

Europa-Beziehungen, während John B. Hobson dafür plädiert, die Ursprünge des Kapitalismus im Zusammenwirken verschiedener Zivilisationen zu suchen und Andrew Zimmerman abschließend noch einmal die wechselseitige Inspiration von transnationaler Geschichte und Historischer Soziologie Revue passieren lässt. Zimmerman plädiert für eine dialektische Fassung von Geschichte, die der Gefahr des Eurozentrismus entgegentritt, indem sie sich nicht auf eine einzige Erzählperspektive festlegen lässt, sondern immer das Potential subalternen Stimmen mitdenkt. Wer sich an einer solchen Art Geschichte im Dialog von global ausgerichteter Soziologie und Geschichtswissenschaft inspirieren lassen will, sei nicht zuletzt auf die vorzügliche Auswahlbibliographie am Ende des Bandes verwiesen, die aufzeigt, wieviel intellektuelles Gepäck mitzuführen ist, wenn man als sachverständig gelten will.

Anmerkung

- 1 J. Osterhammel, *Die Flughöhe des Adlers*, München 2017.

**Constance Bantman / Bert Altena**  
(eds.): **Reassessing the Transnational Turn, Scales of Analysis in Anarchist and Syndicalist Studies**, Oakland, CA: PM Press 2017, 235p.

Reviewed by  
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The present volume brings together a series of articles that all shed light on a seeming contradiction: as historians went 'transna-

tional' or 'global' and challenged the role of the nation-state as the default category of historical analysis, anarchism made a powerful return to the scholarly agenda. Committed internationalists, highly mobile activists and, after all, declared enemies of the state, anarchists appeared as the perfect transnationalists *avant la lettre*. However, the recent studies adopting an explicitly transnational approach have also revealed the segregation of anarchist (exile) communities along national lines and the persistence of patriotic and even xenophobic sentiment among anarchists. It would seem that, rather than providing appealingly fitting illustrations of the ideological, material and personal transcendence of the nation-state, case studies from the anarchist and syndicalist movement can at the same time help to problematize an all-too smooth understanding of transnationalism. As the editors Constance Bantman and Bert Altena put in in their very nuanced introduction, in so doing 'anarchism and syndicalism have provided a better understanding of the functioning and limitations of the First Globalization' (p. 4).

The articles in the collection go on to not only offer concrete examples of the complex realities of anarchists acting in a transnational sphere, but also to propose concrete strategies of 'reassessing the transnational turn'. To pick the two theoretically most far-reaching suggestions, we could point out Isabelle Felici's approach that draws on migration history to make sense of the anarchist experience and Raymond Craib's compelling characterisation of Casimiro Barrios as a 'sedentary' anarchist. That Felici starts from the universality of the different stages of a migrant's

passage while Craib scrutinises the case of an individual (on whose exemplarity we are invited to ponder) is telling of the underlying concern of a volume that aims to highlight the interdependence of different spatial categories rather than to posit the local and the global, the national and the transnational, as opposites. We find studies of individual cities – such as Kenyon Zimmer's excellent piece on San Francisco as an anarchist hub connecting European immigrants with those who had crossed the Pacific – and the biographies of far-travelled individuals, Kropotkin, Malatesta and Michel, but also lesser-known anarchists. As the editors remind us, it is above all the notion of the network that allows us to cut across these levels and to understand localities and actors as 'nodes' offering an entry point to such networks.

Given the caution with regard to the confident agenda of transnational studies, this reviewer was a bit disappointed to not find a thorough engagement with a common reproach levelled at network analysis: that the discovery of connections alone risks to take precedence over the transformations that these connections brought about, or as David Bell has put it, that we tend to 'learn far more [...] about postal systems, telegraphs, and telephones than about the ideas transmitted through them.'<sup>1</sup> The articles in the collection have surprisingly little to say on how anarchists conceived of their internationalism and on the specific impact that the many cross-cultural encounters had on anarchist theory (as Bantman has so admirably done in her own monograph<sup>2</sup>). We are left wondering why anarchism so quickly developed an appeal all over the world<sup>3</sup> and how this in turn fed back into the thought of its ex-

ponents. We would love to see the three parts of the book – that could roughly be summarised as theories, practices, contexts – speak more closely to each other and produce more global conclusions. This reluctance to take the scalar approach all the way to its global level (in each sense of the term) at times makes 'anarchism' and its supposed cosmopolitanism appear as a given – an assumption that not least this volume forces us to revise.

