

comparativ

ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR GLOBALGESCHICHTE UND
VERGLEICHENDE GESELLSCHAFTSFORSCHUNG

Matthias Middell / Alessandro Stanziani (Eds.)

Empires reconfigured

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Herausgegeben im Auftrag der
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Matthias Middell und Hannes Siegrist

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Empires reconfigured

Ed. by Matthias Middell and Alessandro Stanziani



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Inhaltsverzeichnis

Editorial	7
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Aufsätze

<i>Matthias Middell</i> Empires in Current Global Historiography	9
<i>Gabriela Goldin Marcovich / Silvia Sebastiani</i> Empire, Enlightenment, and the Time Before: Global Contexts for Writing the History of Mexico	23
<i>Yaruipam Muivah / Alessandro Stanziani</i> Forced Labour at the Frontier of Empires: Manipur and the French Congo, 1890–1914	41
<i>Ulrike von Hirschhausen / Jonas Kreienbaum</i> “Neocolonialism” Revisited: An Empirical Enquiry into the Term’s Theoretical Substance Today	65
<i>Margot Lyautey / Marc Elie</i> German Agricultural Occupation of France and Ukraine, 1940–1944	86

Forum

<i>Salvatore Ciriaco</i> The Early Modern “Silk-Road”. The Role of European, Chinese, and Russian Trade Reassessed	118
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Rezensionen

- Arnd Bauerkämper / Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe (eds.): Fascism without Borders. Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe from 1918 to 1945, New York / Oxford 2017
Victor Lundberg 135
- Ralph Callebert: On Durban's Docks: Zulu Workers, Rural Households, Global Labor, Rochester 2017
Jonathan Hyslop 138
- Elleke Boehmer / Rouven Kunstmann / Priyasha Mukhopadhyay / Asha Rogers (eds.): The Global Histories of Books. Methods and Practices (New Directions in Book History series), Berlin / Basingstoke 2017
Cécile Cottenet 140

Annotationen

- Carola Lentz / David Lowe: Remembering Independence (= Remembering the Modern World), London / New York 2018
Geert Castryck 144
- Trevor Burnard / John Garrigus: The Plantation Economy. Atlantic Capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica (= The Early Modern Americas), Philadelphia 2016
Megan Maruschke 144
- Marcel van der Linden: Workers of the World. Eine Globalgeschichte der Arbeit (= Globalgeschichte, Bd. 23), Frankfurt am Main 2017
Matthias Middell 145
- Alexandra Köhring / Monica Rüthers (Hrsg.): Ästhetiken des Sozialismus. Populäre Bildmedien im späten Sozialismus (= Socialist Aesthetics. Visual Cultures of Late Socialism), Köln 2018
Antje Dietze 147
- Thi Hanh Nguyen: Les Conflits Frontaliers Sino-Vietnamiens de 1883 à nos Jours, Paris 2018
Yasmine Najm 148
- Autorinnen und Autoren 149

Editorial

With this issue, *Comparativ* includes three new features. Firstly, in a short intro the editors of the journal relate themes and arguments of the single issue to the wider programmatic concerns of *Comparativ*. Since its founding in 1991, the journal has published new research on world and global history at the crossroads of a wide range of area studies by means of thematic issues in which a selection of articles presents one topic from different and yet integrated angles. In this way, *Comparativ* serves to bring joint inquiries to the fore and provides a forum for collaborative studies on connections and comparisons along the many scales that have become relevant for the flows of past and present people, ideas and goods as well as for the ever renewed attempts to control such fluidity. Secondly, we complement our book review section with an annotation section that provides an increasing number of shorter summaries of newly released works. In doing so, we respond to the growing number of monographs and edited volumes that make it increasingly more difficult to gain an overview of, select and assign books for reviewing. Thirdly, *Comparativ* has been incorporated into the DOI system, which assigns persistent identifiers to the single article to increase the integration into as well as retrieval from digital databases and library catalogues.

This special issue presents global perspectives on empires and imperial constellations, which aim at feeding into the current lively discussion about the place of empires in world and global history as much as in the social sciences and history at large. This discussion reacts to a dual observation: On the one hand, and for a long time, social scientists and scholars from the humanities have taken for granted that the era of empire is over and done with and that historical development was a directed process “from nation-state to empire”. On the other hand, ‘empire’ was a frequently used trope in public debates about imperialist behaviour and in fact continues to be. Military interventions have been seen through this lens, and international organizations have been criticized for imperial(ist) politics while many one-to-one interstate relations also often appear as

imperial in nature. The articles collected here somehow parallel the effort made by the authors in a book on empire and the social sciences recently edited by Jeremy Adelman (London: Bloomsbury 2019).

What we can learn from the recent interest in imperial histories is that we obviously miss an important part of modern history when reducing statehood to the national, which large parts of the social sciences do when remaining attached to the context of their foundation during the emergence of nation-states in the second half of the nineteenth century. This is particularly interesting since it is exactly the ambition of social sciences to find explanations at a world level and not only at national level. But to analyse societies and economies as national containers driven mainly by their internal tensions and contradictions is not enough to grasp the impact of border-transcending entanglements and connections that were to a large extent organized by empires. It is therefore no wonder that the renewed interest in imperial histories and imperialism – and the role social scientists played within this framework to make the empire work – went hand in hand with the rise of global histories since the 1990s.

But, of course, empires are not fixed entities either; they have seen as much transformation as other spatial formats. The empires of the Atlantic world are quite different from what imperialist behaviour today insists on calling an empire of the twenty-first century. A decisive turning point, so it seems to us, was the revolutionary period after 1776 when Europe as well as the Americas saw empires dissolving under the attacks of nation-builders who ironically right from the beginning distinguished between new principles at home and the continuation of imperial features – including enslavement and other forms of coerced labour – in the colonies where citizenship was denied to the unfree.

This fundamental transformation, at the same time, secured the establishment of nation-states and the survival of empires so that a new spatial format emerged that can be called a nation-state with imperial extension. This hybrid format has seen a successful career at least until the times of decolonization. Success means that the most ambitious hegemonic powers of the world since the 1820s used this format to organize their positioning in the world and their ways of controlling global flows. To study the variants of this format over time and space may help us to overcome the often lamented methodological nationalism, to overcome the simplistic opposition of Eurocentric and postcolonial perspectives and to better understand global integration as an asymmetric process.

None of these imperial configurations was able or even intending to integrate the whole world, instead integrating its very specific world of transregional linkages but never with a planetarian scope. Studying empires therefore can also be an invitation to understand global processes as the result of competing globalization projects instead of misinterpreting globalization as a natural process without alternatives. At the same time, we may better understand why resistance to global integration often uses the rhetoric of independence and sovereignty – given the imperial(ist) experience many people in the world had been confronted with.

Matthias Middell / Katja Naumann

Empires in Current Global Historiography

Matthias Middell

There is no doubt: empires strike back, not only in history but also in historiography. This famous expression of colonies that impact the (former) imperial metropolis has been inspired by the manifold experiences coming from the everyday presence of people, material resources, and cultural patterns circulating across imperial spaces. The renewed, and surprisingly growing, interest in the study of empires by historians – as well as far beyond a narrow institutional understanding of the discipline – takes inspiration from a whole series of observations. The old narrative “from empire to nation”, which reflected the ideas of historians at the end of the nineteenth century as well as during the moments of massive decolonization, now seems outdated. The nation-state is obviously not the only and final stage in world history – replacing everything that came before. This insight is fed both by the observation that nation-states are not the only spatial format with which societies react to the global condition – both at the end of the nineteenth as well as during the twentieth and at the beginning of the twenty-first centuries – and by the disillusionment with the failed dream of anti-colonial activists that the declaration of independence would mean immediate sovereignty over the definition of transregional connectedness. Decolonization, on the contrary, turned out to be a lengthy and painful process leading to different forms of dependency than those existing during the colonial era but not to what the myth of the sovereign nation-state promised. The debate about ongoing economic connectedness at times of state independence¹ has promoted the idea that worldwide capitalism may function as an all-encompassing empire within which the individual nationalized state and society lose importance – as well as freedom to choose

1 T. Bierschenk/E. Spies (Hrsg.), 50 Jahre Unabhängigkeit in Afrika. Kontinuitäten, Brüche, Perspektiven, Köln 2012.

their own way in dealing with global capital flows.² The idea of empire propagated by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri has only influenced the discussion for a short time since the metaphorical use of empire in this interpretation – despite the reference to debates about imperialism at the beginning of the twentieth century – has not convinced that many historians. Their idea of empire was too much part of an ideology of globalization that had its “fifteen minutes of fame” in the 1990s, insisting on a couple of arguments: there is a completely new situation in the world due to now overmighty globalization, which there is no real alternative to and which makes necessary the development of a completely new societal analysis in order to invent a new type of interpretation as well as to invent (and political create) new anti-systemic forces to challenge the recently emerged power relations.

Part of the ambitious new interpretation of the world was to declare the nation-state dead³ and no longer a meaningful framework of struggle between various social forces.⁴ This globalization ideology, which by far was a perspective not only of the left⁵ but also among mainstream liberals and conservatives, met resistance from those who argued that the nation-state still remained a major theatre of social conflict and/or resistance to tensions emanating from global and transregional entanglements.

Slowly, historians also began to address the challenge that was embedded in this globalization ideology by insisting on globalization being not so much a new thing but a long-lasting process that gave birth to very different features over time. Global history – which undoubtedly is based on the long tradition of world history writing – received new societal relevance because it became an essential part of a very fundamental debate across the world: Do we share the discourse of newness that was characteristic of that globalization ideology or do we insist on the long historicity of globalization? If the latter, then of course the issue of diachronic comparison comes to the fore and historical research gains new importance as a way to interpret the present and forecast the immediate and long-term future. It is evident that historians are not good at predicting such a future, but they may provide historical references together with the context for a (cautious) reapplication – as it happened with the term empire. In a world that was no longer organized into stable blocs separated from one another by an iron curtain and based upon the principle of (more or less sovereign) nation-states, uncertainty emerged concerning the spatial configuration of world order. It is clear that the transformative process towards a new world order – or rather orders in the plural – takes time, and from the beginning, the outcome of such a process is not yet clear. Nevertheless, the slowly emerging structure needs a language to describe these orders even before they can be completely

2 M. Hardt / A. Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge, MA 2000.

3 K. Ōmae, *The End of the Nation State. The Rise of Regional Economies*, New York 1995.

4 M. Albrow/R. Fellingner, *Abschied vom Nationalstaat. Staat und Gesellschaft im globalen Zeitalter*, Frankfurt a. M. 1998.

5 On the contrary, it found its first worldwide remarked expression in the famous controversy between Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington about the new situation after the end of Cold War – both definitively beyond any suspicion of being part of any kind of left.

understood. A multitude of terms have been tested and some have survived the public debate over their applicability better than others. “Region” is always a candidate since it lacks any precise meaning when it comes to the scale at which a region is identified. It can be both a substate region and a region that encompasses more than one or two states; it can also be used to characterize territorial units crossing borders, and one can even take the frontier as a specific form of a region. Region can be used for territories with clearly drawn borders surrounding a coherent physical space, but they can also be characterized by fuzzy limitations. The term region has the advantage of being useable in almost all dimensions of human interaction – there are economic as well as linguistic, cultural, and administrative ones as well as many more. A region might be connected to power and authority, but this is not a necessary component of the meaning given to regions.

Therefore, the apparent advantage of the term “region” at times of uncertainty concerning the emerging new spatial order turns into a disadvantage. While the “regional” was already used in the 1990s when it comes to the description of alternatives to the national, other terms remained attractive as well – among them, evidently the notion of empire. Historians and those searching for historical references started testing if this particular term carries a meaning that represents an alternative to the world that was lost with the end of the Cold War. This process can be understood as a sequence of attempts that placed individual layers of meaning on the term empire, thereby carrying more or less strong resonance in the social debate.

To understand, global capitalism as empire has turned the relationship between transformations in finance and economy, on the one hand, and in the political organization of societies, on the other hand, somehow upside down. Modern capitalism appears to be borderless and only to be understood as a global system – just as an ever-expanding empire. In a way, this builds on the world-systems theory of Immanuel Wallerstein, who, however, had been much more careful with the term empire because he had anchored his study of the world system to a detailed analysis of early modern economic and state development.⁶ Although the book by Hardt and Negri gave the term empire not only new prominence but also a critical connotation, they followed, to some extent, Karl Marx in his dialectical thinking about capitalism, which they (like him) characterized as exploitative, on the one hand, and as unavoidably expanding, on the other hand.

In this perspective, empire remained a metaphor for expansion towards planetarian coverage and not very much more. The terminological confusion of empire and capitalism as a global economic order, however, encountered other strands of the debate, especially the one regarding the USA as the only remaining superpower after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. This led to the question if the USA is the new empire governing the world and guaranteeing its (democratic and capitalist) order. While some answered that

6 I. Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*. vol. I: *Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, New York, London 1974; vol. II: *Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600–1750*, New York et al. 1980; vol. III: *The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730–1840s*, San Diego et al. 1989.

question with a list of recommendations to the US administration what it could learn from historical attempts by empires such as the British one in the nineteenth century to organize worldwide hegemony,⁷ others were more careful with historical parallels and insisted on the new situation within which the US played their role at the beginning of the twenty-first century.⁸

Another dimension of interest in empires had to do less with capitalism and international relations and more with increasing mobility and the resulting diversity within societies as a consequence of globalization. Sociologists, like Ulrich Beck, predicted that deterritorializing effects of global processes and the increasing power of transnational companies escaping any control by state authorities would undermine the strict framework of nation-states together with their arrangements for welfare and of democracy and would in the end rather repeat patterns that had been typical for early modern societies (e.g. empires).⁹ This interpretation calls to mind a triptych, with the nation-state and its strong capacity to exercise control via territorialization over its population in the middle, but the pre-national/-imperial history before the emergence of the nation-states on the left is more likely to become the blueprint for the future situated on the right.¹⁰

Beck's sociology resonated not only with his British colleagues but also with developments in the field of geography, where a new political geography shattered existing paradigms in its own discipline and more specifically in the field of international relations. John Agnew has argued that it is no longer sufficient to remain in what he calls a "territorial trap"¹¹ and to imagine the world as being covered by competing and interacting but above all sovereign states. He has demonstrated how much other disciplines depend on innovation within geography. This was echoed by a strong and growing constructivist strand within geography,¹² becoming step by step a larger movement now called the spatial turn and impacting the humanities and social sciences in the one way or the other.¹³ The central argument is that this spatial turn, with its claim that space does not

7 N. Ferguson, *Empire. The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power*, New York 2002; N. Ferguson, *Colossus. The Rise and Fall of the American Empire*, London 2005.

8 C. J. Calhoun/F. Cooper/K. W. Moore, *Lessons of Empire. Imperial Histories and American Power*, New York 2006; C. S. Maier, *Among Empires. American Ascendancy and its Predecessors*, Cambridge, MA 2006.

9 U. Beck (Hrsg.), *Politik der Globalisierung*, Frankfurt a. M. 1998, pp. 10–19.

10 U. Beck, *Was ist Globalisierung? Irrtümer des Globalismus – Antworten auf Globalisierung*, Frankfurt a. M. 2002, pp. 24–47. This rather pessimistic interpretation goes hand in hand with an attempt to show sociological interpretation a way out of its methodological nationalism and to become fit for future debates about a renewal of democracy and global citizenship.

11 J. Agnew, *The Territorial Trap. The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory*, in: *Review of International Political Economy* 1 (1994) 1, pp. 53–80.

12 As a short summary: B. Werlen, *Andere Zeiten - Andere Räume? Zur Geographie der Globalisierung*, in: M. Ott/E. Uhl (eds.), *Denken des Raums in Zeiten der Globalisierung*, Münster 2005, pp. 57–72; B. Werlen/T. Brennan (eds.), *Society, Action and Space. An Alternative Human Geography*, London 1993.

13 J. Döring/T. Thielmann (eds.), *Spatial Turn. Das Raumparadigma in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften*, Bielefeld 2008; B. Warf/S. Arias (eds.), *Spatial Turn. Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, London 2009; M. Middell/K. Nauermann, *Global History and the Spatial Turn. From the Impact of Area Studies to the Study of Critical Junctures of Globalisation*, in: *Journal of Global History* 5 (2010), pp. 149–170; F. Williamson, *The Spatial Turn in Social History: A Review of Recent Research Trends*, in: *European History Quarterly* (2014), pp. 703–717.

exist per se but is produced by and during social interaction, would exactly fit the historical moment of uncertainty about future spatial configurations. Globalization – having undermined the seemingly stable order of a hierarchy of scales (from the local via the regional and the national to the international) with the (elites of the) nation-state at the all-controlling centre – invites creative observation and thinking of new products of the space-making activities of individual as well as collective actors. One may doubt from the historian's perspective that this was the first unique point in history where such an uncertainty came to the fore,¹⁴ but this objection does not change much in the general direction of the debate at the beginning of the new millennium. There was a fast-growing interest in transcending the long-lasting obsession with the national and in discovering either new or returning spatial formats.

As a solution to this problem, the new idea of global governance was launched – meaning to many authors involved in the debate the upscaling of regulatory regimes from the national to a (rather under-defined) global level. Undoubtedly, it was not completely new to dream of a world government that overcomes national egoisms and fulfills the expectations of social justice at a larger scale than thus far possible.¹⁵ The United Nations comes to mind, but with the failed reform attempt undertaken by Kofi Annan around the millennium, this ended rather in disillusionment again. Partly in parallel, the discussion of a so-called new regionalism emerged – somehow renewing the interest in regional configurations that had reached its last peak among social scientists and historians in the 1970s. But the new regionalism paradigm was not so much interested in regionalist movements undermining the absolute sovereignty claim of nation-states but rather at looking into possibilities of alliances built by nation-states to regulate or even avoid conflict as well as formulating coordinated answers to challenges emanating from powers and processes outside the region. Since the new regionalism idea was first made use of by political scientists, the central idea of sovereign states sharing rather than losing sovereignty has not been given up, and the connection to the debate over empire has remained loose. However, one can draw a line from the newly discovered relevance of such regional alliances based upon power and sovereignty sharing to three aspects:¹⁶ to the debate about non-national spatial formats that react to a slowly emerging new world

14 Stuart Elden already a couple of years ago insisted on the historicity of a concept such as territory, and one can read the age of revolutions around 1800 as another moment of uncertainty that gave rise to a new spatial semantics around the notions of nation and nation-state, while at the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century notions like transnational nation and imperialism indicated another, probably similar, shift. On these different "spatial turns" or moments of respatialization, see S. Elden, *The Birth of Territory*, Chicago 2013; M. Maruschke/ M. Middell (eds.), *The French Revolution as a Moment of Respatialization*, Berlin/Boston 2019; K. K. Patel, *Nach der Nationalfixiertheit. Perspektiven einer transnationalen Geschichte*, Berlin 2004;

15 J. M. Hanhimäki, *The United Nations. A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford/New York 2008; M. Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace. The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*, Princeton 2009; E.-M. Muschik, *Managing the World. The United Nations, Decolonization, and the Strange Triumph of State Sovereignty in the 1950s and 1960s*, in: *Journal of Global History* 13 (2018) 1, pp. 121–144.

16 J. Agnew, *Sovereignty Regimes: Territoriality and State Authority in Contemporary World Politics*, in: *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95 (2005) 2, pp. 437–461.

order (or the perceived need for one), to new forms of capitalism, and to new features of circulation and flows undermining the existing patterns of territorialization.¹⁷

Historians reacted to this public interest in imperial configurations, first of all, with an intensification of research on many different historical cases.¹⁸ The 2010s were particularly rich in new publications on empires, both old and new. Large empires became the subject of global comparison.¹⁹ Colonization and the resulting power asymmetry between metropolises and colonies²⁰ were compared within a larger, and global, spectrum and no longer reduced to the classical Western European examples.²¹ This resulted in a series of global histories of empire²² and undermined the idea that empires belong definitively to the past. It would be too long to list here all the achievements of this recent historiography that has been addressing topics as different as the impact empires and colonial configurations had on knowledge orders, labour regimes, network building and mobility, disease management, and resources mobilized from colonial peripheries for global competition, to name a few. The more we have learned from this literature, the more the idea of an imperial past transforming into a national present has vanished.²³ Legacies and remains of empires are shining through many social realities of today's world. Post-colonialism reminds its readers that colonialism does not end with the formal declaration of state's independence and that it remains a tangible reality not only in the former colonies but also in the former metropolises.

Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper brought these arguments into a coherent interpretation when publishing their world history of empires.²⁴ This history neither ends with

17 S. Marung/M. Middell (eds.), *Spatial Formats under the Global Condition*, Berlin/Boston 2019.

18 For former developments in the field of imperial historiography, see, e.g., Anne Friedrichs, *Das Empire als Aufgabe des Historikers. Historiographie in imperialen Nationalstaaten: Großbritannien und Frankreich 1919–1968*, Frankfurt a. M. 2011; U. von Hirschhausen/J. Leonhard, *Zwischen Historisierung und Globalisierung. Titel, Themen und Trends der neueren Empire-Forschung*, in: *Neue Politische Literatur* 56 (2011) 3, pp. 390–402.

19 P. F. Bang/C. A. Bayly (Hrsg.), *Tributary Empires in Global History*, New York 2011; P. F. Bang/D. Kolodziejczyk (eds.), *Universal Empire. A Comparative Approach to Imperial Culture and Representation in Eurasian History*, Cambridge/New York 2012; and, finally, as part of this collective research: P. F. Bang/W. Scheidel (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the State in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean*, New York 2013.

20 F. Cooper/A. L. Stoler, *Between Metropole and Colony. Rethinking a Research Agenda*, in: F. Cooper (ed.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, Berkeley 1997, pp. 1–56.

21 K. Barkey/M. von Hagen (eds.), *After Empire. Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building. The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman, and Habsburg Empires*, Boulder 1997; A. Etkind, *Internal Colonization. Russia's Imperial Experience*, Cambridge 2011; O. Bartov/E. D. Weitz (eds.), *Shatterzone of Empires. Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands*, Bloomington 2013; B. Gainot/M. Vaghi (eds.), *Les Indes orientales au carrefour des empires*, Paris 2014; R. Crowley, *Conquerors. How Portugal Seized the Indian Ocean and Forged the First Global Empire*, New York 2015; S. Faroqi, *The Ottoman Empire and the World around It*, London 2004; C. Aydin, *Regionen und Reiche in der politischen Geschichte des langen 19. Jahrhunderts*, in: S. Conrad/J. Osterhammel (eds.), *1750–1870. Wege zur modernen Welt*, München 2016, pp. 35–253.

22 J. Frémeaux, *Les empires coloniaux dans le processus de mondialisation*, Paris 2002; J. D. , *After Tamerlan. The Global History of Empire*, London/New York 2007; J. Darwin, *The Empire Project. The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970*, Cambridge 2011.

23 J. Esherick/H. Kayali/E. van Young (eds.), *Empire to Nation. Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World*, Lanham, MD 2006.

24 J. Burbank/F. Cooper, *Empires in World History. Power and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton, NJ 2010.

nationalization nor with decolonization,²⁵ and neo-imperial policies of the 2010s – be it on the Crimean Peninsula or in the Near East – seems to confirm this lesson.

But when there is no longer a unidirectional pathway from former features of statehood to the nation-state, then the interest in these former features becomes legitimate again. This has led to discussions about the appropriateness of imperial features in managing diversity as a possible answer to the growing importance of mobility, mixed societies, and interwoven or hybrid identities. Whereas this strand of debate seems to place empire in a rather positive light and puts emphasis on its flexibility in managing social constellations characterized primarily by diversity, the opposite is also true and has been highlighted by studies on the German Reich²⁶ or Stalin's Soviet Union as (failed) empires,²⁷ which insisted on exercising disproportionate (or even genocidal) violence and oppressive features in holding the empire together.

The debate led to two major characteristics that have been brought to the fore again and again in the many studies about individual empires. The first was their expansion through conquests and the incorporation of areas as a result of wars, dynastic marriages, and settlements. Already the great empires of antiquity were compared to the previously dominating city-states as wide-ranging domains, admired for how they dominated their respective hemisphere. However, this was always accompanied by the warning not to overstretch such a dominance. The larger the lands imperial elites held under their formal control, the more they became dependent on an ever-increasing (and costly) military apparatus as well as on the collaboration of local elites – both elements that have served as an explanation for the decline of empires.

Such warnings found legitimation in the second characteristic of empires, which speaks against a long-term preservation of the wide area of rule: empires are based on legal inequality of their inhabitants. The privileges of a core population correlated with the oppression and dependent legal situation of many of the peripheral populations that came to the empire through conquests and colonization. This legal depriveleging had increasing consequences when mobility between the peripheries and the centres of empires became greater and speeded up. The management of such differences turned out to be ever more complicated and visibly discriminating, thereby mobilizing discontent. These two characteristics led to a contradictory relationship between empires and territorialization, which was relatively slow until the eighteenth century. Out of necessity, empires build administrations and infrastructures. However, these primarily serve the military control of the area ruled and the primacy of military and dynastic interests, even though the transport of economic goods and the political integration of provinces also

25 M. Thomas/A. S. Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: From "High Imperialism" to Decolonisation*, in: *The International History Review* 36 (2014) 1, pp. 142–170; M. Thomas/A. S. Thompson (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, Oxford 2018.

26 As an overview: S. Baranowski, *Nazi Empire. German Colonialism and Imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler*, Cambridge/New York 2011.

27 V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*, Chapel Hill 2007.

became stimulated. During most of their existence, empires build on the great independence of their provinces and subareas.²⁸

The expansion of empires has repeatedly not only met political resistance but also intellectual opposition, which emphasizes the illegitimacy of an order based on legal inequality. The criticism of the enslavement of the Indians already started with Las Casas in the sixteenth century, and this criticism intensified in the eighteenth century up until the destruction of France's imperial past as an *ancien régime* to be definitively overcome, which was contrasted with the sovereignty and equality of rights of all citizens established by the revolution. However, just a few years after the storming of the Bastille, the ideas of equality and freedom combined perfectly with the conquering strategies under Napoleon's renewed imperial rule,²⁹ and already since the early part of 1790, planters tried to turn the argument of freedom and autonomy towards a new legitimation of slavery. Against the expectations, the result of the French Revolution was therefore, paradoxically, not the format of a nation-state, which guaranteed all its citizens equality before the law but instead a (long-term toxic) mixture of popular sovereignty and continuation of imperial practices for the expanse of a renewed colonial empire: nation-state cum empire, so to speak.

France does not stand alone in this respect. The British Empire, which emerged after the Seven Years' War,³⁰ has not even hidden its imperial character³¹ in the name and the tension between the national and the imperial remains to this day (with the open Irish question becoming acute again due to the hard Brexit) a fundamental ambivalence. Spain and Portugal also insisted at the Congress of Vienna that the abolition of slave trade should only be fixed for territories north of their own possessions on the West African coast,³² and they remained, despite all the liberal revolutions of the 1820s and independence successes in Latin America, a mixture of nation-state and empire.³³ Dynasties and parliaments found long-lasting compromises in constitutional monarchies.³⁴ But even republics did not give up their imperial expansion into so-called empty areas – as the American settlement in the West of the continent shows.³⁵

28 P. Perdue, *Boundaries, Maps, and Movement: Chinese, Russian, and Mongolian Empires in Early Modern Central Eurasia*, in: *International History Review* 20 (1988), pp. 263–286; J. Sand, *Subaltern Imperialists: The New Historiography of the Japanese Empire*, in: *Past and Present* (2014) 225, pp. 273–288.

29 C. Belaubre/J. Dym/J. Savage (eds.), *Napoleon's Atlantic. The Impact of Napoleonic Empire in the Atlantic World*, Leiden 2010.

30 F. McLynn, *1759. The Year Britain became Master of the World*, New York 2004.

31 G. B. Magee/A. S. Thompson (eds.), *Empire and Globalisation. Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c. 1850–1914*, Cambridge/New York 2010.

32 H. Duchhardt, *Der Wiener Kongress. Die Neugestaltung Europas 1814/15*, München 2013, pp. 94–96.

33 G. B. Paquette, *Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions: The Luso-Brazilian World, c. 1770–1850*, Cambridge 2013.

34 J. Leonhard/U. von Hirschhausen, *Empires und Nationalstaaten im 19. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 2009; G. D. Schäd, *Compting Forms of Globalization in the Middle East: From the Ottoman Empire to the Nation State, 1918–1967*, in: A. G. Hopkins (ed.), *Global History. Interactions between the Universal and the Local*, Basingstoke/New York 2006, pp. 191–228.

35 F. Schumacher, *Reclaiming Territory. The Spatial Contours of Empire in US History*, in: Marung/Middell (eds.), *Spatial Formats*, pp. 107–148.

This became the basis of the second wave of modern colonization, emerging around 1870. Now also newly formed nation-states like Germany and Italy sought their place in the sun and strived to gain colonies.³⁶ And they certainly did so under the impression that the contemporaries regarded nation-state cum empire as the more efficient type of state when it came to influencing the world order.³⁷

In 1918, Lenin and Wilson seemed to have marked an end point to this history.³⁸ Many people hoped for the promised decolonization, which they perceived to be embedded in the concept of the right to self-determination of the peoples, considered to be opposed to the logic of imperialism. This turned out to be an illusion, even if the losers of the First World War had to temporarily renounce their imperial extensions. But they were already back as global players in the 1930s and especially Japan, Italy, and Germany tried again to build murderous empires.³⁹

The United Nations was founded in 1945 on the principle of an equality of nations but gave its central founding members – with their right to veto in the Security Council – a double-edged sword, which could be used not only to maintain the world order, but also to protect their own expansion spaces and the development of a respective hemisphere.⁴⁰ Decolonization therefore progressed slowly and the Cold War era was first and foremost a conflict between two superpowers with global spheres of influence, which were often treated like imperial supplementary areas, especially in Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa.⁴¹

The idea that the 1989 revolution would end this spatial format with the dissolution of the Soviet Union two years later turned out to be a premature vision again.⁴² New conflicts inspire new imperial ambitions as the wars of the last two decades in Central Asia, the Middle East, or Eastern Europe demonstrate. What has changed, and is still changing, is the context of such a spatial format: technology makes classical borders of territory more and more porous and resource distribution (from energy supply to industrial sites, from working infrastructures to human resources, which increasingly become the central issue in knowledge societies) is so unequal that it increasingly collides with

36 S. Conrad/J. Osterhammel, *Das Kaiserreich transnational. Deutschland in der Welt 1871–1914*, Göttingen 2004; S. Conrad, *Globalisierung und Nation im Deutschen Kaiserreich*, München 2006; E. R. Dickinson, *The German Empire: an Empire?*, in: *History Workshop Journal* (2008) 66, pp. 129–162; S. Berger/A. Miller (eds.), *Nationalizing Empires*, Budapest 2015.

37 R. A. Butlin, *Geographies of Empire. European Empires and Colonies, c. 1880–1960*, Cambridge/New York 2009.

38 B. Meissner, *Lenin und das Selbstbestimmungsrecht der Völker*, in: *Osteuropa* 20 (1970), pp. 245–261; E. Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment. Self-determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, New York 2007; about the difficulties to characterize the Soviet Union properly: R. Suny/T. Martin (eds.), *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, Oxford 2001.

39 R. Pergher, *Mussolini's Nation-Empire. Sovereignty and Settlement in Italy's Borderlands, 1922–1943*, Cambridge 2017.

40 A. G. Hopkins, *American Empire. A Global History*, Princeton 2018.

41 D. C. Engerman, *The Second World's Third World*, in: *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 12 (2011) 1, pp. 183–211; F. Cooper, *Citizenship, Inequality, and Difference. Historical Perspectives*, Princeton 2018.

42 Q. Slobodian, *Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism*, Harvard 2018.

traditional means of territorialization that were developed within agrarian and early industrial societies.

As a consequence, empires have seen a steady transformation and their relationship with territorialization has changed dramatically over time. To grasp some of the major trends found in these transformations was the intention of a workshop held in Leipzig in September 2018. It was the product of a continuing fruitful cooperation between the Global History Centre at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris, under the strong leadership of Alessandro Stanziani, and the Leipzig Research Centre Global Dynamics. Some of the papers presented at the workshop were reworked by the authors in the light of the stimulating comparative debate that took place. While empire has become an object of intensified interest in many historiographies, there are still important differences in the focus of empirical work and historiographical references. Archives in different countries give access to different empires, and this may facilitate differently designed comparisons. The time that has passed since decolonization in France and Germany is different, and therefore the colonial past has an impact that differs too. The writing of imperial histories consequently has deeper or shorter roots, feeds different narratives, and uncovers different facets of global history, which is the shared horizon of this collective effort. To complement such perspectives and to make comparisons across the boundaries of continents and historical epochs was the first goal of the successfully achieved cooperation.

But there is more to it. Global history as a field cannot limit itself to traditional comparison, where the entities to be compared are conceptualized as largely isolated from each other. On the contrary, global history starts from the assumption that societies are increasingly interdependent and entangled and that mobility leads to the growing circulation of people and, as a consequence, of cultural patterns. Already in his famous speech on comparative history at a congress in 1928 in Oslo,⁴³ Marc Bloch addressed this issue by insisting on the fact that we have to fundamentally distinguish between a (relative easy) comparison that focuses on two or more cases being independent from each other and the (much more complex and challenging) form of comparison that takes into consideration the multiple entanglements between the objects compared. The contributions to this issue present various ways to cope with this challenge and to compare imperial configurations that are undoubtedly connected to each other through the migration of actors and circulating objects as well as mutual observation and the resulting learning processes.

The first article by Gabriela Goldin Marcovich and Silvia Sebastiani guides us back to the Atlantic world's empires⁴⁴ but looks at it from the angle of newly emerging voices claiming authority for the interpretation of history and society in the Americas. The ex-

43 M. Bloch, *Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes*, in: *Revue de synthèse historique* 46 (1928), pp. 15–50.

44 J. M. Fradera, *The Imperial Nation. Citizens and Subjects in the British, French, Spanish, and American Empires*, Princeton, Oxford 2018.

amples of Francisco Javier Clavijero, who wrote a monumental *Storia antica del Messico* (1780/81) and José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez, who edited the *Gazeta de literatura de México* (1784–1795) in Mexico City (the capital of New Spain) and who commented on Clavijero's history for never publishing a Spanish edition serve the purpose to bring to the fore the enormous transformations the Spanish (as well as other European) empire(s) underwent in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. By following the traces of these important enlightenment figures, we are introduced to the first period of decolonization and the breakdown of empires in modern history. It became a challenge to the knowledge order established over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but it was obviously not the end of imperial experiences and circumstances in Central America. Alzate, who tried (unsuccessfully) to enter the intellectual landscape of Spanish enlightenment at times when Humboldt sparked massive interest in knowledge about the Americas, saw his ambition to be published in Madrid vanish with the increasing tensions within the Bourbon empire. In the 1820s, however, his texts were finally published in London, where the victorious empire of a decades-long competition systematized knowledge about the formal and informal parts of its imperial zone of influence. Creole insights were now considered important, especially those about Mexico, which was seen as a potential hub of global trade. The same holds true for Clavijero's history of Mexico, which, after its publication in London, became a source for British imperialism, and it was later used in its subsequent Mexican editions as an intellectual component of the emerging Mexican state-building. With these two exemplary cases, we see very clearly scientists with their intellectual production at the service of changing imperial configurations before and after the great transformation of the Atlantic world. But what had been useful for the expansion of empires later became reread and appropriated for the purpose of a slow nation-building.

Yaruipam Muivah and Alessandro Stanziani turn the page from intellectual history of empires to the question of labour relations and they compare two important cases of nineteenth-century empire-building, namely British India and French Congo with regard to the effect of abolition. The old discussion about the reasons, ways, size, and consequences of discontinuing first slave trade and later on the use of slaves in the many situations, ranging from plantations to households⁴⁵ to many more, cannot be solved by general assumptions. Instead, it is only through careful reconstruction of the local and regional configurations – because there were so many legal possibilities to continue manumission of all kinds, as we know in much more detail from global labour history – that a truly insightful approach can be taken.⁴⁶ The two case studies first of all confirm the contradictory character of abolition in the colonies, both British and French. Whereas the transformation towards double free proletarians became over the nineteenth century a universally accepted norm in the metropolises that made enslavement and slavery a

45 See the impressive overview of the historical varieties of slavery provided by M. Zeuske, *Handbuch Geschichte der Sklaverei. Eine Globalgeschichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, Berlin/Boston 2019.

46 M. van der Linden, *Workers of the World. Essays toward a Global Labor History*, Leiden/Boston 2008.

shameful act – and an argument now turned against the Indians and Africans in terms of civilizing missions necessary before they may be allowed to become independent – the opposite development had to be observed in the colonies where a weak colonial state declared to be forced to accept local customs. The legal heterogeneity of empires, which was always one of the main characteristics of this spatial format, transformed into an even more contradictory combination of different (and in fact mutually exclusive) norms concerning the rights and the freedom of people living the space of what was called an empire. The article addresses the labour relations within such a space, but the conclusions go beyond that social dimension of the late nineteenth-century realities. Empires had changed (or were about to change) into nation-states with imperial extensions – openly accepting the contradictions between the legal foundations of its different parts. The gap between these parts were covered, on the one hand, by legitimating discourses full of racism and Eurocentric hubris and, on the other hand, by violent oppression of emancipatory ambitions.

Margot Lyautey and Marc Elie combine forces to compare the German Reich's expansion to the west in 1940 and to the east a year later. In both cases, food provision for the German population – and the troops needed to establish and secure the new colonialism – became a central issue and provides the opportunity to compare methods and consequences of the massive requisition of grain and other foodstuff. The underlying dream of an autarkic continental economy and the planned reduction of the Soviet population by starvation were, as the authors show, distinct features of a nevertheless coherent policy that followed a certain vision of the future German empire. Securing food supply became a geopolitically grounded obsession, against the background of the experience made with blockades during World War I, and many specialists of agriculture were mobilized to plan a new imperial configuration that was organized around the procurement of food and – as a consequence – the dramatic plunder of Eastern Europe with the deadly consequences for the important parts of its population. This method took, without any doubt, inspiration from other forms of colonialism; however, the extreme military and police presence as well as the connectedness of the territories allowed for a much more severe exploitation and control of the occupied land. A large apparatus was established and squeezed grain out of the farmers' lands. However, it became clear already in 1942 that the dream of an autarkic continental economy with a highly industrialized Germany and food-supplying Russia and Ukraine failed and transformed into a nightmare for all those who were not close enough to the privileged military, to the industrial workers (essential for the weapons production), and the Nazi apparatus. The fact that this imperial attempt came with genocide and mass starvation and was only to be stopped by the joint forces of major powers of the world made the price visible people had to pay for these radicalized imperialist dreams.

While addressing a situation many decades later, the article by Ulrike von Hirschhausen and Jonas Kreienbaum deals with a similar constellation as the study of Creole emancipation before and after 1800, which opens this issue, namely the disillusionment with political independence in Africa in the 1960s, which has led to the notion of neo-co-

lonialism. The term, coined by the Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah, in 1961, mirrors the frustration of the time when formal independence had not resulted in the hoped-for economic development. Nkrumah repeated the rhetorical trick already used by Lenin in his book on imperialism as the latest form of capitalism half a century before and declared neo-colonialism the last stage of imperialism, claiming that final liberation will follow dialectically the current misery. The renewal of the debate about neo-colonialism since the 1990s, however, shows that such hope for immediate change was premature. The term now is used by alter-globalization movements to relate former anti-imperialism with the current critique of a neo-liberal variant of globalization, but the authors demonstrate that such historical analogy produces its flaws. By comparing research on British India in the nineteenth century and Zambia's waltz with international capital in the later twentieth century, they come to the conclusion that economic interventions from outside in both cases remained limited and that their outcome depends much more on indigenous agency than the traditional understanding of neo-colonialism suggests. For our discussion about the many historical variants of empire, we can draw from this rereading of the neo-colonialism debate at least two conclusions. First, there was a shift from a political understanding of imperial rule to one that looks primarily at the economic dimension and loads the notion of empire with the meaning of organized economic exploitation. The agents of such exploitation in many cases are not explicitly mentioned, for example as individual companies or political elites of the former colonial metropolises, but often vaguely addressed as either societies of the North (and thus addressing the complicity even of the worker in the North profiting from the redistributive effects of neo-colonial political economy and global inequality) or international alliances (organized in multinationals⁴⁷ or in institutions like the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank governing via credits and "adjustment programmes"⁴⁸). With this shift, second, a transformation of the understanding of empire goes hand in hand, leaving the territoriality of former empires behind and defining them rather as a structural complex than a concrete geographical configuration. Empires have always been characterized by incomplete territorialization and fuzzy borderlands instead of clear-cut borders. Notwithstanding, with the debate about neocolonialism and the primarily economic dimension of power asymmetries involved, empire loses more and more its geographical appearance. One of the effects is that there is no clearly identifiable centre but a multitude of them, and the term empire converges with an understanding of control over (parts of) the world.

Empires, we can conclude from these examples, have survived for much longer than the older historiography assumed, but at the same time they underwent massive transformations and were no longer the empires of medieval or early modern times (or even before).

47 A. Dupont Chandler/B. Mazlish (eds.), *Leviathans. Multinational Corporations and the New Global History*, Cambridge/New York 2005.

48 S. Randeria/A. Eckert (eds.), *Vom Imperialismus zum Empire. Nicht-westliche Perspektiven auf Globalisierung*, Frankfurt a. M. 2009.

The most recent hype around the notion of empire (and its references to the debate about imperialism) indicates that the path of the concept has not yet come to an end. However, empire-building at times of increasing demand for national and even regional independence and autonomy as well as at times of the many overlapping transnational and transregional ties looks quite different from similar activities in the past. Expanding into neighbouring lands and long-lasting annexation of foreign territories becomes more and more the exception.⁴⁹ With the current respatialization of the world that privileges hubs and urban centres of innovation (“global cities”⁵⁰), corridors,⁵¹ and enclaves⁵² over vast territories of “remote areas”,⁵³ the traditional empire-building appears costly and unprofitable. But this, as we know from historical examples, has not hindered people from trying it again.

49 But as cases in the Near East show these exceptions still exist and continue to raise anti-imperialist mobilization.

50 For the conceptualization of these trends, see S. Sassen, *The Global City. Introducing a Concept*, in: *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 11 (2005) 2, pp. 27–43.

51 S. Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights. From Medieval to Global Assemblages*, Princeton 2006.

52 C. Baumann/A. Dietze/M. Maruschke (eds.), *Portals of Globalization in Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, Leipzig 2017.

53 S. Sassen, *When Territory Deborders Territoriality*, in: *Territory, Politics, Governance* 1 (2013) 1, pp. 21–45.

Empire, Enlightenment, and the Time Before: Global Contexts for Writing the History of Mexico

Gabriela Goldin Marcovich / Silvia Sebastiani

ABSTRACTS

Dieser Beitrag untersucht die unterschiedlichen Wege und Werke zweier mexikanischer Kreolen, die es durch die Vertreibung der Jesuiten 1767 auf beide Seiten des Atlantiks verschlug. Francisco Javier Clavijero (1731–1787) schrieb in den Päpstlichen Staaten, damals ein bedeutendes Zentrum alten Wissens in Europa, die monumentale *Storia antica del Messico* (1780–1781). José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez (1737–1799) gab in Mexiko-Stadt seine *Gazeta de literatura de México* (1784–1795) heraus und schrieb Notizen zu Clavijeros Geschichte für eine nie veröffentlichte spanische Ausgabe. Dieser Artikel lenkt die Aufmerksamkeit weg von der „Auseinandersetzung der Neuen Welt“ mit gegenüberstehenden europäischen und amerikanischen Stimmen und konzentriert sich stattdessen auf die sehr reiche, aber noch immer nicht untersuchte Debatte unter mexikanischen Kreolen. Er verweist darauf, dass das Exil Clavijero und Alzate in unterschiedliche imperiale Konfigurationen versetzte, was erhebliche Auswirkungen auf ihre politischen Agenden und erkenntnistheoretischen Ansätze hatte. Durch die Untersuchung der Strategien, mit denen sie ihre internationale Glaubwürdigkeit als lokale Experten für Mexikos vorkoloniale Geschichte und architektonische Relikte profilierten, wird auch die variable Rezeption von Clavijeros und Alzates Werken erkundet, in einer Zeit, die durch bedeutende imperiale Transformationen gekennzeichnet war.

This article examines the different trajectories and works of two Mexican Creoles, separated by the Jesuits' exile in 1767 in two different sides of the Atlantic. Francisco Javier Clavijero (1731–1787) wrote the monumental *Storia antica del Messico* (1780–1781) in the papal states, then a major center of antiquarian knowledge in Europe. José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez (1737–1799) edited his *Gazeta de literatura de México* (1784–1795) in Mexico City and wrote notes on Clavijero's history for a never published Spanish edition. This article shifts attention away from the “dispute of the New World” opposing European and American voices and concentrates in-

stead on the very rich but still unstudied debate between Mexican Creoles. It suggests that the exile placed Clavijero and Alzate within different imperial configurations, and this had significant implications on their political agendas and epistemological approaches. By investigating the strategies that they employed for shaping their international credibility as local experts of Mexico's pre-colonial history and architectural remains, this article also explores the fluctuating reception of Clavijero's and Alzate's works in a period characterized by significant imperial transformations.

The "dispute of the New World" entered a new phase in the 1780s, one characterized by the direct "*prise de parole*" of American Creoles, coming both from the Spanish and the Anglophone sides of the continent.¹ These new voices delineated an Atlantic world, linking Europe and the Americas, the British and Spanish empires, via the Pontifical States. They provided distinct and original perspectives about the nature, inhabitants, and history of America. American Creoles paid close attention to the antiquities in the New World and its natural history, while challenging the diminishing view championed by Enlightenment *philosophes* such as Buffon, Raynal, Cornelius de Pauw, or William Robertson.² It is not our aim to repeat this well-known story. What matters here is to stress the imperial and transimperial dimension of this intellectual "polemics" – as Gerbi called it –, focusing on the tensions among Mexican Creole savants in the age of the Enlightenment.

