of Leagues for the Defence of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (*Fédération internationale des ligues pour la défense des droits de l'homme et du citoyen*).<sup>78</sup> However, the success proved to be hollow because, although the most renowned international law organizations, institutes, and NGOs had adopted a human rights approach, this had no immediate consequences.

Why was this? A tentative answer to this question is given by looking at the political and professional environment of Mandelstam in exile, informed by Bourdieu's capital and field theory. Mandelstam did not act as a solitary figure but within a larger group of diplomats, politicians, and international lawyers who were in exile in Western Europe for political and religious reasons. The first intensive working contacts between activists in political exile and representatives of refugee and philanthropic organizations were established in the Consultative Committee of the High Commissioner for Refugees of the LoN. The committee had the task of advising the high commissioner Fridtjof Nansen on Russian, Ukrainian, Armenian, and Jewish refugee groups that had emerged in the Russian and Ottoman Empires as a result of the revolution and civil war.<sup>79</sup> In these working contexts, a group was consolidated that was heterogeneously composed and operated in different organizations whose members, however, shared basic political convictions. A particularly large number of actors came from liberal Russian circles, many of whom were Jews; however, other people – who had acted for the independence of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan or who had been defeated in the conflicts in Greece after the Asia Minor Disaster (1922) – joined them. Most of them were in Paris, where they were active, as well as in Geneva and The Hague. In addition to the Institute of International

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<sup>77</sup> For the text of the international declaration of human rights (*Déclaration des droits internationaux de l'homme*), which comprises only six articles, see Mandelstam, "La généralisation", pp. 708–709; Aust, "From Diplomat to Academic Activist", pp. 1120–1121.

<sup>78</sup> Burgers, "The Road to San Francisco", pp. 452–453.

<sup>79</sup> Kévonian, "André Mandelstam and the Internationalization of Human Rights", pp. 241–242.

Law, they propagated their ideas in the Geneva Graduate Institute and the Hague Academy of International Law. Characteristic of this group was that they led materially precarious existences; therefore, they took over teaching and lecturing activities at the above-mentioned institutions whenever they were offered.

However, the main site of their activities seems to be the International Diplomatic Academy (Académie Diplomatique Internationale, ADI), which was founded in Paris in 1926. The historian (member of the French Academy [Académie Française] since 1897) and career diplomat Gabriel Hanotaux was its *président d'honneur*, and some of ADI's features seem to be connected to Hanotaux. During his time as minister of foreign affairs in the 1890s, he successfully worked for a French-Russian rapprochement. From 1920 to 1923, Hanotaux served as the French delegate to the LoN. As a career diplomat, he disliked party politicians' meddling in international affairs and favoured diplomacy based on thorough knowledge of states and states' interests. The acting president of ADI was the viscount Joseph de Fontenay, who was the French ambassador to Spain and the Holy See from 1923 to 1932. At the opening session of the ADI on 10 June 1927, de Fontenay reasoned that the new association could offer good and unique services to the international community.<sup>80</sup> While other institutions, like the LoN most notably, were working for the consolidation of peace as well, "nous travaillerons à notre manière [. . .], uniquement en apportant toute notre conviction, tout notre bonne volonté". The ADI's founders "veulent tenter d'empêcher, sinon l'éclosion d'incidents et de différends, du moins les complications qui en surgissent fatalement si on n'intervient à temps". He likened the ADI to a producer of *médecine préventive* (preventative medicine) since it would analyse burning issues of the time and offer balanced solutions that would be informed by non-partisan, fact-finding efforts.<sup>81</sup> However, Antoine F. Frangulis, one of ADI's two permanent secretary generals, cautioned at the same opening session that the received methods of diplomacy would not suffice any longer in a world of significantly more intense international relations: "La méthode de travail, l'adresse, le savoir-faire, l'art diplomatique ne suffit pas à faire face à la complexité et à la multiplicité de ces rapports. [. . .] Devant l'effort global de la science, la diplomatie ne saurait demeurer dans la domaine de l'art."<sup>82</sup>

<sup>80</sup> For the following quotes, see, "Allocution de M. le Vicomte de Fontenay", *Séances et travaux* (Académie Diplomatique Internationale) 1 (1927) 1, pp. 8–9.

<sup>81</sup> "Si jamais en cas de désaccord entre deux peuples, les Gouvernements intéressés devaient adopter de nos travaux pour mettre fin à l'incident, nous pourrions nous dire avec fierté et satisfaction que nous avons bien servi la cause de Paix et de l'Humanité." Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., pp. 10–11.

Two years after its foundation, the ADI announced its membership structure according to occupation. Out of the envisaged 150 members, 130 were co-opted already, and they were grouped according to their assumed importance: 2 former presidents, 12 acting chiefs of governments, 30 ministers of foreign affairs, 14 ministers in other fields, 23 ambassadors; 28 plenipotentiary ministers, 9 international law professors, and 5 members of the International Court of Justice.<sup>83</sup> The membership structure is indicative of what the ADI leaders thought to be a viable way to influence international foreign policy and the agenda of the LoN, namely to gather politicians specialized in foreign affairs and diplomats and to engage them in a dialogue with international lawyers and judges. The preponderance of politicians and career diplomats, however, points to the international law's somewhat limited role for diplomacy and international policy. The above-mentioned group of political émigrés formed a distinct category of ADI members, since they brought personal experiences of political suppression or ethno-religious minority sensibilities to the table. They were former foreign ministers, ambassadors, plenipotentiary ministers, and so forth in the Russian Empire, in formerly (often short-lived) independent countries that were incorporated in the Soviet Union (such as Armenia and Georgia), and in Greece before the anti-royalist takeover in 1923/24.

While Mandelstam seems to have been the intellectual leader of the émigré group with a specific agenda as discussed above, Frangulis assumed the role of its organizer within ADI as he was one of its two permanent secretary generals. Frangulis was presented in the ADI's *Séances et Travaux* (1929) as "ancien Ministre de Grèce" and "ancien Délégué à la S.D.N.", and Mandelstam featured interchangeably as "Professeur de Droit International" and as "ancien Directeur au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères de Russie". The interplay between Mandelstam's legal activism and Frangulis's political leverage becomes clear with the International Declaration of Human Rights. It was only after Frangulis had assumed his diplomatic status again, as the delegate for Haiti on behalf of its president Stenio Vincent, that he was able to table the declaration at the Assembly of the LoN in 1933.<sup>84</sup> The intellectual and institutional trajectory of Mandelstam's declaration points to the limits of capital transfers in the interrelated fields of diplomacy, international politics, and international law. To a certain extent, the boundaries of the fields became more fluid and permeable for legal

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<sup>83</sup> "Allocution du Vicomte de Fontenay", *Séances et travaux* (Académie Diplomatique Internationale) 2 (1929) 4, p. 7.

<sup>84</sup> Burgers, "The Road to San Francisco", p. 457.

activisms in the interwar period; however, still diplomatic status was required for moving declarations the decisive step ahead to become international law.

## 6 Towards a Typology of Interwar Legal Activism: A Conclusion

In their book on advocacy networks in international politics, Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink make the observation that “the jurists responsible for inserting the idea [of human rights] into early twentieth-century global debates came from countries at the periphery of the European system rather than at its cultural core”.<sup>85</sup> This chapter has explored the structural reasons for this tendency in legal activism with an Eastern European background, which are to be found in the concomitant appearance of small nation-states and of ethno-religious minorities after World War I. Both the diplomats of the new states and the representatives of the minorities perceived international politics and international law as arenas and instruments for their legal advocacy. However, state-led and minority-based legal activism drew on partially different resources, argued with different normative assumptions, and had different agendas.

The results of this chapter are primarily based on three case studies, which, surely, do not allow for sweeping generalizations. Much more research is necessary in all aspects of the legal and diplomatic fields analysed in this chapter. To give just one example, the degree and the exact proceedings of the policy coordination between the main anti-revisionist’s alliances – the Little Entente and the Balkan Pact – are known only superficially. Deeper knowledge on biographical and intellectual aspects of interwar international and transnational legal activism would further insights into strategies and traditions of self-positioning in East-Central and South-eastern Europe, transcending the supposed watershed of 1945.

From the analysis of three legal activists’ biographies in the interwar period, I propose a typology of legal activism operating within the sphere of influence of the LoN, which builds on a series of antagonistic variables:

- government intellectuals versus intellectuals in political exile or minority rights advocates,
- agency in the LoN versus legal activism in the orbit of the LoN, and
- recasting and strengthening the state’s position in international law versus questioning and curtailing the state.

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<sup>85</sup> Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*, p. 82.



Pella was a prototypical government intellectual.<sup>86</sup> He belonged to the Romanian political establishment; his legal career was furthered with state subsidies, and his standing as an international lawyer was bolstered by acquiring the status of an official delegate to the LoN. Bucharest invested in several currencies – that is to say, financially, politically, and symbolically – in Pella's career, ultimately with the aim of having a strong voice in international relations and international legal policy that served Romanian interests. Bucharest's strategy with Pella paid off to some degree since his activism in several professional associations and political bodies in the orbit of the LoN earned him the role of an indispensable actor on the field of criminal law. Yet, both conventions that Pella drafted in 1937 for the LoN, the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism and the Convention for the Creation of an International Criminal Court, proved to be non-starters. Pella's advocacy for banning aggressive wars and for fighting international terrorism seemingly served noble causes that, however, served Romanian foreign policy interests well as an aggrandized nation-state with several large ethno-religious minority groups and with all neighbouring countries having more or less revisionist policy aims. As this constellation was constant in the interwar period – with Romania's political regime changing from parliamentary monarchy to royal dictatorship under King Carol II in 1938 to military dictatorship under Ion Antonescu in 1941, and to communist-led people's democracy in 1945<sup>87</sup> – Pella served Romanian interests throughout this time. The following suggestion that Pella sent to Bucharest from Berne in 1944 concerning the fate of the Transylvanian Jews under Hungarian occupation gives a glimpse into his understanding of how to further Romanian state interests:

Strictly personal for the Secretary General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I ask you to communicate to me if you agree that we plan a special action with means we have here at our disposal for protecting the Jews from Northern Transylvania who are now the subjects of the Hungarian regime. By this action, we could attract not only the sympathy of the Jewish world organizations, but that of the Anglo-Americans as well. At the same time,

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<sup>86</sup> I borrow this category from French historiography on the post-Dreyfus Affair differentiation of intellectuals' public roles. The government intellectual – as opposed to the revolutionary and the specific intellectual – is conceived of as a reformist, often a scholar working in existing institutions where he seeks to enlighten public opinion and to guide the actions of statesmen. For the case of an international lawyer, see M. Papadiki, "The 'Government Intellectuals': Nicolas Politis – An Intellectual Portrait", *The European Journal of International Law* 23 (2012) 1, pp. 221–231.

<sup>87</sup> P. Nistor, *Admiterea României comuniste în ONU. Între negocieri diplomatice și discreditare simbolică* [Romania's Admission to the United Nations. Between diplomatic negotiations and symbolic dicreditation], Iași: Institutul European, 2014, pp. 67–87.

we would mark a sign for consolidating our rights to the territories we have lost through the so-called Vienna arbitrations.<sup>88</sup>

In comparison to Pella, the legal activism of Raphael Lemkin, André Mandelstam, and Antoine Frangulis (whom I touched upon only briefly) had to draw on significantly weaker resources. As exiled persons, Mandelstam and Frangulis lost any financial and political state support as they were no longer official Russian or Greek diplomats or delegates, and Lemkin lost his status as a Polish delegate. Their legal activism was informed by sensibilities about ethno-religious minorities in Eastern Europe and by their personal experience of politically motivated emigration and suppression. Partially, they acted in the same professional lawyers' associations and commissions as Pella; however, losing or lacking an official status diminished their immediate agency and success in shaping international law. In order to compensate for this disadvantage, they tried to develop alternative repertoires of legal activism by stressing their unique diplomatic skills and intellectual insights in institutions in the orbit of the LoN. They were also well aware of the limits of freelance legal activism, as only state delegates to the LoN were entitled to table declarations and conventions. In the medium term, during the lifetime of the LoN, Lemkin's and Mandelstam's attempts to reconfigure international law on the basis of universally conceived legal goods, thereby curtailing state powers over its own citizens, were doomed to fail. Only after World War II and after the Holocaust did Lemkin's and Mandelstam's interwar legal activism bear fruit – two of the most important international law documents of the twentieth century – the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, both adopted in 1948.

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<sup>88</sup> See doc. nr. 264, in: M. Hausleitner, S. Hazan, and B. Hutzelmann (eds.), *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945. Bd. 13: Slowakei, Rumänien und Bulgarien*, Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2018, pp. 549–550. Obviously, Pella used Jewish persecution by Hungary instrumentally for Romania's claims to Northern Transylvania, while not addressing the official anti-Semitism of the Romanian state under Carol II and Antonescu and the Holocaust in Bucovina, Bessarabia, Transnistria, and the Old Kingdom.

Gilad Ben-Nun

## 7 The Polyglot Background of Eastern Europe's Jewish International Jurists and Its Talmudic Legal Origins

Scholars interested in the history of modern international law have been for quite some time puzzled by a fascinating conundrum of disproportionality. The crude over-representation of Eastern European Jewish international jurists in the drafting of the world's most important international multilateral legal treaties has been perplexing scholars for nearly two decades. As Stefan Troebst has recently reiterated, modern international law's very prosopography reads more like a *mitteleuropäischer* (Central European) geographical survey.<sup>1</sup>

A precursory (and by no means exhaustive) survey of the drafting history of these treaties reveals this disproportion of Jewish jurists. Leo Pasvolksky's drafting of the United Nations (UN) Charter (1942–1945);<sup>2</sup> Hersch Lauterpacht's formulation of crimes against humanity in Nuremberg's International Military Tribunal (1945–1956);<sup>3</sup> Raphael Lemkin's drafting of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948, hereinafter the Genocide Convention);<sup>4</sup> René Cassin's important role in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the European Convention for Human Rights (1950), which later earned him the Nobel peace prize;<sup>5</sup> George Cahen-Salvador, Rabbi Dr Georg Cohn, and Valeri Nissim Mevorah's drafting of the 4th Geneva Convention

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1 S. Troebst, "Eastern Europe's Imprint on Modern International Law", in: A. Ciampi (ed.), *History and International Law: An Intertwined Relationship*, Forwarded by ICJ Judge Giorgio Gaja, Cheltenham and Camberley: Edward Elgar Publishers, pp. 34–36. For a good bibliography concerning many of these Jewish international jurists, see S. Troebst, "Speichermedium der Konflikterinnerung. Zur osteuropäischen Prägung des modernen Völkerrechts", *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropaforschung* 61 (2012), pp. 417–420, n. 48–63. On the more general rise of modern international law as a phenomenon of the twentieth century, see M. Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law 1870–1960*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

2 On Leo Pasvolksky's constitutive role in the drafting of the UN Charter at the Brookings Institute under the orders of the then US secretary of state, Cordell Hull, see S. C. Schlesinger, *Act of Creation: The Founding of the United Nations*, New York: Basic Books, 2004, pp. 43–44.

3 P. Sands, *East-West Street: On the Origins of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, New York: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2017, pp. 115–137, 275–315.

4 Ibid., pp. 137–207. See also M. Lewis, *The Birth of New Justice: The Internationalization of Crime and Punishment, 1919–1950*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 181–229.

5 J. Winter and A. Prost, *René Cassin and Human Rights: From the Great War to the Universal Declaration*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, pp. 221–265.

relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Times of War (hereinafter the 4th Geneva Convention) and its Common Article 3 (1949),<sup>6</sup> and Jacob Robinson, Paul Weis, and Rabbi Dr Isaac Lewin's drafting of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (hereinafter the Refugee Convention) and its non-refoulement principle (1951) and their elaboration of the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (1954, hereinafter the Convention on Statelessness) all fall into this category.<sup>7</sup> To claim that Jewish international jurists played a meaningful role in the making of some of the world's most important international legal treaties *post*-World War II would be an understatement.

Attempting to answer the conundrum inherent in this Jewish disproportionality, eminent scholars, such as Carole Fink, Mark Mazower, Philippe Sands, and others, have all provided some very convincing arguments why the Jewish participation was so significant in the making of modern international law. Grossly oversimplified here, their arguments stress the amalgamation of Jewish emancipation during the nineteenth century, which facilitated the entry of Jews into university law faculties, and the traumas of discrimination and persecution as a minority, which, in turn, triggered an enhanced Jewish will to "universally" defend ethno-national minorities *per se*, as in Fink's words: "defending the rights of others".<sup>8</sup> To my mind, these explanations hold a fundamental core of ontological validity that is hard to dispute.

In a recent address, Lord David Neuberger, the outgoing president of the United Kingdom Supreme Court, stresses the contributions Jews have made to

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6 On the role of Georges Cahen-Salvador, Georg Cohn, and Nissim Mevorah in the making of the 4th Geneva Convention for civilians (1949), see G. Ben-Nun, *The 4th Geneva Convention for Civilians: The History of International Humanitarian Law*, London: Bloomsbury Books, 2020. On their specific role in the making of the Common Article 3 of the 4th Geneva Convention, see G. Ben-Nun, "Treaty after Trauma: Protection for All in the 4th Geneva Convention", in: Ciampi (ed.), *History and International Law*, pp. 103–134.

7 On Jacob Robinson and Paul Weis's instrumental roles in the drafting of the Refugee Convention, see G. Ben-Nun, "The Israeli Roots of Article 3 and Article 6 of the 1951 Refugee Convention", *Journal of Refugee Studies* 27 (2014), pp. 101–125. On Lewin's drafting of the non-refoulement principle, see G. Ben-Nun, "The British-Jewish roots of Non-Refoulement and Its True Meaning for the Drafters of the 1951 Refugee Convention", *Journal of Refugee Studies* 28 (2015), pp. 93–117, n. 101–103. On Jacob Robinson's important role in the drafting of the Convention on Statelessness, see G. Ben-Nun, "From Ad-hoc to Universal: The International Refugee Regime from Fragmentation to Unity 1922–1954", *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 34 (2015), pp. 23–44.

8 C. Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878–1938*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. See also M. Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, pp. 104–149; Sands, *East-West Street*, pp. 141–191.

this court since World War II.<sup>9</sup> His habitual quotation from religious Jewish and Talmudic sources and his reiteration of the fact that English liens (the predecessor to mortgage laws in today's UK) derive from the Talmudic laws of contracts is no surprise to those acquainted with his biography.<sup>10</sup> The disproportionate number of Jews who have sat on the UK's highest judicial bench, with no less than eight Jewish judges serving on it between 1951 and today, seems to further confirm his point.<sup>11</sup> While the general question as to why Jews excel in law and judicial instances is a perennial one, according to Lord Neuberger at least, this excellence has to do with a combination of specific and intertwined factors. These include a strong Jewish emphasis on education – which served as a partial answer to the disadvantages of persecution over the ages – coupled with a textual tradition of Talmudic debate on judicial and legal interpretation.<sup>12</sup>

Setting aside his other points, in this chapter I would like to briefly delve into Lord Neuberger's postulation concerning the impact of Talmudic learning upon the biography and intellectual development of Jewish jurists. I opt to limit myself to the realm of modern international law and focus on what I see as an additional, plausible factor that might help to explain the rather disproportionate role played by East-Central European Jewish international jurists in the drafting of some of the international legal treaties mentioned above.

Following up on Lord Neuberger's insight into the importance of the Talmudic tradition for Jewish excellence in different legal fields, in this study I want to underscore the "specific" importance associated with the knowledge of multiple languages, which was a mutual characteristic of virtually all the Jewish international jurists discussed here. As I demonstrate below, the polyglot linguistic abilities that these jurists brought with them to drafting tables probably provided them with certain specific technical capacities needed for the drafting of international legal treaties, probably more so when compared to domestic legal realms. In some cases, their multilingual capacities might have even brought their respective governments (or non-governmental organizations [NGOs]) to send "them" – and not other delegates – to those drafting tables in the first place.

To most of these Jewish jurists, their development of multilingual capacities was intimately related to their own biography and upbringing. Virtually all of

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<sup>9</sup> Lord Neuberger, "The Jewish History of the Supreme Court", Address delivered to the Jewish Civil Servants' Network, 17 May 2017, <https://www.supremecourt.uk/docs/speech-170517.pdf> (accessed 11 December 2019).

<sup>10</sup> J. Shapiro, "The Shetar's Effect on English Law – A Law of the Jews Becomes the Law of the Land", *Georgetown Law Journal* 71 (1983), pp. 1179–1200.

<sup>11</sup> Neuberger, *The Jewish History of the Supreme Court*, p. 3, § 10.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2, §5, pp. 10–11, § 28.

these Jewish jurists had been given a strong upbringing in Talmudic legal learning from a young age, which later in their lives dovetailed with a formal training in modern international law, usually via the pursuit of a doctorate in this field from German-speaking Central-European universities, which were now open to Jews following their emancipation.<sup>13</sup> This dual character of their education – Talmudic law and modern international law – meant that these jurists were forced to master a thorough knowledge of multiple languages. On the one hand, their native Eastern European background implied that they were conversant in both Slavic and Germanic languages. Their modern international law education would require a very strong command of French (the diplomatic language of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries par excellence), in addition to English and Italian. On the other hand, their Jewish religious upbringing and Talmudic learning demanded fluency in Hebrew and Aramaic (at the very least). Thus, by the later stage of their professional lives, when these Jewish jurists came to sit at these legal drafting tables, they were already distinctly polyglot and, hence, well accustomed to multilingual working environments. With international law being far more prone to multilingual problems than other branches of law (most certainly domestic law being mostly based on a single language, as it were), these Jewish jurists' polyglot competencies rendered them indispensable to the drafting of these treaties. As we shall see, specific evidence of this indispensability exists regarding the coordination of the French and English texts of the Refugee Convention and the Convention on Statelessness.

To be sure, Jews were certainly not (by any means) the only polyglot people in Eastern Europe. Armenians, Mennonites, Orthodox Christians, and Catholics were probably just as much so. If there was ever a multicultural, multilingual, and multiconfessional world region (prior to the horrors of World War II and its violently, horrifying ethnic un-mixing of peoples), then East-Central Europe, with the Balkans, would surely count as one of the most humanly diversified of those world regions. So why the Jews?<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Up until the late eighteenth century, Jews were either prohibited from attending European universities on account of their faith, or significantly hampered in doing so thanks to stringent numerical quotas of Jewish students entitled for enrolment. The emancipation of Jews in Europe, which took place from the early nineteenth century onwards, entailed their growing right to attend universities and secular higher education. On emancipation and its impacts upon Jewish communities, see D. Sorkin, *Jewish Emancipation: A History Across Five Centuries*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019.

<sup>14</sup> One should stress here that, while this chapter examines the Eastern European Jewish contributions to modern international law, it by no means implies that non-Jews from this region did not contribute equally to the development of this field. If anything – it is to the contrary. From Fyodor Martens's initiation and chairmanship of the Hague Conventions for War on Land

I think that part of the answer has to do specifically with their “Talmudic background”. In a nutshell, and continuing where Lord Neuberger left off, my argument is as follows: being brought up with a strong Talmudic learning experience not only exposed these Jewish international jurists to another set of languages (Semitic ones: Hebrew, Aramaic, and, of course, their native Yiddish), but also cultivated in them certain modes of thought processing that – once imprinted upon them at a young age – remained part and parcel of the way they analysed text.

As I have argued elsewhere, Talmudic law and international law share three fundamental similarities in their structural nature.<sup>15</sup> Both systems of law are devoid of a permanently active legislator and rely primarily upon the existence of a judiciary with “interpretative faculties” for their functioning. Both progress through “interpretation” of their original legislative sources from bygone eras: law-making treaties (*traités-lois*) for international law or the Torah for Talmudic jurists. Lastly, and in contrast to domestic legal systems, both international law and Talmudic law famously suffer from a limitation in their ability to apply measures of coercion to effectuate their decisions and rulings.

With specific regard to linguistic competencies, a cardinal feature of Talmudic learning concerns the drifting of the scholar “between different languages” so as to come to a better understanding of the original ancient text of the Torah (the Pentateuch – the first five books of the Hebrew Bible – and Moses’s Jewish law code – as set forth in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). The reading and comprehension of virtually any passage in the Torah demands a strong knowledge of Hebrew, being the language of the main text.

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(1899, 1907), to Platon Morozov’s fight against the UK and the US delegates in favour of a wide and universal reading of the 4th Geneva Convention and its Common Article 3, to Grigorii Tunkin’s fight for universal rights as the leading Soviet jurist present at the elaboration of the great Human Rights Covenants (for Civil and Political Rights 1966, and for Economic and Social Rights 1970), Eastern European non-Jewish jurists have had a signal (if not outright primordial) impact on the making of modern international law and, especially, on humanitarian and human rights law. For Martens’s impact, see L. Mälksoo, “F. F. Martens and His Time: When Russia Was an Integral Part of the European Tradition of International Law”, *European Journal of International Law* 25 (3) 2014, pp. 811–829. On Platon Morozov’s work in favour of Common Article 3 and later in its application when he was a judge on the bench of the International Court of Justice in *Nicaragua v the United States* (1986), see Ben-Nun, *The 4th Geneva Convention for Civilians*, pp. 103–106, 170–219. On Grigorii Tunkin’s vital work, see R. E. Fife, “Creative Forces and Institution Building in International Law”, in: Ciampi (ed.), *History and International Law*, pp. 11–16.

<sup>15</sup> G. Ben-Nun, “How Jewish is International Law?”, *Journal of the History of International Law* 23 (2021) 2, pp. 249–281.

Alongside this Hebrew text, each book of the Pentateuch carries Onkelos's authoritative Aramaic translation of the Hebrew text (which dates back to the first century AD), upon which much relies if one comprehends the true meaning of unused words from a bygone era and from a language largely unspoken for well over two millennia, that is to say Hebrew. In addition, there are the languages of the immediate translations of the Torah: Greek (the so-called Alexandrian Septuagint of the third to second century BC) and later Latin (St. Jerome's Vulgate from the fourth century AD). Lastly, there are the vital Jewish sources written in Arabic – in what is known as “Arabia” (Arabic text) – albeit written with a Hebrew alphabet as opposed to an Arabic one. “Arabia” is very similar to Yiddish – in that the latter is a Germanic-Hebrew mixture, yet written with Hebrew characters. It is worth noting that both Maimonides and Rabbi Judah Halevi (author of the famous *Kuzari*), for example, wrote an overwhelming majority of their entire corpuses in “Arabia”. With its linguistic proximity to Hebrew and being a direct derivative of Aramaic, the knowledge of Arabic was, and is, not something out of the ordinary for average Talmudic scholars.

Seeing that perhaps some of the readership might not be fully conversant with Talmudic law as such, I begin this paper with a very brief (and grossly oversimplified) explanation of the nucleus of Talmudic law by highlighting four so-called “Talmudic traits”, which help to explain the later work of these jurists. I continue with a concrete exploration of documented instances where the Talmudic background of these Jewish jurists specifically influenced twentieth-century international legal treaties: Jacob Robinson's drafting of the UN Convention on the Declaration of Death of Missing Persons (1950), hereinafter the Declaration of Death Convention) and Rabbi Isaac Lewin's authorship of the non-refoulement principle in the Refugee Convention. I conclude this paper with Robinson's own testimony about multilinguality, coupled with one contemporary example of the problematics of parallel versions of international treaties, wherein the change of language brings about a radical departure – with radical and far-reaching political and legal implications – from the wording of binding international documents.

## 1 A Short Word on Concepts and Methods

Hebrew-speaking Orthodox Jews, such as the Jewish international jurists discussed in this study, would most certainly have read the Torah by following its long-standing and canonized categorization into 52 blocks of text – one for each calendar week of the year. These blocks of text, which are usually named according to the first words in that week's reading, are called *Parshiot* (in singular



*Parasha* (פרשה). This canonized reading of the text, and the division of the Torah into *Parshiot*, was already customary during the Second Temple period, as evidenced by the parts of the Torah found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (first century AD).

By contrast, the division of the entire Jewish Bible (and the Christian Bible for that matter) into chapters and verses was only conducted some 1,400 years later, in fourteenth-century England, with the first “official” Bible to use the chapter-and-verse division being the so-called Geneva Bible of 1560. Moving towards the Jewish usage of *Parshiot*, the King James Bible, unlike other Christian Bibles, follows the book order of the Jewish Old Testament yet also incorporates the now common partitioning into chapters and verses. In order to fully understand the way in which these jurists referred to Jewish religious legal sources, one must always recall that they read the biblical text in its Hebrew original, while possessing a full understanding of its etymology of wordings “prior” to the translation of these words into non-Semitic languages.

Lastly, there lies the issue of the Torah reading alongside its authoritative commentaries. As Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks has recently expounded, one of the major problems of many religious extremists these days concerns their tendency to read ancient sacred texts “literally” without reference to their authoritative commentaries. Nowadays, this is certainly true for some followers of the Abrahamic faiths, who make the mistake of reading the Torah, the Christian Gospels, or the Holy Quran literally. It applies equally to extremist followers of other ancient religions, such as contemporary extremist Hindus in Kashmir or Sinhala Buddhists in Sri Lanka, who also resort to reading Vedas or Sutras in their “literal” manner. Wishing to avoid this pitfall, and in line with the long-standing Orthodox Jewish requirement of always reading the biblical text “through” its canonized commentators, I shall rely for my understanding of my reading of the text in this study upon the interpretation of the Bible’s most authoritative and universally undisputed commentator – Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Itzhaki [1040–1105]).

## 2 Three Talmudic Legal Traits

Risking the pitfalls inherent in any generalization, especially about the Talmud (being *two* separate collections of first- to fourteenth-century rabbinical teachings: the Babylonian and the Jerusalemite Talmuds), one can single out three key legal characteristics that generally run through most of the Talmudic literature:

- (a) A cherishing of legal “debate”: the Talmud attaches a primordial importance to legal “debate” and to its variety of arguments, especially when these include “dissenting” legal opinions;

- (b) The “explicit” overridingness provided “human” judicial interpretation “on earth” – over and above any specific “written”, or laid down, scriptural law;
- (c) The explicit religious Jewish obligation to contribute to the gentile and non-Jewish majoritarian societies within which Jews dwell (at least until the Messiah’s theoretical coming);

Regarding point (a), as Prof. Moshe Halbertal succinctly puts it, the Talmud’s signal trait is its debate and disagreement<sup>16</sup> (מהלוקת). This entire corpus is one long series of debates and legal argumentation, from its opening disagreement as to when one ought to say the morning prayer (with the rabbis expressing three opposing opinions thereof in Zeraim- זרעים ברכות א' א' until its very last question concerning Kosher honey (Taharot- טהרות עוקצים ג' יא'). Correspondingly, consensus within the Talmud usually merits no more than two to three words. Debate, on the other hand, with its myriad of concurring and dissenting opinions, can carry on for several pages.

A classic example of Talmudic unanimity can be observed in the protections of the migrant stranger or refugee to be accorded under Jewish law. Displaying consensus on the absolute need for this protection, given is mentioned 46 times in the Torah (more than any vulnerable human category), the Talmudic unanimity is expressed in the habitual wording “the rabbis have exclaimed” (תנו רבנן), which is followed, in this case, by the decree of protecting the refugee simply because “harming him is evil”.<sup>17</sup> Three words (in the original Hebrew) for consensus – no more.

By contrast, debate and disagreement, which are much more salient to the Talmud, are extensively elaborated. While disagreement was cherished, the rabbinical sages were equally clear about the “procedural manners” through which debates were to be handled, how judicial verdicts were to be arrived at, and what the consequences were for those sages who broke with Talmudic legal procedure. The very blueprint for correct Talmudic judicial procedure and the grave penalties for the rabbis who dared to infringe upon it are laid out in Tractate Baba Mezi’a page 59b. As the late author Amos Oz rightfully stresses in his work compiling a series of essays: “if you read just one Talmudic page in your life, make it Baba Mezi’a 59b”.<sup>18</sup>

As with so many Talmudic passages, a cardinal debate concerning a fundamental issue – in this case, the interpretative faculties of judges under Jewish

<sup>16</sup> M. Halbertal, *Editor’s Introduction to the Six Orders of the Mishna*, Tel Aviv: Am Hasefer & Yediouth Aharonot Publishers, 2004, p. iii.

<sup>17</sup> בבא מציעא, נט' ב, “מפני שסורו רע”.

<sup>18</sup> A. Oz and F. Oz-Salzberger, *Jews and Words*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012, p. 20.

law – was centred on an entirely mundane and seemingly dull question as to whether a certain oven was Kosher for cooking or not (“Akhnai’s oven”). Arguing against the Sanhedrin’s majority, and after all measures of legal argumentation had been exhausted, Rabbi Eliezer decided, as a measure of last resorts, to summon the Almighty’s divine intervention to prove the validity of his dissenting minority opinion. When he claims that should he be correct, a tree shall move from its premises – and the tree does so – the majority of the rabbis react by stressing that “no proof can be brought from the trees”. When he then claims that should he be correct, water shall flow uphill backwards – and it does – the rabbinical majority reacts by stressing that “no proof can be brought from the water”. When, finally, Rabbi Eliezer claims that should he be correct, the Almighty himself shall render his calling – whereupon a heavenly voice cries out that in all the matters of the Halakha (Jewish law), the Blessed One agrees with Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Joshua (Eliezer’s greatest rival) rises and quotes from Deuteronomy 30:12, stressing that the Torah is no longer “in the heaven” (לא בשמים היא).

Therein follows the most important Talmudic “procedural” legal guideline: “majority rule”. As asserted by Rabbi Jeremiah, “the Torah had already been given at Mount Sinai; we pay no attention to a Heavenly Voice, because Thou hast long written in the Torah at Mount Sinai [quoting Exodus 23:2] ‘after the majority to wrest judgment’”.<sup>19</sup> As Amos Oz explains: “The Torah was now a human domain. A majority judgment beats the Almighty in a scholarly argument. No less.”<sup>20</sup> Rabbi Eliezer, who refused to agree with the majority, thus was thus excommunicated, stripped entirely of his judicial title, condemned to solitude, and died the cruellest of deaths – alone and in silence. So severe was the penalty upon the abrogator of the Talmudic due process and judicial procedure.

Thus, to point (b), the importance associated with the principles derived from “Akhnai’s oven” concerning Talmudic law’s dependence on judicial due process and the overridingness of human judicial opinion over any of the law’s written dead letters simply cannot be overstated. Once “Akhnai’s oven” made it into the Talmud, virtually all subsequent commentators and interpreters followed suit concerning its overridingness of living judicial interpretation over the dead-letter law.

One of the most famous examples of the subsequent impact this Talmudic insistence on the freedom of earthly judges to interpret the Torah’s scripture had upon future generations of Jewish thinkers is to be found in Rashi’s commentary

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

on the Torah.<sup>21</sup> In his commentary on “Akhnai’s oven”, Rashi pointed his readers to his commentary on the Torah’s very last verse, in its last three words “in the sight of all Israel” (Deuteronomy 34:12 – לעיני כל ישראל). Recalling how Moses broke God’s own first set of the Ten Commandments, Rashi set out to answer one of Judaism’s greatest theological difficulties: by what right did Moses dare to break the stone tablet of the Ten Commandments, which God himself crafted with his own finger (באצבע אלוהים)? Rashi’s explanation is truly astounding:

[T]hat Moses’s heart brought him to break the stone tablets before their eyes [. . .] and the Blessed One – he agreed with Moses and told him: That which you have broken – well and good that you have broken!<sup>22</sup>

Moses holds the most basic tenet of Jewish law (if not of all humanity – the Ten Commandments) made by God himself. Yet, upon his descent from Mount Sinai, as he sees the Golden Calf, he decides to break the tablets in front of the amazed Jewish people’s very eyes. The message is clear – the text of the Ten Commandment shall remain the same. However, its application on earth shall be up to Moses, the first rabbinical sage and Judaism’s first judge. If the application of the Almighty’s most profound law requires the shattering of this very law, then the Almighty shall concur with Moses’s decision as the judge applying that law on earth – post eventum, after Moses had already taken his decision to break the tablets. The law – being eternal – was made by God. Nevertheless, its application here on earth is not his, as the legislator, to control.

Concerning point (c), a dominant Talmudic trait that likely drove many of the Jewish international jurists mentioned above to engage in worldly affairs and attempt to “defend the rights of others” has to do with the explicit and absolute religious Jewish obligation to contribute to the gentile and non-Jewish majoritarian environments within which Jews dwell (at least until the theoretical coming of the Jewish Messiah and the end of days).<sup>23</sup> The religious responsibility bestowed upon

21 D. Krochmalnik, H. Liss, and R. Reichman (eds.), *Raschi und sein Erbe* (Schriften der Hochschule für Jüdische Studien Heidelberg), Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2007.

22 Rashi on the Torah, Deuteronomy 34:12 (own translation; exclamation mark in the eleventh-century original). The original Hebrew reads:

לשעני כל ישראל: שנשאו לבו לשבור את הלוחות שנאמר ואשרם לעיניכם, והסכימה דעתו של הקב"ה לדעתו, ש מר, אשר  
נא שברת – ישר כוחך ששברת!

23 C. Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878–1938*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. From the vast literature that has appeared in recent years, see the following. On Jewish jurists’ actions in favour of persecuted Armenians following their genocide in 1915, see D. Kevonian, “André Mandelstam and the Internationalization of Human Rights (1869–1949)”, in: P. Slotte and M. Halme-Tuomisaari (eds.), *Revisiting the Origins of Human Rights*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

Jews to endeavour to secure the prosperity and well-being of the non-Jewish societies within which they dwell derives directly from the prophet Jeremiah's commandment to the first Jewish exiles in Babylon (576 BC):

Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem [. . .] to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive to Babylon [. . .] Thus saith the Lord [. . .] Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat their fruit [. . .] And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in its peace thereof shall you have peace.<sup>24</sup>

Jeremiah's "letter to the exiles of Babylon", as this passage came to be known, resonated with diasporic Jews through the ages. The Jews, so long as they dwelt amongst the gentiles, have a religious obligation ("Thus saith the Lord") to do all in their power for the betterment and flourishing of their surroundings. It is worth noting here that – to this day – Jewish participation in the armed forces, for example, of the US or the UK, or indeed in the German armed forces during World War I draws its theological grounding from this decree by Jeremiah. The same goes for any religious Orthodox Jewish prayer offered in favour of the security and well-being of foreign heads of state, as in the common prayer held to this day for the health and security of the US president or the prayer for the Queen's well-being in the UK, as is said in all Orthodox synagogues across those countries.

The Talmudic sages expanded upon Jeremiah's commandment and added to it the "three oaths" of the Tractate of Ketubot 111a (כתובות ק"א א'). The sages interpreted Jeremiah's decree as a two-way bond between Jews and gentiles, seeing as Jews would always remain a minority within their non-Jewish surroundings. The Jews would take three oaths: not to repossess the Land of Israel by force through unwarranted mass immigration, not to rebel against the world's nations, and not to attempt to forcefully cajole the coming of the Messiah. In return, the world's nations swore not to harm and persecute the Jews. Needless to say, the Talmudic sages were also exercising their fair share of "wishful thinking" in their interpretation here, as Jewish fanaticism and Rome's harsh retaliation during the destruction of the Second Temple and the exile during the second century AD left harsh psychological scars upon the sages. This measure of wishful thinking, of the

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2015, pp. 239–266. On Raphael Lemkin's work in favour of Armenians, see Sands, *East West Street*, pp. 141–191. On Rabbi Maurice Perlzweig and Peter Benenson's involvement in the establishment of Amnesty International, see J. Loeffler, *Rooted Cosmopolitans: Jews and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018, pp. 215–229.

<sup>24</sup> Jeremiah 29:7.

exiles assuming they will return to Israel in the near future, can be clearly felt when one reads certain passages of the Talmud – especially the Babylonian (so-called “exiled”) Talmud, which is the only one that includes Ketubot’s three oaths. These are not mentioned at all in the Jerusalemite Talmud, which as its name implies – was written by the sages already present in the holy land, as opposed to their exiled Babylonian peers.

### 3 Dovetailing International Law and Talmudic Law

In an interesting passage written in 1950 and addressed to Moshe Sharett, the Israeli foreign minister, and Walter Eytan, the director general of the Israeli foreign ministry, Jacob Robinson makes reference to the Talmudic background of several of the Jewish delegates who were engaged in the drafting of what would become the Refugee Convention:

5. A few words about the Jewish participation in this committee: USA was represented by Mr. Louis Henkin, who is the son of a rabbi [Yosef Eliyahu Henkin], an authority in the Talmudic family law (the last issue of *Talpiot* carries an article by him on *Agunoth*), and himself an observant Jew. Formerly secretary of Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, he has a sharp Talmudic mind and was very good in drafting [. . .] the IRO [International Refugee Organization,] was represented by Dr. Paul Weis (formerly with the World Jewish Congress in London) [. . .] in addition, the Jewish organizations with the so-called consultative statues were also present [. . .] rabbi Dr. Lewin of Agudath Israel, and rabbi Dr. Perlzweig of the WJC [World Jewish Congress] also addressed the meeting.<sup>25</sup>

The crux of the matter here concerns the disproportionate impact that Jewish international jurists “who stemmed from religious or observant Jewish backgrounds” from East-Central Europe had on the development of modern international law. This biographical aspect set these jurists apart from, for example, their contemporary German-Jewish peers, such as Hans Kelsen, Hermann Kantorowicz, Erich Kaufmann, Hans Morgenthau, or Leo Strauss.<sup>26</sup> The defining feature of

<sup>25</sup> Israel State Archives (ISA), Foreign Ministry Files (MFA) reference ISA/RG 93.38/1-31. Jacob Robinson to Walter Eytan, RE: Ad Hoc Committee on Statelessness and Related Problems – Final Report, 21 February 1950, Doc. 133, p. 5 § 5.