For what we do get are stunning insights into the thorny issue of nationalism and anarchism. The problem in fact appears in each of the contributions and it is undoubtedly the great strength of the volume as a whole to approach anarchist nationalism in-depth and from a broad range of perspectives. All of them underline the pitfalls of imposing our present-day understanding of nationalism on historical figures. The perhaps most fascinating finding comes from the confrontation of Davide Turcato's discussion of nationalism centred on Malatesta with Ruth Kinna's take on Kropotkin's theory of the state: although dealing with the most vocal pundit of each camp in the conflict occasioned by the First World War, both articles stress that a clear-cut distinction between the nation and the state is essential when trying to make sense of anarchist 'nationalism'. On a less theoretical level, Nino Kühnis and Martin Baxmeyer untangle for the Swiss and Spanish case how nationalist rhetoric came to fulfil a series of functions: for Kühnis it helped to foster a common identity whereas Baxmeyer stresses the fundamental shift that the Civil War introduced in the anarchist literary production. The same can be said of Constance Bantman's study of the diverse range of reactions of

French anarchists to the Dreyfus Affair and on the role of previous experiences and contacts in explaining the anti-semitic stand of some anarchists. Taken together, these examples underline how historical contingency challenged anarchist theory. In light of this focus on the nation and the era of World War One, the overly European perspective that the editors themselves regret seems justifiable; the relative absence of articles on the Yiddish-speaking, Russian or the German anarchist movement (compared with the predominance of Italian perspectives) is however more painful. Bert Altena's article on Max Nettlau illustrates the challenges faced by a German-speaking anarchist, not always aware of his own prejudices. The nationalist classifications employed by this early and in many ways constitutive historian of anarchism reminds us to rethink our own categorisations of different branches of the anarchist family. Pietro di Paola's succinct overview of different generations of Italian anarchists in London invites us to draw further comparisons to other 'national' communities and to those established in other places (he notes that while the London Italians tended to belong to radical movements before their departure, those in Argentina became radicalised only in the host country).

The volume is in this sense also an opening to new avenues of research and an encouragement to continue reassessing the transnational turn. Bert Altena's untimely death in October of this year leaves the task of continuing his work to the many who have been inspired by him. The reprinting of his book – this is a slightly revised version of the 2015 Routledge volume under the same title – is testimony not only to

the editors' commitment to accessibility, but also to the relevance of the topic. Its fascinating and important articles introduce a welcome degree of nuance to the hagiographical character of a great deal of anarchist scholarship. It can be hoped that transnational scholars will in turn learn a lot from the anarchists.

#### Notes

- 1 David A. Bell, 'This is What Happens When Historians Overuse the Idea of the Network', in: *The New Republic*, online 26.10.2013 (<https://newrepublic.com/article/114709/world-connecting-reviewed-historians-overuse-network-metaphor>, accessed on 18.9.2018).
- 2 Constance Bantman, *The French Anarchists in London (1880–1914): Exile and Transnationalism in the First Globalisation*, Liverpool 2013.
- 3 Part of this is perhaps accounted for by the existence of a sister-volume: Steven J. Hirsch, Lucien van der Walt (eds.), *Anarchism and Syndicalism in the Colonial and Postcolonial World, 1870–1940: The Praxis of National Liberation, Internationalism, and Social Revolution*, Leiden 2010.

**Georg Fischer: Globalisierte Geologie. Eine Wissensgeschichte des Eisenerzes in Brasilien (1876–1914), Frankfurt am Main: Campus 2017, 328 S.**

Rezensiert von  
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Es war im Jahr 1910, als in der brasilianischen Eisen- und Stahlindustrie globalisierte Finanzströme ein neues Zeitalter einleiteten. Bis dahin hatte sich in Brasilien eine Allianz aus Experten und