Deep changes took place in both the European and American chessboard in the second half of the eighteenth century. The Spanish empire underwent administrative, economic and political transformations as result of the Bourbon reforms, which aimed at countering the French and especially the British threat. The Seven Years' War (1756–1763), the first commercial conflict on a world scale, was a crucial event which marked a significant weakening of Spain in front of "the making of the British empire" in America as well as in Asia.³ Among the principal events following the Treaty of Paris, three are particularly relevant for the scope of this article. First, the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Bourbon States in 1767 and the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773, which modified substantially the contours of scholarly life in the Catholic World. Within this context, nearly four thousand Jesuits, mostly coming from the Spanish empire, arrived in the Papal States. Second, the American Revolution (started in 1776), which constituted the first defeat of European imperialism on a world scale, and brought Enlightenment ideas to the Constitution of the United States in 1787. Third, the start of the French Revolution (1789), which soon came to be interpreted as a direct result of the spirit of the Enlighten-

1 A. Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World*, Pittsburgh 2010 [1955].

2 On Creole historiography, see D. A. Brading, *The Origins of Mexican Nationalism*, Cambridge, UK 1985, pp. 3–23; Id., *The First America. The Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots and the Liberal State. 1492–1867*, Cambridge, UK 1991; A. Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination*, New Haven, CT/London 1990, pp. 91–116. See also Ch. Stewart (ed.), *Creolization: History, Ethnography, Theory*, Walnut Creek 2006; R. Bauer / J. A. Mazzotti (eds.), *Creole Subjects in the Colonial Americas: Empires, Texts, Identities*, Chapel Hill 2009.

3 Ch. A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire*, Cambridge, UK 1988; Id., *Imperial Meridian. The British Empire and the World, 1780–1830*, London / New York 1989.

ment. These events produced a profound reconfiguration of the intellectual poles of the Enlightenment on a global scale, while also contributing to a new way of writing history, and in particular the history of the New World.⁴

In this article we examine the trajectory and the works of two Mexican Creoles: Francisco Xavier Clavijero (or Francesco Saverio Clavigero in the Italianized form, Veracruz 1731–Bologna 1787), author of a monumental *Storia antica del Messico* (1780–1781), who, as a Jesuit, experienced the exile and was sent to the papal states in Italy; and José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez (Ozumba 1737–Mexico City 1799), polymath and editor of the *Gazeta de literatura de México* (1784–1795) who, being a secular priest, remained in Mexico, where he became a very active intellectual figure. They were two major characters of a group of savants which has been identified by historiography as the “Mexican Enlightenment”,⁵ and which also included the erudite Antonio de León y Gama (Mexico City 1735–Mexico City 1802) and the Jesuits Francisco Javier Alegre (Veracruz 1729–Bologna 1788) and Pedro José Márquez (Rincón de León, Guanajuato 1741–Mexico City 1820).⁶ After the Jesuits’ expulsion, this group was split on two opposite sides of the Atlantic – a peculiarity which had major political as well as epistemological consequences in their writings and exchanges, as we try to show in what follows.

Clavijero and Alzate display many similarities, both on a sociological and on an intellectual level. The fathers of both had immigrated to New Spain marrying with creole women, and both had Basque origins. Alzate studied in the Jesuit College of San Pedro y San Pablo in Mexico City, where Clavijero, six years older than him, was teaching in the 1750s. Both had a keen interest in the antiquities and in the natural history of Mexico, to which they dedicated a considerable amount of their intellectual production. From this perspective, both took part in the Enlightenment “dispute of the New World”. However, they developed very distinct historiographical genres, had different scopes and aims, and addressed diverse audiences. If Clavijero responded to the European *philosophes* with a monumental history of ancient Mexico, Alzate employed the most agile strategy of punctual interventions, which he published in his periodical gazettes – an editorial format which had spread all over Europe in the previous decades and that he employed for addressing Mexican issues.

4 J. Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World. Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World*, Stanford 2001.

5 Ch. E. Ronan, *Francisco Xavier Clavigero, S.J. (1731–1787), Figure of the Mexican Enlightenment: His Life and Works*, Rome/Chicago 1977; R. Moreno, Alzate, educador ilustrado, in: *Historia Mexicana* 2 (1953) 3, pp. 371–389; Id., *La filosofía de la ilustración en México y otros escritos*, Mexico City 2000; A. S. García, *Dos científicos de la Ilustración Hispanoamericana: J. A. Alzate y F. J. de Caldas*, Mexico City 1990.

6 Other members of this group were, on the Jesuit side: Diego José Abad (Jiquilpan 1727–Bologna 1779), Francisco Javier Alegre (Veracruz 1729–Bologna, 1788), Rafael Landívar (Guatemala 1731–Bologna 1793), Andrés Cavo (Guadalajara 1739–Rome 1803), Juan Luis Maneiro (Veracruz 1744–Mexico City 1802), Andrés Guevara y Basoazabal (Guanajuato 1748–Placencia 1801); and, among those who remained in Mexico City, José Ignacio Bartolache (Guanajuato 1739–Mexico City 1790), and Benito Díaz de Gamarra y Dávalos (Zamora 1745–Mexico City 1783). See G. Goldin Marcovich, *¿Una generación del 67? Trayectorias sociales y redes intelectuales novohispanas después de la expulsión*, in: I. Fernández Arrillaga et al. (eds.), *Memoria de la expulsión de los jesuitas por Carlos III*, Madrid/Alicante 2018, pp. 175–184.

The locality from which they wrote had significant influence on their scholarly productions, as well as in the circulation of their works. Clavijero's forced exile in the Pontifical States placed him in one of the major centres of antiquarian knowledge in Europe, whereas Alzate wrote his gazettes from Mexico City, the capital of New Spain. Clavijero's history circulated widely in Europe and was translated into English and German, also reaching the newborn United States. If Alzate was a correspondent of European academies and institutions, to which he sent various specimens and maps, he remained at the margins of European debate over the eighteenth century. By distantiating them, the exile also placed the two Mexican savants within different imperial configurations, with distinct political as well as intellectual agendas.

Historiography has focused on the Creole responses to European *philosophes* within the context of the "dispute of the New World", stressing their "local expertise" as well as the ways in which American patriotism shaped their epistemological interventions.⁷ Instead, the debates among Mexican savants, as well as their different political and historiographical perspectives, have been left unexplored. In this article, we suggest a shift in attention away from the polemics between European and American voices to concentrate on the very rich 'internal' exchanges among Mexican Creoles. In so doing, we intend to question a major historiographical construction that pretends that the Mexican Creoles shared a unique and monolithic viewpoint. On the contrary, in our opinion, not only did they follow various strategies and employ different tools in addressing European *philosophes*, but they also expressed diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives while dealing with Mexican history, both natural and civil.

Our article interrogates these different approaches by focusing on the direct, as well indirect, debate between Clavijero and Alzate, which opens up critical questions, such as: what is history? When does it start? What are the instruments and what are the reliable sources upon which its legitimacy might be founded? How could Creole savants establish their intellectual authority and recognition from different localities? What does it mean to write from Bologna or from Mexico City? What are the epistemological implications of their specific discourses in the political arena? In order to address these questions, we attempt to bring together intellectual and imperial histories and shed light on the negotiations of knowledge in different settings of the Atlantic world. This is also a way to investigate the role played by Mexican savants in the Enlightenment debate.

Writing the History of Mexico in Bologna

Clavijero was born in Veracruz in 1731. He began his studies in Puebla where he entered the seminary but then decided to become a Jesuit, so he went to the Colegio de Tepozotlán in 1748. He developed a great interest in the new European philosophy (Descartes and Leibniz, especially), and played an important role in introducing it into the univer-

7 This is the case of the already mentioned crucial works by Gerbi, Brading as well as Cañizares.

sity curriculum.⁸ After some time spent in Puebla, he was sent to Mexico City to the Colegio San Pedro y San Pablo. It is in this period that Clavijero became the mentor of a group of young students who were drawn to reformist ideas. Important intellectual figures emerged from this group in the following decades, including Alzate.⁹

In the aftermath of the royal decree of 1767, which expelled the Society of Jesus from all the Spanish territories following the example of Portugal (1759) and France (1764), 678 Jesuits from New Spain were conducted *manu militari* to the port of Veracruz, while their goods and possessions were expropriated.¹⁰ Jesuits sailed on a long journey, lasting several months, during which they were also held in prisons for some time at La Havana, Cadiz, and finally in Corsica, which was then in the midst of a civil war. Diplomatic negotiations between Spain, France, the Republic of Genoa, and the Papacy took place in relation to their settlement. The majority of the expelled priests coming from the Mexican province landed in Bologna in September 1768, where they reorganized the life of the order.¹¹ They relied on the pension that the Spanish crown provided them, supplementing it with private masses. Clavijero lived in Ferrara with other Jesuits for a couple of years and then settled in Bologna in the palazzo Herculani.

After a difficult first year, the living conditions of the banished priest seemed to stabilize, in spite of the uncertainties about the duration of the expulsion as well as the future of the order, especially after the death of Clement XIII in 1769. The suppression of the Society in 1773 by Pope Clement XIV's bull *Dominus ac Redemptor* marked a new exile for Clavijero, a spiritual one.¹² Two manuscripts in Clavijero's hand address the question of the suppression of the Society, who thus transgressed the prohibition imposed on (ex-) Jesuits to write on this subject: he depicted Jesuits as modern Templars, who were victims of an international conspiracy. This was, according to him, the most terrible among many errors of his own "unphilosophical century".¹³

Throughout his banishment in Italy, Clavijero found himself at the heart of the "lieu des savoirs antiquaires":¹⁴ the papal states were then a lively intellectual hub, full of very rich libraries and collections, which attracted erudite scholars from all over Europe – among whom the names of Johann Joachim Winckelmann and Alexander von Humboldt are just the most well-known. Furthermore, from Bologna Clavijero could be in touch with

8 B. Navarro, *La introducción de la filosofía moderna en México*, Mexico City 1948.

9 G. Méndez Plancarte, *Humanistas del siglo XVIII. Introducción y selección de Gabriel Méndez Plancarte*, Mexico City 1941.

10 E. M. St. Clair Segurado, *Expulsión y exilio de la provincia jesuita mexicana, 1767–1820*, San Vicente del Rapiel 2005.

11 E. Giménez López, *Jesuitas españoles en Bolonia (1768–1773)*, in: U. Baldini / G. P. Brizzi (eds.), *La presenza in Italia dei gesuiti iberici espulsi. Aspetti religiosi, politici, culturali*, Bologna 2010, pp. 125–157.

12 M. Batllori, *La cultura hispano-italiana de los Jesuitas expulsos: españoles-hispanoamericanos-filipinos, 1767–1814*, Madrid 1966; Id., *Entre la supresión y la restauración de la Compañía de Jesús, 1773–1814*, in: *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu XLIII* (1974), pp. 364–393; St. Clair Segurado, *Expulsión y exilio*; I. del Valle, *Escribiendo desde los márgenes: colonialismo y jesuitas en el siglo XVIII*, Mexico City 2009.

13 Clavijero, *Carta sobre el juicio que formará la posteridad sobre la destrucción de los jesuitas* (probably written in 1776), Ms. 187, Fondo Sorbelli, Biblioteca Estense di Modena. See also MS 193, *ibid.*

14 A. Romano (ed.), *Rome et la science moderne entre Renaissance et Lumières*, Rome 2008.

other erudite ex-Jesuits in exile, who had also landed in the Pontifical States and were engaged in writing the histories of various parts of America: from Chile to Guatemala, Argentina, Ecuador, Filipinas...¹⁵ One of his regular correspondents was the Spanish Jesuit Lorenzo Hervás y Panduro, who set out to write a universal encyclopedia of all the languages.¹⁶

Clavijero was neither a unique nor an isolated voice among the Jesuit Creoles, but he deserves special attention as he was one of the first to enter a stage which had been, until then, the prerogative of European scholars. His *Storia antica del Messico*, printed in two volumes in 1780–1781 in the Pontifical town of Cesena, was a major contribution to historiography, while Clavijero also penned a short treatise on the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe and a *Historia de la Antigua o Baja California* (1789), published posthumously in Venice.¹⁷ Originally written in Spanish, but published in Italian, the *Storia antica del Messico* was a pre-Columbian history, which aimed to provide evidence of the period preceding the conquest. It consisted of ten books, chronologically ordered and covering a large time-span, from the late-sixth century to the capture of the last Mexican monarch in 1521. The leitmotiv of the history was an Enlightenment question: that of the formation, growth, and fall of empires. The protagonist of the narrative was the Aztec empire, swept away by the Spanish empire, itself in decline in Clavijero's time. The *Storia* was dedicated "by a Mexican" to a Mexican institution, the "reale e pontificia università degli Studi di Messico", considered to be the only institution appropriated for writing Mexican history. Clavijero lamented the absence of a chair of Antiquity, without which the comprehension of Mexican paintings had been lost even in Mexico. At the same time, he advocated for the construction of a museum, in which to preserve all the ancient monuments, statues, and documents: this was the necessary foundation of any historian.¹⁸ A preface on the historical method and an "Account of the writers on the Ancient History of Mexico" strengthened this point.

Nine "Dissertations", dedicated to Count Gian Rinaldo Carli – author of the *Lettere Americane* (1780) which compared pre-Columbian history to Italian antiquities¹⁹ – closed the *Storia antica del Messico*. These repeated, in polemical and oratorical form, the

15 The names of the Jesuits writing about America in this period include Giovanni Ignacio Molina on Chili, Juan de Velasco, José Jolí, and José Manuel Peramás on Quito, Paraguay, and Rio de la Plata, Filippo Salvatore Gilij on Orinoco.

16 A. Astorgano Abajo, Hervás y Panduro y sus amigos ante la mexicanidad, in: M. Koprivitz Acuña (ed.), *Ilustración en el mundo hispánico: preámbulo de las independencias*, Tlaxcala 2009, pp. 201–254.

17 Francesco Saverio Clavigero, *Storia antica del Messico*, cavata da' migliori storici spagnuoli, e da' manoscritti, e dalle pitture antiche degl'Indiani: divisa in dieci libri, e corredata di carte geografiche, e di varie figure: e dissertazioni sulla terra, sugli animali, e sugli abitatori del Messico, Cesena, Per Gregorio Biasini, all'Insegna di Pallade, 1780–1781; Breve noticia sobre la prodigiosa y renombrada imagen de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de México, Cesena, Gregorio Biasini, 1782; Id., *Storia della California: opera postuma*, Venezia, M. Fenzo, 1789.

18 Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursúa, viceroy of Spain between 1771 and 1779, had disposed to collect the antiquities in a museum within the Royal University of Mexico City, where he also founded the first chair on the pre-conquest history. But both the museum and the chair lived very shortly. See M. Achim, *From Idols to Antiquity. Forging the National Museum of Mexico*, Lincoln / London 2017, p. 12.

19 See Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World*, pp. 233 ff.

topic previously expounded as “historical truth”. Each dissertation took as an argument one of the themes of the Enlightenment “thesis” about America: Clavijero challenged the supposed strangeness and malignant nature of the American continent, the assumption that American animals were small in comparison to those of the Ancient World, dealt with the question of how America was peopled and to the “true” origins of syphilis. He insisted, in particular, on the physical and moral constitution of the Americans, who were far from being weak and effeminate as Buffon and Cornelius de Pauw had imagined, while dealing with their culture and religion.²⁰

Clavijero used the instruments of criticism as elaborated by European Enlightenment against Enlightenment itself. From a rhetorical point of view, he followed a twofold strategy, both ironical and provocative, by denouncing the whimsical theories of European philosophers, who never left their countries but who claimed the right (and the knowledge) to write the history of others. It was as a missionary as well as an American voice “in the field” that Clavijero undertook to ridicule and to “provincialize” histories produced by an armchair scholar in, and from, enlightened Europe. Clavijero created an imaginary and sarcastic dialogue with, on the one hand, the European philosophers and, on the other hand, his potential reader. This rhetoric, which continually resorted to pathos, to exclamation, and moral judgment, led to the condemnation of the opposing party in an imaginary court.

In order to strengthen an alternative “*régime d'historicité*”²¹ to that of the European Enlightenment, Clavijero had to shape his authority differently. One of his literary strategies was to base his legitimacy on his status as a Creole. As such, not only could he speak on the behalf of all the Americans, but he was also the one who knew and brought sources from America to Europe. He claimed to be able to understand and speak the Nahuatl, and to have direct and close knowledge of the “indigenous” inhabitants of the New World, as well as their “original” documents. The *Storia antica del Messico* was the fruit of his lifetime interest for the indians.²²

The renewed attention paid to the most ancient history of Aztecs led Clavijero to adopt a historiographical perspective which questioned the idea that written documents were the only reliable sources for history. While denouncing the distorted vision through which the written culture of Europe failed to recognize the worth of other cultures, he upheld the use of iconographic, archaeological, as well as pictographic materials. His approach marked a break from the method adopted by Enlightenment *philosophes* such as the Scottish Presbyterian William Robertson, who had built his highly respected *History of*

20 Dissertations on the Land, the Animals, and the Inhabitants of Mexico: in which the Ancient History of that Country is confirmed, many points of Natural History illustrated, and numerous Errors refuted, which have been published concerning America by some celebrated modern Authors. On Clavijero's *Storia*, we follow here the argument advanced by Silvia Sebastiani, What constituted historical evidence of the New World? Closeness and distance in Robertson and Clavijero, in: *Modern Intellectual History* 11 (2014) 3, pp. 675–693.

21 F. Hartog, *Régimes d'historicité. Présentisme et expériences du temps*, Paris 2002.

22 See Félix de Sebastián, *Memorias de los padres y hermanos de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Nueva España*, Fondo Sorbelli, Biblioteca Estense di Modena, Ms A 532, vol. 2, pp. 66–67.

America (1777) relying on Spanish sources, while dismissing the validity of the Indian ones. On the basis of these sources, Robertson had enchained American societies to the first stage of human development, that of “savagery”, where the European *conquistadores* would have found them. Clavijero, by contrast, considered Mexican paintings and codices as the most authentic, and so reliable, historical records witnessing the greatness of the Aztec empire, swept away by the Spanish. In so doing, he criticized the Enlightenment narrative of European expansion, based only on European written documents.²³ However, his history remained Eurocentric for three major reasons: first, it was developed within an antiquarian perspective by maintaining a constant parallel with European classical antiquity; second, its epistemological framework remained that of a conception of human history conjured as an illustration of sacred history; third, it justified the evangelizing mission, so ending up attenuating his criticism of European empires.

Clavijero's *History of Mexico* in Britain and Back to (the Other Side of) America

Clavijero's *Storia Antica del Messico* was translated into English by Charles Cullen, one of the sons of the well-known Edinburgh physician William Cullen, and published in London in 1787 by Robinson's family, which emerged from the mid-1780s as a major publisher of the Scottish Enlightenment on the London market.²⁴ The *History of Mexico* had a strong impact in both Britain and its former empire, the United States, founded in the same year: 1787. Cullen dedicated his translation to John Stuart, Earl of Bute, a Scotsman who was Prime Minister of Great Britain in 1762–1763 and signed the Treaty of Paris which ended the Seven Years' War, while also being one of the principal patrons in Scotland. Lord Bute's patronage, Cullen's family circle, and Robinson's editorial milieu represented for Clavijero's *History* a veritable guarantee for wide distribution in the anglophone world and beyond.

Becoming available in English, Clavijero's work immediately confronted what was then Britain's most authoritative American history: the already mentioned *History of America* by the Principal of the University of Edinburgh William Robertson (Borthwick 1721–Edinburgh 1793). The comparison was exacerbated by Cullen's introduction, which

23 Cañizares, *How to Write the History of the New World*; J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vol. 2: *Narratives of Civil Government*, Cambridge, UK 1999, pp. 316–328, and vol. 4: *Barbarians, Savages and Empires*, Cambridge, UK 2005, pp. 157–204. On the providential role of European expansion in Robertson's work, see S. J. Brown (ed.), *William Robertson and the Expansion of Empire*, Cambridge, UK 1997; S. Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment. Race, Gender and the Limits of Progress*, New York 2013, ch. 3.

24 Francesco Saverio Clavigero, *The History of Mexico: Collected from Spanish and Mexican Historians, from Manuscripts, and Ancient Paintings of the Indians* [...]. Translated from the Original Italian, by Charles Cullen, Esq., 2 vols., London, G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1787. The Robinson family were booksellers active in 1764–1830: George Robinson (?–1811), George Robinson (1736–1801), James Robinson (?–1803 or 1804), John Robinson (1753–1813). See R. B. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book. Scottish Authors and their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland and America*, Chicago 2006, p. 390 and Appendix.

contrasted Robertson's elegant style with Clavijero's authentic argument. Numerous reviews published in the main British journals of the period (from the *Monthly Review* through the *Scots Magazine*, the *Critical Review* or the *London Chronicle*) also proposed the confrontation between the two authors, sometimes favouring one approach while sometimes favouring the other. The article "America" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the major British work of organized knowledge in the eighteenth century, dramatically changed in the span of ten years, between the second edition (1778) based on Robertson's narrative, and the third (1788) inspired by Clavijero's work.²⁵

Robertson himself, at the time considered one of the major historians in Europe, engaged in a direct debate with Clavijero, answering the (ex)Jesuit's "great asperity" in the fifth and last revised edition of his *History of America*, published in 1788.²⁶ The answer was a negative one, by which Robertson confirmed the validity of his own historical method and hierarchy of reliable sources. The European "discovery" and conquest of America, which Robertson placed at the outset of his narrative, disclosed his historical project and the place covered in it by the New World, while also stressing the positive evaluation of the Spanish Empire.²⁷ Book VIII, which closed Robertson's *History*, moved from the destruction of Aztec and Inca empires through the improvement of the whole of American society in almost every field of knowledge, economics, and morals, that occurred especially in the last century of Bourbon rule.²⁸ American progress remained, according to Robertson, the consequence of Spanish imperialism – in spite of Clavijero's efforts of praising the Aztec empire.

The English translation of Clavijero's *History of Mexico* served as the basis for the German translation, published in Leipzig in 1790, and as such was quoted by the naturalist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach in the third edition of *De generis humani varietate native*²⁹, so becoming part of the huge anthropological debate then taking shape. It also crossed the Atlantic: it was first published by the Scottish emigré Thomas Dobson in Philadelphia in 1804 and then in Richmond (Virginia) in 1806, in several editions.

Clavijero's *History* provided a historical model to scholars of the newborn United States also in search of their own past. Benjamin Smith Barton and Thomas Jefferson took Clavijero as a crucial reference while dealing with North American Antiquities. In par-

25 S. Sebastiani, L'Amérique des Lumières et la hiérarchie des races. Disputes sur l'écriture de l'histoire dans l'*Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1768–1788), in: *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 67 (2012) 2, pp. 327–361. This article develops in detail the historiographical polemics between Robertson and Clavijero.

26 William Robertson, *The History of America* (1777), V ed., 3 vols., London 1788. See Sebastiani, "L'Amérique des Lumières et la hiérarchie des races", and "What constituted historical evidence of the New World?"

27 St. J. Brown, An Eighteenth-Century Historian on the Amerindians: Culture, Colonialism and Christianity in William Robertson's *History of America*, in: *Studies in World Christianity* 2 (1996), pp. 204–222; K. O'Brien, *Narratives of Enlightenment. Cosmopolitan History from Voltaire to Gibbon*, Cambridge, UK 1997, pp. 93–166.

28 Robertson's plan of writing about British America was interrupted by the outbreak of the American Revolution.

29 The third edition of Blumenbach's *De generis humani varietate native* was published in Göttingen in 1795, while the first edition dated back to 1776. For an English version, see *The Anthropological Treatises of Blumenbach and the Inaugural Dissertation of John Hunter on the Varieties of Man*, transl. and ed. by Th. Bendyshe, London 1865, pp. 192, 293. Blumenbach also quoted Robertson several times, together with other Enlightenment naturalists and historians.

ticular, the “Account of several remarkable vestiges of an ancient date, which have been discovered in different parts of North America”, that introduced Barton’s *Observations on Some Parts of Natural History*, published in London in 1787, was intended to provide proof of a glorious past in North America, parallel to that of Mexico. Barton, who in 1787 was a student of medicine at the University of Edinburgh under William Cullen and took issue against the Principal William Robertson, became an important intellectual figure of post-colonial America: from 1789 he taught Natural History and Materia Medica at the College of Philadelphia, where he introduced Blumenbach’s classifications of human race, together with a new attention toward language and antiquities.³⁰

Barton proposed to compare the ruins of Kentucky or Ohio to those of Mexico: if they were less spectacular, it was nonetheless possible to lay claim to the same monumental and cultural tradition for North America, too. When the new state began to look west, Mexico mattered strongly, as Samuel Truett has put it: “the fact that Mexican history came to the US frontier by way of New Spain added a new layer of entanglement, in which prior appropriations at the borderlands of one empire found new significance at the acquisitive edges of another”.³¹ By discovering, at the margins of Europe, another Creole voice, coming from another empire, Barton could enrich his historical view with perspectives borrowed from the Mexican past. But whereas he rooted the new nation in a monumental natural history, Clavijero had focused more on the cultural foundations of American history, in connection to Nahua peoples.

The newborn United States was at the frontier with Mexico, but Mexican history entered the United States from Europe, via the Atlantic. It is within these transatlantic and transimperial interactions – and competitions – that Clavijero’s work has to be placed.

Tensions Within the Spanish Empire: Alzate Follower and Critic of Clavijero

In 1783 the editor Antonio de Sancha (Torija 1720–Cádiz 1790) announced the forthcoming Spanish edition of Clavijero’s *Storia antica del Messico*. The Court had addressed a letter to Clavijero asking him to send his Spanish original manuscript to Sancha, probably on the advice of some people in Madrid, who were very interested in his work.³² Sancha, the main printer in Madrid, intended to publish the most elegant and complete edition of Clavijero’s history, to which he planned to add maps and illustrations. He

30 See S. Sebastiani, *Anthropology beyond Empires: Samuel Stanhope Smith and the Reconfiguration of the Atlantic World*, in: L. Kontler et al. (ed.), *Negotiating Knowledge in Early Modern Empires: A Decentered View*, New York 2014, pp. 207–233.

31 S. Truett, *The Borderlands and Lost Worlds of Early America*, in: E. Countryman / J. Barr (eds.), *Contested Spaces of Early America*, Philadelphia 2014, pp. 300–324, quotation p. 319. See also P. Hämäläinen / S. Truett, *On Borderlands*, in: *Journal of American History* 98 (2011) 2, pp. 338–361.

32 Charles Ronan asserts that, with all probability, the person behind the idea of Clavijero’s Spanish edition was Manuel Lardizabal y Uribe (1739–1820), a Mexican-born lawyer who had studied at the Colegio de San Ildefonso and had emigrated to Spain to continue his education. See Ch. E. Ronan, *Clavijero: The Fate of a Manuscript*, in: *The Americas* 27 (1970) 2, pp. 113–136, esp. note 7, p. 114. In the next pages we follow Ronan’s article.

first sent the manuscript to the Council of Castile, which entrusted Pedro de Luján, el Duque de Almodóvar, with its revision. The latter reviewed it positively, except for what he considered Clavijero's partiality towards Las Casas and his use of some sources he deemed unreliable.³³

Around the same time when Sancha announced the Spanish edition of Clavijero's *Storia antica del Messico*, about fifty copies of the Italian edition arrived at the University of Mexico City, to which – as we have mentioned – the work was dedicated. As soon as he heard about Sancha's project, José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez prepared some notes to be added to Clavijero's Spanish edition.³⁴ Alzate was very confident that his comments soon would be published in Madrid, as he mentioned this affair in his publications.³⁵ But this was not the case. His notes provide, however, unique insight into the reception of Clavijero in New Spain and the relation between locality and the production of knowledge within the boundaries of the same empire.

José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez was born in a town near Mexico City in 1737. When the family moved to Mexico City, Alzate studied in the Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo, where Clavijero was teaching; so, their friendship might date back to 1750, as Charles Ronan has suggested.³⁶ Alzate became a secular priest and started working at the Arzobispado just before the expulsion of the Jesuits. In spite of the distance, he remained somehow in contact with Clavijero. Speaking about Clavijero's circle at the Colegio, his biographer Juan Luis Maneiro (Veracruz, 1744–Mexico City, 1802), at the time his student and then his closest friend during exile, named specifically Alzate, “whose literary works arrive to us from time to time even if the vast sea separates us”.³⁷ Clavijero was one of the most cited authors in Alzate's writings, often qualified as “*el sabio*” or “*el insigne*”. But a close reading makes it also emerge some divergences, which are worth to be emphasised.

In his *Descripción de las antigüedades de Xochicalco*, a short treatise on the ruins of Xochicalco published as a supplement to the *Gazeta de literatura* in November 1791, Alzate quoted Clavijero in the opening epigraph, thus implying that he was fulfilling his wish of preserving and studying Mexican antiquities. In the preliminary remarks, he noted that the similarity between their ideas did not depend on copying each other, but was

33 Ibid. p. 117. Pedro Francisco Jiménez de Góngora y Luján, first Duke of Almodóvar (1727–1794), edited the Spanish translation of Raynal's *Histoire des deux Indes*, “with the comments by a Catholic Spaniard”, under the pseudonym Eduardo Malo de Luque. The first volume was published by Antonio de Sancha in 1784.

34 Alzate's manuscript notes for book VI and VII (vol. II) are kept in the National Library of Mexico and are reproduced in R. Moreno de los Arcos, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, in: *Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl* 10 (1972), pp. 359–392. Roberto Moreno also found the notes for books I and II in the Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia de México and published them in: *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia Antigua de Clavijero (Addenda)*, in: *Estudios de cultura náhuatl* 12 (1976), pp. 85–120. The notes for the remaining books have not (yet) been found.

35 See for instance, Alzate, *Gaceta de Literatura de México* [ed. 1831], vol. 2, p. 53.

36 See Ronan, Francisco Javier Clavijero, note 100, p. 34.

37 Juan Luis Maneiro, Joannis Aloysii Maneiri... De vitis aliquot mexicanorum aliorumque qui sive virtute, sive litteris Mexici inprimis floruerunt, 3 vols., Bononiae, ex typographia Laelii a Vulpe, 1791–1792, vol 3, p. 49. “[...] Josephus Alzateus, cujus assiduas in litteris vigilias interdum audimus, tametsi mari immenso disternimur.”

the result of “treating the same subject with sincerity and the help of the critic”.³⁸ If the emphasis Alzate put in stressing that he read Clavijero “*only after*” having published his own treatise might seem excessive and, as such, a bit suspicious, his approach to the ruins differed from that of the *Storia antica del Messico*. Alzate presented his treatise as a personal report of his visit to the ruins, written in the first person – in contrast with the impersonal account adopted by Clavijero’s history. Unlike Clavijero who also presented himself as a local expert of Mexico but never quoted his indigenous informants directly, Alzate referred often to the “natives” who accompanied him in his excursions and that he called “*prácticos*”: the role they played in his narrative is indeed significant.³⁹ Alzate’s intervention addressed first of all an internal question: he denounced both the precarious state of preservation of the ruins and the pernicious activities of those hacienda’s owners who used their territories as carriers. But, at the same time, his *Descripción de la antigüedades* – published on the occasion of the arrival, in Mexico, of Malaspina’s expedition, to whom he dedicated his treatise – clearly shows that Alzate aspired to reach an international and scientific audience.

Alzate’s complex relationship with Clavijero, made of admiration but also of criticism, emerges in the clearest way in the notes he wrote on the *Storia antica* around 1789–1790.⁴⁰ By then, Alzate was established as one of the most important intellectual figures of New Spain and had been publishing his *Gazeta de literatura de México* for half a decade. He was also a correspondent member of the French Academy of Sciences since the 1760s.⁴¹ In his gazettes he dealt with a variety of topics related to “useful” sciences, mainly physics, chemistry, and natural sciences, but also history and geography.⁴² Alzate is neither systematic nor monolithic in his interests and interventions; but, by constantly referring to his gazettes’ articles in his other publications, he weaved thematic threads and gave a sense of coherence to his work as a whole, despite the dispersion of the materials. Along with the antiquities, one thread was his long-standing interest in the Mexican Indians.

The notes that Alzate wrote on books VI and VII of *La storia antica del Messico*, dealing with ancient Mexicans’ religion, rites, and political, military and economic organization, are particularly interesting. His style of commentary was the same he used for annotating the excerpts of foreign authors he translated and published in his gazettes. Roberto Moreno maintains that Alzate followed Clavijero in his vindication of the Indians before

38 Alzate, *Descripción de la antigüedades de Xochicalco*, in: *Gaceta de Literatura de México*, 1831, vol. 2, p. 265. In the Advertencia, Alzate asserted: “Ni el abate Clavijero se valió de mi débil ensayo, ni yo tuve original que copiar; nos expresamos con identidad, lo que no es de extrañar, pues tratando del mismo asunto con sinceridad y con el auxilio de la crítica, era preciso vertiésemos las mismas ideas.”

39 In his reference to his indigenous informants, Alzate also stressed their “superstitions”. See, *ibid.*, pp. 28–30.

40 On the datation of Alzate’s notes, see Moreno, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, pp. 360–364.

41 P. Bret, Alzate y Ramírez et l’Académie Royale des Sciences de Paris: la réception des travaux d’un savant du Nouveau Monde, in: P. Aceves Pastrana (ed.), *Periodismo científico en el siglo XVIII: José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez*, Mexico City 2001, pp. 123–205.

42 A sample of Alzate’s writing has been recently edited by M. Achim, *Observaciones útiles para el futuro de México: selección de artículos 1768–1795*, Mexico City 2012.

and after the conquest, against two different enemies: the European *philosophes* who had diminished their physical and intellectual capacities in their writings, and the political mistreatments of Indians by the authorities of New Spain.⁴³ Alzate, however, disagreed with Clavijero on some important details, such as the estimations of the number of human sacrifices, which he maintained to be less numerous than usually stated, siding with Las Casas.⁴⁴

Beside pushing forward the “Lascasian” agenda, Alzate challenged the central argument on which Clavijero had constructed his authority as a Creole historian: his first-hand knowledge about American nature, peoples, and original documents. The insistence on the local expertise and the epistemological value of the eyewitness in opposition to the philosophical and distant history of armchair Europeans was a leitmotiv of the *Storia antica del Messico*. However, Alzate, from his position *sur place*, challenged this very point, stressing that Clavijero had spent over twenty years in exile, and was therefore far away from the Mexican sources, specimens, and monuments he was speaking about. While applying to Clavijero the same criticism the latter had raised against European writers, Alzate pointed to an important contradiction lurking throughout the work of the banished Jesuit: Clavijero had couched his own history in a language of closeness, but he was writing from a distant space and time, being in Bologna and dealing with the Aztec past.⁴⁵

This was particularly true for natural history, for which Alzate often relied on his own observations. For instance, he disputed Clavijero’s observations about the axolotl, an endemic species living in the lakes of Mexico City. Clavijero noted, following the writings of Francisco Hernández (1514–1587), the sixteenth-century author of the *Mexican Treasury*, that this “aquatic lizard” had a uterus and menstruated. In his text, Clavijero took aim at Jacques-Christophe Valmont de Bomare (1731–1807) who doubted this characteristic, dismissing the authority of the French naturalist, on the ground that the latter had never seen such a specimen in person, and was therefore not trustworthy. Alzate, on the contrary, wrote in his notes to Clavijero’s history that “Bomare was right to doubt about this phenomenon [menstruation], as by its dissection I have verified that this is false”.⁴⁶ In so doing, Alzate reasserted his deeper degree of intimacy and experience, in which he rooted his own scientific credibility. On November 1790, Alzate devoted a full issue of his gazette to the axolotl. Briefly referring to “a work that I’ve

43 Moreno, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, p. 369.

44 Clavijero records that Las Casas “reduces these sacrifices to such a small number, that we are left to believe, they amounted not to fifty, or at most not to a hundred”, whereas other sources – including Zumarraga, the first archbishop of Mexico – reported that the number of victims was 20,000 per year or even more. Clavijero took an intermediate position here, while stressing that he did not understand why Las Casas, who used Zumarraga’s testimony, contradicted him on this issue. See Clavijero, *History of Mexico*, vol. I, book VI, chap. 20, pp. 280–283. Alzate, on the contrary, noted: “I do not know why our author [Clavijero] disagrees with Las Casas’ opinion”. See note 13, in Moreno, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, p. 379.

45 Sebastiani, *What constituted historical evidence of the New World?*

46 “En lo demás tuvo razón Bomare para dudar del fenómeno que se refiere, pues por la disección he verificado ser falso.” See Moreno, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia Antigua de Clavijero* (Addenda), p. 356, note 102.

prepared on the history of New Spain, and which I hope will be published very soon by D. Antonio de Sancha"⁴⁷, he did not mention explicitly Clavijero but reasserted his agreement with Bomare and delved into a full examination of the axolotl, retorting to first-person narrative and relying heavily on Indian informants. He concluded that the axolotl syrup was a good medicine against tuberculosis and suggested that it should be commercialized.

Alzate, thus, used a variety of literary strategies to intervene both on local and on international levels, in the hope of being published in Europe. He stressed the importance of the knowledge he was revealing to Europeans, and to Spaniards in particular, either for their physical well-being (such as the cure for tuberculosis) or for the well-being of the empire through the development of commerce – benefitting the empire at broad as well as New Spain's economy. With his gazettes, Alzate could achieve several goals: he could bring the latest European scientific contributions to New Spain but also gather and make available Mexican riches and particularities to Europe. In this way, he could contribute, from his locality, to the scientific international discussions. The flexibility and regularity of this literary genre, while providing a running commentary of the local affairs (within the limits of the censorship requirements), also allowed him to organize the enlightened sociabilities in Mexico City.⁴⁸

The emphasis on locality emerging from Alzate's notes could be read as a political commentary on the current state of Indians and ancient vestiges alike. One could roughly categorize Alzate's notes of the books VI and VII in three sets: anthropological observations, curious facts and political comments. His notes doubled down on the local expertise by providing a glimpse of how things were in the present. Many notes provided information on whether modern Indians still behaved as the ancient ones described by Clavijero: whereas the latter affirmed, for instance, that the Indians used to burn incense for the idols in all their houses, Alzate explained that "nowadays the Indians burn incense for the saints in their chapels".⁴⁹ On the one hand, this presentist gaze reinforced

47 "En una obra que trabajé sobre la historia de Nueva España, y que espero se publique muy en breve por D. Antonio de Sancha, expuse observaciones seguras acerca del ajolote o axolotl, pez raro por su organización, y de que se han vertido muchas falsedades..." See Alzate, *Gaceta de Literatura de México* [1789–1795], Puebla, 1831, vol. 2, p. 53.

48 See G. Goldin Marcovich, *La circulation des savoirs entre l'Europe et la Nouvelle Espagne au XVIIIe Siècle. Les Gazettes de José Antonio De Alzate y Ramírez, Mémoire de Master*, Paris, EHESS, 2012. For more on Alzate's naturalist practices and his criticism vis-à-vis the European classificatory system, see R. Moreno de los Arcos, *Linneo en México: Las controversias sobre el sistema binario sexual, 1788–1798*, Mexico City 1989; and more recently: H. Cowie, *Peripheral Vision: Science and Creole Patriotism in Eighteenth-Century Spanish America*, in: *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 40 (2009) 3, pp. 143–155; M. Achim, *From Rustics to Savants. Indigenous Materia Medica in Eighteenth-Century Mexico*, in: *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 42 (2011) 3, pp. 275–284.

49 "En el día acostumbran los indios en sus oratorios incensar a los santos." Alzate, note 14 to Clavijero's Vol. II, Lib. VI, Chap. 21, in Moreno, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, p. 379. See also note 11, p. 378. A similar idea was also expressed in note 21: whereas Clavijero wrote that the ancient Mexicans sent their children to school, Alzate noted that "even today the Indians try to send their small children to colleges" ("hasta el día procuran los indios dedicar sus prequeños hijos a los colegios"), *ibid.*, p. 380. He added that there was more demand than supply and that some had tried to open schools for Indian children but had faced many difficulties.

Clavijero's credibility in his confrontation with the European polemicists; on the other, it served as a local and punctual intervention. If Clavijero merely hinted his disagreement on the way Indians were treated by local authorities, Alzate gave it full development. In book VII, chapter 14 dealing with the "Division of the lands, and titles of possession and property", Clavijero compared the ancient land property system of the Indians to the Spanish (and European) feudal system. "In the Mexican empire" – he wrote – "as far as we can find, real fiefs were few in number; and if we are to speak in the strict sense of the civil law, there were none at all; for they were neither perpetual in their nature, as every year it was necessary to repeat the form of investiture, nor were the vassals of feudatories exempted from the tributes which were paid to the king by the other vassals of the crown."⁵⁰ This rather fair system, he seemed to conclude, somehow had been preserved by the Crown through benevolent legislation, but had been abused by individuals and judges. "The catholic kings have assigned lands to the settlements of the Mexicans, and made proper laws to secure to them the perpetuity of such possessions; but at present many villages have been deprived of them by the great power of some individuals, assisted by the iniquity of some judges."⁵¹

Alzate, in his notes, went further: "ever since the Indian peoples have been deprived of the administration of their lands, these [lands] have become totally useless to them: it sounds like the property is theirs, but they cannot make any use of them [these lands] or have the slightest profit from them".⁵² He provided a list of examples to illustrate his point: Tlatelolco, Iztacalco, Mexiucá. If we understand this correctly, these lands assured a rent, but the Indians, according to Alzate, were ignorant of this economic system and so derived no benefit from it: "why would the Indians care about the publication of how much of their riches have been used in the National Bank, if they ignore that there is such a Bank and if both the capitals and the profits are so useless to them?"⁵³ Locality played on a multiplicity of scales, in New Spain but also in Madrid, where Clavijero's *History* was supposed to be published.

Historiographical Failures and New Imperial Competitions

The Spanish publication of Clavijero's history never saw the light of day in Spain. When Sancha sought the approbation of the Council of the Indies, he encountered insurmountable difficulties. "The appearance of the *Storia antica* in Italy" – writes Ronan – "had caused a very unfavorable reaction among a number of the exiled Spanish Jesuits

50 See Clavijero, *The History of Mexico*, vol I, Book VI, Ch. XIV, p. 349.

51 Ibid. p. 350.

52 "Desde que se quitó a los pueblos de indios la administración de sus tierras les son absolutamente inútiles: suena por suya la propiedad, pero no pueden hacer ningún uso ni sacar de ellas el más mínimo provecho". Alzate, note 26 in Moreno de los Arcos, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, p. 382.

53 "¿Qué importa a los indios que se publique que sus caudales han utilizado tanto o cuanto en el Banco Nacional, si ellos ignoran que hay tal Banco y tan inútiles les son las utilidades como los principales?" Ibid.

living in that country.”⁵⁴ They considered it as having defended Mexican Indians, while being “highly insulting to Spain”. Therefore, as soon as the Majorcan Jesuit, Ramón Diosdado Caballero, who was sent to Rome, heard the news about the forthcoming edition of Clavijero’s history in Spanish, he wrote a strong refutation with the intent of “repairing the scandal it had provoked”.⁵⁵ Diosdado sent a letter to Gálvez, the former *Visitador general* of New Spain, at that time Minister of the Indies, warning him about Clavijero’s work and hoping to publish his own refutation – *Observaciones americanas y suplemento crítico a la historia del ex- Jesuita Don Francisco Xavier Clavijero* – under his patronage as an antidote to the Spanish edition.⁵⁶ So, although the censors provided positive reviews of Clavijero’s manuscript to the Council of the Indies, Gálvez stalled the publication, with the intention of revising it on the basis of Diosdado’s observations, that he intended to publish.⁵⁷ One of the censors of Diosdado’s “Observaciones” hailed his efforts “to refute an American in the middle of Italy” as an action “proper to a noble heart, truly Spanish, and worthy of great praise”, while stressing that Diosdado successfully refuted “the Raynals and Robertsons”.⁵⁸ This in itself did not prevent the publication of Clavijero’s history in Spain, as the book was further sent to censorship with Diosdado’s “Observaciones” and its reports: the censors deemed Clavijero worth publishing, whereas they considered Diosdado’s observations as full of errors and lacking in good faith. However, the opposition levelled by Diosdado and backed by Gálvez stalled the publication so effectively that the entire project was eventually forgotten, awaiting a final revision which the appointed person never made.⁵⁹ Diosdado’s opposition casts light on the complexity of stances concerning the place of America and American history within the Spanish empire, as well as among the (ex)Jesuits.

As for Alzate, he never reached the audience he expected to and his notes remained manuscript. Around the same time, Alzate asked the Crown to be named “royal chronicler of the Indies” and proposed a geography of America.⁶⁰ His request was endorsed by the Viceroy Revillagigedo who commended the high quality of Alzate’s works and his devotion to the homeland and the king.⁶¹ In Madrid, Juan Bautista Muñoz had no objections but the members of the Academia de la Historia expressed their opposition to such a title.⁶² The task of a chronicler, they explained, was to “adjust history to the political interests of the Nation, and the rights of the Crown, defending them against the

54 Ronan, *Clavijero: The Fate of a Manuscript*, p. 118.

55 Diosdado to Gálvez, Rome, August 5, 1784, AGI, Patronato 296, fols. 1–3, quoted in Ronan, *Clavijero: The Fate of a Manuscript*, p. 118.

56 *Ibid.* p. 119.

57 *Ibid.* p. 121.

58 Miguel de San Martín Cueto to José de Gálvez, November 12, 1785, AGI, Patronato 296, fols. 4–31v, quoted in Ronan, *Clavijero: The Fate of a Manuscript*, p. 122.

59 *Ibid.*, pp. 125–134.

60 “Expediente sobre que la Cámara de Indias tenga presente para Prebendas, à D.n Josef Antonio de Alzate...”, 1777–1791, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, México, 1883.

61 *Ibid.*, June 26, 1790.