<sup>26</sup> On the impact of émigré German-speaking jurists on Great Britain, see J. Beatson and R. Zimmermann (eds.), *Jurists Uprooted: German-Speaking Emigre Lawyers in Twentieth-Century Britain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. In the case of Israel, the fact that well over 40 per cent of the first cadre of its Supreme Court’s judges were either German or European Jews has been well documented (see F. Oz-Salzberger and E. Salzberger, “The Secret German Sources of the Israeli Supreme Court”, *Israel Studies* 3 [1998], pp. 159–192).

these Jewish international jurists concerns their hybrid educational background, which included a mixture of Jewish religious teachings of Talmudic law alongside a strong “secular” international legal training.<sup>27</sup> This educational background is distinctly different from the completely secular education that Kelsen and Kantorowicz received, as these German jurists “were not” versed in Jewish religious teachings in any manner and most notably “did not” possess the linguistic skills (Hebrew and Aramaic) that came with this religious upbringing. Given the prevalence of their “classic” occidental Enlightenment-based education, Kaufmann, Strauss, and especially Morgenthau sided rather crudely with political realism (which in the case of Morgenthau was almost Machiavellian naked).<sup>28</sup>

A glimpse at the biographies of those mentioned in Robinson's passage (including the author himself) strongly confirms this point. Robinson was born in Lithuania in 1881 and was given the “classical” Jewish Talmudic upbringing, completed his doctorate in public international law from the University of Warsaw in 1917, and published his first major studies, which cemented his international acclaim as an expert, on minority issues in Berlin in German.<sup>29</sup> Nehemiah Robinson, Jacob's younger brother and later director of the WJC legal department, was born in Lithuania in 1898 and was given the same Talmudic upbringing as his older brother. He then went on to complete his doctorate (in German) in international law and economics at the law faculty of the University of Jena in 1927.<sup>30</sup> Louis Henkin (mentioned above by Robinson for his “sharp Talmudic mind” as the US delegate to the Economic and Social Council, was born in Belarus in 1917, emigrated to the US in 1923, received his father's Talmudic education, enrolled for a first degree at New York's Yeshiva University, and then attended Harvard Law School. Rabbi Dr Isaac Lewin, who represented the ultra-

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27 G. Ben-Nun, *Seeking Asylum in Israel: Refugees and the History of Migration Law*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2017, pp. 58–59. On the difference between Eastern and Western European Jewish jurists and their approaches to international law, with the German-speaking “secular” ones being far more inclined to realism, and with their counterparts being far more attuned to moralistic outlooks, see Ben-Nun, “How Jewish is International Law?”.

28 For a good discussion of Kelsen, Kaufmann, and Morgenthau, see R. Paz, *A Gateway between a Distant God and a Cruel World: The Contribution of Jewish German-Speaking Scholars to International Law*, Leiden: Brill, 2012.

29 J. Robinson, *Das Minoritäten-Problem und seine Literatur. Kritische Einführung in die Quellen und die Literatur der europäischen Nationalitätenfrage der Nachkriegszeit, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des völkerrechtlichen Minderheitenschutzes*, Berlin and Leipzig: Institut für ausländisches öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht in Berlin/Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1928.

30 N. Robinson, *Die Finanzwirtschaft Litauens als eines neuen Staats*, Prague: Buchdruckerei Mercy & Sohn, 1928.

Orthodox Jewish political party Agudath Israel, was the son of Poland's chief rabbi Aaron Lewin. Born in Wieliczka in 1906, Lewin received his rabbinical Talmudic ordination in 1935 and went on to complete his doctorate in international law (and, interestingly enough, in Catholic religious canon law) in Łódź in 1937. Maurice Perlzweig was born in Poland (to liberal Reform Jews) in 1895 and was also given a Talmudic upbringing. He is the only one in Robinson's list "not" to have received a legal education but rather a humanistic one, graduating from the University of Cambridge in 1927 with a degree in Oriental and Semitic languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, and Arabic).<sup>31</sup> Perlzweig was specifically sent to Cambridge because there were other Jewish scholars there who, in addition to his "secular" university curriculum, could "together instruct me in what was then called 'rabbinics' that is to say Talmud, Mishna, Gemara, Midrash, and later Hebrew literature".<sup>32</sup>

While one could carry on at length concerning this prosopographical sketch, the point is essentially this: most Jews who later participated in the drafting of international legal treaties had the usual mixture of Talmudic learning in addition to secular international law training as their educational background. From a Jewish perspective, what is interesting is that these jurists represented the entire rich spectrum of Central-European Jewry prior to its annihilation in the Holocaust: from Reform Judaism (Perlzweig), to "modern Orthodox" Jews (the Robinsons), to the ultra-Orthodox Haredi community (Isaac Lewin). Interestingly enough, there seemed to have been a consensus as to the mutual benefit and perhaps even "complementarity" of Talmudic and secular religious training "all across" these Jewish strata. This, by the way, is also true for René Cassin, who, while not an Eastern European, was given the same Jewish religious upbringing (being prepared for his bar mitzvah by his uncle, the rabbi of Strasbourg, and with his mother remaining an observant Jew her entire life), notwithstanding the fact that Cassin himself chose to distance himself from these religious Jewish aspects after puberty.<sup>33</sup> One sometimes gets the feeling that today, at the very least, Judaism's ultra-Orthodox strata tend to be far less open to the world than back in Rabbi Lewin's days.

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<sup>31</sup> See M. Perlzweig's own memoirs available on the website of Columbia University Library: *The Reminiscences of Dr. Maurice L. Perlzweig*, vol. 3, p. 139 (p. 138 in the source), [http://www.columbia.edu/cu/libraries/inside/ccoh\\_assets/ccoh\\_4074305\\_transcript.pdf](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/libraries/inside/ccoh_assets/ccoh_4074305_transcript.pdf) (accessed 11 December 2019).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>33</sup> G. Adams, *Political Ecumenism: Catholics, Jews, and Protestants in De Gaulle's Free France 1940–1945*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006, pp. 69–70.



This complementarity comes across rather starkly in something that Robinson refers to in his passage concerning authority of Louis Henkin's father in Talmudic family law: the issue of *Agunoth*. At the very same time that Robinson began his drafting of the Refugee Convention, the WJC had just managed to secure the agreement for the Declaration of Death Convention (1950) – a convention that since then has long been forgotten.<sup>34</sup> From 1948 onwards, the WJC worked tirelessly to develop a convention that would compel states to issue death certificates for victims of World War II. While the general problems related to the lack of death certificates for missing deceased persons (in terms of property rights, inheritance claims, etc.) were clearly expressed by the WJC, a somewhat unique Jewish Talmudic perspective of this problem was known, albeit not explicitly mentioned in the organization's publications: the problem of *Agunoth*.<sup>35</sup>

Under religious Jewish law, a married woman whose husband cannot be located or whose death cannot be confirmed is considered “trapped” (“anchored” in literal translation). This entrapment is because, in the case of her remarriage to another man, were her first husband to unexpectedly reappear, the woman would have committed one of the worst felonies under Talmudic marital law (being betrothed to two husbands), also resulting in the illegitimacy of her children who were conceived during her second marriage. The problem of *Agunoth* was especially acute after the European Jewish Holocaust. In the article written by Louis Henkin's father, quoted by Robinson, reference is made to the rabbinical acceptability of the death certificates issued by European states to deceased Jews, following the protocol of the now endorsed UN convention, thereby clearing the way to use these non-Jewish documents as a legitimate proof of death according to Jewish law and “freeing” these widowed women who survived the Holocaust.

The point here is one of conjunction between international law and Talmudic law. Robinson was directing the drafting of a modern international legal treaty under the UN's auspices (the Declaration of Death Convention) while simultaneously securing the specific “religious” needs of Jews who had survived the Holocaust under the precepts of Orthodox Talmudic family law. Being well versed in both fields, Robinson neither had a problem nor saw any contradiction in coordinating his efforts so as to answer the needs of both legal systems

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34 United Nations Treaty Series (UNTS), vol. 119 (1952), p. 99, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20119/volume-119-I-1610-English.pdf> (accessed 11 December 2019).

35 N. Robinson, *The United Nations and the World Jewish Congress*, New York: Institute for Jewish Affairs & International Press, 1955, pp. 28–35.

simultaneously for the benefit of all the people who perished during World War II and remained unidentified – Jews and non-Jews alike.

## 4 Rashi, Hebrew Linguistics, and Isaac Lewin's Drafting of the Non-Refoulement Principle

The last decade has seen a considerable widening of our understanding of the driving forces – and drafting forces – that helped shape the wording of the Refugee Convention.<sup>36</sup> As Glynn, myself, and others have all demonstrated, the role of Jewish international jurists, such as Paul Weis, Jacob and Nehemiah Robinson, Isaac Lewin, Louis Henkin, and others, in the making of this convention was absolutely paramount for its wording and adoption.<sup>37</sup> The Refugee Convention's offspring, the Convention on Statelessness and, indeed, the very nature and existence of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and its Executive Committee, were also heavily influenced by the work of these Jewish drafters.<sup>38</sup>

The entire elaboration of the Refugee Convention's non-refoulement principle (today enshrined in Article 33), from its earliest draft at the United Nations Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Committee on Statelessness and Related

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**36** T. Einarsen, "The Drafting History of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol", in: A. Zimmermann, J. Dörschner, and F. Machts (eds.), *The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol: A Commentary*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 37–74.

**37** I. Glynn, "The Genesis and Development of Article 1 of the 1951 Refugee Convention", *Journal of Refugee Studies* 25 (2012), pp. 135–140. For the relationship between all these jurists and Jacob Robinson's central role in the making of this convention, see G. Ben-Nun, "The Israeli Roots of Article 3 and Article 6 of the 1951 Refugee Convention", *Journal of Refugee Studies* 27 (2014), pp. 101–126.

**38** On the shift from the Refugee Convention to the making of the Convention on Statelessness (which only came into force in 1960), see G. Ben-Nun, "From Ad Hoc to Universal: The International Refugee Regime from Fragmentation to Unity 1922–1954", *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 34 (2015), pp. 23–44. On the nexus between the drafters of the Refugee Convention and their work in favour of the UNHCR and its Executive Committee (against strong French and US pressures), see G. Ben-Nun, "The Expansion of International Space: UNHCR's Establishment of Its Executive Committee ('ExCom')", *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 36 (2017), pp. 54–73. For an adversarial, albeit extremely well-researched perspective on the Jewish (and especially Israeli) contribution to the making of the Refugee Convention, see R. Giladi, "A 'Historical Commitment'? Identity and Ideology in Israel's Attitude to the Refugee Convention 1951–1954", *International History Review* 37 (2015), pp. 745–767.

Problems, Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons (hereinafter Ad Hoc Committee on Statelessness) in February 1950 to its final endorsement at the Geneva Plenipotentiaries' Conference in July 1951, was one long and continuous effort on behalf of the Jewish delegates: Isaac Lewin, Paul Weis, and, most importantly, Jacob Robinson (in his final compromise on the limitation to non-refoulement as evidenced by Article 33, paragraph 2).<sup>39</sup> From the vantage point of Jewish law, the most important issue concerns the fact that the non-refoulement principle itself, as elaborated by Rabbi Isaac Lewin, was premised upon ancient biblical Jewish legal principles of refugee protection. As Lewin explained to the ad hoc committee's delegates, the prophet Amos

considered the prohibiting of sending refugees back, to be binding rule of international law of his time. He once said that God would never forgive Philistine Gaza and Phoenician Tyre for the crime of expelling the Jewish refugees, who had found asylum in their countries, delivering them to the enemy, the Kingdom of Edom.<sup>40</sup>

Knowing full well that many of the delegates present would ponder the relevance of a biblical textual quotation to the affairs at hand, Lewin stressed that, in his view, the non-refoulement principle was not restricted to the tenets of Jewish law but rather applied universally to all mankind:

It is obvious that since Amos reprimanded Gaza and Tyre, which were not bound by Jewish law; for that sin – he considered their act a violation of international law. We therefore have a precedent for the present convention dating back from the eighth century B.C.<sup>41</sup>

Evidence that Lewin's address, which drew upon biblical sources, was seen as somewhat esoteric (to say the least) can be found in the fact that this address cannot be found anywhere in the Refugee Convention's meticulously ordered official records of that treaty's *travaux préparatoires*, having been deleted by that record's UN editors. Nevertheless, given Lewin's important role in the international making, and eventual adoption, of the non-refoulement principle, his observations regarding the relevance of Amos's biblical prophecy seems to merit further exploration here.

One conundrum that certainly deserves clarification concerns Lewin's rather anachronistic observation concerning some sort of biblical "violation of international law". Taking Martti Koskenniemi, Richard Tuck, and Stephen Neff – being undisputed authorities on the history of international law – at their

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<sup>39</sup> Ben-Nun, *The British-Jewish Roots of Non-Refoulement*, pp. 107–113.

<sup>40</sup> Ben-Nun, *Seeking Asylum in Israel*, p. 59.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

word, international law (in its current form) is an invention that dates to the eighteenth century or, at best, to the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.<sup>42</sup> Lewin, who had a doctorate in international law, later single-handedly drafted the UN General Assembly's Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, and in 1981, he was awarded the UN Peace Medal (the highest peace prize worldwide second only to the Nobel Peace Prize) – surely he knew a thing or two about international law.<sup>43</sup> This makes his seemingly anachronistic claim all the more interesting to examine.

The first step towards understanding Lewin's alleged anachronism requires an understanding of how he himself came to read the biblical book of Amos. Being his father's son (Aaron Lewin – Poland's chief rabbi), Isaac Lewin could not help but read Amos in the original Hebrew of the standard Pentateuch's printed page. As with all biblical texts present in any ultra-Orthodox Haredi house such as his, at the bottom of the biblical Hebrew text sat, as always, Rashi's authoritative commentary on the Bible. Onkelos's translation of the biblical text into Aramaic sat to the right of the text. To understand Lewin's legal observations about Amos, we must recall the "multilingual manner" in which he, as an ultra-Orthodox Jew, approached it.

The history of the Hebrew language – like that of the Jewish people – is old and somewhat peculiar. Having originated in the Middle East somewhere around 2,000 BC, the language was routinely spoken for about 1,500 years before gradually descending into the realm of a sacred (yet linguistically dead) language (around 500 BC). This is rather similar to Sanskrit in India, Ge'ez in Ethiopia, or even Latin for the Catholic Church. In all such cases, while the "dead language" remains that of the codified sacred text (Vedas in Sanskrit for Hinduism or the Ethiopian prayer book in Ge'ez), the daily discourse of people shifts to vernacular languages: Hindi for the people of the Indian subcontinent, Amharic or Tigrinya for the communities in Ethiopia, or indeed Aramaic for the Jews.

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<sup>42</sup> For the point of view of international law as a nineteenth- to twentieth-century endeavour, see M. Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law 1870–1960* (new edn), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. For a point of view that stretches further back to international law's fifteenth- to sixteenth-century origins, see R. Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. For the recent broadest and most authoritative account of international law's history, see S. Neff, *Justice among Nations: A History of International Law*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014.

<sup>43</sup> For the text of Lewin's drafted UNGA Res. 36/55 of 25 November 1981, see the website of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ReligionOrBelief.aspx> (accessed 11 December 2019).

While the etymological and linguistic relationships between the mother tongue and its vernacular offspring remain deep and intertwined, culturally speaking the people often lose their full capacity to understand the original sacred text as the centuries progress and the people move away from the ever more stagnating sacred language. This veering away is even evident in the Bible itself. The book of Daniel – the last to be included into the sanctified Old Testament codex (probably incorporated into it around 400 BC) – is written, in fact, overwhelmingly in Aramaic, not Hebrew. The Mishna (first and second centuries AD), being the earliest of Talmudic texts, is in and of itself one large exercise in extending the use of the written Hebrew language. Being written in Hebrew was seen as an exercise in the continuity and extension of the sacred language. Nevertheless, the language's rabbinical protagonists most certainly “did not” speak Hebrew amongst themselves, rather using a mixture of Aramaic and especially Greek – the latter being the Near East's lingua franca following its Hellenistic conquest by Alexander the Great in 332 BC.

As with Luther's translation of the Christian Bible, stemming largely from his wish to bring the sacred text closer to the understanding of commoners and thereby facilitating their participation, a similar process took place during the first and second centuries AD with the translation of the Bible into Aramaic and Greek. Seeing the dangers inherent in translating a sacred text (which in some parts is assumed to embody the direct words of God himself), these translations were undertaken strictly and only by officially authorized bodies. This was the case with the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible (the Septuagint, named after the 70 Jewish sages in Alexandria who allegedly undertook the translation around the third century BC). It was also the case with Onkelos's translation of the Torah into Aramaic in the first century AD. One should stress that the translation of the Bible into English (the King James Version) followed exactly the same procedure some 1,500 years earlier by Onkelos, with the work by King James's seventeenth-century Oxford scholars Thomas Holland and Richard Brett largely depending upon Onkelos's own Aramaic translation.<sup>44</sup>

With the Talmud being largely an Aramaic text (which interprets its Hebrew nucleus of the Mishna), the next – and by far most important commentary for understanding the Torah's original Hebrew text – was Rashi's eleventh-century commentary, which he composed in Western Europe between Troyes, Worms, and Mainz. Written entirely in Hebrew (so as to continue the legacy of writing sacred texts in the sacred language), Rashi, nevertheless, explicitly references

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<sup>44</sup> G. Steiner, “The Book”, in: Idem, *Language and Silence: Essays 1958–1966*, London: Faber & Faber, 1967, p. 218.

Onkelos's Aramaic translation many times within his Hebrew text, in most cases to substantiate his own reading of the biblical text.<sup>45</sup> In addition, and seeing as his readership was firstly the pupils in his own yeshiva in Worms, Rashi incorporates in many instances transcriptions of medieval French and German words (in Hebrew letters with inverted commas) into his Hebrew text to facilitate better understanding for his students – seeing as these were the languages they spoke daily in and around today's Rhineland-Palatinate.

As the printing revolution of the sixteenth century engulfed the Jewish textual world, a standardized version of the Torah was introduced. The text, along with the punctuation as originally laid down in the Aleppo Codex (the tenth century's most accurate version of the Hebrew Bible, later consecrated by Maimonides), was printed, together with Onkelos's Aramaic translation on the right side and Rashi's commentary on the bottom (Figure 1<sup>46</sup>). This has remained the layout of all Orthodox Jews' Pentateuch to this day.

With all that clarified, we can now return to Lewin's reading of Amos in February 1950. There is virtually no doubt that when Isaac read Amos in preparation for his speech before the UN's Ad Hoc Committee on Statelessness, he used a similar Hebrew textual version to the one shown above. In his address, he did not mention the exact chapter and verse to which he was alluding. Nevertheless, given the brevity of the book of Amos and the fact that Tyre is mentioned in it only once in relation to Edom, his insistence upon a first precedent (of sorts) for an international legal norm guaranteeing the protection of refugees could only stem from that prophet's referral to the words "whole captivity" and "brotherly covenant". This, in fact, corresponds to Amos 1:9:

Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Tyre, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they delivered up the whole captivity [גלות שלמה] to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant [ברית אחים]

Lewin's reference to the expulsion of refugees and their deliverance into the hands of their tormentors stems from the Hebrew words גלות שלמה. This is

<sup>45</sup> On Rashi's specific contribution to the linguistic development of Hebrew and the impact his commentary had on the developers of nineteenth-century modern Hebrew, such as Bialik and Agnon (sitting between Odessa, Leipzig, and Bad Homburg), see C. Gamliel, *Linguistics in Rashi's Commentary*, Jerusalem: The Bialik Institute at the Hebrew University Press, 2010, pp. 197–226 (in Hebrew).

<sup>46</sup> Wikimedia Commons, “Rashi’s Commentary on the Torah”, [https://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%A4%D7%99%D7%A8%D7%95%D7%A9\\_%D7%A8%D7%A9%22%D7%99\\_%D7%9C%D7%AA%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%94#/media/%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%91%D7%A5:Rhashi\\_me\\_chicot.jpg](https://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%A4%D7%99%D7%A8%D7%95%D7%A9_%D7%A8%D7%A9%22%D7%99_%D7%9C%D7%AA%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%94#/media/%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%91%D7%A5:Rhashi_me_chicot.jpg) (accessed Sep. 2020)

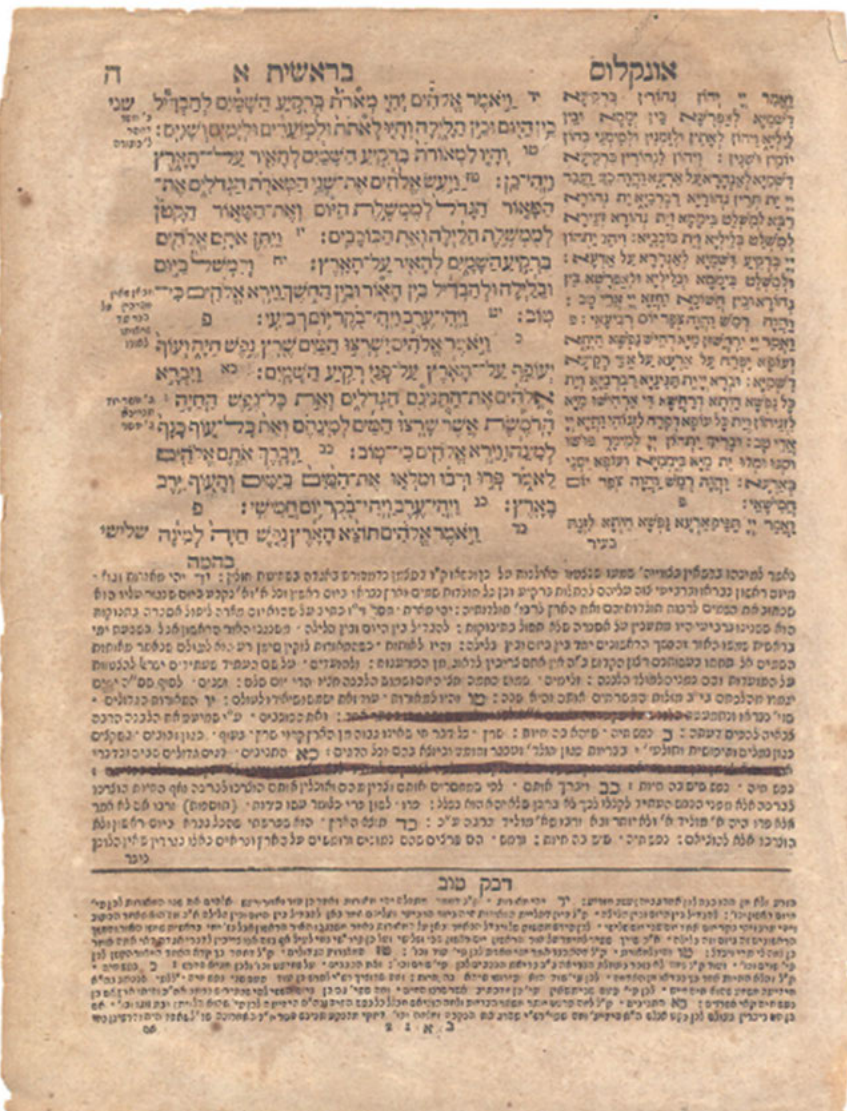


Figure 1: A Printed Copy of the Torah (Genesis 1), Amsterdam 1749. Onkelos' Aramaic translation on the right column, Rashi's commentary at the bottom.

correctly translated as “entire exiled people”. The King James version mistakenly translates שלמה גלות as “whole captivity”. The correct translation only appears in very modern translations of the Bible, such as the Holman Christian Standard (2004). This mistranslation originates in the earliest Greek Septuagint

translation of the Old Testament from Alexandria, where גלות was translated into the Greek word αιχμαλωσία, which was later carried forward into St. Jerome's Vulgate translation of the Bible into Latin (from the Greek). St. Jerome correctly translated the Greek αιχμαλωσία as the Latin *Captivatem*. From there, the path to the King James version's "whole captivity" was short.

Yet, not all was incorrect with St. Jerome's translation of αιχμαλωσία into *Captivatem*. For St. Jerome, who was born in the Roman province of Dalmatia, passed most of his life as a monk in Bethlehem, speaking both fluent Aramaic and Hebrew, in addition to his native Greek and Latin. So much so was the Christian originator of the Vulgate conversant with the languages of the biblical Near East, that he managed to capture a notion that we today as modern readers of Hebrew have lost concerning the meanings underpinning of the words גלות שלמה – "entire exiled people". Fortunately, though, St. Jerome's underlying understandings were indeed captured by Rashi – as one ought to have expected from the most venerable of all Jewish biblical commentators. Regarding the words גלות שלמה in Amos 1:6, Rashi explains:

גלות שלמה: the captivity of Israel for that it shall be complete, so that not one soul would be able to escape, thus performed the people of Tyre who would stand on the roads and at the cross roads, and would capture those fleeing and would then deliver them unto Edom.

Rashi's clarification is vital to understanding the plight of refugees. In Lewin's reading, the responsibility for biblical protection of refugees lay not only upon those who persecuted refugees but also upon those who merely handed refugees over to those who would later persecute them. This specific meaning is revealed in his reading of Rashi's explanation of גלות שלמה – "whole captivity" or "entire exiled people". To Lewin, the responsibility of states to protect persecuted refugees according to the Refugee Convention he was drafting was not only from their tormentors but also from the people who were merely aiding their tormentors, in that they turned back those persecuted. With Lewin's entire family perishing in the Holocaust in Poland and him sitting at the UN Ad Hoc Committee's drafting table only five years after the end of World War II, he knew all too well how many Jews were turned back into the hands of the Nazis by non-German collaborators within the occupied areas of Europe. Rashi's clarification of what took place during biblical times, which Amos referred to in his prophecy, literally unfolded in front of Lewin's own eyes five years earlier. It is this aspect of "collaboration" that St. Jerome so masterfully captured in his Vulgate translation of *Captivatem*, to which Lewin alluded in his quoted text from Amos.

The severity of the deed executed by the people of Tyre, and which earned them Amos's wrath, was not only the abrogation of some vague ethical principle (not turning refugees back into the hands of their tormentors). Rather, it was the



concrete abrogation of a certain regional diplomatic pact between two previous formidable kings, which Tyre reneged upon. Lewin's reference to some early form of international law concerns Amos's reference to the abrogation of a "brotherly covenant" and God's reprimanding thereof. As Rashi explains, these words refer to the regional political pact between the pagan King Hiram of Tyre and the Jewish King Solomon in Jerusalem. This pact is mentioned in 2 Samuel 5:11, 1 Kings 5:14–25, and also 1 Kings 9:10–16, whereby both kings referred to one another as "my brother", hence the "brotherly covenant".

The conjunction between the expulsion of exiles back to their tormentors (Edom), which was undertaken by the same people whose king had previously concluded this agreement with the Jewish King Solomon, and the abrogation of an existing regional diplomatic agreement – in addition to the infringement upon the more general moral principle of not turning refugees back into the hands of their tormentors – lay at the heart of Lewin's seemingly anachronistic claim in favour of some sort of a biblical notion of international law.

## 5 Conclusion: The Eastern European Jewish Linguistics of Modern International Law

In 1928, Jacob Robinson published the first of several bibliographies he would publish during his life on topics concerning international law, with the last one being published ten years prior to his passing in 1967. This first bibliography was dedicated to the protection of minorities – a topic close to Robinson's heart and one in which he had become a recognized international legal authority.<sup>47</sup> In the preface to this bibliography, Robinson explains:

This bibliography is polyglot. Works presented here, in the languages which the editor can read freely include publications in: Russian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Polish Ukrainian, Czech, German, Dano-Norwegian, Swedish, Dutch, French, Italian, Catalan, Rumanian, Spanish, Bulgarian, English, Hebrew and Yiddish (sources in the last two languages have been transcribed into Latin characters from the Hebrew alphabet). Notwithstanding the editor's limited knowledge of Hungarian, he has nevertheless endeavoured to include those Hungarian publications known to him.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Robinson, *Das Minoritäten-Problem*. See also J. Robinson, *Kommentar der Konvention über das Memelgebiet*, Kaunas: Verlag Spaudos Fondas, 1934.

<sup>48</sup> Robinson, *Das Minoritäten-Problem und seine Literatur*, p. 7.

Personal testimonies of people who were associated with Robinson speak of a very timid man, who, despite his almost encyclopaedic knowledge, was a rather reserved and quiet person. Bragging was hardly his “cup of tea”. His statement above should be taken more as a statement of fact – as to the sources included in his bibliography, along with his recognition of his own linguistic shortcomings. In all probability, Robinson’s linguistic skills might not have been that different from those of other Jewish peers he most likely knew during his lifetime. In all likelihood, Nehemiah Robinson, his younger brother, spoke many of these languages mentioned above. André Mandelstam – who served as the dragoman (interpreter) for the Russian embassy in Istanbul, spoke some 15 tongues (including Turkish and Arabic), and with whom Robinson was well acquainted – would not have been any less multilingual. Given their similar biographies to Robinson, Hersch Lauterpacht, Raphael Lemkin, or Rabbi Dr Georg Cohn might have mastered somewhat fewer languages than Robinson, yet not to any radical degree. The minute one was born into an educated Jewish household in East-Central Europe in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, one’s multicultural and multiconfessional surroundings, coupled with the duality of Talmudic and international law education, meant that one would simply be compelled to become conversant in so many languages.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> On the notion of “Democratic Diplomacy” post-World War I and its radical departure from past diplomatic practices, see G. Ben-Nun, “The Subjugation of International Law to Power Politics and Mystery of State (‘Arcana Imperii’) in Shakespeare’s *Henry V*”, in: D. Carpi and F. Ost (eds.), *As You Law It: Negotiating Shakespeare*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018, pp. 87–104, at 101, n. 27.

Klemens Kaps

## 8 Trade Connections between Eastern European Regions and the Spanish Atlantic during the Eighteenth Century

The conquest and colonization of the Americas between the fifteenth and seventeenth century have been traditionally portrayed as a largely Western European enterprise. This orientation still serves narratives in handbooks and shapes specialized studies on the colonial Americas and their interactions with the corresponding colonial centres in Europe during the early modern period.<sup>1</sup> However, intriguing historical scholarship in the framework of “Atlantic history” or the “Atlantic system”<sup>2</sup> in recent years has called attention to the manifold and intricate webs of interaction between colonial empires in the Americas, highlighting the fluid boundaries, flexible loyalties, and hybrid identities of imperial actors. Such webs of interaction emerged particularly from commercial exchange, which was one of the major channels of economics, together with political and cultural transregional and translocal interactions across the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>3</sup> However, scholars have also shown the crucial role of numerous actors in transatlantic

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., J. H. Elliott, “The Seizure of Oversea Territories by the European Powers”, in: H. Pohl (ed.), *The European Discovery of the World and Its Economic Effects on Pre-Industrial Society, 1500–1800. Papers of the 10th International Economic History Congress International Economic History Congress*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990, pp. 43–61; P. Emmer, “In Search of a System: The Atlantic Economy 1500–1800”, in: H. Pietschmann (ed.), *Atlantic History. History of the Atlantic System 1580–1830*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002, pp. 169–17; Ph. T. Hoffman, *Why Did Europe Conquer the World?*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> H. Pietschmann, “Historia del sistema atlántico: Un marco de investigación en Hamburgo”, *Memoria y Civilización* 1 (1998), pp. 139–164.

<sup>3</sup> M. Herrero Sánchez and I. Pérez Tostado, “Conectores del mundo atlántico: Los irlandeses en la red comercial internacional de los Grillo y Lomelín”, in: I. Tostado Pérez and E. Hernán García (eds.), *Irlanda y el Atlántico Ibérico. Movilidad, participación e intercambio cultural* [Ireland and the Iberian Atlantic. Mobility, participation and cultural exchange], Sevilla: Albatros

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trade that clearly transcend the sociopolitical boundaries of what can be considered the Western European maritime powers – Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, France, and England – revealing the involvement of merchants and sailors from a range of other European areas in this colonial trade. This is most prominent in the case of the Spanish Empire, whose imperial economy could not have functioned without the intense participation of foreign merchants, bankers, and sailors, or without a range of non-Spanish commodities that were dispatched from Spain to Spanish America.<sup>4</sup>

While recent research has shed a lot of light on Genoese businessmen and on Dutch, Flemish, Hanseatic, Tuscan, French, and British traders,<sup>5</sup> the eastern part of the European continent received less attention. Klaus Weber has studied

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Ediciones, 2010, pp. 307–321; I. Lobato Franco and J. M. Oliva Melgar (eds.), *El Sistema Comercial Español en la Economía Mundial (Siglos XVII–XVIII). Homenaje a Jesús Aguado de los Reyes* [The Spanish Commercial System in the World Economy (17th–18th Century). Homage to Jesús Aguado de los Reyes], Huelva: Universidad de Huelva, 2013; A. Games, “Cohabitation, Suriname-Style: English Inhabitants in Dutch Suriname after 1667”, *William & Mary Quarterly* 72 (2015) 2, pp. 195–242; J. Cañizares-Esguerra, *Entangled Empires: The Anglo-Iberian Atlantic, 1500–1830*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018.

4 A. García-Baquero González, “Los extranjeros en el tráfico con Indias: Entre el rechazo legal y la tolerancia funcional”, in: M. B. Villar García and P. Pezzi Cristóbal (eds.), *Los extranjeros en la España Moderna, Actas del I coloquio internacional celebrado en Málaga del 28 al 30 de noviembre de 2002* [Foreigners in Modern Spain], Vol. 1, Málaga: Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación, 2003, pp. 73–99.

5 M. Herrero Sánchez, “La república de Génova y la Monarquía Hispánica (siglos XVI–XVII)”, *Hispania* LXV/1 (2005) 219, pp. 9–20; C. Brilli, *Genoese Trade and Migration in the Spanish Atlantic, 1700–1830*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016; J. J. Iglesias Rodríguez, *El árbol de Sinople. Familia y patrimonio entre Andalucía y Toscana en la Edad Moderna*, Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 2008; F. J. Zamora Rodríguez, *La ‘Pupilla dell’occhio della Toscana’ y la posición hispánica en el Mediterráneo occidental (1677–1717)* [The ‘Pupilla dell’occhio della Toscana’ and the Hispanic Position in the Western Mediterranean (1677–1717)], Madrid: Fundación Española de Historia Moderna, 2013; K. Weber, *Deutsche Kaufleute im Atlantikhandel 1680–1830. Unternehmen und Familien in Hamburg, Cádiz und Bordeaux*, Munich: C. H. Beck, 2004; T. Weller, “Las repúblicas mercantiles y el sistema imperial hispánico: Génova, las Provincias Unidas y la Hansa”, in: M. Herrero Sánchez, Y. R. Ben Youssef Garfía, C. Bitossi, and D. Puncuh (eds.), *Génova y la Monarquía Hispánica* [Genoa and the Hispanic Monarchy], vol. 2, Génova: Società Ligure di Storia Patria, 2011, pp. 627–656; A. Crespo Solana, *Mercaderes atlánticos. Redes del comercio flamenco y holandés entre Europa y el Caribe* [Atlantic merchants. Flemish and Dutch trade networks between Europe and the Caribbean], Córdoba: Universidad de Córdoba, 2009; B. Arnaud, *Les marchands français de Cadix et la crise de la Carrera de Indias (1778–1828)*, Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2017; J. I. Martínez Ruíz, “¿Cádiz, Jamaica o Londres? La colonia británica de Cádiz y las transformaciones del comercio inglés con la América española (1655–1750)”, *Studia Historica / Historia Moderna* 33 (2011), pp. 177–202.

traders who migrated from Habsburg-governed Bohemia and settled in the port city of Cádiz,<sup>6</sup> Spain's only mercantile hub legally entitled to trade with Spanish America between 1680 and 1765–1778 from the 1720s onwards. In addition, other works mention the key role of imports – for example, the Baltic region for shipbuilding, Upper Hungarian copper, and Silesian and Bohemian linen exports – supplying to a great degree Spanish American markets.<sup>7</sup> However, there is still a lack of detailed studies on the involvement of Eastern European regions in the Spanish transatlantic trade.

These examples are the starting point for this chapter, which aims to analyse the forms and impacts of the multiple economic connections as well as mutual commercial influences and interactions between Spain's Atlantic system and Eastern European regions during the eighteenth century as part of the larger process of early modern globalization. Trade connections are understood both in their material dimension of commodity flows, and in terms of the social sphere of merchants, sailors and their networks conducting these transactions. One important aspect in this regard is to scrutinize older but partially still persistent notions according to which Eastern Europe was considered a remote area for Atlantic trade, which is often linked to its peripheral economic profile.<sup>8</sup>

Without questioning the unequal character of the global division of labour that came into existence with the Atlantic expansion of the two Iberian monarchies in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the relatively unfavourable position Eastern European regions had within this division,<sup>9</sup> this chapter takes a close look at micro-structures and micro-places<sup>10</sup> in order to demonstrate that

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6 Weber, *Deutsche Kaufleute*, pp. 133–143.

7 A. Crespo Solana, *El comercio marítimo entre Amsterdam y Cádiz (1713–1778)* (Estudios de Historia Económica nº 40), Madrid: Banco de España, 2000; Idem, *Entre Cádiz y los Países Bajos. Una comunidad en la ciudad de la ilustración*, Cádiz: Fundación Municipal de Cultura del Ayuntamiento de Cádiz, 2001; Z. P. Pach, "The East-Central European Aspect of the Overseas Discoveries and Colonization", in: Pohl, *The European Discovery*, pp. 178–194; H. Pohl, *Die Beziehungen Hamburgs zu Spanien und dem spanischen Amerika in der Zeit von 1740 bis 1806* (Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Beiheft 45), Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1963, pp. 127–139; W. Zorn, "Schwerpunkte der deutschen Ausfuhrindustrie im 18. Jahrhundert", *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik* 173 (1961), pp. 422–447, at 427–430.

8 I. Wallerstein, *The Modern World System I. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, New York et al.: Academic Press, 1974, pp. 308, 323–324; M. Zeuske, *Sklaven und Sklaverei in den Welten des Atlantiks 1400–1940. Umriss, Anfänge, Akteure, Vergleichsfelder und Bibliographien*, Münster: LIT, 2013, p. 195.

9 Wallerstein, *Modern World System I*; B. Hausberger, *Historia mínima de la globalización temprana* [Minimal history of early globalisation], Ciudad de México: Colegio de México, 2018.

10 Zeuske, *Sklaven*, pp. 176, 180.

Eastern Europe was a far more complex world region and that different of its territories fulfilled various and changing functions in the globalizing economy. Focusing on the protoindustrial production located in East-Central European regions, such as Silesia and Bohemia, the differentiated production geography and trade patterns with Spanish America will be revealed while underlining that some East-Central European regions could benefit from participation in the Atlantic colonial trade – acting as core rather than peripheral spaces.

Firstly, a broader overview will be developed to contextualize both world regions regarding their productive and mercantile profiles, showing the different forms and extent of commercial interaction between Eastern European regions and the Spanish Empire. In the following two sections, the trade connections between Eastern European regions and the Spanish Empire through the two main routes – the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea – will be considered, and a case will be made for the relevance of the Mediterranean despite the common interpretation of its demise. The next section will focus on commodity flows, with a specific focus on the commodity chains of linen and glass, arguing for a more complex division of labour than a clear-cut core-periphery pattern. In the final section, the mediators of these commodity flows will be scrutinized more in depth, paying attention to transcultural networks and the role of Eastern European actors within them. In this part, I will include examples that follow the concept of “global micro-history”,<sup>11</sup> promoting an understanding of these transactions, the intricate web of commodity chains tying together production and consumption zones, and the actors and their social embeddedness to mediate these exchanges.

Thus, although this chapter focuses on specific trade flows between Eastern European and Spanish American regions, it places them within the broader spatial and social “commercial web”<sup>12</sup> of the early modern global economy, which transcends regional and imperial borders. In that sense, the chapter follows the paradigmatic guidelines developed around the concept of “translocality”,<sup>13</sup> aiming at analysing relationships between spaces of different scales and between geographical distance and density. It will therefore be shown that within Europe, similar to places and regions in Asia and Africa, areas considered a lesser part of

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11 F. Trivellato, “Is There a Future for Italian Microhistory in the Age of Global History?” *California Italian Studies* 2 (2011). p. 1.

12 M. Schulte-Beerbühl and J. Vögele (eds.), *Spinning the Commercial Web. International Trade, Merchants and Commercial Cities, c. 1640–1939*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2004.

13 U. Freitag and A. v. Oppen, “Introduction. ‘Translocality’: An Approach to Connection and Transfer in Area Studies”, in: U. Freitag and A. v. Oppen (eds.), *Translocality. The Study of Globalising Processes from a Southern Perspective*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010, pp. 1–21.

globalization narratives, such as Eastern Europe, were part of a multilayered web of mutual connections and influences, a web that was characteristic of the early modern global economy. The manner in which these links were, to a high degree, silenced and hidden in both areas will be critically revisited, based on both recent research and new source material relating to, above all, regions under the rule of the Habsburgs. The chapter will therefore focus on how connections and interlinkages on the translocal and transregional levels<sup>14</sup> – driven by integration processes of global scope and mediated through “portals of globalization”<sup>15</sup> that served as nodes and gateways of cross-border connections – created important configurations and spaces of agency that fostered and impacted socioeconomic changes in the eighteenth-century Spanish Atlantic and Eastern Europe.