62 Juan Bautista Muñoz (Museros 1745–Valencia 1799) was appointed by Charles III Cosmographer of the Indies in 1770. In 1779 he was charged with the writing of a “History of the New World” that was to counter the philo-

declamations and rumors of the rival nations, or the conquered provinces". Thus, in the view of the Academia de la Historia, the main purpose of history was political, and had to counter both foreign enemies and internal dissenters. By consequence, the chronicles should, according to them, "at all times reside at the Court, so that he would write his history under the sight of the tribunals".⁶³ In this imperial logic, writing from Italy or from New Spain was equally problematic, as both places were distant from the courtly oversight.

Alzate had remained on the sidelines of the European debate, despite his efforts, all along his life, to take direct part in it. His work would enter the European debate only after his death, via Alexander von Humboldt, who first made his name documenting his travels to Spanish America. In his *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain* (1811), Humboldt stressed the achievements of the Bourbons in New Spain, while relying much on both Alzate and Clavijero. His *Political Essay* was, in turn, appropriated and reinterpreted by the Mexican nationalist historiography during the 19th century.⁶⁴ In Europe, Humboldt's "comprehensive description" made the "previously opaque Spanish possession transparent, instilling the belief that Mexico was pivotal to the control of world trade."⁶⁵ Particularly in Britain, Mexico came to be perceived as a strategic site for global commerce, not only for its geographical position nearly equidistant between Europe and Asia, but also because it appeared full of resources to be exploited and possibilities for foreign investments.⁶⁶ The knowledge developed by Mexican savants was now put at the service of British imperialism.

The new imperial logic which developed in the wake of the Atlantic revolutions and the disintegration of much of the Spanish Empire had a direct impact on Clavijero's reception. When Clavijero's *Storia* finally appeared in Spanish in 1826, it was not published in Madrid but in London. It was printed by the German publisher Rudolph Ackermann (Schneeberg 1764–London 1834), who produced more than eighty titles in Spanish, seizing the profitable opportunities opened by the commercial blockade with Spain in

sophes views on Spain and its history in the Indies. For a detailed account of the historiographical stances of the Academy and its inner workings see Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to write the history of the New World*, ch. 3.

63 "Informe de Don Juan Bautista Muñoz", January 26, 1791 and "Informe de la Academia de la Historia", April 29, 1791, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, México, 1883, "Que es también del cargo del cronista, ajustar la historia a los intereses políticos de la Nación, y derechos de la Corona, sosteniéndoles contra las declamaciones y rumores de las naciones rivales, o de las provincias conquistadas. Que por esta razón es una de las máximas fundamentales de estos Reynos, y señaladamente de las Indias, que el Cronista, en todos tiempos haya residido en la Corte, para que escriba su historia a la vista de los Tribunales."

64 L. E. O. Fernandes, *Patria Mestiza. A invenção do passado nacional mexicano (séculos XVIII e XIX)*, São Paulo 2012; Id., *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain: Humboldt and the history of Mexico*, in *HiN – Humboldt im Netz. Internationale Zeitschrift für Humboldt-Studien* (Potsdam/Berlin) XV (2014) 28, pp. 24–33, <http://www.unipotsdam.de/u/romanistik/humboldt/hin/hin28/fernandes.htm>.

65 N. Rupke, *A Geography of Enlightenment: The Critical Reception of Alexander von Humboldt's Mexico Work*, in: D. N. Livingstone / Ch. W. J. Withers (eds.), *Geography and Enlightenment*, Chicago 1999, pp. 319–339, quotation p. 330.

66 *Ibid.*, pp. 331–333.

the newly independent republics of Spanish America.⁶⁷ The *Historia antigua de Megico* which was published in England, to be sold (especially) in Latin America, was not the original text written by Clavijero but it was a translation from the Italian, made *ex novo* by José Joaquín de Mora (Cádiz 1783–Madrid 1864), a Spanish liberal writer who had exiled in London in 1823, after the French invasion.⁶⁸ Between 1823 and 1826, Mora was the most prolific collaborator of Ackermann’s publishing venture for overseas, deeply contributing to build his Spanish catalogue.⁶⁹ Mora’s translation of Clavijero’s *Historia* was reprinted in Mexico in the 1850s, while another translation by the Bishop of Puebla, Francisco Pablo Vázquez, was published by Juan R. Navarro in 1853. The original Spanish text written by Clavijero, instead, appeared in 1945 only,⁷⁰ whereas Alzate’s notes remained dispersed in Mexican archives.

During the uncertain process of Mexico’s nation-building, Creole historiography became unpopular.⁷¹ The National Museum of Mexico, founded in 1825 by presidential decree, responded to Clavijero’s prospect of preserving Mexican ancient monuments and documents in one space, but had to adapt the eighteenth-century model of “collecting and studying antiquities and natural history” to the “new formation of economic and social power both in Mexico and in the transatlantic world”.⁷² With the independence of Mexico, another imperial configuration took shape, together with a different political, geopolitical and intellectual agenda.

67 E. Roldán Vera, *The British Book Trade and Spanish American Independence: Education and Knowledge Transmission of Knowledge in Transcontinental Perspective*, Aldershot 2003.

68 F. S. Clavijero, *Historia antigua de Megico sacada de los mejores historiadores españoles y de los manuscritos y de las pinturas antiguas de los indios ... traducida del italiano por José Joaquín de Mora*, 2 vols., London, R. Ackermann, 1826.

69 During his collaboration with Ackermann, Mora wrote, edited and translated an impressive number of works in Spanish, ranging from history to catechism, geography, political economy, education of women, as well as Spanish and Latin grammars, literature, and journals. At the end of 1826, he left England and moved first to Argentina and then to Chile. For a list of Ackermann’s Spanish publications, including those by Mora, see Roldán Vera, *The British Book Trade and Spanish American Independence*, pp. 243–259. On the Spanish liberal exile in England in the 1820s, see the classic study by V. Lloréns, *Liberales y románticos: Una emigración española en Inglaterra (1823–1834)*, Madrid 1968, esp. pp. 229–257. See also F. Durán López, *Versiones de un exilio. Los traductores españoles de la casa Ackermann (London, 1823–1830)*, Madrid 2015.

70 F. J. Clavijero, *Historia antigua de México. Primera edición del original escrito en castellano por el autor*, ed. and introd. by M. Cuevas, 4 vols, Mexico City 1945.

71 This is clearly shown by D. Brading in *The Origins of Mexican Nationalism*, Cambridge, UK 1985. See also chapters “Civilisation and Barbarism” and “Mexican Leviathan” in Brading’s *The First America*.

72 Achim, *From Idols to Antiquity*, pp. 15–16. This study stresses the uncertainties of the first four decades of the National Museum and shows that the alliance between archeology and state power took shape in the 1870s only. It is by that time that the museum came to be identified with its antiquities.

Forced Labour at the Frontier of Empires: Manipur and the French Congo, 1890–1914

Yaruipam Muivah / Alessandro Stanziani

ABSTRACTS

Dieser Aufsatz beleuchtet die vielfachen Beziehungen zwischen Zentren und Frontier-Zonen des französischen und des britischen Imperiums in Asien und Afrika mit Blick auf die Zirkulation von Ideen sowie die sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Dynamiken. In Fallstudien zu Manipur und Nordost-Indien einerseits sowie Französisch-Kongo andererseits diskutieren die Verfasser Sklaverei, freie Arbeit und in Frage gestellte Souveränitäten. Aus dieser Perspektive wurde die Produktion einer Peripherie weniger als ein Gegensatz von metropolitanem Zentrum und seinen Kolonien wahrgenommen und praktiziert, sondern vielmehr als die Herausbildung von Räumen zwischen den Imperien.

This article stresses the interrelations in terms of the circulation of ideas and the economic and social dynamics between various core and frontiers of the French and the British Empires in Asia and Africa. In taking the case of Manipur and North-East India, on the one hand, French Congo on the other hand, the question of slavery, free labor, and disputed sovereignties will be discussed. From this perspective, the making of a periphery was conceived and practised at the interstices of empires rather than as an opposition between the mainland core and its colonies.

Debates about abolition of slavery have essentially focused on two interrelated questions: (1) whether nineteenth- and early twentieth-century abolitions were a major breakthrough compared to previous centuries (or even millennia) in the history of humankind, during which bondage had been the dominant form of labour and human condition; and (2) whether they express an action specific to Western bourgeoisie and liberal civilization. It is true that the number of abolitionist acts and the people con-

cerned throughout the extended nineteenth century (1780–1914) has no equivalent in history: 30 million Russian peasants, half a million slaves in Saint-Domingue in 1790, 4 million slaves in the US in 1860, another million in the Caribbean at the moment of the abolition of 1832–1840, a further million in Brazil in 1885, and 250,000 in the Spanish colonies were freed during this period. Abolitions in Africa at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century have been estimated to involve approximately 7 million people.¹ Yet this argument has been criticized by those who have argued that the abolitionist legal acts take into consideration neither the important rate of manumission and purchase of freedom in Islamic societies, in areas such as Africa, South-East Asia, and the Ottoman Empire,² nor the important rate of manumission in Russia and Brazil prior to general abolition, nor the legal and social constraints on freed slaves and serfs.

The question is whether these legal tools benefited emancipated slaves and new indentured immigrants or only local and / or colonial elites. We intend to answer this question and examine its main terms: the state, labour, and rights. Instead of the nation-state, we strongly place the role of the empire centre stage; instead of the ahistorical opposition between free and unfree labour, we stress their historical co-evolution and definitions; and instead of abstract rights, we look for law in action and concrete distribution of rights and obligations inside and between the empires.³ Thus, this article seeks to provide answers that go beyond these standard oppositions between “before” and “after” the abolition, on the one hand, and between the “West” and “the rest”, on the other hand. We will emphasize interrelations in terms of the circulation of ideas and the economic and social dynamics between the various cores and frontiers of the French and the British empires in Asia and Africa. Within this broader context, abolitions at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century look unique if compared to previous movements. The European societies were moving to high industrialization: the Second Industrial Revolution, the welfare state and finance, and in this perspective new imperialism were related much less to sugar and cotton than to rubber and minerals. Yet, technical difficulties were still very important, specifically in Central Africa, and therefore geopolitical stakes played a central role, while, unlike former abolitionism, public opinion did not produce massive movements, even in Britain.

In particular, we will focus our attention on two frontier colonies: the French Congo and Manipur. While the abolition of slavery in Sudan, Senegal, and Guinea and French West

1 S. Drescher, *Abolitions. A History of Slavery and Antislavery*, Cambridge, UK 2009.

2 On these debates, see, among others, J. C. Miller, *Slavery and Slaving in World History: A Bibliography, 1900–1996*, Armonk, N.Y. 1999; C. Meillassoux, *Anthropologie de l’esclavage*, Paris 1986; M. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, New York 1980; O. Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*, Cambridge, MA 1982; J. Watson (ed.), *Asian and African Systems of Slavery*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1980; W. G. Clarence-Smith (ed.), *The Economics of the Indian Ocean Slave Trade*, London 1989; G. Campbell (ed.), *The Structure of Slavery in the Indian Ocean, Africa and Asia*, London 2004.

3 Some references: D. Hay/P. Craven (eds.), *Masters, Servants, and Magistrates in Britain and the Empire, 1562–1955*, Chapel Hill 2004; L. Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures*, Cambridge, UK 2002; R. Roberts, *Litigants and Household. African Disputes and Colonial Courts in the French Soudan, 1895–1912*, Portsmouth 2005. For more references, see here after.

Africa (FWA)⁴ in general has been widely explored,⁵ the process in the French Congo and French Equatorial Africa (FEA)⁶ has received less attention (apart from studies such as those by Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch).⁷ The main focus of these works have been capital and concession companies. Starting from these works, we then will put emphasis on labour while seeking to introduce the Congo experience into a comparative and global perspective. In particular, we will study the case of Manipur, in North-East India. Like the French Congo, this area has been the object of only a few works.⁸ Progressively annexed by the British at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, the absence of natural resources was not attractive to the British economically. However, the abundant supply of labour – in the form of various forced labour – and the strategic geographical location, sandwiched between the British territory of Assam and the expanding imperial Burmese Empire, meant that controlling the state became a very important issue for British imperial interests.

In the major debates in Indian and African studies, some have underlined the hypocrisy of the colonial state regarding its real aim, that is to say to exploit bonded labour. Others have taken the opposite position, arguing that colonial officials were motivated by genuine anti-slavery feelings and that it was only the impotence of the colonial state that limited this impetus.⁹ In both cases, the question concerned the strength and power of the colonial state. James Scott has emphasized the role of the nation-state and the

- 4 In 1895, the colonial government decided to federate its West African colonies. Thus, Senegal, French Sudan, Guinea, and Ivory Coast formed a new administrative entity called French West Africa (FWA). Yet, in practice, the government of the FWA was only settled in 1904–1905. Dahomey was added in 1899, Niger and Mauritania in 1904, and Upper Volta in 1919.
- 5 Among others, see M. Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule in French West Africa*, Cambridge, UK 1998; R. Roberts, *Two Worlds of Cotton. Colonialism and Regional Economy in the French Soudan, 1800–1946*, Stanford 1996; B. Fall, *Le travail forcé en AOF*, Paris 1993; B. Barry, *La Sénégalie du XVe au XIXe siècle; traite négrière, Islam, conquête coloniale*, Paris 1988; D. Bouche, *Les villages de liberté en Afrique noire française, 1887–1910*, The Hague 1968; J.-L. Boutiller, *Les captifs en AOF, 1903–1905*, in: *Bulletin de l'IFAN* 30, ser. B (1968) 2, pp. 511–535; D. Cordell/J. Gregory, *Labour reservoirs and population: French colonial strategies in Koudougou, Upper Volta, 1914 to 1939*, in: *Journal of African History* 23 (1982) 2, pp. 205–224; M. Klein, *Islam and Imperialism in Senegal: Sine-Saloum 1847–1914*, Stanford 1968; P. Manning, *Slavery, Colonialism and Economic Growth in Dahomey, 1640–1960*, Cambridge 1982; F. Renaut, *Libération d'esclaves et nouvelle servitude: les rachats de captifs africains pour le compte des colonies françaises après l'abolition de l'esclavage*, Abidjan 1976; R. Roberts, *Warriors, Merchants and Slaves: the State and the Economy in the Middle Niger Valley, 1700–1914*, Stanford 1987; H. Brun-schwig, *Noirs et blancs dans l'Afrique noire française ou comment le colonisé devient colonisateur (1870–1914)*, Paris 1983.
- 6 AEF is the French acronym for l'Afrique équatoriale française. The general government of the AEF was officially designed in 1910. According to its 1910 boundaries, French Equatorial Africa included Gabon, Middle Congo, Ubangi-Chari, and Chad. Before that date, in 1898, Gabon, the Congo and the interior areas were combined into an immense colony, called the French Congo.
- 7 C. Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo (AEF) au temps des grandes compagnies concessionnaires, 1898–1930*, Paris/La Haye 1972.
- 8 L. Hrangchal, *Revisiting the Boi System of Lushai Hills*, in: *Journal of North East India Studies* 4 (2014) 2, pp. 41–54; L. Dzuwicheu, *Road and Rule: Colonialism and the Politics of Access in the Naga Hills, 1826–1918*. Dissertation, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi 2005.
- 9 J. Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*, Princeton 2000; Roberts, *Litigants and Households*.

attempts by state officials in a wide variety of contexts.¹⁰ However, contrary to Scott's argument, his ideal types (city-states, Asian despotic states, and European nation-states) often evolved according to colonial, not just national, realities, and the effort to translate models into practices was hindered by the weakness of colonial administrations and actively opposed by local populations.

In this sense, Scott's elaboration of Schendel's "Zomia" and its people is one of the few works that tries to create the idea of frontier and its people from the "frontier" itself; still, this is also done through the voices and writing of the "frontiersmen" (here in the American sense of the term), who happen to have a different voice.¹¹ Scott's work has generated a lot of lively debate among many scholars, and in the process, much praise has been garnered for the originality of the theory. At the same time, many scholars who have worked on a specific region within the Zomia have questioned the validity of his theory for specific tribes/people and if it has been overgeneralized.¹² Scholars who have studied North-East India (which is included in the Zomia) have also highlighted some of the problems of including this part of India in his characterization of Zomia.¹³ Though the term Zomia was conceived from one of the tribes of the North-East Frontier, many of the propositions Scott makes do not find their fullest expressions until the last quarter of the nineteenth century among many of the frontier tribes in the North-East Frontier.¹⁴ Unlike Scott, we refer to empire instead of nation-states and we use Zomia as a heuristic to discuss the construction of empires, rights, and labour. From this standpoint, frontiers of the empire do not necessarily only refer to hills in South-East Asia, but also to Central Africa and similar places (the far north, for instance), which were hard to penetrate and exploit and where violence and coercion persisted well beyond the official abolition of slavery.

Slavery and Abolition in British Africa: Transplanting India to Africa ...

Debates on African and colonial history tend to focus on the transformation of politics, labour, societies, and economies under European "imperialism". The abolition of

10 J. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, New Haven, CT 1998.

11 W. van Schendel, *Geographies of Knowing, Geographies of Ignorance: Jumping Scale in Southeast Asia*, in: *Environment and Planning: Society and Space* 20 (2002) 6, pp. 647–668; J. Michaud, Editorial: *Zomia and Beyond*, in: *Journal of Global History* 5 (2010) 2, pp. 187–214; J. Scott, *The Art of not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*, New Haven, CT 2009. For the criticism on the lack of voices from the Zomians, see B. G. Karlsson, *Evading the State: Ethnicity in Northeast India Through the Lens of James Scott*, in: *Asian Ethnology* 72 (2013) 2 (Performing Identity Politics and Culture in Northeast India and Beyond), pp. 321–331.

12 Karlsson even writes: "Scott is not afraid of generalizations and make comparisons shamelessly over time and space." Karlsson, *Evading the State*, p. 326.

13 See J. J. P. Wouters, *Keeping the Hill Tribes at Bay: A Critique from India's Northeast of James C. Scott's Paradigm of State Evasion*, in: *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* 39 (2012), pp. 41–65.

14 Scott maintains that this idea of Zomia becomes unviable after the 1950s, but many of the main foundations of Zomia had become obsolete by the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

slavery,¹⁵ the relationship between direct and indirect rule,¹⁶ and the economic dimension of empire¹⁷ are among the most common themes. Discussions concern the relative strength of “local” and “colonial” actors and institutions,¹⁸ the tensions especially between domination and local agency, and the costs and benefits of the empire.¹⁹

We aim to take some of these topics into consideration here, notably the importance of the labour question and of African agency. Abolition was not an indigenous African concept: masters could free slaves through manumission, and slaves could sometimes redeem themselves. In most cases, manumissions were extremely important, especially in Islamic areas. In some Muslim societies, freed slaves became hereditary clients, while in non-Muslim societies slave origins were remembered when it came to questions of marriage, inheritance, and rituals.²⁰ Instead, full-scale abolition was a Western European idea, although it took different forms in Britain, France, the Netherlands, Spain, and Portugal.²¹ Each European power therefore exported its own idea or ideas of what abolition and freedom meant. The British began by fighting against the slave trade, as they had done in the Atlantic world almost a century earlier. They focused their efforts on the slave trade in the trans-Saharan region and the Red Sea, but they gradually enlarged their scope of action to the Gold Coast and other western parts of Africa and then down to the Cape Coast. Colonial methods, competition between colonial states, and the weight of humanitarian motives compared with political and economic goals were the underlying issues. British officials sought to avoid confrontation with Islamic authorities, chiefly regarding the practice of concubines, which was left intact; Islamic customary law was invoked to justify its legitimacy. A number of British colonial elites were of the opinion that control of the colonies should be achieved through agreements with local chiefs, whereas a sudden abolition of all forms of dependency described as slavery might bring about the collapse of local economies and societies and hence of imperial authority.²²

15 A few references (more in the following parts): S. Miers/I. Kopytoff (eds), *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives*, Madison, WI 1977; P. Lovejoy/J. Hogendown, *Slow Death of Slavery: The Course of Abolition in Northern Nigeria, 1897–1936*, Cambridge 1993; Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*; S. Miers/R. Roberts (eds.), *The End of Slavery in Africa*, Madison, WI 1988.

16 K. Mann/R. Roberts (eds.), *Law in Colonial Africa*, Portsmouth 1996; F. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question. Theory, Knowledge, History*, Berkeley, CA 2005; A. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*, Stanford 1996; Cooper, *Decolonization*; M. Chanok, *Law Custom and Social Order. The Colonial Experience in Malawi and Zambia*, Cambridge 1985; Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*.

17 M.E. Chamberlain, *The Scramble for Africa*, London 2014; A. Zimmermann, *Alabama in Africa*, Princeton 2010; K. Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 3, *Global Empires and Revolutions*, Cambridge 2012. R. Austen, *African Economic History*, London 1987; G. Austin/S. Broadberry, *The Renaissance of African Economic History*, Introduction, special issue *Economic History Review* 67 (2014) 4, pp. 893–906.

18 F. Cooper/A. L. Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, Berkeley 1997.

19 J. Millar, *The Problem of Slavery as History*, New Haven, CT/London 2012; D. D. Cordell/J. W. Gregory (eds.), *African Population and Capitalism: Historical Perspectives*, Boulder 1987; D. Cogneau, *L'Afrique des inégalités. Où conduit l'histoire*, Paris 2006; P. Bairoch, *Economics and World History: Myths and Paradoxes*, Chicago 1993; J. Marseille, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français. Histoire d'un divorce*, Paris 1984; D.K. Fieldhouse, *Economics and Empire*, London 1984.

20 S. Miers/R. Roberts, Introduction, in: Miers/Roberts (eds.), *The End of Slavery in Africa*, pp. 3–68.

21 Drescher, *Abolitions*.

22 Lovejoy/Hogendown, *Slow Death*.

From the start, as regards slavery, and not just the slave trade, British leaders explicitly took India as a model. In Africa, as in India, sovereignty, colonial rule and slavery were interconnected. In 1866, Zanzibar was made “so far as concerns the administration of justice to British subjects, a part of Her Majesty’s Indian Empire.”²³ The subsequent extension of Indian law into continental Africa was a result of the expansion of British power from Zanzibar into the interior.²⁴ A subsequent order in council from the Foreign Office confirmed this outcome and some 20 Indian acts were introduced in different parts of British Africa. These Indian laws and procedures were not turned into British rules but coexisted with “native customs” and Islamic law. Thus, the Protectorate Court sitting in Mombasa, which could appeal to Zanzibar and its subordinate courts, exercised jurisdiction over all British and non-British protected subjects as well as nationals of foreign countries. The Native Courts, whether presided over by tribal chiefs, headmen, or British officials, were meant to enforce “native custom”. As in India, the adoption of legal codes in Africa followed the principle of indirect rule. In India, indirect rule emerged first in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and then again in response to the Sepoy Mutiny. The British adopted the same principle in Africa, where Henry Maine’s approach found a staunch supporter in Frederick Lugard.²⁵ During this period, local forms of slavery were considered “mild”, as they had been in India almost a century earlier, compared with “real” (chattel) slavery and were quite often described as domestic dependency.²⁶ Lugard himself stressed the difference between domestic and chattel slavery (the former prevented idleness). When he arrived in Buganda in December 1890, he therefore declared it was necessary to avoid any direct interference in slaveholding and abolition (a source of chaos).²⁷ In his opinion, slaves should be emancipated only in places under direct protectorate rule like Zanzibar.

These views gradually changed: in the Gold Coast, an ordinance forbidding slaveholding was issued in 1874, whereas in several other areas this did not become the accepted attitude until the 1880s. Tolerance of local practices of bondage came under attack for two main reasons: first, they had been adopted for pragmatic purposes, namely to collaborate with local chiefs in managing the colonies and recruiting labour. Neither aim was achieved inasmuch as the collaboration was limited, and the chiefs failed to provide the labour force required (by the colonial state as well as by private companies) while continuing their slave traffic. Change did take place when the British abolitionist movement escalated its campaign against African practices and British tolerance.²⁸ The Protestant movement in Britain and missionaries in Africa intensified their actions. As in previous

23 H.F. Morris/J. Read, *Indirect Rule and the Search for Justice: Essays on East African Legal History*, Oxford 1972, pp. 112–113.

24 T. Metcalf, *Imperial Connections*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 2007, p. 24.

25 K. Mantena, *Alibis of Empire. Henri Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism*, Princeton 2010.

26 Miers/Kopytoff, *Slavery in Africa*; Miers/Roberts, *The End of Slavery*.

27 Rhode House Library, Oxford, Lugard Papers, Mss. British Empire, 30–99; printed version of Lugard’s diaries: M. Perham/M. Bull (eds.), *The Diaries of Lord Lugard*, Evanston 1959, 4 vol. In particular, vol. 1, pp. 171–173.

28 Cooper, *From Slaves to Squatters*, pp. 61–64.

cases of abolition, humanitarian aims, religion, moral values, and economic interests converged in support of the radical abolition of slavery itself and not merely the slave trade. Evangelical philanthropy allied with “Burkean” colonial abolitionism to eradicate all forms of slavery in Africa. Yet it was the mistreatment and murder of people subjected to slavery rather than the desire to abolish slavery per se that finally spurred them to act. They received the backing of a third movement asserting “the elementary rights of humanity”. This movement comprised workers’ unions, the Aborigines’ Protection Society, and groups of British merchants who defended the principle of trading directly with “natives” without the colonial state acting as the middleman. From this standpoint, free trade and free labour were joined together, exactly as labour unions combined anti-colonialism and local workers’ rights.

This political reorientation created a dilemma for colonial officials: how could they reconcile maintaining law and order with the political necessity of defending humanitarianism? The reactions and timing varied from one colony to another, even though a general trend was at work. With the support of the anti-slavery movements in Britain, the colonial administration and the public blamed the “barbaric and backward” attitudes of the Africans, who were accused of enslaving their fellow Africans. This argument was used to justify the “civilizing mission” of this or that European country and furnished the basis for discussions between Great Britain, France, Germany, and Belgium at the Brussels conference convened in 1889 to define the criteria for partitioning Africa. All the participants strongly advocated the introduction of free labour, order, and discipline.²⁹ This process was supposed to take place in two stages (once the territory was occupied, of course): slaves would first be freed and then a genuine labour market would be set up. Yet the Brussels Conference Act of 1890 left procedures against slavery to the discretion of each imperial power. Great Britain took an extreme position with regard to both stages: it pushed much harder than the other powers for the abolition of the slave trade; it adopted a far more careful attitude towards the abolition of slavery by using “the case of India” as an example; and, at the same time, it kept its Masters and Servants Acts alive in its new African acquisitions as the foundation and expression of “free” labour much longer than the other colonial powers. It was therefore up to the colonial state to determine the measures best suited to facilitating the transition to a free labour market while simultaneously guaranteeing that order would be maintained. The transplantation of anti-vagrancy laws and the Masters and Servants Acts to Africa were their response to this dilemma. This helps to explain the attention that European authorities devoted to labour rules after emancipation.

Europeans, and the British in particular, needed manpower for their companies and firms, colonial state infrastructure and public works as well as military recruits and household servants. Despite the denunciation of new colonial forms of slavery by mis-

29 F. Cooper, *From Free Labour to Family Allowances: Labour and African Society in Colonial Discourse*, in: *American Ethnologist* 16 (1989) 4, pp. 745–765.

sionary critics,³⁰ in many British and French areas (Ubangi-Shari, Coastal Guinea, Sudan, Somalia, and Northern Nigeria)³¹ fugitive slaves, “vagrants” (i.e. freed slaves with no official contract of employment), and “disguised slaves” freed by the colonial authorities were still captured and eventually re-enslaved.³² Several measures were adopted to increase the supply of labour force and orient it towards colonial instead of local actors: raising the amount of taxes to be paid in labour as well as economic policies unfavourable to local economies such as mandatory low crop prices, specific crops required, etc.³³ Passes limited free labour mobility, while access to higher-paid jobs was limited for Africans. In fact, the colonial officers were firmly convinced that the African continent could not be developed unless Africans learned that they were not free to choose where, when, and how to work. A campaign was launched against vagrancy, theft, alcoholism, and interpersonal violence; the goal was not only to control African labour, but also to promote labour discipline for the benefit of the black elites.³⁴ Within these broader approaches, which were more or less common to the various areas in Africa, concrete policies varied from one place to another inside each empire (British policies were different in Zanzibar, Kenya, the Cape, and the Gold Coast) and between empires, although transimperial commonalities occurred as well. Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, like Portuguese Angola and French Algeria, gave priority to a cheap supply of manual labour, direct forms of taxation, and pre-emptive rights over land granted to white settlers. Here we find a major shift compared to earlier periods in the relationship between labour institutions in Britain and its colonies. Until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, colonial practices and institutions of free labour had been an extension of mainland institutions, in particular of the Masters and Servants Acts, apprenticeship, and vagrancy rules. In the colonies, they were extreme variants of those in Britain, with even more statutory and procedural inequalities between masters and servants (or indentured immigrants). Henceforth, the creation of the Masters and Servants Acts in Africa no longer meant transplanting and locally adapting British rules, but a deliberate decision to impose specific legislation considered outmoded in the home country. The new Masters and Servants Acts were adopted in Africa precisely at the moment when they were repealed in Britain (1875). In this case, the civilizing mission was based on two judgments: that Africans must be educated (and the law served this purpose) and, at the same time, that they were backward in their development and therefore old British rules rather than contemporary ones were more appropriate for the African context.³⁵ As a result, unlike the previous colonial period, following the repeal of the Masters and Servants Acts in Britain and the emergence of the welfare state, the path of labour and freedom in the

30 K. Grant, *A Civilized Savagery: Britain and the New Slavery in Africa, 1884–1926*, New York/London 2006.

31 See the different chapters by D. Cordell, M. Klein, R. Roberts, L. Cassanelli, J.S. Hogendorn, and P. Lovejoy in: Miers/Roberts, *The End of Slavery*.

32 P. Lovejoy, *Transformations of Slavery*, Cambridge 2000.

33 Fall, *Le travail forcé*, in particular chapters 2 and 3, p. 54 ff.

34 TNA, CO 533/16, W.D. Ellis minute, 12 oct. 1906; *Eastern African Protectorate*, no. 8, 1906.

35 G. St.J. Orde Brown, *The African Labourer*, London 1933, reprint 1967.

colonies (especially African) diverged from the one in mainland Britain. While British workers in Britain were enjoying increasing protection and welfare, labouring people in the colonies still were under unequal labour and legal rules. From this perspective, welfare and its national orientation intensified rather than reduced inequalities within the empire and among labouring people in particular.³⁶

... and Back: From Africa to Manipur

Manipur emerged from the “Seven Years’ Devastation”³⁷ (1819–1826), with its population almost reduced to a handful of thousand (about 3,000 adults) from about 4–6 lakh (a unit numbering 100,000) before the Burmese invasion³⁸ and its land desolated. Many of the Manipuris escaped to Cachar and the British territory of Sylhet. There in Cachar, many Manipuris were kidnapped or abducted and sold as slaves in Sylhet, while many Manipuris in Sylhet, facing hardship, sold their children into slavery.³⁹ The majority of the population were taken as captives by the Burmese and made slaves and dispersed to the various parts of the Burmese Kingdom.⁴⁰ The Indian law commissioner on slavery reported the number of Manipuris detained as slaves in the district of Arracan and Chittagong to about 3,000 or 4,000.⁴¹ So when Manipur was finally free from Burmese occupation in 1826, with the help of the East India Company, the population was only a few thousand and was in need of men to repopulate the valley and of labour to rebuild the kingdom from scratch.

The process of rebuilding started almost immediately after the signing of the Treaty of Yandaboo in 1826. Gambhir Singh, the raja of Manipur, took up the process of rebuilding the country at the same time he subjugated and brought most of the hill tribes under control before his death in early 1834, a policy also followed by his uncle and successor Nara Singh. Many of the subjugated hill tribes were forced to come down to the valley and work.⁴² The raja also forced many of the fugitive Manipuris in the hills to come

36 Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society*, pp. 342–348; Idem, *From Slaves to Squatters*, pp. 235–254.

37 The occupation of Manipur by the Burmese from 1819 to 1826 is known as *Chahi Taret Khuntakpa* or “Seven Years’ Devastation” in the annals of Manipur history due to the sheer size of its destruction. Many of the old structures were leveled, most of the fields became jungle, and the valley was almost depopulated.

38 The only person to give this number is Col. James Johnstone. See J. Johnstone, *My Experience in Manipur and the Naga Hills*, London 1896, p. 86. But this number is highly improbable, and the total population of the state might only have been around a couple of hundred thousand.

39 Indian Law Commission, *Report from the Indian Law Commissioner Relating to Slavery in the East Indies*, 1841, p. 23.

40 Ibid., p. 103.

41 Ibid., p. 104.

42 Many worked on major projects in the state like building bridges, roads, canal, river embankment, etc. India Office Records and Private Papers, Mss Eur D485: 1904, *Manipur State: Diary of Manipur*, pp. 193, 201 (this manuscript is a one of the many versions of the Cheithrol Kumpapa, or the Manipur Chronicle); L. J. Singh, *The Lost Kingdom* (Royal Chronicle of Manipur), Imphal 1995, pp. 123, 126–127, 129.

down to the valley and resettled them again.⁴³ More subjects under the raja meant more labour and taxes to reconstruct his capital.

The British were not silent observers in these developments; instead, most of the military expeditions to subjugate and, in the process, to capture slaves were done not only in the presence of British officials but with an active participation of the British officials and the government's support, which continued until the mid-nineteenth century.⁴⁴ Manipur was not a rich princely kingdom, but in the geopolitics of the nineteenth century with the Burmese Empire rapidly expanding towards its north-west, its position was crucial for the defence of not only the British province of Bengal but also the newly acquired territory of Assam, where tea had been recently discovered. Manipur also played another important role because the kingdom, with its army supported by the British, was crucial in quelling discontent and raids in the region.⁴⁵ For these reasons, a strong and stable princely state was necessary and, in this development, the British overlooked much of the violence and many of the atrocities committed by the state.

The lack of money and resources were substituted by manpower in the form of coerced / forced labour, which were used extensively in every imaginable way. In pre-colonial Manipur, slavery (both chattel and bonded) along with *lallup* – a forced labour system where every male subject between the age of 16 and 60 years were made to provide free labour for 10 days in every 40 days, totalling about 90 days a year to the state – and tributary labour from the hill people formed an important function that met most of the needs of the state.

The colonial officers posted in Manipur did not make much of a distinction between chattel and bonded slaves but no doubt recognized the differences. Most of the chattel slaves were owned by the raja, and a minority of them were owned by the royal family, high officials, and the priestly class, to whom the raja had given the slaves as a present for marriage (in case of the royal family) or for their service to the state. These chattel slaves were the absolute property of the owner and could be given or sold as the owner pleased. Most of these chattel slaves were settled by the raja in a separate community, and they were also liable to be called up for *lallup* and as well cultivated the land they got for serving in the *lallup*, in addition to cultivating the land of the raja and doing other works for the raja.⁴⁶ Compared to the bonded slaves, the slaves in possession by the raja seemed

43 M. W. McCulloch, *Account of the Valley of Munnipore and of the Hill Tribes*, Calcutta 1859, p. 9.

44 The British government provided arms and ammunition to the raja's army even after the Manipur Levy was disbanded in 1934. The Manipur chronicle records many expeditions where British officials were also present. See Nithor Nath Banerjee Papers, Mss Eur D485: 1904; Singh, *The Lost Kingdom*; S. N. Arambam Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur: The Cheitharon Kumpapa*, Original text, translation and notes, vol. 3, Delhi 2013. Even British official acknowledged their role, R. Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*, Calcutta 1874, p. 71.

45 The British used the Manipuri army to crush the Khasi revolt and to control the Nagas in the north as well as were part of the British expeditionary forces (and sometimes leading the expedition) against the Lushais in the south.

46 Every person who performed their service were entitled to about two acres of land for cultivation, on which the state collected tributes. It was a way of expanding the agricultural land.

to be more independent as they lived in their own houses and when not working for the raja carried on with their own lives.

The bonded slaves in pre-colonial Manipur were mostly in the possession of private individuals. Most of these bonded slaves had fallen to their present status due to debt. With the signing of the Treaty of Yandaboo, raiding expedition for slaves had been hindered on both sides, and the British had discouraged the enslavement of the hill tribes.⁴⁷ The coming of the British had instituted the use of money in an unprecedented way, penetrating deeply both the valley society and the hill communities of the state. Very soon, many of the tribal communities began to include in their traditional marriages demands for more material things and money – to meet the demand, many fell into debt. There are no records by the British or the Manipur authorities on the number of bonded slaves in pre-colonial Manipur, but many of the rich and influential families had one or more, and at times these bonded slaves were sent as a substitute for the master's *lallup*.⁴⁸ The bonded slaves were generally treated well, but they seemed to be exploited badly at the same time. They lived in the same house as the master and depended on the master for food, clothes, and shelter.

Bonded slaves were of two kinds in Manipur – *minai* and *asalba* – which Captain Gordon, in his dictionary published in 1837, describes as bondmen, but the term *minai* is also used to describe slave in the same dictionary, indicating that the Manipuris did not distinguish much between the two.⁴⁹ Theoretically, the bonded slaves were in the service of the master for such term until they could repay the money they had taken. But in practice, they remained bonded forever as the interest on the money they first took continued piling up, thereby remaining in debt for perpetuity. Even the children born to such a person also became the property of the master, and in the long run they became chattel slaves but in the possession of private individuals.

Forced labour in pre-colonial Manipur was widespread both in the valley and the hill areas. Many colonial officers used the term “slave like” for the inhabitants of the valley, saying that the raja could do whatever he liked with them and any kind of work could be extracted from them. This, in a way, was somewhat true as the raja, by various means, could make any of his subjects perform any duty he wished. But the people who performed the forced labour lived a very different life from those in slavery. They were not dependent on the raja for their livelihood, and their only connection with the raja was when they went to report for their service. In the case of some distant hill tribes, unlike the slaves in the valley, they were very independent. Forced labour was provided for a limited number of days in a year, and in case of the number of days being extended longer than the stipulated time, then the labour was compensated. In the case of slavery,

47 This did not mean raiding came to an end, rather the treaty marked a period after which the British government, through its political agent in the state, provided checks and balances on such activities between Burma and Manipur. Internal raiding for slaves continued till the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

48 Arambam Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur*, p. 19.

49 C. J. A. Gordon, *Dictionary of English, Bengálí, and Manipurí*, Calcutta 1837.

this was not so because the master was the absolute owner of the slaves when under his possession.

The scarcity of “voluntary” labour was a serious problem in the state, particularly because the wet rice cultivation was basically labour intensive, and the Manipuri raja solved this problem through the *lallup* system.⁵⁰ In exchange for land, the raja received labour, taxes, tribute, etc. But power was not exclusively derived from owning land but how he utilized his taxes and labour. Power begets more power, and the king of Manipur was no exception to this. In pre-colonial Manipur, *corvée* performed by the inhabitants of the valley, slavery, and tributary labour by the hill tribes and the various works performed by the *Lois*⁵¹ were some of the important forms of labour that kept the country running until the takeover of the administration by the British in the last decade of the nineteenth century. These systems formed the backbone of the economic activities until the British took over the administration of Manipur in 1892 and in some way continued to play an important role after 1892.

The British – from company to government – had spent most of the nineteenth century building relations and trying to open up the state while making Manipur more dependent on them. Constructing roads on a grand scale; signing agreements that prohibited monopoly by the raja, free trade, and the free movement of people; and introducing Western education – all these were designed to give the British an upper hand in the politics of the region. The raja of Manipur was not blind to the British’s design, and many efforts were directed to counter the growing influence of the British in the state. The late nineteenth-century European imperial expansion in Africa and Asia saw the British come to power in the state and the region. The policy followed by the British in the region was one of consolidating their power, and, in achieving this, many consolations were given to the ruling elites. One such consolation was the continuation of the use of forced labour, including bonded labour. This consolation came at a cost because the British – claiming to be the advocate of modern civilization and freedom – were criticized by many for allowing such practices to be part of their rule. Practices like *lallup* was abolished and the chattel slaves of the raja were set free with the introduction of the British rule. But along with the abolition of *lallup*, the British also simultaneously expanded the *pothang* system to include all male members of the state.⁵² The British emancipated the slaves of the raja – mostly who originated as captives of expeditions and therefore constituted “true slaves” – but slavery as a system were never attacked, and the practice of making and keeping *manai* (bonded labour) practice lingered throughout the

50 K. Ruhini Kumar Sharma/O. Ranjit Singh, Outlining Pre-Colonial Economy of Manipur, in: J. B. Bhattacharjee (ed.), State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur, Delhi 2010, p. 149.

51 *Lois* are the outcaste people in Manipur; they do not regard themselves as Meetei but claim that they are the original inhabitants of the valley who were outcaste when the various Meetei tribes, led by the Ningthouja clan, came to power in the valley.

52 *Pothang* was a forced labour system where every adult male was required to give the state labour without remuneration for specific tasks. The service also included providing food and lodging for government officials and guard duties.

colonial period. In the hill areas, much of the labour practices remained the same under colonial rule. The British promoted their old rhetoric that such practices were part of the traditional society and that such labour was necessary for the stability of the region. When the British introduced indirect rule in the region, they did so with some preconceived notion of various tribes in mind. With regard to the British decision to introduce indirect rule, D.R. Lyall, the deputy commissioner of the Chittagong Division, in his note on the future management of the South Lushai Hills (dated 2 January 1890), writes:

*The nature of the people is such that for any attempt at governing minutely would be expensive, and our knowledge of the people and their custom is small. I would, therefore, recommend that for the present system the government through chiefs should be fully recognized.*⁵³

The British, after coming to power in Manipur, divided the administration of the state into two separate units – the valley under the rule of the raja (but until 1907, the British political agent acted as the head of the state in the “interest” of the minor raja), while the administration of the hill areas was placed directly under the administration of the political agent. The period between 1891 and 1907, Gangmumei has argued, can be classified as a period of direct British rule as the political agent had a free hand in all matters.⁵⁴ While in the valley the British introduced many changes after coming to power, none affected the people more than the decision of the British to introduce privatization of land as well as taxes on land. The administration of the valley and the hill was formally separated by the British after coming to power. The political agent was put in charge of running the hill administration without any other European officer to help him in the affairs.

Manipur comprises more than 90 per cent of what James Scott calls “shatter zones or zones of refugee”,⁵⁵ and the population making up these “zones of refugee” are the various tribes that the British labelled “savages” and “primitive”. But Scott says that our received wisdom of what is “primitive” is often a secondary adaptation – their own political choice – adopted by the people to evade state-making. He writes:

*Hill people are best understood as runaway, fugitive, maroon communities who have, over the course of two millennia, been fleeing the oppressions of state-making projects in the valleys – slavery, conscription, taxes, corvée labour, epidemics, and warfare.*⁵⁶

On the one hand, the hill tribes – the Nagas and the Kukis – were resisting changes, mostly state-making machinery like forced labour and taxation, introduced by the Manipur state. On the other hand, they were trying to hang on to their old ways at the same time the Manipur state was also resisting the attempt of the British to introduce changes

53 J. Zorema, *Indirect Rule in Mizoram*, Delhi 2007, p. 80.

54 Gangmumei Kamei, *Colonial Policy and Practice in Manipur*, on Imphal Free Press, kanglaonline.com/2011/08/colonial-policy-and-practice-in-manipur/ (accessed on 2 August 2011).

55 Scott, *The Art of not Being Governed*, p. x.

56 *Ibid.*, p. ix.

in the state. The British, after coming to power in 1891, did introduce many changes in the state, and many of the old practices were abolished. Their campaign against slavery was not limited to the British Empire but took place on both sides of the Atlantic; in the Indian subcontinent, however, they took a more gentle approach, translating many of the slave systems, which were necessary for the region, that were mutually beneficial to both the master and the slave. But they were not so much against the use of forced labour and very well understood the importance of such service in the state and the region. *Lallup* was abolished not so much because the British in the region were against the use of forced labour but because of economic reasons. The British could do so because with the abolition of *lallup* another form of forced labour – *pothang* – was revived, expanded, and introduced to the general population, so therefore the vacuum was immediately filled by another. The British did not introduce any new forms of a forced labour system after coming to power as this would have meant that the government was sanctioning the use of forced labour, and this would have run counter to the narrative of “civilization” the British were advocating during this period – that of a free and just society. But the British took many of the existing forced labour practices that, in the pre-colonial period, were limited to few of the raja’s subject, expanding the scope of the system to include almost everyone in the state.

The late nineteenth century and the remaining period of colonial rule was spent by the British in trying to consolidate their power in the region with the help of the ruling elite class like the raja and the *pibas* (the head of the clans) in the valley or the chief in the hill areas, and, in their endeavour, many of the old forms of forced labour were allowed to be continued. At the same time, much of the labour owed to the rulers and chiefs was most of the time appropriated for British imperial use. They argued for the continuation of the systems on the grounds that this labour was given as tribute and that abolition of such practices would lead to open rebellion from the ruling elites. But their real concern was that if such practices were abolished, then they would not receive any labour, and many of the state mechanisms that depended on such labour would suffer.

The British consciously kept some of the “unfree” forms of labour in the state, especially among the hill areas, as labour was not willingly provided, and economically it made more sense. Economic reasons, which were in some way responsible for the abolition of *lallup*, were also in some way the reasons for retaining some form of forced labour in hill areas and the introduction of a new form of forced labour in the valley. This policy of extracting tributary labour would later be imposed on the tribes inhabiting the Lushai Hills and be a source of hardship for the people.⁵⁷

57 MSA, Annual Report on the Native States and Frontier Tribes of Assam for the year 1897–98, Shillong: Assam Secretariat Printing Office 1898, p. 22. The labour policy followed by the British in the Lushai Hills made it mandatory for each house to supply one coolie to work for ten days a year.

The French Congo

Several works have pointed out the contradictions between France's revolutionary principles and the forms of labour in its colonies.⁵⁸ Along a similar line, some have revealed the economic interests behind French colonization in Africa⁵⁹ while others have denied it.⁶⁰ Authors closely related to the theory of world-system economies have also highlighted the rentier mentality of French colonizers and the gap between an ideology that advocated free labour and the practice of forced labour.⁶¹ More recently, some historians have taken a new approach, emphasizing the complexity of French policies.⁶² Alice Conklin, for example, has shown that liberal ideals were not mere window dressing for oppressive policies, but in fact set limits on the amount of coercion the colonial administration was permitted to use.⁶³ This view partly reflects recent trends in comparative colonial legal history: instead of expressing the yoke of colonialism, the multiplication of labour rules paved the way to complex social dynamics in which colonized peoples could claim and exercise rights attributed to them in theory but of little avail in practice.⁶⁴ In Senegal, Louis Faidherbe had initially championed the assimilationist principle according to which French citizenship could be granted to all those who embraced the French political and "civilization" principles. Support for this approach gradually crumbled in the 1880s and the 1890s, when Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza, among others, advocated the principle of association based on his experience in Equatorial Africa. According to this position, the main objective was to establish broad sovereignty and develop trade relations. Finally, by imitating its neighbour, the Belgian Congo, the principle of incorporation – founded on concession companies – prevailed at the turn of the century in the French Congo as well. In this case, French companies took control of the soil and had rights over labour as well.

Many believed that Africans still were too backward to be assimilated; thus policies had to take into consideration local attitudes and customs and to seek alliances with local chiefs. By the end of the nineteenth century, the possibility of assimilating Africans had been rejected both in mainland colonial circles influenced by racist trends in the social sciences and by the governor of the FWA, Ernest Roume, who considered it politically dangerous.⁶⁵ Thus, even if the Third Republic overcame previous attitudes towards Africans as "barbarians", it simply wanted to legitimate the presence of its subject within the republic, not to grant them full rights. Indeed, the rejection of assimilation was

58 Renault, *Libération d'esclaves*; Brunschwig, *Noirs et blancs*.

59 Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*.

60 Marseille, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français*.

61 Fall, *Le travail forcé*.

62 Cooper/Stoler, *Tensions of Empire*.

63 Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*.

64 L. Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures*, New York 2002.

65 Conklin: *A Mission to Civilize*, p. 77.

tantamount to saying that Africans were not yet capable of comprehending the meaning of freedom.⁶⁶

Thus, French colonial policy remained in place, although major budgetary constraints were imposed upon it. At the turn of the century, balancing the budget and cutting expenses were both priorities on the political agenda. Such a balance seemed difficult to achieve, as the state was increasing its social intervention during the same period. Initial forms of social protection, along with the centralization of measures formerly handled by municipal authorities (control over markets, roads, etc.), put increasing pressure on the national government budget. In view of the limited political support for the occupation of Africa, the resources allocated for colonial policy implementation became the subject of intense negotiations. The need to balance the budget was underscored not only by those opposed to colonial expansion but also by liberals who were afraid of deviating from financial orthodoxy.

Labour in French Equatorial Africa: From Local Slavery to Colonial Bondage

Before the arrival of the French, slavery was practiced in the future territories of the FEA, as in other areas of Africa.⁶⁷ For example, eastern Ubangi-Shari had been integrated into the Muslim economy of the Sahel and the Nile basin mainly by Arab and Muslim merchants that penetrated the region between 1820 and 1850 in search of ivory and slaves.⁶⁸ After that date, the demand for slaves was even greater in the Islamic world in general, especially in the Nile valley. The arrival of the Khartoumers in Sudan launched the slave trade. A genuine slave-based mode of production existed in the region. The land was desert, agriculture was abandoned, ivory was intended for export, and the population formed a reservoir of slaves for the Islamic world. Towards the 1890s, when the French first penetrated the area, several decades of slavery and slave trade had already depopulated most of the villages and altered the activities and settlements of the remaining population.

Domestic and other forms of slavery were widespread in Gabon before the arrival of the Europeans, but they further expanded when the colonists came around the middle of the nineteenth century. At the time, slaves were used as porters, farm labourers, and servants.⁶⁹ Animist tribes, such as the NGao and the Babu, were systematically raided by the sultans of north and northeast Upper Ubangi. The sultanate of Bangassu drew much of its strength from capturing slaves, who were then sold to the sultans in Sudan. Rafaï and

66 Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*, p. 176ff.; M. Klein, *The End of Slavery in French West Africa*, in: H. Suzuki (ed.), *Abolitions as a Global Experience*, Singapore 2016, pp. 199–227.

67 Lovejoy, *Transformations of Slavery*, pp. 76–80, 191–212.

68 D. Cordell, *The Delicate Balance of Force and Flight: The End of Slavery in Eastern Ubangi-Shari*, in: Miers/Roberts, *The End of Slavery*, pp. 150–171.

69 E. M'Bokolo, *Le Gabon pré-colonial: étude sociale et économique*, in: *Cahiers d'études africaines* 17 (1977) 66–67, pp. 331–344.

Semio, the other two sultanates of Upper Ubangi, were created during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In theory, the sultans wielded absolute power in these entities; in reality, they shared it with clan chiefs. Bonded labourers, particularly the Nzakara and Zande peoples, were at the bottom of the social hierarchy, along with slaves from various other ethnic groups. When the Europeans appeared, the sultanates became their main collaborators and slave suppliers. Chad fell under the influence of the Sudanese caliphate of Sokoto, which possessed a huge contingent of slaves living on plantations, in villages, or even in trade centres.⁷⁰ Along the southern edge of the desert, nomadic merchants and herders owned numerous slaves acquired through desert raids or trading in the savanna. These slaves were used for heavy labour such as building dams, drenching animals, etc. In the Congo equatorial basin, large numbers of slaves were engaged in agriculture (tobacco, vegetable salt, and sugarcane). In inland areas, slaves were usually associated with clan organization: they could be seized and had an exchange value precisely because they were not members of a clan. They could as well be incorporated afterwards into one of the local clans. In this sense, slavery allowed clans to widen their line of descendants.⁷¹ In all these regions, the characteristics of slavery were modified by the arrival of the Europeans. In the Lower Congo, the Mpongwe lost their role as middlemen between neighbouring African populations and the Europeans and became servants or low-level employees in colonial stores.⁷² Similarly, the Loango and Bakongo clans further south could no longer act as brokers but instead became porters or even bonded labourers on coffee and cacao plantations. The inland population put up a longer resistance to European penetration, but in the north, the sultanates signed agreements with the Belgians and the French allowing them to engage in the slave trade until World War II.⁷³ France adopted strategies similar to those of Britain.⁷⁴ At a conference held in 1892, the French authorities declared that there were more servants in their colonial territories than slaves. As servants, the Africans could not be liberated because their status in no way violated French law. When the French first began penetrating into the area, they encountered enormous difficulties in establishing posts and an organized administration. In this context, they were careful not to adopt aggressive politics against slavery, which would complicate an already fragile situation. The elimination of slavery was not central to coping with economic development or depopulation.⁷⁵ The lack of military forces encouraged military elites to use local slaves for their operations, and many civilian colonial officers had no problem with slavery.⁷⁶ The openness of the region made it hard to force abolition without causing the flight of an already limited population. Indeed, slavery and

70 Lovejoy, *Transformations of Slavery*, p. 193.

71 *Ibid.*, p. 246.

72 G. Sautter, *De l'Atlantique au fleuve Congo. Une géographie du sous-peuplement*. République du Congo, république gabonaise, Paris 1966.

73 Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, p. 76.

74 Conklin, *A Mission*, pp. 11–38; Cooper/Stoler, *Tensions of Empire*, Introduction, pp. 1–156.

75 P. Manning, *Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa*, Cambridge 1998.

76 ANOM FM SG GCOG/XIV 1 et 2 recrutement de travailleurs Kroumen.

the slave trade were a threat to the colonial project by removing the people who collected rubber, ivory, and other products. However, many families who populated the area, notably the Fang, preferred to mix the market and autonomy, combining farming with hunting, gathering, and fishing. They had no dead season, and when they sold to the market, they did not intend to do it according to French requests in terms of products and prices. Thus, the French collected taxes and tended to break up lineages in order to enhance control. Chiefs were supposed to collect taxes, but the young were often aggrieved that the chiefs would not pay taxes on their behalf and broke away to form their own small lineages.⁷⁷ At the same time, the French collected taxes related to the export of these products. In reality, this vague definition of “genuine slavery” was used to negotiate workforce availability with the local chiefs. During periods when preserving the alliance with clan chiefs was the top priority, African labourers were called “servants”. When, on the contrary, the manpower requirements of the colonial companies became critical or the colonial authorities wanted to flex their muscles in the direction of the local chiefs, the same labourers were referred to as “slaves” and thereby “freed” so they could be more or less reclaimed by the companies and the French authorities.⁷⁸ Thus, in the 1890s, the French established posts where they hoped to gather fugitive slaves, and at the same time they signed treaties with local chiefs.⁷⁹ At first, missionaries accepted fugitive slaves and tried to establish *villages de liberté*, similar to those that had been set up in Sudan in 1894/95.⁸⁰ In those years, the French still lacked the strength to solve their dilemma. They needed good relations with the local chiefs and a labour force: if they pushed their demands too far, they risked losing both the chiefs’ support and the labour force; if they did not, they could not consolidate their position. Like the British in other areas, the French sold weapons to some chiefs, thus supporting warfare and enslavement and weakening their own position.⁸¹ Yet they continued to sell weapons to local chiefs without even mentioning slavery in their treaties until 1904.⁸² Officially, French policies aimed to achieve three objectives: abolish slavery, gradually introduce new labour rules, and create a genuine labour market. It never occurred to anyone that the new rules could be the same as those in force in France. Forced labour was included to meet the demands of both the colonial authorities and private companies;⁸³ it was seen as necessary to help

77 Manning, *Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa*, p. 37.

78 On this ambivalence in FWA, see Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*, pp. 178–185.

79 ANOM MI 131MIOM/3 Gaston Gaillard, *Traité de protectorat, de commerce, de personnes avec les chefs Zoubia et Coumba*, 28 août 1891.

80 ANOM FM SG Soud/XIV/1. See also Bouche, *Les villages*.

81 ANOM AEF GGAEF 2D/9 Mission Dybowski, 1892. Also J. Dybowski, *La route du Tchad du Loango au Chari*, Paris 1893.

82 ANOM FM MIS//12 Mission scientifique et économique par Auguste Chevalier. Also A. Chevalier, *Mission Chari-lac Tchad, 1902–1904*, Paris 1907.

83 Fall, *Le travail forcé*; F. Renault, *L’abolition de l’esclavage au Sénégal. L’attitude de l’administration française 1848–1905*, in: *Revue française d’histoire d’outre-mer* 58 (1971) 1, pp. 5–80.

improve the “barbarian Africans”⁸⁴ and cope with the lack of manpower.⁸⁵ At the same time, France continued its “redemption”⁸⁶ practices and the colonial authorities tried to persuade the chiefs to enforce the labour rules rather than impose them themselves. French policies did change, however, with the rise of the anti-colonial movement in France and the 1889 conference in Brussels (where the British tried to force the other colonial powers to adopt their anti-slavery policies). Between 1903 and 1905, slavery was declared illegal, first in the FWA and then in the FEA. In 1905, official French statistics, based on an unidentified calculation method, reported 2 million slaves in the FWA out of a population of 8 million.⁸⁷ According to the new strategy, it was necessary to eradicate slavery in order to break the resistance of the local chiefs and put an end to their “disloyalty”.⁸⁸ Colonialist discourse and the “civilizing mission” gained renewed momentum, along with the rhetoric about “vestiges of feudalism”. Such vestiges were said to prevail in Africa; the civilizing and colonizing mission was thus viewed as a new chapter of the revolution in France.⁸⁹ Civilization was associated with private property, a free labour market, and social stability. This was not pure rhetoric, however; a number of colonial officers sincerely believed it. Nevertheless, they all expressed disappointment at the attitude of the Africans who, despite the “revolution” and the contribution of civilization, continued to “cheat”, that is they did not behave as the colonial authorities had hoped. Instead of “independent peasants” and urban workers, the French found themselves confronted with populations that migrated from one empire to another, often with the changing seasons.⁹⁰ In 1905, slaves began a massive exodus throughout French Sudan, in spite of attempts on the part of the French to reconcile masters and slaves.⁹¹ The refugee communities in Sudan posed a threat to the demographic stability of eastern Ubangi-Shari.⁹² Refugees and slave raiding were difficult to distinguish,⁹³ while incidents between the French and local population increased.⁹⁴ The regular army and concession militias intervened in joint acts of violence.⁹⁵

To counter these tendencies, the French authorities, again like the British, introduced highly repressive work discipline. The former slaves were not supposed to work wherever

84 ANOM Equatorial Africa, government, G 1 AEF 2H/8, From the Governor of Cameroon to the Minister of Colonies, September 14, 1917.

85 ANOM, G 1 AEF 2H/8, From the Governor of Cameroon to the Minister of Colonies, September 14, 1917.

86 Cordell, *The Delicate Balance*.

87 Boutiller, *Les captifs en AOF*, p. 520.

88 ANOM, GGAEF, 4(1) D2. N'Djolé, Rapport du capitaine Curault, administrateur de la région de l'Ogouou sur le groupement hostile de Mikongo et la nécessité d'une répression immédiate contre le chef Ngoua-Midoumbi et ses partisans, *Années 1906*.

89 ANOM Equatorial Africa, government, G 1 AEF 2H/8.

90 Lovejoy, *Transformations*, pp. 254–262. Also Renault, *L'abolition de l'esclavage au Sénégal*, pp. 5–15.

91 Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*, pp. 159 ff; R. Roberts, *The End of Slavery in French Soudan, 1905–1914*, in: Miers/Roberts, *The End of Slavery*, pp. 282–307; M. Rodet, *Les migrantes ignorées du Haut-Sénégal, 1900–1946*, Paris 2009.

92 Cordell, *The Delicate Balance*, pp. 205–224.

93 ANOM AEF GGAEF 3D/3. Mission Fillon.

94 ANOM FM 2 AFFPOL/19. Incidents du Bas M'Bomou.

95 ANOM, GGAEF 8Q58.

and whenever they thought best: if they did not have a proper labour contract, they could be found guilty of vagabondage; if they left before their task was completed, they would be sentenced for desertion.⁹⁶ Such measures proved ineffective, however, due to the unwillingness of the various colonial authorities to cooperate with each other – the French, British, Belgian, German, and Portuguese were all competing for manpower and always ready to recover fugitives.⁹⁷ The coercive measures were also weakened by competition within the French Empire itself, between different regions or even between companies and public authorities. In 1904/05, the Congo was definitively placed under French administrative control; its territory was divided into four main areas: Gabon, Middle Congo, Ubangi-Shari, and Chad. A general commissar directly oversaw the Middle Congo, while a lieutenant governor ruled Gabon.

However, the economic exploitation of the area was difficult: in 1902, the value of the FEA's exports was 1.6 million (in current US dollars), compared with 13.1 million for the FWA. By 1913, the latter had reached 29.2 million dollars in exports, while FEA exports stagnated.⁹⁸ The colonial powers, particularly France and Belgium, developed an interest in the Congo and Gabon only with the rise of steamboat navigation, when it became possible to use the Congo River to transport products and link up with the various European empires in Africa. It should be emphasized that the French government was generally reluctant to finance its colonies and preferred to concentrate its limited allocations in the FWA.⁹⁹ During this period (1900–1920), France adopted the concession system, that is to say it granted operating monopolies to private enterprises. From this standpoint, the colonial policies in the FEA differed significantly from those in the neighbouring FWA, where concessions were seldom awarded and private companies dominated. Despite these advantages, few companies invested in the FEA prior to World War I and almost none before 1900. French capitalists preferred Turkey, Russia, and Indochina to Africa, particularly Equatorial Africa, which was considered too difficult to exploit profitably. By 1903, only one-third of the companies set up in the previous ten years were still in operation; they merged over the next few years to the point where, in 1909, only six companies controlled all French activities in the FEA.¹⁰⁰ Until the 1920s, these companies ran a predatory economy, trying to obtain a maximum amount of resources with minimum investment and maximum coercion. Their operations were not very profitable.

The only certitude was that population was scarce. Thus, the commercial traffic between Stanley Pool (a lake) and the Upper Congo, linking Boubangui, Batéké, and Bakongo, included slaves, manioc, ivory, and European goods. This trade was carried out by the

96 ANOM, GGAEF 2H 15.

97 ANOM, G 1 AEF 2H/8.

98 D. Fieldhouse, *The Economic Exploitation of Africa: Some British and French Comparisons*, in: P. Gifford/W. R. Louis (eds.), *France and Britain in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule*, New Haven, CT 1971, pp. 659–660.

99 Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, pp. 120–127.

100 Ibid.

Fang people from the Gabonese coast to the Moyen-Ogooué province.¹⁰¹ Outside this circuit, the French army, the concession companies, and the colonial state had to resort to porters, whom they constantly criticized for their native indolence and laziness.¹⁰² This argument was to prove useful to the concession companies in suggesting the need for coercion.¹⁰³ In the absence of any explicit governmental authorization on this point – but with all the ambiguities mentioned earlier – the concession companies were able to recruit labourers either directly or through tribal chiefs. Most often, the companies and the government chose to work with the chiefs. However, the authority of the local chiefs was often limited to their own villages, and in any case they seldom supplied all the manpower requested.¹⁰⁴ The companies usually paid in kind, arguing that local workers did not understand the meaning of money. Some chose the approach used by planters in Assam and the Mascarenes: they kept wages not only to help Africans save, but also to protect themselves against possible misconduct.¹⁰⁵

Tensions mounted, especially over portage. The French authorities and the concession companies had an enormous need for porters.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, the companies abused the porters: They not only did not pay them, but they also extended their *engagement* longer than stipulated in the initial agreement.¹⁰⁷ This type of forced labour generated a considerable amount of resistance and desertion.¹⁰⁸ The French military authorities then turned to various forms of forced requisition: women were taken hostage until the men presented themselves.¹⁰⁹ Later on, some concessions adopted the same principle, which was the source of the main scandals in the French Congo at the time.¹¹⁰ Wages were very low or even non-existent in view of the extremely hard labour involved; recruiters carried out manhunts around deserted villages, notably in the Cercle de Gribingui area.¹¹¹ The French League of Human Rights denounced the abuses,¹¹² but little was done concretely to stop these practices.

Violence was not the only problem; due to the requisition of manpower by the colonial powers, there were not enough labourers for the local farms. Collaboration between the colonial authorities, concession companies, and local chiefs was more harmonious in the Upper Ubangi, particularly in the territory of the sultanates.¹¹³ The three small

101 Sautter, *De l'Atlantique au fleuve Congo*, pp. 825–829.

102 ANOM FM SG GCOG/XIV, 1 et 2.

103 *La Dépêche coloniale*, 23 décembre 1903; Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, p. 103.

104 ANOM, GGAEF 8Q58.

105 ANOM, GGAEF, 8Q59, Libreville, Rapport d'inspection de la Société du Haut-Ogooué, Année 1908.

106 ANOM, GGAEF, 2H 15, Correspondance du Commissaire général du Gabon au Commissaire général dans les possessions françaises et dépendances, Année 1907.

107 ANOM, GGAEF, 2H 15.

108 ANOM, GGAEF, 8Q59, Libreville, Rapport d'inspection.

109 ANOM, FP, PA/16(V)/5 (mission Brazza, notes); FP/PA/16(V)/3 (criminal cases, women).

110 *Ibid.*

111 *Ibid.* See, in particular, Bobichon, Report on portage.

112 ANOM FM 2AFFPOL/19, Observations of the French League for the Protection of Human Rights and the Womens International League for Peace and Freedom on the system adopted by the large concessions.

113 E. Assidon, *Le commerce captif: les sociétés françaises de l'Afrique noire*, Paris 1989.

potentates of Bangassu, Rafaï, and Semio relied on slaves they acquired through raids or trade.¹¹⁴ Encouraged by the French authorities, the Compagnie (later Société) des Sultanats decided to seek the support of these potentates and their workforce.¹¹⁵ The idea was to exchange European products, already widely used by the elites of the sultanates, for rubber produced by the sultans' slaves.¹¹⁶ However, the local chiefs either did not supply the manpower they had promised, or they failed to provide sufficient numbers to satisfy the French companies.¹¹⁷ The often violent clashes with the local population increased,¹¹⁸ notably in response to the actions of militias employed by the concession companies.¹¹⁹

Huge debates took place in France at the turn of the century concerning their political, legal, and economic legitimacy.¹²⁰ All these aspects were linked to the role of the colonial state: on the one hand, it delegated much of its authority to the concessions on the pretext that it lacked the necessary financing to become directly involved in African colonization. On the other hand, that same colonial state thought the concession system lent itself to fraud and abuse.¹²¹ This twofold connection between the colonial state and the concessions, already of considerable importance with regard to profits and taxation, became even more problematic when it came to labour and violence against local populations. The fact that taxes could be paid in kind and in labour and not necessarily in cash made it difficult to separate taxation and labour. The payment of taxes through concession companies thus paved the way to the worst abuses, and local workers were compelled to work for the companies to redeem their "debts" to the colonial state.¹²² Violence was widely used to enforce this rule.¹²³

Conclusion – Colonial State and Free Labour: Universal Meanings vs Local Practises

In India, the return to indirect rule during the second half of the nineteenth century once again went along with renewed tolerance towards "local customs". The British showed

114 E. de Dampierre, *Un royaume Bandia du Haut Oubangui*, Paris 1967.

115 ANOM FM/2AFFPOL/21, sociétés concessionnaires, Société des sultanats.

116 ANOM, FM, 2AFFPOL/4 (compagnies concessionnaires); FM/2AFFPOL/21.

117 ANOM, FM, 2AFFPOL/25 (sociétés concessionnaires, recrutement de la main d'œuvre indigène); 2AFFPOL/29, Société des Sultanats.

118 ANOM FM, 2AFFPOL/1 (commission des concessions, réclamations formulées par des collectivités indigènes).

119 ANOM FM, 2AFFPOL/13 (compagnies concessionnaires) et 2AFFPOL/29, Société des Sultanats.

120 On these debates, see Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*; J. D. Saint-Marc, *Des compagnies privilégiées de colonisation. De leur création et de leur organisation dans les possessions françaises*, PhD, Bordeaux 1897; M. Hamelin, *Des concessions coloniales. Étude sur les modes d'aliénation des terres domaniales en Algérie et dans les colonies françaises du Congo*, Paris 1898.

121 H. Cuvillier-Fleury, *La mise en valeur du Congo français*, Paris 1904; Union Congolaise, *Les sociétés concessionnaires du Congo français depuis 1905. Situation financière, plantations, main-d'oeuvre (1906–1908)*, Paris 1909.

122 G. A. Nzenguet Iguemba, *Colonisation, fiscalité et mutations au Gabon, 1910–1947*, Paris 2005.

123 ANOM, GGAEF, 8Q58 and 8Q59.

similar attitudes in a completely different context, namely Africa. They initially exported their notion of the colonial state developed in India, seeking agreements with local chiefs while tolerating local forms of slavery. It was only when these alliances collapsed and the abolitionist movement reinforced its position regarding Africa that direct rule and the prohibition of slavery developed.¹²⁴ Considering the Lushai Hills and the French Congo as a “non-state space”, as postulated by Scott, is also not novel or unique considering that understanding frontier has been studied from such a perspective.¹²⁵ But by the term “non-state space” should not mean that the state was not present in their discourse or that state did not want to do anything with these people in the hills and frontiers. Zomia was always within the realm of the state and within the discourse of the state because controlling these areas were crucial for the peace, prosperity, and stability of the state. The notion of Zomia also hardly fits with the French Congo. The French pursued their civilizing mission, but the possibility of imposing these attitudes was greater in Senegal than in the Congo. It was undoubtedly more difficult to establish a colonial state in the Congo: more power was attributed to military than to civilian colonial authorities, and it was accompanied by more violence and abuses. In the FWA, the civilizing mission was a topic of discussion and policy debates;¹²⁶ in the FEA, debates focused on the relative strength of military vs civilian power and the brutal exploitation of local resources. In short, the “colonial state” encompassed various institutional actors: private companies (in India and the Congo), state officials, and law courts. For institutional and ideological reasons, these actors advocated and tried to practice different policies with regard to sovereignty and slavery. Some were genuine abolitionists, some were merely opportunistic abolitionists, and still others were hostile to local autonomy and because of that, they fought local forms of slavery. Efforts to implement abolitionist aims ran up against these diverse attitudes within the administration as well as lack of organization and information. In addition, local societies, which presented a similar variety of attitudes, also played an active role; chiefs, merchants, slaves, and former slaves transmuted the initial, often contradictory aims of the colonial powers into something else. In the end, the top-down activity of the state was certainly stressed in many – though not all – colonial contexts, but it tended to be an aim and ambition more than a historical reality. Colonial and post-colonial studies have often confused aims, goals, and practices. At the same time, we should not exaggerate the opposite interpretation and focus exclusively on the lack of power of the colonial state. Even when the colonial state was weak, as Herbst has pointed out, and even when the state was a private company, aided if neces-

124 Morris / Read, *Indirect Rule and the Search for Justice*.

125 Scott, *The Art of not Being Governed*, p. 13. For discourse on frontier as a “non-state space”, we just have to look at any literature published by the colonial authorities where frontier is portrayed as a “lawless” and “uncivilized” space inhabited by the “savages”, which is contrasted with the organized and law abiding subject in their directly administered area. See Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North East Frontier of Bengal* by Alexander Mackenzie, Calcutta 1884; Sir Robert Reid, *History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam From 1883–1941*, Delhi 1942, etc.

126 Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*, pp. 178–196.

sary by military and paramilitary forces, the violence was extreme. Just because the ideal type of efficient state was not achieved does not mean the state did not matter. While British norms and perceptions translated into various forms of bondage and slavery in India, and thereby helped perpetuate slavery well after its official abolition, those institutions nevertheless predated any British intervention. The solution adopted in India and the practices that were accepted did not result solely from British influences, but rather from the interaction between those influences and local labour relationships and values. Europeans did not create slavery in India and Africa, but they transformed its existing forms and introduced new ones. Oppositely, Henri Maine has identified status with despotism and ancient societies, like India and its castes. Starting from this experience, he has reached the conclusion that the legal opposition in Britain itself between masters and servants was no longer acceptable.

Such mutual influence between the mainland and its colonies did not necessarily lead to more “freedom” in the colonies and convergent paths between the two. Indeed, it was quite the contrary. Although the rhetoric assimilating slaves into proletarians was widespread in both France and Britain during the first half of the nineteenth century, it reflected a political and ideological attitude occasionally espoused by conservatives and by some labour associations as well. The Indian experience encouraged people like Henri Maine to support the abolition of the Masters and Servants Acts in Britain while keeping coercion alive in India. Worse still, the French constantly sought to impose their own categories and values in what they believed was their civilizing mission. In this effort, they tried to limit the influence of local and colonial values and attitudes.

Finally, at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, it was no more a question to discuss the abolition of slavery in the European colonies, but, quite the opposite, to occupy new territories in the name of freedom. The scramble for Africa responded to this goal. From this standpoint, the colonies were no more an extension of the mainland, but – being its extreme variation – rather its negation. There was no question of granting any kind of welfare to liberated Africans; instead, a transition period of cultural and technical apprenticeship was required before they could understand and practice freedom. The state and the welfare state enhanced one each other in France and Britain, while in the frontier colonies weak colonial states, military presence, violence, and coerced labour were bound together.

“Neocolonialism” Revisited: An Empirical Enquiry into the Term’s Theoretical Substance Today

Ulrike von Hirschhausen / Jonas Kreienbaum

ABSTRACTS

Der Begriff des „Neokolonialismus“ geht davon aus, dass auch nach der formalen Unabhängigkeit ehemaliger Kolonien von den europäischen Empires weiterhin eine ökonomische Abhängigkeit der Staaten von den Metropolen und Institutionen des Westens fortbesteht. In den 1960er und 1970er Jahren hat sich der Begriff zu einer zentralen Analysekategorie antikolonialen Denkens entwickelt und wird im Zeichen der gegenwärtigen Globalisierung heute erneut als Erklärungsfaktor verwandt. Der vorliegende Aufsatz testet den analytischen Gehalt des Terminus, indem er ihn an zwei konkreten historischen Beispielen überprüft. Es handelt sich um die ökonomischen Interventionen des Britischen Empire im indischen Bengal zwischen 1870 und 1930 und das Eingreifen internationaler Finanzinstitutionen im zentralafrikanischen Sambia im Rahmen sogenannter Strukturanpassungsprogramme in den späten 1970er und 1980er Jahren. Trotz gewisser Kontinuitäten in den ungleichen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen über die politische Dekolonisation hinaus, so argumentiert der Aufsatz anhand der beiden Fälle, ist das Konzept des „Neokolonialismus“ als analytisches Werkzeug wenig hilfreich. Es vernachlässigt die Agency lokaler Akteure, übersteigert die Macht der imperialen bzw. neokolonialen Metropole und ist blind für die tatsächliche Wandlungsfähigkeit internationaler Wirtschaftsbeziehungen. Der Aufsatz plädiert stattdessen für den Begriff des „globalen Kapitalismus“, der die ambivalenten Motive und Folgen ökonomischer Interventionen besser erfassen kann, ohne existierende Machtungleichgewichte zu verschleiern.

The term “neocolonialism” refers to the situation of former colonies remaining dependent on the metropolises and institutions of the West even after they achieved formal independence from the old European empires. In the 1960s and 1970s the term became a central category of analysis for anticolonial thought and even today, in the face of another wave of globalization, it serves as an explanatory factor. This essay examines the term’s analytical power by confronting

it with two specific historical case studies. These are the British Empire's economic intervention in Indian Bengal between 1870 and 1930 and the engagement of international financial institutions in central African Zambia in the name of structural adjustment during the late 1970s and 1980s. Notwithstanding certain continuities in unequal economic relations beyond the point of political decolonization, the essay argues that the concept of "neocolonialism" is not helpful as an analytical tool. It neglects local agency, overemphasizes the power of the imperial or neo-colonial metropole and ignores the actual transformation of international economic relations. Instead, the article advocates the term "global capitalism", which better grasps the ambivalent motives and consequences of economic interventions without disguising existing power differentials.

*Neo-colonialism is [...] the worst form of imperialism.
For those, who practice it, it means power without responsibility
and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress.*
Kwame Nkrumah, 1965

As a concept Neo-colonialism is as disempowering as the conditions it portrays.
Robert J. C. Young, 2001

Neocolonialism came up with the experience of post-colonial economy. The term seemed to catch the very situation of many former colonies in Africa, the Middle East and Asia after formal independence in the 1950s and 60s. Their new political sovereignty did not go along with economic autonomy, but seemingly was accompanied by a perpetual economic dependence on the former metropolises in the West.¹ For Kwame Nkrumah, anticolonial leader and first president of Ghana, who coined the term in 1961, invisible modalities – economic, ideological, political, and cultural – secured an ongoing control of the former imperial centres over nominally independent nations, above all through new forms of corporate and financial forms of capital: "The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside."² Nkrumah's personal experiences had been crucial for developing the concept. In 1957, when his country had just achieved political inde-

1 See for the term's connotation and definition: International Encyclopedia of Human Geography, Amsterdam 2013, p. 360ff.; The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration, ed. by I. Ness, vol. II, p. 523ff; see also the entry "neoliberal globalization and migration", *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 2290ff.; B. C. Smith, Understanding Third World Politics. Theories of Political Change and Development, chapter 3, The Politics of Neo-Colonialism and Dependency, pp. 54–76, 3rd ed. Bloomington 2009; R. J. C. Young, Postcolonialism. A Historical Introduction, chapter 4, Neo-colonialism, pp. 43–56. For an introduction into dependency theories, closely related to the concept of neo-colonialism, see, for instance, W. L. Bernecker/Th. Fischer: Dependency Theories, in: Itinerario 22 (1998) 4, pp. 25–43; A. Ziai, Development discourse and global history: from colonialism to the sustainable development goals, London 2016.

2 Kwame Nkrumah, Neo-Colonialism. The Last Stage of Imperialism, London 1965, p. ix. Nkrumah first used the term in *idem*, I speak of Freedom. A Statement of African Ideology, 1961; for similar statements on inde-

pendence, he had been overly sanguine. Now that the former Gold Coast was liberated economic development would quasi-automatically follow, as he believed. The former student of theology at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania phrased his famous motto in biblical terms: "Seek ye first the political kingdom, and all things shall be added upon you", and he promised to turn Ghana into an industrialized paradise within a decade. A few years later, however, his ambitious development schemes had failed, not the least due to depressed prices cocoa, Ghana's main export commodity, fetched on world markets. Also, Ghanaian attempts at industrialization had brought important parts of the economy into the hands of multinational companies. Now his training as an economist and his contact to Marxist influenced intellectuals, like C. L. R. James, during his years in the United States seemed of greater importance. Obviously referencing Lenin, in 1965 Nkrumah explained economic failure as the result of neo-colonialism, "the last stage of imperialism".³

The concept of neocolonialism soon became an integral part of African and Latin American anti-imperial theorizing and with time a constituent of broader left-wing analyses of the Third World's political economy and critical development work up to the 1980s. Afterwards it fell out of fashion due to the dominance of economic principles as marketization and liberalization and the fragmentation of Third World unity facing debt crises and the success of the Asian "tigers".⁴ With the advent of globalization in general, and the obvious failure of structural adjustment programmes in Africa and elsewhere, the term is experiencing a new renaissance since the late 1990s, not always in wording, but certainly in substance. Anti-globalization movements put their critique of corporate power, the enlarged role of finance capital in the impoverishment of the Global South and of the "imperialistic" role of multilateral development institutes as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank in the centre of their protest. On the website of the World Social Forum, founded in 2001 as a network to coordinate anti-globalization movements, neocolonialism is prominent and its use is entirely consistent with Nkrumah's definition.⁵ The political and cultural meanings of the term loom even larger in today's anti-globalization critique, focusing on fields like land concessions and pros-

pendence, see *Africa and the West. A Documentary History*, vol. 2, *From Colonialism to Independence, 1875 to the Present*, Chapter 5, pp. 149–183.

- 3 Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana. The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, London 1957, p. 164. Idem, *Neo-Colonialism. On Nkrumah's biography and thought*, see D. Birmingham, *Kwame Nkrumah. The Father of African Nationalism*, Athens 1998; B. Davidson, *Black Star. A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah*, Oxford 2007; B. Lundt/Ch. Marx, *Kwame Nkrumah 1909–1972. A Controversial African Visionary*, Stuttgart 2016; A. Biney, *The Political and Social Thought of Kwame Nkrumah*, New York/Houndmills 2011, pp. 131–133. On the situation in Ghana see also F. Cooper, *Africa Since 1940. The Past of the Present*, Cambridge 2009, pp. 161–163; R. S. Gocking, *The History of Ghana*, Westport/London 2005, pp. 115–145.
- 4 See, for instance, G. Garavini, *After Empires. European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957–1986*, Oxford 2012, pp. 241–249; M. Mazower, *Governing the World. The History of an Idea*, London 2012, pp. 343–377; V. Prashad, *The Darker Nations. A People's History of the Third World*, New York/London 2007, pp. 207–259.
- 5 The Charter of Principals specifies the Forum is opposed "to neoliberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism". <https://fsm2016.org/en/sinformer/a-propos-du-forum-social-mondial/> (accessed 4 October 2018). See also E. N. Sahle, *World Social Forum: Re-imaging Development and the Global*

pecting rights, multilateral aid donors, military invasions, or biodiversity. The political renaissance of the concept as an explanation of the consequences of globalization has spurred our thinking to reassess the term historically. Which definition of colonialism does the term carry and is it consistent with current historical research on colonial economy, informed by global history? Can neocolonialism adequately describe the relations between the newly independent states of the Global South and their former metropolises in the 1970s and 1980s? And finally, though only in a preliminary way, is the term a conceptual tool capable to explain the features and consequences of current globalization, as its proponents claim?

Neocolonialism as an analytical tool underwent varied critique of historians and political scientists alike. A key element is the high “level of generality” devoid of conceptual precision and historical specification while reducing the function of Third World states to external economic intervention and influences from outside.⁶ This is precisely the point our analysis takes as a starting point by focusing on two distinct historic economies over time, one colonial, one postcolonial. The first example is a “classic” case of imperial intervention that is British India between 1870 and 1930, with a particular focus on Bengal and Western India under formal colonial rule. The second case takes up the example of Zambia since the late 1970s and the way the African state dealt with the “structural adjustment programmes” of IMF and World Bank, where, as one historian recently noted, “the ‘hidden hand’ of neo-colonialism appears to show itself in a rather concrete and threatening form.”⁷ Focusing on the dynamics of these two economic interventions we attempt to probe the seemingly clear-cut historiographical periodization assuming an end of colonialism after formal decolonization as much as the equally suggestive rhetoric of an informal continuity of colonial control of the Global South through agencies of the West.

The term neocolonialism following Nkrumah’s lead also today refers mainly to economic intervention assumed to result in exploitative relations between states of the Global South and Western centres of capital. Given the scope of this paper with its aim to proceed historically through a vast and rich field of research, it deliberately leaves the political and cultural aspects of neocolonialism out of the analysis. Mainly three aspects define economic intervention as our prime concern. First, economic intervention contains a direct interference in the sovereignty of a foreign economic policy, often supported by political pressure or military means. Second, the intervening party often attempts to open the economy of a peripheral region for the global market. Transfers of commercially valuable raw materials and commodities from local plants in various parts of the colonial world consequently result in a closer entanglement between centres and peripheries with

South Beyond the Neo-Colonial Gaze, in: J. Blau / M. Karides (eds.), *The World and US Social Forums: A Better World is Possible and Necessary*, Leiden 2008, pp. 223–238.

6 See Smith, *Understanding Third World Politics*, p. 73. For an impressive empirical study to deconstruct “Neo-Colonialism”, see N. J. White, *British Business in Post-colonial Malaysia 1957–70. “Neo-colonialism” or “disengagement”?*, London 2004.

7 D. Rothermund, *The Routledge Companion to Decolonization*, London / New York 2006, p. 274.

the intention to favour the former. Third and finally, economic intervention is often accompanied by pressure on the indigenous society to specialize on few raw materials or food crops. This way, it has the capacity to enforce a more homogenous labour force increasingly dependent on international monopolies.

With this definition of economic intervention as an operational device, our paper proceeds in four steps. It first sketches briefly the genealogy of the concept and its fore-runners, particularly with regard to India in the 19th and to Africa in the 20th century. Second, forms and consequences of British economic intervention in 19th-century India concerning its manufactural system, its export situation and the labour market are discussed with a special focus on global history's new perspectives. Third, the impact of the "structural adjustment programmes" on late 20th-century Zambia imposed by international organisations are explored, looking particularly at the retreat of the state and the reopening of its economy to the world market. Fourth and finally, the question whether postcolonial economy is coined by an informal continuity of colonial control or whether alternative economic frameworks can better characterize these constellations is discussed and a preliminary answer given.

I. From "Drain" to "Neocolonialism": Criticising Colonial Economics

"Foreigners come here and in a short time earn enough to live in comfort back home, and our country is being pumped dry in the process."⁸ The popular sentiment that *Jnananeshan*, the mouthpiece of the Young Bengal movement, expressed in 1834, echoes arguments exchanged since the East India Company's intrusion into Bengal around 1760 until today. The basic narrative of "drain" as the dominant paradigm for India's economic situation under British rule and thereafter maintains that imperial intervention enriched Britain's economic stability while removing resources from India capable of pushing its own modernization. The concept served basic needs of the Indian nationalistic movement since the late 19th century and has remained a core argument of subsequent postcolonial governments as well as historiography in the 20th century. The way historians applied this formula was by trying to present evidence of gains and losses between India and Great Britain, keeping data, processes, and arguments within the realm of one centre and one periphery. This way, economic questions became often renationalized by reducing a variety of agents and agencies to two camps: an indigenous, national periphery and an imperial core. The debate has been relentless, but obviously failed to come to any broadly accepted result. The strong political agenda, which "drain" carries, is probably one reason, why, as David Washbrook has put it, "the battle may [...] have generated more heat than light."⁹

8 Jnananeshan, 9 August 1834, quoted in S. Sarkar, *Bengali Entrepreneurs and Western Technology in the Nineteenth Century. A Social Perspective*, in: *Indian Journal of History of Science* 48 (2013) 3, pp. 447–475, quote 447.

9 D. Washbrook, *The Indian Economy and the British Empire*, in: D. Peers/N. Gooptu (eds), *India and the British Empire*, Oxford 2012, pp. 44–74, quote p. 45.

The basic idea that Britain “drained” India’s wealth leading to exploitation and impoverishment makes it appear a direct forerunner to the term “neocolonialism”, appearing in the 1960s. Paul Baran, André Gunder Frank, and others discovered the Indian nationalistic texts, which presented models of colonial exploitation and used it for their own work on terms-of-trade, dependency theory and world inequality.¹⁰ For Raúl Prebisch, the long-standing head of the Economic Commission for Latin America, raw material exports from Latin America or other poor regions on the periphery of the world economy structurally fetched ever lower prices compared to the industrial products of the metropolises. This inevitably led to the frustration of all the development plans of the world’s poor countries.

In the following decades, the Economic Commission for Latin America turned into the breeding ground for dependency theory, which in turn caught the attention of future African leaders, Nkrumah being among the “perhaps most influenced”.¹¹ Although the concepts of “drain”, “terms-of-trade” and “neocolonialism” differ in their temporal and regional origin, as well as in their focus on colonialism versus postcolonial times, the similarities in substance are obvious. All concepts argue that economic relations between North and South were per se exploitative serving exclusively the interests of Western centres of power and capital. This can include a forced extraction of surplus through colonial states, unequal exchange between states of the Global South and North, or intervention through transnational banks and multilateral development agencies.

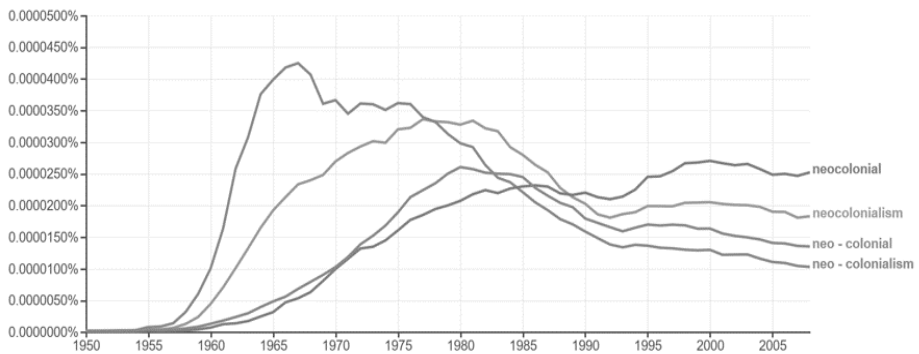
The critique which concepts like “drain” or “neocolonialism” as analytical concepts have earned centres on the static geography of power implied in which colonial or postcolonial actors exert almost no economic agency of their own. Assuming their genuine powerlessness and passivity underestimates the impact colonized actors as well as the independence movements themselves made and rather perpetuates stereotypes of helplessness while showing sympathy. The changing modes of agency, resistance, accommodation or assertion within colonial and postcolonial relations are therefore not adequately reflected in such theories. Besides, these concepts carry a moral standing, often arguing with a generic sense of unjustness, which particularly in the case of “neocolonialism” often overshadows its analytical content. Despite these shortcomings, “neocolonialism” seems to be back on the political agenda. A view at Google Ngram (see graph, next page), a tool to chart the frequency of use of any expression in the millions of books Google digitized during the past years, shows the gradual recovery of the term, which becomes even more pronounced if you limit the search to American English.

10 See T. Roy, *The British Empire and the Economic Development of India (1858–1947)*, in: *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History* 34 (2015) 2, pp. 209–236, at p. 212.

11 R. Vokes, *African Perspectives on Development*, in: T. Binns/K. Lynch/E. Nel (eds.), *Handbook of African Development*, New York 2018, pp. 10–18, here p. 12f. A key text for terms-of-trade theory is R. Prebisch, *The Economic Development of Latin America and Its Principal Problems*, New York 1950. See also E. Dosman, *The Life and Time of Raúl Prebisch, 1901–1986*, Montreal 2009. And on dependency theory Bernecker/Fischer, *Dependency Theories*.

The terms' revivification often couched in related terms like "re-colonisation" or "neo-liberalism" as a process seems to indicate that a certain understanding of colonial economic relations informs today's explanations of North-South relations better than current analytical terms seem capable to. Still working as a combative catchword for postcolonial elites and activists, it also recently reappeared as an analytical concept in the social sciences. Mark Langan, for instance, has very recently argued that "the concept of neo-colonialism, as originally proposed by Nkrumah, remains valid for critical assessment of African countries' position within the globalised market economy."¹² A brief and very selective account of India's economy under colonial rule and the ways Indians themselves dealt with the British intervention will provide a first historical grounding of the consequences of economic intervention and puts neocolonialism, so to say, under a historical stress test informed by global history.

Bibliometric analysis of the terms 'neocolonialism' and 'neocolonial', 1950–2008¹³



II. Indian Economy under British Rule in a Global Context

Situating Britain's intervention in India's economy has been an object of an extremely extensive historiography without coming to a consensus so far. Mainstream Indian interpretations tend to presume that market integration with the imperial economy stunted the pattern of indigenous development and tended to explain India's "underdevelop-

12 M. Langan, *Neo-Colonialism and the Poverty of "Development" in Africa*, London 2018, p. 27. See also A. Ziai, *Neokoloniale Weltordnung? Brüche und Kontinuitäten seit der Dekolonisation*, in: *APuZ* 44–45 (2012), pp. 23–30.

13 Google Ngram Viewer, https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=neocolonialism+per+cent2Cneocolonial+per+cent2Cneo-colonial&year_start=1950&year_end=2018&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=&direct_url=t1+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cneocolonialism+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cc0+per+cent3B.t1+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cneo+per+cent20-per+cent20colonialism+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cc0+per+cent3B.t1+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cneocolonial+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cc0+per+cent3B.t1+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cneo+per+cent20-per+cent20colonial+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cc0 (accessed 3 October 2018).

ment” primarily through Britain’s “development.”¹⁴ Recent economic research informed by global history refrains from such renationalizing of economics and rather tries to situate India “as a crucial pivot in a multilateral system of imperial economy and force”, as David Washbrook has proposed.¹⁵ Given this state of research the following remarks based on current research do no more than simply highlight selective cases with special regard to the key markers of economic intervention as defined above: interfering with a foreign economic policy, opening the economy to global markets, and pressing the cultivation of certain crops.