Whereas the translocal approach understands global entanglement as a multifocal process of interaction, taking an actors’ perspective from below instead of an elitist viewpoint and subscribing to a heterogeneous globalization process,<sup>16</sup> the transregional approach underlines the idea that entanglement occurs in a multilayered spatial web stretching from the local through the regional to the transregional and to the global level. Even though all these spatial levels are mutually influenced by this integration process, both approaches break with the traditional national view that makes empires and states the logical starting points and actors of cross-border entanglements of a global scope. Instead, different urban centres serve as condensed nodes that foster and manage these interactions, with state policies acting as an important factor regarding the regulations and institutions of these cities. The term “region” is certainly vague and can be applied not only to spatial entities within a state but also to smaller spaces that transcend political boundaries. Another term with an ambiguous meaning is “world regions”.<sup>17</sup> Both terms will be applied in this text – Eastern Europe and Spanish America can be considered world regions, which can again be subdivided into several regions.

This chapter takes into account both land and sea trade centres between Eastern Europe and the Spanish Atlantic, with a particular focus on commercial harbours in the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean –

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<sup>14</sup> M. Middell (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Transregional Studies*, London: Routledge, 2019.

<sup>15</sup> M. Middell and K. Naumann, “Global History and the Spatial Turn: From the Impact of Area Studies to the Study of Critical Junctures of Globalization”, *Journal of Global History* V (2010) 1, pp. 149–170.

<sup>16</sup> Freitag and v. Oppen, “Introduction”, p. 1, 3–4, 8.

<sup>17</sup> A. Komlosy, *Globalgeschichte. Methoden und Theorien*, Wien et al.: Böhlau, 2011, pp. 165–188, 211–247.

such as Gdańsk/Danzig, Trieste/Trst, Genoa, Barcelona, Cádiz, and Veracruz – that served as connecting nodes for commercial interactions, merchant networks, and commodity flows between land and sea. While the maritime harbours were bound together by shipping traffic through maritime spaces of contact, they were as well connected to places in the interior adjacent to the coast and far beyond the immediate hinterlands, where, in many cases, rivers such as the Elbe, Oder, Vistula, or Dnjepr facilitated access and served as extensions of maritime spaces. However, the hinterlands varied over time according to improving infrastructures, such as roads and customs policies.

Major trade centres in the interior of the states analysed, such as Mexico City, Madrid, Cracow, Vienna, or Belgrade, played an important role in this integration process. These portals of globalization were connected in multifaceted ways to smaller commercial towns that orchestrated production on the local level and the commercialization of the respective goods.<sup>18</sup> This underlines a functional hierarchy according to which there were primary portals of globalization, such as Cádiz, Marseilles, Hamburg, Genoa, or Amsterdam in commodity trade and London and Amsterdam in financial services. They could, however, only function through their connections with smaller but still transregionally important port cities that were linked to more remote production areas, such as Trieste, Gdańsk, Veracruz, or Lima. As they did not manage such a broad range and density of commodity and money flows, they could be classified as “secondary portals of globalization”. This hierarchy was certainly far from stable, as the rise of London to the status of a financial centre (replacing Amsterdam) over the course of the eighteenth century shows, as well as the rise of Cádiz, Hamburg, and Trieste, albeit differing in intensity and scope.<sup>19</sup> Apart from such

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**18** Zeuske, *Sklaven*, pp. 193–194; W. Drobesh, “Il ruolo di Trieste tra i porti marittimi e fluviali austriaci (1719–1918)”, in: R. Finzi, L. Panariti, and G. Panjek (eds.), *Storia economica e sociale di Trieste, vol. II: La città dei traffici 1719–1918* [Economic and social history of Trieste, vol. II: The city of traffic 1719–1918], Trieste: Lint, 2003, pp. 349–367; G. Borruso, C. Bradaschia, and G. Borruso, “Le infrastrutture di trasporto terrestre a sostegno dei traffici portuali triestini”, in: *ibid.*, pp. 759–806; D. Schwara et al., *Kaufleute, Seefahrer und Piraten im Mittelmeerraum der Neuzeit. Entgrenzende Diaspora – verbindende Imaginationen*. Unter Mitarbeit von L. Müller, P. Krebs, I. Haag, and M. Gosteli, München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2011, pp. 152–155.

**19** M. Bustos Rodríguez, *Cádiz en el sistema atlántico. La ciudad, sus comerciantes y la actividad mercantil (1650–1830)* [Cadiz in the Atlantic system. The city, its merchants and commercial activity (1650–1830)] Cádiz: Silex, 2005; G. Felloni, “Organizzazione portuale, navigazione e traffici a Genova: un sondaggio tra le fonti per l’età moderna” [Port organization, navigation and trade in Genoa: a survey among the sources for the Early Modern Age], *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria*, XLIII (2003) 1, pp. 337–364; K. Newman, “Hamburg in the European Economy, 1660–1750”, *Journal of European Economic History* 14 (1985), pp. 57–93; L. Neal, *The*



nodes in the global network of commercial exchanges, local harbours can be identified that were tied to these port cities by cabotage trade along the coastlines in the vicinity, delivering local products to these big port cities, which were mainly destined for local consumption but could serve as additional commodities in long-distance trade.

## 1 Apparently Distant, but Tied Together: Geographies of Commodity Entanglement between Eastern Europe and the Spanish Atlantic in the Eighteenth Century

One of the reasons for the relative neglect of Eastern Europe, both in material terms and in reference to actors, is certainly the complex trade geography. Roughly speaking, regions in the eastern part of Europe wanting to access Spain and its colonies overseas were confronted with a bifurcated trade geography. The first route ran from the Baltic Sea through the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean and involved prominent harbours located along the south-eastern Baltic coast, such as Gdańsk, Stettin/Szczecin, Memel/Klaipėda, Königsberg/Kaliningrad, Riga, Archangelsk, and, later in the eighteenth century, St. Petersburg on the one end of this commercial exchange. At the other end of the mercantile shipping routes lay mainly ports located on the northern Spanish coast, such as La Coruña, Santander, Bilbao, and San Sebastián. The Andalusian maritime shipping area between the Bay of Cádiz and Sanlúcar de Barrameda, connected through the Guadalquivir River inland as far as Seville, was certainly the most prominent destination as a connecting point to the coveted colonial trade. Due to the strict regulation of Spain's colonial trade, commodities had to be dispatched through the harbour of Seville and, since 1680, through Cádiz. This holding time for Spanish and other European products before dispatch to Spanish America was quite different from other temporary layovers in harbours on the route from the Baltic Sea to the Iberian Peninsula. This is due to the fact that the specific regulations of Spain's institutionalized colonial trade, often referred to as

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*Rise of Financial Capitalism, International Capital Markets in the Age of Reason*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 20; M. Schulte-Beerbühl, *Deutsche Kaufleute in London. Welt-handel und Einbürgerung (1600–1818)*, München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2007; N. Wiecker, *Der iberische Atlantikhandel. Schiffsverkehr zwischen Spanien, Portugal und Iberoamerika, 1700–1800*, Stuttgart: Steiner, 2012.

a “monopoly”, required that the further movement of commodities from the Iberian Peninsula to Spanish America was conducted exclusively by legally entitled merchants and sailors who generally had to be Spanish subjects (with only a few exceptions).

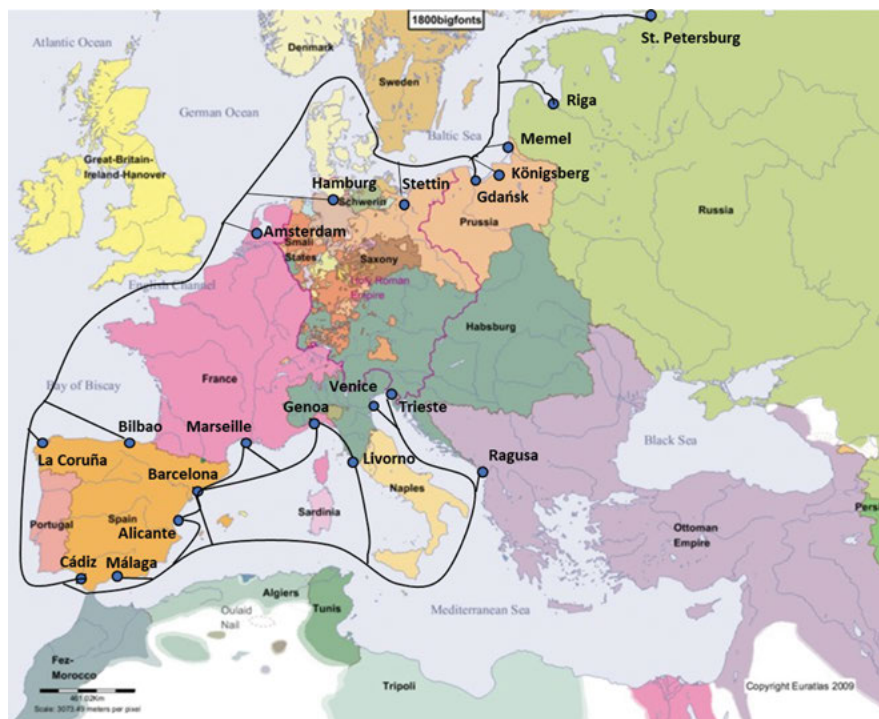
Mercantile shipping also followed a sophisticated administrative system that, until 1739 in the case of Peru and as late as 1776 in the case of the rest of the American dominions, was organized in the framework of a convoy shipping system that had to follow a standardized shipping route. This route went through the port cities of Veracruz, Cartagena de Indias, and, on the return trip, Havana, from where commodities were traded into the interior, whereas the trade fairs of Panama and Portobelo (later replaced by Jalapas) were two key intermediary channels in Central America. Only the so-called “free trade” reforms of the second half of the eighteenth century made this system more flexible by allowing new harbours in both peninsular Spain and Spanish America to participate in this trade (see Figure 1).<sup>20</sup>

The second route relevant for the access of Eastern European regions to Spain and Spanish Atlantic markets was the Mediterranean Sea, where Italian ports from Genoa through Livorno to Venice were the most important gateways. For particular territories in south-eastern Europe, ports located along the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea, such as Ragusa/Dubrovnik, Bocche di Cattaro/Boka kotorska, and Durazzo/Durrës, served as access channels to maritime trade. Many of them were ruled by the Republic of Venice, at least over a substantial part of the early modern period, and most of them had to rely on the cooperation with larger port cities to channel commodities to Spanish Atlantic markets. Finally, harbours in the Ottoman Empire, mainly on the Greek peninsula, were important connecting points, and Ottoman-governed territories located even further east used the alternative and geographically more remote route through the Black Sea and, subsequently, the Bosphorus River in Constantinople and the Dardanelles Strait to access the Mediterranean Sea.

This short and condensed outline of maritime shipping routes connecting Eastern European regions through a range of entrepôts to trade flows directed towards the Spanish Empire demonstrates that Eastern European regions are hardly visible in the sources as places of origin of key commodities that were

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**20** A. García-Baquero González, *Cádiz y el Atlántico, 1717–1778: El comercio colonial español bajo el monopolio gaditano* [Cadiz and the Atlantic, 1717–1778: Spanish colonial trade under the Cadiz monopoly], Cádiz: Excelentísima Diputación Provincial de Cádiz, 1988, Vol. 1, pp. 104f., 160–165, 266; M. Alfonso Mola, “The Spanish Colonial Fleet (1492–1828)”, in: Pietschmann (ed.), *Atlantic History*, pp. 365–374; J. R. Fisher, *Economic Aspects of Spanish Imperialism in America, 1492–1810*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997, pp. 71f.



**Figure 1:** Commercial Harbours and Shipping Routes between Eastern Europe and the Iberian Peninsula (Source: © Euratlas; own elaboration).

exported to Spain. This absence in the sources is due to the geographical remoteness of Eastern Europe and the long journey from there, which included many layovers. Shipping both from south-eastern Baltic and Mediterranean harbours relied on numerous layovers on the way to the Iberian Peninsula in order to load cargo as well as food and water for the crew or to reload a part of the cargo due to customs duty regulations in Spain.<sup>21</sup> Many sources ignore these exchanges implicitly, privileging large “portals of globalization”, such as Hamburg, Amsterdam, and Antwerp in the north and Venice, Livorno, and Genoa in the south.

Eastern European products often became part of commodity chains that ended up in Western European territories or beyond without their origin being registered (with the exception of Silesian linen and Bohemian glass that were

<sup>21</sup> Crespo Solana, *El comercio marítimo*, p. 97; C. Vassallo, *Corsairing to Commerce. Maltese Merchants in XVIII Century Spain*, Malta: University Publishers, 1997, pp. 191, 194.

produced within these regions or within a cross-border area including also Saxony, Austria, south-western Poland and Northern Hungary). Since most raw materials did not need a label of origin to be marketed successfully, their provenance is absent in the sources. Last but not least, most mediation centres on the way to Spain were located beyond Eastern Europe; therefore, Hamburg and Amsterdam appear as the exporters of commodities that had been shipped there from further east. Only when there was direct traffic were the connections to eastern Baltic harbours visible in the sources (such direct traffic seems to have increased over the course of the eighteenth century).

## 2 Part I: Dynamic Eastern Europe's Commercial Connections with the Atlantic World – From the South-eastern Baltic to the Spanish Atlantic

This trade geography experienced important changes concerning both the intra-regional hierarchy of port cities and trade routes on the macro-regional level. New trade centres emerged, such as Hamburg in the late seventeenth century and St. Petersburg, Stettin, and Trieste in the eighteenth century – the last three spurred greatly by mercantilist policies. The shift of the colonial harbour from Seville to Cádiz in 1680 and the transfer in 1717 of the two main institutions regulating the colonial trading system – the Casa de la Contratación and the Consulado – also transformed the trade geography. An even more profound change was initiated by a “free trade” system, permitting 9 Spanish harbours to trade directly with the Spanish-governed Caribbean Islands in 1765 before a sweeping reform of the colonial trade system (implemented in 1778) allowed 13 harbours on the Iberian Peninsula and 22 in Spanish America to trade directly with each other.<sup>22</sup>

These new competitors precipitated the decline of older nodes in remote trade. Venice gradually lost ground to Trieste; Stettin and Memel grew at the expense of Polish-governed Gdańsk.<sup>23</sup> Spain's “free trade” system diverted some trade flows

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<sup>22</sup> C. Martínez Shaw, “Bourbon Reformism and Spanish Colonial Trade, 1717–1778”, in: Pietschmann (ed.), *Atlantic History*, pp. 375–386, at 382f.; A. Crespo Solana, *La casa de la contratación y la intendencia general de la marina en Cádiz*, Cádiz: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Cádiz, 1996.

<sup>23</sup> R. Reichert, “El comercio directo de maderas para la construcción naval española y de otros bienes provenientes de la región del Báltico sur, 1700–1783”, *Hispania*, LXXVI (2016) 252, pp. 129–158, at 135–137; D. Andreozzi, “‘La gloria di un dilatato commercio’. L'intrico delle

from the traditional big ports of transatlantic colonial trade to newly licensed ports: on the Iberian Peninsula, Barcelona, La Coruña, Málaga, and Santander conducted some of the transatlantic trade flows, although the leading position of Cádiz remained virtually untouched. Between 1778 and 1796, Cádiz handled 76.4 per cent of exports to Spanish America and 84.2 per cent of imports.<sup>24</sup> Within the Spanish American harbours, the ports in New Spain – Veracruz and Honduras – maintained their overall share compared to the period from 1717 to 1778 by handling about 40 per cent of commodities arriving from Cádiz. Similarly, the Caribbean Islands preserved their relative position, whereas Venezuela and Cartagena de Indias lost their advantage to the Río de la Plata region and the Pacific coast.<sup>25</sup>

This reordering of the hierarchy of port cities was caused by different factors, such as state border regimes, wars, transport infrastructure, and a shifting product geography. However, changes in the transregional division of labour were most important. The colonization of the Americas and the growth of Atlantic trade fostered the deterioration of the core region of the European economy between northern Italy and southern Germany at the turn of the sixteenth to the seventeenth century and its gradual replacement by the Netherlands and England. This shift is believed to have precipitated the marginalization of Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean Sea both in the European and the emerging global economy<sup>26</sup> – an interpretation that has been questioned in the last few years, and my research contributes to this reconsideration.<sup>27</sup>

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politiche e lo sviluppo di Trieste nell'Adriatico centro settentrionale (1700–1730)", *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome – Italie et Méditerranée modernes et contemporaines* 127 (2015) 1, pp. 2–18, <http://mefrim.revues.org/2125>; E. Faber, *Litorale Austriaco. Das österreichische und kroatische Küstenland*, Trondheim and Graz: Steiermärkisches Landesarchiv, 1995.

24 J. R. Fisher, *Commercial Relations between Spain and Spanish America in the Era of Free Trade, 1778–1796*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1985, pp. 49, 65.

25 Ibid., p. 55; García-Baquero González, *Cádiz y el Atlántico*, Vol. 1, pp. 267f. The comparison is not entirely accurate as the shares after 1778 are in *reales de vellón* in comparison to tons before, while exports from Cádiz after 1778 only reflected a part, albeit the vast majority, of colonial trade.

26 P. Kriedte, *Spätfeudalismus und Handelskapital. Grundlinien der europäischen Wirtschaftsgeschichte vom 16. bis zum Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980, p. 90; Z. P. Pach, *Hungary and the European Economy in Early Modern Times*, Aldershot: Routledge, 1994, pp. 257–259; F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, Paris: Colin, 1966, Vol. II, p. 517.

27 D. Andreozzi (ed.), *Mediterranean Doubts. Trading Companies, Conflicts and Strategies in the Global Spaces (XV–XIX centuries)* (Economic History Frameworks, vol. 2), Palermo: NDF, 2017; M. Herrero Sánchez and K. Kaps (eds.), *Merchants and Trade Networks in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, 1550–1800: Connectors of Commercial Maritime Systems*, London: Routledge

Both reasons for change – political regulation and shifts in the transregional division of labour – brought problems and opportunities. In some cases, the emergence of new harbours supported stronger direct trade connections between Eastern European regions and the Iberian Peninsula in the eighteenth century, as sources on the micro-level, such as merchants' letters, notary files, or port books (in addition to other customs-related sources) reveal. Thus the trade activity of Amsterdam merchants further strengthened the ties with the Baltic region, as is proved by the intense mercantile shipping traffic that linked Gdańsk, the leading port city of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, with Cádiz. As Ana Crespo Solana has shown by compiling these data, this trade was conducted to a great extent on Dutch ships acting as intermediaries, especially between the late 1730s and the late 1760s (see Table 1<sup>28</sup>).

This interaction was a key part of the renewed trade prosperity between Spain and the south-eastern Baltic region after 1742, putting an end to the conflictive period between the War of the Spanish Succession and the Great Northern War up to the War of the Polish Succession, when the active commercial exchange that had marked the relationship between both areas in the late seventeenth century had been virtually severed. This new phase of prosperity lasted for several decades in the eighteenth century and perdured even the First Partition of Poland-Lithuania in 1772.<sup>29</sup>

In fact, Gdańsk continued to largely resist political measures, such as a high customs duty introduced by Prussia in 1775 and levied on the Vistula River in front of the city, aiming to divert trade flows to other harbours in the area, such as Elbling/Elbląg or Stettin, which were under Prussian control at that time. Despite these difficulties, which resulted in a massive reduction of mari-

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2017; S. D. Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean. The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (California World History Library, 17), Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011; F. Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009; R. Pieper, "Der Mittelmeerraum als Mittler zwischen Orient und Okzident im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert", in: S. Karner (ed.), *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Festschrift für Gerald Schöpfer zum 60. Geburtstag*, Graz: Leykam, 2004, pp. 69–85; K. Weber and M. Schulte-Beerbühl, "From Westphalia to the Caribbean: Networks of German Textile Merchants in the Eighteenth Century", in: A. Gestrich and M. Schulte-Beerbühl (ed.), *Cosmopolitan Networks in Commerce and Society 1660–1914*, London: German Historical Institute, 2011, pp. 53–98.

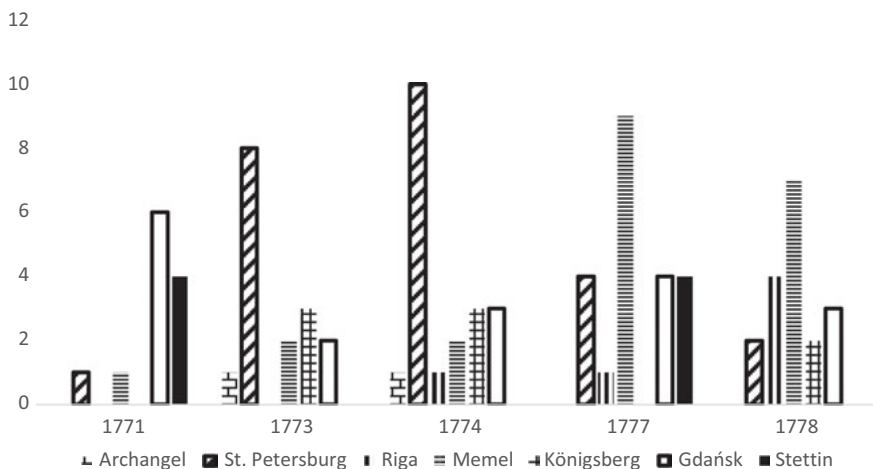
28 Source: Crespo Solana, *El comercio marítimo*, pp. 120–122, 126, 129, 131–134.

29 Reichert, "El comercio directo", pp. 133–137, 139–144, 147.

**Table 1:** Maritime traffic between Cádiz and Gdańsk by Dutch merchant ships, 1738–1767.

Year	Ship	Carrying capacity (tons)	Route
1738	<i>De Jacob</i>		Amsterdam-Cádiz-Gdańsk
1738	<i>De Juffrouw María</i>		Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Riga-Cádiz
1738	<i>De Agneta María</i>		Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1739	<i>De Vijverhoff</i>	680	Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1746	<i>De Stadt Amsterdam</i>		Gdańsk-Cádiz-Gdańsk
1747	<i>De Jonge Nicolaes</i>		Gdańsk-Cádiz-Amsterdam
1747	<i>De Hermanusy Jacob</i>		Gdańsk-Cádiz-Amsterdam
1747	<i>Tempel Salomon</i>		Gdańsk-Cádiz-Sanlúcar
1747	<i>De Jonge Cornelis</i>		Gdańsk-Cádiz-Amsterdam
1749	<i>Het galjoetschip T. Schwandrif</i>	360	Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Sound-Cádiz- Cartagena del Levante
1750	<i>San Pedro</i>	200	Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1750	<i>Oude Wagens</i>	380	Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Sound-El Ferrol-Cádiz
1750	<i>De Vriendschap</i>	380	Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Sound-El Ferrol-Cádiz
1750	<i>De Vrouw María</i>	400	Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1750	<i>De Vlugge Duijf</i>		Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1763	<i>De Twee Jonge Jannen</i>		Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1763	<i>De Vrouwe Christina</i>	360	Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1767	<i>De Anna Catharina</i>		Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1767	<i>Dorp Oudeboom</i>		Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1767	<i>De Eendracht</i>	260	Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1767	<i>De Goede Vreede</i>	220	Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1767	<i>De Jonge Jeltje</i>	210	Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz
1767	<i>De Gestadige Jager</i>	220	Amsterdam-Gdańsk-Cádiz

time traffic and trade conducted through the harbour,<sup>30</sup> ships from Gdańsk still continued to enter the harbour of Cádiz in a considerable number in the years 1773–1774 and 1777–1778, respectively— although the numbers were clearly lower than in 1771 (see Graph 1).<sup>31</sup>



**Graph 1:** Number of Ships entering Cádiz from South-eastern Baltic Harbours, 1771–1778.

At the same time, mercantile shipping from a range of south-eastern Baltic harbours, such as Stettin and Königsberg, to Cádiz increased as well, pointing to a rise of imports that Cádiz acquired from the area (although the statistics do not consider the loading capacities of ships). However, this new boom went hand in hand with a notable shift in the intraregional trade geography: the number of ships leaving from Gdańsk to Cádiz shrank, whereas Memel, Königsberg, and St. Petersburg particularly dispatched increasing numbers of ships. This traffic, however, does not reflect the whole trade that Eastern European regions located

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., pp. 140, 150f.; E. Cieślak, “The Influence of the First Partition of Poland on the Overseas Trade of Gdańsk”, in: W. G. Heeres and J. A. Faber (eds.), *From Dunkirk to Dantzig: Shipping and Trade in the North Sea and the Baltic, 1350–1850: Essays in Honour of J. A. Faber*, Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 1988, pp. 203–215, at 204–206, 209.

<sup>31</sup> *Estado General de las Embarcaciones, que han entrado, y salido en esta Bahía de Cadiz, en el Año de la fecha, tanto de America, como de Europa*, for the years 1771, 1773, 1774, 1777 and 1778. Stored at: Archivio di Stato di Trieste (hereafter ASTS), C.R.S. Intendenza 253, fol. 458; Archivo General de Indias (hereafter AGI), Consulados 97/13; Österreichisches Staatsarchiv (hereafter ÖStA), Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (hereafter HHStA), Staatenabteilung (hereafter StAbt), Spanien Diplomatische Korrespondenz (hereafter DK) 109, fol. 82; 111/14, fol. 16.



around the Baltic Sea and North Sea coastline conducted with Spain in the late eighteenth century. Hamburg, for example, channelled an important volume of commodities, mainly from East-Central European regions, particularly Silesia and Bohemia.<sup>32</sup>

### 3 Part II: Reshuffling of Eastern Europe's Commercial Routes with the Atlantic – East-Central European Connections through the Much-Deplored Mediterranean

The northern route connecting Eastern European regions located in the Russian Empire, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Prussia, and the northern provinces of the Habsburg Monarchy relied on port cities in the region, creating maritime economies, images, and brands with some reference to the regions of origin of the exported commodities. The situation along the southern Mediterranean route was quite different. Most harbours were much more difficult to access because the Alps served as a physical barrier, while long navigable rivers connecting the interior with the coastlines were largely absent. Multiple political and customs barriers between the small Italian states and the Eastern European regions – belonging to different imperial states, particularly the Ottoman and the Habsburg Empires – made commodity transport even more time – consuming and costly. Genoa was one option as a gateway for Bohemian traders. Venice also represented an alternative for merchants for directing Bohemian products towards the Mediterranean Sea. Both routes ran through the trade fairs of Linz, with Augsburg and Nuremberg acting as connecting points for the route to Genoa.<sup>33</sup> Ports on the Adriatic Sea were even more relevant as access points to global markets for the Hungarian regions, Croatia, and Carniola. Here, Venice served as the predominant connection for long-distance trade up to the early eighteenth century. The Republic of Venice had successfully defended its trade monopoly in the northern Adriatic Sea against repeated attempts by the Archduke of Austria since the 1520s to

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<sup>32</sup> Pohl, *Die Beziehungen Hamburgs*, pp. 127–133.

<sup>33</sup> J.V. Polišenský, “Bohemia, Genoa and the Atlantic”, in: R. Belvederi (ed.), *Atti del II<sup>o</sup> Congresso Internazionale di Studi Storici. Rapporti Genova-Mediterraneo-Atlantico* [Proceedings of the Second International Conference of Historical Studies. The Relations Genoa-Mediterranean-Atlantic], Genova: Università di Genova, 1988, pp. 313–319, at 315; P. Balcárek, “La Moravia e Genova dal Cinquecento fino all'Ottocento”, in: *ibid.*, pp. 437–452, at 440–441.

convert the small harbours located at the Habsburg-governed Adriatic coast between Trieste and Carlopago/Karlobag into commercial ports.<sup>34</sup>

However, from 1684 to 1718, the geopolitical reordering after the wars between the Habsburg Emperor and the Ottoman Empire and after the War of the Spanish Succession, as well as after Venice's increasing loss of control over cabotage trade in the northern Adriatic Sea, placed the Habsburg rulers in a more favourable position. Charles VI could create the legal framework to launch the harbours under his sovereignty as commercial ports. The famous decree of free shipping in the Adriatic Sea (1717) and the declaration of free ports, first of Trieste and Fiume/Rijeka (1717/1719), then of Porto Rê/Kraljevica (1722), Buccari/Bakar, Zengg/Senj, and Carlopago (all in 1725), laid the groundwork for a new geography and density of long-distance maritime trade from the north-eastern Adriatic Sea.<sup>35</sup>

According to the information provided by the French consul in Cádiz, at least two ships had already circulated between Trieste and Cádiz in 1728 and 1729, one of which sailed under the imperial flag.<sup>36</sup> In the following decades, Trieste was transformed into a major hub for long-distance trade, including shipping traffic with Spain.

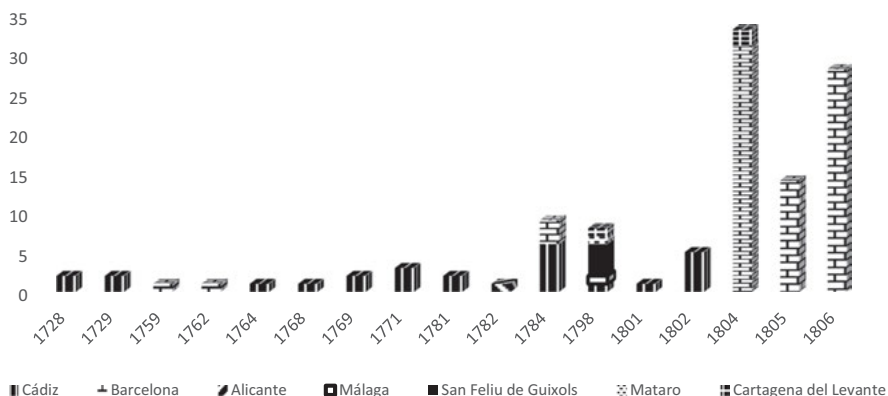
While this early maritime traffic seems to be closely linked to the state-supported mercantile projects around the Ostend Company, which was granted far-reaching privileges for direct access to Spain's colonial trade system in the

34 P. Gasser, "Karl VI., Triest und die Venezianer", *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs*, Sonderband, Vol. 3, Wien, 1997, pp. 17–109, at 21–33; Braudel, *La Méditerranée*, Vol. I, pp. 117f.

35 D. Andreozzi, "Tra Trieste, Ancona, Venezia e Bologna. La canapa e il commercio nell'Adriatico del '700" [Between Trieste, Ancona, Venice and Bologna. Hemp and trade in the Adriatic Sea in the 18th century], in: D. Andreozzi and C. Gatti (eds.), *Trieste e l'Adriatico. Uomini, merci, conflitti* [Trieste and the Adriatic. People, Commodities, Conflicts] (Quaderni storici del Dipartimento di Scienze Politiche Università degli Studi di Trieste, 3), Trieste: EUT, 2005, pp. 153–201, at 160; J. Pešalj, "Making a Prosperous Peace: Habsburg Diplomacy and Economic Policy at Passarowitz", in: C. Ingrao, N. Samardžić, and J. Pešalj (eds.), *The Peace of Passarowitz*, West Lafayette/Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2011, pp. 141–157, at 144f., 147f.; D. Frigo, "Le "Disavventure della Navigazione": Neutralità Veneziana e Conflitti Europei nel primo Settecento", in: D. Andreozzi (ed.), *Attraverso i Conflitti: Neutralità e Commercio fra età Moderna ed età Contemporanea* [Through Conflicts: Neutrality and Commerce between Early Modern and Modern Age], Trieste: EUT, 2017, pp. 53–74, at 55f.; E. Ianiro, *Veneti e Ottomani nel XVIII secolo* [Venetians and Ottomans in the 18th century], Venezia: Marsilio Editori, 2014, p. 92.

36 Archives Nationales, Affaires Étrangères (hereafter AE) /B/I/234, fol. 282–286, 307–308; AE/B/I/236, fol. 151–153.

Treaty of Vienna (1725),<sup>37</sup> mercantile shipping connections linked Trieste to Cádiz and a range of other Spanish ports from Barcelona through Mallorca and Alicante as far as the Canary Islands in the following decades. Many lay-overs and the reloading of the transported cargo in the port of Genoa and in the Sicilian ports, Naples, and Livorno make it difficult to trace the real number of merchant ships circulating between Trieste and Spanish harbours in the course of the eighteenth century. However, direct mercantile shipping traffic between Trieste and Spanish harbours expanded since the first two voyages in the 1720s (see Graph 2).<sup>38</sup>



**Graph 2:** Number of Ships circulating between Trieste and Spanish Port Cities, 1728–1806.

After shipping stabilized, connecting with new harbours, such as Barcelona, during the 1750s and 1760s and withstanding the interruptions of maritime traffic by

<sup>37</sup> C. Storrs, *The Spanish Resurgence, 1713–1748*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016, pp. 6, 109f.; Crespo Solana, *Mercaderes atlánticos*, pp. 57–59, 63–72; V. León Sanz, “Al servicio de Carlos VI. El partido español en la corte imperial”, in: J. Albareda Salvadó (ed.), *El declive de la Monarquía y del Imperio español* [The decline of the Monarchy and the Spanish Empire], Barcelona: Crítica, 2015, pp. 225–275, at 245f.

<sup>38</sup> Sources: J. Pradells Nadal, *Diplomacia y comercio. La expansión consular española en el siglo XVIII* [Diplomacy and trade. Spanish consular expansion in the 18th century], Alicante: Universidad de Alicante, 1992, pp. 419f.; P. Vilar, *La Catalogne dans l’Espagne moderne. Recherches sur les fondements économiques des structures nationales. Vol. III: La formation du capital commercial*, Paris: SEVPEN, 1962, p. 135; Archivo Histórico Nacional (hereafter AHN), Estado, 3648; AN, AE/B/1/234, fol. 282–286, 307–308, AE/B/1/236, fol. 151–153; ASTS, Intendencia, 253, fol. 52–53, 99, 228, 457; Intendencia 868, fol. 127f.; C.R. Governo 392; ÖStA, HHStA, StAbt Spanien, DK 117 (1785–1786), no. 42, fol. 7, 9–10; *El Diario de la Vigía* 1797–1802.

warships and corsairs in the Mediterranean Sea during the Seven Years' War,<sup>39</sup> the data reveals a temporary slowdown in the later 1770s. However, this certainly does not mark the end of direct merchant ship voyages between Trieste and Cádiz after 1776, as older literature has claimed.<sup>40</sup> Quite the contrary, direct shipping traffic between the Habsburg Adriatic coast and Spain took place during the late 1770s, as a ship from Fiume reaching Cádiz in 1778 demonstrates.<sup>41</sup> And the early 1780s marked the breakthrough for Trieste's direct trade connection with Spanish harbours, now stretching to Alicante, Cartagena del Levante, and Málaga.

This rise in direct commercial shipping began during the American War of Independence, peaking after the war and remaining a lasting trend. During the American War of Independence and the Napoleonic Wars, several smaller Catalan ports entered Trieste's commercial geography in Spain, and the number of ships between the Habsburg Adriatic coast and Spain continued to rise, even more so after the turn of the nineteenth century. The new importance of Barcelona was certainly linked to the port's access to colonial trade after 1778, while the wars and their consequences opened the gateway from Trieste direct towards the other side of the Atlantic basin.

In 1797, the Spanish government introduced the regulation of "neutral trade", permitting all harbours in friendly or neutral countries to trade directly with Spanish American ports using ships flying any neutral flag. This measure was to guarantee supplies for the colonies in the face of disrupted shipping traffic between the Iberian Peninsula and Spanish America during the Napoleonic Wars and the shipping blockade imposed by Great Britain. Licensed merchants in the merchant guild at Cádiz, supported by reports of abuses in the system of licenses for this trade, successfully lobbied for exemption from the measure in 1799. However, they could not prevent the rule from being reintroduced only a few years later, albeit in a somewhat changed form. The juxtaposition between Spanish American and peninsular Spanish interests led to a cycle of deroga-

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39 U. Cova, *Commercio e navigazione a Trieste e nella monarchia asburgica da Maria Teresa al 1915* [Commerce and Shipping in Trieste and the Habsburg Monarchy from Maria Theresa until 1915], Udine: Del Bianco, 1992, pp. 50–52, 68–69.

40 A. Beer, "Die österreichische Handelspolitik unter Maria Theresia und Joseph II.", in: *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte* 86 (1899), pp. 1–204, at 75.

41 ÖStA, HHStA, KA StAbt Spanien DK 111/4, no. 4, fol. 16: *Estado General de las Embarcaciones, que han entrado, y salido en esta Bahía de Cadiz, en el Año de la fecha, tanto de America, como de Europa. Cadiz, y Diciembre 31 de 1778.*

tions and re-introductions of the “neutral trade” rule, also opening up the space to allow ships under the Austrian flag to travel directly to Spanish American ports.<sup>42</sup>

In 1802, an Austrian ship entered the port of Genoa from La Guaira with a valuable cargo of coffee, leather, indigo, and Málaga wine – a part of which was consigned to a trading house in Genoa while the rest was dispatched to Trieste.<sup>43</sup> On 17 July 1804, an English ship captured the Austrian ship *La Bella Giuditta* in the Caribbean.<sup>44</sup> A year later, the Austrian frigate *La Prudencia* entered the harbour of Havana, seeking to settle accounts regarding a transaction made on Puerto Rico, coming from the Danish-ruled island of St. Thomas after obtaining notice of the reintroduction of “neutral trade” by the Cuban colonial administration. The captain, Marcos G. Tarabocchia, took a considerable cargo of Cuban sugar on board before starting the return trip to Trieste.<sup>45</sup>

These examples of Austrian merchant ships reaching Spanish American harbours directly during the Napoleonic Wars show that, in the context of the crumbling Spanish colonial trading system, merchants in Trieste could establish direct trade links with Spanish American possessions, which, until then, had to be mediated through traders settled in the officially licensed port cities on the Iberian Peninsula. This meant that Triestinian merchants could acquire colonial products, such as sugar, coffee, or indigo, directly from colonial harbours, such as Havana or La Guaira, facilitating a considerable increase in profits for traders and shipowners. However, the Iberian Peninsula was not completely isolated from its colonies, at least before Spain’s occupation by Napoleonic troops in 1808. It was precisely during the wars that two Triestinian traders established successfully themselves in Spanish harbours. Firstly, José Platner started to work in Barcelona as a commercial employee for the trading house Arabet Gautier Manning, whose main partner was the imperial consul in Alicante. Platner advanced later to become a partner in his own right.<sup>46</sup> Secondly, Juan Zangopulo, from a Greek background,

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<sup>42</sup> Pohl, *Die Beziehungen Hamburgs*, pp. 254, 264, 274; J. Ortiz de la Tabla y Ducasse, “Comercio neutral y redes familiares a fines de la época colonial”, *Relaciones de poder y comercio colonial: nuevas perspectivas* 394 (1999), pp. 143–172, at 143, 145–147.

<sup>43</sup> H.-T. Niephaus, *Genuas Seehandel von 1746–1848. Die Entwicklung der Handelsbeziehungen zur Iberischen Halbinsel, zu West- und Nordeuropa sowie den Überseegebieten*, Köln and Wien: Böhlau, 1975, p. 117.

<sup>44</sup> Cova, *Commercio e navigazione*, p. 123.

<sup>45</sup> AGI, Ultramar, 199, N. 676.

<sup>46</sup> M. Aglietti, *L’istituto consolare tra Sette e Ottocento. Funzioni istituzionali, profilo giuridico e percorsi professionali nella Toscana granducale* [The Consular Institution between the 18th and 19th century. Institutional Functions, judicial Profile and professional Trajectories in Grand Ducal Tuscany] (Storia e Politica, 10), Pisa: ETS, 2012, p. 139, reference 318; P. Gasser, “Triests Handelsversuche mit Spanien und die Probleme der Österreichischen Schifffahrt in den Jahren

acted as consignee for ships usually captained by Greeks under the Ottoman flag, which connected the eastern Mediterranean Sea with Cádiz and Spanish America during wartime.<sup>47</sup>

But the wars also had adverse effects, for example the repeated interception of ships under the Habsburg imperial flag on their way from Trieste to Spanish harbours, especially Barcelona. According to a report (dated 12 October 1793) by the imperial vice-consul in Barcelona, José Sauri y Trias, English privateers had captured three ships under the imperial flag at Toulon coming from Trieste and having loaded Hungarian grain that was sent by the Jewish Triestinian trading house Grassin Vita Levi to its correspondents in Barcelona, Juan Bacigalupi and Durán y Gasso.<sup>48</sup> In 1794, the polacre *Nostra Signora di Loretto* was chartered from Trieste to Barcelona but was intercepted by a Sardinian ship in San Remo. Trieste's insurance company Camera di Assicurazioni authorized Girolamo de Benedetti of San Remo to liberate the ship through the intervention of the Sardinian authorities.<sup>49</sup> In September 1801, the brigantine *Maria Elena* was chartered by several Triestinian trading houses to ship its cargo to Barcelona under the imperial flag, but got stuck in Palermo. The trading houses involved, Michele Giuseppe Faraone and Vedova d'Antonio Perez, represented by Carlo de Maffei, entitled Giovanni Battista Mattei of Palermo to recover the cargo and to decide whether it should be sent to Barcelona on another ship or returned to Trieste.<sup>50</sup>

These examples demonstrate that, in addition to the direct involvement of Trieste in Spain's Atlantic commercial system, shipping traffic between the Habsburg Adriatic harbours and the Iberian Peninsula also grew at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. Trieste's increasing direct traffic with port cities in the Spanish Empire only partially affected the intermediary role that other Mediterranean ports, notably Genoa, had played in Trieste's participation

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1750–1800, Teil 2", *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 37 (1984), pp. 172–197, at 188–189.