Britain’s prime interests in India lay in military needs, revenue operation, and the expansion of overseas commerce. The backdrop of enforcing these aims with brute force was an astonishing abstinence of interest in domestic markets. A first short inquiry into India’s artisan production and the role of weavers, merchants, and consumers in small towns in Western India after 1870 challenges the notion of intervention as an over-arching colonial scheme.¹⁶ The first half of the 19th century with imperial expansion into India had brought about a disruption of pre-existing commercial networks with Indian and African states ceasing to act as main customers of cloth. A deep depression between 1820 and 1850 gave way to a changed constellation for small-scale artisans representing a major employment group and constituting around 10 million people in the early twentieth century.¹⁷ In the Bombay presidency, the centre of India’s textile industry, the availability and cheaper price of machine-made yarn often imported from England enhanced the Indian weaving family’s ability to tailor its products to buyers’ specifications. By flexibly using machine-made materials for their handmade cloth the production became closer associated with international capitalism, shifting the artisan economy from a precolonial global context to a new reliance on imperial networks for their raw material.

A further reason for the gradual reinvigoration of handloom weaving after 1870 were new forms of demand. The “drain” argument shares with the paradigm of “neocolonialism” the bias against analysing consumption patterns privileging production at the expense of demand. Because of the British encouraging and enforcing sedentary agriculture, peasants became increasingly consumers of the cloth market. The Indian “Adivasis”, for example, a group of rural poor, came to reside in regions of sedentary agriculture developing new ideas of modesty. Men adopted the dhoti, women the sari, both made by small producers in Western India’s small towns. A further source of expanded demand came from large urban centres like Bombay, Ahmedabad and Poona, where new styles of public life and new forms of social expectation triggered new kinds of buying patterns. Here, the shares of industrialized cloth in the total market of the Bombay presidency

14 See L. Chaudhary, Introduction, in: L. Chaudhary (ed.), *A New Economic History of Colonial India*, London 2016, pp. 1–14.

15 Washbrook, *The Indian Economy*, p. 54. See for an early forerunner K. N. Chaudhuri, *India’s International Economy in the Nineteenth Century: An Historical Survey*, in: *Modern Asian Studies* 2 (1968) 1, pp. 31–50.

16 See for the following above the painstakingly researched study of D. Haynes, *Small town capitalism in Western India. Artisans, Merchants, and the Making of the Informal Economy, 1870–1960*, Cambridge 2012.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 2 f.

declined while the handloom-made held theirs. One reason was that men tended to consume mill-manufactured cloth while women tended to wear fabrics woven on handlooms serving also as a marker of group and caste distinction. When the members of a Provincial banking inquiry interviewed the Sholapur-based entrepreneur L. K. Tikekar in 1929 about the competition from textile mills, they seemed surprised about his answer. Tikekar was very confident about the competitiveness of local weavers' adaption to new demands.

*You don't think the mills will be able to compete with the handloom weavers' asked one questioner. "No", replied Tikekar, "because Sholapur is famous for its sarees. They require a mixed weaving which requires a special care to be taken".*¹⁸

Crucial for the artisanal economy was the increasing role of artisan-capitalists, often weaver-masters who combined maintaining shops, shaping consumer choices, and selling clothes to outside localities. While ordinary artisans lived mostly under poverty, this group of artisan-capitalists often disposed of intimate knowledge of the production process, had family members or employees to forge new markets some distance away and tried to cultivate new buyers for the products they manufactured. The "karkhandars", as they were called, combined the functions of consumption, production, management, and marketing in one entity, the artisan joint family, which was critical for the expansion of India's informal economy. The emergence of an artisanal capitalism, located in small towns, however, could emerge as it did, through the relative absence of the colonial state. The clerks of the British Raj carried mostly a stereotype of the artisan as a traditional figure and never came to terms with the capitalist character of the artisanal economy. Half-hearted efforts to institutionalize weaver-cooperatives in order to "protect" them against the fast pace of transformation or to promote technical improvements never had a real impact on the majority of Western India's artisans. While strongly acting in the agrarian realm the colonial administration exercised almost no real intervention into the artisans' production, representing a major sphere of employment in 19th-century India. In sum, the example of the artisan economy shows the agency of entrepreneurs pushing new demands, market-orientated peasants, craftspeople using their technical expertise, skilled factory workers investing extra-money into their own workshops, and traders selling outside their own localities – barely influenced by the state at all. In contrast to traditional assumptions of colonialism involving a strong economic intervention in a foreign economy, the British state exercised almost no intervention in the sphere of artisanal economy. The artisans themselves rather developed flexible modes to deal with economic changes induced by international trade. While "drain" does not capture this historic constellation adequately, "small town capitalism", as Douglas Haynes has proposed, does rather better denote this indigenous and largely independent agency within the Raj.

A second aspect of “economic intervention” relates to the enforced opening of a peripheral economy for products from the metropole with the intention to favour the interests of the core. This pattern has been extensively shown through the well-known case of the cotton industry, enforcing the exports of raw material in India while importing ready-made textiles from England in the first half of the 19th century. A less familiar example is the rise of Bengal’s jute manufacturing industry into the world’s leading export commodity since 1900. Jute cultivation in Bengal had resulted in a new word for the “golden fibre”, as one official of the east India Company noted in 1791:

*We are continuing our searches for a new Article for Export to Great Britain [...] We sent Samples of clean Hemp of this country and one of Jute (we know no English name for this) the material of which Gunnies and the Ropes used in cording Bales is made.*¹⁹

When British entrepreneurs and agents started to install jute mills along Calcutta’s Hugli River since the 1860s, the mills made large profits paying dividends of up to 25 per cent the year to their mainly English and Scottish shareholders. No British industrialist who perceived Calcutta as a sole supplier of raw jute to the mills in Scottish Dundee in these years would have imagined the product, its export markets as well as its ownership to take a different direction.

In the second half of the 19th century, almost exclusively British managing agencies adopted the Scottish technology, build up factories around Calcutta and launched a technical and commercial head-on competition with the long-standing mills in Great Britain. While handloom goods found their vent locally, machine made articles were sold predominantly abroad only to transcend imperial markets very soon. The growing global demand for jute as a packaging product led to the unprecedented growth of the Bengal industry. A prime catalyst of this development were the markets of the US, Australia, New Zealand, and China. While these markets had absorbed less than 16 per cent of Bengal’s foreign exports in 1875, this figure rose to about 75 per cent in 1910.²⁰ Comparative advantages compared with the long-standing mills in Britain were labour costs, with wages at about 50 per cent of those of British workers, and an efficient colonial railway infrastructure lowering transportation costs considerably. Another comparative advantage came from the heavy prohibitive tariffs a number of jute manufacturing countries in Europe and North America imposed on their export goods since the 1870s. The colonial state in contrast completely refrained from any state patronage of the jute industry marking a sharp difference to the discriminatory practices employed by East India Company officials in the first half of the century. In 1911, ca. 90 per cent of the total

19 Quoted in: I. Ray, Struggling against Dundee: Bengal jute industry during the nineteenth century, in: The Indian Economic and Social History Review 49 (2012) 1, pp. 105–146, quote 106.

20 Bengal Administrative Report, 1867–77, p. 165, quoted in Ray, Struggling against Dundee, p. 125. A government report in the 1870s had already concluded: “The Indian mills now command a practical monopoly of the Asiatic and a large portion of the American and Australian markets and have in the past years largely extended their exports to China. This has deprived the Dundee manufacturers of some of the main outlets for their trade, and their demand of raw jute has consequently fallen.”

global demand were supplied by India alone while Scottish Dundee, the former centre of the Jute industry, was not able to compete anymore with Indian prices and output. The labour-intensive industry required both skilled and an unskilled workforce, bringing about substantial job opportunities for those regularly employed. A large number of employment was generated also indirectly through the forward and backward streams of the industry as well as by agriculture being closely linked to the jute cultivation. Indrajit Ray has calculated the ratio of direct employment in the factories of the Bengal jute industry versus indirect employment around 1900. He estimated around 236,000 employed workers and 8 million indirectly employed people constituting a large informal sector securing livelihoods from the Jute industry.²¹

Until 1900 primarily British entrepreneurs and capitalists profited from bringing the local product to global markets exploiting cheap labour, land, and other resources. An explosion in trading profits came with World War I, when gunny demands increased rapidly through military needs. The prosperity of the industry continued through the 1920s and early 30s and brought the emergence of Indians taking over ownership and opening up their own mills in Calcutta. A key agent in this transition were the Marwaris, an ethno-linguistic group that had migrated from Rajasthan to Bengal, acting as brokers, bankers, and industrialists.²² They had dominated the trade in raw jute since 1900 and introduced *fatka* (speculation) making millions on the stock markets and on hedge transactions. The British interest in short-term profit played in the hands of these Indian entrepreneurs and investors who increasingly used *fatka* to buy British shares. Soon the Marwari traders accumulated so many shares of British companies that their patriarchs became elected onto British boards even before 1914. The Fort Gloster Jute Mills in Calcutta show this transition exemplarily: While 1874 witnessed 119 shareholders, among them 105 foreigners and 14 Indians, the same mill in 1890 had 73 foreign shareholders and 79 Indian.²³ Omkar Goswami has vividly pictured the different styles British and Indian businessmen employed in their business:

*While British managing agencies maintained plush offices, quarters with tennis courts, [...] sponsored rugby leagues and regattas [...] and spent an enormous time sending memos to each other, the Marwaris sat in more austere premise, worked longer hours, flogged both machines and workers, executed deals on word of mouth and went about unobtrusively making (largely undeclared) money.*²⁴

The tremendous profits induced a very large entry of new mills after the war owned by Indians, which were not as strong in terms of capacity as the British but steadily under-

21 Calculation *ibid.*, p. 139.

22 See O. Goswami, Then came the Marwaris. Some aspects of Change in the Pattern of Industrial Control in Eastern India: Indian Economic and Social History Review 22 (1985), pp. 225–2549.

23 T. Sethia, The Rise of the Jute Manufacturing Industry in Colonial India: A Global Perspective, in: Journal of World History 7 (1996) 1, p. 90.

24 O. Goswami, Collaboration and Conflict. European and Indian Capitalists and The Jute Economy of Bengal, 1919–1939, in: The Indian Economic and Social History Review XIX (1982) 2, pp. 141–179, quote 154.

mined the formal structure of industrial collaboration. The grandson of Aditya Birla, a Marwari, who accumulated a conglomerate of mills in the 1920s, remembered his grandfather's first effort to break the British monopoly: "It was very difficult for grandfather to establish this jute mill. Whenever he would buy some land to establish this mill, the English and Scots would buy land and all around to prevent him from building the jute mill."²⁵ In 1925 the British undercapitalisation had effected in 60 per cent of the shares of all Bengal Jute companies to be in the hands of Marwaris.²⁶ The introduction of Jute to global markets, in sum, had first favoured predominantly the interests of British investors and agency houses. Gradually, Indian groups emerged as traders soon to take over ownership and, since the 1920s, build their own mills. A growing participation of Marwari entrepreneurs in India's largest export earner after 1918 made a European enclave into a capitalist sector whose profits favoured both British and Indian economic actors.

Given these historic constellations, "drain" as a category seems too static and too one-directional to capture the development of Bengal's jute industry. Here, the colony outstripped the metropolis and matured from a supplier of raw material into the world's leading jute manufacturer. In contrast to the cotton industry, the colonial state showed almost no sign of interference, probably because the industry generated substantial revenues in the form of income tax and served Britain in adjusting its trade settlement in the global market. Finally, "drain" neglects local agency as a decisive factor in the colonial economy. While profits in the first decades definitely favoured metropolitan elites, ownership soon changed and the majority of the booming jute industry after 1900 belonged to Indians. "Global capitalism" eventually denotes a more fitting term to capture the multiple factors and ambivalent realities of this unique story.

A third aspect of economic intervention focuses on possible colonial efforts to transform exports of manufactured goods into exports of primarily agricultural commodities. The Indian national historiography has focused strongly on such a conjectural relationship between colonial rule and decline of industries, conceptualised in the still very influential paradigm of "deindustrialisation".²⁷ Empirical investigations whether this event actually took place, however, remain scarce. Some current works, among them Sven Beckert's narrative of cotton as a global commodity, stress the colonial state's power to effectively coerce a change of cultivation.²⁸ Economic history in contrast does rather point to the limits of such coercive intervention due to a variety of interconnected factors. An exemplary case to reassess the question of economic intervention into the agrarian sphere

25 Quoted in Sethia, *Jute Manufacturing*, pp. 90f.

26 See Goswami, *Collaboration and Conflict*, p. 143.

27 See I. Ray, *The myth and reality of deindustrialisation in early modern India*, in: Chaudhary (ed.), *A New Economic History of Colonial India*, pp. 52–66.

28 See S. Beckert, *Empire of Cotton. A Global History*, New York 2014; L. D. Satya, *Cotton and Famine in Berar 1850–1900*, Delhi 1997; M. Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts. El Nino famines and the Making of the Third World*, London 2001.

in the second half of the 19th century is the colonial state's effort to employ a "cotton imperialism" in Dharwar, Western India, which Sandip Hazareesingh has investigated.²⁹ Western India was the pre-eminent location of India's cotton production where colonial ideas to "improve" the fibre, and therewith stimulate both output for export and taxing potential of the peasants concentrated. Dharwar comprised of 4500 square miles and three different climate zones. The Dharwar peasants cultivated their land fully only, when the weather prospects seemed to support harvest, while resisting further cash crop cultivation out of fears to enhance tax charges. The crisis of cotton supplies in the face of the American Civil war in the 1860s pushed the British India Office to privilege the cultivation of American over indigenous cotton and had them set up a Colonial Cotton Department in 1863. This development denotes a more interventionist mode of organising colonial power than the British had hitherto practised in that sector. For a short time, on the height of the American supply crisis, colonial officers tried to monitor peasants to cultivate only American cotton, a different and finer fibre, instead of the indigenous Kumta cotton. Legal acts prosecuting peasants for cotton mixing and confiscating mixed varieties proved unsuccessful and showed how limited imperial capacity for economic control actually was.

Ecological constraints added to counteract the colonial improvement programme. The ever-increasing value of teak led to rampant deforestation affecting the climate of Dharwar for cotton cultivation. Overall drop in rainfall and consequently in atmospheric moisture had strong effect on the cotton plant, above all the American cotton fibre that the Cotton Department had favoured. In 1880, the Department had to admit, that "much of the land formerly devoted to exotic (American) cotton was turned to the cultivation of the indigenous fibre". In the same year the Dharwar peasants had cultivated the indigenous "Kumta" crop which was more resistant to climate change over an area of 439,251 acres while the American one covered only mere 77,121 acres.³⁰ A further factor interacting with the peasants' agency as well as with environmental conditions was the state's changed stand towards intervention. The global recession starting in 1873 reinforced laissez-faire doctrines and led to the dissolution of the Cotton Department altogether in 1883. In the early 1880s the colonial improvement programme seemed to have lost any impetus.

In short, the colonial state's effort to push a cotton improvement programme and broaden cultivation in line with its export interests met with a number of constraints since the 1860s. The Dharwar peasants resented the cultivation design imposed from above and preferred the indigenous fibre as part of a diverse, risk-reducing cropping system. Climatic changes plus the state's own demise from its cotton programme added to the "cotton imperialism's" failure in 19th century Dharwar.

29 See S. Hazareesingh, *Cotton, Climate and colonialism in Dharwar, western India, 1840–1880*, on which the following is based.

30 See for quote and numbers *ibid.*, p. 15.

III. Zambia's Waltz with International Capital and the Question of Imperial Intervention

After independence in 1964 Zambia had no need to borrow from international capital sources, though it was eagerly trying to 'develop' its economy as so many other post-colonial countries. The central African state was home of vast copper resources and the corresponding mining industry, which generated sufficient revenue to finance the attempts of the Zambian government to diversify its economic base into manufacturing, build up a health and education sector. Also, in the late 1960s, President Kenneth Kaunda launched a "Zambianization" campaign. KK, as he was called, a trained teacher still in his forties and proponent of a moderate form of African socialism, aimed at the control of the commanding heights of the Zambian economy – i. a. taking over 51 per cent of the copper industry. Then, after a rather successful decade, the interrelated oil and world economic crisis of 1973–1975 came, effectively derailing the economy. Suddenly, Zambia's oil import bill more than doubled from \$ 50 million in 1972 to more than \$ 125 million in 1974. World-wide inflation additionally caused great increases in prices of imported capital goods, spare parts, and inputs to keep mining and manufacturing industries running. At the same time, recession in Western industrial countries made the demand and price for copper slump. All this seriously threw Zambia's balance of payments off track.³¹

Kenneth Kaunda's government decided to borrow money to tide over what it hoped would only be temporary problems. It took out short-term loans on the so-called Eurocurrency markets now flush with petrodollars. Debts with short repayment periods rose from \$ 53 million in 1974 to nearly \$ 470 million in 1975 and about \$ 840 million in 1978.³² But as copper prices stayed depressed, foreign exchange remained scarce despite outside credit, imports had to be restricted, manufacturing industries and agriculture were starved of inputs and consequently operating at low capacity. This was also true of the copper mines whose output declined from 702,100 metric tons in 1974 to 584,800 five years later.³³ Thus the economy shrank throughout most of the late 1970s and 1980s, the balance of payments problems remained, while debts mounted. By the late 1970s, Zambia was at the brink of bankruptcy. It approached Western governments, for instance asking the Federal Republic of Germany for \$ 100 million "programme loan assistance" and securing another \$ 100 million aid package from the United States in 1978.³⁴ Finally, unable to service its commercial debts, Zambia began talks with the IMF

31 J. Kreienbaum, *Der verspätete Schock. Sambia und die erste Ölkrise von 1973/74*, in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 43 (2017), pp. 612–633; also M. Larmer, *Mineworkers in Zambia. Labour and Political Change in Post-colonial Africa*, London 2007, pp. 42–58; M. Burdette, *Zambia. Between Two Worlds*, Boulder / Aldershot 1988, pp. 64–132.

32 See Republic of Zambia, *Financial Report for the Year Ended 31st December 1974*, Lusaka 1975, p. vi; *Financial Report 1975*, p. vi; *Financial Report 1978*, p. vi.

33 Burdette, *Zambia*, p. 99.

34 Bundesarchiv Koblenz, B 102/213012, *Besuch führender Persönlichkeiten aus Sambia*, Dez. 1966 bis Feb. 1976, Government of the Republic of Zambia, *Economic and Technical Co-operation Between the Federal Republic*

on whose standby facility it had drawn in a small way since 1971.³⁵ But now money only came with strings attached.

The IMF and the World Bank had both been established as a consequence of the Bretton Woods talks in 1944. From the beginning IMF lending was based on the notion that debtors needed to set their "house in order" so that they would be able to repay credits. In order to assure this homework was done, the fund formulated conditions which debtor countries had to fulfil in order to get money.³⁶ From the late 1970s onwards conditionality grew in importance. This had to do with a broader shift in economic theory and especially development economics. Up to this point the World Bank had supported the dominant view in "developing countries" that they should use earnings from the export of primary commodities to foster industrialization. Problems in "development" seemed to stem primarily from exogenous problems, mainly fluctuating prices for raw materials.³⁷ In 1981 two influential reports then marked a paradigm change. The so-called Bates and Berg reports both placed the prime problems with economic "development" in the domestic arena – corruption, excessive state-intervention, and an over-reliance on industrialization were blamed.³⁸ This was in line with the wider turn to what was soon dubbed "neoliberalism" and its cry for privatization, free trade, and pro-market reforms. Identifying the principle problems of 'development' within debtor nations themselves, now made conditionality seem ever more important to make them ready for successful growth.

While the first minor IMF-credits to Zambia in the early 1970s had been non-conditional, this changed with the next "standby arrangement" in 1976. Now, the credit over 62 million Special Drawing Rights (SDR)³⁹ was based on the condition that the Zambian government would put a ceiling on money supply and credit in order to curb inflation and devalue the Kwacha by 20 per cent. A decisively bigger agreement along similar lines followed in 1978.⁴⁰ Following another oil price shock and accompanying world recession in 1979–82, which further exacerbated Zambia's economic and financial position Kaunda's government dealt out a giant 800 million SDR loan with the Fund. This credit line, the second largest to an African country, which was to be released in tranches

of Germany and the Republic of Zambia, 3 February 1976, esp. pp. 6 and 47f.; A. DeRoche, *Asserting African Agency: Kenneth Kaunda and the USA, 1964–1980*, in: *Diplomatic History* 40 (2016), pp. 975–1001, at p. 993.

35 See C. Fundanga, *The Role of the IMF and World Bank in Zambia*, in: B. Onimode (ed.), *The IMF, The World Bank and the African Debt*, vol. I. *The Economic Impact*, London/New Jersey 1989, pp. 142–148, at p. 143; Burdette, *Zambia*, pp. 122f.

36 Burdette, *Zambia*, p. 122; N. Woods, *The Globalizers. The IMF, the World Bank, and Their Borrowers*, Ithaca 2006, pp. 39–64.

37 See the *World Bank Operations Evaluation Study: G. G. Bonnick, Zambia Country Assistance Review*, Washington 1997, p. 2.

38 R. H. Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa. The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 2005 [1981]; World Bank, *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa. An Agenda for Action*, Washington 1981.

39 An international reserve asset created by the IMF in 1969.

40 <http://www.imf.org/external/np/fin/tad/extarr2.aspx?memberkey1=1080&date1Key=2018-04-30> (accessed 16 May 2018); Fundanga, *IMF and World Bank in Zambia*, p. 143.

between 1981 and 1984 and was mainly used to pay back foreign creditors, came along with stiffer conditions. It called for another currency devaluation, lower imports, a reduction in price controls for many staple goods, rigorous foreign exchange restrictions for Zambians while liberalizing rules for foreign company accounts and finally a limit on wage increases.⁴¹ These conditions obviously meant a direct interference with Zambia's domestic economic policies.

Economically, however, these prescriptions did not work. As Zambian mines, industry, and also agriculture were all heavily dependent on imported inputs – machines, spare parts, raw materials, and fertilizers, a legacy of both colonial rule and post-independence import-substitution industrialization – devaluation had doubtful effects. It made imports more expensive and thus contributed to the starvation of the Zambian economy which operated at ever decreasing capacity.⁴² From 1977 to 1987, the Zambian GNP per capita shrank by 26 percent.⁴³ Devaluation and the reduction of price controls for essential goods also led to increasing inflation, which could not be balanced with higher salaries given the wage increase restrictions. This seriously ate into average household budgets and led to a wave of strikes in July 1981.⁴⁴ With economic decline and unpopular medicines prescribed by international financial institutions, the UNIP-government was fast losing its legitimacy. It soon turned out that Zambia could neither live with or without IMF and World Bank credits. Given the constantly depressed copper prices, it could not make do without their money. But accepting the medicine from Washington entailed domestically highly unpopular policies, while also not setting the economy on a sustainable track.

The consequence was an on-off-relationship between Zambia and the international financial institutions. Domestic unrest frequently led to government criticism of their policies and non-compliance with conditions – for instance the reintroduction of food subsidies. This was in turn answered by IMF and World Bank by suspension of payments. “Facing the cutoff from vital funds”, Marcia Burdette comments, “again and again the G[overnment of the] R[epublic of] Z[ambia] knuckled under and implemented more ‘stabilization’ policies.”⁴⁵ By 1984, Zambia's foreign debt had grown to \$ 4 billion and it needed 65 per cent of its foreign exchange earnings for debt servicing, making it the most heavily indebted country in sub-Saharan Africa and thus reducing its bargaining position vis-à-vis its international creditors.⁴⁶ With every new credit line conditions became more intrusive. In 1985 the IMF urged Zambia to introduce an “auction system” for the allocation of foreign exchange, with the consequence that 99 per cent were conceded

41 Burdette, Zambia, p. 122f; J. Ihonvbere, Structural Adjustment and Democratization in Zambia, in: M. S. Smith (ed.), *Globalizing Africa*, Trenton/Asmara 2006, pp. 325–342, at p. 333.

42 Fundanga, IMF and World Bank in Zambia, p. 144.

43 Ihonvbere, Structural Adjustment, p. 334.

44 Ibid., p. 331 f.

45 Burdette, Zambia, p. 123.

46 Larmer, *Mineworkers*, p. 52; Ihonvbere, Structural Adjustment, p. 334. On the strong bargaining position of the IFIs in Africa in general, see Woods, *The Globalizers*.

to foreign multinational companies. Obviously, the Fund tried to re-open the Zambian economy for private capital from abroad. A year later, in December 1986, implementation of an IMF agreement led to the doubling of mealie meal prices, the local staple food. The results were strikes and widespread rioting. Kaunda decided to listen to the streets rather than the IMF, scrapping the auction system, freezing the price for essential goods again and announcing a New Economic Recovery Programme under the theme of "Growth from Own Resources". Without donor support, however, the state had no means to pay salaries to teachers and civil servants or buy drugs for hospitals.⁴⁷

Finally, in the face of economic collapse and the sharp deterioration in standards of living, opposition mounted and UNIP had no choice but to grant the first multi-party elections since 1973, when Zambia had become a one-party state. In October 1991, Frederik Chiluba's Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) won a land-slide victory over Kaunda's UNIP. As the long-standing chairman of the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions he had been among the staunchest critics of "structural adjustment". But only months before taking office Chiluba turned from Saulus to Paulus suddenly supporting macro-economic reform. Finally, World Bank and IMF had a willing local ally to implement "adjustment".⁴⁸ Unfortunately, the results were rather worse than better with Zambia's economic decline continuing at increasing speed. Formal sector employment halved as many of the former parastatals could not compete on open markets after privatisation and closed down. Agricultural output further declined, making the country increasingly dependent on food aid. Spending on education and health greatly diminished, while HIV/AIDS spread, reducing life expectation to the mid-30s.⁴⁹ This rapid economic downturn, to be sure, was not only the result of "structural adjustment", but first of all of the continuation of depressed copper prices and also to some extent of the siphoning off of monies by corrupt elites. However, adjustment certainly did not work out as either Washington based economists or most Zambians had hoped.

Did the intervention of international financial organisations in Zambia carry the hallmarks of earlier imperial economic interventions as identified in the introduction? To a large extent they certainly did. First, conditions attached to structural adjustment funds obviously meant serious infringements into the sovereignty of Zambia's economic policy. The devaluations of the Kwacha, the scrapping of food subsidies and the freezing of wages were highly unpopular among most Zambians and nothing the UNIP government would have enacted without pressure from Washington. In 1989, Zambia even had to accept an IMF-approved expatriate governor for its central bank in order to secure funding.⁵⁰ The leverage used, however, differed from 19th century cannon boat diplomacy or

47 Larmer, *Mineworkers*, pp. 52–54; Ihonvbere, *Structural Adjustment*, pp. 332–338; Zambia, National Commission for Development Planning: *New Economic Recovery Programme: Interim National Development Plan*, July 1987–December 1988, Lusaka 1987.

48 On Chiluba's turn around see Larmer, *Rethinking African Politics*, pp. 252f.

49 Miles Larmer, *Reaction & Resistance to Neo-Liberalism in Zambia*, in: *Review of African Political Economy* 32 (2005), pp. 29–45, here 30f.

50 Ch. S. Adam/A. M. Simpasa, *The Economics of Copper Price Boom in Zambia*, in: A. Fraser/M. Larmer (eds.),

direct state intervention as in the case of cotton production in Dharwar. The freezing of essential funds proved sufficient to make Kaunda's government follow the prescriptions, at least to some extent.

However, these infringements were dependent on a certain willingness to cooperate by Zambian actors. The on-off-relationship between the international financial institutions in Washington and Zambia in the 1980s was an expression of the lack of enthusiasm for "structural adjustment" within the UNIP government and of the limited power the Fund and Bank could wield without collaborators at the right positions. Deference of their prescriptions at times went so far that Kaunda openly criticized them, trying to use them as a convenient scapegoat on whom he could blame Zambia's economic ills, while trying to conceal UNIP's part in the story. This situation only changed with the triumph of Chiluba's Movement for Multi-Party Democracy in 1991. As in the case of India, and in many other imperial scenarios, what happened on the ground was at least as much shaped by local actors, sometimes serving as intermediaries, as by the metropole. While Africans appeared as powerless "pawns" in Nkrumah's writings on neocolonialism, Zambian actors, especially those in high politics, obviously possessed agency, enacting or blocking adjustment policies as it served them. Particularly in the fields of food subsidies and monetary devaluation Kaunda proved that he was not simply accepting orders from Washington.⁵¹

Second, despite the immediate goal to put Zambia in a position to repay its debts, IMF and World Bank conditions aimed at re-integrating the country into the world economy. These international organizations functioned as "globalizers" as Ngaire Woods has argued.⁵² Their interventions reversed post-independence attempts to reduce the country's dependence on Western industrial states and especially Southern African settler regimes by diversifying the economy and nationalizing bigger businesses. Now, the parastatal sector was re-privatized including, in the 1990s, the crucial copper mines. By the year 2000 large parts of the copper industry were back in the hands of Anglo-American Corporation, one of the mining multinationals which had dominated Zambian mining in colonial times. Controls on foreign capital were scrapped and the former inward-looking strategy of import substituting industrialization was abandoned. It all served to open Zambia's formerly "closed economy"⁵³ to the world market.

Third, as in colonial times Zambia was supposed to be integrated into the world economy in a specific way, as a producer of a single commodity: copper.⁵⁴ It was to be a classic mono-economy, whose only other economic activity was agricultural production, largely for domestic consumption. Naturally, this decision had consequences for the Zambian work force. A small class of Zambian businessmen began to profit from Washington

Zambia, Mining, and Neoliberalism. Boom and Bust on the Globalized Copperbelt, Houndsmill / New York 2010, pp. 59–90, here 64.

51 Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, New York 1963, p. 174; also compare Biney, Nkrumah, p. 132 f.

52 Woods, *The Globalizers*. See also J. E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, New York 2002.

53 Larmer, *Neo-Liberalism*, p. 30.

54 Cf. Larmer, *Mineworkers*, p. 47.

induced reforms, especially with the privatizations of parastatal companies commencing in the 1990s. These profiteers were often former managers of said parastatals who had been able to accumulate some capital during the 1970s and 1980s and were now able to bid for these firms.⁵⁵ While they were frequently making huge personal gains, most other groups within Zambian society suffered. This was especially true for the formerly rather privileged mineworkers and those employed in public service. For many of them the new labour regime that came with economic decline and "structural adjustment" was unemployment and a struggle for survival in the informal economy. They either went back to the land or, especially women, tried to make a living from street vending.⁵⁶ Finally, while the IMF, the World Bank, and Western governments were making very considerable sums available to help Zambia reschedule its debts and help with its "development", the net transfer soon changed direction. As most of the money was only loaned, initially often on commercial conditions, by 1985 the African country was obliged to transfer greater sums to the IMF for interest payments and debt repayments than it was receiving.⁵⁷ As Kenneth Kaunda complained, the "heavy external debt burden" had turned Zambia into a "net exporter of financial resources at a time when the country was in dire need of resources to keep the economy afloat."⁵⁸ The ghost of "drain" was still around.

IV. Conclusion

This paper aims to reassess the term "neocolonialism" by contrasting the theoretical concept with empirical inquiries into two cases of economic intervention, one colonial, and one postcolonial. What do they say about the question of postcolonial economy to be coined by an informal continuity? At first sight, similarities and differences stand out between the British colonial state's intervention in India in the 19th and international institutions engagement in Zambia in the 20th century.

First, the state as intervening actor. In 19th century Bengal the colonial state enforced serious infringements into the sovereignty of a foreign, the Mughal state, above all through tax collection and military means. The same state refrained, however, from intervention in a variety of other economic sectors, as the artisanal economy, or proved too weak to enforce its own programmes, as the failure to introduce American cotton in Dharwar in the 1860s shows. In the late 20th century, in contrast, international financial institutions were the key actors. Although former imperial powers, and especially the United States,

55 Larmer, *Neo-Liberalism*, p. 31.

56 J. Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity. Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*, Berkeley et al. 1999; K. Tranberg Hansen, *The Informalization of Lusaka's Economy: Regime Change, Ultra Modern Markets, and Street Vending, 1972–2004*, in: J.-B. Gewald/M. Hinfelaar/G. Macola (eds.), *One Zambia, Many Histories. Towards a History of Post-Colonial Zambia*, Leiden 2008, pp. 213–239.

57 P.-A. Andersson, *Foreign Aid, Debt, and Growth in Zambia*, Uppsala 2000, p. 40.

58 Quotation in Ihonvbere, *Structural Adjustment*, p. 336.

have a lot of clout in both World Bank and IMF,⁵⁹ direct interventions of states into the domestic affairs of other formally sovereign states have become increasingly unacceptable. Equally vanished has the possibility that economic interventions serve to prepare for the formal takeover of a territory as has so often been the case during the 19th century. To re-colonize Zambia when it was unable to service its debts, as famously happened in Egypt in the 1880s, has never been an option. Indirect interventions through international financial organizations however escape these restrictions to some extent, giving the term “neocolonialism” in this respect a certain probability.

Second, the consequences of interference. While the term “neocolonialism” carries the assumption of colonial intervention to be per se exploitative, the selective inquiries into colonial peripheries rather point to the limits of intervention. The colonial state in India while acting strongly in the fiscal, military, and legal realm simultaneously left large sectors of the economy and certain employment groups to themselves. Tirthankar Roy went so far as to state, “the Empire neither helped nor obstructed the growth of trade and industry”.⁶⁰ Thus, an understanding of colonialism to go hand in hand with deep and “successful” intervention faces historic realities showing rather the limits and failures of such efforts. The Zambian example confirms that observation to a certain extent in that interventions of international financial institutions hardly delivered the results sought after in Washington. Without sufficient support of Kaunda’s government and in the face of popular opposition on the streets the liberalization programme devised by Western economists was only introduced reluctantly and in a piecemeal fashion. The concept of “neocolonialism” in this respect misses explanatory power because it builds on the wrong assumption that the colonial state was capable to successfully intervene in peripheral regions economically while current research rather highlights the “long arms and weak fingers” of empires.⁶¹ Cutting off the funds from Washington, however, was a form of intervention, severely felt in Zambia. The diachronic examples from the colonial and postcolonial time point rather to the conclusion that economic intervention had a stronger impact on Zambia’s postcolonial domestic markets and society than in colonial India where colonial power concentrated on fiscal, military, and legal governance but refrained from intervention in large parts of the domestic economy.

Third, indigenous agency. The cases presented here show the strong economic agency of Western Indian cloth artisans, Bengal jute investors and Dharwar cotton peasants in dealing with the changes induced by the colonial regime as by the international economy. In all three examples, the economic actors made forceful attempts to adapt to the changing character of colonialism, often closely associated with or even forging industrial capitalism while in other instances successfully resenting coercive means of crop cultivation. Equally, the different approaches of two consecutive Zambian president’s to “structural adjustment” highlight the importance of local cooperation or non-cooperation. While

59 Cf. Woods, *The Globalizers*.

60 Tirthankar Roy, *The British Empire*

61 See F. Cooper, *Colonialism in question. Theory, Knowledge, History*, Berkeley 2005, p. 197.

Kaunda repeatedly blocked "adjustments" in the fields of food subsidies and currency devaluations when local opposition mounted, frustrating economists in Washington along the way, his successor was far more willing to follow IMF prescriptions. The term "neocolonialism" in contrast sees non-Western societies and agents predominantly as objects of Western dynamics and elites, whereas the colonial and postcolonial cases presented here rather show a situational interplay of being object to (post)colonial pressure while simultaneously acting as subjects in transforming and undermining it.

Fourth, fluidity and stasis. Paradigms as "neocolonialism" describe the relation between Western states and non-Western regions as rather static. The former are in a position of strength pushing economic development in latter regions for their own interest. The case study of the Bengal Jute industry, however, illustrates the fluidity of the situation. Colonial elites in time outstripped the metropolis making large profits from the demand of global markets and turning the old core-periphery model upside down. The Zambian case, in contrast, highlights the static elements. In the post-colonial period, the central African state remained roughly at the same position in the world economy it had occupied in late-colonial times. It was solely an exporter of copper and an importer of industrial goods, energy, know-how, and at times food from industrialized countries. The Zambian experience also holds true for most of Africa and many other parts of the Global South. Other countries, however, the richest oil states, the East Asian "tigers" and, of course, China broke with the old pattern. Frequent recent accusations of their current "neocolonialism" in buying up African land and resources testify to the fact that they have quit the ranks of the world's "have-nots" and joined the core-states of the global economy.

Given the understanding of "imperialism" and "neocolonialism" as all-powerful processes, its neglect of local agency, and the fluidity in world economic relations we hold that the concept of "neocolonialism" is not helpful as an analytic device. Nevertheless, its insistence on the continuity of certain unequal economic relations between post-colonial states and former metropolises is a valid point, as the Zambian example underlines. But rather than to ascribe these continuities to the machinations of some undefined "neocolonial" forces, we understand them as a consequence of a world shaped by global capitalism in both the 19th and 20th centuries. "Global capitalism" better captures the often conflicting interplay of the state and private economic actors and takes the limits of imperial power into account as much as the extent of local economic agencies. Above all, the term provides for a better framework to explain the fluidity of economic relations between different world regions in a decisively non-static global geography of power.

German Agricultural Occupation of France and Ukraine, 1940–1944

Margot Lyautey / Marc Elie

ABSTRACTS

Dieser Aufsatz vergleicht und vernetzt die nationalsozialistische landwirtschaftliche Ausbeutung von Frankreich und der Ukraine. Sie trägt zu unserem Verständnis der Prinzipien, Funktionsweise und Auswirkungen der Ernährungs- und Agrarpolitik im NS-Reich sowohl im Westen als auch im Osten bei. Wir befassen uns zunächst mit der allgemeinen Ernährungs- und Beschaffungspolitik des Dritten Reiches und wie sie sich auf die Völker und die Landwirtschaften in Europa unterschiedlich ausgewirkt hat: Wie haben die Nationalsozialisten eine Agrarpolitik für ihr ganzes Reich konzipiert, geplant und gestaltet? Wir zeigen, wie der Traum von einer autarken kontinentalen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft („Großraumwirtschaft“), die Pläne zur Kolonisierung vor allem des Ostens, aber in geringerem Maße auch des Westens (der „Generalplan Ost“ in seinen verschiedenen Varianten) und der Wille, große Teile der sowjetischen Bevölkerung durch Hunger zu zerstören (der „Hungerplan“) sowohl in Visionen als auch in Umsetzungen miteinander interagierten. Zweitens vergleichen wir, wie deutsche Besatzer die landwirtschaftliche Ausbeutung in ihren wichtigsten landwirtschaftlichen Eroberungen durchführten. Wie haben deutsche Agronomen die Landwirtschaft der von ihnen dominierten Gebiete Ukraine und Frankreich verändert? Mit welchen Ergebnissen? Wir zeigen, dass sie sich in beiden Fällen in erheblicher Weise auf die existierenden Machtstrukturen stützten. Drittens unterstreichen wir die Zusammenhänge und Transfers zwischen diesen beiden Besatzungsregimen: die Praxis, Landarbeiter massenhaft umzusiedeln, um den Bedarf an Arbeitskräften in der Agrarproduktion zu decken, den Einsatz von deutschen „Landwirtschaftsführern“, die Tätigkeit der Landbewirtschaftungsgesellschaft Ostland sowohl in der besetzten Sowjetunion als auch im besetzten Frankreich und den Anbau der Gummipflanze Kok-sagyz.

This paper compares and interconnects Nazi agricultural exploitation of Ukraine and France. It contributes to our understanding of the principles, workings, and implications of the food and agriculture policy in the Nazi empire both in the West and in the East. We are dealing first

with the food and procurement policy of the Reich and how it diversely impacted peoples and agricultures in Europe: how did the Nazis imagine, plan, and craft an agricultural policy for their whole empire? Specifically we show how the dream of an autarkic continental economic community ("Großraumwirtschaft"), the plans to colonize mostly the East but to a lesser extent the West, too (the "Generalplan Ost" in its several variants), and the will to destroy large swathe of the Soviet population by starvation (the "Hungerplan") interacted with one another both in visions and in implementations. Second, we compare how German occupants carried out agricultural exploitation of Ukraine and France, which were the main agricultural acquisitions of Nazi Germany. How did German agronomists set about to transform the agriculture of the countries they dominated? With what results? We show that both in the East and in the West they relied on existing administrative structures. Third, we underline connections and transfers between these two occupation regimes: the practice of forcibly and massively moving peasants to fit production needs, the institution of German agricultural managers to rule local farmers ("Landwirtschaftsführer"), the establishment of the Ostland farming company both in the occupied Soviet Union and occupied France, and the culture of the rubber-plant kok-sagyz.

Introduction

Since the groundbreaking work by Aly and Heim,¹ historical research has amply demonstrated how the racial and expansion policies of the Nazi regime were linked to its food and resource policy.² Questions of grain and oilseed procurement were linked to the Eastern drive and to the extermination of Jews, Sinti, and Roma, and to the starvation of prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian Poles, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Russians, and others. To feed the German army high rations and to sustain the population of the Reich with sufficient food supplies, the German government organized starving rations in occupied territories and destroyed ethnic minorities and captives. Not only the long-term colonial vision – and its carrying out – of a Europe under German dominion with a de-industrialized, de-urbanized, and re-agrarianized Eastern Europe, freed from Jews, Communists, and "useless" persons, led to organized mass killings; but the organization of the food procurement from occupied territories to the Reich was a major factor bringing about intentional devastation and death by shooting, hanging, gazing, and hunger in the *Generalgouvernement* and the occupied Soviet territories.³

Although agriculture and agricultural sciences under the Nazis in Germany proper are well studied,⁴ contemporary historiography has long shown little interest for German

1 G. Aly/S. Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung: Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine Neue Europäische Ordnung*, Hamburg 1991.

2 C. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weißrußland 1941 bis 1944*, (2nd ed.), Hamburg 2012; A. J. Kay, *Exploitation, Resettlement, Mass Murder: Political and Economic Planning for German Occupation Policy in the Soviet Union, 1940–1941*, New York 2006; T. Tönsmeier/P. Haslinger/A. Laba (eds.), *Coping with Hunger and Shortage under German Occupation in World War II*, Cham 2018.

3 Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*; W. Lower, *Nazi Empire-building and the Holocaust in Ukraine*, Chapel Hill 2005; K. C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule*, Cambridge, MA 2004.

4 G. Corni/H. Gies, *Brot – Butter – Kanonen: Die Ernährungswirtschaft in Deutschland unter der Diktatur Hitlers*,

agricultural policies in the occupied territories, in the West and East. Comparing and interconnecting how Germans diversely exploited peasants in their European colonies is a task ahead of us.⁵ The goal of this paper is more modestly to provide the reader with an understanding of the principles, workings, and implications of the food and agriculture policy in the Nazi empire both in the West and in the East. We are dealing first with the general food and procurement policy of the Reich and how it diversely impacted peoples and agricultures in Europe: how did the Nazis imagine, plan, and craft an agricultural policy for their whole empire? Specifically we show how the dream of an autarkic continental economic community (*Großraumwirtschaft*), the plans to colonize mostly the East but to a lesser extent also the West (the *Generalplan Ost* in its several variants), and the will to destroy large swathes of the Soviet population by starvation (known in the historiography as the *Hungerplan*) were distinct but interacted with one another both in visions and in implementations.

Second, we compare how German occupants carried out agricultural occupation in the territories they occupied, taking two case studies, Ukraine and France, which were the main agricultural acquisitions of Nazi Germany. How did German agronomists set about to transform the agriculture of the countries they dominated? With what results? We show that, notwithstanding vastly different occupation regimes, they relied on existing administrative structures to a considerable extent in both countries. Third, we underline interconnections between these two occupation regimes: the practice of forcibly and massively moving peasants to fit production needs, the institution of German agricultural managers to rule local farmers (*Landwirtschaftsführer*), the *Ostland* farming company both in the occupied Soviet Union and occupied France, and the culture of the rubber-plant kok-sagyz.

Berlin 1997; S. Heim (ed.), *Autarkie und Ostexpansion: Pflanzenzucht und Agrarforschung im Nationalsozialismus* (Geschichte der Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft im Nationalsozialismus, Bd. 2), Göttingen 2002; G. Gerhard, *Nazi Hunger Politics: A History of Food in the Third Reich*, Lanham 2015; T. Saraiva, *Fascist Pigs: Technoscientific Organisms and the History of Fascism*, Cambridge, MA 2016.

- 5 Brandt's famous work from 1953 does not draw a comparison, but describes parallel case studies (K. Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II. Volume II. Management of Agriculture and Food in the German-Occupied and Other Areas of Fortress Europe. A Study in Military Government*, Stanford 1953). Most importantly, it is historiographically outdated, as it can be read as justifying and disculpating Nazi occupation policies. Klemann and Kudryashov (H. A. M. Klemann / S. Kudryashov, *Occupied Economies: An Economic History of Nazi-Occupied Europe, 1939–1945*. London / New York 2012) devotes only a few pages to agricultural questions. Tooze's masterpiece (*The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy*, London 2006) has more on agriculture, but not organized in a systematic East-West comparison. The most important work to date on Nazi agricultural occupation in the East is Gerlach's on Belarus (Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp. 231–371) and on the Agrarreform under German occupation of Soviet territories (C. Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*, in: *Besatzung und Bündnis, Deutsche Herrschaftsstrategien in Ost- und Südosteuropa*, Berlin / Göttingen 1995, pp. 9–60). If a lot has been written on food supply and the black market in France (among others F. Grenard, *Les Scandales du ravitaillement : détournements, corruption, affaires étouffées en France, de l'Occupation à la Guerre froide*, Paris 2012), the work of Cépède is still the most comprehensive one on French occupied agriculture and agricultural policies (M. Cépède, *Agriculture et alimentation en France durant la IIe Guerre mondiale*, Paris 1961).

Map 1



I. Reorganizing Europe Agriculture to serve German Priorities: Hunger and Agricultural Specialization in the Nazi Empire

That Germany should become the centre of an autarkic continental trade system was an important tenet for many anti-liberal economists in inter-war Germany. The desire to free Germany from overseas imports and from dependency toward the Anglo-saxon powers in its food deliveries led to the idea of building an autonomous *Großraumwirtschaft* by coalescing the agricultural efforts and potentials of all countries of continental Europe, including the European part of the Soviet Union. It was believed that Germany could not solve its agricultural problems within its borders only, even expanded back to their 1914 state.⁶ The countries of Europe would enter a common food market protected from outside competition and oriented toward the needs of Germany. Such a trade entity promised to yield Germany cheap and diversified food produces. It would offer a life insurance against any British-led continental blockade. The experience of the blockade during WWI obsessed many Nazi leaders who convinced themselves that the war was

6 Herbert Backe, a specialist of grains production in Russia, came to prominence after the launch of the Four Year-Plan in 1936, where he was in charge of food policy.

lost from the moment morale dwindled on the home front: maintaining good food supplies in Germany had the highest priority in case of a new world conflict. NSDAP leaders and army generals shared this vision with central economic actors.⁷ Herbert Backe, the leading agricultural politician behind the Nazi food policy and Minister for Agriculture from 1942, wrote during the war: “In place of the international world economy the *Großraumwirtschaft* steps in, characterized by the coalition of peoples of the same or related races in the same space.”⁸ Such an integrated agricultural space would allow for a healthy specialization of the regions of Europe and end the soil-destroying monocultures and overseas extensive farming, Backe argued. To replace them, the Germans were teaching occupied “backward” nations of Europe how to intensify production and embrace “food freedom” (*Nahrungsfreiheit*) from overseas imports.⁹

Food and agricultural specialists played a prominent role in designing and implementing the Nazi food policy in Europe, which was at the same time a colonial and a racial policy. Many Nazi politicians and higher bureaucrats who played a major role in the racial policy in occupied territories were trained in agronomy in the broad sense: Heinrich Himmler, Herbert Backe, his secretary SS-Gruppenführer Hans-Joachim Riecke, Theodor Oberländer, Otto Schiller, etc. Countless experts and academics in agricultural sciences helped devise occupation plans and supervise occupation of European countries. Remarkably, several of them were born or had lived in the former Russian empire or in the Soviet Union. Analyses of the “overpopulation” of Poland, Ukraine, Russia, and of the “Russian grain question” during the 1920s–1930s played a key role in how Nazi Germany envisioned its dominion over Europe, with the intersection of food and demographics constructed as a “geopolitical” issue which needed a territorial solution if Germany was to survive in the long run: the *Großraumwirtschaft* was truly based on a “geopolitics of starvation”.¹⁰

The *Generalplan Ost* was an immense and long-time SS-led endeavour to design the future of continental Europe under German hegemony. The plan, in its many and evolving variants, set out to colonize and germanize regions to the East and to a lesser extent to the West of the Reich in several decades after the war. Some 31 million people from the occupied Soviet territories were to be deported to Siberia – this made out two-thirds of the local population planned to survive war and genocide – and the rest would be enslaved by ten million German colonists. Ukraine was to become an enormous Germanized territory deep into Soviet / Russian territory, reaching to the Volga.¹¹ Already during the war the SS experimented with colonization in Ukraine.¹²

Parallely to the *Generalplan Ost*, German war planners crafted concrete plans to occupy the Soviet Union. They divided the Soviet Union in two sections, along a line stretching

7 Corni/Gies, *Brot – Butter – Kanonen*, p. 499.

8 H. Backe, *Um die Nahrungsfreiheit Europas: Weltwirtschaft oder Großraum*, Leipzig 1942, p. 216.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 235.

10 A. Dallin, *German Rule in Russia 1941–1945. A study of occupation policies*, London 1957, p. 310.

11 C. Madajczyk/S. Biernacki, *Vom Generalplan Ost zum Generalsiedlungsplan*, München 1994.

12 Lower, *Nazi Empire-building*, pp. 171–179.

from Arkhangelsk to the north and to Astrakhan to the south (the A-A line): west of this line lied enough land to feed Germany and counter the effects of a maritime blockade.¹³ Further, Herbert Backe divided the Soviet Union into surplus regions (Ukraine, South Russia, North Caucasus) and deficit regions (Central Russia with Moscow, Northern Russia with Saint-Petersbourg, Belarus): with industrialization, the Bolsheviks had forced urbanization and so considerably modified the grain balance, he argued; instead of exporting grain, the producing regions had to support growing cities. Backe proposed to counter this – in his view – wrong development by reagrarianizing the Soviet Union: the deficit regions had to be cut off from supply, with cities left to starve, whereas the surplus regions would produce for Germany. Ukraine, with its rich soils, would become the true granary of Europe.¹⁴ These ideas were endorsed by Hitler and the higher command staff. If they could not be implemented to the fullest, they had nonetheless dire consequences for the Soviet population: during the siege of Leningrad 1.5 million people died of hunger. In Ukraine, Kiev and Charkov were cut-off from the countryside leading to an unknown number of deaths by starvation. That Kiev had to starve was a common mantra among German occupying forces.¹⁵ A capital of 851,000 inhabitants before the war, Kiev had less than 300,000 inhabitants by mid-1943. An unknown part of this tremendous drop is explained by excess deaths by starvation and related diseases.¹⁶ Among 3.35 million Soviet POWs, at least 2 million died of starvation or execution. High number of Jews in ghettos and patients of psychiatric hospitals and other closed establishments died of starvation.¹⁷

France and Ukraine were major acquisitions in agricultural terms for the German conquest strategy: with these two countries under its yoke, Germany and its empire, it was thought, could become self-sufficient and resist the sea blockade. This turned out to be wrong. Relatively quickly after the invasion of the Soviet Union, it occurred to the agricultural command that given the problems of lacking workforce, agricultural inputs, and machinery, Ukraine could never replace Germany's future food production in the foreseeable future.¹⁸ What is more, notwithstanding the terrible sufferings imposed by the occupants onto the population, Ukraine could never in the course of the war feed completely the occupation forces and the three million fighting men and their horses.¹⁹

13 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, p. 56.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 58; Gerhard, *Nazi Hunger*, p. 25.

15 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, pp. 164–186.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 186; "Kiev" in *Bol'shaya sovetskaya entsiklopediya*, Moscow 2008, online: <http://bse.sci-lib.com/article060949.html> (accessed on 8 October 2019).

17 C. K. Priemel, *Occupying Ukraine: Great Expectations, Failed Opportunities, and the Spoils of War, 1941–1943*, in: *Central European History* 48 (2015), pp. 31–52, at p. 46.

18 H.-J. Riecke, *Aufgaben der Landwirtschaft*, in: *Ostaufgaben der Wissenschaft: Vorträge der Osttagung deutscher Wissenschaftler (24.–27. März 1942, Berlin)*, hrsg. vom Hauptamt Wissenschaft d. Dienststelle Rosenberg, 1942, pp. 28–37.

19 H.-E. Volkmann, *Landwirtschaft und Ernährung in Hitlers Europa 1939–1945*, in: *Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen* xxxv (1984), pp. 9–74.

Table 1a. Deliveries of major agricultural products from France‡ to Germany† (1940–1944)

Foodstuffs	France
Bread Grain (wheat, rye) (tons)	2 950 000
Secondary cereals (oat, barley) (tons)	2 431 000
Straw° and hay* (tons)	3 788 000
Meat (tons)	891 000
Eggs° (thousand)	311 300
Fats (margarine, tallow, oils) (tons)	51 200
of which	
Oils (tons)	39 400
Butter (tons)	88 000
Potatoes* (tons)	752 000
Sugar* (tons)	99 000
Wine (hectoliter)	10 400 000
Milk (hectoliter)	1 445 000
Cheese (tons)	45 000

Sources: Cépède, *Agriculture et alimentation en France durant la I^{re} Guerre mondiale*, pp. 356–160; ° Rapport sur l'organisation de la disette en France sous l'occupation, 15.04.1945, pp. 9–10, 1990072/1, Archives nationales; * M. Weinmann, *Die Landwirtschaft in Frankreich während des 2. Weltkrieges unter dem Einfluß der deutschen Besatzungsmacht*, Tübingen 1961, pp. 92–102.

‡ Both occupied and “free” zones.

† Both to occupying troops and deliveries to the Reich.

Tables 1a and 1b give an overview of the total deliveries from France and the Soviet Union to Germany during the whole conflict. These data should be handled with care because there is an uncertainty as to the amount of food that was misappropriated by German occupants and so did not enter the official statistics of deliveries to the Wehrmacht and to the Reich. In the case of France, this amount is estimated and accounted for in the data series;²⁰ for the case of the Soviet Union and Ukraine (which made roughly 60% of all Soviet procurements to Germany), the volumes looted are not taken into account. They reached far greater proportions in Ukraine than in France. Moreover, in both cases, the data includes comestibles both for occupying troops and deliveries to the Reich.

20 Note that deliveries of potatoes and sugar were partially compensated with imports from Germany.

Table 1b. Deliveries of major agricultural products from occupied Soviet territories to Germany† (1941–1944) (tons, rounded)

Foodstuffs	occupied Soviet territories
Bread Grain	5 016 400
Feed Grain	4 135 500
Oilseeds	952 100
Livestock and meat	563 700
Eggs (thousand)	1 078 800
Oils	20 500
Butter	206 800
Potatoes	3 281 700
Sugar	401 000

Source: Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies*, p. 129.

† Both to occupying troops and deliveries to the Reich.

In the Soviet case, the great majority of foodstuffs did not reach the Reich but was consumed by the German troops and occupying administration: 80% of all cereals, 88% of the meat and virtually all potatoes. Only by oilseeds did the Reich get the lion's share (¾) of what the occupied USSR produced.²¹

II. Agricultural Occupation in France and Ukraine

Although France and Ukraine were part of one economic design, the respective roles assigned to them within the continental hierarchical food system of “fortress Europe” bore vastly different occupation regimes. It was not only a question of racial ideology and colonial utopia though. Both local/national and front conditions were extremely different, and these differences had, too, tremendous consequences for the survival of local populations.

In the Reichskommissariat Ukraine (and in other parts of the pre-1939 occupied Soviet territories, with the exception of Northern Caucasus) German occupiers did not bother to negotiate with the local population and to take into account not only their aspirations, but their most fundamental human needs. German occupiers tolerated no autonomy, no self-government above the village level.²²

21 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, p. 129.

22 Erich Koch, Reichskommissar for Ukraine, ordered his subordinates to treat the population of Ukraine in a “hard and uncompromising” way, with the “constant threat and the use of punishment and reprisals, even when no direct provocation for such exists” (quoted by Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 52).

In France, German authorities preferred to deal with a weakened domestic French authority in Vichy than having the French government flee to North Africa and continue to lead the war from there. The point was to exploit France at its full industrial and agricultural potential for German needs, while using the already functioning French administration and hence without many occupation troops.

Occupation in France

The Armistice treaty of June 1940 defined two zones of occupation (later called “occupied zone” and “free zone”), separated by the guarded “demarcation line”. A large military occupation apparatus was established in the Northern occupied zone. The Alsace-Moselle was factually annexed to the Reich and both *départements* Nord and Pas-de-Calais were placed under the authority of the German military command in Belgium. A third zone was created in the North-East even though it was not stated in the Armistice treaty: the “forbidden zone”, where the return of French refugees was prohibited, and whose western border (the “North-East line”) was also guarded. The point was to prepare this zone for eventual German settlement and annexation and hence to bring France back to its medieval borders, according to a memo addressed to Hitler in 1940.²³

Backwardness of French Agriculture

France was the major economy among occupied countries.²⁴ Therefore it had a very significant role to play to support Germany’s war effort. But according to many German experts at that time, even though French agriculture benefited from favourable conditions for production (good weather, great ratio of arable land against population, fertile soils, etc.), it was not developed to its full potential. German authorities supposedly had to fight the backwardness of French agriculture in order for France to completely realize its role in the new European food economy:

*It is an intolerable state that in France there are currently 5.5 million hectares of uncultivated land, [...] while in Germany we are trying to pull even small surfaces of arable land from the sea to increase our cropping areas. The great battle for agricultural production in Europe, [...] will soon make the deplorable aspect of uncultivated land and hundreds of abandoned villages disappear in France.*²⁵

Lauenstein, director of *Ostland*, a German farming company that is discussed below, described French countryside in 1941 in the following terms: “Vast extents of good land

23 P. Schöttler, Eine Art Generalplan West. Die Stuckart-Denkschrift vom 14. Juni 1940 und die Planungen für eine neue deutsch-französische Grenze im Zweiten Weltkrieg, in: Sozial.Geschichte: Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts 3 (2003), pp. 83–131.

24 M. Boldorf / J. Scherner, France’s Occupation Costs and the War in the East: The Contribution to the German War Economy, 1940–44, in: Journal of Contemporary History 47 (2012) 2, pp. 291–316.

25 H. Backe, Complément sur la conférence faite par M. le Secrétaire d’État Backe le 9 juillet 1941 à Paris, Paris 1941.

were left in fallow for years, perhaps decades, the cattle was in deplorable state”.²⁶ Agriculture specialist Dr. Vageler was also very critical:

*As to fundamental research in Agriculture and Forestry, in particular for pedology and local lore [Standortkunde], it seems that France is the most backward country in Europe. [...] Especially the tillage methods and the dominant assumptions on the matter are widely outdated and completely irrational.*²⁷

A Techno-Administrative Structure

The occupation authorities headquarters were in Paris in the Hotel Majestic, under the supervision of the Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich (MBF). The Agriculture and Food supply group was inside the Economy department and organized around three divisions: Group I Agricultural Production, Group II Food supply, Group III Headquarters of the *Ostland* company, which managed numerous French farms in North-Eastern France, in the forbidden zone. The staff was composed of civilian military-government officials, who usually were experts in their field before the war. In order to control the activity of every French administrative branch at each geographical level in the occupied zone, the German military administration territorial structure paralleled the French. A group *Agriculture and Food supply* was created in each *Feldkommandantur* with 1 to 3 specialists.²⁸ Dr. Fritz Reinhardt,²⁹ the chief of the *Agriculture and Food supply* department in Paris had only a small staff of experts to assist him with the extensive administrative work involved, hence he had to rely heavily upon the French administration.³⁰ The German authorities did not manage directly, but they overlapped with the French services, while monitoring them. They were no substitute to the French authorities although they often threatened to replace them.³¹ Until December 1942 this organization concerned only the “occupied zone” in the Northern part of France. After 1942, *Agriculture and Food supply* officials were set up also in Southern France but spread farther apart than in the North. The German influence on agriculture in the “forbidden zone” of North-Eastern France was far stronger than in both previous zones, as we will see later.

26 Lauenstein to the personnel of Ostland company in France, 3.06.1941, Archives départementales des Ardennes, 12 R 106, quoted by J. Mièvre, L’« Ostland » en France durant la Seconde guerre mondiale: une tentative de colonisation agraire allemande en zone interdite. Annales de l’Est, Mémoire 46, Université de Nancy II, 1973, p. 47.

27 Dr. Vageler, Research programme for the year 1943/44, 15.09.1943, Bundesarchiv Berlin Lichterfelde (BAL), R 73/15317.

28 The Feldkommandanturen corresponded essentially to the level of the French départements.

29 Fritz Reinhardt (1898–1965) was trained in agronomy at the University of Halle (Diplomlandwirt and then Doctor in natural sciences), member of the NSDAP since 1929, of the SS since 1934. He was an expert on fertilizer questions and the combating of insects and plant diseases. Before the war he worked in the Agriculture department of IG Farben, for the Reichsnährstand, and for the Ministry of the Reich for Food and Agriculture where he was personal referent to State Secretary Backe.

30 Brandt, Germany’s Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II, p. 506.

31 G. Eismann, Hôtel Majestic: ordre et sécurité en France occupée, 1940–1944, Paris 2010, p. 139.

Fitting German Needs and Intensifying French Agriculture

German authorities tried to influence French agriculture to make it fit German needs. They demanded – and obtained – the adoption of specific laws, for instance to create a Plant Protection Service, to fight against the Colorado Potato Beetle, to regulate seeds. They imposed cropping plans and they decided personnel policy.³² While German authorities had a more practical influence on agriculture in the occupied zone, they also tried to gain control over French agriculture as a whole, notably influencing Vichy's legislation, which had to be applied in both zones.

A major instrument to increase food exports from France was to diminish French rations. It resulted in lower official food rations than anywhere else in the countries Germany occupied in the West-Denmark, Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, Belgium, the Netherlands, or Norway.³³ At the end of 1943, the bread ration in France was lowered to 300 grams against 350 g in 1940, and meat was set at 120 g per week against 360 g in 1940.³⁴ These diminutions allowed to import more food products to Germany to maintain high rations in Germany. Indeed, in 1943, as bread rations were lowered in France, the country provided more bread grain than ever before in the war, accounting for 46% of German imports.³⁵ Table 2 displays the lowest and highest rations for occupied France, occupied USSR and Germany.³⁶

The goal of German officials was to make French agriculture more productive especially for specific crops needed for the food supply of occupying forces and of German civilians in the Reich: fodder to sustain meat production, oilseeds to supply fats, and grain. In order to orient French agricultural production towards German needs, the German military authorities in Paris designed cultivation plans. For each agricultural campaign Reinhardt and his staff negotiated mandatory surfaces and obligatory crops with the French Ministry of Agriculture (wheat, oil seeds, beets, oats, etc.) for the occupied zone, and after 1942 for the whole French territory. Those plans had then to be enforced locally by German officials in the *Feldkommandanturen* and by French Agricultural Services.

32 Among others dismissal of the French minister of Agriculture and choice of the head of the Corporation Nationale Paysanne, Archives nationales, 19900072/1.

33 Klemann/Kudryashov, *Occupied Economies*, p. 108.

34 H. Umbreit, *Der Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich 1940–1944*, Boppard am Rhein 1968, p. 310.

35 Michel's report "Der Beitrag des französischen Raumes zur Kriegswirtschaft", 1944, pp. 12–14 Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv (BA MA) RW 35/1446.

36 For Ukraine, only specific strata of the population, working for the Germans, were entitled to rationing at all. The others had to find food all by themselves (Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*).

Table 2. French, Soviet and German lowest and highest food rations (grams per week)

	France, August 1942		Occupied Soviet territories, March 1943		Germany, April 1942	
	Lowest Ration (Elderly)	Highest Ration (Heavy Labour)	Lowest Ration	Highest Ration (Heavy Labour)	Lowest Ration	Highest Ration (Heavy Labour)
Meat	193	397	100	350	300	850
Fats	101	151	50	250	206	575
Bread	1 400	2 450	1 500	4 000	2 000	4 400
Potatoes	1 092	1 092	2 500	4 500	—	—
Sugar	190	247	—	150	—	—

Sources: France: Cépède, *Agriculture et alimentation en France*, p. 388; USSR: Volkman, *Landwirtschaft und Ernährung*, p. 47; Germany: *Ibid.*, p. 67.

Fertilizers were of course a crucial product in this “battle for production” to increase yields, but they were only available very scarcely. Michel Cépède estimated that the amount of synthetic fertilizers available to French farmers during the war was under 55% of the (already low) pre-war consumption, and even under 35% after 1943.³⁷ Their allocation was henceforth of strategic importance and was decided upon by Reinhardt in Paris. Fertilizers were allocated in priority to crops “of first importance”.³⁸

To make French agriculture produce more, the Germans extended cultivated surfaces by reducing the amount of uncultivated land. According to German agricultural experts, France had 1,5 million to 5 million hectares of land remaining uncultivated.³⁹ For them it was a clear sign that French agriculture was in need for intensification. German authorities launched the *Brachlandaktion* (“Fallow action”) to recultivate 400,000 ha uncultivated and fallow lands.⁴⁰ But soon experts had to understand that considering the scarce means of production – fertilizers, workforce, farm machinery, and gasoline – it was not profitable to cultivate each and every piece of land.⁴¹ Recultivation targets were reduced to 120,000 ha from which only 45,000 ha were indeed recultivated during the 1943/44 campaign.⁴² German officials had more success in modifying crop rotations to reduce fallows.⁴³ Out of the 820,000 ha of fallows inside rotations in 1942 in the occupied zone, only 480,995 ha were left in January 1944.⁴⁴

The German military authorities in Paris were determined to boost the French oil seeds production to meet Berlin’s autarkic goals. However, oil seeds were not commonly grown in France, mainly because fats were imported from the colonial empire.⁴⁵ Indeed France grew oilseeds only on 11,470 ha during in 1936/37 against 50,000 ha in Germany.⁴⁶ During the 1941/42 campaign oil seeds cultivation accounted for 37,900 ha, already 3.3 times more than in 1936/37. German authorities in Paris planned to extend those areas to 250,000 ha in 1942/43 and then to at least 400,000 ha in 1943/44.⁴⁷ Each *département* was assigned a minimum surface area to crop in oilseeds, which corresponded to

37 Cépède, *Agriculture et alimentation en France*, p. 236.

38 Meeting at the Majestic, 18.01.1943, 19900072/1, Archives nationales.

39 The width of this range indicates that those figures were part of a discourse to delegitimize certain agricultural practices like fallowing. See Backe, *Um die Nahrungsfreiheit*, p. 230 and H. Backe, *La Mission de l’agriculture en Europe: conférence faite à Paris, le 9 juillet 1941*, Corbeil 1941.

40 See Reinhardt’s report one year after the introduction of *Landwirtschaftsführer* in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

41 Letter from *Sicherheitspolizei* to Dr. Brandt, personal staff of the *Reichsführer-SS*, 3.02.1944, BAL, N 19/1305. See also the reports on *Brachlandumbruch* in AJ/40/793 (3), Archives nationales.

42 On the *Brachlandaktion* see AJ/40/793 (1)–(3), Archives nationales.

43 See *Berichte über den Einsatz der La-Führer*, 6.01.1944, AJ/40/793 (3), Archives nationales.

44 See Reinhardt’s report one year after the introduction of *Landwirtschaftsführer* in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

45 For the period 1935–1938 the domestic production for oilseeds accounts for only 4,5% of the French metropolitan consumption, G. Bertrand, H. Neveux, M. Agulhon, and M. Gervais, *Histoire de la France rurale*. ed. by G. Duby and A. Wallon. 4 vols, Paris 1992, vol 4, p. 74.

46 According to uncorrected data from *Statistique agricole annuelle 1945*, Ministère de l’Agriculture, Paris 1947; *Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich*, Berlin 1880–1942.

47 According to Reinhardt’s Report on the action of *Landwirtschaftsführer*, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales, and box AJ/40/793 (7) on oilseeds, Archives nationales.

an expected amount of oilseeds production at the end of the year. Then local officials had to enforce the plan and monitor agricultural productions in farms, to make sure that the foreseen areas were indeed cultivated with oilseeds. Sowing seeds had to be imported from Germany, usually in exchange for French seeds of other plants (vegetable or fodder plant). Specific propaganda towards farmers was designed to incline them to cultivate more oil seeds. But oilseeds were hard to crop, because they need significant amount of fertilizers, which were lacking throughout the war.

Statistical data about agricultural production during the war is highly uncertain because it was based on statements from the peasants themselves. They had direct personal interest to declare a lower production in order to be less taxed. Following the same reasoning, the French state had every interest to show low production data to the German authorities. While keeping this uncertainty in mind, Table 3 shows us that area allocated to oilseed still rose during the war, contrary to almost any other crop.⁴⁸ Sunflower appeared for the first time in French agricultural statistics in 1943 and as a whole cropping area of oilseeds was multiplied by 25 between 1937 and 1944.⁴⁹ This clearly reveals a singular path for oilseed production. Total yearly production of oilseeds jumped from an average of 13,000 tons before the war to 31,000 t in 1942, and 132,000 t in 1943. But this rise masks a drop in productivity from 1.09 ton per hectare before the war to 0.6 t/ha in 1943.⁵⁰ This is at least partly due to the serious shortage of chemical fertilizers.⁵¹

48 Only pastures, tobacco, flax and fallows stayed the same or rose between 1939 and 1944 according to uncorrected data from *Statistique agricole annuelle* 1945.

49 According to uncorrected data from *Statistique agriculture annuelle* 1945, pp. 510–512.

50 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, p. 543.

51 Around 50% of the pre-war availability until 1942, then 35% in 1943, and only 9% in 1944, Cépède, *Agriculture et alimentation en France*, p. 236.

Table 3. Acreage in France‡ from 1937 to 1944 for major crops (hectares)

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	Progression 1939–1944
Total arable land	19 485 728	18 510 980	17 719 435	17 492 161	17 377 859	17 164 313	- 12 %
of which							
Wheat	4 583 979	4 252 266	4 364 989	4 279 516	4 227 345	4 163 418	- 9 %
Other Cereals	5 282 967	4 459 606	3 915 908	3 806 408	3 798 751	3 697 269	- 30 %
Potatoes	1 278 878	1 061 295	829 316	777 205	796 423	796 527	- 38 %
Oils Seeds	7 586	8 580	15 149	37 858	242 097	284 772	+ 3 654 %
Flax	47 610	31 869	23 702	34 289	49 108	49 457	+ 4 %
Pulses	261 310	242 746	215 731	221 541	222 852	172 977	- 34 %
Fallows	no data	no data	no data	2 264 857	1 769 490	1 827 337	–
Pastures	11 485 960	11 847 090	12 680 632	12 161 027	11 757 531	12 023 637	+ 5 %

Sources: Statistique agricole annuelle 1945, p. 453–522 and Statistique agricole annuelle 1943, p. 111 and p. 181.

‡ French metropolitan territory without the départements Moselle, Bas-Rhin, and Haut-Rhin for which no data was submitted.

Occupation in Ukraine

Invasion, Plunder, and Destruction

The German invasion of the Soviet Union encountered tremendous military successes in the summer and fall of 1941 and again in the fall of 1942. With their advance into Soviet territory, the Germans occupied 40% of the grain fields and 45% of the livestock of the whole Soviet Union, both mainly located in Ukraine.⁵² The Reichskommissariat Ukraine counted 17 million inhabitants on 340,000 square kilometers at the beginning of 1943.⁵³

Contrary to earlier campaigns to the West, South-East, and East, the German armies entered an immense space devoid of power structures. First, the Soviet Union was centrally organized around a double hierarchy: state organs and party organs ran their echelons from the top to the bottom. No significant economic life could take place outside their reach. Power structure and infrastructure were deliberately destroyed both by the Germans forces and the Soviet authorities, far beyond the destruction wrought by combat. Because Germans led a *Weltanschauungskrieg* to destroy the Soviet state, they killed party members en masse, who were executives in companies, farms, and administration, and destroyed the Soviet party and state hierarchies. Their effort at annihilating the Soviet state in the occupied territories were seconded by the Soviet leadership who ordered highly successful “scorched earth” strategy which left the German armies with a devastated country and a dead economy.⁵⁴

As a result, all systems of distribution, collection, and exchange between enterprises and farms ceased to function. In agriculture since collectivization, no farm could operate without precise orders coming from the party hierarchy at the local, regional, republican, and central level: plans and calendars of sowing and harvesting were set by this hierarchy, not by the farms. What every farm had to sow and harvest, where and when, with what machinery and for what price was the sole responsibility of the bureaucratic apparatus, and indeed, of Moscow. With the invasion, this whole system evaporated.⁵⁵ In the summer 1941 peasants did not begin harvest before receiving orders from the Germans or the Banderites, the Ukrainian insurrectionary army.⁵⁶

Therefore, contrary to the occupation of France, that of Ukraine and other parts of the Soviet Union required to organize a new power structure replacing the old one. There was no “collaborating” government to collaborate with. We will see soon that this replacement meant that German occupiers reproduced to a great extent the Soviet power structure in the village. Furthermore, a fundamental question had to be solved of how far the German occupier should go with the reconstruction of the destroyed economy. This question provoked important debates and was never entirely decided, with positions

52 Dallin, *German Rule in Russia*, p. 320.

53 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reichskommissariat_Ukraine (accessed on 27 September 2019).

54 Priemel, *Occupying Ukraine*.

55 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, p. 56.

56 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 130.

ranging from the total destruction of the industry to create a purely agricultural land, to that of re-building a strong industrial base to serve the needs of the war economy.⁵⁷ In Ukraine, many peasants welcomed the Germans as liberators, even if the German forces committed atrocities.⁵⁸ Peasants were undernourished and extremely poor. The majority of peasants were women, because men had been drafted to the army, deported or killed during the dekulakization drive of the early 1930s.⁵⁹ The 1941 harvest was excellent but less so in the Left Bank (East of the Dnieper) because combats and Soviet-style evacuation had destroyed crops more extensively than in western Ukraine.⁶⁰

Immediate Exploitation, Long-Term Colonization, or Land Reform?

The German occupying forces and administration followed at the same time three competing and intertwined goals until their departure in the spring of 1944. The first was to exploit peasants and their lands to the utmost in order not only to feed the army – 4 to 6 million men, plus administrative personnel both German and local – but to bring substantial amount of grain and oilseed to the Reich to maintain the comparatively high life standard of the German population.

To guarantee extreme exploitation, many military authorities and administrators proposed to keep the kolkhoz system: resuming “collective” farming was the best way to pressure the peasants to give as much grain as possible. As a leading German expert wrote in 1943: “From the viewpoint of acquisition the kolkhoz system appeared as ideal” mainly because the “peasant does not get his hands on the agricultural commodities that his work produces” and “the state keeps in their hands how much they want to give away to the village population.”⁶¹ By contrast, allowing for the distribution of land parcels among the peasants would have brought chaos, many believed, and made the control of the peasant work and output over hundreds of thousands of farms almost impossible, not to speak about the lack of machinery, draft animals, managing experience, and agronomic knowledge among workers of collective farms. Backe himself was a supporter of keeping the kolkhozes.

But the idea of immediate exploitation was in tension with another, far reaching and long-term goal: that of colonizing Ukraine. Himmler and the SS, who were strong players among the occupying forces, were keen to create a tabula rasa of Ukraine, “freeing” it from Jews, Communists and rebels in order to create a new land aristocracy exploiting the Ukrainian peasants in large plantations. Their desired model was that of giant exploitation, the former Soviet state farms, but managed in the guise of Prussian Junker latifundiae. In that they agreed with those who wanted to keep the collective farms. But they opposed them in that they favoured colonization by German settlers, an intention

57 Priemel, *Occupying Ukraine*.

58 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 125.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 129.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 131.

61 O. Schiller, *Ziele und Ergebnisse der Agrarordnung in den Besetzten Ostgebieten*, Berlin 1943, p. 3.

which could only disorganize production in the short run and bring heavy conflicts with local peasants and Ukrainian nationalist organizations.

A third idea was that of a land reform: splitting up the collective lands and distribute plots among the former *kolkhozniki*. It was favoured by many in the Ministry for Eastern Affairs (*Ostministerium*) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The great majority of peasants wanted to return to family farming, and effectively used the disappearance of Soviet power to split up the *kolkhozes*.⁶² The goal of de-collectivization was therefore to gain strong support among the population, especially among the Ukrainian peasants who resented the Soviet system for the imposition of the *kolkhozes*, the famine of 1932–33 and continuing food shortages, punishment operations, and humiliations. Furthermore, it would have been, it was thought, a clear national and international signal that the campaign against the Soviet Union was a liberation war aimed at freeing the peoples of the Soviet Union from Moscow's dominion and from the Stalinist regime.⁶³

It is important not to overstate the significance of these tensions. They were never that important as to hamper significantly the agricultural exploitation of Ukraine. Moreover, the different goals were not contradictory: Long-term colonization plans were compatible with the effort to raise output by quickly reorganizing the farm economy.⁶⁴ During the whole occupation, the advocates of full exploitation succeeded in imposing their views at every step, even if some efforts in the direction of easing centralized controls over farms and redistributing land to peasants were made.⁶⁵ So there was no real dilemma between giving the peasants what they asked for and jeopardizing the supplies of the military and civilians, on the one hand; and keeping the *kolkhozes* to guarantee the output and losing the support of the peasants, on the other hand. Feeding the Reich and its armies had steadily the highest priority and was the only systematically and persistently pursued goal of the occupation.

From Kolkhozes to Cooperatives: An Unachieved Reform

Notwithstanding the relentless goal of procuring as much grain and other foodstuffs as possible from the Ukrainians, some changes were introduced at the beginning of 1942. A new Agrarian Order (*Agrarordnung*) was passed into law by Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories Alfred Rosenberg in February. A compromise between the different visions of the agricultural occupation, it was penned by Otto Schiller (1901–1970), an expert in Soviet agriculture: Schiller had worked in seed production in the

62 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 128.

63 Prior to the German retreat land privatization occurred in rare cases to reward collaborators and to antagonize the peasantry and the rebels in partisan regions. V. Yu. Vasiliev / R. Yu. Podkur / S. D. Galchak / D. Beyrau / A. Weiner, *Zhizn' v okkupatsii. Vinitskaya oblast'. 1941–1944 gg.*, Moscow 2010, pp. 464–465. The "Proclamation concerning the introduction of property in land of family farmers" of 3.06.1943, declaring the privatization of lands, is usually seen as a failure with no concrete realizations. Dallin, *German Rule in Russia*, pp. 360–363; Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, pp. 670–671. However, see a dissident view in Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 177.

64 Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*.

65 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*.

Volga region and North Caucasus in the 1920s and had been agricultural attache to the German embassy in Moscow in 1931–1936.⁶⁶ Now a high-ranking functionary within the Ostministerium, he had been tasked with elaborating a reform concept for Soviet agriculture and supervising its implementation. The *Agrarordnung* has received extensive, even disproportionate treatment in historiography, from Brandt and Dallin in the 1950s to Corni / Gies and Gerlach in the 1990s. Remarkably, Otto Schiller himself has played a leading role in extolling the significance of his work in the occupied territories and setting the tone in the historiography.⁶⁷ But it is important to remember that the great majority of Soviet peasants never left the kolkhoz under German rule.

The kolkhoz system was maintained as the major organizational form of agricultural production in Soviet occupied territories with the exception of the territories annexed by the Soviet Union in 1939–1940 under the secret protocol of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact: the Baltic countries and the Eastern regions of Poland and Romania.⁶⁸ More than 80% of kolkhozes were maintained in Ukraine.⁶⁹ They were renamed “communes”, but the system of control and exploitation created by the Stalinist leadership in the 1930s was maintained and hardened, as shown in a study of the Kirovograd region (right-bank Ukraine).⁷⁰ The German military and civil administration stepped into the Soviet apparatus’ shoes to control the village: the key enforcement measures were taken at the district level staffed with the Ukrainian administration inherited from Soviet times, but led by a German district farm leader (*Kreislandwirt*) replacing the party first secretary. Regional farm leaders (*Gebietslandwirte*) sat higher up, at the regional level. In the kolkhozes the chairman was replaced by a village leader (*starosta*).⁷¹ Like in Soviet times, it rained down ominous instructions on the kolkhozes from the district administration: when and what to sow, when and how to harvest, to enforce work discipline and so on. The language of these orders, demanding for instance the “over fulfillment of the daily work norms,” strikingly resembled the Soviet one.⁷²

The kolkhoz system was all about mandatory procurements. To enforce it, the Stalinist leadership had introduced a wage payment system called *trudodni*, which allowed to exploit the peasants without jeopardizing the procurement campaign. Peasants received their salaries in kind only after the harvest had been secured by the authorities. The peasants were given an enlarged family plot, but taking care of a bigger plot and working for the kolkhoze would conflict exactly like during Soviet times. Above the kolkhozes, the

66 Ibid., pp. xxvi–xxvii; Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform*.

67 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, pp. 93–97. Brandt gives the text of the *Agrarordnung* in English in full, pp. 665–670; Schiller was a leading author of this sum. Dallin, *German Rule in Russia*, pp. 325–339; Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*; Corni / Gies, *Brot – Butter – Kanonen*, pp. 543–548.

68 Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 347.

69 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 134.

70 I. Petrenko, *Natsists'kij okupatsijnij rezhim na Kirovogradshhini 1941–1944 rr.* Kirovograd Tsentral'no-Ukrains'ke vidavnistvo, 2004, p. 183.

71 Ibid., p. 184.

72 Ibid., p. 187, 190.

Soviet Machine-Tractor Stations (MTS) concentrated the appliances and were responsible for harvesting to ensure that the peasants could not take grain for themselves. But there were few machines left after the Soviet retreat and what was left was in bad shape.⁷³ Gasoline was lacking.⁷⁴ The occupiers soon forced the peasants to give back to the kolkhoze the cows and horses they had shared among themselves when Soviet power left the village. But there were so few animals (mostly cows were used for farming for lack of draft animals) and machines that agricultural work was done mostly by hand during the war, including plowing and harvesting.⁷⁵

To discipline the peasants, the German occupying forces applied more violence than their Soviet precursors, forcing children under 14 to work in the fields, fining and jailing peasants and using them for forced labour for low norm fulfilment, taking hostages to pressure communities, shooting and hanging for non-compliance or as examples.⁷⁶ Medals and gifts were used as carrots.⁷⁷ Deportation to Germany was an ever present threat. All in all, the kolkhoz remained the dominant farm organization over the whole occupation period because it gave to the German occupants great control and exploitation levers.⁷⁸

The *Agrarordnung* reformed land tenure around three gradations: the kolkhoz, the co-operative, and private ownership. The second step, presented in the *Agrarordnung* as intermediary, was Schiller's favoured form. Given the lack of machinery and horses, it made sense to help peasants to share appliances and means for agricultural works. The kolkhoz fields were cut into equal strips. Each farmyard received a strip in each field. This distribution did not take the family size or the number of its workers into account, as had been the case in the *mir* village organization before the Revolution. Plowing and seeding was done collectively, but each peasant harvested individually his allotted strips. The cooperatives in the *Agrarordnung* were tightly controlled by the German administration, which imposed the crop plan. The members of the cooperative were collectively responsible before the Germans. But because field maintenance was done individually, underperforming workers could be easily spotted and punished.⁷⁹ The MTS retained the heavy equipment, whereas draft animals were distributed among the peasants.⁸⁰ Schiller's design offered a way to maintain control over the peasants and to maximize production: Splitting up the kolkhozes without privatizing land, but keeping the peasants organized around a few obligatory common assignments, and ensuring that the peasants would maximize production.

73 Ibid., p. 211.

74 Ibid., p. 214.

75 Ibid., pp. 191–192.

76 Ibid., p. 189.

77 Ibid., pp. 195–196.

78 Vasiliev/Podkur/Galchak/Beyrau/Weiner, Zhizn' v okkupatsii, p. 464.

79 Gerlach, Kalkulierte Morde, p. 349.

80 Gerlach, Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten, p. 17; O. Schiller, Ziele und Ergebnisse der Agrarordnung in den Besetzten Ostgebieten. Berlin 1943; Brandt, Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II, pp. 668–669.

The implementation of the *Agrarordnung* was paradoxical: where the distribution of land plots to the peasants could have had the most economical, political and ideological impact – in the Ukraine – the reform was carried on slowly. And where the reform's expected impact was the least – in the other Soviet territories – it was implemented to the fullest. As a result, whereas 20% of the collective farms were transformed into cooperatives in the regions under control of Army Groups North and Centre, at the end of 1942 it was the case of only 8% of them in Ukraine. It reached 16.8% in August 1943.⁸¹ For Belorussia Gerlach finds a stabilization of the total cultivated area and, as in France, a reduction of fallows, which he partly explains with the change in agricultural organization squeezing more work out of the peasants.⁸² Whether the cultivated areas were maintained in Ukraine and whether the *Agrarordnung* provoked a similar intensification is not decidable given the lack of relevant case studies.

Cooperatives were not only about raising production and giving more leeway to the peasants. Gerlach shows that the German occupiers sought to enhance political control on the peasants: not every peasant was entitled to an allotment. In densely inhabited regions of Western Ukraine, the occupiers decided to have a minimum allotment size of 4-7 hectares, irrespective of the number of peasants. In these regions, the cooperatives made many families landless. For instance, in Kirovograd region, of 81 courtyards only 66 were allotted land (6 hectares each). 15 families were left without land because they had not fulfilled the "minimum amount of workdays".⁸³ Furthermore the *Agrarordnung* was a means to exclude politically "unreliable" villagers and "scroungers", and more generally all those whom the occupiers considered superfluous peasants. Those who did not receive land were deported to Germany for compulsory work or shot by the police if not compliant.⁸⁴

We have seen in this second part the main characteristics of German agricultural policies both in occupied France and Ukraine. They show different strategies for one common goal: extracting as much foodstuffs and resources from occupied territories. Both of them show that the Germans, regardless of the tremendous differences in occupation practices in both countries, relied heavily on existing structures and norms to exploit land and people: the French agricultural administration and the Soviet kolkhoze. The ideas of maintaining existing structures to guarantee the procurement of a maximum amount of comestibles, and changing how agriculture worked ("modernizing") in order to raise outputs in the future were in tension. We will now look at the imperial side of Nazi agricultural and Food supply policies which enabled transfers between East and West.

81 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 134.

82 Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 330.

83 Petrenko, *Natsists'kij okupatsijnij rehzhim*, p. 204, 207.

84 Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*, pp. 20–21.

III. Administrating the Countryside in Occupied Territories: Transfers between East and West

Although very different in nature and practice, the occupation of North-Eastern France and of the Ukraine grew more interconnected toward the end of the war. German officials had plans to colonize both regions after the war. As occupation of France hardened in 1942, German occupiers transferred control mechanisms of agricultural production from the occupation of Poland and Soviet territories to France, particularly to the Forbidden Zone. We will dwell on two German institutions created not only to exploit, but to transform agriculture of occupied territories: the *Landwirtschaftsführer* and the *Ostland* company.

One example of those transfers are forced migrations, more or less temporary, in agriculture. Indeed, Germans moved hundreds of thousands of agricultural workers within the Eastern occupied territories to take part in harvesting in the sparsely settled Southern and Eastern steppes of Ukraine. To free up land to settle Volksdeutsche, the German administration deported Ukrainian peasants of Zhitomir region to South Ukraine.⁸⁵ In North-Eastern France, as workforce was lacking in the fields, German authorities resorted to the same pattern of forced migration: from January 1943 on, at least 20,000 Poles were deported from the region of Lodz to the *départements* Ardennes, Meuse, and Meurthe-et-Moselle.⁸⁶

Global Change for the Nazi Empire: The Crisis of 1942 / 1943

To understand why occupation practices and institutions were transferred from the East to the West in the second half of the occupation, we have to return to a dramatic change which affected the whole Nazi empire at the turn of 1942–1943. At this time several crises came to a head. First, on the Western front, at the end of 1942, the allied forces freed Northern Africa. Consequently, the French government and the Reich lost access to raw materials including food produces and fertilizers.⁸⁷ Second, on the Eastern front, the Wehrmacht lost the strategic initiative and began a slow retreat after its defeat at Stalingrad (February 1943). As a result of these setbacks, the German leadership strengthened its grip both in Germany and in the occupied territories. Declaring “total war” they demanded that all resources be fully exploited for the military effort. German occupiers intensified requisitions of raw materials, workers, and finished products.

In France in the first years of occupation, the economic exploitation consisted in requisitions but also in purchases on the black market. To keep the extent of these purchases secret, German offices financed them with occupation funds, that is with the money paid

85 Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*, pp. 34–35.

86 A. François, *Les Polonais déportés dans les Ardennes pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale*, in: *Revue Historique Ardennoise* 48 (2016), pp. 155–176.

87 F. Grenard / F. Le Bot / C. Perrin, *Histoire économique de Vichy: L'État, les hommes les entreprises*, Paris 2017, p. 102; Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 328.

on a daily basis by the French government to the German occupation forces.⁸⁸ In 1942 black market purchases sky-rocketed, running to about 8 million RM per day – more than one-third of occupation funds. Aside from soldiers, German agencies, seeking consumer goods and raw materials, and the Wehrmacht agencies, purchasing goods for the troops, became black market clients on a large scale.⁸⁹

From the beginning of occupation MBF chief economist Elmar Michel criticized black market purchases by Germans: they undermined the goal of exploiting France over the long term, which required a policy of reconstruction, not looting. Michel was successful in finding allies within the Ministry of Finances in Berlin, and finally, in March 1943, Berlin forbade the German army to enter black market operations.⁹⁰ As a consequence of this limitation of the Wehrmacht's liberalities, German authorities began demanding the French Ministry of Agriculture more output via heightened planned requisitions. Michel calculated that whereas France had yielded 12% of its grain output to Germany in 1942, it was already 17% the following year. As far as meat was concerned, the raise was from 15% to 23%, on the background of a rising agricultural output (see table 4).

In Ukraine, the Wehrmacht pillaged the countryside to a far broader extent than in France, and basically without any outside control. Based on the principle that the Army had to feed itself from the land it occupied and on the ideas that Ukraine was the bread-basket of Europe and that its inhabitants were inferior Slavs, the German military expected to live off comfortably from the villagers. Even the agricultural department of the Army's own Economic Command set one of its main tasks to "protect the farming enterprises and their means of production from seizures by our own troops". It had to send *Landwirtschaftsführer* to the zones immediately behind the front line to organize food procurement for the Army and prevent uncontrolled seizures by the military.⁹¹ In 1942, after first tensions appeared in the Reich with food supply, the Army had to feed itself more intensely from the land, leading to an unprecedented looting campaign in the summer. It is important to notice that the army requisitioned not only food products and cattle, without compensation. They took horses and cars for their own transportation needs so that the farming activities were slowed down or made impossible.⁹²

88 Boldorf / Scherner, *France's Occupation Costs*, p. 299.

89 Ibid., p. 306.

90 Grenard, Le Bot, Perrin, *Histoire économique de Vichy*, p. 107.

91 Denkschrift der Wirtschaftsorganisation Ost über den Einsatz der Landwirtschaftsführer im Schwarzerdegebiet Südrusslands, auf der Krim und in Transnistrien, anonymous, BA MA MSG 2/1268.