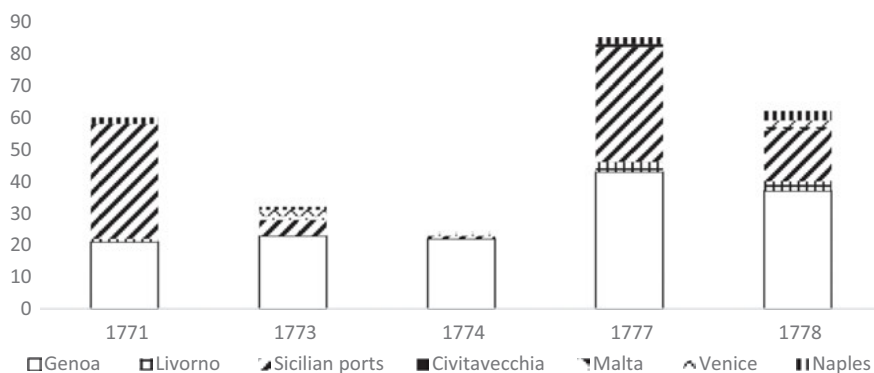
<sup>47</sup> Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz (hereafter AHPC), Protocolos Notariales (hereafter PN) de Cádiz, 2/432, fol. 264–265; 7/1372, fol. 77–80; E. Martín Corrales, "Greek-Ottoman Captains in the Service of Spanish Commerce in the Late Eighteenth Century", in: M. Fusaro, C. Heywood, and M.-S. Omri (eds.), *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean. Braudel's Maritime Legacy*, London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2010, pp. 203–222.

<sup>48</sup> Gasser, "Triests Handelsversuche Teil 2", pp. 193–194.

<sup>49</sup> ASTS, Archivio Notarile, 286, fol. 14: Procura: Jacobo Alessandro Vital e Giovanni Drosso Platarà a Girolamo de Benedetti di San Remo.

<sup>50</sup> ASTS, Archivio Notarile, 289, fol. 92: Procura: Li Signori Carlo de Maffei ed altri a Giovanni Battista Mattei di Palermo.

in long-distance maritime trade. This can be seen in the figures showing the shipping traffic between Genoa and Spanish port cities after the 1770s. Thus, Genoa still occupied a leading position for commercial shipping to Cádiz amongst the western Mediterranean ports during the 1770s (see Graph 3).<sup>51</sup>



**Graph 3:** Number of Ships arriving in Cádiz from various Western Mediterranean Ports, 1771–1778.

Although Genoa could maintain a key role as an intermediary port for trade with mainland Spain and the Spanish Atlantic in the Mediterranean, its significance gradually shrank in the last decades before the dissolution of the Republic of Genoa in 1805 and after the city of Genoa had become part of the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont after 1815. Genoa's trade only expanded again in the 1840s.<sup>52</sup>

Parallel to Genoa's diminishing role in the mediation of commercial interactions with Spain, Trieste managed to integrate itself into these trade flows and gradually took over an increasing share of this trade – a tendency that culminated in the disruption of maritime shipping traffic and the collapse of Spain's colonial trading system during the Napoleonic Wars. While East-Central European regions were increasingly linked via Trieste and, eventually, also via the Croatian harbours under Habsburg rule to Spain and its Atlantic system, harbours such as

<sup>51</sup> *Estado General de las Embarcaciones, que han entrado, y salido en esta Bahía de Cadiz, en el Año de la fecha, tanto de America, como de Europa*, for the years 1771, 1773, 1774, 1777 and 1778. Stored at: ASTS, C.R.S. Intendencia 253, fol. 458; AGI, Consulados 97/13; ÖStA, HHStA, StAbt, Spanien DK 109, fol. 82; 111/14, fol. 16.

<sup>52</sup> Niephaus, *Genuas Seehandel*, pp. 124–228.

Ragusa, Durazzo, and Bocche di Cattaro were important intermediary centres for south-eastern territories.<sup>53</sup>

Ragusa started to develop and tighten its links to Trieste, less as a port and increasingly as an important provider of transport services. This can be seen in the rising number of ships under the flag of the Republic of Ragusa that linked Trieste to harbours in the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. In December 1765, Carlo Brentani from the trading firm Brentani e Longhi of Genoa approved a charter contract with the Ragusan ship captain Biaggio Buck to travel to Trieste with his polacre *La Pellegrina* and acquire a cargo of grain, which he should afterwards transport to Livorno or Genoa.<sup>54</sup> In 1775, ships under the Ragusan flag carried 10.7 per cent of the overall volume of imported commodities to Trieste, although they transported only 1.4 per cent of exports from Trieste.<sup>55</sup> Spanish ports were an important destination for Ragusan ships. In Cádiz, the number of Ragusan ships arriving was considerable, reaching 30 to 40 vessels a year. Therefore, in 1782, the imperial consul, Paolo Greppi, asked the Court and State Chancellery in Vienna for permission to assume the office of the deceased Ragusan consul in Cádiz, in addition to his current post, in order to boost his income through consular taxes on arriving ships.<sup>56</sup> Ragusan ships were also used by merchants for shipping goods between Cádiz and Trieste directly. Thus the trading firm Ruepprecht y Cía of Cádiz chartered the Ragusan vessel *Cleopatra*, captained by Josef Cavovich, in 1796 to ship a portion of cargo to Trieste.<sup>57</sup>

This tendency underlines the important position Trieste attained as a commercial hub, linking Eastern European commodity markets to the Spanish Atlantic in the late eighteenth century. The dense merchant networks that worked smoothly at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century were built up no later than the 1730s and 1740s. According to an official document that circulated within the Supreme Commercial Intendancy, Trieste's superior administrative office in commercial and shipping affairs, after the Seven Years' War

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53 C. Luca, "The Dynamics of Commercial Activity in the Ottoman Port of Durazzo during the Consulate of Zorzi (Giorgio) Cumano (1699–1702)", in: M. Denzel, J. de Vries, and Ph. Robinson Rössner (eds.), *Small Is Beautiful? Interlopers and Smaller Trading Nations in the Pre-Industrial Period. Proceedings of the XVth World Economic History Congress in Utrecht (Netherlands)*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2011, pp. 179–200; Schwara et al., *Kaufleute*, pp. 148–152.

54 Archivio di Stato di Genova (hereafter ASG), Notai Antichi 13989, N. 337.

55 Own calculations according to W. Kaltenstadler, "Der österreichische Seehandel über Triest im 18. Jahrhundert", *Vierteljahrsschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 56 (1969), pp. 1–104, at 95.

56 Archivio di Stato di Milano (hereafter ASMi), Dono Greppi, carteggio 382, Paolo Greppi a Antonio Greppi, Cadice, 26 Febraio 1782.

57 AHPC, PN de Cádiz, 25/5790, fol. 214–215.



several local trading firms maintained business ties with the Canary Islands as early as 1746. Amongst them, the company Rocci e Balletti stands out, which exported two crates of stockings from Bohemia and Trieste to the Canary Islands.<sup>58</sup> Giacomo Balletti was one of the leading merchants in Trieste: he had immigrated to the city from Ferrara, was the consul of Malta, and, from 1756, acted as director of the merchant guild for many years. In 1772, Balletti was elected director of the first Triestinian insurance company.<sup>59</sup> Well before that date, Balletti was at the centre of one of the most ambitious attempts to intensify Trieste's trade with Cádiz and Spanish colonial trade. As a director of the Compagnia del Commercio di Spagna, he was one of the bigger shareholders and responsible for the company's branch, which was run by the Genoese merchant Giorgio Fedriani in a partnership with Balletti's son-in-law, Giuseppe Luca Langwieder (Languider) in Cádiz. Although the branch seems to have failed by the mid-1770s, the enterprise was a successful connection between East-Central Europe and the Spanish Atlantic through Trieste for several years.<sup>60</sup>

In 1764, the company sent commodities amounting to 38,104.9 florins to Cádiz. Amongst the products the company delivered to Cádiz were linen textiles – mainly from Bohemia but also from Upper and Lower Austria, Styria, and Carniola (13,338.9 florins in sum) – and woollen products from Moravia (1,272.5 florins), which, together with other textiles from Lower Austria and Trieste, accounted for nearly the half of the cargo. Furthermore, metal products from Styria, Carinthia, and Lower Austria and glass from Bohemia and Styria were delivered. On its way back to Trieste, the ship commanded by the Genoese ship captain Giuseppe di Gaetano di Gezzo loaded commodities from Spain, such as grapes from Málaga, honey and red wine from Alicante, and colonial products at Cádiz, including indigo from Guatemala, cacao from Caracas, sugar from Havana,

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58 ASTS, C.R.S. Intendenza Commerciale, b. 479: Dimostrazione del Commercio Che diverse Nazioni fanno con l'America spagnola per mezzo dell'Isole Canarie, e di quello che potrebbe introdursi da felicissimi Stati Austriaci, fol. 25.

59 P. Gasser, "Triestiner Handel vor 1790. 'Corpo Mercantile', die Anfänge der Handelsbörse und die Opposition Fiumes", in: *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 24 (1971), pp. 245–279, at 249–250; Faber, *Litorale Austriaco*, p. 152; L. Panariti, "Assicurazione e banca. Il sistema finanziario triestino (secc. XVIII–XIX)", in: Finzi, Panariti, and Panjek, *Storia economica*, vol. II, pp. 369–458, at 392.

60 ÖStA, HHStA, StAbt Spanien, DK 105/4, fol. 467; ASTS, C.R.S. Intendenza Commerciale, b. 253, fol. 362; T. Lutman, "Handel Triestu w 1775 r. w świetle memoriału Paskwala Ricciego" [Trieste's Trade in 1775 in the light of a Report by Pasquale Ricci], in: *Studia z historii społecznej i gospodarczej poświęcone prof. dr. Franciszkowi Bujakowi* [Studies in Social and Economic History dedicated to Prof. Dr. Franciszek Bujak], Lwów 1931, pp. 317–345, at 332.

and tobacco from the Royal Tobacco Factory in Seville.<sup>61</sup> The Triestinian trading firm François & Tomasich – which, in 1768, had opened a branch in Cádiz, run by Giovanni Tomasich,<sup>62</sup> who is classified as coming from Croatia in the Cádiz population census of 1773 – failed by 1772.<sup>63</sup> However, Triestinian merchants intensified their links with the Spanish Atlantic during the following years, relying on well-established agents in the Andalusian port city. The dense networks between the Habsburg Adriatic and the Spanish Atlantic thus weakened traditional intermediary centres and fostered the integration of East-Central European regions with the Spanish Atlantic in the second half of the eighteenth century.

## 4 Commodity Flows From Eastern Europe to the Spanish Atlantic System: Colonial Economies Beyond Clear-Cut Core-Periphery Structures

The commodities traded through the transport routes and portals of globalization described so far, both by land and by sea, followed a complex geography of the division of labour. Traditionally, the integration of both Eastern Europe and the Americas into the nascent world economy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has been framed as a process of peripheralization. According to this interpretation, most prominently developed by Immanuel Wallerstein, but also supported by Peter Kriedte, Zsigmond Pál Pach, and Robert DuPlessis,<sup>64</sup> the conquest and colonization of the Americas brought about a massive expansion of delivery and export markets in raw materials on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. In response to the emergence of Atlantic colonial markets, the shift of the economic core towards Western European countries in the course

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<sup>61</sup> ÖStA, Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv (hereafter FHKA), Neue Hofkammer (hereafter NHK), Kommerz Litorale Akten, 856, fol. 491: Aufzeichnung der von der Spanischen Handelskompagnie am 13. August 1764 nach Spanien transportierten Waren. ASTS, Notai, b. 322, fol. 158.

<sup>62</sup> Tomasich appeared as Juan Thomasich (sometimes also Thomasick) in the Cádiz notary files.

<sup>63</sup> ASTS, Notai, b. 322, fol. 274–275; Archivo Histórico Municipal de Cádiz (hereafter AHMC), L.1006.

<sup>64</sup> Wallerstein, *Modern World System I*; Idem, *The Modern World System II: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600–1750*, New York: Academic Press, 1980; Idem, *The Modern World System III. The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World Economy, 1730–1840s*, Cambridge: Academic Press, 1989; Kriedte, *Spätféudalismus*; Pach, *Hungary*; R. S. DuPlessis, *Transitions to Capitalism in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

of the sixteenth century mentioned above led to the foundation of an intra-European division of labour in a global transatlantic context.

Eastern European regions, most notably the western regions of the Russian Empire, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Hungary, and Carniola, provided key raw materials – such as timber, pitch, hemp and flax (often in the form of ropes and sails), copper, and mercury – in this spatial economic order, which were paramount for the Atlantic expansion and the construction of maritime empires from Western Europe. Most of these commodities were of crucial importance for the construction of ships. Mercury, as a substance for amalgamation, and copper-based tools fostered the silver extraction in Mexican and Peruvian silver mines and contributed to the silver circuits within the Spanish Empire and on a global level, stretching across Europe – as far as Russia and the Ottoman Empire – and reaching China. Meat and grain imports from Moldova, Transylvania, Hungary, and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth improved the provision of foodstuffs in all Atlantic economies, fostering specialization in agriculture and the expansion of manufacturing production, especially in the Netherlands.<sup>65</sup>

At the same time, the influx of America's silver to Seville and its distribution throughout Europe spurred the "price revolution" in the sixteenth century and contributed to the demise of silver and gold mining in East-Central European regions, such as Tyrol, Bohemia, Silesia, Hungary, and Poland-Lithuania, in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.<sup>66</sup> Accordingly, the Atlantic expansion reinforced a hierarchical division of labour in that period, in which

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**65** M. Díaz Ordóñez, "Las nuevas periferias americanas en la circulación de cáñamo y jarcia para la construcción naval militar española en el siglo XVIII", *Magellánica – Revista de Historia Moderna* 6 (2019) 11, pp. 181–202, at 185–191; D. Adamczyk, *Zur Stellung Polens im modernen Weltssystem der frühen Neuzeit* (Schriftenreihe Studien zur Geschichtsforschung der Neuzeit, Vol. 21), Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2001, pp. 138f.; Pach, "The East-Central European Aspect", pp. 181f.; E. Crailsheim and E.-M. Wiedenbauer, "Central Europe and the Atlantic World: The Mines of Idria and the American Demand for Mercury (1556–1646)", in: R. Pieper and P. Schmidt (eds.), *Latin America and the Atlantic World. El mundo atlántico y América Latina (1500–1850). Essays in Honor of Horst Pietschmann*, Köln et al.: Böhlau, 2005, pp. 297–318; R. Pieper and P. Lesiak, "Redes mercantiles entre el Atlántico y el Mediterráneo en los inicios de la guerra de los treinta años", in: A. Ibarra and G. del Valle Palvón (eds.), *Redes sociales e instituciones comerciales en el imperio español siglos XVII a XIX* [Social networks and commercial institutions in the Spanish empire, 17th to 19th centuries], México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2007, pp. 19–39, at 21.

**66** G. Otruba, "Schlesien im System des österreichischen Merkantilismus. Die Auswirkungen des Verlusts Schlesiens auf die österreichische Wirtschaft", in: P. Baumgart and U. Schmielewski (eds.), *Kontinuität und Wandel. Schlesien zwischen Österreich und Preußen*, Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1990, pp. 81–118, at 88f.

competitive pressures between two peripheral macro-regions, the Americas and Eastern Europe, played an important role. While the spatial scope and the timing of Eastern Europe's integration into the Atlantic system have been controversially discussed, some research has shown that even East-Central Europe did not face marginalization from international trade flows as had been stated earlier.<sup>67</sup>

Atlantic markets and transatlantic trade entered into a new phase of prosperity and expansion in the eighteenth century, in which Eastern European regions were heavily involved. Parallel to the development concerning transport routes and maritime trade centres, commodity flows also showed a solid base of continuity upon which profound changes occurred. Newly commercialized commodities emerged alongside the expansion of older products that could acquire new forms. Traded volumes rose massively, having a severe impact on the geographies of production and consumption. On the one hand, the continuities of Eastern Europe's involvement in the Spanish Atlantic system are strongly visible on the macro-level: the mining products – copper and mercury, so necessary for the functioning of the silver-based colonial extractive economy – and shipbuilding materials played a paramount role in the commercial expansion of Eastern European regions. Grain moved from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Russia through the Baltic Sea as well as from Hungary, the Banat of Temésvar/Timișoara, and Croatia through Trieste and Fiume and, passing through Genoa to Spain, improving the food supply of the population on the Iberian Peninsula. Hungarian and Croatian grain were “soft cereals”, which were consumed mainly in Catalonia, while “hard cereals” traded from the Ottoman Empire and the Black Sea region passing through Sicily were highly popular in Spain's colonies overseas.<sup>68</sup> In addition, new products appeared, such as potash, which was produced, amongst others, in the vicinity of the Habsburg Adriatic coast and exported to Barcelona as well as to Marseille, Ostend, Hamburg, London, and Glasgow.<sup>69</sup> In the Baltic

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<sup>67</sup> Kriedte, *Spätfeudalismus*, p. 90.

<sup>68</sup> Reichert, “El comercio directo”; B. Hendrich, *Ein Wirtschaftsbild Genuas-Venedigs-Livornos um die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts nach den Reiseschilderungen des Grafen Karl von Zinzendorf*, PhD thesis, Wien 1965, p. 47; Gasser, “Triests Handelsversuche Teil 2”, p. 193; Z. Herkov, “Über den Seehandel und die Handelsmarine in der Adria zur Zeit Kaiserin Maria Theresias mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Kroatischen Küstenlandes”, in: G. Mraz (ed.), *Jahrbuch für Österreichische Kulturgeschichte 10: Maria Theresia als Königin von Ungarn*, Eisenstadt: Institut für Österreichische Kulturgeschichte, 1984, pp. 319–337, at 334–335; ÖStA, FHKA, NHK, Kommerz Litorale Akten, 871.

<sup>69</sup> Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona (hereafter AHCB), Fondo Comercial, Gloria A-212; ASTS, Intendenza Commerciale, 592A; Herkov, “Über den Seehandel”, p. 334.

region, animal hides from Moscow emerged as an important commodity that was shipped to Cádiz.<sup>70</sup>

While the export trade of grain, potash, and hides shows a continued and maybe even extended role of vast East European regions as peripheral spaces, the picture becomes more complex when the focus is shifted to the commodities of mining and shipbuilding. Copper from the mines in Upper and Lower Hungary and mercury extracted in Idrija, Carniola, were exported not only to Spain but also to other European states – such as Portugal, France, and the Netherlands – and the Ottoman Empire.

With the change in the Habsburg's commercial policy concerning the support of its Adriatic seaports, both copper and mercury were exported through Trieste to France, Spain, and Portugal; Amsterdam also regained a part of the copper business after the 1730s. The royal regalia system that regulated both mining products therefore maintained its production geography in the north-east and the south of the Habsburg dominions and at the same time reorganized the trade geography and commercial organization of the distribution of both products by closing its depots in Venice, Regensburg, Wrocław, and Gdańsk and by redirecting exports mainly through Trieste.<sup>71</sup>

Exports of Upper Hungarian copper and Carniolan mercury gained the most importance towards the end of the eighteenth century in Spain under this new form of distribution. In 1782, the imperial consul in Cádiz, Greppi, concluded a very profitable deal with the Swedish consul for delivering copper plates to the Spanish navy in order to cover the hulls of warships.<sup>72</sup> The consignments of the copper deal comprised a delivery amounting to 195,402 florins and making up 71 per cent of all exports that left Trieste directly for Spain between 1 November 1782 and 31 October 1783.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Crespo Solana, *Entre Cádiz*, p. 257.

<sup>71</sup> W. Kaltenstadler, "Der österreichische Seehandel über Triest im 18. Jahrhundert, Teil 1", *Vierteljahrsschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 55 (1968), pp. 481–500, at 498–500; R. Pieper, "Zur Anbindung Innerösterreichs an die atlantischen Märkte in der Frühen Neuzeit (1670–1758)", in: U. Tischler-Hofer and R. Zedinger (eds.), *Kuppeln – Korn – Kanonen. Unerkannte und unbekannte Spuren in Südosteuropa von der Aufklärung bis in die Gegenwart. Für Harald Heppner*, Innsbruck et al.: Studienverlag, 2010, pp. 175–186, at 77.

<sup>72</sup> G. Liva, "L'Archivio Greppi e l'attività della filiale di P. G. a Cadice nella corrispondenza commerciale (1769–1799)", *Archivio Storico Lombardo* CXXII (1995), pp. 431–487, at 464–465; Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz (hereafter AHPC), Protocolos notariales (PN) de Cádiz, 21/5113, fol. 278–279.

<sup>73</sup> ÖStA, FHKA, NHK, Kommerz Litorale Akten Nr. 850 (share represents calculation by the author).

Two years later, Greppi struck a five-year contract with the Spanish minister of the Indies, José de Gálvez, for mercury deliveries from Idrija at 12,000 Castilian quintals a year, which were destined for the Spanish American mines.<sup>74</sup> Greppi was exempted from any customs duties when importing the mercury to Cádiz from Trieste<sup>75</sup> while guaranteeing the treasury of the Imperial Court Chamber of Coinage and Mining in Vienna a profit of 900,000 florins for the mercury sales in 1786.<sup>76</sup> This deal contributed decisively to an expansion of mercury production in Idrija and an unprecedented growth of the profits of Greppi's own company.<sup>77</sup>

Thus, two East-Central European mining regions participated substantially in the perpetuation and expansion of the Spanish Atlantic imperial economy during the eighteenth century; exports to Spain generated a considerable amount of profits not only for the state treasury and the merchant company involved but also for local and regional economies – for workers and carters as well as inns and farms in the northern part of the Kingdom of Hungary and in western Carniola. They represent important incentives for development in these two regions rather than a clear-cut peripheral status. Even though Swedish production sites were strong competitors of the Hungarian copper mines, Hungary could still defend an important market share in the Spanish Atlantic. Idrijan mercury, in turn, had an important position on several export markets and benefitted from the fire in Europe's largest mercury mine in Almadén in Andalusia in 1755. The closure of this important mine for several decades created an opportunity for exports from Idrija that, together with the mine of Huancavelica in the Viceroyalty of Peru, supplied the mercury for Spanish American mines in the last one and a half decades of the eighteenth century.<sup>78</sup>

Similar to mining products, shipbuilding materials were also basic components for the functioning of the Spanish imperial system across the Atlantic. The commodities of timber, pitch, flax, and hemp were imported in vast quantities to Spain, especially after government programmes for rebuilding the Spanish navy were initiated after the War of the Quadruple Alliance and after the defeat of the Spanish Armada at Cape Passaro in 1720. In contrast to copper and mercury, it was not the

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74 AGI, Indiferente General 1788.

75 AHPC, Ordenes Reales para la Aduana de Cádiz, libro 40, fol. 263, exp. 154.

76 ÖStA, FHKA, NHK, Hofkammer für Münz- und Bergwesen (MBW), Akten II. Abt. 882, fol. 63–72.

77 H. Weitensfelder, "Bunte Metalle – vergiftete Umwelt: Auswirkungen von Bergbau und Verhüttung in historischer Perspektive", in: E. Bruckmüller and V. Viniwarter (eds.), *Umweltgeschichte. Zum historischen Verhältnis von Natur und Gesellschaft* (Schriften des Instituts für Österreichkunde, 63), Wien: öbv & hpt, 2000, pp. 40–53, at 48; Liva, "L'Archivio Greppi", pp. 466–468.

78 Pieper, "Zur Anbindung", pp. 179f.; Weitensfelder, "Bunte Metalle", pp. 47–48.

Mediterranean-linked East-Central European but the Baltic region that served as the primary region for the import of ship-building materials. While repeated warfare had blocked this trade in the first decades of the eighteenth century, the Spanish ports started to import a growing portion of timber from the south-eastern Baltic region in 1742, which, in sum, represented 60 per cent of all identifiable cargo passing on merchant ships through the Sound toll station in the Kingdom of Denmark directly to the Iberian Peninsula. The largest part of these deliveries consisted of timber for shipbuilding (29.46 per cent), which underlines the link these imports had with the programme of expanding the Spanish navy. Grain, the key export product of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, played a less central role (21.37 per cent) in all these deliveries. Hemp even had a vanishingly tiny share (1.66 per cent), although it was still delivered to Spain especially for its use in sails or ropes on ships.<sup>79</sup> These figures, which comprise only the direct maritime trade between the south-eastern Baltic ports and those in mainland Spain, still indicate a certain shift in the trade pattern in comparison to earlier periods.

Although Dutch merchants lost their dominant role in the Baltic trade throughout the eighteenth century to merchant ships sailing under the British flag and a number of other flags,<sup>80</sup> both Dutch merchants and the port of Amsterdam continued to play an important intermediary role for Spanish imports from the Baltic region (see Table 1). While Amsterdam-based merchants maintained strong links with Gdańsk, they also traded with partners in Russian port cities, such as Riga, Narva, and St. Petersburg. Not only timber and grain but also other ship-building materials were exported from all these harbours through Amsterdam to Cádiz and other Spanish Mediterranean ports, thus showing a much more diversified commodity structure of these deliveries than direct trade relations would suggest.<sup>81</sup>

Imports reaching Spain from St. Petersburg since the 1770s, composed of an important share of linen, hemp, and pitch, were increasingly transported to the Iberian Peninsula on Spanish ships that emerged in the Baltic Sea in the last decades of the eighteenth century. However, the poor quality of Russian linen and ropes impeded their sale in Cádiz, limiting their export market to Bilbao, as the Spanish consul in St. Petersburg, Antoni Colomí, pointed out in a report

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<sup>79</sup> Reichert, "El comercio directo", pp. 144–151.

<sup>80</sup> L. Beutin, *Der deutsche Seehandel im Mittelmeergebiet bis zu den Napoleonischen Kriegen*, Neumünster: Karl Wachholtz Verlag, 1933, pp. 99–101, 103.

<sup>81</sup> Crespo Solana, *El comercio marítimo*, pp. 74, 93–95, 104; Idem, *Entre Cádiz y los Países Bajos. Una comunidad en la ciudad de la ilustración* [Between Cadiz and the Netherlands. A Community in the City of Light], Cádiz 2001, pp. 257, 288, 301.

to state secretary Count Floridablanca in 1791.<sup>82</sup> This underlines that the Russian Empire covered only a part of the vast amount of hemp, together with its products such as sails and ropes, that the Spanish shipping sector, including the navy, needed in the course of the eighteenth century.<sup>83</sup> The remaining needs were supplied by other Eastern European regions where sails and ropes were produced, which encompassed the south-western part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the south of Bohemia. While sailcloth from Bohemia was exported to Spain and Spanish America through Trieste in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century,<sup>84</sup> sails from southern Poland, which, after 1772, was incorporated into the Habsburg Empire as the Kingdom of Galicia, were exported mainly to Gdańsk along the Vistula River from where they reached the Iberian Peninsula. In 1783, the Spanish navy's shipbuilding arsenal in Cádiz received timber, pitch, linen, and sailcloth dispatched from St. Petersburg, Riga, and Gdańsk by Spain's envoy in Russia, Pedro de Normande.<sup>85</sup>

Linen bags, which were used for grain shipments, were also exported in the same way, thus underlining the intertwined production for export to Atlantic markets.<sup>86</sup> In addition, timber for shipbuilding and potash were delivered on the Vistula River from the Galician area to Gdańsk, showing how far the hinterland of Baltic ports and the attractions of the Atlantic markets reached into the interior of Eastern Europe in the eighteenth century.<sup>87</sup> Furthermore, the processing of these deliveries, such as woven sailcloth and potash, challenges the classic narrative that raw material exports are characteristic of Eastern European regions, turning them into peripheries. While the production of sails and potash was carried out under precarious conditions in protoindustrial peasant households, it

<sup>82</sup> A. M. Schop Soler, *Die spanisch-russischen Beziehungen im 18. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1970, pp. 198–203, 230.

<sup>83</sup> Díaz Ordóñez, "Las nuevas periferias"; Idem, "Los pros y los contras de la guerra como motor de la globalización del cáñamo en América en el siglo XVIII", in: A. J. Rodríguez Hernández, J. Arroyo Vozmediano, and J. A. Sánchez Belén (eds.), *Comercio, guerra y finanzas en una época en transición (siglos XVII–XVIII)* [Trade, War, and Finance in a Time of Transition (17th–18th centuries)], Valladolid, 2017, pp. 61–90; Idem, "Radiografía de un fracaso angloespañol: El cáñamo, un producto que debería haber llegado de América durante los siglos XVI–XIX", *Obradoiro de Historia Moderna* 27 (2018), pp. 263–289.

<sup>84</sup> H. Zeitlhofer, *Besitzwechsel und sozialer Wandel. Lebensläufe und sozioökonomische Entwicklungen im südlichen Böhmerwald, 1640–1840* (Wirtschafts- und Sozialhistorische Studien, 36), Wien: Böhlau, 2014, p. 107.

<sup>85</sup> AHPC, Ordenes Reales para la Aduana de Cádiz, libro 38, fol. 94, no. 75.

<sup>86</sup> J. Rohrer, *Bemerkungen auf einer Reise von der Türkischen Gränze über die Bukowina durch Ost- und Westgalizien, Schlesien und Mähren nach Wien*, Wien: Anton Pichler, 1804, pp. 197f.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., pp. 66f.



nevertheless provided income for impoverished small producers in agriculturally disfavoured and remote rural areas in Eastern Europe.

## 5 Reversing the Traditional Pattern: Complex Hierarchical Divisions of Labour in the Economies of Linen and Glass

consistentlyThe production of sails, bags, and ropes reveals a hitherto largely ignored dynamic: Eastern European regions were able to slightly improve their production profile through their interaction with Atlantic markets, of which Spain's imperial territories made up an important share. These trends were even stronger in the case of the production of two commodities – glass and linen textiles. While glass production was mainly located in Bohemia, with a strong focus in the north of the region, linen was produced in a vast region stretching from the south-western part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth alongside the Carpathian Mountains, through the neighbouring regions of Upper and Lower Hungary, Silesia, Bohemia, and Upper Austria, to Saxony. In addition to hemp, flax was often used as raw material, and the woven cloth was characterized by a differentiated range of products and quality that met a variety of demands ranging from veils, tablecloths, towels, and napkins to sails and bags. Correspondingly, the spatial division of labour within this large area, which was separated by several state borders between Saxony, Prussia, the Habsburg Monarchy, and Poland-Lithuania, was complex and followed different commodity chains according to the kind of cloth produced.<sup>88</sup>

Accordingly, products of the highest quality, such as veils, towels, tablecloths, and shirts were produced in a transregionally organized commodity chain between Saxony, Silesia, Bohemia, and the outmost western part of the south-western Polish linen-producing region at the estate of Andrychów. Within this division of labour, peasant households were engaged in spinning yarn and weaving cloth as subcontractors in putting-out systems, only sometimes small-commodity production prevailed. While these basic production activities can be found in all the East-Central

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<sup>88</sup> Weber, *Deutsche Kaufleute*, p. 72; Zorn, "Schwerpunkte", pp. 427–430; Pohl, *Die Beziehungen Hamburgs*, pp. 127–139; M. Kulczykowski, *Andrychowski ośrodek płócienniczy w 18 i 19 wieku* [The Andrychów Linen Production Centre in the 18th and 19th century], Wrocław: Zakład narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1972, pp. 12, 14f., 20, 88; Zeitlhofer, *Besitzwechsel*, pp. 104–111; Rohrer, *Bemerkungen*, pp. 195–197; Idem, *Versuch über die slawischen Bewohner, Theil 1*, Wien: Anton Pichler, 1804, p. 110.

European linen regions, the refining steps of the process, such as fulling, bleaching, and dyeing as well as the commercialization of the finished products were carried out in specialized production centres located mainly in Silesia and Saxony.

This division of labour was not static. Bleacheries and dyeing facilities in Bohemia, for example, were built after Silesia had become part of Prussia, and a small linen-producing cluster was set up in south-western Poland around the village of Andrychów within the estate of Andrychów to the west of Cracow. Peasant households there started to engage in the dyeing, fulling, printing, and bleaching of linen at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. In contrast to these high-quality products destined for household consumption, sails and bags were produced in a different chain, which was largely regionally, sometimes even locally, organized and was concentrated in southern Bohemia, Upper and Lower Hungary, and all of south-western Poland beyond the Andrychów area. Both production geographies were not neatly separated but overlapped as demonstrated by the acquisition of yarn in the Carpathian area, east of Cracow, for the Andrychów production site.<sup>89</sup>

These different linen products were destined for local, regional, and transregional markets of global scope. Silesian linen had been a key commodity in the exports of the English Royal African Company to Africa as part of the so-called triangle trade since the 1670s. Overall, more than three-quarters of Silesian linen exports were destined for the Western European maritime powers and their overseas colonial markets between 1748 and the early 1790s.<sup>90</sup> While Silesian and Saxon linen exports were mostly directed towards England, passing through Hamburg, the share of Spanish Atlantic markets was far larger than the official numbers suggest. Much of this linen fabric ended up in Spain and its colonies through smuggling and through the intermediation of the British merchant community in Cádiz.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> E. K. Bacon, *Austrian Economic Policy in Galicia, 1772–1790*, PhD thesis, University of Chicago, 1975, p. 47, reference 1; B. Smutny, “Johann Ludwig Graf von Harbuval und Chamaré. Manufakturunternehmer und Merkantilist der Theresianischen Ära in Böhmen”, in: I. Cerman and V. Luboš (eds.), *Adel und Wirtschaft. Lebensunterhalt der Adeligen in der Moderne*, München: Martin Meidenbauer, 2009, pp. 85–119; Kulczykowski, *Andrychowski ośrodek*, pp. 15, 22, 90, 97, 129, 134; H. Zeitlhofer, *Besitzwechsel*, pp. 106f.

<sup>90</sup> Kriedte, *Spätfeudalismus*, pp. 103, 166; A. Steffen, “A Fierce Competition! Silesian Linens and Indian Cottons on the West African Coast in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth centuries”, in: J. Wimmer and K. Weber (eds.), *Globalized Peripheries. Central and Eastern Europe in a Rethinking of the Atlantic World, 1680–1860*, Martlesham and Rochester: The Boydell Press, 2020, pp. 57–79.

<sup>91</sup> K. Weber and M. Schulte-Beerbühl, “From Westphalia to the Caribbean: Networks of German Textile Merchants in the Eighteenth Century”, in: A. Gestrich and M. Schulte-Beerbühl

While Hamburg's role as a transmitter for Silesian and Bohemian linen fabric grew during the eighteenth century, the southern route through the Mediterranean Sea, with its commercial hubs Genoa and Venice, continued to function as an important gateway.<sup>92</sup> The Mediterranean commercial channel was gradually re-directed through Trieste. Silesian linen was stowed on the ships the Second Oriental Company sailed from Trieste to Lisbon already in 1723,<sup>93</sup> and Silesian linen was again part of the cargo of grain, Bohemian glass, and steel the Catalan skipper Pedro Recaséns shipped to Barcelona in 1759.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, the tiny part of Silesia that remained under Habsburg rule after 1748 conducted a remarkable export of different linen products through Trieste to Spain, France, England, the Netherlands, and the Ottoman Empire during the 1760s.<sup>95</sup> Bohemia's connection with the southern maritime export route to Spain was even stronger. The merchant Johann Georg Palm, from Rumburk in northern Bohemia, who was strongly involved in linen exports from Bohemia to England during the 1730s, sent a consignment of linen through the Habsburg Adriatic port cities in 1736 on behalf of a Bohemian linen manufactory.<sup>96</sup>

Bohemian traders maintained far-reaching and diversified business during the 1760s with traders in Spain,<sup>97</sup> where Cádiz was a major destination for consignments of Bohemian linen, which is demonstrated by the shipment carried out by Triestinian Compagna del Commercio di Spagna in 1764.<sup>98</sup> Meanwhile, commodity chains that linked Bohemia to Silesia and Saxony and the export trade through Hamburg continued to play a predominant role: between 1782 and 1791, 55 per cent of Bohemia's linen exports went to Silesia, 10 per cent to Saxony, 24 per cent to Spain and Portugal, and 11 per cent to Italy.<sup>99</sup> The

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(eds.), *Cosmopolitan Networks in Commerce and Society 1660–1914*, London: German Historical Institute London, 2011, pp. 53–98, at 56–57.

<sup>92</sup> Kriedte, *Spätféudalismus*, p. 157; Niephaus, *Genuas Seehandel*, pp. 69, 92.

<sup>93</sup> H. Benedikt, "Finanzen und Wirtschaft unter Karl VI", in: *Der Donauraum* 9 (1964), pp. 42–58, at 48.

<sup>94</sup> Pradells Nadal, *Diplomacia y comercio*, p. 416.

<sup>95</sup> ASTS, C.R.S. Intendenza, 587–590; ÖStA, FHKA, NHK, Kommerz Litorale Akten, 856.

<sup>96</sup> A. F. Pribram, *Das böhmische Commerzcollegium und seine Thätigkeit. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des böhmischen Handels und der böhmischen Industrie im Jahrhunderte nach dem westfälischen Frieden* (Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen in Industrie in Böhmen, VI), Prag: Verlag des Vereines für Geschichte der Deutschen in Böhmen, 1898, p. 125.

<sup>97</sup> ASTS, C.R.S. Intendenza, 587–590.

<sup>98</sup> ASTS, C.R.S. Intendenza, 589; ÖStA, FHKA, NHK, Kommerz Litorale Akten, 856, fol. 491.

<sup>99</sup> H. Hassinger, "Der Außenhandel der Habsburgermonarchie in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts", in: F. Lütge (ed.), *Die wirtschaftliche Situation in Deutschland und Österreich an der Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart: Gustav Fischer, 1964, pp. 61–98, at 68.

Mediterranean region seems to have attracted one-third of Bohemia's linen exports in the late eighteenth century. This bifurcated geography of Bohemia's linen trade seems to have been the response to the massive production of linen fabric that surpassed the finishing capacities of the region. Nevertheless, there was no product-specific specialization of trade routes, so both fine linen sorts (veils) and sails were exported through Trieste as mentioned above.<sup>100</sup>

Southern Polish linen was exported to Atlantic markets mainly through Gdańsk, although after the First Partition of Poland-Lithuania in 1772 and the customs war that Prussia waged against Gdańsk, the southern route through Trieste became an alternative gateway for Galician linen. While it is difficult to accurately assess the change in Galicia's linen export geography, the route through the Baltic Sea seems to have remained significant. At least 80 per cent of all linen leaving Gdańsk for export in the early 1800s came from Galicia. The high-quality products from the Andrychów production site were particularly relevant for export to Spain, and they made their way even to America (though it is not entirely clear whether to the British or Spanish colonies).

While linen was one of the main commodities that moved from Europe across the Atlantic Ocean in the eighteenth century, indications in ship registries and official statistics rarely state the precise origin of the cloth traded over long distances. This is due to the complex division of labour, in which Silesia's position may have been somewhat challenged both in refining and distribution but seldom in marketing. East-Central European linen fabric was therefore mainly marketed as "Silesian linen" and "linen from Hamburg" in Spanish America; sometimes the description of "German linen" appears, perhaps indicating Westphalian production. Only the denominations "imperial" and "Flemish" linen suggest a closer relationship with production sites in the Habsburg dominions at first glance, although, in practice, Silesian and Hamburg linen utilized Bohemian linen and some intermediate components such as yarn from this north-western Habsburg region.<sup>101</sup> However, these categories were rarely applied coherently and consistently in Spanish ship registers for colonial trade.

Still, a sample for the year 1782, which I compiled from 88 out of 104 existing registers for all Spanish harbours licensed to trade with Spanish American

<sup>100</sup> ASTS, C.R.S. Intendenza, 587–590; ÖStA, FHKA, NHK, Kommerz Litorale Akten, 856; Zeitlhofer, *Besitzwechsel*, p. 107.

<sup>101</sup> According to the Flemish merchant Guillaume Schamps in 1752, linen from the Habsburg monarchy was packed as Flemish linen. W. v. d. Driesch, *Die ausländischen Kaufleute während des 18. Jahrhunderts in Spanien und ihre Beteiligung am Kolonialhandel*, Köln and Wien: Böhlau, 1972, pp. 428.

ports, shows that the linen categories with East-Central European links – exported from Cádiz, La Coruña, Barcelona, and Santander to Havana, Veracruz, Caracas, La Guaira, Cartagena de Indias, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, and Lima – amounted to a value of 1.2 million reales de vellón (approximately 183,707.9 florins).<sup>102</sup> While the real volume of East-Central European and western German linen exports to Spanish America clearly exceeds these numbers, these official data underline the significance of East-Central European linen for the supply of Atlantic markets in the late eighteenth century.

Similarly, crystal glass from Bohemia was shipped across the Atlantic Ocean, although it did not have a similar dominant position in the commodity structure as linen.<sup>103</sup> In sum, important regions of East-Central Europe could benefit from the interaction with the Spanish Atlantic and fulfilled production tasks of proto-industrial core regions.

## 6 Connectors Between Eastern Europe and the Spanish Atlantic

The commodity export of Eastern European regions would have been impossible without the interaction of various kinds of actors who organized the intermediation in a widely spun and intricate web of social relationships (some of them have been mentioned in the previous sections). In the following section, I will give a brief systematic overview of the profiles and roles of the different actors who managed the commodity and monetary flows between the Spanish Atlantic and Eastern Europe. While Western European actors dominated the exchanges in the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean – such as Dutch merchants and sailors, Spanish diplomats and traders, British sailors and skippers, and Italian merchants and sailors – Eastern European actors played an important part in trading and shipping. Thus, merchants from the Russian Empire were present in Cádiz already by 1723, when Jakov Mateevich Evreynov and Aleksey Veshnyakov were appointed

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**102** Own calculation according to the data compiled on the basis of the single ship registers AGI, Indiferente General, 2173 and 2174. For an overview of the aggregate data on the basis of all ship registers as well as methodological issue and source criticism, see J. R. Fisher, *Commercial Relations between Spain and Spanish America in the Era of Free Trade, 1778–1796*, Liverpool: University of Liverpool 1985. Conversion of reales de vellón to florins according to C. Storrs, *The Spanish Resurgence, 1713–1748*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016.

**103** Weber, *Deutsche Kaufleute*, pp. 133–143.

Russian consuls in the Andalusian port city, a process that was similar in all other Spanish ports. In the same year, Ivan Andreevich Shcherbatov was appointed as Russian consul in Cádiz, employing Russian merchant Lev Semenikov as his assistant.<sup>104</sup> This politically driven expansion of Russian trade was linked to mercantilist projects that had a company at its core that should conduct trade with China through Cádiz, an activity that came to an end in the late 1720s together with the consular representation.<sup>105</sup>

The Swedish-born Russian subject Johann Georg Brandenburg had run a trading house in Cádiz from the late 1750s and obtained an appointment as Russian consul from Tsarina Catherine II in 1764.<sup>106</sup> The Russian mercantile community, according to the official lists sent during the 1770s to the Spanish Chamber of Commerce and its section responsible for controlling foreigners, was to a high degree comprised of people with Russian last names, such as Jorge Popodimoff, Juan Estamatachi, Jorge Jurturi, or Antonio Candioto, but had the Swede George Weidling as vice-consul.<sup>107</sup> This underlines the strong links with Swedish trade and the territories of the Swedish state and displays the fluidity of legal categories. However, the number of merchants from Russia in Cádiz rose in the late eighteenth century: in 1773, the population census of Cádiz mentions four Russian subjects as citizens; by 1791, this number had risen to 17.<sup>108</sup> Keeping in mind a cautious view of territorialized, not to mention national, identities, the rising number of Russian subjects settling in Cádiz underlines the increasing mercantile influence of Russia that stretched from the Baltic Sea on the one hand to the Mediterranean Sea on the other after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca had been concluded in 1774, and from both further on towards the Spanish Atlantic. This calls into question notions of Russia's passivity in global trade and highlights the discourse of backwardness towards the Eastern European world region as part of the process of the well-known "invention of Eastern Europe".<sup>109</sup>

The role of Eastern European actors as managers of commodity flows with the Spanish Atlantic was not limited to Russian subjects. The merchant Juan Francisco Czaikowski from Gdańsk was active in Cádiz as a partner of the com-

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**104** Schop Soler, *Die spanisch-russischen Beziehungen*, pp. 35, 40.

**105** *Ibid.*, pp. 42–43; Archives Nationales (AN), Paris, Affaires Étrangères (AE)/B/I/234, fol. 34.

**106** Schop Soler, *Die spanisch-russischen Beziehungen*, pp. 122–123; Bustos Rodríguez, *Cádiz*, pp. 438–439.

**107** AHN, Estado 629/3, Exp. 64.

**108** Bustos Rodríguez, *Cádiz*, p. 114.

**109** L. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

mercial firm Simon Ludendorff y Compañía, whose main partners came from Stettin and Ückermünde. As Czaikowski declared in his will in 1827, in crisis-hit and impoverished Cádiz, he was still waiting for a credit amounting to 33,000 silver reales to be paid back by the trading house Baldase in Havana.<sup>110</sup> This proves that Eastern European actors integrated directly with transatlantic mercantile networks and underlines once again the complex translocal relationships that linked merchants from the western edge of the south-eastern Baltic region between Ückermünde, Stettin, and Gdańsk, where political boundaries vanished with the Second Partition of Poland-Lithuania in 1793, which brought Gdańsk under Prussian rule.

Even denser networks spanning from their regions of origin through the North Sea to the Iberian Peninsula and from Cádiz across the Atlantic Ocean managed to build up a large community of Bohemian traders in Cádiz. This group engaged in exporting glass from their region of origin to which they were closely tied to in business, social, and cultural affairs alike, but quickly expanded to other branches of trade, such as linen or colonial goods. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, four Bohemian merchants also travelled to Lima and Mexico City, and the branch office that the powerful company Hiecke Zinke y Compañía opened in the vice-royal capital of New Spain was a booming success for several years. Only protectionism and changing market conditions after Mexico's independence led to the failure of the branch.<sup>111</sup>

Eastern European merchants integrating in different ways with transatlantic commercial networks were more prominent on the Baltic route than on the Mediterranean route; however, they were far from absent on this second route, demonstrated by the example of the Croatian merchant Giovanni Tomasich and the activities of Bohemian traders who also traded through the Mediterranean.

However, the Mediterranean route differed from the northern gateway regarding the direct implication of sailors in commercial exchanges. Especially the eastern Adriatic coast played an important role in this respect. The Republic of Ragusa and the Bocche di Cattaro are prime examples of the importance of south-eastern European connectors for the Atlantic economy in the eighteenth century. Ragusan sailors sometimes entered into Austrian service or sailed under the Austrian flag, and they played an important role in the Habsburg Monarchy's

<sup>110</sup> AHPC, PN de Cádiz, 23/5411, fol. 314–317; Weber, *Deutsche Kaufleute*, pp. 359–360.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 133–143; B. Badura, “Apuntes sobre los orígenes del comercio vidriero entre Bohemia y México (1787–1839)”, *Historica* 9 (1964), pp. 69–134.

maritime expansion at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. The Austrian ship *La Prudencia* (already mentioned above), landing in Cuba after having stopped at St. Thomas and Puerto Rico, was commanded by captain Marcos G. Tarabocchia, whose firm was located in Trieste.<sup>112</sup> Genoese customs registers from 1779 classify Tarabocchia as a Ragusan citizen.<sup>113</sup> The same is true for sailors from Venetian Dalmatia and even for the Adriatic territories governed by the Habsburgs before the reshuffling of the political landscape in the area after 1797. The ship captain Mateo Felipe, from Zengg/Senj/Segnia, settled in Cádiz, from where he undertook voyages to Puerto Rico and Cuba with the two ships he owned, thus becoming part of the Spanish colonial maritime system at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. When Felipe lay ill in bed and drew up his will in November 1809, he declared that the ongoing trips be completed and the accounts be settled with his agents in Puerto Rico while he appointed his mother in Senj as his heir.<sup>114</sup>

To conclude, it is important to take a look at the complex and intertwined connections of local contexts to the transatlantic networks. The examples of Russian, Polish, Croatian, and Bohemian merchants as well as Ragusan and Croatian sailors represent the top of a pyramidal system that reaches far into the hinterlands of Silesia, Bohemia, Galicia, or Hungary, where putting-out agents of both Western European origin, such as Dutch, Swiss, and British as well as of local or regional backgrounds organized peasant households in gathering resources for commodity production for far-flung Atlantic markets. These putting-out merchant-capitalists (*Verleger*) organized the spinning of yarn, the weaving of linen fabric, and sometimes completed finishing processes in manufactories, such as bleaching, fulling, and dyeing. While the commodity chains were complex and varied, particularly at the end of the chain towards the finished product, the merchants mobilized resources bound to the feudal agrarian system and thus mobilized the labour of peasants and smallholders.

Sometimes, however, these putting-out systems could not be properly organized by outsiders, such as the failure of the merchant Karl Gottlieb Litzke and his counterpart/competitor Fridolin Jenny in Galicia underlines. Both traders originated beyond Eastern Europe – in Hamburg and in Gladis in eastern Switzerland, respectively – and migrated to the Galician commercial towns of Jarosław and Cracow respectively, where they engaged in the linen business. While Litzke successfully operated a linen manufactory in Jarosław between the 1770s

<sup>112</sup> AGI, Ultramar, 199, N.676.

<sup>113</sup> ASG, Casa di San Giorgio, Portofranco, 183,00093 (sala 37, 93), fol. 30.

<sup>114</sup> AHPC, PN de Cádiz, 4/951, fol. 261–270.



and 1795, where he conducted the refinery processes of linen to be sold mainly to the imperial Habsburg army, Jenny faced failure in his attempt to move into the organization of a putting-out system in Central Galicia in the mid-1780s. Jenny's one-time success in 1785 in exporting linen fabric woven in the circle of Rzeszów to a value of 40,000 florins through Trieste to Marseille displays the cultural and social hierarchies in these exchanges.<sup>115</sup> When Jenny had sold the cloth successfully to the French army, he was asked to mention the producer in Westphalia or Silesia, where the cloth was thought to come from. According to a contemporary observer, Jenny's resistance to revealing the true origin of the linen, that being the Galician peasant producers, whose name alone would have discredited the quality of the product, would have impacted its marketing success. Back in Galicia, Jenny invested in weaving looms and tools in order to turn the one-time success into a steady business. But when he returned to the Rzeszów area a few months later, the observer bitterly remarked, he allegedly found that the peasants had destroyed their looms and bargained the yarn in exchange for liquor at the local tavern owned by a Jewish innkeeper.<sup>116</sup>

Complaints about the embeddedness of peasant households in Galicia in local habits and networks, often underpinned with strong anti-Semitic arguments against allegedly all-dominant Jewish traders, underlines that translocal commercial connections were not a unilineal "success story" and followed clear-cut mechanisms. Negotiations and diverse interests played an important role. Without doubt, many Eastern European producers and petty traders were not present on the mental map of eighteenth-century big players in the portals of globalization in the most important ports on the routes from the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean to the Spanish Atlantic. This, however, should not lead us to overlook the intertwined and complex role of Eastern European actors in the economic network with the Spanish Atlantic in the eighteenth century. We should rather recognize the intricate web that tied Eastern European regions to Spanish Atlantic ones. Hierarchies were, without any doubt, very much present; however, Eastern European regions, particularly in East-Central Europe, could gain an important economic and social advantage from their interaction with the Spanish Atlantic over the course of the eighteenth century.

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**115** Rohrer, *Versuch*, Theil 1, pp. 149–150; Bacon, *Austrian economic policy*, pp. 68–69, 114–120; M. Kulczykowski, *Kraków jako ośrodek towarowy Małopolski zachodniej w drugiej połowie XVIII wieku* [Cracow as a Commodity Centre in Western Little Poland in the second half of the 18th century], Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1963, p. 98.

**116** Rohrer, *Versuch*, Theil 1, pp. 150–151.

## 7 Conclusions

Eastern European regions appear to have been linked to the Spanish Atlantic system to a considerable degree during the eighteenth century, contrasting with the older and classic but still influential narratives. The evidence, case studies, and examples presented in this chapter reveal that a binary scheme between an Eastern European periphery and a Western European core during the early modern times is far too simple to grasp the complex socioeconomic hierarchies of the nascent world economy. While the analytical toolkit associated with the study of a global division of labour, such as the works of Wallerstein, Braudel, and others, is still useful for analysing the unequal economic and power relations between the eastern part of the European continent and other world regions, it has to be adapted in several ways. Amongst them, the consideration of multiple spatial relations and economic profiles, such as the ties between the Spanish American colonies and Eastern European regions, stands out, but also the role of actors and their networks is paramount in understanding the emergence, transformation, and perpetuation of the translocal and transregional spatial division of labour in which Eastern Europe and Spanish America were connected via two main trading routes and multiple portals of globalization and intermediaries.

In this line, the chapter points out that Eastern European regions were far from limited to a classic peripheral function as providers of raw materials and foodstuffs to Western markets. Quite the contrary, semifinished and finished manufactures played an important role, improving the living standards of subaltern peasant households in remote rural areas and spurring a virtual protoindustrial boom in some regions, such as Silesia or Bohemia. And still, the delivery of raw materials had, in some cases, spillover effects for economic prosperity and economic changes, as the mining areas of Upper Hungary and Carniola have demonstrated. Furthermore, the chapter underlines that the integration of Eastern European regions with Spanish American markets was not an issue exclusively of Western European merchants, investors, and sailors. Rather, Eastern European actors could integrate not only with transregional networks based on Spanish ports and stretching out to the Atlantic world, but were also part of a complex immigration process towards Spanish port cities such as Cádiz and Barcelona, thereby playing a significant role in tying their regions of origin to Spanish American markets.

Last but not least, the chapter has shown that this process of transregional and translocal connections was not a linear undertaking but a multipolar negotiation between different interests. As the example of the frustrated attempts of integrating some areas of Habsburg Galicia into a transregional commodity chain of linen production tied to global markets demonstrates, the rejection of local

producers to integrate with the capitalist logic of distant markets should not be read as a failure of “backward” actors not capable to understand the benefits of profit and commerce. Rather, we see here the case of rejecting the enlargement of borders and markets and the preference for localized structures and trust. This and many other issues, to which this chapter could only allude, need further research in the framework of global history that rests heavily on translocal and transregional concepts.



Michael G. Esch

## 9 Migrants from East-Central Europe in South America: Discourses and Structures between Mission, Pogrom Escape, Human Trafficking, and “Whitening”

The history of migrations from Eastern Europe to South America is comparatively underexposed in historiography outside of the sometimes extensive, ethnonationally coded works on traditional diaspora research. This is certainly due to the fact that, in terms of the number of immigrants, Latin America pales in comparison to the other transatlantic migration destination, North America. Whereas millions of people from Eastern Europe – especially Poles and Eastern European Jews but also Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, and Balts – permanently or temporarily migrated to the USA before the First World War, there were only several hundred thousand in Latin America at this time, to which tens of thousands more were added in the interwar period. This does not mean, however, that migration to South America is only of anecdotal interest: rather, I will try to show that it is both instructive and indispensable in terms of processes of globalization and interdependence as well as of the change in meaningful and structuring contexts to add a southern dimension to the North Atlantic migration system.<sup>1</sup> I am less concerned with a quantitative reconstruction of the migrations from Eastern (mostly the later East-Central)<sup>2</sup> Europe to South America than with some examples of their character; social, economic, and cultural contexts; and effects. The main focus will be on migrant and non-migrant actors and the relationship between discursive representations and migrant practice.

The presence of (predominantly male) migrants from Eastern Europe in South America can be detected relatively early: according to Krzysztof Smolana, individual inhabitants from Polish-speaking areas migrated to the Spanish and

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1 D. Hoerder, “Segmented Macro Systems and Networking Individuals. The Balancing Function of Migration Processes”, in: J. Lucassen/L. Lucassen (eds.), *Migration, Migration History, History: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives*, Bern: Lang, 1997, pp. 73–84.

2 The terms “Eastern” and “East-Central Europe” are, as I am aware of, problematic and charged with identitarian and political meanings. For this article, East-Central Europe is considered geographically as a part of Eastern Europe, but it will be used for the region consisting mainly of the new nation-states formed in the aftermath of the First World War.

Portuguese colonies as early as the late sixteenth century; Jaroslav Vaculík names 27 Czech missionaries who went to what was to become Paraguay around 1700.<sup>3</sup> Migrants from Eastern Europe, especially missionaries from the Polish and Bohemian-Moravian regions, were also in the Jesuit missions and *reducciones* (reductions) in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There is no agreement in the literature concerning the moral, social and cultural assessment of these “Jesuit states”. On the one hand, the *reducciones* protected the actual natives, particularly the Guarani in the Brazilian state of Parana and the Adipon in Argentina and later Paraguay, from being deported as slaves or being killed. The *reducciones* helped to make the land arable and tried to transform the tribes, who had been living as hunters and gatherers, into sedentary Christian farmers – with some success. On the other hand, this was the result of a disciplinary turn to obedient labour, which, as argued by Paul Lafargue in 1895, distinguished the actions of the Jesuits from that of the slave traders at best in the degree of violence against the natives and the fact that the natives could remain in familiar surroundings.<sup>4</sup> The author of one of the first reports on the remainders of the Jesuit state in Paraguay from 1783, Martin Dobrizhoffer, possibly came from Bohemia.<sup>5</sup> Because of his report, he is considered a precursor of modern ethnography.<sup>6</sup>

It can hardly be assumed that the actors were interested in having made an independent, politically or culturally specific contribution to the activities of the Jesuits. As Markéta Křížová has shown, such missionaries did not appear as Czechs

3 K. Smolana, “Polska diaspora w Ameryce Południowej, Środkowej i Meksyku” [The Polish diaspora in South and Middle America and in Mexico], in: A. Walaszek (ed.), *Polska Diaspora* [The Polish diaspora], Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2001, pp. 130–148, at 130; J. Vaculík, *České menšiny v Evropě a ve světě* [Czech Migrants in Europe and the World], Prague: Libri, 2009, p. 267.

4 See also, e.g. P. Caraman, *Ein verlorenes Paradies. Der Jesuitenstaat in Paraguay*, München: Kösel, 1979; P. Lafargue, *Der Jesuitenstaat in Paraguay*, Stuttgart: Dietz, 1895. A sort of mediating stand takes W. Reinhard, “Gelenkter Kulturwandel im 17. Jahrhundert. Akkulturation in den Jesuitenmissionen als universalhistorisches Problem”, *Historische Zeitschrift* 223 (1976), pp. 535–575.

5 According to the *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Österreich*, Vol. 3, Wien: Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1858, p. 333, Dobritzhofer was born in Freiberg, Bohemia (today Příbram) in 1717. The ADB (Vol. 47, 1903, p. 735), on the other hand, insists that Dobritzhofer came from Styria in Moravia (today Příbor), not from Freiberg. The NDB (Vol. 4, 1959, p. 6) does not specify a place of birth. A German translation of his Latin script was available shortly after the first edition: M. Dobrizhoffer, *Geschichte der Abiponer, einer berittenen und kriegerischen Nation in Paraguay*, Wien: Kurzbek, 1783.

6 A. Kitzmantel, “Die Jesuitenmissionare Martin Dobrizhoffer und Florian Paucke und ihre Beiträge zur Ethnographie des Gran Chaco im 18. Jahrhundert”, PhD thesis, München, 2004, [https://edoc.ub.uni-muenchen.de/3886/1/Kitzmantel\\_Angelika.pdf](https://edoc.ub.uni-muenchen.de/3886/1/Kitzmantel_Angelika.pdf) (accessed 30 September 2019).

or Poles but as members of the universalistic *Societas Jesu* and as members of a transnational, elitist European-Catholic reference area: as subjects of the Habsburg Empire, Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland were involved in the global expansion of Catholic Europe as well as in the expansion of the Russian Empire to the east.<sup>7</sup> Like their colleagues traveling across the globe, these Jesuit missionaries reported on the peculiarities they observed regarding the environment and culture in general as well as the slave trade to superiors and relatives in their places of origin, thus creating a link, albeit a selective one, that led to a little-by-little increasing migration from Eastern Europe to South America.<sup>8</sup> This prehistory is interesting because, in addition to the affiliation of these actors to expansionist European elite circles, it anticipated to a certain extent the later ambivalences and transnational or trans-regional and translocal characteristics of the migratory connections between Eastern Europe and South America.

## 1 Second Globalization and Transatlantic Migration

In the second globalization in the course of the nineteenth century,<sup>9</sup> the circumstances surrounding migration across the Atlantic changed significantly in several ways. The modernization of European societies; the sometimes catastrophic, but always transforming economic and sociocultural effects of capitalization and industrialization on rural subsistence economies; the globalization of the commodity, capital, and workforce markets; and the increasing implementation of the nation-state in this process<sup>10</sup> – additionally enforced by the apparently unlimited availability of land in the colonized areas and decolonized states of America engendered growing migration flows that connected Western and

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<sup>7</sup> See the overall presentation by W. Reinhard, *Geschichte der europäischen Expansion*. 4 Vols, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1983–1990, and *Die Unterwerfung der Welt. Globalgeschichte der europäischen Expansion 1415–2015*, München: Beck, 2016.

<sup>8</sup> M. Křížová, *Problem of (proto)National/Ethnic/Regional Identities of Jesuit Missionaries from Central Europe in America* (Working Paper Series of the Centre for Area Studies, 5), Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. on this, despite their apologetic and eschatological tendencies, E. S. Rosenberg (ed.), *A World Connecting 1870–1945*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, and J. Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt. Eine Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, München: Beck, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> On the intertwining of nationalization and globalization and their effects on migration and migration policy, see S. Conrad, *Globalisierung und Nation im Deutschen Kaiserreich*, München: Beck, 2006.

increasingly Eastern Europe with the Americas and created what Hoerder and others call the North Atlantic migration system.<sup>11</sup> However, any enthusiasm about the integration of Eastern Europe into this migration and economic system and the new links emerging between Eastern Europe and South America should not obscure several structural facts: the phenomenon of mass migration across the Atlantic affected large parts of Eastern Europe (except Silesia)<sup>12</sup> much later than it had affected other European regions – one reason for this was the high cost of crossing the Atlantic until the end of the nineteenth century. It was not until the 1890s that this obstacle was overcome due to the governments in South America instigating an active policy of internal colonization by promising individuals, families, and groups willing to settle in the country to finance the crossing and to facilitate the acquisition of land and residency titles. Further delays resulted from the fact that subsistence farming and paternalistic farmers' associative practices were still functioning to some extent in many places throughout Eastern Europe – which meant that potential emigrants lacked both the possibility and the will to undertake such long-distance journeys. In this context, South America seemed even further away from Europe than the USA, both geographically and mentally speaking.

This perspective remained the case even after the reduction in the cost of sea travel across the Atlantic from the 1880s onwards not least because of the transnational or transregional agendas of most migrants: after the US government repealed the Homestead Acts, and thus the “free soil” policy in the country, the relatively high degree of industrialization made transatlantic migration attractive for rural migrants who wanted to spend a few months or years overseas and then return home with their savings. Ultimately, temporary migration to North America was a new and promising opportunity for classical employment migration, which expanded and partially replaced more traditional forms, such as seasonal migration from Galicia to Saxony and Prussia.<sup>13</sup> The vast majority of migrants to the USA tried to save as much money as possible in as short of a time as possible through dependent work in industry – money that

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**11** Hoerder, “Segmented Macro Systems”, pp. 73–84; D. Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact. World Migrations in the Second Millennium*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2002; D. Hoerder, “Makrosoziologische Ansätze in der Bevölkerungssoziologie: Migrationssysteme und Migrationsregimes”, in: Y. Niephaus et al. (eds.), *Handbuch Bevölkerungssoziologie*, Wiesbaden: Springer VS Verlag, 2015, pp. 1–19.

**12** Cf. M. Kula, “Polska Diaspora w Brazylii” [The Polish diaspora in Brazil], in: Walaszek, *Polska Diaspora*, pp. 118–129, at 118f; and the essay by Andrzej Michalczyk in the present volume.

**13** Ultimately, these were new and promising opportunities for classical employment migration, which expanded and partially replaced more traditional forms, such as seasonal migration from Galicia to Saxony and Prussia.



was then to be used to expand the house or the area under cultivation, as well as to buy a wide variety of items, in the place of origin.<sup>14</sup> However, a move to South America, subjectively and often also in practice, implied not only a permanent settlement with dependent or self-employed activity in agriculture but also often a pioneering activity in presumed and actual wilderness. The vast majority of migrants thus headed to the northern part of the double continent, and only relatively few ventured to its more southern parts.

A second essential factor was the nationalization of the world in direct connection with the second globalization. As Benedict Anderson has shown, the invention of the modern nation-state set in motion a process of transformation that not only encompassed the already-existing Western European states and the empires dominating East-Central Europe but also led to foundations of post-colonial states and nations in South America from the early nineteenth century onwards – notably because of the legitimizing construct of “popular sovereignty” and the associated promises of political and cultural participation.<sup>15</sup> Paraguay became independent in 1811, Argentina in 1816, Brazil in 1822, and Uruguay in 1825 (with international legal recognition following in 1828) – to name only the later main destination countries of migrants from Eastern Europe. The transformation of European and American communities from colonialist, institutionalized territorial states of the *ancien régime* to sometimes expansive nation-states or multiethnic empires with increasingly ethnonationally segregated subjects had significant effects on the genesis and course of migration both within Europe and in a transatlantic perspective.

No later than the 1850s had several South American states favoured the immigration even of Europeans, who – such as the Irish or Italians – were already deemed undesirable in other destination countries. In the Argentine constitution of 1853, for example, there is a paragraph stipulating the promotion of all European immigration to enhance the country’s economic and intellectual

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. in addition to M. Wyman, *Round-Trip to America. The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880–1930*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993, most recently M. G. Esch, “Migration: Transnationale Praktiken, Wirkungen und Paradigmen/Zugänge zur Migrationsgeschichte und der Begriff des Transnationalen in der Migration”, in: F. Hadler and M. Middell (eds.), *Handbuch einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas, Vol. I. Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017, pp. 131–188, 457–488 and the literature listed there.

<sup>15</sup> B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, New York: Verso, 1983; W. Reinhard, *Geschichte der Staatsgewalt: Eine vergleichende Verfassungsgeschichte Europas von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, München: Beck, 1999.

culture.<sup>16</sup> Most South American countries – for example, Uruguay around 1865 and Argentina in 1869 – consequently established immigration offices and agencies dedicated to the promotion and the more targeted management of migration from Europe.<sup>17</sup> The fact that groups already deemed dangerous or detrimental further north were not excluded had less to do with post-colonial anti-racism than with a different demarcation between the desirable and the undesirable, which principally affected the possibilities and representation of East-Central European immigrants: this group, including Eastern European Jews, were desirable in the context of the “whitening” of the national population, that is to say, the statistical and spatial displacement and marginalisation of the indigenous.<sup>18</sup> We will see later that an internal differentiation of the basically white segments of the population also occurred in some circumstances in South America.

## 2 Migration and Discourse in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries

Migration from Eastern Europe to transatlantic areas was affected by these paradigm shifts and adjustments in a specific way and to a certain degree because it developed into a mass phenomenon precisely at a time when the nationalization of the masses via the ethnic reformation of the nation and the parallel establishment of the class-reconciling welfare state had reached their peak in Europe and were also progressing rapidly in North America.<sup>19</sup> For this very reason, the case

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**16** “The Federal Government shall encourage European immigration, and it may not restrict, limit, or burden with any tax whatsoever the entry into Argentine territory of foreigners whose purpose is tilling the soil, improving industries, and introducing and teaching the sciences and the arts.” Constitution of the Argentine Confederation of 1 May 1853, Art. 25, cit. n. [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Argentina\\_1994?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Argentina_1994?lang=en) (accessed 27 May 2020).

**17** A. Windus, *Afroargentiner und Nation: Konstruktionsweisen afroargentinischer Identität im Buenos Aires des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2005, pp. 95ff.

**18** Kula, “Polska Diaspora w Brazylii”, pp. 118–129, at 119.

**19** G. Noiriel, *Réfugiés et sans papiers. La République et le droit d’asile, XIXe–XXe siècles*, Paris: Pluriel, 1998; G. Noiriel, *Etat, nation et immigration, Vers une histoire du pouvoir*, Paris: Belin, 2001; G. L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich*, New York: Howard Fertig, 1975; A. Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998; M. Schulze-Wessel (ed.), *Nationalisierung der Religion und Sakralisierung der Nation im östlichen Europa*, Stuttgart: Steiner, 2006.

of South America is of considerable value for the investigation of the polyvalence of the positioning of migrants and migration in the ever-hegemonic discourses.

The convergence of political, hygienic, and ethnonational discourses across Europe in the course of the nineteenth century ultimately led to the conclusion that immigration from the “East” was fundamentally undesirable and dangerous. With the Polish Uprisings (1830/31 and 1863/64) and the transnationalization of the Russian social revolutionary movement and its transition to terrorism in the 1870s and 1880s, politically motivated emigration – which had originally been welcomed by liberals and democrats acting in solidarity because of its anti-Russian character when it came to the Poles and because of its moral integrity when it came to Russian revolutionaries – was increasingly identified as a catalyst of potential unrest in host countries. Consequently, the characterization of Eastern European refugees and economic migrants as troublemakers was extended to include educational and economic migrants from the same regions. In the German Reich, events in the countries of origin such as the Polish January Uprising (1863/64), the successful assassination of Tsar Alexander II in May 1881, or the Russian Revolution (1905) were used to restrict the entry of any migrants from the “East”. These restrictions and similar measures played a major role in encouraging people that were willing to emigrate to look for other opportunities, even though immigration regulations in countries such as France and Great Britain remained liberal, and the restrictive approach of the Prussian central authorities was occasionally mitigated by subordinate regional and local authorities.<sup>20</sup>

In the USA, individual domestic political incidents were decontextualized and used to enforce restrictive measures that went far beyond the narrower circle of the scandalized actors. The assassination of American President William McKinley by Leon Czołgosz, a descendant of Polish immigrants, in 1901 was used two years later as an argument for the adoption of the Anarchist Exclusion Act, which, in fact, was directed primarily against politicized and poor migrants,

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**20** Cf. D. Gosewinkel, *Einbürgern und Ausschließen. Die Nationalisierung der Staatsangehörigkeit vom Deutschen Bund bis zur Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001; H. R. Peter (ed.), *“Schnorrer, Verschwörer, Bombenwerfer?” Studenten aus dem Russischen Reich an deutschen Hochschulen vor dem 1. Weltkrieg*, Frankfurt am Main et al.: Peter Lang, 2001; M. G. Esch, “Fundstück: Zentrale Diskurse und lokale Praxis in der Flüchtlingskrise 1906”, *Mitropa 2017* (Jahresheft des Leibniz Instituts für Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Europa), pp. 40–43, etc. See most recently M. G. Esch, “Refugees and Migrants: Perceptions and Categorizations of Moving People 1789–1938”, in: W. Borodziej/J. von Puttkamer, *Immigrants and Foreigners in Central and Eastern Europe during the Twentieth Century*, London: Routledge, 2020, pp. 7–32.

characteristics shared by many migrants from Eastern Europe.<sup>21</sup> As early as 1896, the introduction of literacy tests had rendered the entry into the US exceedingly difficult for Italian, Eastern European, and Asian migrants.<sup>22</sup> After 1917 and until the early 1920s, the almost global “Red Scare” caused continuing mistrust against proletarian and peasant immigrants from Eastern Europe, which also found expression in the infamous quota system that severely restricted immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe and Asia.<sup>23</sup>

The nationalization of European and transatlantic societies especially affected emigrant nations because emigration was seen, on the one hand, as a social and economic opportunity and, on the other hand, as a threat to the ethnonational structure of a country’s population. Particularly in the interwar period, this debate led to a transnationalization of the nation at the level of the emerging national elites at home and abroad. The emergence of an independent national liberation movement in the form of Zionism also affected the Jewish segments of the population: as Tara Zahra aptly recognizes, regarding migration, Jews differed from the Christian East-Central Europeans only in so far as they hoped to achieve a nation-state by emigrating, while the gentile social reformist factions were concerned with transforming migrants into outposts of already territorially fixed nations and their state.<sup>24</sup>

The enforcement of the hygienic-bacteriological principle of disease control and its connection with ethnonational attributions from the 1890s onwards and especially during the First World War ultimately had similar effects.<sup>25</sup> Paul Weindling has described in detail how the enforcement of the bacteriological discourse, as a shift from a holistic to a symptomatic approach for explaining diseases, led to the identification of Eastern Europe and, within this region, specific segments of the population as carriers and transmitters of infectious and

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21 Esch, “Refugees”; E. P. Hutchinson, *Legislative History of American Immigration Policy*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981, pp. 127–133, 150–158, 423–427.

22 Ibid., p. 482.

23 B. O. Hing, *Defining America through Immigration Policy*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004; R. J. Goldstein, “The Anarchist Scare of 1908: A Sign of Tensions in the Progressive Era”, *American Studies* 15 (1974) 2, pp. 55–78; Hutchinson, *Legislative History*.

24 T. Zahra, *The Great Departure. Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World*, New York/London: Norton & Co., 2016, p. 77.

25 S. Berger, “Narrative Etablierung einer Kriegswissenschaft. Die deutsche Bakteriologie am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkriegs”, in: U. Caumanns, F. Dross, and A. Magowska (eds.), *Medizin und Krieg in historischer Perspektive – Medycyna i wojna w perspektywie historycznej* (= Medizingeschichte im Kontext, 17), Frankfurt am Main et al.: Peter Lang, 2012, pp. 359–371.

sometimes fatal diseases.<sup>26</sup> In 1892, Robert Koch, the father of modern bacteriology, suspected that the Hamburg cholera epidemic was caused by Russian migrants,<sup>27</sup> which resulted in migrants, especially from Eastern Europe, being equated with epidemics.<sup>28</sup> From 1916 onwards, the identification of the impoverished Jewish population in Eastern Europe as carriers of the typhoid bacterium contributed to anti-Semitic representations of Jews as a plague, which, under German occupation, provided significant additional medical justification not only for the ghettoization of Polish Jews but also for their deportation to the extermination camps.<sup>29</sup>

### 3 Colonization, Capitalist Penetration, and Epidemics

The increasing limiting of temporary and permanent emigration options changed in the wake of new initiatives meant to support internal colonization in some South American countries, which, in some respects, were an echo of mercantilist population policies and a forewarning of its modern descendant.<sup>30</sup> When Brazil offered in 1890 free passage to all European settlers, in the two years that followed more than 100,000 volunteers of all ethnic and denominational affiliations were found throughout the Russian and Habsburg parts of East-Central Europe. The “Brazilian fever” quickly reached such proportions amongst the rural population that the Hungarian government, under pressure from landowners, banned

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26 P. Weindling, *Epidemics and Genocide in Eastern Europe, 1890–1945*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

27 A. Fahrmeir, O. Faron, and P. Weil, “Introduction”, in: A. Fahrmeir, O. Faron, and P. Weil (eds.), *Migration Control in the North Atlantic World. The Evolution of State Practices in Europe and the United States from the French Revolution to the Inter-War Period*, New York/Oxford: Berghahn, 2003, pp. 1–7, at 5; T. Brinkmann, “Why Paul Nathan Attacked Albert Ballin: The Transatlantic Mass Migration and the Privatization of Prussia’s Eastern Border Inspection, 1886–1914”, *Central European History* 43 (2010), pp. 47–83.

28 Weindling, *Epidemics*, pp. 49–72; 139ff.

29 Ibid., pp. 273–277; M. G. Esch and U. Caumanns, “Fleckfieber und Fleckfieberbekämpfung im Warschauer Ghetto und die Tätigkeit der deutschen Gesundheitsverwaltung 1941/42”, in: W. Woelk and J. Vögele (eds.), *Geschichte der Gesundheitspolitik in Deutschland im 20. Jahrhundert – von der Weimarer Republik bis in die Frühgeschichte der “doppelten Staatsgründung”*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2002, pp. 225–262.

30 Cf. here U. Niggemann, “‘Peuplierung’ als merkantilistisches Instrument: Privilegierung von Einwanderern und staatlich gelenkte Ansiedlungen”, in: J. Oltmer (ed.), *Handbuch Staat und Migration in Deutschland seit dem 17. Jahrhundert*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016, pp. 171–218.

emigration to Brazil completely in 1892.<sup>31</sup> A similar “Argentine fever” was raging at about the same time. In Galicia, too, around 1890, concern grew about an impending economic and demographic loss by emigration to South America.<sup>32</sup> Despite such measures, emigration from the Hungarian parts of the dual monarchy to South America, especially Brazil, far exceeded that from Cisleithania. According to a count of the passenger lists, only 94,047 Cisleithanians (“Austrians”), in comparison to 264,460 Transleithanians (“Hungarians”), left the empire for Argentina between 1876 and 1910. By contrast, only 8,500 Transleithanians found their way to Brazil in the same period, in addition to 55,870 Cisleithanians, probably because of the already mentioned ban of 1892.<sup>33</sup> Although no ethnolinguistic data are available on the composition of the emigrants, it can be inferred that a large proportion of the former spoke Slovak or Slovene as a mother tongue and the latter spoke Polish: according to estimates, more than 100,000 people migrated from “Polish territories”, that is to say, the ethnically mixed former territories of the Polish aristocratic republic, to Brazil alone between 1890 and 1914.<sup>34</sup>

The will to emigrate was certainly, to a large degree, a sign that the capitalization of the world had already structurally and mentally penetrated even the most remote areas of East-Central Europe. Instead of coming to terms with static conditions, medium-plot and small-plot farmers developed an individualized desire for social advancement and material prosperity, which was further reinforced by the fact that globalization was affecting the social economies of East-Central Europe. The latter led to a sustained weakening of subsistence economies and paternalistic models of wealth and, at the same time, to an increasing identification of social position and happiness with unmodified status symbols and participation in the commodity economy. In other words, the desire to improve one’s own situation through temporary or permanent emigration had not only been made possible by globalization and its instruments – economic interdependence and acceleration of news and transport – but also had ultimately been created by it. The extent to which these developments meant a sustainable

<sup>31</sup> Zahra, *Great Departure*, p. 74.

<sup>32</sup> J. Mazurek, *Kraj a emigracja. Ruch ludowy wobec wychodźstwa chłopskiego do krajów Ameryki Łacińskiej (do 1939 roku)* [Homeland and Emigration. The Peasants Movement and Peasant Emigration to the Countries of Latin America (until 1939)], Warszawa: PWN, 2006, p. 119f.

<sup>33</sup> G. Neyer, “Auswanderungen aus Österreich. Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zur Gegenwart”, *Demographische Informationen* (1995/96), pp. 60–70, at 69.

<sup>34</sup> J. E. Bor, *Slováci v Argentine* [Slovaks in Argentina], Buenos Aires: Stanisław Hlucháň, 1986, pp. 8–16; [Antoni Olcha], *Emigracja Polska w Brazylii. 100 lat osadnictwa* [Polish emigration in Brazil. 100 years of settlement], Warszawa: Lud, 1971; K. Głuchowski, *Materiały do problemu osadnictwa polskiego w Brazylii* [Materials for the problem of Polish settlement in Brazil], Warszawa: Instytut naukowy do badań emigracyjnych i kolonizacyjnych, 1927, p. 45.

transformation of the sociocultural shape of the village revealed itself not least by the numerous conflicts between traditional church, landowning authorities, and the numerous returnees: the latter brought with them not only money but also goods and acquired attitudes towards life as well as behaviours that were hardly compatible with traditional village life.<sup>35</sup>

In the case of North Atlantic migration, an important role in this process was played by private entrepreneurs who arranged crossings and occasionally jobs or settlements, luring migrants with prospects of prosperity. How this business was conducted transnationally is illustrated by the photograph of Ivan Kraker's travel agency in Ljubljana (see Figure 1):<sup>36</sup> the presumably Jewish-Slovenian travel agent advertised himself as being a representative of French shipping lines that called at destinations in South America, namely Argentina and Uruguay, as well as Canada, via French (Le Havre) and North American ports.

This photograph is also interesting because the Compagnie Chargeurs Réunis Sud Atlantique had emerged from a shipping company founded in 1872 by some bankers who mainly sought postal licences from the French government. Moreover, despite a monopoly of traffic from French ports to South America, the company could barely compete with German and British lines in the area of passenger transport even after being taken over by the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique.<sup>37</sup> It is also remarkable that Argentina is mentioned amongst the promoted destinations, but Brazil is not. A second photo, probably taken four years later, mentions Uruguay instead of Australia. It cannot be clarified here if this expressed the changing preferences of the emigrants or if these preferences were conversely influenced by changing offers of the shipping companies – which then, again, might have been stimulated by the immigration policy of the respective governments. We do know, however, that the more established businessmen and residents of Ljubljana complained about the migrant clientele: South-eastern Europe was drawn into the maelstrom of transatlantic migration relatively late, and

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35 Wyman, *Round Trip*; R. Kantor, *Między Zaborowem a Chicago, Kulturowe konsekwencje istnienia zbiorowości imigrantów z parafii zaborowskiej w Chicago i jej kontaktów z rodzinnymi wsiami* [Between Zaborów and Chicago. Cultural Consequences of the existence if an Immigrant Community from the Parish of Zaborów in Chicago], Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1990; M. M. Stolarik, *Immigration and Urbanization: The Slovak Experience, 1870–1918*, New York: AMS, 1989.

36 Source: <http://ljubljanakps.zrc-sazu.si/en2-13.html>.

37 A. Croce, *La société générale des transports maritimes à vapeur*, Paris: MDV, 2002; J. Beaugé and R-P. Cogan, *Histoire maritime des Chargeurs Réunis et de leurs filiales françaises: Compagnie Sud-Atlantique, Compagnie de Transports Océaniques, Compagnie Fabre, Société Générale des Transports Maritimes, Nouvelle Compagnie de Paquebots, Barré et Dayez*, Paris: Barré-Dayez, 1984.



**Figure 1:** Ivan Kraker's travel agency in Ljubljana, ca. 1924.

Ljubljana was a latecomer as an emigration bridgehead and port.<sup>38</sup> Obviously, however, the establishment of this new emigration port was met with such keen interest that a large number of travel agents and the number of emigrants were attracted by it, for whom no adequate accommodation was available and who occasionally violated certain rules of decency and could only be controlled by cordoning off the road in question by the police.<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, the photograph – as well as similar others – illustrates that emigration to South America became a specific line of business for Ljubljana in the 1920s: according to the original caption, Kolodvorska ulica – the street by the railway station – was a “street of emigration offices, hotels and emigrants”.<sup>40</sup> It also suggests the above-mentioned fact that emigration to South America had, to a

<sup>38</sup> U. Brunnbauer, *Globalizing Southeastern Europe. Emigrants, America, and the State Since the Late Nineteenth Century*, London: Lexington Books, 2016, pp. 37ff., 80 *et passim* follows (in principle correctly) the dominance of German shipping lines to such an extent that it does not even mention the French competition.