92 Volkmann, *Landwirtschaft und Ernährung*, p. 49.

Table 4. French production and deliveries to the Reich, 1941–1943

French production (tons)					Deliveries to the Reich (in percentage of the French production)		
	1941	1942	1943	Progression 1942–1943	1941	1942	1943
Bread grain	3 756 000	4 013 000	4 193 000	+ 4,5 %	+ 14,6	+ 12,1	+ 17,0
Fodder grain	3 002 000	2 466 000	2 712 000	+ 10 %	+ 20,1	+ 18,6	+ 25,3
Meat	1 142 000	914 000	976 000	+ 6,8 %	+ 14,5	+ 15,3	+ 23,3
Butter	–	111 000	118 000	+ 6,3 %	–	+ 1,8	+ 15,3
Vegetables	1 440 000	1 408 000	1 408 000	0	+ 7,0	+ 7,0	+ 7,6
Fruits	4 883 000	911 000	913 000	+ 0,2 %	+ 4,5	+ 6,5	+ 12,9
Wine (1000 hL)	49 428	47 429	47 585	+ 0,3 %	+ 4,1	+ 5,8	+ 10,4

Source: Michel's report "Der Beitrag des französischen Raumes zur Kriegswirtschaft", 1944, p. 12 (Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv RW 35/1446).

Simultaneously with the interdiction to enter black market deals in France, Hitler forbade uncontrolled confiscations by the Wehrmacht in the East in spring 1943. From now on the troop had to report on their requisitions and needs to the military economic command.⁹³ This heightened control of military behaviour contributed to good procurement results in Ukraine and in Belorussia in 1943, notwithstanding the growing influence of partisans and the lack of workforce and machinery.⁹⁴

Ruling the Peasants: The Landwirtschaftsführer from East to West

In Ukraine, the Germans ruled over 100,000 farms and 3,000 mechanization enterprises (MTS), which needed a centralized bureaucratic apparatus to function.⁹⁵ The Economic Command Staff East of the Wehrmacht (*Wirtschaftsführungsstab Ost*) created a new control structure over agriculture to replace the Soviet one. But in fact, the Germans compromised with the existing structure, and all in all they kept a lot of what Soviet administration had created, as we have seen earlier. A key echelon in the hierarchy was the *Landwirtschaftsführer* (La-Führer, La-Fü), controlling farm activities of a group of kolkhozes. When the Wehrmacht transferred to German civil authorities of the Reichskommissariat Ukraine, the whole agricultural bureaucracy was transferred, including the 14,000 La-Führer. In the territories (in Ukraine and elsewhere) which remained under military rule, the same system of agricultural control remained in place.

On average, one La-Führer had 108 collective farms under his responsibility.⁹⁶ Even if assisted by translators and local agronomists, this made impossible for him to visit regularly every farm. Most La-Führer were farmers from Germany who had no command of either the Ukrainian or the Russian language and were ignorant of the natural conditions for farming, especially in the Ukrainian steppes to the East.⁹⁷

In January 1943, Backe, who monitored closely French agriculture, demanded to raise productivity “by any means necessary”, especially to cultivate fallows.⁹⁸ For Reinhardt, this could only be possible if the German and French agricultural administrations would get both more qualified workforce, vehicles, and gasoline. His request was backed by the *Militärbefehlshaber* himself and resulted in the establishment of 182 German *Landwirtschaftsführer* in March 1943 and in the liberation of 550 French agronomists, with whom they were supposed to work.⁹⁹

There were 788 La-Führer stationed all over France in April 1944, aged between 32 and 55. Many had worked for the *Reichsnährstand* before the war and were considered by their hierarchy as having a strong experience with the German *Erzeugungsschlacht*

93 Ibid., p. 50.

94 Ibid., Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 320.

95 Dallin, *German Rule in Russia 1941–1945*, p. 320.

96 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*.

97 Ibid.; Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*.

98 “in weitreichendem Umfange alle Maßnahmen”, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

99 Letter from Stülpnagel to the Army High-Command, 13.02.1943; letter from Wi III/1 to the *Bezirkshauptmannschaft* A, B, C and Commander from Gross-Paris, 15.02.1943, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

(Battle for production).¹⁰⁰ An undefined number of them came from occupied Ukraine and Poland and had to undergo training at the *Wehrwirtschaftsersatzabteilung V* in Gera. Others had not worked in the East, but came directly from farms in Germany. They were often older or unable to fight and for these reasons were sent to France to supervise agriculture.¹⁰¹

The La-Führer were assigned to reinforce the local *Agriculture and Food supply* groups at the level of the *Feldkommandanturen*. Each La-Fü had to advise on 55,000 hectares of agricultural land on average. Only 70% were equipped with a car.¹⁰² The rest of them had to travel by bike. Added to the fact that only about 10% of them spoke French this made it complicated if not impossible to complete their mission of counsel.¹⁰³

According to Reinhardt, La-Führer in France “will serve as agricultural advisers and not as production controllers [as they did in Ukraine].”¹⁰⁴ Their mission was to increase French agricultural production according to German needs, mainly by enforcing the cropping plans. Concretely they had to make sure that the cultivated area that had been planned for each crop was effectively cultivated. Those cultivation plans were designed every year in Paris by Reinhardt’s group at the MBF, in negotiations with French authorities, to ensure deliveries to Germany and food supply. Each of them had a notebook (*Taschenbuch für Landwirtschaftsführer*) containing a short agricultural lexicon, main figures on French agriculture, specifics on the most common French varieties of wheat and oats and advice on how to introduce new crops.

The La-Fü first assessed wastelands and uncultivated areas and prepared their recultivation.¹⁰⁵ They also assessed the numbers of abandoned farms.¹⁰⁶ They then spent most of their time “advising” French farmers.¹⁰⁷ They organized meetings with farmers, mayors, trustees, and French agricultural services, sometimes showing movies on “good” agricultural practices. Those meetings were often followed by farm and field inspections to show one good and one bad example of farming in the village.¹⁰⁸ La-Führer also had to be available one day a week at their office for counseling, which was about every aspect of

100 67% apprenticeship or agricultural winter school, 9% agronomist, 2% state examined farmer, 22% without any degree. According to *Befehlshaber* South-West about 121 La-Führer, 25.08.1943, AJ/40/793 (2), Archives nationales.

101 Among others before being stationed in France, Gustav Bubritzki worked for the *Milch- und Fettanstalt* Ukraine and Joachim Lipke was *Gebietslandwirt* in the Russian steppe. AJ/40/460, Archives nationales and RH 36/258, BA MA. Eduard Linberg was employed by the Ostland in occupied Poland and transferred in 1943 to the Ostland company in occupied France, BA MA, RH 36/259.

102 Reinhardt’s report one year after the introduction of *Landwirtschaftsführer* in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

103 Report of the *Befehlshaber* South-West, 25.08.1943, AJ/40/793 (2), Archives nationales; BA MA RH 36/368 and RH 36/369.

104 *Entretien du Majestic*, Reinhardt to Bonnafous, the French Minister for Agriculture and Food Supply, 29.04.1943, 3W 75/1, Archives nationales.

105 Report of the *Befehlshaber* North West to the MBF in Paris about the La-Führer’s activities, 13.01.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

106 “Mission and provisional tasks of the La-Führer”, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

107 More specifically with the 400 French agronomes that were released in early 1943.

108 AJ/40/793 (3), Archives nationales.

farm management: fertilization through synthetic and organic products, fight against the Colorado potato beetle, cultivation of oilseeds, new crops (mainly soy and kok-sagyz), animal husbandry conditions.¹⁰⁹ The La-Führer advocated for a more intensive and productivist agriculture.

But La-Führer also assessed agricultural activity: production, size of herds, measure of cultivated areas, silos, etc. They established statistical data in order to correct French statistics and monitored the deliveries for food supply.¹¹⁰ The establishment of La-Führer was a clear sign that the Germans distrusted the French authorities down to the regional level and preferred to take the matter of food requirement in their own hands. Their establishment was a complete surprise for the French, who did not appreciate this extra German monitoring over the whole country.¹¹¹

In their monitoring of agricultural production, La-Führer fought against the black market, in accordance with the policy adopted in Paris. Some of them were specifically responsible for the collection of milk and fats, key products for the (German) food supply. Alongside their agricultural mission, the La-Führer were also supposed to monitor the “political atmosphere”, not unlike the control functions they exerted in Ukraine. Their daily contact with rural population make them precious assets, providing “important intelligence material.”¹¹²

A large survey of soil was conducted starting 1943 in the formerly “occupied zone” with the goal to create “soil maps as a basis for the cultural planning of the [Ostland] and the MBF.”¹¹³ Such maps would provide the occupation authorities with a better knowledge of the territory, a first step towards ecological occupation. The point was to scientifically assess the potential for yield improvement of cultivated area, to test the worthiness of re-

109 They advocated for the building of manure pits. MBF group Wi III/1 to the Befehlshaber and Feldkommandanturen, 27.04.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales. They checked for the mandatory signs in front of each potato field and for farmers who did not spray properly. Reinhardt's report one year after the introduction of Landwirtschaftsführer in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales. Letter from MBF division for agricultural production to the 3 district chefs, 08.06.1944 : “The Landwirtschaftsführer are instructed to support the increase of the acreage for oilseeds in any manner. Protests are to be kept to a minimum.” AJ/40/793 (7), Archives nationales, Lyautey translated. Reinhardt's report one year after the introduction of Landwirtschaftsführer in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales. Better use of pasture, and building of silos for animal feed. MBF group Wi III/1 to the Befehlshaber and Feldkommandanturen, 27.04.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales. See also AJ/40/793 (3), Archives nationales.

110 Reinhardt's report one year after the introduction of Landwirtschaftsführer in France, 4.05.1944; template for reports on the activity of La-Führer, 10.09.1943, both in AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

111 Letter from French Minister for Agriculture and Food Supply Bonnafeux to Reinhardt, 12.04.1943: “You even declared that the liberation of 545 [French] agronomists that I demanded a few months ago was related to the acceptance of the establishment of those agricultural counselors in the occupied zone by my Department. This condition has never been brought to my attention and I am very surprised to see it invoked today (...) This is why I am bound to demand you in the strongest and the most insistent manner to please renounce to the implementation of those counselors.” AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales, translated by Lyautey.

112 In their reports “ist kurz auf Beobachtungen über die politische Haltung und Stimmung der französischen Bauernschaft einzugehen”; “wichtiges Nachrichtenmaterial”. Reinhardt's report one year after the introduction of Landwirtschaftsführer in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

113 Title of the project, Research Programme 1943/44, Imperial Institute for foreign and colonial forestry in Hamburg, 15.09.1943, BAL R 73/15317. Note that the “occupied zone” concentrated most of France's agricultural production. Not any map has yet been found in the archives.

cultivating wastelands and to rationalize the use of synthetic fertilizers knowing precisely what the soils' requirements for each nutrient were.

In the context of "the inevitability of having to replace the lost Ukrainian soil yields", this work was considered vital for the war (*kriegswichtig*).¹¹⁴ La-Führer collected more than 17,500 soil samples overall. The survey was supervised by Dr. Vageler, head of the Department of *Agriculture and Forestry* of the German institute in Paris and analyses were performed in his home university, the Imperial Institute for foreign and colonial forestry in Hamburg. The survey showed a less acute soil acidification than expected, which meant some fertilizer phosphate could be saved for the German armaments industry.¹¹⁵ However the results showed that expectations on the re-cultivation of wasteland were to be reconsidered given the very low availability of synthetic fertilizers.¹¹⁶

La-Fü were present not only in occupied USSR or France, but in several European countries under German dominion: in Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, Greece, and some parts of Romania.¹¹⁷ In November 1943 an order of Hitler forbade any further transfer of La-Fü from the East to the West: they were to serve in combat units on the Eastern Front.¹¹⁸

To Modernize and to Colonize: Ostland and LBGU

German authorities saw farming in France and the Soviet Union as backward, mainly because, in their view, the land and the soils were not used intensively enough. As British and French colonizers, German planners and administrators pursued the goal of modernizing the agriculture of their Western and Eastern colonies, in Ukraine and the French Forbidden Zone.¹¹⁹ To this effect they set up special corporations which pursued several goals: to regroup land in bigger farms, develop mechanization, the use of fertilizers, both synthetic and natural, "rationalize" tillage, and introduce new varieties. In all these aspects, there is a lack of historical information. More research is needed on what Germans agricultural specialists did precisely in their experimental farms in Ukraine and France, and what they wanted the La-Fü to require from the French and Ukrainian peasants.

In the East, collective farms were already big enough, mostly. A Farming Corporation Ukraine was formed (*Landbewirtschaftungsgesellschaft Ukraine*, LBGU) to manage the farms.¹²⁰ It controlled deliveries and producers. But purchase, storage, handling, processing, imports, and exports were managed by another German enterprise, the *Zentralhan-*

114 Letter from Heske to Marcus, Reichsforschungsrat, 11.03.1944, BAL R 73/15317.

115 Letter from Reinhardt to Vageler, 16.03.1944, BAL R 73/15317.

116 Letter from *Sicherheitspolizei* to Dr. Brandt, personal staff of the Reichsführer-SS, 3.02.1944, BAL, N 19/1305.

117 Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*, p. 38; order from Oberst Matzky and Major Krantz, 30.11.1944, BA MA, RW 19/3160.

118 Hitler's order (Führerbefehl), 27.11.1943, quoted in letter of WFST/Org. (1. Staffel), 14.12.1943, BA MA RH 4/491.

119 For French North Africa see D. K. Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome: Environmental History and French Colonial Expansion in North Africa*, Athens 2007.

120 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, p. 83; Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*, p. 32.

delsgesellschaft Ost für landwirtschaftlichen Absatz und Bedarf GmbH (ZHO or ZO).¹²¹ LBGU had the same functions as the Agricultural Corporation *Ostland* (of its full name *Ostdeutsche Landbewirtschaftungsgesellschaft*), which was active in Poland and France. *Ostland*¹²² was a farm management company, involved in occupied Poland starting early 1940, and beginning in summer 1941, in occupied Soviet territories. Its purpose was to manage seized farms and prepare estates for the German agrarian colonization to come. In France, the company was active as soon as September 1940 in the Forbidden Zone.¹²³ In order to maintain agricultural production at a normal level, the implementation of the company was very fast, mostly on abandoned farms. But “poorly managed farms”, according to German criteria, were also brought under the *Ostland*’s authority. At its height, the company managed 11,500 French farms on 170,000 hectares of farmland, and more than half of agricultural land in the *département* Ardennes. The goal of this enterprise was to apply German “national-socialist” methods to French agriculture in order to boost its production: regrouping of land and mechanization, agronomic trials in experimental fields, selected high-quality seeds, synthetic fertilizers, etc. *Ostland* set up 35 experimental station in the Forbidden Zone.

The management of the workforce was also national-socialist: every estate (around 450 hectares) was under the rule of a German chief of culture, who led non-German farmworkers. They were French or foreign, some of which were deported to Eastern France.¹²⁴ The workforce was accounted according to their productivity and each group had a productivity factor.¹²⁵

Even though the purpose of *Ostland* might have been, at the beginning of the war, to prepare the area for a potential annexation, and although French refugees were not allowed back in the “Forbidden Zone” where the company was active, no German settlers were ever sent to France in the farms managed by this company. The colonization plans remained plans and only Wehrmacht officials worked in those farms, without their families.

The *Ostland* company was both a showcase and a first implementation of those “German” methods in France.¹²⁶ Not only the new way of production were tested (in ploughing for example), but also new varieties and crops (soy and kok-sagyz among others),

121 Corni / Gies, *Brot – Butter – Kanonen*, p. 537; Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 57.

122 Not to be mistaken with the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, which was the military administrative entity that managed the Baltic States, Belarus and the North-Eastern part of Poland starting 1941. The company changed its name to “Reichsland” after 1941 to avoid any misunderstanding.

123 For more information of the *Ostland* company in France, see Mièvre, L’“*Ostland*” en France; M. Lyautey, L’*Ostland* en France pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, *Mémoire de master de l'EHESS*, 2017, 184 pp. and the work of A. François, *Les Polonais déportés*.

124 More than 600 foreign Jews from Paris and 20,000 Poles were deported in order to work for the *Ostland* in North-Eastern France.

125 1 for men; 0,7 for women; 0,3 for youth; 0,5 for Jews, and 0,3 for POW of colour. 12R 143, Archives départementales des Ardennes.

126 The *Militärbefehlshaber* himself describes the goal of *Ostland* to be “a german example of agriculture in order”. Letter from Stülpnagel to Oberkommando Wehrmacht, 13.02.1943, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales (Lyautey translated).

before they could be considered for a wider use on the whole French territory. Several agronomic trials were also designed to scientifically prove the superiority of German varieties over French ones, to then be able to extend their cultivation all over the country.¹²⁷ Colossal means were put into this company, especially considering the war condition: tens of thousands of men and women for the workforce, hundreds of tractors, fuel, fertilizers, seeds, chemical products, and sprayer to fight the Potato beetle, etc.

But *Ostland* was also thought as a place where a new “elite of German farmers learns to think on a large scale, to work and compare in a European way, to use the soil with the aim of achieving a maximum in nutrition, not ideologically, but nevertheless obsessed with the idea of German exemplary performance.”¹²⁸

The Germans exported farm appliances to the Forbidden Zone of France and to the occupied Soviet Union. Under the *Ostackerprogramm*, ZO brought 7,000 tractors, 20,000 generators, 250,000 steel plows, 3,000,000 scythe, thousands bulls, cows, boars, and stallions to the Soviet occupied territories.¹²⁹ In France, *Ostland* brought 433 tractors, 373 ploughs, 116 trucks and other appliances, mainly from Lanz, a German manufacturer of farm equipment. This material remained in France after liberation and played an enduring role in the mechanization of agriculture locally. In Ukraine, the *Ostackerprogramm* contradicted the radical plunder which occupation forces practiced, first during the German advance in 1941, and second during the German retreat in 1943–44, and other occasions (summer 1942).

Kok-sagyz’s Travel from Soviet Kazakhstan to France via Occupied Ukraine

Germans pushed to introduce new crops in French and Ukrainian farming. This drive was motivated by specific demands of German war industry and German food economy. For instance, oilseeds were in high demand, so Germans forced French farmers to cultivate rapeseed. An interesting case is that of the rubber plant kok-sagyz, which made its way from Kazakhstan to Ukraine, Poland, and France during German occupation. Several countries during WWII were interested in the industrial properties of dandelions, including the Soviet Union, Germany, and the USA.¹³⁰

Heim has extensively studied how German scientists and the SS developed research on kok-sagyz plants, the extraction of rubber from it (especially in Auschwitz) and its farm-

127 “Der Aufbau der Versuchsabteilung der ‘Reichsland’ im besetzten nordfranzösischen Gebiet”, Dr. Leitzke, 12R 99, Archives départementales des Ardennes.

128 “Hut ab vor ihrer Leistung! Eine landwirtschaftliche Elite”, Zeitungsdienst des Reichsnährstandes, n163, 21.07.1941, BAL, R 3601/2353.

129 Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp. 323–324.

130 In the USA, pedologist Marlin Cline worked on dandelions, trying unsuccessfully to turn it into crops. John M. Duxbury, Memorial statement on Marlin G. Cline (1909–2009), online on: https://ecommons.cornell.edu/bitstream/handle/1813/19175/Cline_Marlin_G_2009.pdf (accessed on 8 October 2019). There is still interest in turning dandelions into rubber for the tire industry. Ludwig Burger, Tire makers race to turn dandelions into rubber, Reuters, 20 August 2014, online in: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-dandelion-rubber/tire-makers-race-to-turn-dandelions-into-rubber-idUSKBN0GK0LN20140820> (accessed on 8 October 2019).

ing.¹³¹ Germans relied heavily on literature, researchers, equipments, fields and seeds from the Soviet Union.¹³² Basically, they transferred under their control the research being done on kok-sagyz in occupied Soviet territories. The SS plundered equipments, secured institutes, deported scientists and libraries to Germany and to their research facilities in Auschwitz. For that, men were sent to Ukraine, including the Crimea, and the North Caucasus, searching for anything kok-sagyz related. Two Russian scientists are named, a certain Nikitin and Yakov Alexeievich Popov as being used by the SS for research on kok-sagyz, but there were many more.¹³³

The SS wanted to develop kok-sagyz in France. The crop was introduced for the 1944–1945 campaign, to use as an ersatz for rubber. It was a special demand from the Reichsführer-SS and cultivation was planned on at least 2,500 ha in regions where sugar beets yields were high (North-Eastern France mostly and also around Paris and Orléans). Seeds were provided by Germany. The crop was ultimately tested in 59 farms in the summer 1944. The SS even planned to deport 180,000 additional Poles as workforce to develop French kok-sagyz production.¹³⁴

Conclusion

In this paper we have attempted to take an integrated and connected view of Nazi domination of Europe. Going beyond serialized case studies and comparison of occupational regimes, we have looked at how personal, material and intellectual circulations within its empire shaped the colonial visions and occupation practices of Nazi Germany in three areas: displacement of peasants, cultivation of strategic plants like kok-sagyz, and political and economic control at the district level via the *La-Führer*. Deepening the research on what agricultural practices and seeds were imposed, and widening the geographical scope to include other occupied countries is a task ahead of us.

Already in 1942 it occurred to the German occupiers that the new acquisitions to the Reich to the East and to the West could not substantially relieve its agriculture from its productive tasks. Both in Ukraine and France, ideas of greatly intensified farming and rising outputs crushed against the workforce shortfalls and material shortcomings. The *Großraumwirtschaft* never materialized and autarkic agricultural development remained a dream, and actually a nightmare for millions of Europeans who were not near the top of the Nazi food chain.

131 S. Heim, *Plant Breeding and Agrarian Research in Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institutes 1933–1945: Calories, Caoutchouc, Careers*, New York/Berlin/Heidelberg 2008, pp. 103–120.

132 In the occupied territories of the Soviet Union, though, the general contempt for the kolkhoze system and for Ukrainian and Russian agricultural practices among occupying forces was combined with a great and sustained interest in the advances of Soviet agronomy among German researchers. From the first day of the invasion to the last day of occupation, German occupiers translated the best works of Soviet agronomists and tried to maintain agricultural research on the bases of Soviet agricultural institutes. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 332.

133 Heim, *Plant Breeding*, p. 110–111.

134 See AJ/40/793 (11), Archives nationales.

Agronomists played a leading part in this lamentable history. Riecke, Schiller, Backe, Reinhardt, and many lesser colleagues participated in the initiation and unfolding of the great genocide and starvation which characterize WWII. Placed by the Nazi regime at key positions within the occupation apparatus, they endorsed the goal of building an empire premised on a hierarchy of food production and food entitlement which led to millions of deaths by hunger. On the ground they controlled the most numerous of all occupation apparatuses, as well as a large network of monitoring functionaries and procurement enterprises. Squeezing the most grain and oilseeds out of the farms was their major task. As the war persisted, intensifying production became a ubiquitous objective to which they committed themselves. Constraining the locals to produce technical crops which were necessary for Germany's war effort was another priority. If they happily failed in their grand scheme of colonization and autarky, they proved frighteningly successful in fulfilling these three tasks at the cost of the local populations.

FORUM

The Early Modern “Silk-Road”. The Role of European, Chinese, and Russian Trade Reassessed¹

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ABSTRACT

Dieser Aufsatz untersucht den historischen und zeitgenössischen Ort des europäischen und asiatischen Handels im Kontext der sogenannten „Seidenstraße“. Der Erfolg und die Konkurrenz der heutigen chinesischen Wirtschaft wird als Ursache für die sinkende Bedeutung der westlichen Volkswirtschaften auf den Weltmärkten angesehen, aber die Realität *ist* und *war* in der Vergangenheit viel komplexer. War die Industrielle Revolution ein grundlegender Wendepunkt? Insbesondere in Zentralasien waren die institutionellen und wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen weitaus differenzierter, als man von der Vorstellung der „Seidenstraße“ als bloßer Ost-West-Transitroute annehmen könnte. In diesem Sinne betrachte ich die Zusammenhänge zwischen der maritimen und der Seidenstraße. Ich interpretiere die wachsende Präsenz Russlands auf den zentralasiatischen Märkten ab dem 16. Jahrhundert im Zusammenhang mit dem chinesischen Vormarsch in Westasien. Die englischen Ambitionen und die englische Präsenz in Südasien (Indien) betrafen auch die zentralasiatischen Märkte und standen in direktem Wettbewerb mit der Expansion Russlands. Diese wirtschaftlichen und institutionellen Beziehungen haben die Geopolitik des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts, in der sich das allgemeine Konzept der Seidenstraße entwickelte, tiefgreifend beeinflusst.

This paper investigates the historic and contemporary place of European and Asian trade in

1 I would like to thank Professor Peter Burschel, director of the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel (Germany), for allowing me to draw widely on the material housed in that library, without which I could not have completed this paper. The English translation was provided by Jeremy Scott.

the context of the so-called "Silk Road". The success and the competition of the present-day Chinese economy is seen as the cause of the declining role of Western economies in world markets but the reality *is* and *was* much more complex in the past. Was the Industrial revolution a fundamental turning point? In Central Asia in particular the institutional and economic rapports were much more nuanced than one might be led to believe by the notion of the "Silk Road" as a mere route of East-West transit. It is with this in mind that I consider the rapports between the maritime road and the silk road. I interpret the growing presence of Russia in the Central Asian markets from the sixteenth century onwards in connection with the Chinese advance in Western Asia. The English ambition and presence in Southern Asia (India) was also concerned with central Asian markets and was in direct competition with Russian expansion. These economic and institutional rapports went on to have a deep influence on 19th and 20th century geopolitics, in which the general concept of the Silk Road developed.

The Traditional Silk Road and the Maritime. Products and International Competition

This article aims to examine trade along the famous Silk Road between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. The term 'Silk Road' itself is said to have been coined by the nineteenth-century German geographer Ferdinand von Richthofen in discussing centuries of trade along the harsh desert routes of Central Asia that linked such places as Samarkand, fabled cities that were also great centres of manufacture. In such commerce, silk clearly epitomized the important luxury goods imported into Europe from Asia. However, that was not the only product carried from China to the West: porcelain, tea and, earlier still, paper and gunpowder (basically a large part of the era's technological know-how) played a no less essential role in East-West trade. And nowadays, after centuries of western dominion which meant that the predominant flow of trade was West-East, we are once again in a situation in which it is the goods flowing out of the Orient that are playing an increasingly dominant role in international commerce.²

It is no coincidence, therefore, that the expression "New Silk Road" is closely connected to the resurgence of China's strategic interest in the West, a "revival" of the influence of Eastern civilization, which, as in the past, cannot be seen in isolation from economic/technological issues. The economic success of present-day China is, furthermore, closely linked to the declining role of some Western economies in world markets. Indeed, the new Silk Road is thus known as the "Belt and Road Initiative", which aims to link the whole of Asia to China and afterwards connect it to some European terminals. Which ones are selected to become such destinations is another aspect of the current interna-

2 The image of the "Silk Road" has to be assessed bearing in mind other views of the relationship between Asia and Europe, which bring together religious aspects of the issue and the question of the various political and economic powers involved. Philippe Forêt and Andeas Kaplony, for example, have identified a "Buddhist Road", a "Mongol Road", an "Islamic Road" and a "Mediterranean Road" (The Journey of Maps and Images on the Silk Road, London/Boston 2008, pp. 1–5). Useful material in a large historical perspective is offered by U. Hübner et al. (eds.), *Die Seidenstraße. Handel und Kulturaustausch in einem eurasiatischen Wegenetz*, Hamburg 2001.

tional competition. Certainly, as in the heyday of Chinese civilization from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, the number of Chinese products flowing towards Europe nowadays seems to be much higher than that of European products being exported to Asian markets. In the past this trade deficit would ultimately be compensated for by the West's technological superiority, with the machines of the Industrial Revolution enabling European nations to become firmly established in Asian markets. But in the future?

Limiting our present discussion to a focus on Central Asia, the area of the continent traversed by the Silk Road, one observes the emergence of two directions of long-distance trade in luxury goods that, in general terms, can be seen as running east-west and north-south. This trade flow was, for reasons regarding both climate and environment, irregular, depending upon the numerous caravans whose passage also had an influence upon the life of local nomadic peoples. Yet, despite its irregularity, such trade stimulated the growth of empires, which, in turn, developed to control / exploit the movement of luxury products with the introduction of taxation, resulting in powerful geopolitical interests being, quite literally, invested in commerce. There is no question that von Richthofen and Western historians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries focused primarily on the commercial aspects of the Silk Road and less on the issues relating to taxation and the control exercised by the political entities in Central Asia. However, alongside this "east-west trade" there was also a "north-south trade", commerce that also involved local nomadic societies.³ Both the "east-west" and "north-south" trade stimulated interest in controlling this area and its resources, bringing into play the Chinese Empire, the Russian Empire (whose influence is generally underestimated by historical discussions of the period concerned with this issue), and European trade companies.⁴ Furthermore, within the complex world of Central Asia, greater attention should also be placed on

3 J. A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass. Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in Qing Central Asia, 1759–1864*, Stanford 1998, p. 99; idem, *The Silk Road. A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford 2013. There is a vast bibliography on the legendary Silk Road. One can now consult P. Frankopan, *The Silks Roads. A New History of the World*, New York 2015, even if – in spite of a title that suggests this is just another study of the Silk Road – this work aims to explore the various levels of the relationship between "East" and "West" (an aspect that is brought out by the title of the German translation: *Licht aus dem Osten: Eine neue Geschichte der Welt*, Berlin 2016). Also see V. Hansen, *The Silk Road. A New History with Documents. With Coverage of the Mongols and Marco Polo*, Oxford 2017. For the strictly Italian aspect of the question, see F. G. Bruscoli, *Bartolomeo Marchionni, "homem de grossa fazenda" (ca. 1450–1530). Un mercante fiorentino a Lisboa e l'impero portoghese*, Florence 2014; M. Spallanzani, *Mercanti fiorentini nell'Asia portoghese (1500–1525)*, Florence 1997.

4 Without going into all details of a vast literature on the role played by Western trading companies, I would like to mention M. Morineau / S. Chaudhuri (eds.), *Merchants, Companies and Trade Europe and Asia in the Early Modern Era*, Paris / Cambridge, UK 2007; L. Dermigny, *La Chine et l'Occident. Le commerce à Canton au XVIII^e siècle, 1719–1833*, 3 vols, Paris 1964; S. Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia 1500–1700. A Political and Economic History*, London 1993; N. Steensgaard, *Carracks, Caravans and Companies. The Structural Crisis in the European-Asian Trade in the Early 17th Century*, Odense 1973; L. Blussé et al. (eds.), *Companies and Trade*, Leiden 1981; G. Souza, *The Survival of Empire: Portuguese Trade and Society in China and the South China Sea, 1630–1754*, Cambridge, UK 1986; J. C. Boyajian, *Portuguese Trade in Asia under the Habsburgs, 1580–1640*, Baltimore / London 1993; C. Jacqueland, *De Séville à Manille, les espagnols en mer de Chine*, Paris 2015; E. Erikson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade. The English East India Company, 1600–1757*, Princeton 2016; F. Gipouloux, *La Méditerranée asiatique. Villes portuaires et réseaux marchands en Chine, au Japon et en Asie du Sud-Est, XVI^e–XXI^e siècles*, Paris 2009.

such nomadic peoples as the Zunghars, the Jurchen, and the Kazakhs, all who certainly interacted with the larger political entities.⁵

As far as European traders are concerned, they – and Italians in particular, from the time of Marco Polo onwards – played a role in opening up such terrestrial trade routes, even if (for both international and domestic reasons) they would subsequently be almost entirely excluded from them. During the Middle Age one might cite not only Marco Polo⁶ but also other merchants and numerous missionaries, such as Giovanni da Pian del Carpine, Odorico da Pordenone, and Giovanni da Montecorvino (all of whom who tried to convert Asian populations).⁷ Thereafter, national trade companies and monopolies appeared, better organized to exploit such commerce and enjoying the substantial protection provided by emerging nation-states. It is true that Tuscany and Genoa tried to establish similar companies, but these regional states did not have the same success as the Dutch East India Company (VOC) or as the companies set up by the Portuguese, Spanish, English, French, Swedes, or Danes.⁸

Another aim of our article is comparing the fortunes of the ancient Silk Road with those based on commerce of the new Maritime Silk Road, the latter being considered more profitable and seen as a central axis of relations between East Asia and the West.⁹ In the

5 P. C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, Cambridge, MA 2005.

6 Hans Ulrich Vogel's recent work puts an end to the hypothesis that Marco Polo never actually reached China: Marco Polo was in China. *New Evidence from Currencies, Salts and Revenues*, Leiden/Boston 2013. His arguments are confirmed by the two Orientalists Mark Elvin and Philippe Ménard in their prefaces to his book.

7 The issue of the role of Catholic missionaries and of Italian trade in the Middle Ages is too sizeable to be dealt with here. On these questions see *Relation des voyages en Tartarie de Fr. Guillaume de Rubruquis*, Fr. Jean du Plan Carpin, Fr. Ascelin, et autres religieux de S. François et S. Dominique, qui y furent envoyez par le Pape Innocent IV et le Roy S. Louys [...] (recueilly par Pierre Bergeron), Paris 1634. The drive to convert the peoples of Asia would continue into the Early Modern period; see the bibliography by C. Wessels in: *Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia, 1603–1721*, The Hague 1924, as well as the following works: C. K. Pullapilly / E. J. Van Kley (eds.), *Asia and the West. Encounters and Exchanges from the Age of Explorations. Essays in Honour of Donald F. Lach*, Notre Dame 1986; J. W. Witek, *The Seventeenth-Century European Advance into Asia. A Review Article*, in: *The Journal of Asian Studies* 53 (1994) 3, pp. 867–880.

8 T. Iannello, *Progetti di istituzione in Italia di Compagnie commerciali per il Giappone*, in: A. Tamburello (ed.), *Italia – Giappone, 450 anni*, vol. I, Rome/Naples 2003, pp. 75–77. Luca Molà's research into the role played by Italian cities is a good starting-point here (see: Venezia, Genova e l'Oriente: i mercanti italiani sulle Vie della Seta tra XIII e XIV secolo, in: M. A. Norell (ed.), *Sulla Via della Seta. Antichi sentieri tra Oriente e Occidente*, Turin 2012, pp. 124–166). However, G. Marcocci's essay *L'Italia nella prima età globale (ca. 1300–1700)*, in: *Storica* 60 (2014), pp. 7–50, overlaps with the aims of the present study, with its goal of tracing the course of Italian trade in a problematic period of Italian history. One source that is still useful in reconstructing the Italian presence in international markets is A. De Gubernatis, *Storia dei viaggiatori italiani nelle Indie orientali: pubblicata in occasione del Congresso geografico di Parigi, con estratti d'alcune relazioni di viaggio a stampa ed alcuni documenti inediti*, Livorno 1875. Given the close relations that existed between the Republic of Venice and the subcontinent, India should be a focus of particular study, see A. Grossato, *Navigatori e viaggiatori veneti sulla rotta per l'India. Da Marco Polo ad Angelo Legrenzi*, Florence 1994. A traditional yet still useful is the edition by D. Carruthers, *The Desert Route to India, Being the Journals of Four Travellers by the Greath Desert Caravan Route between Aleppo and Basra, 1745–1751* [1929], Farnham 2010.

9 R. Kauz (ed.), *Aspects of the Maritime Silk Road: From the Persian Gulf to the East China Sea*, Wiesbaden 2010; R. Ptak, *Die maritime Seidenstrasse. Küstenräume, Seefahrt und Handel in vorkolonialer Zeit*, Munich 2007. The most recent works stress that "the contrast between land and maritime routes might not have been as sharp as normally assumed" (see my own: *Luxury Production and Technological Transfer in Early Modern Europe*, Leipzig 2017, pp. 258–259).

period after the Yuan dynasty, the Silk Road was also believed to be increasingly dangerous. But were ships and the maritime route really so much safer than the old terrestrial roads? In any case, it is true that the Italians seemed to have been the first to lose out because of the opening of a new maritime route to the East (as well the shift of commercial activity away from the Mediterranean towards the Atlantic).¹⁰

Their near-complete absence from this sea-borne trade with Asia is highlighted both by historians and by the silence surrounding this argument, found in contemporary sources.¹¹ Nevertheless, while the Italians were directly affected by the shifting balance between the Silk Road and the maritime route, a more nuanced account has to be given when discussing the various other actors and political-economic factors at play in Central Asia. Indeed, I would stress that trade along the Silk Road continued to occupy a certain role and, even more critically, the commerce flowing through Central Asia helps to explain what would take place during the nineteenth century between the major political and economic actors, both Western and Eastern countries.

A supportive argument could draw on the figures put forward by Williamson and O'Rourke. They estimate that between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries world trade grew by around 1.06 per cent per year. For his part, Angus Maddison claims that from 1500 to 1820 annual growth in the gross domestic product of both China and Western Europe was only around 0.4 per cent. If one is to believe these figures and what they say about the relationship between gross national product and intercontinental trade, the divergence in development over these two centuries between Asian and European countries was not that dramatic (certainly in Europe, internal demand, and thus a relative increase in the spending power of domestic consumers, occupied an essential role in stimulating European development). Furthermore, it does not seem that there were any decisive improvements in transport technologies or any decrease in the costs borne by merchant ships, all of which remained fairly constant over these centuries: it would only

10 Given the complexity of relations between Europe, Asia, and the Americas (even if only in quantitative terms), it is difficult to propose a straightforward revisionist account. Jan de Vries stresses the fact that "the cumulative value of British, French, and Dutch imports from the New World exceed[ed] those from Asia by nearly a factor of three (J. de Vries, *Limits of Globalization in the early modern world*, in: *The Economic History Review* 63 [2010] 3, p. 728). Asian trade – involving the overheads of distant travel and the need to penetrate established networks – never enjoyed the profit margins that plantation products traded across the Atlantic yielded to landowners in European colonies (idem, *Connecting Europe and Asia: a Quantitative Analysis of the Cape-route Trade, 1497–1795*, in: D. O. Flynn et al. [eds.], *Global Connections and Monetary System, 1470–1800*, Aldershot 2003, pp. 82–85). Furthermore, I. Blanchard, converting Jan de Vries' calculations in guilders into figures in pounds sterling, has calculated that in 1802 "this Eurasian commerce, which encompassed wares carried through both the trans-continental and local nomadic trade-system, crossing Russia's Asiatic frontiers from Central Asia [...] was only valued ca. £160,000", while just 30 years previously "the value of goods transported by way of the Cape maritime route to Europe amounted to ca. £4,820,000", see Blanchard, *The "Great Silk Road"*, ca. 1650 / ca. 1855, in: M. A. Denzel et al. (eds.), *Small is Beautiful? Interlopers and Smaller Trading Nations in the Pre-industrial Period*, Stuttgart 2011, pp. 262–263.

11 B. Yun-Casalilla, *Iberian World Empires and the Globalization of Europe 1415–1668*, Singapore 2019, esp. pp. 51–88; S. Bernabéu Albert (ed.), *La Nao de China, 1565–1815. Navegación, comercio e intercambios culturales*, Sevilla 2013; W. L. Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, Manila 1985; J. L. Gasch-Tomás, *Asian Silk, Porcelain and Material Culture in the Definition of Mexican and Andalusia Elites, c. 1565–1630*, in: B. Aram/B. Yun-Casalilla (eds.), *Global Goods and the Spanish Empire, 1492–1824: Circulation, Resistance and Diversity*, New York 2014, pp. 153–173.

be with the revolution brought about by steam power in the nineteenth century that these factors would come into play.¹²

Such data is instructive, but it does not help one to quantify the impact of European trade on Asian affairs. And such complications are increased by the scarcity and poverty of local sources; by the primitive way in which many Asia products were traded (sometimes through the simple truck system, a tributary system within the many areas controlled by the Chinese authorities); by the complicated fiscal system used in collecting taxes from the nomadic populations inside Central Asia; by the continuing contraband between the different nations interested in the Asian trade; and by the growing conflict between the emerging nations and the numerous merchants operating inside Central Asia (Russians, English, Afghans, and Indians). All these aspects make attempts at precise quantification of Western interests inside Asia seem wishful thinking. As Jack Goldstone stresses when discussing the role of American silver and the supposed impact of its declining influx on political affairs of China (particularly during the crisis of the Ming dynasty in the seventeenth century): "silver bullion played a role far out of proportion to its scale in the economy". Much more substantial influences on the internal affairs of China were the control of the borders, the role of the agriculture, recurrent famine, and dynastic conflict between Chinese rulers. Indeed, the total volume of European trade "was never more than just over 1 percent of China's economy, and was generally 0.2–0.3 percent. The complete cessation of such trade (the arrival of the silver) would hardly have been noticeable in the over-all economy".¹³ At the same time, the relative closure of China as well as of Tokugawa Japan – and their relative disinterest in commercial expansion beyond their own borders – created more opportunities for Westerners to become involved in Asian affairs.¹⁴ Arms and military force also influenced the Europeans' ability to impose their presence upon Asian markets – an issue that is covered in a whole range of post-colonial studies that I can only cite here.¹⁵

12 R. Findlay/K. A. O'Rourke, *Power and Plenty: Trade, War and the World Economy in the Second Millennium*, Princeton 2007, pp. 305, 378–79.

13 J. A. Goldstone, *East and West in the Seventeenth Century: Political Crises in Stuart England, Ottoman Turkey, and Ming China*, in: *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30 (1988) 1, p. 115. W. S. Atwell, on the contrary, has no doubts about the effects of imported silver on the Chinese economy, see: *Another Look at Silver Imports into China, ca. 1635–1644*, in *Journal of World History* 16 (2005) 4, pp. 467–489.

14 It should not be forgotten that the Asian continent had for centuries being particularly attractive for European countries, which were in many ways less advanced, particularly with regard to technology. The reason why relations developed as they did – and particularly why the fleets of the eunuch Admiral Zheng did not continue their exploration of the African and Arabian coast in the first decades of fifteenth century – remains a controversial point (one compelling and convincing interpretation is that this was due to the fact that Chinese policy was primarily concerned with managing internal affairs: Ying Liu et al. (eds.), *Zheng. He's maritime voyages (1405–1433) and China's relations with the Indian Ocean world: a multilingual bibliography*, Leiden 2014).

15 A wealth of economic and cultural insights can be found in the essays that make up P. Burschel/S. Jüterczenska (eds.), *Begegnen, Aneigen, Vermessen. Europäische Expansion als Globale Interaktion*, Stuttgart 2016. Also see G. Wade, *Asian Expansions: An Introduction*, in: idem (ed.), *The Historical Experiences of Polity Expansion in Asia*, Abingdon 2015, p. 18. On the idea of "cosmopolitanism", see G. Marcocci, *Renaissance Italy Meets South Asia: Florentine and Venetians in a Cosmopolitan World*, in: J. Flores et al. (eds.), *Cosmopolitanism in the Early Modern World: The Case of South Asia (16th–18th Centuries)*, Paris 2015, pp. 45–68. On the notion of "interconnected worlds", see S. Subrahmanyam, *Mondi connessi: la storia oltre l'eurocentrismo (secoli 16.–18.)*, Rome 2014; G.

What is certainly true is that both short- and long-distance trade existed before the emergence of nation-states and the structure within which they existed.¹⁶ Thus, as Chaudhuri underlines, at the time of the Portuguese arrival in India in 1498, “there had been no organized attempt by any political power to control the sea-lanes and the long distance trade of Asia. The Iberians and their north European followers imported a Mediterranean style of warfare by land and sea into an area that had hitherto had quite a different tradition”¹⁷. Similarly, Michael Pearson examines the fiscal policy followed by Asia to reveal a very different approach to that found in European financial policies. The first tended to focus on revenue from the taxation of agricultural produce, while within European states an increasing role was played by the fiscal revenue generated by maritime trade: “the issue of sea revenues is a key to understanding European expansion”.¹⁸ The common perception of Asian countries in decline has undoubtedly been accompanied by the perception of European maritime trade in expansion and the decreasing significance of the Silk Road. And it was during this period that Italian merchants, unable to compete with such major institutions as trade companies, were forced to operate under the umbrella of Portuguese and Spanish trade organizations or join forces with individual merchants.¹⁹ Future research is required to cast more light on the limited

Marcocci, *Indios, cinesi, falsari: Le storie del mondo nel Rinascimento*, Bari 2017. Within this specific historical context, lucid and telling arguments for historians to reconsider the East and re-evaluate the supposed centrality of the West are advanced in J. Goody, *L'Oriente in Occidente. Una riscoperta delle civiltà occidentali*, Bologna 1999. However, one cannot forget the fundamental lessons to be learnt from the pioneering studies by Joseph Needham and his successors in the volumes on Science and Civilisation in China, published by Cambridge University Press from 1954 onwards.