<sup>39</sup> M. Denovšek, *Ljubljana: Križišče na poti v svet. Množično izseljevanje Slovencev v Ameriko/Ljubljana* [Crossroads on the Way to the World. Mass Emigration of Slovenians to America], pp. 7 *et passim*. <http://ljubljanakps.zrc-sazu.si/Brosura/Ljubljana%20-%20Krizisce%20na%20poti%20v%20svet.pdf> (accessed 24 October 2019).

<sup>40</sup> Cited *ibid*.



large degree, become a migration of entire families. This also remained so until later and in other parts of Eastern Europe: according to the *Pamiętniki Emigrantów*, a collection of autobiographical reports that was created in the 1930s of Polish migrants from all over the world, one-third of the families living in South America had been recruited by travel agents and had travelled as family units.<sup>41</sup>

Finally (to follow on from a statement by Ulf Brunnbauer),<sup>42</sup> the view from the periphery changes the overall picture in this case. Police measures to contain the disorder caused by migrants like in Ljubljana were also to be found in large emigration ports, such as Hamburg, Liverpool, or Le Havre, which had developed and perfected specific containment infrastructures. In the port areas – which were themselves neatly separated from the rest of the city – “emigrant hotels” were set up in addition to check-in halls, providing mass accommodation where migrants could spend the time between their arrival in the port city and their departure and which, ultimately, also served as quarantine stations. These facilities were not necessarily run by the state but sometimes responded to official requirements: in Hamburg, for example, Hamburg–American Line ship-owner Albert Ballin initially had a number of barracks built directly on the quay, which were replaced in 1901 due to port expansion by several large halls in which emigrants had to spend 14 days. It was not by chance that these halls were erected on an island in the river Elbe and, thus, at a safe distance from the Hamburg population.<sup>43</sup> The other European, American, and Asian ports carried out similar operations in the period around 1900.<sup>44</sup> From 1911 to 1955, the Argentine government operated the huge Hotel de Inmigrantes (see Figures 2a, 2b),<sup>45</sup> where new arrivals were accommodated for up to five days free of charge in communal dormitories and fed in large dining halls. A forerunner facility, whose construction was reminiscent of Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon, had existed since 1888 and basically served as a quarantine station. Here, as in Europe, immigration was identified for a long time with the risk of epidemics, although the yellow fever epidemic of 1851/52, which had originally legitimized

<sup>41</sup> Instytut Gospodarstwa Społecznego (ed.), *Pamiętniki Emigrantów. Ameryka Południowa*, no 1–27, Warszawa 1939, p. ix.

<sup>42</sup> Brunnbauer, *Globalizing*, p. 8.

<sup>43</sup> R. Evans, *Death in Hamburg. Society and Politics in the Cholera Years 1830–1910*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.

<sup>44</sup> See in general J. Vögele and H. Umehara (eds.), *Gateways of Disease. Public Health in European and Asian Port Cities at the Birth of the Modern World in the Late 19th and Early 20th Century*, Göttingen: Cuvillier, 2015.

<sup>45</sup> Source: <http://www.apellidositalianos.com.ar/inmigracion/fotografias-inmigrantes.html>; <https://www.ciudadaniaitaliana.com.ar/historia/hotel-de-inmigrantes/>.



**Figures 2a, b:** Hotel de Inmigrantes before (left) and after (right), 1911.

the quarantine of immigrants, had been of domestic origin. The new building was a response to the desired increase in European immigration and it transformed both the architectural appearance and the internal organization of the quarantine. The new hotel was now more reminiscent of a spa hotel than a converted silo. Accordingly, it expressed the Argentine state's commitment to its new citizens by welcoming them, at least architecturally and materially.

The quarantine was instigated by Europeans, and it was originally intended to protect immigrants and professional travellers: German and German-Austrian medical observers had quickly established that the more northern the origin of a sick person was, the more serious an infection with the yellow fever disease was. It could become particularly severe and often fatal for Finnish and Russian seafarers, whose ships brought emigrants in addition to goods to Brazil. The German-Brazilian physician Avé Lallemand intervened several times, together with the German consul general, initially against the conditions in a makeshift quarantine station in a garden house. They favoured complete isolation of the sick, which, in addition to better treatment, was intended above all to protect Europeans from further infection. In fact, Lallemand was honoured by the Swedish, Austrian, and Russian governments and the Hamburg Senate for his services to their subjects.<sup>46</sup> However, when yellow fever seemed to be finally defeated around 1910, typhoid fever and the above-mentioned spotted fever had been firmly established as epidemics of eastern origin spread by migration. Thus, although the perspective was somehow reversed, the inauguration of a hygienic anti-epidemic discourse caused the spatial discrimination and isolation of immigrants.

<sup>46</sup> H. Wätken, "Die Gelbfieberepidemien in Brasilien um die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts", *Ibero-amerikanisches Archiv* 1 (1925) 2, pp. 131–144, esp. 137.

## 4 “Free” and Organized Settlement

Overall and structurally, migration to South America differed little from migration between East-Central Europe and North America. One distinguishing feature was that some South American states promoted rural settlement at a time when the “free soil” policy in the USA had already come to an end. This settlement migration was different from other forms of betterment migration: the migrants needed much larger amounts of money – if not for the crossing, then for the initial arrival period – and the settlement was usually planned as final, which also meant that entire families migrated more frequently to South America than within Europe or to North America. Settlement was riskier because it took place in regions not previously cultivated with European methods, where the usual agricultural techniques were only applicable in an adapted form or even did not work at all. Added to this was the threat, exaggerated or real, of diseases against which European settlers had not yet developed any resistance. Both particularities – the confrontation with “wilderness” and the threat of new diseases – accordingly circulated in media coverage and informal reporting (as well as rumour mongering) about conditions in South America.

Because of the expected difficulties following migration, usually several families – sometimes from one village – joined together to found entire villages: in 1897, 14 families with 69 members established the first Polish-Catholic settlement in the Argentine district of Misiones, the former area of the Jesuit *reducciones*. Further, similarly structured groups of settlers, especially from the Polish-speaking areas, followed.<sup>47</sup> It was not until 1913 that a Czech settlement, only six hectares at that time, was established in the Argentine province of Chaco.<sup>48</sup> These and other “colonies” would not grow considerably until the 1920s: according to estimates, in the 20 years between the world wars, about 40,000 Poles and 1,600 Czechs emigrated to Brazil and 28,000 Czechs to Argentina. Consequently, in 1934, the Polish Republic established a consulate in Posada, the administrative centre.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Olcha, *Emigracja Polska*.

<sup>48</sup> Vaculík, *České menšiny*, p. 234.

<sup>49</sup> A. Dembicz (ed.), *Relacje Polska-Argentyna. Historia i współczesność*, Warszawa: CSL UW, 1996.

## 5 Emigration, Nationalization, and Socioeconomic Transformation

As early as 1900, Russian-Polish and Habsburg social reformers, such as the Lviv-born economist and migration researcher Leopold Caro, considered permanent migration to be both a danger as well as an opportunity on multiple accounts: emigration to South America unloaded social conflict potential onto rural areas and in the best case promoted the development of national consciousness, thus perhaps becoming a welcome substitute for colonialism. Initially, however, Caro conjured up the dangers of a wrongly pursued migration policy: in his paper from 1909 on Austria's emigration policy, he criticized German nationalism, especially the nationalism against Slovaks that pushed them to emigrate, to an extent leading to a shortage of labour inland.<sup>50</sup> Emigration, originally considered as a discharging of "overpopulation" in order to transform and integrate a then intensive agriculture into the capitalist domestic markets, could, if not sufficiently curbed, hinder the increase and even maintenance of globally competitive agricultural production as well as the domestic recruitment of surplus agricultural workforce for industrialization. Concerns about the recruitment of efficient soldiers and the lack of national awareness, especially amongst farmers, were also raised.<sup>51</sup> The Czech lawyer and statistician Jan Auerhan had similar concerns around 1906 about Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia.<sup>52</sup>

It therefore comes as no surprise that even in East-Central Europe with the absence of modern nation-states civil society actors engaged in harnessing migration for the desired purposes and in the right directions – and simultaneously to use the very concept of betterment migration for the advancement of their own livelihood and prosperity: private companies were set up to organize emigration in both Poland and Slovakia. These enterprises contributed to a peculiar transnationalization of the ethnic and political nation, first amongst ethnic Poles: the Polish Emigration Society (*Polskie Towarzystwo Emigracyjne*), founded in Galicia in 1908, set itself the task of providing social care for (ethnic) Poles living abroad and of ensuring permanent ties to their homeland. The emerging civil society also set out

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50 L. Caro, *Auswanderung und Auswanderungspolitik in Österreich*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1909.

51 L. Caro, *Wychodźstwo polskie*, Kraków: Ojczyzna, 1911.

52 S. Brouček and T. Grulich, *Domáci postoje k zahraničním čechům v novodobých dějinách (1918–2008)* [Opinions at Home about Czech Emigrants in the Contemporary History (1918–2008)], Prague: Public History, 2009, p. 26.

to explore possibilities of seasonal migration to South America as a sort of external co-financing for the economic transformation of the countryside.<sup>53</sup>

The tension between eugenic, economic, and demographic considerations concerning overpopulation, ethnic homogenization, and labour requirements as well as the desire to secure global raw material deposits and sales markets intensified after the division of East-Central Europe into nation-states after World War I. The obvious tension between an ethnically defined titular nation and a multiethnic reality even in these nation-states found early expression in the establishment of Polish and Czech ministerial institutions in 1918, which organized and controlled the remigration of former forced labourers and other migrants.<sup>54</sup> Institutions concerned with outward migration followed shortly after. Such institutions – and increasingly the respective national governments – had multiple concerns. The main task was to control emigration, which was supposed to contribute to an improvement of the demographic basis for the capitalization of the domestic economy – as a prerequisite for its international competitiveness – by unloading “population surpluses”, a policy that on the other hand threatened to withdraw particularly active components from the titular ethnic nation.

The intended response was a thorough nationalization of the emigrants, to the extent that they would become colonial outposts of the nation-state: after the Paris Peace Conference had rejected the transfer of former German colonies to the newly founded states in East Central Europe, the establishment of settler colonies in South America, Asia, and Africa provided the desired colonial<sup>55</sup>

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53 Cf. Mazurek, *Kraj*, pp. 140f.

54 Cf. most recently M. G. Esch, “*Refugees and Migrants: Perceptions and Categorizations of Moving People 1789–1938*”, in: W. Borodziej and J. v. Puttkamer (eds.), *Immigrants and Foreigners in Central and Eastern Europe during the Twentieth Century*, London and New York: Routledge, 2020, pp. 7–32.

55 Matthias Middell, amongst others, speaks in this context of “*imperial supplementary spaces*” and, in particular, regarding German expansion and conquest plans in World War II, implies a restoration of the empires nominally dissolved in 1918, which conceptually contradicts the enforcement of the principle of the nation-state otherwise stated for 1918ff. Although a detailed discussion of the scope of such a concept would certainly be appealing, it is not to be undertaken at this point. At this point, I prefer that of the *colonial enlargement area*, since – as I hope to show – it is more suitable and more appropriate to the intentions of the political actors. Cf. S. Marung, M. Middell, and U. Müller, “Territorialisierung in Ostmitteleuropa bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg”, in: Hadler and Middell (eds.), *Handbuch einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas*, pp. 37–130, at 45ff.; “Internationale Organisationen und das Prinzip des Nationalen: Bündnispartner oder Gegenspieler? Ein Gespräch der Herausgeberinnen mit Susan Zimmermann, Marcel van der Linden und Matthias Middell”, in S. Marung and K. Naumann (eds.), *Vergessene Vielfalt. Territorialität und Internationalisierung in Ostmitteleuropa seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014, pp. 240–251.

enlargement areas. The emigration policies now initiated by the successor states – namely Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia – were based on the dialectics of promotion and obstruction that characterizes most state intervention. On the one hand, the abolition of and distinction from the old regime as well as the factual economic and legal integration into the global world of nation-states demanded the free movement of goods and people, especially in the successor states. Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, for example, complied with this demand by already declaring emigration “free” in their draft constitutions.<sup>56</sup> Nevertheless, there was a growing need for state control: the otherwise quite liberal Czechoslovakian government, for instance, tried to limit emigration by sometimes charging exorbitantly high fees for issuing passports and, from 1928, reserved the right to refuse exit visas on political and economic grounds. In practice, this mostly affected Czechs who wanted to emigrate to the Soviet Union but also concerned certain craftsmen and other specialists to some degree. From 1936 onwards, an amendment to the emigration law stipulated that the recruitment of overseas settlers had to be approved beforehand by the Ministry of Social Affairs.<sup>57</sup>

Poland did not impose any significant restrictions on overseas migration, but it hindered the return of ethnically non-Polish minorities; it even expatriated them collectively in October 1938.<sup>58</sup> Neither of these issues affected the migration to South America, as settlement here in was specifically promoted, again within the structural framework and logic of the nation-state. Similar to Polish and Czech social reformers and national politicians around 1900, state authorities specifically endorsed closed settlements in ethnically homogeneous colonies. In 1919, the Polish Emigration Office (Polish *Urząd Emigracyjny*) was founded to take care of those Poles “to whom the mother country could not yet offer a roof over their heads”. As early as 1921, an interministerial State Emigration Council (*Państwowa Rada Emigracyjna*) was set up, which had to examine draft laws for their compatibility with a migration policy that had not even been clearly formulated. In 1925 followed a ministerial department that managed the establishment

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56 J. Rychlík, *Cestování do ciziny v habsburské monarchii a v Československu. Pasová, vízová a vystěhovalecká politika 1848–1989* [Travelling Abroad in the Habsburg Monarchy and in Czechoslovakia. Passport, Visa and Emigration Policies 1848–1989], Prague: Ústav pro Soudobé Dějiny, 2007, pp. 12–25.

57 Brouček and Grulich, *Domácí postoje*, p. 20.

58 On the Expatriation Decree of 1938 and its application to Jews, Ukrainians and Germans, see also J. Tomaszewski, *Preludium zagłady, Wygnanie Żydów polskich z Niemiec w 1938 r.* [Prelude to Extinction. The Deportation of Polish Jews from Germany in 1938], Warszawa: PWN, 1998; M. G. Esch, “Die Politik der polnischen Vertretungen im Deutschen Reich 1935–1939 und der Novemberpogrom 1938”, *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 8 (1999), pp. 131–154.

and supervision of extraterritorial schools.<sup>59</sup> Sometimes, state control was not established directly but rather through the state-sanctioned if not initiated establishment of private-sector institutes and associations. The Czech Office for Economic Aspects of Emigration and Colonisation (Ústav pro hospodářské styky emigrační a kolonizační) was established in 1923 upon the suggestion of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after the two ministries had proved unable to agree on the division of their competences when it came to emigration policies. As early as 1924, the institution presented a detailed memorandum recommending comprehensive state control over immigration and emigration, including financing, which from 1928 was handled by a new department of the Bank of the Czechoslovak Legions (Banka československých legií), which had been founded in 1919 in Irkutsk and had moved its headquarters to Prague in 1921.<sup>60</sup>

Unlike in Europe and North America, where ethnic Poles, Czechs, and especially Jews sometimes were not considered to be real Europeans, South American governments welcomed them as white settlers suitable to displace the indigenous population. As a result, the East-Central Europeans, who were used to discrimination, were suddenly recognized as Europeans here.<sup>61</sup> East-Central European specialists on migration were not strangers to this kind of European chauvinism, but they in turn considered the “whites” of South America as inferior. In 1919, Zygmunt Gargas, an economist from Cracow, declared in a statement for the State Emigration Council that Brazil was suitable for emigration from Poland precisely because of the lower overall cultural level of its partially “savage” population, which in turn meant that the national consciousness of Polish settlers was less endangered in Brazil than in the USA, with its predominantly Anglo-American – and thus superior – culture.<sup>62</sup> In 1925, a commission of experts at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs followed the same principles when it determined certain destinations for emigration that allowed for continuous state control of the identity and thus loyalty of Polish settlers. In addition to Brazil, the commission included Ar-

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59 A. Walaszek, *Reemigracja ze Stanów Zjednoczonych do Polski po I wojnie światowej (1919–1924)* [Reemigration from the United States to Poland after the First World War (1919–1924)], Kraków: Nakład Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1983, p. 119; M. Wieliczko, “Z dziejów Polaków żyjących w sąsiedztwie ojczyzny” [From the History of Poles Living in the Neighbourhood of their Homeland], in: A. Koprukowniak & W. Kucharski (eds.), *Polacy w świecie. Polonia jako zjawisko społeczno polityczne, Cz. 1–3* [Poles in the World. The Polonia as a Social and Political Phenomenon], Lublin: Uniwersytet Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej w Lublinie, 1986, cz. 1, pp. 81–308, at 182.

60 Brouček and Grulich, *Domáci postoje*, pp. 19–25.

61 Kula, “Polska Diaspora w Brazylii”, pp. 119f.; Zahra, *Great Departure*, p. 282.

62 Zahra, *Great Departure*, pp. 77f.

gentina as well as Turkey, the Dutch East Indies, and – astonishing in this context, but for different reasons – southern France. In 1937, the Polish Republic signed a migration convention with Bolivia.<sup>63</sup> In other words, while US demographers and migration politicians postulated that East-Central European migrants were culturally and socially inferior, some of their East-Central European colleagues declared that they were at least better than the South Americans.

In another take on the principle of ethnic nationality, the Polish Emigration Society, in the 1930s, promoted the emigration of ethnic and social undesirables and wanted to keep the desirable ones in the country as much as was possible; at the same time, the society was involved in negotiating certain social and labour standards for labour migrants, especially, but not only within Europe.<sup>64</sup> After independence, however, the perspective changed: the migration of settlers to South America now played an important role in coping with (and participating in) globalization to the extent that its promotion by the governments there seemed particularly suited to establish ethnonational bridgeheads that would ensure both access to raw materials and privileged access to markets for domestic products.<sup>65</sup>

The connection between the desire for additional colonial space and migration management became most obvious in the case of the Maritime and River League (*Liga Morska i Rzeczna*), established in 1924. At first, the organization seemed to be primarily concerned with the promotion of access to waterways and the seven seas as well as the integration of the Polish Republic into the world market via the oceans. The renaming of the organization to Maritime and Colonial League (*Liga Morska i Kolonialna*) in 1930 indicated a shift in priorities. In 1934, the *Liga* bought land for settlement in the Brazilian state of Paraná, where a veritable Polish colony had been living, in the administrative centre of Kurytyba and its vicinity, since the 1890s. Supported by the Polish state, the *Liga* linked a Polish civilization mission with the attachment of the settlers to the Polish Republic by establishing partially state-funded schools

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63 D. Gabaccia, D. Hoerder, and A. Walaszek, "Emigration et construction nationale en Europe (1815–1939)", in: N. L. Green and F. Weil (eds.), *Citoyenneté et émigration. Les politiques du départ*, Paris: Éditions de l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2006, pp. 67–94, at 89f.

64 Ibid., p. 90; Zahra, *Great Departure*, pp. 82f.; J. Plewko, *Sprostac migracji. Pomoc migrantom ekonomicznym z ziem polskich (połowa XIX – początek XXI wieku)* [Facilitating Migration. Aid for Economic Migrants from the Polish Lands (mid 19<sup>th</sup> c.–early 20<sup>th</sup> c.)], Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2010, pp. 129–133; M. Gmurczyk-Wrońska, *Polacy we Francji w latach 1871–1914. Społeczność polska i jej podstawy materialne* [Poles in France between 1871 and 1914. The Polish community and its material basis], Warszawa: Neriton, 1996, p. 256.

65 Mazurek, *Kraj*, pp. 141–162.



and “agricultural” training centres named “Espírito Santo”. However, the Liga’s disciplining and supervising intentions were not always met with the approval of the emigrants: both the pressure on the previous generation of emigrants and the attempt to transform the now numerous settlements of Poles in Brazil at the Foz do Iguaçu into a Nowa Polska faced resistance from the settlers and in the end failed.<sup>66</sup> In Poland itself, the Liga became one of the largest Polish mass organizations before 1945, but this did little to change the fact that the 121,000 emigrants in Argentina around 1930 and the 29,000 in Brazil were everything but eager to be pawns in national expansion plans.<sup>67</sup>

The essentially political colonialist agenda behind this form of expansion through emigration from 1930 onwards also aroused suspicion among local political elites. Under the presidency of Getulio Vargas, there was a growing number of voices considering that the Polish settlers having their own schools and marrying mostly endogenously were proof of political unreliability, the lack of willingness to integrate, and their contempt for the Brazilians.<sup>68</sup> Certainly, such ideas were related to the fact that migration to South America was more often than elsewhere aimed at permanent settlement – because of the distance, because it demanded a certain taste for challenges, and because of the necessary financial means. Things were still more in flux there than in the USA of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: urbanization and industrialization had only just begun and still promised substantial potential. However, this state of becoming could also be seen as an opportunity. The borderlands between Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil – a region that had not yet been touched by the developmental embrace of capitalism and nation-states after their “renaturalization” following the fall of the Jesuit statehoods – invited fantasies of civilizing missions and cultural or even national autonomy.

Not fundamentally different but to a lesser degree and with a somewhat shifted geographical focus, emigration policy developed in Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak Foreign Institute (Československý ústav zahraniční), which had been part of the Bank of the Czechoslovak Legions since 1929, in principle pursued the same policy but focused on France and Argentina in its efforts to mediate emigration and the acquisition of soil. In fact, by 1930, about 30,000

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66 Kula, “Polska diaspora w Brazylii”, p. 122; Plewko, “Sprostac”, p. 89; Zahra, *Great Departure*, p. 125 (with some errors concerning data and names). Rather apologetically: T. Bialas, *Liga Morska i Kolonialna 1930–1939* [The Maritime and Colonial League], Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Morskie, 1983.

67 Plewko, “Sprostac”, p. 89; Walaszek, *Reemigracja*, p. 119; Zahra, *Great Departure*, p. 72.

68 Kula, “Polska diaspora w Brazylii”, p. 122.

citizens from Czechoslovakia had emigrated to Argentina, but only 6,000 to Brazil.<sup>69</sup>

However, Czechoslovakia took state intervention some steps further than Poland, in that it cooperated very closely with the regional land offices in the selection of subsidized settlers.<sup>70</sup> This was especially significant for entrepreneurs residing in Argentina, who repeatedly requested the immigration of individual Czech specialists (such as glassblowers), whose departure had to be approved – and could be impeded – by these authorities.<sup>71</sup> Here, too, the founding of the Nová vlast settlement project in Brazil was met with more demand from eager emigrants than what the organization was able to cope with.<sup>72</sup> In Czechoslovakia, as well, the desired state monopoly over migration failed because the number of potential emigrants could not be managed without private facilities.<sup>73</sup>

Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe to South America was, in principle, very similar; along with associations such as Jewish Central Emigration Society JEAS in Poland (Żydowskie Centralne Towarzystwo Emigracyjne “JEAS” w Polsce), founded in 1924, organizations were formed to support migrant workers and settlers. In accordance with the overall extremely transnational and supranational character of many Jewish organizations (which again corresponded to the lack of an accordingly denominated nation-state), JEAS was merely a branch of the humanitarian Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, founded in New York in 1909. Support for emigrants was also supplemented by charitable and social reform foundations such as the Jewish Colonization Association of Baron Maurice de Hirsch. After Hirsch’s death, the association operated as a public limited company, in which JEAS was also a shareholder.<sup>74</sup> Internationalization and transnationalization through mergers replaced the support by an “own” nation-state.

Just as Polish, Czech, and Slovak emigration politicians combined support for compatriots willing to migrate with the desire for social and political reform, the settlement of Jews in South America also pursued broader goals: while Christian migrants from East Central Europe had often already been farmers in their place of origin, Jews were mainly an urban or small-town population, who, due to its exclusion from land ownership, was mainly engaged in crafts

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<sup>69</sup> Brouček and Grulich, *Domáci postoje*, p. 21–23.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30; 35f.

<sup>71</sup> V. Klevetová, “Emigrace českých a slovenských sklářů ve 20. a 30. letech 20. Století” [The Emigration of Czech and Slovak Glass Blower in the 1920s and 1930s], in: *Češi v cizině 1* [Czechs Abroad], Prague: Národopisná knižnice, 1986, pp. 138–152, at 140f.

<sup>72</sup> Brouček and Grulich, *Domáci postoje*, p. 42.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42f.

<sup>74</sup> Zahra, *Great Departure*, passim.

and trade. The training of pioneer farmers, which was run by the foundations, was thus designed to adapt the social structure of Jews to that of their surroundings. One of the most important transnational organizations dedicated to this goal was ORT (Obščestvo Remeslennogo i Zemledel'českogo Truda sredi Evreev), an organization founded in 1880 in Vilna (now Vilnius), which promoted the proliferation of agricultural (and craft) skills amongst Jews throughout Europe in the 1920s.<sup>75</sup>

Since the late nineteenth century, these considerations – which had initially been intended to eliminate socioeconomic differences between Jews and Christians and facilitate their coexistence – merged with the Zionist project: it was not without reason that the debates at the first Zionist Congress, held in Basel in 1897, also revolved around the question whether a national home for Jews should be established in the historical settlement area (i.e. Palestine) or in “uncultured”, colonized regions. Theodor Herzl himself imagined a Jewish state either in Palestine or Argentina. He assumed that the previous and ongoing immigration – which he categorized as “infiltration” – would not lead to the desired goal since it depended on the goodwill of the receiving states and could be stopped at any time “when the native population feels itself threatened”.<sup>76</sup> He, therefore, called for prior sovereignty of a Jewish society as a national representative over such territories, although said territories already belonged to a sovereign state. Herzl assumed that Argentina “would derive considerable profit from the cession of a portion of its territory to us [Jews]”. He, too, assumed a Jewish-European cultural superiority and mission: the neighbouring countries would gain from the emergence of the Jewish state since “the cultivation of a strip of land increases the value of its surrounding districts in innumerable ways”.<sup>77</sup>

This ambitious project had to compete ideologically and literally with the more practical approach of the non-Zionist Jewish Colonization Association of Baron Maurice de Hirsch. Hirsch was committed to providing protection and adequate housing after a group of more than 800 Jewish immigrants had been cheated by their Argentine agent: after a failed attempt to obtain funds for a settlement in Palestine from Baron Rothschild in Paris, some 130 families from what is now Ukraine had been recruited by an Argentine information office for

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<sup>75</sup> See on the ORT: L. Shapiro, *The History of ORT. A Jewish Movement for Social Change*, New York: Schocken, 1980.

<sup>76</sup> T. Herzl, *Der Judenstaat. Versuch einer modernen Lösung der Judenfrage*, Leipzig/Wien: Breitenstein, 1896, here quoted after the english translation from 1896, [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The\\_Jewish\\_State\\_\(1896\\_translation\)/The\\_Jewish\\_Question](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Jewish_State_(1896_translation)/The_Jewish_Question) (accessed 22 May 2020).

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

a settlement in the San Cristobál area. However, as land prices had risen considerably on their arrival, the agent now refused to fulfil the contract. Replacements could be obtained but in a completely undeveloped territory; also, neither tools nor livestock were provided as had been promised. The organization of relief again happened transnationally: a Romanian doctor who lived in Berlin was, while dwelling in Paris, commissioned by the Argentine government to examine hygienic-bacteriological conditions amongst European settlers in Argentina. He found the conditions untenable and informed the responsible ministry and the Alliance Israélite Universelle; he proposed to provide each settler family with 50 to 100 hectares of land as well as with financial aid. The proposal was accepted and implemented by Hirsch. From 1890 onwards, the Jewish Colonization Association accommodated more than 30,000 Jewish settlers in the Buenos Aires area and founded six autonomous villages. Some additional settlements were established in the rest of Argentina and Brazil.<sup>78</sup>

This does not mean, however, that the Jewish and Christian colonies functioned as intended. Many settlers found themselves in situations that had little, if anything, to do with what they had been promised. Land proved unsuitable for settlement, especially when it had been acquired and provided by private organizations; in most cases, settlers struggled with unfamiliar soil and weather conditions. Many hopeful settlers, therefore, were disappointed, exhausted, and impoverished and as a result returned – if possible – to their home villages. Nevertheless, many of these colonies consolidated – ironically exactly in those areas where the Jesuits had created ‘free’ spaces for the Guarani, that is to say, in the Argentine district of Misiones and the Brazilian state of Paraná more than 100 years before. Of not only anecdotal interest but also an indicator for the integration of immigrants into regional and national folklore are sociocultural figures like the Jewish gaucho.<sup>79</sup>

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78 E. Zablotsky, “The Project of the Baron de Hirsch: Success or Failure?” (May 2005). CEMA Working Papers: Serie Documentos de Trabajo No. 289, pp. 7ff. (<https://ssrn.com/abstract=998626>, accessed 31 October 2019); D. Stone, “Diaspora Żydów Polskich”, in: Walaszek, *Polska Diaspora*, pp. 420–446, at 426f.

79 E. Aizenberg and A. Gerchunoff (eds.), *Parricide on the Pampa? A New Study and Translation of Alberto Gerchunoff's ‘Los gauchos judíos’*, Frankfurt am Main/Madrid: Vervuert/Iberoamericana, 2000.

## 6 Sex, Tango, and Deviance

Migration from Eastern Europe to South America was also intertwined with as well as an intrinsic part of the globalization of labour exploitation and of the formation of specific urban subcultures: besides the organized settlement of agricultural pioneers and colonists, the large plantations and developing industries for their part also recruited labour force from Southern and Eastern Europe. Here, we mostly find chain migration, in which letters from migrant workers encouraged others to cross the ocean. Immigration to South America therefore was not limited to the colonization of areas not yet exploited in a modern (i.e. market-oriented) way and/or extent. Although the availability of “undeveloped” land continued to make pioneer settlement possible and necessary, labour immigration was also growing: with an increasing demand for labour, migrants also sought and found their way to the growing cities such as São Paulo, Buenos Aires, or Montevideo.<sup>80</sup> As with other waves of migration and colonization, actors, especially in port cities, were predominantly young and male – which, as in all major cities of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although not creating a market for sexual services, surely expanded it.

As early as the 1860s, some Jewish migrants chose prostitution as a line of business. The Jewish pimps organized their segment of the field on a translocal basis, enjoyed an extremely poor reputation, and nevertheless were a significant actor in the development of one of South America’s most important contributions to world music. Since 1867, there had been a pimp ring in Buenos Aires, which, in 1906 not unlike many Jewish “compatriots” in less despicable industries, founded a society, under the name Varsovia, for the provision of mutual help with its own synagogue and cemetery. While in most cases, religious scissions amongst Jewish and other migrants derived from the discontent of more recently arrived “shakers” with already all-too-accommodated practices of those that were longer established,<sup>81</sup> here it was different.

The foundation of an autonomous congregation became necessary because the rest of the Jewish community in Buenos Aires did not want to have anything to do with the organizers or the subordinated employees of prostitution. Respectable Jews refused donations from the organization and denied pimps and whores access to the synagogue and even burial in the community cemetery.

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**80** Kula, “Polska Diaspora w Brazylii”, pp. 119ff.; Wyman, *Round Trip*, p. 74; Stone, “Diaspora Żydów Polskich”, p. 434ff.

**81** Cf. M. G. Esch, *Parallele Gesellschaften und soziale Räume. Osteuropäische Einwanderer in Paris 1880–1940*, Frankfurt am Main: campus, 2012; T. Brinkmann, *Von der Gemeinde zur “Community” – Jüdische Einwanderer in Chicago 1840–1900*, Osnabrück: V&R unipress, 2002.

The nascent Jewish women's and workers' movement also sharply and aggressively opposed the organization and the prostitution of Jewish women, at times with different and at other times with similar arguments and often in opposition to anti-Semitic identifications.<sup>82</sup> In the interwar period, the new Polish Republic, too, was somewhat uncomfortable that such an organization named itself after the Latin name of the capital Warszawa. Remarkably, the pimps obliged and changed the name of their organization to Cvi Migdal in 1927.<sup>83</sup>

This particular economic sector was attractive not only because of existing demands but also because prostitution was legal in Argentina from 1875 to 1955 (with restrictions from 1923 onwards).<sup>84</sup> Estimates indicate several hundred, mostly male, members of the Cvi Migdal who controlled 2,000 brothels and several thousand women in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. These members provided the supply of mostly Jewish prostitutes, some of whom were recruited by force; others were recruited fraudulently in their places of origin and the European and North American centres of Jewish immigration or entered this profession of their own accord. Buenos Aires also became a destination for pimps who had to leave the USA and South Africa when repression against prostitution was intensified.<sup>85</sup> A social and ethnic hierarchy, however, applied even in this sector: apart from simple brothels for workers and petty bourgeois, there were finer establishments for the upper classes, and while a French prostitute in the 1920s cost three pesos, a *polaca* (Pole) cost two and an Indian woman only half a peso.<sup>86</sup> The organization remained active until the conviction of 108 members in 1930.<sup>87</sup>

It was in this milieu of port pubs and brothels that the tango was born as a peculiar mixture of Spanish, African, and Eastern European musical elements and dances. Very similar to jazz, it is today considered a musical art form but was

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<sup>82</sup> Cf. E. J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice. The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery 1870–1939*, New York: Schocken, 1983.

<sup>83</sup> D. J. Guy, *Sex and Danger in Buenos Aires: Prostitution, Family, and Nation in Argentina*, Lincoln/London: University of Nebraska Press, 1992, pp. 121–123.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.; Stone, "Diaspora Żydów Polskich", p. 426.

<sup>85</sup> Bristow, *Prostitution*, pp. 309f.

<sup>86</sup> T. Fischer, "Der Weg nach Buenos Aires – Frauenhandel und Prostitution in den 1920er Jahren", *Comparativ* 13 (2003) 4, pp. 138–154, at 138.

<sup>87</sup> I use and mention here only the part of the pertinent literature that concentrates on evaluation and differentiation rather than demagoguery and moralization: Bristow, *Prostitution*; Guy, *Sex*; D. Barrancos, D. Guy, and A. Valobra (eds.), *Moralidad y comportamientos sexuales (Argentina, 1880–2011)*, Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2014. On the transnational impact of Cvi Migdal or prostitution in Buenos Aires as an alternative life strategy, see also Esch, *Parallele Gesellschaften*, pp. 91f.

deemed vulgar and obscene until the 1930s because of its origins in the brothels and the way it was danced. How the tango was then spread worldwide and reinterpreted, especially in post-modern feminist theory,<sup>88</sup> would be worth a separate discussion; unfortunately, we do not have space here. However, its reinterpretation is interesting because it, in a way, reverses the discursive transformation of a successful business model of some Eastern European Jewish immigrants into a specifically and typically Jewish migrant demoralizing and disintegrating project.

This transformation began as early as 1892, when a trial in Lviv against 17 Jewish men and ten Jewish women for procuring women for Istanbul brothels caused a sensation far beyond Eastern Europe. At the end of the 1890s, a first congress was held against the so-called “white slave trade”. Around 1906, Protestant activists in the USA launched a campaign that scandalized the recruitment of young women for North American brothels, which presumably were mostly run by migrants. Another campaign – which directly addressed the corrupt cooperation of local authorities with the Cvi Migdal and, later on, some cases of forced prostitution that became public – followed from 1927.<sup>89</sup> In a sense, the public-induced crackdown on prostitution and its attendant phenomena had exacerbated the situation in a way that could only end in the destruction of the Cvi Migdal. But restrictions and regulations had been far from bettering the situation of the women. Instead they led to an increased intensity and violence of male access to women in the brothels – and thus created the conditions that had been fantasized about in the early campaigns.<sup>90</sup>

The most important point for us is that the anti-migrant discourse against prostitution in these campaigns anticipated the later discursive construct of Jewish male lechery and female depravity as a particularly dangerous assault on the moral and biological integrity of the white race. The film *The Inside of the White Slave Traffic* (see Figure 3), from 1913, states at the beginning that the pimps’ favourite pastime was *Stuß*, a card game with a Yiddish name that was also known as “Jewish Faro”. Pimping was thus sufficiently identified as

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**88** See, above all, P.-I. Villa, “Bewegte Diskurse, die bewegen. Überlegungen zur Spannung von Konstitution und Konstruktion am Beispiel des Tango Argentino”, in: R. Gugutzer (ed.), *body turn. Perspektiven der Soziologie des Körpers und des Sports*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2015, pp. 209–232; P.-I. Villa, “Bewegte Diskurse, die bewegen. Warum der Tango die (Geschlechter-) Verhältnisse zum Tanzen bringen kann”, in: A. Wetterer (ed.), *Körper Wissen Geschlecht. Geschlechterwissen und soziale Praxis II*, Sulzbach: Helmer 2010, pp. 141–164.

**89** Bristow, *Prostitution*, pp. 313ff.; Guy, *Sex*, pp. 109–135.

**90** Bristow, *Prostitution*, pp. 312–317. Bristow suspects that even without state repression, the Cvi Migdal would probably have dissolved soon due to changed conditions and ageing. In fact, despite trials and deportations, it continued to exist until 1939 and then disintegrated.



**Figure 3:** Scenes from *The Inside of the White Slave Traffic*, USA 1913.

Jewish.<sup>91</sup> The film is interesting in that it was secretly shot in red-light districts, and some women who involuntarily were shown in the film apparently sued the producers for indemnities.<sup>92</sup> The film *The Slave Market*, shot in 1921, had similar anti-Semitic connotations, with the figure of the procurer being strongly reminiscent of caricatures of the typical Jew.<sup>93</sup>

It is remarkable from a film-historical and transnational perspective that the production of blue movies (i.e., erotic and pornographic films) began at the same time as the above-cited cinematic creations. These blue movies utilized the same motifs, and again both Argentine brothels and East-Central Europe –

<sup>91</sup> *The Inside of the White Slave Trade*, USA 1913. Here cited in *The Inside of the White Slave Traffic*, 1913. 72–Op. BluRay, Available 21 March 2013 from Adrian Mihai, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZHihjo\\_eBQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZHihjo_eBQ) (accessed 24 October 2019).

<sup>92</sup> <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0003016/>, (accessed 24 October 2019).

<sup>93</sup> *The Slave Market*, USA 1921, here cited in *The Slave Market*, downloaded 25 May 2017 from EYE. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdgC1uGCPvE> (accessed 24 October 2019).



in this case, the emigration country Austria – were involved: Austrian film production began in 1906 with *Am Sklavenmarkt* (At the slave market), a film that was intended for closed men's evenings and that showed young women scantily clad in an oriental setting. The presumably first pornographic film, *El Satarío* (or *El Sartorio*), was probably shot sometime between 1907 and 1915 with (white) actresses from brothels in Buenos Aires.<sup>94</sup> The impressive range of representations and discursive definitions from the notion of abducted and raped innocence to the promise of ecstatic corporeality is found even more clearly in pictorial representations. Both ends can, however, be contrasted (as in Figure 4)<sup>95</sup> with the presumably far less glamorous (but also mostly less violent) reality of everyday brothel life.<sup>96</sup>



**Figure 4:** Representations: Prostitutes as victims; glamour girls; sex workers.

In fact, the campaigns against the white slave trade were often less concerned with protecting young women from violence and humiliation than with effectively

<sup>94</sup> D. Thompson, *Black and White and Blue: Erotic Cinema from the Victorian Age to the VCR*, Toronto: ECW, 2007; M. Achenbach, P. Caneppele, and E. Kieninger (eds.), *Projektionen der Sehnsucht. Saturn. Die erotischen Anfänge der österreichischen Kinematographie*, Wien: Filmarchiv Austria, 1999. The film itself can be viewed under “Am Sklavenmarkt” (Österreich 1906), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZOS9-IPYAY> (accessed 31 October 2019); “El Satarío oder El Sartorio! (Argentinien 1907?)”, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nY\\_T7OGA-rY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nY_T7OGA-rY) (accessed 31 October 2019).

<sup>95</sup> Source: E. A. Bell, *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls. Or War on the White Slave Trade* (1910), cover; <https://k62.kn3.net/taringa/A/4/A/A/6/B/Pizzaymoscato/E87.jpg> (ca. 1920); [https://gcdn.emol.cl/patagonia/files/2016/10/1932\\_cro\\_1b\\_gr.jpg](https://gcdn.emol.cl/patagonia/files/2016/10/1932_cro_1b_gr.jpg) (ca. 1929).

<sup>96</sup> The author is currently only aware of a few autobiographical portrayals – and mostly by then young men – relating to everyday life in brothels: L. Armstrong, *Armstrong, Satchmo: My Life in New Orleans*, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1954; Driss Ben Hamed Charhadi, *Ein Leben voller Fallgruben*, trans. P. Bowles, A. R. Strauss, Nördlingen: Greno, 1985.

normalizing their behaviour. In this discourse, the “fallen girl” was considered to be as needy as she was stained, damaged and irreparable. The call for state intervention and help overlooked the fact that Galician prostitutes in Istanbul and Bombay refused to be rescued by the Habsburg legation and that the milieu – despite obvious humiliation and suffering – opened up its own affiliations, obligations, social practices (including certain pension payments), and career paths.<sup>97</sup> The discourse against prostitution allowed sexuality only as a precondition for biological reproduction in marriage and only in certain forms. It was also directed against all those who were defined as strangers: any initiation of sex by women or men, for example in ice-cream parlours or other establishments run by immigrants, was criticized.<sup>98</sup> The book *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls* (1910), by Ernest A. Bell, was dedicated to an “Army of Loyal Workers” who were concerned about the “Safety and Purity of Womanhood”. The impetus of the campaign and the measures that followed it were mixed with racist motives from the very beginning, especially in the USA: the North American Mann Act (1910), a law against trafficking women for prostitution, was formulated in such a way that it could also be used, until the 1960s, against black persons who took white companions on trips over state borders.<sup>99</sup> The focus on female behaviour – that is to say, the mistrust of single women – had repercussions right up to the legislation of the countries of origin, since women who migrated alone in the interwar period needed the informal approval of a male caretaker to obtain a visa to travel to France or across the Atlantic.<sup>100</sup> Finally, South American, North American, and European physicians and eugenicists linked the campaign against trafficking of women to their own considerations on how to ensure the biological optimization of desired populations. This was also true in East-Central Europe: it was not without reason that Leon Marek Wernic, the Polish minister of health, who from 1922 until 1939 was chairman of the Polish Eugenic Society (Polish Towarzystwo Eugeniczne) and deputy secretary of the International Eugenic Society, was also one of the spokespersons of the campaign against trafficking of women in Poland.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Bristow, *Prostitution*, pp. 311; 316–317; Fischer, *Weg*, pp. 145ff.

<sup>98</sup> E. A. Bell, *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls or War on the White Slave Trade*, o. O. 1910, Frontispiece and passim.

<sup>99</sup> D. J. Langum, *Crossing Over the Line: Legislating Morality and the Mann Act*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

<sup>100</sup> Zahra, *Great Departure*, p. 120.

<sup>101</sup> Fischer, *Weg*, p. 140; Guy, *Sex*, pp. 130ff.; 186–199; Bristow, *Prostitution*, p. 306. On Wernic as a eugenicist, cf. T. Rzepa and R. Żaba, “Leon Wernic jako zwolennik i propagator eugeniki” [Leon Wernic as a Supporter and Propagator of Eugenics], *Postępy Psychiatrii i Neurologii* 22 (2013) 1, pp. 67–74.

The trial of Cvi Migdal, in the early 1930s, focused upon the postulated (and sometimes surely actual) coercive nature of recruitment, initiated a campaign against prostitution in general (and thus reinforced bourgeois morality) that finally legitimized a limiting of prostitution in 1936. This abolition happened in an increasingly repressive and xenophobic political discourse that was subsequently replaced by a campaign against homosexuals under the slogan “worse than whores”.<sup>102</sup> The main theme of the anti-prostitution discourse in Argentina was the complicity of Jewish pimps, the police, and the administration – ultimately, the corruption of the Argentine state and the depravity of the *pueblo hebreo* (Jewish people).

## 7 Conclusion

So to what end do we make this connection between Eastern Europe and South America? What can be shown here that we did not already know? Firstly – but I am probably preaching to a choir of specialists and an already pre-informed readership – it shows that East-Central Europe was an essential part of the world and its cumulating interconnections in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Secondly, it shows how diverse the contexts were in which migration from Eastern parts of Europe to South America took place, contexts that charged this migration with signification and were shaped by it: colonialism, racism, the modern nation-state, the globalization of the exploitation of labour, and the hybridization and globalization of cultural resources and sexual morality. We also see the extent to which economy, migration, colonialism, nationalism, and culture have intertwined under the global condition.

Strangely enough, the migration I have been writing about here is only partially placed in these contexts in the literature, while works devoted to such contexts often ignore East-Central European migration and migrants. What is regrettable about this is that it disregards an opportunity to take a closer look at entanglements of social, ethnonational, as well as hygienic and migration-related discourses and policies in their functioning and their manifold effects, which are not strange to other regions but are hard to be found elsewhere in such concentration, range, and ambiguity. Here, as elsewhere, the view from the periphery, with East-Central Europe and South America being positioned

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<sup>102</sup> K. Ramacciotti and A. Valobra, “‘Peor que putas’. Tríadas, safistas y homosexualidad en el discurso moral hegemónico del campo médico, 1936–1954”, in: Barrancos et al., *Moralidad*, pp. 195–216.

on opposite fringes, may provide insights into contexts and interactions and – an aspect I had to omit mostly – their effects on the subjects, historically relevant aspects that are lost when only looking at the large structures. The history of migrations from East-Central Europe to South America invites us to consider a *histoire croisée* that seems capable of questioning old and new normative certitudes (which are, of course, always simplifications). To go into this questioning at greater length would be a delightful but also quite challenging task.

Immanuel R. Harisch

# 10 East German Friendship Brigades and Specialists in Angola: A Socialist Globalization Project in the Global Cold War

## 1 Introduction

The order of the global Cold War was shaken politically in the mid-1970s with the establishment of self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist regimes in the African Lusophone territories and Ethiopia and, above all, with the US-American defeat in Vietnam, which seemed to have dealt imperialism a heavy blow, according to communist parties and left wingers around the world. Economically, skyrocketing prices of global commodities (such as oil, coffee, and cocoa<sup>1</sup>), combined with rising interest rates on the global financial markets, severely constrained – both socialist and capitalist – import-dependent national economies and forced governments, like the one in East Berlin, to restructure their economic machine substantially. This was aggravated by the Soviet Union's decision in 1975 to adjust the prices of raw materials within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) every year instead of the previously utilized five-year terms.<sup>2</sup> Eastern European countries had to react to these shifts, and they sought to secure scarce or unavailable goods and raw materials from producing countries in the Third World.<sup>3</sup>

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1 The explosion of coffee and (as a complementary good) cocoa prices was due to frosts in Brazil, which devastated coffee trees in the then biggest coffee-producing country.

2 G. Winrow, *The Foreign Policy of the GDR in Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 160.

3 S. Lorenzini, "Comecon and the South in the Years of Détente: A Study on East-South Economic Relations", *European Review of History* 21 (2014), pp. 183–199.

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**Note:** The article is based on research for my MA thesis, titled "Handel und Solidarität: Die Beziehungen der DDR mit Angola und São Tomé und Príncipe unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Austauschs 'Ware-gegen-Ware' ca. 1975–1990" (Vienna, 2018). I would like to thank the editor Katja Castryck-Naumann for her valuable thoughts and comments in the rework for this volume. I also thank my colleague Eric Burton for his comments on an early draft of this chapter.

In 1977, some people in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) leadership came to the conclusion that the East German economy was on the verge of bankruptcy. For some high-ranking economic leaders, it was a “question of existence”, given that projected expenditures for coffee and cocoa in the next five-year plan were practically unaffordable for the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands, SED).<sup>4</sup> To save the state economy from collapse, East German economic planners and foreign traders focused as quickly as possible on their foreign trade with the African “priority countries” with a “socialist orientation”, such as Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe, to acquire raw materials, such as coffee, without using convertible foreign exchange in specific barter trade agreements.<sup>5</sup>

East German citizens’ demand for coffee was jeopardizing both the regime’s finances and social stability,<sup>6</sup> and the rising world market prices for oil and coffee, in principle, favoured resource-rich Angola. However, at the point of effectively taking over administrative power in 1976, the People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola, MPLA), Angola’s future ruling party, was faced with the task of a complete social, political, and territorial (re)organization of the parts of the country it controlled. Lisbon’s post-colonial roadmap for Angola after the Carnation Revolution of April 1974, which had deposed the heirs of the Salazar regime, provided a transitional government made up of the three rival Angolan liberation movements until the planned proclamation of independence on 11 November 1975. This coalition between the MPLA,<sup>7</sup> National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (União

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4 H.-J. Döring, “Es geht um unsere Existenz”: Die Politik der DDR gegenüber der dritten Welt am Beispiel von Mosambik und Äthiopien, Berlin: Ch. Links, 2001. See also A. Dietrich, “Zwischen solidarischem Handel und ungleichem Tausch: Zum Südhandel der DDR am Beispiel des Imports kubanischen Zuckers und äthiopischen Kaffees”, *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik* 30 (2014), pp. 48–67.

5 For a close examination and assessment of these barter agreements in the Angolan and São Toméan case, see my master thesis and I. R. Harisch, “Bartering Coffee, Cocoa and W50 Trucks: The Trade Relationships of the GDR, Angola and São Tomé in a Comparative Perspective”, *Global Histories* 3 (2017), pp. 43–60. For an early assessment of credit and barter arrangements between East and South, see M. Lavigne, *The Socialist Economies of the Soviet Union and Europe*, Bath: Pitman Press, 1974 [French edition 1970], pp. 348–360.

6 For a detailed account on the “coffee crisis” and how it threatened the legitimacy of the East German SED, see V. Wunderlich, “Die ‘Kaffeekrise’ von 1977”, *Historische Anthropologie* 11 (2003), pp. 240–261 and A. Dietrich, “Kaffee in Der DDR – ‘Ein Politikum Ersten Ranges’”, in: Ch. Berth, D. Wierling, and V. Wunderlich (eds.), *Kaffeewelten: Historische Perspektiven auf eine globale Ware im 20. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015, pp. 225–248.

7 The MPLA, Angola’s ruling party, led by Agostinho Neto, had followers mainly among the Mbundu people of Luanda’s hinterland as well as coastal cities. The MPLA’s Marxist ideology,

Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola, UNITA),<sup>8</sup> and the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola, FLNA)<sup>9</sup> had already fallen apart months before the envisaged transfer of power, resulting in open conflicts between the three constituents fuelled by fading Portuguese authority and mutual suspicion. In late August 1975, Fidel Castro persuaded the rather reluctant Leonid I. Brezhnev, leader of the Soviet Union, to support the MPLA on an “internationalist mission”: thousands of Cuban and MPLA soldiers, equipped with Soviet military equipment, were ultimately able to retain control of Luanda and successively took back neighbouring provinces from an invading South African army and UNITA in the south and from FLNA in the north.<sup>10</sup> As the Portuguese army withdrew from province after province, white settlers followed suit.<sup>11</sup> Altogether 90 percent of the 320,000 immigrants living in Angola – administrators, entrepreneurs, teachers, economists, plantation owners, truck drivers, engineers and technicians, to name a few – had fled the country.<sup>12</sup> The often inexperienced party functionaries and economists of the victorious MPLA were confronted with a sharp drop in productive capacity in all sectors of the economy. The coffee production was paralyzed by abandoned plantations, a scarcity of functioning harvest machines, a lack of means of transportation, and almost no trained personnel.

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represented by its mostly *mestiço* (mixed) intellectual leadership, was consolidated in 1977, when the MPLA transformed itself into a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party that aimed to crush political dissent among Angola’s population following an attempted coup d’état in the same year.

**8** UNITA, led by Jonas Savimbi, had followers mainly among the Ovimbundu population of the Central Angolan highlands. It received military, financial, and logistical support from the USA and South Africa because it joined the South African army in attempting to invade Angola and capture the capital, Luanda.

**9** The FLNA, led by Holden Roberto, had followers mainly among the Kikongo-speaking people in Angola’s northern provinces and Zaire. It received military, financial, and logistical support mainly from Zaire, the USA, and China.

**10** For an excellent account on the critical moments of 1975/76 and beyond, see P. Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976–1991*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013; furthermore O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 207–239.

**11** J. Pearce, *Political Identity and Conflict in Central Angola, 1975–2002*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017, pp. 36, 39, 43.

**12** D. Birmingham, “Angola”, in: P. Chabal (ed.), *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002, pp. 137–184, at 150; Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom*, p. 79.

Given this dire situation, the MPLA leadership made it clear in early 1978 that Angola would expect “the states of the socialist community to make the greatest possible effort to support the country. It is important that every socialist country acts quickly”.<sup>13</sup> Tens of thousands of Cuban soldiers, together with Soviet military equipment and advisers, had enabled the MPLA to assert its power over the capital Luanda, the oil-rich exclave of Cabinda, and a number of provincial towns in the north and on the coast. Yet, the MPLA was far from ruling over the vast country. The mammoth task ahead of the MPLA was to reach pre-independence levels of production, set up a mass education and health system, and reconstruct vital infrastructure. These aims proved incredibly difficult as the rebels of UNITA, who were supported by South Africa’s Apartheid regime and the USA, embarked on a destabilization war and aimed to destroy the gains of the MPLA wherever possible.<sup>14</sup>

At that time, Cuba had around 3,500 aid workers – mostly teachers, construction workers, and doctors – in the country.<sup>15</sup> The first East German specialists in Angola were sent by the East German Ministry of Transport to manage ship clearance in Angola’s ports, conduct surveys on the national road network, and inspect the Benguela railway.<sup>16</sup>

In June 1977, on extremely short notice, the MPLA requested some 380 East German aid workers to assist with the upcoming coffee harvest and related transportation issues.<sup>17</sup> In April 1977, the Cuban leader Fidel Castro, told Erich Honecker, the general secretary of the SED, that an estimated 200,000 to 400,000 tons of Angolan coffee were still in warehouses.<sup>18</sup> Due to the excellent relations between the two ruling parties and the geostrategic and economic importance of

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<sup>13</sup> Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen (SAPMO), Bundesarchiv Berlin Lichterfelde (BArch), DE 1/57596, “Bericht über den Arbeitsbesuch des Premierministers der Volksrepublik Angola, Lopo do Nascimento, Mitglied des Politbüros und Sekretär des Zentralkomitees der MPLA-Partei der Arbeit, vom 6. bis 8. Februar 1978 in der DDR”, 10 February 1978, p. 6.

<sup>14</sup> J. Becker, *Angola, Mosambik und Zimbabwe: Im Visier Südafrikas*, Köln: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1988, pp. 88–139.

<sup>15</sup> Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom*, p. 80.

<sup>16</sup> For reports of the specialists of the Ministry of Transport in Angola, see SAPMO BArch DM1/12157.

<sup>17</sup> SAPMO-BArch, VD MR–845/77, “Beschuß über den Einsatz von FDJ-Brigaden in der VR Angola”, 27 July 1977, not paginated.

<sup>18</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY30 JIV 2/201/1292, “Fidel Castro’s 1977 Southern Africa Tour: A Report to Honecker (excerpt),” 3 April 1977, History and Public Policy Programme Digital Archive; document obtained by Christian F. Ostermann; translated by David Welch with revisions by Ostermann <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112142> (accessed 4 August 2019).



Angola, the top levels of the SED responded positively to the Angolan request. From 1 September 1977 onwards, hastily recruited East German staff were deployed at several locations in Angola with the task of securing the import of Angolan coffee and fostering the export of the East German W50 truck by setting up a network of on-site workshops, providing customer services and repairs, combined with vocational training. Within less than a decade, Angola emerged as the largest export market for W50 trucks in Africa and ranked eighth in importing countries worldwide.<sup>19</sup> The specialists – skilled and experienced workers (Facharbeiter) – were accompanied by Friendship Brigades (Freundschaftsbrigaden). The GDR's Friendship Brigades, founded in 1963, acted as a tool for solidarity, foreign policy, and development work abroad. A brigade was usually comprised of 10 to 30 young adults in their 20s and early 30s, with an emphasis on collective work organization and social life in contrast to Western aid workers who were often dispatched in small groups or individually.<sup>20</sup>

More than 200 East Germans had arrived in Angola by mid-1978 in response to the MPLA's request, which was accompanied by a so-called "coffee agreement" that guaranteed East Germany's coffee shipments from Angola would be traded through a barter system for goods from the GDR.<sup>21</sup> In the early 1980s, the number of active brigades in the socialist republic of Angola increased to 8, out of a total of 19 brigades dispatched around the world, thereby making up roughly half of the East German "brigadists" dispatched abroad at that time.<sup>22</sup>

I situate this "coffee agreement" between the MPLA and the SED, which included the Friendship Brigades and other East German specialists, in the context of global socialist development programmes. By using a comparative concept of significant ruptures and multiple crises that both the governments in East Berlin

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**19** Altogether, the GDR exported 13,189 W50 trucks to Angola from 1977 to the late 1980s. Hungary imported with 98,000 the most W50 trucks, followed by Iraq (72,209), China (69,337), Soviet Union (49,311), CSSR (27,501), Vietnam (19,202) and Bulgaria (16,660). See F. Röncke, *IFA W50/L50. 1965–1990: Eine Dokumentation*, Stuttgart: Motorbuch, 2013, p. 93.

**20** E. Burton, "Solidarität und ihre Grenzen bei den Brigaden der Freundschaft der FDJ", in: F. Bösch, C. Moine, and St. Senger (eds.), *Globales Engagement im Kalten Krieg*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2018, pp. 152–185.

**21** Harisch, "Bartering Coffee, Cocoa and W50 Trucks".

**22** The 15 Friendship Brigades comprised 301 people deployed in the following countries (number of brigades): Angola (5), Algeria (2), Guinea (2), Mozambique, Yemen, Mali, Guinea-Bissau, Cuba, and Somalia (1 each). See SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/22233, "Hinweise zur Vorlage über die Arbeit der Brigaden der Freundschaft der FDJ 1982", n.d. See also I. Schleicher, "Elemente entwicklungspolitischer Zusammenarbeit in der Tätigkeit von FDGB und FDJ", in: H.-J. Bücking (ed.), *Entwicklungspolitische Zusammenarbeit in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der DDR*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1998, pp. 111–138, at 137.

and Luanda faced in the mid-1970s (as outlined above), I show how global developments greatly impacted the legitimacy of the ruling classes of both countries and their mutual task of warding off economic collapse of their respective national economies. Moreover, the dispatch of the East German personnel to Angola demonstrates how these transformations on a global scale led to new strategies of resource-poor Eastern European countries, such as the GDR, to adapt to changing economic relations.

In this chapter, I highlight both the broader structural interlinking of the two socialist states' economic, political, and ideological interests into which the Friendship Brigades were inserted and the "micro structures of implementation"<sup>23</sup> and challenges on the ground in Angola from the late 1970s to the late 1980s. I attempt to explain this socialist globalization project in the context of a period characterized by multiple ruptures, which heavily impacted the respective socialist parties – the SED and MPLA – and led to the deployment of the Friendship Brigades in Angola in the first place. As a competing project to Western capitalist globalization, this socialist globalization project, together with others, aimed at alternative forms of economic integration and political alliances, leading to new connections between communist and post-colonial states.<sup>24</sup>

The chapter is based on archival research, drawing from documents from the Ministry of General Agricultural Machinery and Vehicles (Ministerium für Allgemeinen Maschinen-, Landmaschinen- und Fahrzeugbau, MALF) and the Ministry of Transport (Ministerium für Verkehrswesen, MfV), and the Central Council of the Free German Youth (Zentralrat der Freien Deutschen Jugend, ZFDJ) and from the brigades' semi-official diaries<sup>25</sup> – all of which can be found in the Federal Archives in Berlin in the section Foundation Archives of Parties

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**23** B. Unfried, "Instrumente und Praktiken von 'Solidarität' Ost und 'Entwicklungshilfe' West: Blickpunkt auf das entsandte Personal", in: B. Unfried and E. Himmelstoß (eds.), *Die eine Welt schaffen: Praktiken von "Internationaler Solidarität" und "Internationaler Entwicklung"*, Leipzig: Akademische Verlagsanstalt, 2012, pp. 73–98.

**24** See, e.g., J. Mark and P. Apor, "Socialism Goes Global. Decolonization and the Making of a New Culture of Internationalism in Socialist Hungary, 1956–1989", *The Journal of Modern History* 87 (2015), pp. 852–891; J. Bockman, "Socialist Globalization against Capitalist Neocolonialism: The Economic Ideas behind the New International Economic Order", *Humanity* 1 (2015), pp. 109–128. This argument is also put forward in I. R. Harisch and E. Burton, "Sozialistische Globalisierung: Tagebücher der DDR-Freundschaftsbrigaden in Afrika, Asien und Lateinamerika", *Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History* 17 (2020) 3, pp. 578–591.

**25** On the diaries of the Friendship Brigades in Angola, see P. Sprute, "Exercising 'International Solidarity': The Brigadetagebücher of the FDJ-Freundschaftsbrigaden in Angola and the Experience of Young East Germans in the Global Cold War", Unpublished seminar paper, Humboldt-University, Berlin, 2018. See also Harisch and Burton, "Sozialistische Globalisierung".

and Mass Organizations of the GDR (Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen, SAPMO). This archival material is combined with a number of narrative interviews I conducted with former members of the Friendship Brigades and specialists in 2017 and 2018.<sup>26</sup> The narratives provided by the interview partners were especially instructive to examine the limits of the East German deliveries in Angola beyond the official representations in the archives.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section sketches out the emergence and objectives of the East German Friendship Brigades within the field of global development policy of the 1960s. Furthermore, the joint development strategies of the SED and the MPLA, together with the specific conditions and goals of the brigades' mission in Angola, are explained. Through my analysis, it will become clear that the solidarity discourse, which was crucial for the brigades' self-understanding, was closely interwoven with the GDR's foreign trade interests.

The main part of this chapter examines the personnel sent and the fine structures of implementation on the ground in Angola from the late 1970s to the late 1980s, such as the complex tripartite remuneration scheme. Next, the section discusses what the mostly young men and few women perceived as obstacles to their mission of exercising solidarity more than 6,000 kilometres away from home in a challenging environment, constantly overshadowed by a raging internationalized destabilization war that was mainly fuelled, according to their (and the MPLA's) perspective, by Pretoria and Washington.<sup>27</sup> Other challenges faced included how to cope with everyday life in general and the transfer of knowledge within the vocational training programme, which was impaired by insufficient language skills on the East German side and a low level of education and supposed lack of discipline on the Angolan side.

Contact between the East Germans and the Angolans, Cubans, and Soviets on the ground – under the banner of socialist “internationalism” – will be emphasized throughout this contribution. This emphasis supports the overall argument that the presence of the GDR's Friendship Brigades in socialist Angola was part of socialist global entanglements, with the intersection of solidarity and trade in the relationship between the SED and MPLA leadership acting as a nodal point.

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<sup>26</sup> I conducted seven interviews. The interview partners – a car electrician, electrical engineer, motor mechanic, locksmith for agricultural machines, toolmaker, and industrial blacksmith – were deployed at different times from 1977 to the late 1980s. Four of the male brigadists later worked as specialists in Angola after their two years in the Friendship Brigade.

<sup>27</sup> See Becker, *Angola, Mosambik und Zimbabwe* and Westad, *The Global Cold War*, pp. 207–239.

## 2 East German Friendship Brigades of the Free German Youth: A Socialist Instrument of Development Policy

Development policy had become a global endeavour in the early 1960s, and youth organizations were involved, to a large degree, to assert their sending country's interests and to "universalize their own social system".<sup>28</sup> In 1963, the two German states followed, respectively, the footsteps of the volunteers of the Peace Corps (USA) and the youths who were dispatched by the Komsomol (Soviet Union). The Federal Republic's German Development Service was founded on 24 June 1963, and the GDR followed less than three months later with the founding of the Friendship Brigades of the Free German Youth (Freie Deutsche Jugend, FDJ).<sup>29</sup> Initially, the brigades' main aim was to show "active solidarity with the people living in the young nation states" and to support these countries in achieving political and economic independence and social progress.<sup>30</sup> In 1978, the secretariat of the ZFDJ refined their objectives to include increasing the GDR's international reputation, propagating Marxist-Leninist ideology and peace policy, sharing experiences of socialist construction and youth associations, and training young citizens in host countries to become qualified specialists.<sup>31</sup>

Starting in 1964, the ZFDJ dispatched more than 60 Friendship Brigades to their work locations in 26 African, Asian, and Latin American countries.<sup>32</sup> By the 1980s, with an average of 300 members per year, a few thousand brigadists were sent to their work locations.<sup>33</sup>

Production brigades, in the form of youth brigades, had existed in the Soviet-occupied zone since the 1940s. A decade later, work brigades emerged, which were followed by the Brigades of Socialist Work, established in 1959.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Burton, "Solidarität und ihre Grenzen", p. 154.

<sup>29</sup> Y.-S. Hong, *Cold War Germany, the Third World, and the Global Humanitarian Regime*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, p. 291.

<sup>30</sup> U. van der Heyden, "FDJ-Brigaden der Freundschaft aus der DDR – die Peace Corps des Ostens?" in: Unfried and Himmelstoß (eds.), *Die eine Welt schaffen*, pp. 99–122, at 101.

<sup>31</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DE 1/57596, Bericht über die Arbeit der FDJ-Brigaden in Entwicklungsländern: Konzeption für die Gestaltung der Arbeit der FDJ-Brigaden in den Jahren 1978/79, 28 February 1978, p. 3.

<sup>32</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/19631, "25 Jahre Brigaden der Freundschaft", 28 July 1989, not paginated.

<sup>33</sup> van der Heyden, "FDJ-Brigaden", pp. 104, 106, 114.

<sup>34</sup> T. Reichel, "Sozialistisch arbeiten, lernen und leben": *Die Brigadebewegung in der DDR (1959–1989)*, Köln: Böhlau, 2011, p. 59.

Made up of mostly young men and a few women in their 20s and early 30s, the youth were sent as collectives (*Kollektive*) and not individually or in small groups, as was the common practice for Western aid workers, especially for volunteers.<sup>35</sup> In that sense, the internationally active Friendship Brigades represented a unique extension of the internal brigade movement in the GDR.<sup>36</sup>

The occupational background of the brigade members varied depending on the requirements for the specific mission, but in general it comprised a wide range of technical, medical, and pedagogical professions.

In the GDR, state-delegated experts with operational tasks were referred to officially as cooperators (*Kooperanten*), skilled workers as specialists (*Spezialisten*), and the members of the Friendship Brigades of the Free German Youth as brigadists (*Brigadisten*).<sup>37</sup> There were clear differences between the brigade members and specialists on the ground. According to *Neues Deutschland*, the central organ of the SED, the brigadists, being mostly very young, came “with the enthusiasm of the youth and with the willingness to actively show solidarity” and with “the firm will to make sacrifices”.<sup>38</sup> This “active solidarity” and “willingness to make sacrifices” was used to justify the poorer accommodation, worse situation regarding supplies, and lower remuneration of brigadists compared to that of specialists.

Unlike other forms of solidarity, which were usually handled centrally by the GDR's Solidarity Committee (Solidaritätskomitee), the ZFDJ was responsible for the staff deployment of the Friendship Brigades.<sup>39</sup> However, the Angolan case was different. Due to the mission's entanglement with the export of W50 trucks,<sup>40</sup> in addition to the ZFDJ, the MALF and MfV were also responsible. The specialist brigade, named “Solidarity”, of the Industrial Association for Vehicle

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35 Burton, “Solidarität und ihre Grenzen”, p. 153.

36 See *ibid.*, p. 152; Harisch and Burton, “Sozialistische Globalisierung”.

37 Unfried, “Instrumente”, p. 82.

38 “Die Blauhemden helfen in Angola. Beitrag der Solidarität von FDJ-Brigaden im tropischen Afrika”, *Neues Deutschland*, 15 August 1979.

39 U. van der Heyden, *GDR International Development Policy Involvement: Doctrine and Strategies between Illusions and Reality 1960–1990. The Example (South) Africa*, Münster: Lit, 2013, p. 88.

40 The first W50 truck came off the production line on 17 July 1965 in the automobile factories of the VEB Industriewerke Ludwigsfelde, part of the IFA conglomerate. The countless vehicle superstructures for the universally applicable W50 included tipper vehicles, box trucks, semi-trailer tractors, tankers, fire brigade vehicles, and refuse collection vehicles. The VEB Industriewerke Ludwigsfelde exported the W50 to more than 53 countries on 4 continents (see Ch. Suhr, *Laster aus Ludwigsfelde*, Reichenbach: Kraftakt, 2015, pp. 71, 204).

Construction (Industrieverband Fahrzeugbau, IFA),<sup>41</sup> through the IFA combine for commercial vehicles in Ludwigsfelde, was handled by the MALF itself.<sup>42</sup>

Because the Friendship Brigades were integrated into party structures through the ZFDJ, the SED, overall, had a definitive influence on GDR development policy since civil society and church groups were only able to make themselves heard effectively at the end of the 1980s.<sup>43</sup> The notion of “solidarity”, commonly framed as “anti-imperialist solidarity” (*anti-imperialistische Solidarität*), was paramount in the SED’s political-ideological discourse towards the colonial territories and independent nation-states of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.<sup>44</sup> The GDR’s politically and ideologically motivated *Südpolitik* (a policy oriented towards states in the Global South) sought to strengthen the “progressive forces” on the African continent and, thus, advance the construction of socialism worldwide.<sup>45</sup> Accordingly, it is unsurprising that the seizure of power of the socialist MPLA in resource-rich Angola created high hopes amongst the SED leadership:<sup>46</sup> “For the first time, a developing country [Angola] with the foundations of a modern economy is on our side. Under the current power relations, a socialist state with a model effect for the whole of Africa can be created in a short space of time.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> The IFA was a conglomerate of combines that was administered by the MALF. The W50 truck was produced in the VEB Industrierwerke Ludwigsfelde, south of Berlin.

<sup>42</sup> Information on this can be found, e.g., in SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/22234, “Zwischenbericht über den bisherigen Einsatz der FDJ-Brigaden des Ministeriums für Allgemeinen Maschinen-, Landmaschinen- und Fahrzeugbau in der VR Angola”, 1 February 1978, respectively SAPMO-BArch, DY 3023/997, “Bericht über die Ergebnisse des Einsatzes der Brigaden der Freundschaft der FDJ im Jahr 1982 und Maßnahmen für ihre weitere Arbeit”, 2 December 1982.

<sup>43</sup> B.-E. Siebs, *Die Außenpolitik der DDR 1976–1989: Strategien und Grenzen*, Paderborn: Schöningh, 1999, p. 54.

<sup>44</sup> Unfried, “Instrumente”, p. 77.

<sup>45</sup> H.-G. Schleicher, “Entwicklungszusammenarbeit und Außenpolitik in der DDR: das Beispiel Afrika”, in: H.-J. Bücking (ed.), *Entwicklungspolitische Zusammenarbeit in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der DDR*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1998, pp. 95–110, here pp. 101f.

<sup>46</sup> Schleicher, “Entwicklungszusammenarbeit”, pp. 101f.

<sup>47</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 3023/1464, “Information über die Reise einer Delegation des MfAA in die Volksrepublik Angola”, 1 September 1977.

### 3 “Solidarity” and Trade Matters: Aims and Conditions of the Friendship Brigades’ Deployment in Angola

In the years that followed the battles over Luanda and its hinterland, the victorious Marxist liberation movement – the MPLA – had to establish control over most of the country’s provinces. Reviving the devastated agricultural sector proved to be a monumental challenge for the new government, which was overseeing an economy whose productivity dropped roughly two-thirds in almost all sectors compared to pre-independence levels. As for coffee, production fell from over 200,000 tons prior to independence to a mere 25,170 tons in 1978, and the MPLA government was deprived of substantial export revenues due to the slump in coffee production.<sup>48</sup>

From 1976 onwards, relations between Angola – whose first president as well as the leader of the MPLA, Agostinho Neto, embarked on a “socialist path to development” – and the socialist countries, such as the GDR, developed fast.<sup>49</sup> In turn, the SED and MPLA agreed upon agreements for credit, trade, and commercial shipments as well as cooperation in construction and geology, agriculture, transport, plant construction, and health and social services, amongst many more endeavours. The personnel dispatched to Angola included technical and educational specialists from a similar variety of fields as well as the Friendship Brigades.<sup>50</sup>

In accordance with a decision made on 1 September 1977 by the Central Committee of the SED, the brigades would be deployed at several locations in Angola and were given a twofold task. Firstly, they should help to secure the import of Angolan coffee through the construction of a “coffee line”. At the request of the MPLA, the necessary coffee peeling machines would be repaired at harvest time and the transport and marketing of the harvest would be supported through GDR aid. The brigades would be supported by East German

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<sup>48</sup> M. R. Bhagavan, *Angola’s Political Economy, 1975–1985*, Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1986, p. 67, quoted in Harisch, “Bartering Coffee, Cocoa and W50 Trucks”, p. 51.

<sup>49</sup> Importantly, there existed a good basis for trust, given that the SED and its mass organizations had supported the MPLA since the early 1960s with solidarity shipments, scholarships, weapons, and military training. See H.-G. Schleicher, “The German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the Liberation Struggle of Southern Africa”, in: A. Temu and J. Das Neves Tembe (eds.), *Southern African Liberation Struggles 1960–1994: Contemporaneous Documents*, 9 vols, Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2014, pp. 449–561, here pp. 501–507.

<sup>50</sup> An overview of the agreements between 1977 and 1987 can be found in SAPMO-BArch, DL 226/38.

coffee experts, roasting masters, truck drivers, civil engineers, and economists. Secondly, they should secure the export of the East German W50 trucks by setting up a network of on-site workshops as well as customer and repair services. In addition, Angolans would receive vocational training in these workshops.

Thus, the “coffee agreement”, which included the Friendship Brigades, was described by both East German and Angolan actors as “mutually beneficial”: Angolan coffee – bartered for East German trucks and personnel who, in turn, assisted in repairing Angola’s war-damaged and neglected coffee commodity chain – seemed a win-win situation. On the one hand, it acted as a viable option to save precious hard currency for the leadership of the SED in East Berlin, and, on the other hand, it strengthened the standing of MPLA’s politicians in Luanda, who shared considerable trust towards the socialist bloc due to its commitment during the year-long anti-colonial war against the Portuguese colonialists backed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.<sup>51</sup>

The sending strategy of the Friendship Brigades clearly demonstrates the intermingling of “solidarity” with East German foreign trade interests,<sup>52</sup> and a number of scholars highlight the connections with the general “commercialization” of the GDR’s development policy during the critical juncture of the late 1970s.<sup>53</sup> One example suffices: Heinz-Jürgen Hagenmüller, head of the department managing the Friendship Brigades, stated in 1982:

The stronger orientation of the brigades’ tasks towards GDR objects and exports can also be witnessed in other states. While in Angola the focus is on repairing W50 trucks and securing coffee exports, in Cuba the focus is on the cement plant Karl Marx, in Mozambique on the coal plant Moatize, and in Ethiopia on repairing GDR combine harvesters.<sup>54</sup>

In principle, the export of East German goods made it possible to earn foreign currency while pursuing the GDR’s import efforts. Thus, the work of the brigades

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<sup>51</sup> For a more detailed assessment of and the driving factors for these barter agreements, see the upcoming chapter on Angola in Anne Dietrich’s dissertation project, “Südfrüchte, Rohrzucker und Kaffee aus Übersee – Der Importhandel der DDR mit den Entwicklungsländern Kuba und Äthiopien zwischen Konsumversprechen und ideologischem Anspruch” as well as Harisch, “Bartering Coffee, Cocoa and W50 Trucks”.

<sup>52</sup> Schleicher, “Elemente entwicklungspolitischer Zusammenarbeit”, pp. 121f.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted from H. Butters, “Zur wirtschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit der DDR mit Mosambik”, in: U. van der Heyden, I. Schleicher, and H.-G. Schleicher (eds.), *Die DDR und Afrika: Zwischen Klassenkampf und neuem Denken*, Münster: Lit, 1993, pp. 165–173; Döring, “Es geht um unsere Existenz”.

<sup>54</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY24/22233, “Hinweise zur Vorlage über die Arbeit der Brigaden der Freundschaft der FDJ 1982”, n. d., p. 1 (own translation).



within the framework of the Angolan “coffee line”<sup>55</sup> and the repairing of the exported W50 trucks for Angola is not a new factor affecting the aims of the brigades during this period. Nevertheless, the spontaneity and the number of staff sent over the course of the Angola mission is remarkable. More importantly, the MPLA explicitly requested the ZFDJ Friendship Brigades, and the GDR’s man in charge of the agreement, Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski, fulfilled the MPLA’s wish within a very short time.<sup>56</sup>

The special agreement to purchase 10,000 tons of raw coffee from Angola was signed on 23 June 1977, and the Politbüro decision to send the brigades followed promptly after on 28 June 1977. This was successful due to tough negotiations between bureaucrats and foreign traders of both governments. Angola was not willing to bear any part of the operational costs, especially in convertible currency, as President Neto assumed that Angola would receive the same conditions as other countries for the deployment of “ambassadors in blue shirts” (as the Friendship Brigades were also called).<sup>57</sup> In the end, the basis of the operating conditions of the brigadists in Angola was agreed upon with the representative GDR companies and Angolan authorities in August 1977, which included, amongst others, working times, vacation time, financed travel to and from the country, and restrictions on import for personal use only.<sup>58</sup> Additionally, the deployment period for brigade members was set one year, with the option to extend for another year. Specialists were usually deployed for one to three years, depending on the contract with the GDR company that dispatched them.<sup>59</sup>

The first four locations were in Luanda, Gabela, N’Dalatando, and Uíge. The capital, Luanda, functioned as the main base for East German involvement in Angola because the Central Operation Management was located there. Gabela, surrounded by coffee plantations, is located around 300 km south of Luanda and functioned as an important station between the capital and the more southern towns of Benguela and Lobito. The nearby town of Porto Amboim was Angola’s

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55 Dietrich, “Zwischen solidarischem Handel”.

56 Ch. Hatzky, *Cubans in Angola: South-South Cooperation and Transfer of Knowledge, 1976–1991*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2015.

57 SAPMO-BArch, DY 3023/1463, “Information über die Reise einer Delegation des MfAA in die Volksrepublik Angola”, 1 September 1977, p. 36.

58 SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/22234, “Information über den Stand der Verhandlungen zum Regierungsabkommen mit der Volksrepublik Angola über den Einsatz der FDJ-Brigaden”, 12 August 1977, annex 1.

59 Interview nos. 1, 2, 3 respectively; SAPMO-BArch, DL 226/38, “Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik und der Regierung der Volksrepublik Angola über die Entsendung von Spezialisten der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik in die Volksrepublik Angola”, n. d., p. 50.

only area for cultivating arabica coffee. Most of Angola's robusta coffee was produced in the areas around Uíge, 250 km north-east of Luanda, and N'Dalatando, located 200 km east of Luanda. By May 1978, 25 East German Friendship Brigade members and specialists were deployed in Luanda, 60 in Gabela, 64 in N'Dalatando, and 68 in Uíge, and, numbering altogether 217 GDR citizens in the coffee and transportation sector, of which 128 were brigadists.<sup>60</sup>

This was followed in the late 1970s and early 1980s by car repair workshops in Lobito, Lubango, Huambo, Malanje, and Luena in the far east, and in the mid-1980s, a vocational training centre in the Angolan exclave of Cabinda started to operate. The brigade in the town of Gabela can act as an example to emphasize the aim of the Friendship Brigades to support autarchy as well as the multitude of occupational backgrounds mentioned above. The Gabela brigade consisted of a brigade leader, a party secretary, four locksmiths, two car mechanics, one driving school instructor, one electrician, one water wagon driver,<sup>61</sup> one supplier (*Versorger*),<sup>62</sup> one interpreter, one nurse, and one cook.

## 4 Dispatched to a Collapsing Economy: The Brigades and Specialists' Main Fields of Activity

Two main fields of engagement existed for the East German brigades and specialists on the ground: firstly, the coffee supply chain and, secondly, the car repair workshops, where Angolans received vocational training. Those brigadists active in the coffee sector were mainly assigned to repairing coffee peeling machines and generators from Portuguese or British manufacturers or to assisting with the collection and transport of the harvest. These repair teams usually comprised five members and were referred to as "mobile brigades" since they were not permanently tied to a specific location, as was the case with the workshop brigades. Apart from the tasks mentioned above, "mobile brigadists" took over a number of organizational and repair tasks depending on their occupational background and what tasks the Angolans and Cubans asked them to do. As one East German electrical engineer who was part of a "mobile brigade"

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<sup>60</sup> See the handwritten correction in SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/22234, "Problemkatalog für den Genossen Hartmut König", n. d. [1978].

<sup>61</sup> Daily drive to a thermal spring for fresh drinking water for the brigade and the local hospital.

<sup>62</sup> This person fetched groceries and did all kinds of driving and errands.

remembered, he was usually assigned various tasks by the Angolans or Cubans on site:

Most of the problems that we were supposed to solve, as far as I was concerned, were always decentralized somewhere in the area, kilometres away, sometimes 100 kilometres or so, and those were always problems that the Angolans told us where they needed help, we couldn't even know that [. . .] or the Cubans who were working in a certain area told us that it would be good if the place was connected to the power circuit again.<sup>63</sup>

In fact, the tasks of the electrical engineer in question ranged from repairing emergency power generators (most Angolan villages and even smaller towns were not connected to an integrated power grid) to restarting machines in joineries and workshops to connecting dozens of households, sawmills, and car workshops to the power grid.<sup>64</sup>

The work of the young East German men and women also concerned other fields, some of which was carried out outside working hours – for example, some tasks were undertaken semi-voluntarily on institutionalized “Red Saturdays”. This included tasks such as ensuring the water supply of individual municipalities or maintaining large generators, which could sometimes take a brigade member or specialist to a training camp of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO)<sup>65</sup> over a weekend. A former brigadist and later business traveller for the VEB Industriewerke Ludwigsfelde, for example, told me that he and a colleague worked for free over a weekend to repair a generator in a SWAPO training camp since this was requested by the Angolan partners. To do this kind of work free of charge – “where a Swede would certainly have asked for several hundred dollars” – was seen by one interviewee as a unique characteristic of the GDR staff as a whole, given its mission of internationalism and solidarity.<sup>66</sup>

Regarding the coffee preparation infrastructure (peeling, cleaning, and pre-sorting) in the four main coffee-cultivating areas of Angola, it was reported in early 1978 that only 220 of 660 coffee enterprises were still in operation. The remaining 440 enterprises were not operating due to broken diesel electric stations because of a lack of skilled staff for operation, maintenance, and repair. Owing to these shortcomings, it was estimated that a whole year's harvest was going to waste in abandoned warehouses in Angola's countryside. As for the follow-up processing (post-cleaning, sorting, storing, and shipping),

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<sup>63</sup> Interview no. 2.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> A Namibian Liberation Party.

<sup>66</sup> Interview no. 3.

the roughly 40 enterprises were limited in their production capacity due to a lack of skilled personnel.<sup>67</sup>

How effective the deployment of the brigades was perceived by the Central Operations Management in Luanda and the Central Council of the FDJ in East Berlin was determined by the reporting of local agents. The East German workshop and brigade leaders gave a detailed account of the brigade's productivity in their biannual reports. The latter recorded repaired W50 trucks as well as coffee peeling and processing machines, together with overtime worked. The vocational training activities and any problems that occurred were also written down. According to Eric Burton, the exclusively male brigade leaders were "in a particularly important, but also precarious situation as mediators of reality between local experiences and the Central Council of the Free German Youth [in Berlin]".<sup>68</sup>

Therefore, the table below (Table 1), with figures calculated from the brigade leaders and specialists' reports, has to be seen against the tendency of the reporting agents to probably portray things more favourably than they were in reality. The detailed reports and tables on the brigades' work – which are available in the Angolan case up until 1984 – also reveal a habit of quantifying work performance.<sup>69</sup> Quantifiable targets for the brigade collective were detailed in the annual "fighting programmes" (*Kampfprogramme*), some of which were written down in the brigade diaries. With their individual targets the brigades competed with each other for the honorary title "Collective of socialist work/Kollektiv der sozialistischen Arbeit".<sup>70</sup> Taking all this into account, the table compiled below gives an idea of the number of repairs conducted on the ground. With Angola's truck fleet being estimated at around 500 in 1976 and the number of coffee enterprises at around 660 in 1978, the table emphasizes the major influence the work of the brigades and specialists' work had. It is also important to keep in mind that a functioning transport system was key to delivering the coffee harvest to the roasteries and then to the ports for export.

However, the effectiveness of the Angolan, East German, and Cuban attempts in improving the coffee commodity chain were adversely influenced by a number of factors. These included continuously raging armed conflicts in many coffee-

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67 SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/22234, "Zwischenbericht über den bisherigen Einsatz der FDJ-Brigaden des Ministeriums für Allgemeinen Maschinen-, Landmaschinen- und Fahrzeugbau in der VR Angola (Stand per 1.2.1978)", 10 February 1978.

68 Burton, "Solidarität und ihre Grenzen", p. 162.

69 Ibid.

70 See, e.g., the "fighting programme" in SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/20213, "Wettbewerbsprogramm der Freundschaftsbrigade Uíge zur Erringung des Titels 'Kollektiv der sozialistischen Arbeit' sowie des Kampfes um ein 'Rotes Ehrenbanner des ZK der SED'", 29 October 1982.

**Table 1:** Number of trucks and machines repaired by the East German personnel.

Period	Trucks (total)	Foreign trucks	W50 trucks	Truck inspections	Coffee peeling and processing machines	Agricultural machinery	Stationary diesel engines	Overtime (hours)
09/1977–05/1978 <sup>71</sup>	3,806	306	3,550	n/a	91	n/a	n/a	5,885
09/1977–09/1979 <sup>72</sup>	13,252	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,200	691	827	20,966
1982 <sup>73</sup>	4,724	1,294	3,430	2,003	593			19,106
1983 <sup>74</sup>	5,802	2,011	3,791	2,365	1,763			15,011

<sup>71</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/22234, “Zwischenbericht über den bisherigen Einsatz der FDJ-Brigaden des Ministeriums für Allgemeinen Maschinen-, Landmaschinen- und Fahrzeugbau in der VR Angola (Stand per 1.2.1978)”, 10 February 1978.

<sup>72</sup> “Die Blauhemden helfen in Angola”, *Neues Deutschland*, 15 August 1979.

<sup>73</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 3023/997, “Bericht über die Ergebnisse des Einsatzes der Brigaden der Freundschaft der FDJ im Jahr 1982 und Maßnahmen für ihre weitere Arbeit, 2 December 1982”, p. 17.

<sup>74</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 3023/998, “Bericht über die Ergebnisse des Einsatzes der Brigaden der Freundschaft der FDJ im Jahr 1983 und Maßnahmen für ihre weitere Arbeit im Jahr 1984, 1 December 1983”, p. 259.

growing areas,<sup>75</sup> which resulted in decreased production; a lack of necessary technical knowledge about machines, fertilizers, and processing following the Portuguese exodus; the mismanagement and incompetence of the managers appointed by the MPLA government; a lack of support for small-scale farmers growing coffee; and a drought at the beginning of the 1980s. These circumstances contributed to a further decline in production.<sup>76</sup>

Importantly, the shortage of labour remained an acute, unresolved problem. Before independence, up to 120,000 Ovimbundu “contract workers” from the central highlands of Angola had picked, washed, and dried the coffee cherries under a system of “neo-slavery”.<sup>77</sup> The structural problem of a post-colonial labour supply was never solved and is symptomatic of the MPLA’s neglect of establishing a policy of incentives in rural areas. Coffee production had fallen to a meagre 17,400 tons by 1982, and the once most important foreign currency earner was now one agricultural commodity amongst many.

Due to the rapidly growing presence of East German W50 trucks on Angolan roads – from none at independence to over 7,000 by 1980 and 10,000 by 1984<sup>78</sup> – the work of the East German brigades and specialists increasingly concentrated on the second main field of activity: the transport sector and technical vocational training. Car repair workshops were set up in Luanda, Gabela, N’Dalatando, and Uíge. Facilities in Lobito, Lubango, Huambo, Malanje, and Luena followed afterwards. Some 30 to 90 Angolans worked alongside the East German (and sometimes Cuban, Soviet, Portuguese, or Swedish) staff in these workshops. Local workers comprised already skilled workers and a number of apprentices, seeing that each brigade member and specialist usually had one to two apprentices. The rest of Angolan workforce was made up of secretaries, cleaning staff, and, sometimes, street children, who did not go to school.<sup>79</sup> The resident workshop manager was assisted by a counterpart from the GDR, but the operational management and ultimate decision-making authority was always reserved for the Angolan workshop director, who was, theoretically, positioned one level higher in the hierarchy than either the Angolan or East German workshop manager. The

75 K. Somerville, *Angola: Politics, Economy, Society*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1986, p. 141.

76 *Ibid.*, p. 130.

77 Birmingham, “Angola”, p. 139. See also Becker, *Angola, Mosambik und Zimbabwe*, pp. 119f.

78 D. Coburger, “Boten der Freundschaft in Angola”, *Neues Deutschland*, 20 February 1980, p. 6; H. Quaas, “Robur-Transporter auf angolanischen Straßen”, *Neues Deutschland*, 11 December 1984, p. 6. By comparison, the MPLA’s truck fleet at independence numbered around 400 to 500 trucks. See the report in SAPMO-BArch, DM1/8287, “Bericht zur Dienstreise des Vertreters des Ministeriums für Verkehrswesen im Rahmen der Delegation der DDR nach der VR Angola”, 18 May 1976.

79 See the different reports in SAPMO-BArch, DM1/12157; Interview nos. 1, 2, 3.

work relationship between these actors oscillated between a constructive one, where the East German side was invited to management meetings in some workshops, and a conflictual one regarding authority: “Another problem is that the Angolan director is reluctant to accept our proposals and advice. His mentality is that he is director and that he can do everything and knows everything.”<sup>80</sup> In some instances, the East German perceived superiority in constructing a socialist order was justified with what was seen as the result of colonialism on the mental state of their Angolan counterparts: “Our main daily collective task is to constantly consult with our Angolan colleagues on the professional and ideological aspects of the work process. The colleagues should recognize the necessity of learning, knowledge, work, and quality. They must come to the realization that they must first work if they want to buy more or satisfy their needs.”<sup>81</sup>

Although the Angolan apprentices’ skills focused on East German trucks and spare parts, other vehicles (mainly Swedish Volvo and Scania, which were also imported in greater numbers by the MPLA government) were also repaired in the workshops.<sup>82</sup> It is increasingly reported that the workshops maintained vehicles for SWAPO, the Namibian liberation movement, which the MPLA government had supported since Angola’s independence.<sup>83</sup> In this context, it is noteworthy that several hundreds, if not thousands, of the more than 13,000 W50 trucks exported to Angola were delivered to the Angolan army to fight UNITA rebels<sup>84</sup> – a utilization of the W50 truck that was widely unknown amongst the East German populace. As an extension of the work in the car repair workshops, some of the East German brigadists also helped to unload the East German W50 trucks at the ports of Luanda and Lobito, brought the trucks to the large distribution centre, assembled them together there, and carried out the initial inspection before the trucks were handed over to the Angolan Ministry of Agriculture or the Ministry of Transport.<sup>85</sup>

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**80** SAPMO-BArch, DM1/12157, “2. Halbjahresbericht 1980 Uige Manauto 50”, 25 March 1981.

**81** SAPMO-BArch, DM1/12157, “Tätigkeitsbericht für das 1. Halbjahr 1981”, 24 April 1981.

**82** Interview nos. 3, 5. For an approximate ratio of “foreign” trucks to W50 trucks see the table above.

**83** SAPMO-BArch, DM1/12157, “2. Halbjahresbericht 1980 Uige Manauto 50”, 25 March 1981.

**84** Interview no. 3. Of the first truck shipments, 500 out of 2,700 W50 trucks were delivered to the MPLA’s army. See SAPMO-BArch, DY 3023/1464, “Aufbau von Reparaturwerkstätten für den Einsatz von LKW W50 in der VR Angola”, 15 February 1978.

**85** Interview nos. 1, 3. See also SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/22234, “Information über den Stand der Verhandlungen zum Regierungsabkommen mit der Volksrepublik Angola über den Einsatz der FDJ-Brigaden”, 12 August 1977, annex 1.

The vocational training, which was initially tied mostly to the car repair workshops, was soon expanded to include other fields. Whereas Angolan-Cuban cooperation predominantly focused on the education sector and literacy campaigns,<sup>86</sup> the GDR trained local people mostly in technical occupations. Locksmiths for agricultural machinery were trained in Malanje from 1984 onwards.<sup>87</sup> More than 500 young people were said to have been trained as locksmiths, motor mechanics, and bricklayers in the vocational training centre in Angola's exclave of Cabinda.<sup>88</sup>

The construction and expansion of these local vocational training centres were continuously demanded by the high-ranking Angolan delegation during negotiations in the Joint Economic Council (*Gemeinsamer Wirtschaftsausschuss*), which took place alternately in Luanda and East Berlin every one to three years from 1977 onwards.

Regarding the division of labour of the different socialist states engaged in Angola – that is to say, Cuba in general education, transport, and medicine; the GDR in transport, machinery, and vocational training; the Soviet Union in fishery; and Vietnam and Bulgaria in agriculture – this specialization was a result of a bilateral coordination process managed by the MPLA government. Lopo do Nascimento, Angola's prime minister, approached the GDR with options for future cooperation in the sectors of transport and machinery (trucks, railways, and ports), agriculture, and vocational training.<sup>89</sup> Cooperation coexisted with competition on the ground in these socialist globalization projects: while Eastern European staff were often treated by Cuban doctors and guarded by Cuban and Soviet soldiers, the repair teams of East German and Bulgarian agricultural machinery competed rather than cooperated.<sup>90</sup>

Considering that the Eastern European socialist states, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Vietnam were all members of COMECON at that time, it is surprising how little economic organization seemed to play a role in the coordination and setting up of development plans in Angola.<sup>91</sup> Whereas COMECON had set up

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<sup>86</sup> Hatzky, "Cubans in Angola".

<sup>87</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 3023/1002, "Bericht über die Ergebnisse des Einsatzes der Brigaden der Freundschaft der FDJ im Jahr 1984 und Maßnahmen für die weitere Arbeit der Brigaden der Freundschaft der FDJ im Jahre 1985", 5 December 1984, pp. 437f.

<sup>88</sup> van der Heyden, "FDJ-Brigaden", p. 114.

<sup>89</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DE 1/57596, "Bericht über den Arbeitsbesuch des Premierministers der Volksrepublik Angola, Lopo do Nascimento, Mitglied des Politbüros und Sekretär des Zentralkomitees der MPLA-Partei der Arbeit, vom 6. bis 8. Februar 1978 in der DDR", 10 February 1978, p. 6.

<sup>90</sup> Interview no. 1.

<sup>91</sup> The concrete role and initiatives of COMECON in Angola and the "socialist-oriented" states of Africa generally are unexplored topics that deserve more attention.



orientation guidelines for the pricing mechanisms in barter trade and remuneration of specialists, actual involvement remained low. In 1977, the GDR side informed the MPLA that 200 specialists would be sent to Angola as part of a COMECON initiative. In turn, the Angolan side provided a detailed list of the specialists needed.<sup>92</sup> Yet, since the initiative is not mentioned again in the sources, it is difficult to assess how many specialists were sent, if at all. Additionally, in 1985, there was a COMECON proposal for multilateral projects and joint ventures with socialist companies in various Angolan sectors, such as transport, education, and raw material exploration, with the aim of countering the Western dominance of Angolan trade and securing a long-term supply of mineral and agricultural raw materials. It was met with modest enthusiasm: the GDR government was, in principle, in favour of the proposal but made it clear that the bulk of East German involvement should be bilateral.<sup>93</sup>

Regarding the vocational training programmes of the brigades and specialists, I principally agree with the important legacy of the vocational training programmes in Angola to counter colonialisms' conscious neglect of education,<sup>94</sup> which will be focused upon in the next section. Still, it is important to highlight here that these endeavours in Angola were, on a broader scale, interwoven with the foreign trade interests of the GDR at a crucial economic juncture, while on an individual scale, the mission in Angola was presented to the brigadists as a mission for a socialist brother country.

As for the Angolan side, the MPLA top leadership and province commissioners were continuously expressing their satisfaction with the work of the East German brigades and specialists and demanded an extension of their mission.<sup>95</sup> It is important that it was stated repeatedly in the protocols documents of the Joint Economic Council that the efforts of the personnel dispatched to Angola were one important factor amongst others for the Angolan government to stick to the barter agreement with the GDR for its coffee instead of selling it for hard currency – since “coffee, oil, and quartz crystal as strategic goods are usually only sold [by Angola] for convertible currency”.<sup>96</sup> This is a valuable insight

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<sup>92</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 2023/1463, “Forderung der VR Angola zum Einsatz der 200 DDR-Spezialisten im Rahmen der RGW-Initiative”, 2 May 1978, pp. 202–205.

<sup>93</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 3023/1464, “Information über Vorstellungen der VR Angola für die weitere Zusammenarbeit mit dem RGW”, 20 June 1985.

<sup>94</sup> van der Heyden, “FDJ-Brigaden”, p. 121.

<sup>95</sup> See, e.g., the various reports in SAPMO-BArch, DE 1/57609; DY 3023/1463, p. 233; DY 3023/1464, p. 103; DY 24/20213.

<sup>96</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 3023/1464, “Bericht und Maßnahmen in Auswertung der 4. Tagung des Gemeinsamen Wirtschaftsausschusses DDR/VR Angola, 26 March 1983”, p. 99. See also Harisch, “Bartering Coffee, Cocoa and W50 trucks”.

considering that most research assumes that the GDR had to pay for Angolan coffee and oil with hard currency.<sup>97</sup>

The work of the East German Friendship Brigades and specialists in Angola safeguarded a coffee supply for the GDR population at home – roughly 20 per cent of East German coffee imports came from Angola at its peak – and guaranteed the East German economy a continuous export of W50 trucks while their efforts in the Angolan infrastructure sector legitimized the socialist sister party, the MPLA. However, when the East German personnel arrived in Angola in the mid-1970s, they found an internationalized civil war environment. The MPLA's ongoing war with UNITA and South Africa posed a number of problems for the globalization project of the GDR in Angola, reducing its potential for success since its inception.

## 5 Living Conditions and Survival Strategies of the East German Personnel on the Ground

Following the agreement for the deployment of the Friendship Brigades, the Angolan partner mainly had to provide accommodation and food, but given the near collapse of the economy, continuing UNITA incursions, and generally a severe setback in agricultural produce, this was a difficult task for the Angolan partners. Only a few months after deployment, in November 1977, a list of complaints raised by brigade members and specialists was delivered to the desk of Egon Krenz, the first secretary of the ZFDJ, concerning the “inadequate food situation, insufficient supply of spare parts for motor vehicles, lack of interpreters in the places of work, insufficient medical care and hardly any materials for leisure activities”.<sup>98</sup>

In order to comfort the protesting brigade members, they individually received additional pocket money in the amount of 2,000 kwanza,<sup>99</sup> of which 1,400 went to Versina's Catering Fund for Supplementary Catering, which could

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<sup>97</sup> See, e.g., P. Szobi, “Czechoslovak Economic Interests in Angola in the 1970s and 1980s”, in: A. Calori et al. (eds.), *Between East and South: Spaces of Interaction in the Globalizing Economy of the Cold War*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019, pp. 165–196, at 189.

<sup>98</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/22234, “Information zum Stand der Entsendung von FDJ-Brigaden in die VR Angola”, 19 September 1977.

<sup>99</sup> The kwanza was and is the Angolan currency. In 1978, 1,000 kwanza amounted to around 33 US dollars. The value of the Angolan kwanza is put into perspective by the scarcity of goods on offer; on the black market, the exchange rate against the US dollar was significantly lower. Due to the difficult supply situation, wages were “practically worthless”, and since there was hardly anything to buy with kwanzas in practice, the Indian economist Bhagavan described it

be obtained locally. Versina was a GDR institution for East German citizens sent abroad. In local Versina shops (e.g., in Luanda), imported food and beverages could usually be bought.

Despite these early corrective attempts, the poor supply of food and beer remained a continuous point of friction. Beer and other alcoholic beverages played an important role for many East Germans on the ground as entertainment options were scarce and curfews limited the time they could spend outside their lodgings.<sup>100</sup> The supply situation was apparently so miserable in the first years of service in some places of residence that many brigadists did not even want to return to Angola after their holidays in the GDR. The food in some places consisted almost exclusively of rice and dried fish, which had often already been partially infested with maggots.<sup>101</sup> For those brigades deployed on the coast, there were rare opportunities to obtain much sought after “additional food” (*Zusatzverpflegung*) from the GDR ships mooring at Angola’s ports, where a number of East German harbour pilots, together with Cuban specialists, were also deployed to manage the incoming and outgoing cargo after the Portuguese exodus.<sup>102</sup> The dire supply situation on the ground amidst an ongoing war not only severely constrained the effectiveness of the brigade members and specialists dispatched but also diminished the spirit of solidarity as conditions became unbearable for some East Germans.

Another bone of contention was the remuneration scheme. Admittedly, the salary schemes of the staff sent are rather difficult to grasp. It seems that a tripartite remuneration scheme was in operation, at least from the beginning of the dispatching in 1977 until the mid-1980s, when all brigades in Angola were placed under the aegis of the ZFDJ and salary schemes were standardized.<sup>103</sup> The members of the “conventional” Friendship Brigades apparently received 250 West German marks in the form of forum cheques (*Forumschecks*)<sup>104</sup> on a

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as a “worthless” and “mythical” currency (see M. R. Bhagavan, “Angola: Survival Strategies for a Socialist State”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 6 August 1988, p. 1631).

**100** On the role of alcohol in the lives of the brigade members in Angola and beyond, consult Harisch and Burton, “Sozialistische Globalisierung”.

**101** Interview nos. 1, 2, 3.

**102** See the reports in SAPMO-BArch, DM1/12163.

**103** See, e.g., SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/22234, “Angaben zu den materiellen und finanziellen Bedingungen der Brigaden der Freundschaft”, 30 August 1979; SAPMO-BArch, DL 226/38, annex, and information from the interviews.

**104** East German citizens could use forum cheques to shop (mostly for Western goods) at Intershops in the GDR. One forum cheque mark corresponded to one West German mark. In the context of the East German personnel abroad, these cheques guaranteed that hard currency was transferred back to the GDR.

foreign exchange account plus 100 East German marks as a tropical surcharge in the GDR as well as pocket money of about 1,000 kwanza on the ground. The members of the specialist brigade “Solidarity”, which was handled by the IFA combine for commercial vehicles in Ludwigsfelde, received pocket money of 10,000 kwanza per month but, apart from free lodging, had to pay for their own food. What remained of the 10,000 kwanza at the end of the month, but no more than 5,000 kwanza, could be transferred to a foreign exchange account in the GDR. The specialists who stayed in the country for several years were remunerated according to a salary scheme linked to their occupation. This was between 750 and 920 US dollars per month for workshop managers, brigade leaders, skilled workers, and other technicians. Specialists were allowed to reside with their families and received more suitable accommodation and a better supply of food. The comparatively high remuneration for specialists falling under the third group is due to the difficulties the SED government had in recruiting qualified personnel for these missions abroad.<sup>105</sup>

In addition to these official income channels, brigade members and specialists came up with individual strategies to mitigate the moderate level of and access to supplies and to increase their available funds on the ground. While their government bartered for Angolan coffee with trucks, brigade members brought watches and other consumables from the GDR to barter them for foodstuffs or to sell them locally. All my interview partners informed me that East German watches in Angola were “absolute top sellers”. One received between 5,000 and 10,000 kwanza, a sum that partly corresponded to a monthly wage, for a Ruhla watch, which sold for around 10 East German marks in the GDR:

Every half year [when travelling from the GDR to Angola] [. . .] I have always had about two or three watches with me. I also brought soap or toothbrushes and something like that with me, but as I said, *I did not trade in them* but used them to get some money because you could only buy them on the black market, except for at Versina, but they had no fresh goods; those were all only canned food [. . .] [I]f you wanted to supply yourself there on the black market, you just needed a *lot* of money [. . .] and a watch like that, I think it was traded for 10,000 kwanza, which was almost a month’s pay. But there were also [East German] idiots who exaggerated and then some have been arrested at the airport, because they had 50 watches in their luggage.<sup>106</sup>

That the interviewee tries to distance himself with “I did not trade in them” is based on the fact that this kind of trading was not permitted by the GDR

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**105** These difficulties were visible, for example as evidenced by the MPLA’s immediate request of 380 East German citizens, which could not be fulfilled by the SED government.

**106** Interview no. 3 (own translation and emphasis added).

authorities and could mean the end of one's deployment in Angola. In reality, though, as several interview partners mentioned, all brigade members, including the brigade leaders who reported "home" and were responsible for the disciplining of the brigade, engaged in trading and/or selling of East German goods on the black market (*candonga*).

## 6 Problems, Security Risks in the Context of Ongoing War, and Responses to the Contact Ban

Naturally, the mission did not run smoothly, given that there was tension due to disciplinary offences of various kinds punished by the party leadership as well as were some problems (mentioned above) affecting the brigades and specialists' work. The following section examines the difficulties of the socialist development mission, in which GDR citizens engaged with their Angolan hosts, and the learning processes that resulted from these socialist entanglements. The context of the ongoing war is further highlighted as a crucial and an ever-present factor. According to testimonies from interview partners and final reports<sup>107</sup> written by East German workshop managers (in a number of locations) every six months, problematic issues included a lack of spare parts, a demand for more GDR specialists, complications with the "work organization" and "work discipline" of Angolan workers, and calls for better specialization and for adequate Portuguese language training of GDR personnel before their arrival in Angola.

The continuous criticism by both Angolan and East German actors of the GDR's supply of spare parts reached the high-ranking *Mittag-Kommission* and the GDR's central planning commission, which, in the late 1970s, addressed the problem of customer service and the shortage of spare parts and personnel for the W50 truck in Angola – the largest export market for W50 trucks on the African continent.<sup>108</sup> Angolan criticism was acknowledged: an agreement was made between the ZFDJ and the IFA combine for commercial vehicles in Ludwigsfelde to gather specialists and members of the specialist brigade, under the name "Solidarity", and to send them to Luanda from 1979 to 1982 to improve customer services and revamp repair workshops. Under the guidance of experienced East German specialists in the workshops, together with Angolan workers, the 10 to 15 brigade

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<sup>107</sup> Interview no. 3 (own translation and emphasis added).

<sup>108</sup> Rönicke, *IFA W 50/L 60*, p. 93.

members had the task of making as many W50 trucks as possible roadworthy again while training Angolan apprentices as truck drivers, mechanics, turners, and other professions in the workshop area.<sup>109</sup> The best Angolan apprentices were given the opportunity to complete training as master craftsmen in the GDR, highlighting the bidirectional flow of people. By 1989, over 300 Mozambicans and 85 Angolans worked as “contract workers” (*Vertragsarbeiter*) in the automobile factories of the VEB Industrierwerke Ludwigsfelde, primarily in the area for the final assembly of the W50 trucks.<sup>110</sup>

The colonial legacy of a low education level – an illiteracy rate of 85–90 per cent for Angola was estimated at the time of independence in 1975<sup>111</sup> – was mentioned as an enormous challenge for the vocational training by all brigade members:

To offer insights into the black box of electrotechnics – impossible, since it is already for me, an electrician, a black box, so how can you help someone like him [the Angolan apprentice] [. . .] what was just good, he was simply an intelligent guy who was also very skilled in craftsmanship and learned very quickly and wanted to learn [. . .] but I wouldn't say that it had anything to do with what we would have called training [*Ausbildung*], that's nonsense, that's over the top, because people sometimes had so few writing and numerical skills.<sup>112</sup>

Moreover, due to the spontaneity of the dispatching of East Germans as Friendship Brigades to Angola, many brigadists lacked language skills in Portuguese, which greatly impaired their capacity to conduct the vocational work in the coffee sector and in the workshops, as the following quote makes clear:

**109** SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/22234, “Zwischenbericht über den bisherigen Einsatz der FDJ-Brigaden des Ministeriums für Allgemeinen Maschinen-, Landmaschinen- und Fahrzeugbau in der VR Angola (Stand per 1.2.1978)”, 10 February 1978, annex 1.

**110** “Solidarische Verbundenheit mit Angola und Moçambique”, *Neues Deutschland*, 22 February 1989, p. 2. For a sophisticated portrayal of Angolan and Mozambican contract workers in the GDR, see the works of M. C. Schenck, “From Luanda and Maputo to Berlin: Uncovering Angolan and Mozambican Migrants’ Motives to Move to the German Democratic Republic (1979–1990)”, *African Economic History* 44 (2016), pp. 202–234; M. C. Schenck, “A Chronology of Nostalgia: Memories of Former Angolan and Mozambican Worker Trainees to East Germany”, *Labor History* 59 (2018), pp. 352–74. See also U. van der Heyden, *Das gescheiterte Experiment. Vertragsarbeiter aus Mosambik in der DDR-Wirtschaft (1979–1990)*, Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2019.

**111** R. Soares de Oliveira, *Magnífica e Miserável. Angola desde a guerra civil* [Magnificent and Miserable. Angola since the Civil War], Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2015, p. 54.

**112** Interview no. 2.

I am employed in Gabela as a brigade leader and in this function, I have to primarily organize and guide the work of the brigade, which comprises 31 people. Under the conditions in the People's Republic of Angola, this means that I have to clarify difficult technical problems with the responsible Angolan comrades on a daily basis. *Since I and no member of the brigade speak Portuguese*, an interpreter is required. Without an interpreter, however, the organization and execution of our activities can only be carried out to an extent that calls into question our mission as a whole and certainly does not serve the reputation of our republic.<sup>113</sup>

In the years to come, workshop managers and brigade leaders continuously called for better language education for the incoming brigadists, and usually an interpreter was still needed to interact with the Angolan authorities. The insufficient language training was certainly a sore point regarding the effectiveness of the brigades, which was not affected by the war.

Regarding the Angolan workers and apprentices in the workshops, the archival documents and interview partners frequently called attention to a perceived lack of zeal or discipline, often explained by their lack of food, clothing, and regular pay. A high absence rate was one of the biggest challenges. The reasons given in the interviews for the high absence rate of Angolans were manifold: some of their wages, for example, were either not paid at all or paid late. Many had neither proper shoes nor proper clothes for their work in the workshop.<sup>114</sup> According to one brigadist, "family obligations",<sup>115</sup> on the part of the apprentices, also often led to frequent non-appearance. Moreover, "marijuana was omnipresent"<sup>116</sup> and would have had a correspondingly diminishing effect on the productivity and presence of the apprentices. Moreover, the fluctuation of Angolan staff was high, as many able-bodied men still in vocational training or working in the workshops were conscripted into Angola's army, the People's Armed Forces of Liberation of Angola (Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angola, FAPLA), since Angola was in a constant state of warfare.

Pretoria's destabilization war<sup>117</sup> – which had been undeclared since the unsuccessful invasion of Angola by South African troops in 1975 and which the apartheid regime waged together with UNITA rebels and with additional financial support from the USA – was a proxy war of the bloc powers, the USA and

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**113** SAPMO-BArch, DM1/12156, "Schreiben des Basisleiters aus Gabela", 30 September 1977, not paginated (emphasis added).

**114** Various interviews.

**115** Interview no. 3 (own translation)

**116** Interview no. 3 (own translation).

**117** J. Becker, "Metamorphosen des Krieges. Befreiungs- und Destabilisierungskriege in Angola und Mosambik", in: J. Becker, G. Hödl, and P. Steyrer (eds.), *Krieg an den Rändern: Von Sarajevo bis Kuito*, Wien: Promedia, 2005, pp. 258–277, at 258; see, e.g., Birmingham, "Angola", p. 168.

Soviet Union, during the “hot Cold War”.<sup>118</sup> By 1988, more than 1 million Angolans had lost their lives due to the war, and 1.5 million had had to flee their homelands. The attacks by South African troops and UNITA rebels not only caused immense human suffering but also inflicted enormous damage on infrastructure, with schools, bridges, production plants, hospitals, and roads being damaged or destroyed.<sup>119</sup> The war restricted to a great extent the freedom of movement, not only of Angola’s population but also of the members of the Friendship Brigades. In March 1984, UNITA rebels attacked the provincial capital of Sumbe, located halfway along the coast between Luanda and Benguela; a month later, a UNITA-administered terrorist attack in Huambo in the central Angolan highlands killed 15 Cubans and injured or killed at least 40 Angolans.<sup>120</sup>

To what extent the East German personnel was affected by the war varied greatly according to the respective locations: Gabela, once regarded as a “paradise” of living and working conditions, had to be evacuated in 1983 due to security concerns brought on by advancing UNITA rebels. The East German brigadists and specialists cooperated with Angolan, Cuban, and often Soviet personnel in most of the larger Angolan towns where Friendship Brigades were deployed, such as Gabela, Lobito, and Uíge. In some of these towns, medical services would be handled by Cuban or Soviet doctors.<sup>121</sup> Since the SED government did not allow its citizens to carry guns, Cuban *internacionalistas*<sup>122</sup> – who were usually armed and had received military training before their dispatching to Angola – were also taking care of the safety of East German citizens, a situation that again highlights task sharing and cooperation amongst socialist staff from different countries.<sup>123</sup>

The various factors and conditions outlined here – perceived colonial legacies of work organization and work discipline, lack of spare parts, insufficient

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**118** V. Shubin, *The Hot “Cold War”: The USSR in Southern Africa*, London: University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal Press, 2008.

**119** I. Tvedten, *Angola: Struggle for Peace and Reconstruction*, Boulder: Westview, 1997, p. 70.

**120** Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom*, pp. 327f.

**121** Ibid.

**122** The concept “Cuban internationalism” (*internacionalismo cubano*) is used to refer to the service of Cubans in countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia in both the military and civil sector. An essential principle of the Cuban revolution, the concept is linked to sacrifice and solidarity (see B. Unfried and C. Martínez, “El Internacionalismo, la Solidaridad y el Interés Mutuo: Encuentros entre Cubanitos, Africanos, y Alemanes de la RDA”, *Estudios Históricos* 30 [2017], pp. 425–448, at 427f.). From 1975/76 until 1991, tens of thousands of Cuban soldiers were stationed in Angola. By 1977, there were also more than 3,000 Cuban aid workers in Angola, termed *cooperantes*, who worked as teachers, doctors, nurses, engineers, truck drivers, and other skilled workers (Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom*, pp. 9, 82–85).

**123** Interview no. 3; Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom*.



language skills, and an ongoing destabilization war – all point to the difficulties in conducting development work within this socialist globalization project the Friendship Brigades symbolized. It also emphasizes significant learning processes on both sides; for example, the GDR's capacity to provide Portuguese language training was only effectively developed in the mid-1970s, and companies, such as the IFA combine in Ludwigsfelde, were overstretched with the obligations that went hand in hand with the skyrocketing export of trucks.

Another bone of contention that conflicted with the mission's solidarity imperative was the contact ban (*Kontaktverbot*), which was in force to discourage private personal contact between GDR citizens and the population of "non-socialist economic areas" (*Nichtsozialistisches Wirtschaftsgebiet*, NSW) after working hours. Since Angola was not a member of COMECON, it was classified as an NSW.

Some interviewees heavily criticized the imposed contact ban:

What you promised was worth nothing more than the paper, because it's absurd, so you come to a country for a year, well, after half a year you should have a holiday and someone demands that you should avoid all contact with the local population outside working hours [. . .] someone should tell me if there is something more absurd to demand from someone?<sup>124</sup>

Disobedience in these matters could lead, theoretically, to one's repatriation but instead was usually met with a reprimand (*Rüge*) when handled in disciplinary procedures. Overall, the spectrum of "Angolan incidents" reported in the archival documents ranges from "careless handling of food" to "politically inactive behaviour, disciplinary difficulties" to "selling personal belongings" to "insult and gross violations of safety regulations" to "gross violations of contact rules".<sup>125</sup>

Owing to the obstacles imposed by the SED government in the form of the contact ban, it is not surprising that depictions of sexual encounters between East German men and Angolan women are completely absent in the archival records.<sup>126</sup> Interview partners emphasized that brigadists usually entertained their local contacts – mainly friendships – but a few also had Angolan girlfriends.<sup>127</sup> It

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<sup>124</sup> Interview no. 2.

<sup>125</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 24/222333, "Zusammenstellung von Problemen, die es mit Kadern im Ausland gab (1982 und 1983)", 6 June 1983, p. 3.

<sup>126</sup> On these matters, it would be fruitful to consult the archival documents of the East German security service. See also I. Ch. Obernhummer, "Experten der 'Wissenschaftlich-Technischen Zusammenarbeit' der DDR in Afrika. Alltag und Lebensweisen zwischen DDR-Richtlinien und angespannter Sicherheitslage in den 1970er und 1980er Jahren", Master Thesis, University of Vienna, 2010.

<sup>127</sup> Interview nos. 2, 3, 6.

was reported that male East German brigadists and specialists in Uíge engaged in sexual intercourse with Angolan women and frequently “paid” with chocolate as a kind of parallel currency.<sup>128</sup> Another brigadist, and later specialist, mentioned that it was common for male brigadists to have affairs with Angolan women, especially in the provincial towns; however, it was too dangerous in Luanda, since it was too easy to notice.<sup>129</sup>

To sum up, the GDR’s state-imposed double standards became visible when handling contacts of its citizens with citizens of “non-socialist economic areas” such as Angola.<sup>130</sup> On the one hand, the East German government wanted the brigade members to act as “friends” and energetic internationalists during working hours (with often limited language skills). On the other hand, the contact ban after the end of work led to serious legitimization crises for at least some brigadists whose self-perception was to be on an internationalist mission in order to maintain vital economic fields, such as transport and precious coffee exports, for a fellow socialist country.

## 7 Concluding Remarks

Thomas Lindenberger recently made a general remark concerning the global entanglements of countries with state socialism: “state-socialist economies and societies seem to have been least or if at all negatively affected by globalization, and therefore one is tempted to assume that their experience has not much to offer for the history of globalization and global labour”.<sup>131</sup> More specifically, for Lindenberger, “the thin stream of migrant or contract workers from the Global South (Mozambique, Vietnam, Cuba) working in the GDR and the GDR’s engagements in international trade, economic aid and humanitarianism” does not alter the picture drawn above, since “such relations have contributed very little to the actual globalization at large” and “have been firmly subordinated to the strategic requirements of the Soviet Union”.<sup>132</sup>

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**128** Interview no. 2.

**129** Interview no. 1.

**130** Although the GDR believed Angola to be on a “socialist path to development”, Angola was still considered a “non-socialist economic area”.

**131** Th. Lindenberger, “From Cold War Battleground to a Footnote to History? Labour History in Divided and Unified Germany”, *European Review of History/Revue européenne d’histoire* 25 (2018), pp. 61–78, at 69.

**132** Lindenberger, “From Cold War Battleground”, p. 69. Contra E. Burton, A. Dietrich, I. Harisch, and M. C. Schenck (eds.), *Navigating Socialist Encounters: Moorings and (Dis)Entanglements*

Contrary to that, I suggest that it is worthwhile including the experiences of the Friendship Brigades and East German specialists into the history of globalization. Rendering East German entanglements with the socialist countries of the Global South as mere footnotes of history, considering their supposedly tiny impact<sup>133</sup> and a supposedly Soviet superintendence,<sup>134</sup> astonishingly resembles older debates during the Cold War that either exorbitantly overestimated the real socialist possibilities or totally neglected the Eastern radius of action.

I hope I could demonstrate how the mission of the Friendship Brigades of the FDJ and East German specialists was part of a socialist globalization project between the governments in Luanda and East Berlin that was entangled with the Cuban and Soviet missions in Angola but also reached beyond that.<sup>135</sup> Initiated at crucial economic and political junctures for both governments, Angola provided the GDR with up to one-fifth of its coffee imports, with Angola's coffee and transport sector being maintained, to a considerable extent, by East German personnel.

It was shown how the Friendship Brigades, which were founded in the developmental decade of the 1960s amidst decolonization and Cold War rivalries, acted at a nexus of foreign policy, trade, and solidarity amidst an internationalized destabilization war. The structure of the Friendship Brigades – collectives instead of individuals, a variety of occupations, and a certain autarchy – emerged

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*between Africa and East Germany during the Cold War*, Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2021 – a book project that considers it fruitful to ask about the repercussions and legacies of South-East encounters and examine the nature of global socialism.

**133** M. Schenck, for example, has recently argued that many middle- to high-level MPLA party members had studied at East German universities or party schools, such as Potsdam-Babelsberg. See M. C. Schenck, "Negotiating the German Democratic Republic: Angolan Student Migration during the Cold War, 1976–90", *Africa* 89 (2019), pp. 144–166; Hendrik Dane emphasizes the important legacy of East German engagement in Angola: H. Dane, "Gründung einer Erinnerungsgemeinschaft. Das Nachleben der DDR in Angola", in: Th. Kunze and Th. Vogel (eds.), *Ostalgie International. Erinnerungen an die DDR von Nicaragua bis Vietnam*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 2010, pp. 69–78.

**134** This is not to deny that the overall geostrategic direction of East Berlin or Havana was laid down by Moscow and that the agency of the East German ruling class was severely curtailed by the communist party of the Soviet Union. It was important in Angola's case, however, that Soviet superintendence was convincingly refuted by Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom* and Shubin, *The Hot "Cold War"*.

**135** In 1981, an East German workshop leader reported that in the Angolan town of Uíge, where he worked, there were also 40 Soviet military and 2 civil advisers, 7 Yugoslav doctors, 6 Bulgarian teachers, 4 Swedish technicians, 3 Polish technicians, and 2 Congolese teachers present – apart from around 300 Cubans employed in various occupations both civil and military (see SAPMO-BArch, DM 1/12157, 1. "Halbjahresbericht 1981", 9 September 1981).

from the socialist production brigades in the GDR. The “ordinary” brigade members worked alongside better remunerated specialists, who were generally more experienced in their respective domains. However, because of the difficult supply situation, many East Germans found individual strategies to barter GDR consumables for money or goods on the Angolan black market.

The training programmes in the workshops for the Angolans were judged ambivalently by the dispatched brigadists and specialists. Although there were some Angolans who even completed their skilled worker training in the GDR in order to afterwards train apprentices themselves in Angola, a number of factors limited the effectiveness of the training. Many explanations were given for the perceived lack of work discipline of Angolan apprentices and workers, such as no payment of wages, lack of proper work clothes, “family obligations”, hunger, and “omnipresent marijuana consumption”.

On the East German side, however, the brigadists’ lack of language skills on arrival adversely affected the efficiency of their educational tasks in Angola, and it generally restricted their capacity to interact with their environment on their mission abroad. The lack of spare parts was continuously lamented by both the East German personnel on the ground and Angolan authorities; this ultimately led to attempts by the high-ranking party members of the SED to mitigate the supply situation and send a special customer service brigade, the specialist brigade “Solidarity”. Another factor that limited the integration of the East German personnel into the host society, as was criticized by both Angolans and brigadists, was the contact ban with which the SED government aimed to discipline its dispatched citizens. Amid the increasingly intensive war throughout the 1980s, restrictions were stepped up and some brigades even had to be evacuated due to safety reasons and were ultimately disbanded. The wide-ranging impact of the permanent war in Angola was a recurring theme during the time examined, destroying infrastructure, crippling agricultural production, and leading to the death of hundreds of thousands. The fact that the brigades’ mission in Angola’s coffee and transport sector was carried out until the end of the GDR on a larger scope than in any other country, despite these extreme difficulties, reveals the importance of Angola for the East German government while demonstrating the GDR’s own strategy of positioning itself in the field of global development politics.

To conclude, it can be stated that although the East German brigadists and specialists were faced with a persistent shortage of spare parts, a poor supply of food, and comparatively low pay, they made an important contribution to the Angolan coffee and transport sector with their varied activities. The establishment of the brigadists and specialists’ repair workshops and customer services in the provincial capitals and rural regions formed an important backbone of

the Angolan truck fleet, in which the W50 truck produced by East Germany was an integral part. Overall, the mission in Angola was characterized by a dense entanglement between the work by the Friendship Brigades and East German foreign trade interests, with Angola acting as a nodal point for socialist globalization in a number of fields, such as coffee, transportation, shipping, and vocational training, during critical junctures of globalization in the mid-1970s.



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