- 16 M. Middel, *Portals of Globalization as lieux de mémoire*, in: *Comparativ* 27 (2017) 3–4, pp. 70–71. However, this does not mean that one should read the relative closure of China, Japan, and India without reference to the forces driving European expansionism, a process that defined the character of this entire period of history. The evolution in European economies and political systems proceeded in tandem with a process that saw the formation of the modern state, a revolution in the organization of military and naval power, and a growth in trade that triggered, or accelerated, the process of “globalization”. For Immanuel Wallerstein, this process began in the sixteenth century, while Janet Abu-Lughod argues that it actually got underway during the course of the thirteenth century, thanks to the roles played by both China and the Arab world. For his part, Wallerstein tends (wrongly) to underestimate the role played by Asia, above all because he regards this continent as having been excluded from the key structure of “centre – semi-periphery – periphery” during the Early Modern period. The vision that inspires such interpretations is clearly related to the very contemporary debate regarding global trade and national interests, inevitably inviting us to consider the real effects of the process without forgetting that “global expresses a certain multi-layered connectedness of all historical realms – it entails relations, flows, and influences at a cultural, social and political level”. See on this point D. Sachsenmaier, *China and Globalization*, Paper presented to the Conference: *Globalization, Civil Society and Philanthropy*, New York 2003, p. 2; see also D. Sachsenmaier, *Global Perspectives on Global History. Theories and Approaches in a Connected World*, Cambridge, UK 2011. Certainly, once met with some scepticism, A. G. Frank’s arguments with regard to the return of China into world markets (see: *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*, Berkeley / Los Angeles, 1998) are now taken much more seriously.
- 17 K. Chaudhuri, quoted by T. Andrade, *Asian States and overseas expansion, 1500–1700. An approach to the Problem of European Exceptionalism*, in: Wade (ed.), *The Historical Experiences of Polity Expansion in Asia*, p. 53.
- 18 M. N. Pearson, *Merchants and States*, in: J. D. Tracy (ed.), *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires*, Cambridge, UK 1991, p. 48.
- 19 Fully-developed research on this issue can be found in B. Crivelli / G. Sabatini (eds.), *Reti finanziarie e reti commerciali. Operatori economici stranieri in Portogallo, XVI–XVII secolo (=Rivista di Storia Economica XVIII [2015] 2)*. In particular, N. Alessandrini, *Reti commerciali genovesi a Lisbona nel secolo XVII: elementi di commercio*

presence in Asia of Italian merchants (minority groups which also included Armenians, Greeks, and Jews) and on how well they were able to resist changing circumstances and the growing competition from Western Trade Companies.

That being said, it is undeniable that Italy, and particularly Venice, throughout the seventeenth century remained a major destination for the Asian products, even if these were also flowing into many other European ports. Iranian silk, for example, remained a fundamental luxury Asian product that affected the trading relations between Asia and Europe as a whole: key players in this trade were the Armenians and the city of New Julfa, created by the Safavids during the seventeenth century, with the express purpose of facilitating the increase of silk exports from Iran to expanding European markets.²⁰ And this sector of Persian silk was one in which the role played by Venice was far from insignificant as well the capacity of the entire peninsula to tackle the Asian raw and manufactured silk production.²¹

It has to be considered that in each area of what today is called the Middle East one can identify specific local strategies. The Ottoman Empire, for example, was among the competitors closely connected to Indian markets, exporting horses, grain, and cotton and importing jewellery, spices, and fine silks; the Sunni Islam practised by the Ottomans was a significant factor in the rivalry with Safavid Iran.²² For its part, Iran also developed its own cultural and economic strategy in other directions, as is reflected by the diplomatic relations the Safavids maintained with Siam.²³ The fall of the Safavid dynasty at the end of the seventeenth century, a period when the Dutch and English navies were becoming more relevant factors in the East, contributed to the growing importance of the maritime route, even if Central Asian markets continued to exist.

globale, pp. 275–298. See also N. Alessandrini/A. Viola, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo: reti commerciali e strategie politico-diplomatiche (1650–1700)*, in: *Mediterranea. Ricerche storiche* 28 (2013), pp. 295–322. On the fundamental role of Genoa inside Latin America, see C. Brilli, *Genoese Trade and Migration in the Spanish Atlantic, 1700–1830*, Cambridge, UK 2016.

- 20 S. D. Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The global trade networks of Armenian merchants from New Julfa*, Berkeley 2010; R. W. Ferrier, *Trade from the mid-14th Century to the End of the Safavid Period*, in: P. Jackson/L. Lockhart, *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 6, *The Timurid and Safavid Periods*, Cambridge, UK 1986, pp. 472–490. See also: *A Journey to Persia. Jean Chardin's Portrait of a Seventeenth-century Empire*, transl. and ed. by R. W. Ferrier, London / New York 1996, pp. 165–186.
- 21 On this issue, see my contribution "Chinese Silk and European Trade. A Balance (16th–19th century)", in: Ciriaco, *Luxury Production*, pp. 253 sqq.
- 22 A. C. S. Peacock, *The Economic Relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Southeast Asia in the Seventeenth Century*, in: A. T. Gallop/A. C. S. Peacock (eds.), *From Anatolia to Aceh. Ottomans, Turks and Southeast Asia*, London 2015, pp. 63–73. On the geographical exploration undertaken by the Ottoman empire, and the (not always fully exploited) scope for increased trade that resulted there from, see the arguments advanced by G. Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*, Oxford 2010.
- 23 G. Rota, *Diplomatic Relations between the Safavids and Siam in the 17th Century*, in: Kauz (ed.), *Aspects of the maritime silk road*, pp. 71–84.

2. Russian Expansion: From the West to the East

After the decline of Genghis Kahn's empire, both the Timurid and the Yuan dynasty, which governed China, were far from being minor players in what was transpiring in Central Asia, which was experiencing the arrival of new players: the Russians, the English, large nomadic populations, and the Moghuls in India as well as numerous Asian regions (independent from or economically connected to China). Regarding the Silk Road, most traders were limited in transporting their wares from one place to another – that is to say, they did not complete the entire route from east to west. Furthermore, this route was strongly influenced by climate change, as Jan Blanchard observes: rain fall “and abated temperatures resulted in more verdant grass growth in Mongolia” moving progressively southward of the great silk road”.²⁴

The direction of trade was influenced by this climate change. One route affected was towards the northern shore of the Black Sea (to Kaffa in the Crimea) and towards Taman on the Sea of Azov, with Western merchants carrying their wares through Istanbul over the Black Sea and then passing on through Kaffa to Trebizond and Persia beyond. Another was in the direction of Indian markets through the Central Asian khanates – Kokhand, Bukhara, and Khiva – which acted as way stations for merchants passing along the Silk Road. In this sense, the traditional demand/offer of products exchanged along the Silk Road experienced a new lease of life. The newcomers, such as Russians and the English, interacted with numerous populations and tribes – engaging with their interests and activities – inside Central Asia, which were dependents of the Celestial Empire – a literary name for the Chinese Empire – and, before that, of the Dzungar dynasty, which governed from 1678 to 1754/58. It seems that during the phases that experienced climate improvement, described by Blanchard, the area at the eastern end of the Silk Road in the Tarim Basin enjoyed factors that were favourable for trade throughout the seventeenth century. Cities such as Karashar, Kucha, Aksu, Ush, Kashgar, Yarkand, Khotan, and Turfan could profit from “a trading network that linked China, the Middle East, India, Transoxania, Russia, and Siberia”.²⁵ A favourable fiscal system, founded on a low tax rate (even on foreign trade), was introduced by the Dzungar dynasty and would be upheld by the Chinese authorities after the fall of the former dynasty. Of great importance, this fiscal policy was then followed by the Chinese authorities themselves in their expansion toward the West, as has been highlighted by Peter Perdue.²⁶

24 Blanchard, *The “Great Silk Road”*, p. 255.

25 *Ibid.*, pp. 253–275. For an investigation of the cartographical aspects of this, see J. Tucker, *The Silk Road. China and the Karakorum Highway. A Travel Companion*, with a foreword by P. Theroux, London / New York 2015, pp. 122–164.

26 Another issue of strategic importance for China and its westward expansion was the matter of borders and the empire's attitude to its neighbours and competitors, be they Russians, the British at Canton, or such nomadic populations as the Kazakhs and Zunghars (these latter finally becoming subjects under Chinese rule). See Perdue, *China marches West*, pp. 402–403 and 518–519; N. Di Cosmo, *Ancient China and Its Enemies: The Rise of Nomadic Power in East Asian History*, Cambridge, UK 2002; *Idem*, *State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History*, in: *Journal of World History* 10 (1999) 1, pp. 1–40; H. R. Clark, *Frontier Discourse and China's Maritime*

On the opposite side of Central Asia, Russian expansion eastward, which started in the sixteenth century, was certainly inspired by such fiscal policy. The north-south trade route became increasingly valuable after the conquest of Kazan and the foundation of Astrakhan on the Caspian Sea in the sixteenth century, connecting the southern market with the northern – and with Arkhangel'sk in particular, a port through which Russian commerce flowed to Western Europe (especially the Low Countries). Already in the fifteenth century, Kazan's importance is unmistakable, with the city linking economic interests in Moscow with an area that reached as far as Bulgaria as well as the Muslim world. Already by the beginning of that century, "Russian merchants from Moscow, Pskov, and Novgorod operated regularly in the territory of their Muslim neighbour to the east, the khanate of Kazan, where Bulgars, central Asians, and Cherkassy also resided".²⁷ Even the colonization around the Aral Sea during the sixteenth century is a clear expression of the interest in Central Asia, which ultimately led to Russian control over many central Asian states.

It was Peter the Great who had profited from the fall of the Safavid dynasty after the invasion of the Afghani, entering the valuable silk trade and even trying to control the entire Iranian economy.²⁸ Part an only partially successful attempt to gain access to the Indian market, this push in the direction of Persia and Afghanistan was meant to complement (and counterbalance) the role played in the north by the foundation of the city of St. Petersburg. Elsewhere in Russia, by the early years of the seventeenth century one of the many major routes for the silk trade already ran in the direction of Siberia and Arkhangel'sk on the White Sea.²⁹ As Edmund Herzig points out:

raw silk could follow a number of different routes from the production area to Europe and these were: 1) overland to Bursa and Istanbul and onward by sea, or by land across the Balkan peninsula to the Adriatic; 2) overland to Aleppo in Syria from where it was trans-

Frontier: China's Frontiers and the Encounter with the Sea through Early Imperial History, in: *Journal of World History* 20 (2009) 1, pp. 1–33. For more in-depth discussion of the political history and characteristics of the numerous peoples of Central Asia (Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, Turkmen, Tatars, Uzbeks, Kalmyks, etc.), see the fundamental work N. Di Cosmo / A. J. Frank / P. B. Golden (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia. The Chinggisid Age*, Cambridge, UK 2009. On the issue of the "East influenced the West", an interpretation that takes the opposite view to J. Goody: i.e. the reciprocal influence of the West on the East (see footnote 14) is to be found in I. Bellér-Hann, *Silk Road Connectivities and the Construction of Local History in Eastern Xinjiang*, in: *Comparativ* 28 (2018) 4, pp. 93–119. Also see B. Teissier, *Russian Frontiers: Eighteenth-Century British Travellers in the Caspian, Caucasus and Central Asia*, Oxford 2011, where the reports by these travellers make it clear that, in direct competition with the Russians and Chinese, the British were interested in events in Central Asia. On this issue, also see M. Hue (Évariste Régis), *Travels in Tartary, Tibet, and China during the years 1844–56*, transl. by the French, London 1856; A. Beer, *Geschichte des Westhandels im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, Wien 1864, vol. 1, pp. 370–404.

27 E. Monahan, *The Merchants of Siberia. Trade in early Modern Eurasia*, Ithaca/London 2016, pp. 96–97.

28 Teissier, *Russian frontiers*, p.181.

29 Venice itself was present in this port. As Stefano Villani stresses, when the Russian ambassadors were in Tuscany with the aim of opening up trade relations with Italian cities, one of their primary goals was "to encourage Venice to use the commercial base of Arkhangel'sk, and obtain the right for Russians to purchase luxury Venetian fabrics without having to pay customs duties", see Villani, *Ambasciatori russi a Livorno e rapporti tra Moscovia e Toscana nel XVII secolo*, in: *Nuovi Studi Livornesi* 14 (2008), pp. 37–95. My thanks to the author for pointing this out.

ported to the port of Iskenderun and onward by sea; 3) overland to Izmir and onward by sea; 4) across the Caspian to Astrakhan from either Rasht/Anzali in Gilian or Sham-akha/Niyazabad in Shirvan, then up the Volga to Moscow and onward either overland to Central Europe or by way of the Baltic or the White Sea to Holland and England; 5) overland across Iran via Isfahan to Bandar Abbas and onward by sea via the Cap route.³⁰

A particularly dynamic role here was played by Dutch ships, which themselves carried silk and caviar towards Italy specifically and the Mediterranean in general. According to one estimate (which may be seen as applicable in a broader sense):

[T]he Sephardi silk broker Sebastian Pimentel reported that in 1630 only 20 per cent of Dutch silk imports were arriving from the Mediterranean. This means the rest, 80 per cent of Persian silk reaching the Netherlands, was arriving via other routes, including from the Dutch East India Company circumnavigating Africa or from Dutch merchants in Russia. According to Jonathan Israel's estimates, in 1630 four hundred bales of Persian and Armenian silk reached Western Europe via Moscow and Arkhangel'sk [...] and only three hundred silk bales reached Western Europe from Levant and Italy. Thus, bearing in mind the silk traded by the VOC, one might estimate that a good one-fifth of the total silk arriving in Europe came from Russia.³¹

Raw silk was shipped directly from the Iranian market to the Russian market and there was “a considerable increase in the export of raw silk through Astrakhan, which varied from 20,000 to 100,000 kilograms per year at the turn of the eighteenth century”.³² The considerable Russian interest in the Italian market included finished silks and fabrics³³ as well as two exports that would become of vital importance for trade with European markets: caviar and rhubarb (the latter was a medicinal plant for which there was great demand amongst seventeenth- and eighteen-century European consumers, and the trade therein was a monopoly controlled by the Moscow authorities).³⁴ It is no coincidence that it was with the grand duke of the silk-producing Tuscany that Tsar Aleksei Mikhailov signed a commercial agreement in 1658, granting the former a monopoly over the caviar trade within the Italian market in return for the payment of an agreed sum – the grand duke obtained the concession that half of that payment would be calculated in “silk, as was the common practice at Arkhangel'sk”.

Certainly, Russian expansion in Central Asia took advantage of the growing prominence of the Asian khanates, showing an increasing interest in what for Europeans was “the

30 E. Herzig, The Volume of Iranian Raw Silk Exports in the Safavid Period, in: *Iranian Studies* 25 (1992) 1–2, p. 62.

31 Monahan, *The Merchants of Siberia*, p.60.

32 N. G. Kukanova, quoted by A. Stanziani, *After Oriental Despotism. Eurasian Growth in a Global Perspective*, London 2014, p. 80.

33 See R. Mazzei, *Sete italiane nella Russia della seconda metà del Seicento. La produzione lucchese alle fiere di Arcangelo*, in: *Rivista di Storia Economica* (2015) 2, pp. 473–515.

34 In Gemelli Careri's description of the rich array of goods traded in Asia, we are told that the best rhubarb was that grown in Bhutan and sold by the Tartars, see *Giro del mondo del Dottor Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri*, Tomo secondo contenente le cose più vedute nella Persia, Venice 1719, p. 3..

East" and for Russians might also be "India" (as Manohan calls attention to, "the term 'India' in early Russian sources could encompass an area much larger, including even China"³⁵). It is now widely accepted that by the end of the seventeenth century "Russia was heavily integrated in the expanding European world economy, linked to colonial economies of the English and Dutch via Arkhangel'sk and with the Silk Roads trade through the Volga-Caspian and Siberian trade routes".³⁶ As already mentioned, while Arkhangel'sk served as Russia's window to the West, it was Astrakhan, at the mouth of the Volga River into the Caspian Sea, that became its window to the "Orient".³⁷ This is evidenced by a small but active community of Indian merchants, who were part of a much vaster network that extended from Lahore and Multan to Kandahar, Isfahan and Bukhara, linking the north of India with Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asia, and Russia.³⁸ At the same time, as Nicolaus Visscher points out, Persian goods were travelling up the Volga to Astrakhan.³⁹ All of this confirms the existence, in parallel with a complex of Western interests, of Asian interests, which although perhaps being more traditional in character were extremely important.

The Russians were skilled at exploiting divisions among the tribal nomadic peoples of the region (above all, the Kazakhs), and they managed to penetrate such trading centres as Kokhand, Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khivan (in modern-day Uzbekistan), taking advantage of the role played by these cities' merchants. Without them, it would not have been possible to establish trade with Kabul, Herat, Kashmir, and the Chinese cities of Xinjiang.

Bukhara, for example, had no industries that worked raw materials, and so it was purely a trading centre. The city was particularly significant as its merchants supplied Orenburg and the Russian fairs of Nijni and Novgorod with not only cotton (a major commodity) but also dried fruit, rice, raw and dyed silk thread, silk fabrics, shawls, and indigo. Caravans under the control of the Kyrgyz⁴⁰ ran from Bukhara to Kashgar, which remained independent from China until the empire conquered the whole of Xinjiang in 1758. This state of affairs enabled the Russians to export not only their own goods but also those which came from Central Europe, such as cloths, fine coral, pearls, cochineal, cloth of gold, velvet, silver and gold wire, German otter-skins, marten-skins, copper, sugar, hides, large mirrors, wheel rims, needles, glass-wares and Russian nankeens. In

35 Monahan, *The Merchants of Siberia*, p. 362. Also see M. Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier. The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1500–1880*, Bloomington/Indianapolis 2002; D. N. Druhe, *Russo-Indian Relations, 1466–1917*, New York 1970.

36 Monahan, *The Merchants of Siberia*, p. 53.

37 Findlay/O'Rourke, *Power and Plenty*, p. 303.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 244. Manuzzi was more focused on the institutions and social aspects of India than on economic issues. On his presence in the subcontinent, see P. Falchetta (ed.), *Storia del Mogol di Nicolò Manuzzi veneziano*, Milan 1986. See also the comments made by Subrahmanyam in *Mondi connessi*, pp. 183–219.

39 N. Visscher, *Atlas minor*, Amsterdam [ca 1710].

40 5,000 to 6,000 camels were used per year. The load of a single camel was estimated to be 60 ducats in value, which was calculated to be RUB 3,500,000–4,000,000. A single camel could carry 18 to 20 pud, a pud being the equivalent to 40 Russian pounds or 36 Chinese pounds (Bokhara: its Amir and its People, translated from the Russian of Khanikoff by the Baron Clement A. De Bode, London 1845, p. 220).

turn, “Kokhand merchants brought to Bukhara fine white cotton sheets to be dyed, silk stuffs, which were more durable than those of the Bukharans, and about 500 puds (ca. 8 tons) of raw silk of inferior quality to that of Bukhara. Tashkent sent to Bukhara much the same merchandise but in lesser quantity”.⁴¹ Bukhara had a large population (Florio Beneveni, who visited during his travels of 1721 to 1725, mentions 15,000), with a sizeable number of Jewish traders closely linked to the Russian fairs of Nijni and Novgorod (the latter a city that was emblematic of the traditional Russian interest in expansion into Central and Southern Asia). Astrakhan, too, seems to have been equally important as a trading centre. At the crossroads of Eurasian trade, the north-south routes from Russia along the Volga intersected with the merchandise arriving from the Silk Road that was directed towards the ports of the Caspian Sea, Persia and beyond – trade which saw the involvement of Armenians, Indians, Persians, and different Tatar groups.⁴² Nevertheless, the number which some sources give for the population of Astrakhan in 1740 – a total of 100, 000 – seems excessive, even if it is taken up by Tesseir: we know that in 1811 the population numbered only 37,000, which had increased to just 42,800 by 1863.⁴³ Both sericulture and manufacture were developing widely inside this area, which was at the centre of the Silk Road and looked westward towards Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Persia, connecting these regions to China. Eighteenth-century Russian interest in this strategic area (and in Bukhara in particular) is entirely understandable, and equally understandable is the interest shown here by the English East India Company, which was looking towards India (a focus that would have decisive consequences in the future). It is no accident that a treaty was signed in the first half of the eighteenth century by Russians and British to guarantee equal profits from Central Asian trade, especially with regard to that moving through Bukhara and Kiakhta. However, it seems that throughout the eighteenth-century Russia profits in Bukhara did not match those obtained by the British.

While Bukhara and Kashgar were important in Russian trade with China, it seems evident that the major centre for this commerce was Kiakhta, through which passed porcelain plates (decorated with the Greco-Roman designs in demand among European consumers), cotton, Japanese lacquer work, artificial flowers, sugar, tobacco, rice, rhubarb, ginger, musk, and musical instruments. In fact, the rhubarb from Tartar territories was considered better than that from India, and there was no question that the rhubarb that came via Central Asia was better than that transported to Europe by ship, which was exposed to excessive humidity during the voyage. Another central export from China to

41 Ibid., pp. 144, 208, 212, 215–217; William Coxe, *Account of the Russian Discoveries Between Asia and America. To Which Are Added, The Conquest of Siberia, And The History Of The Transactions And Commerce Between Russia And China*, London, J. Nichols for T. Cadel, 1780, pp. 231–243 and 332–343.

42 Tesseir, *Russian Frontiers*, p. 232; N. Di Cosmo, *A Russian Envoy to Khiva: the Italian Diary of Florio Beneveni*, in: *Proceedings of the XXVIII Permanent International Altaistic Conference: Venice, Wiesbaden 1989*, pp. 73–114.

43 See H. Palli et al., *La démographie historique en URSS (avant 1917)*, in: *Annales de démographie historique* (1986), pp. 379–391. This source was kindly pointed out to me by Maurice Aymard, of the *Maison des Sciences de l’Homme* in Paris, whom I would also like to thank for his painstaking reading of the present article.

Russia was tea; exports had begun earlier than the 18th century and were linked with the trade in rhubarb itself (the finer quality of this latter came from Kiakhat, while that from Kashgar was of a lesser quality). It is true that the tea itself still had to compete with the green tea from India (over which the British had a monopoly), but it is nevertheless the case that tea would long remain the key Chinese export not only towards Russia but also to European markets. According to some sources (yet to be assessed and compared), the Chinese tea that was sent to Russia was sometimes believed to be of higher quality than the tea that China exported to Europe.

As for silk, the other vital product, while it is true that the Chinese had banned the export of raw silk, there was also sizeable flow of contraband through Kiakhta, given the great demand for such silk on the Russian market. In effect, the Russians enjoyed considerable advantages in their overall trade with Kiakhta, given that they could export their furs and livestock to the city: for example, when the Chinese were at war with the nomad Kalmyks, these latter depended upon Russians for the supply of horses. So, while it has been calculated that in 1777 Russia actually had a trade deficit in this area (1,484,712 as opposed to 1,313,621 roubles), over the long term it had everything to gain from such trade. Nor should one forget that it exported not only its own fabrics but also those imported from Europe (British, French, and Prussian).

Nevertheless, it was Orenburg more than Kiakhta that became the strategic hub of the internal Asian trade. It even surpassed Astrakhan thanks to its varied commerce: partly luxury items from the Far East and partly traditional ones, such as horses, camels, pelts, and utensils from Russia. It is undeniable "that caravan commerce was revived and that there was a shift from the Iran-Caspian-Astrakhan line to overland routes through Central Asia to Orenburg".⁴⁴ Trade was largely managed by central Asians and Tatars from Kazan and Orenburg to the detriment of Russian merchants themselves; like other European merchants inside Asian markets, these latter were dependent on native interpreters and guides.⁴⁵

3. English, Chinese, Russians: The Italian Avatar

What was happening in Central Asia, however, should not lead one to underestimate the role of maritime trade and the dominance of a port such as Canton, thanks to the growing presence of the British, whose activity there reveals the existence of clear trade links with India – links whose "colonial" nature is not less evident than the "Russification" in Central Asia over the course of the nineteenth century.⁴⁶ With regard to tea, for example, in 1800 Canton would export some 23 million pounds worth, while "only" 2.5 million

44 Stanziani, *After Oriental Despotism*, p. 84.

45 This issue was already raised by D. Lombard, *Questions on the contact between European companies and Asian societies*, in: L. Blussé et al. (eds.), *Companies and Trade*, Leiden 1981, pp. 180–187.

46 U. Hofmeister, *Civilization and Russification in Tsarist Central Asia, 1860–1917*, in: *Journal of World History* 27 (2016) 3, pp. 411–442.

pounds worth passed through Kiakhta (the quality, and therefore the price, of tea could vary depending upon where it was being exported to – for example, Siberia, Britain, Europe or Russia).⁴⁷ The two centres of Canton and Kiakhta thus alternated in standing, even if the latter – due to its geographical position (in the heart of Siberia) – was definitely a fundamental hub for the export of furs and skins, often of very high value (such as beaver, winter fox, sable, etc.). In fact, for a long time, such products and the duty on them would make a sizeable contribution to Russian revenues, even if there were complex negotiations with the Chinese over those taxes: the Chinese wanted to reduce such duties in order to increase their trade with Russia but at the same time expected to be able to levy high exit taxes on their own goods.⁴⁸

The key goods that reflected the future commercial destinies of the two nations were the raw silk and cotton imported from China via Bukhara and Kiakhta. The case of raw silk might be seen as emblematic of the overall situation, given that in 1751 it accounted for 24 per cent of the total Chinese imports into Russia but by the end of the century made up no more than 12 per cent. Russia, however, would continue to import raw silk from Iran as well as wool and cotton from both China and India – all to supply a process of industrialization that may not have matched the phenomenon to be seen in the British Isles but would remain significant for some decades to come. Still, there is no question that most of Russia's exports would continue to be made up of "bulk goods with a low ratio of value to weight, such as hemp and flax, wax and tallow, hides, skins and leather, pitch and tar, timber, and increasingly over time grain".⁴⁹ Just like China's foreign trade, Russia's would be linked throughout the eighteenth century to classic exotic products, and only in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would the formulation "luxury products versus mass products" see the latter prevail.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, in the case of Russia, the process of a "modern" development seems to have been largely underappreciated by traditional historiography.⁵¹ Furthermore, even it is difficult to deny the importance of maritime traffic and the penetration of British interests and trade originating in Southern Asia (especially India), during the nineteenth century Russia's control of markets

47 On this point, see M. Mancall, *The Kiakhta Trade*, in: Ch. D. Cowan (ed.), *The Economic Development of China and Japan*, London 1964, p. 44.

48 M. I. Sladkovskii, *History of Economic Relations between Russia and China*, Jerusalem 1966, pp. 32–33. See this text for the role of caravans financed by the Russian state in the export of furs and other products (due to pressure from the Russian state itself, that trade was gradually to be taken over by private entrepreneurs). On the fiscal systems in Russia and China (the latter perhaps dating back further and generally more efficient), see P. Gatrell, *The Russian fiscal state, 1600–1914*; K. G. Deng, *The continuation and efficiency of the Chinese fiscal state, 700 BC–AD 1911*; and R. Bin Wong, *Taxation and good governance in China, 1500–1914*, in: B. Yun Casalilla et al. (eds.), *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History 1500–1914*, Cambridge, UK 2012, pp. 191–212, 340–352 and 365–372 resp.

49 Finlay/O'Rourke, *Power and Plenty*, pp. 299–304, esp. p. 302 over time grain and bar iron.

50 P. Verley, *Marché des produits de luxe et division internationale du travail (XIXe–XXe siècles)*, in: *Revue de Synthèse* (2006) 2, pp. 359–378. See also S. Richter/G. Garner (eds.), „Eigennutz“ und „gute Ordnung“. Ökonomisierungen der Welt im 17. Jahrhundert, Wiesbaden 2016, pp. 485 sq; Ciriaco, *Luxury Production*.

51 On this issue, see Stanziani, *After Oriental Despotism*, pp. 107sq.

inside Central Asia would become firmly established and remain a defining feature of the political history of the region⁵² until the implosion of the Soviet Union.

If we are interested in the role Italian merchants did play in that region over these centuries, the limited information that is available provides us only with just one figure: Florio Beneveni, originally from Ragusa (Dubrovnik), appointed as a Russian envoy on a mission to Khiva in 1725, which is described in the journal that he wrote in Italian. His mission to Central Asia took place at a time when there were many Europeans at the court of Peter the Great, and Russia was expanding into the Central Asian khanates.⁵³ Indeed, this Russian expansion was not limited to Asia but, as I have underlined, was also in the direction of the Mediterranean, through the increased importance of the Black Sea. Perhaps comparable to Astrakhan on the Caspian Sea, Kaffa would become an important port on the Black Sea after the waning fortunes there of the Genoese and Venetians, a transition that merits more attention.⁵⁴

A no less essential role would be played by the ports of the eastern Mediterranean as well the traditional terminals of Asian caravans, first and foremost those connected to Aleppo.⁵⁵ This latter destination remained vital throughout the eighteenth century, the port continuing to be the final destination of the German products transported by the Venetian ships (fustians, worked cottons, and metal ware). On the other hand, Venice remained the final destination for the luxury products transported by caravans from the Middle East – at that time, Baghdad, Basra, and ancient Babylon.⁵⁶ Iran and India also have to be considered in this larger picture. For example, the presence of the Republic of Venice inside the Indian peninsula was very relevant – think, for instance, of the role of diamonds and the techniques for cutting the stones developed by Venetian artisans.⁵⁷ Nor should one overlook the fact that certain Chinese products began to compete with such typical Venetian objects as false coral on international markets. Undoubtedly, the trade between Venice and these Mediterranean ports (Alexandria and Aleppo) has to be

52 E. Allworth (ed.), *Central Asia. 130 Years of Russian Dominance. A Historical Overview*, Durham / London 1994.

53 Di Cosmo, *A Russian Envoy to Khiva*, pp. 73–114. As was pointed out to me by Maurice Aymard, the reference is to Dubrovnik (Ragusa) and not to the Ragusa in Sicily, as Di Cosmo himself interprets it.

54 "Like Astrakhan, Kaffa was a great entrepôt and the most important port within the Khanate. Strong walls and ditches surrounded it. Its population was some 80,000 souls including some 5,000–6,000 Raya Greeks, Armenians, Catholics and Jews. [...] The town's trade was enormous. Yet even at this time the wares brought to it by way of the "Great Silk Road" constituted only a tiny part. The vast majority of the goods bought and sold at Kaffa were brought from, or despatched to, lands within the Ottoman trade-system of the Black Sea and the Turkish lands beyond the Bosphorus" (Blanchard, *The "Great Silk Road"*, p. 274). On the role of the Black Sea, see G. Harlaftis, *Black Sea and its maritime networks, 1770s–1810s. The Beginnings of its European Integration*, in: G. Nigro (ed.), *Maritime Networks as a Factor in European Integration (The 50th Settimana di Studi dell'Istituto Internazionale F. Datini, Prato 13–17 May 2018)*, Florence 2019; the argument there is already sketched out in Harlaftis et al. (eds.), *The New Ways of History*, London 2009.

55 A. Morana, *Relazione del commercio di Aleppo ed altre scale della Siria e Palestina*, Venice 1799.

56 L. Reinhardt, *Erben einer späten Seidenstrasse. Der Markt von Aleppo in osmanischer Zeit (16.–18. Jahrhundert)*, in: *Die Seidenstrasse. Handel und Kulturaustausch in einem eurasischen Wegenetz*, Hamburg 2001, pp. 237–250.

57 S. Ciriaco, *Diamonds in Early Modern Venice. Technology, Products and International Competition*, in: *Italian Technology from Renaissance to the Twentieth century (History of Technology 32 [2014])*, now in *Luxury Production*, pp. 229–252.

considered inside the framework of the economic relations between Russia and other major Italian economies, for instance the Republic of Venice, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, and Genoa (however, it should be stressed that that latter was increasingly more interested in the Atlantic economy).

Thus, not only does Russia's economic penetration into Central Asia have to be taken into account but also its expansion towards the Black Sea, where it came up against European powers – a circumstance that would become the origin of the “Eastern Question”. Furthermore, Istanbul and Izmir on the Turkish coast, as well as Alexandria on the Egyptian coast (with land links to the Red Sea), have to be considered as vital terminals for trans-Asian trade. Through these ports, northern European markets and such central European centres as Vienna and Leipzig were connected to Asia.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the emergence of many Central Asian states – for example, Kazakhstan – and the exploitation of many mineral and fuel resources (gas and petrol) have given the continent an undeniable advantage, with harsh consequences for the West. There is no question that the strategic reaction here of Europe – and especially the US – has not been adequate. Peter Frankopan writes about a “road to catastrophe” and a “the road to tragedy”.⁵⁸ Interestingly, however, one can see the emergence of a new Silk Road following the same path as the old one – which tends as well to ignore desert areas. This new “Road”, nevertheless, is more a conduit for the flow of products and fuel resources than the exchange of discoveries and know-how as it was in the past (think of the technologies of silk and paper manufacture). How the West should intervene in the future depends on its capacity to react and to develop a wide-ranging political-economic response to the current situation, accepting – as Fernand Braudel stresses – that there are necessary limits to any such reaction.⁵⁹

58 Frankopan, *The Silk Roads*, chapt. 24 and 25.

59 F. Braudel, *Les ambitions de l'histoire*, 2, Préface de Maurice Aymard, Paris 1997, pp. 97–125.

REZENSIONEN

Arnd Bauerkämper / Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe (eds.): Fascism without Borders. Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe from 1918 to 1945, New York / Oxford: Berghahn Books 2017, 373 p.

Review by
Victor Lundberg, Malmö

Fascism is now an international movement, which means not only that the Fascist nations can combine for purposes of loot, but that they are groping, perhaps only half-consciously as yet, towards a world system.¹

As early as 1937, George Orwell pinpointed the significance of the transnational character of fascism. He underlined its potential to dismantle the world we know and threaten the rights we have won and defended during the twentieth century. 80 years later, fascism with its underlying transnational ambitions is unfortunately present on the international political scene again. Today it appears in a neo-fascist costume, with a new combination of beguiling rhetoric, appalling ideas and clumsy political behaviour, but nevertheless, it is

still fascism in its core of strong nationalism and chauvinism, and of anti-democracy, anti-communism, and anti-humanism. From Washington to Budapest, Brasilia to Moscow, Manila to Warsaw, neo-fascism is seeking power. Warning signals from brilliant historians as Federico Finchelstein and perceptive politicians as Madeleine Albright are now as vitally important as once George Orwell's.²

In "Fascism without borders", the editors Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe are very modest when emphasizing the importance and topicality of their book. In their outstanding introduction, they primarily focus, in a very illuminating and clarifying way, transnational fascism from a historical perspective. They start with defining the three dimensions of "transnational fascism": a) fascism was in fact a transnational political movement; b) fascism was in the historical context perceived as a transnational phenomenon; and c) fascism can analytically be approached with a transnational perspective (p. 2). Then they continue to scrutinize "fascism as a transnational political alternative to democracy" in interwar Europe (p. 16). In this, Bauerkämper and Rossolinski-Liebe write pleasurably and concisely with great expertise and analytical abilities. It is pure educational delight to read this.

As the editors initially point out, historical research that focus on the transnational dimensions of fascism are still very rare (pp. 1, 6). However, this volume connects to a small but very important field of historical research, where the most studies are quite recently published.³ In all, this book consists of thirteen chapters, the introduction and the afterword excluded. In fact, the contributions can be divided into three themes. First, there are three essays in this book that stands out with a distinctively conceptual and intellectual ambition. They analyse central key notions and ideas within interwar fascism that had the obvious and strong potential to break national boundaries and bring fascists in interwar Europe together: Johannes Dalfinger about the *völkisch* elements throughout fascist Europe; Aristotle Kallis about violence and creative destruction “at the heart of the fascist history-making project” in Europe (p. 41); and Matteo Pasetti about the corporatist ideas as a central political cornerstone, overcoming national borders. These three intelligent essays dig analytically in the overlooked and contradictory intellectual history of fascism with a true transnational perspective.

Second, there are a group of essays that focus on national case studies, specific movements, and personalities, and their various international relations and transnational aspirations: Raul Carstocea about the international relations around the legionary leader of the Romanian Iron Guard, Ion I Mota; Monica Fioravanzo about the idea of a New European Order (NEO) within Italian fascism; Anna Lena Kocks about the relations and circulations of ideas about leisure among Italian and British fascists; Goran Miljan about the in-

terrelated organization of youth activities within the Croatian fascist group Ustasha and the Slovak Hlinka Party; Claudia Nin-hos about the obscure channels between Portugal and Germany beyond the German Kulturpropaganda; Marleen Rensen about the French fascist intellectual Robert Brasillach; and Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe about the meaning of inter-fascist conflicts between National Socialists and national fascist groups in Austria, Romania, and Ukraine. These seven essays – the backbone of this book – are all qualitative, empirically based and well written, but some of them maybe slip a little when it comes to staying true to the transnational main theme; internationalism is not the same as transnationalism.

Third, there are three essays on the fringe of this book that all have in common that they deal with antifascism: Kasper Braskén about communist antifascism; Silvia Madotto about universities as the centres of transnational antifascism activism in France and Italy; and Francesco Di Palma about transnational channels between antifascist activists in European exile. This is where the weakness of this book is revealed. These three essays are unfortunately not fully compatible with the qualified and well-defined theme around transnational fascism that the editors initially point out. The general idea that “transnational activities of fascists and antifascists were interrelated” (p. 361) is not really convincing or underpinned by these essays. Of course, were antifascists often related to fascists because of their nature as a collective political reaction against them. But does that really mean the opposite; that fascists actually were related to the antifascists in general? According to

this, it also unclear, what is really meant by dubious suggestions like: “a new history of communist antifascism should be written in close relation to transnational fascism” (p. 304). Here it becomes obvious that international antifascism, not only during the interwar period, need to be more critically investigated by historical research that is able to explore the complex antifascist grey-scale from factual and ideologically manifested (communist, syndicalist, social democratic, and radical liberal) antifascism, via political strategies and party tactics within and between the different antifascist actors, to totalitarian, anarchist, irresponsible, and adolescent, versions of antifascist disguises.⁴

However, this does not take away the strength and importance of this splendid book. It illustrates and problematize interwar fascism in Europe as an organic and multifaceted political force field, something Arnd Bauerkämper (in his interesting but too short afterword) portrays as: “fascist ultranationalism did not exclude a sense of common mission or solidarity, giving rise to a wide scope of relations, from mere perceptions to contacts, interactions, transfers, and processes of learning” (p. 355). On the basis of the essays, he also underlines that entanglements, conflicts, and antagonism were a significant factor in these “multiple asymmetries that characterized relations between fascists” (p. 357). On the other hand it is also essential to keep in mind the strong common concept of violence – which Aristotle Kallis in one of the sharpest essays of this book highlights as “the violent pursuit of the fascists ‘new order’” (p. 56) – that ties European fascists together and unifies them, not at least discursively and practi-

cally. This also reminds us about Robert O. Paxton’s important and clarifying definition of fascism as, beyond ideology and politics, a question of “a form of political behaviour”.⁵ Twentieth century fascism is in that sense like a rat: it is adaptable and could orientate and reproduce itself everywhere; it behaves nasty and completely unscrupulous; and it shuns the day, preferring the darkness.

In conclusion, the sheds new light on this; fascism’s overlooked but lethal capacity to emerge and amalgamate above national (and other) borders. This transnational “fascist spirit” (p. 208) that Marleen Rensen picks out in her shining contribution, must continue to be historically investigated and observed, not least because it is through that kind of knowledge we can stand stronger as democratic and humanitarian societies in the future. We may never forget George Orwell. This book helps us not to do that.

Notes:

- 1 G. Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, London 1937, p. 200. Also quoted in this volume, p. 5.
- 2 M. Albright, *Fascism. A Warning*, New York 2018; F. Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism in History*, Oakland 2017.
- 3 See, for example, M. Albanese, P. del Hierro, *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century. Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network. A Modern History of Politics and Violence*, London 2016; N. Alcade, *War Veterans and Fascism in Interwar Europe*, Cambridge 2017; A. Costa Pinto, K. Aristotle (eds.), *Rethinking Fascism and Dictatorship in Europe*, Basingstoke 2014; M. Durham, M. Power (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Transnational Right*, Basingstoke 2010; M. R. Gutmann, *Building a Nazi Europe. The SS’s Germanic Volunteers*, Cambridge 2017; A. G. Kjøstvedt, A. Salvador (eds.), *New Political Ideas in the Aftermath of the Great War*, Cham 2017; A. Mammone, *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*, New York 2015; Ph. Mor-

- gan, Fascism in Europe, 1919–1945, New York 2003.
- 4 See, for an excellent example, H. Garzia, M. Yusta, X. Tabet, Ch. Climaco (eds.), *Rethinking Antifascism. History, Memory and Politics, 1922 to the Present*, New York, Oxford 2016.
 - 5 R. O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, London 2004, p. 218.

Ralph Callebert: *On Durban's Docks: Zulu Workers, Rural Households, Global Labor*, Rochester: Rochester University Press, 2017, 256 S.

Reviewed by
Jonathan Hyslop, Hamilton

Recent years have seen a shift of historical scholarship on South Africa, in the direction of transnational perspectives. This new work has had a salutary effect on a historiography previously characterized by a considerable degree of national exceptionalism and even, at worst, parochialism. It has also highlighted, for the first time, the maritime dimension of modern South African history, with considerable attention given to port cities and their linkages across the world. Yet in its more simplistic manifestations, the new work has tended toward an over-optimistic celebration of 'cosmopolitanism' and 'global mobility'. Simultaneously, we have seen something of a decline in the strong tradition of South African labour history. While there has been much attention to global cultural flows and the travels of radical anti-coloni-

al politicians, working class life and struggles have become somewhat neglected.

Ralph Callebert's *On Durban's Docks* is an important corrective to all of these trends. It is an account of the harbour workers of South Africa's most important port during the Twentieth Century (with a focus on the 1930s to 1950s). The study is in the best traditions of labour history and of modern African social history, drawing on an extensive programme of oral history interviews and on deep archival work. While recognizing the benefits of a more global understanding of South Africa, Callebert fundamentally questions the centrality this has been given, and the implicit optimism that has come with it. He stresses the relative disconnection of Durban's dockworkers from the wider world, and simultaneously he shows the depth of their exploitation. At a deeper conceptual level, this approach is linked by Callebert to a questioning of accounts of globality which are steeped in a universalist view of the diffusion of wage labour and economic rationalism. He charges such approaches with a failure to grasp the specificity of the African context.

Callebert sees dockworkers as constrained by segregationist laws and by linguistic barriers in their interactions with passing ships.¹ Poverty meant that they consumed little of what was imported through Durban. He shows how workers' self-definition was bound up, not with their position as workers, so much as with their aspirations to be heads of rural households and to accumulate cattle. They seldom desired to settle in the cities, and to this extent, the migrant labour system was not simply a product of state coercion. Their footholds in the countryside represented a zone in

which they could escape from the racial domination of the city. There, the workers could establish themselves as patriarchs, marrying through the acquisition of cattle as bride price (*ukulobola*), and remaining in touch with the ancestral spirits (*amadlozi*). The homestead was their primary cultural and emotional reference point. For Callebert, this means that generic accounts of 'proletarianization' and 'urbanization' are inherently unsatisfactory.

Callebert shows that migrancy did change social patterns, but not only in the ways that are usually imagined. Rural women became more central to the management of households, in the absence of their menfolk. Men did not only rely on waged work, but rather combined it with other economic strategies in the city, in order to accelerate their path toward the satisfaction of returning to the land. Many started small side businesses in Durban, and many traded in goods pilfered in the harbour. Callebert here challenges any idea of the dockworkers as 'pure' proletarians – the crucial thing, for him, is the interface between rural and urban economies, and between wage labour, small scale trade and homestead farming.

This leads the to a much broader point, and it is here that the wider interest of Callebert's work lies. He makes an extensive critique of simple notions of economic man. While the cattle which migrants sought to accumulate had economic value, their primary significance was as a source of cultural meaning. Here, Callebert links his work to the insights of Karl Polanyi. His research supports Polanyi's objections to the idea of a universal, profit-seeking economic rationality. Rather, Polanyi points to the ways in which economic

behaviour is embedded in social political and religious life. Dockworkers engaged in small trade not because of any innate entrepreneurial impulse, but as a way of pursuing their vision of a meaningful life in the places from which they had come. Thus, Callebert challenges what he characterizes as 'eurocentric' conceptions of economic behavior, whether Smithian or Marxist.

As a locally-focussed social history, Callebert's book is exemplary. His descriptions of the economic strategies of the dockworkers, of their living and working conditions in the city and their linkages to their rural homes, of the petty 'crimes' which helped them to survive, and of the cooperative economic initiatives in which workers were involved are superb. His section on labour politics is valuable for its emphasis on the role of nationalism in militancy, and for not shying away from the difficult issue of the deep antagonism between the dockworkers and Durban's Indian community. The anti-Indian feeling was horrifically manifested in massive violence against Indians in a massive 1949 riot, in which dockers played a central part. This clash becomes more comprehensible in the light of Callebert's demonstration of how important small trade was to the dockworkers as a source of their livelihoods. Indians, as a dominant force in retail, were competitors.

The assertion of a Polanyian position in the book is of great value. While there has been some interest in Polanyi in South Africa, he tends mainly to have been invoked by leftist social scientists making a critique of 'neo-liberalism'. Thus, he simply stands as a critic of market economics. The much deeper Polanyian argument that societies

are held together by non-economic factors, tends to be ignored by these scholars, who simply want to use him to attack free market economics, in the name of a more egalitarian economic model. They do not take on board the extent to which Polanyi's thinking would also challenge their own tendency to undervalue the cultural and religious dimensions of the social world. A real engagement with the fundamentals of Polanyian thought, as advocated by Callebert, is long overdue in South Africa. Having said that though, Callebert's critique of South African Marxist scholarship may be a little overstated. He charges this tradition with exaggerating their differences with liberals over the centrality of class as opposed to race, with not considering the cultural level of analysis and with engaging in a functionalist type of analysis of the relation between racist policies and capitalism. Yet while some of this is indeed true of the 1970s 'structuralist' Marxist writing on South Africa (Legassick, Wolpe, the 'Poulantzians') and in some of the South African left industrial sociology literature focusing on 'labour process' theory in the 1980s, Callebert paints with too broad a brush here. The whole Marxist-influenced social history movement since the 1970s, for instance in the work the Johannesburg History Workshop, strongly emphasized the need to deal with issues of culture and to avoid functionalism, and radical industrial sociology also became, over time, much more nuanced in dealing with issues of race. And in an era of populism in South Africa, in which a smokescreen of African nationalist racial rhetoric obscures the growing gap between the condition of the working poor and the wealth of the new African and old white elites, there is

surely nothing wrong with paying at least some renewed attention to the question of class.

Nevertheless, this is a stellar contribution to labour and social history, which not only is essential reading for Southern Africanists, but should be of significant interest to a much wider world of historical and social science scholarship.

Note:

- 1 A problem in the book is a somewhat loose use of the term 'apartheid'. I would say that it is important to recognize a distinction between the somewhat loosely organized and often customary segregationism of pre-1948 period, and the intensely regulated and bureaucratized apartheid policy introduced by the National Party regime in 1948.

Elleke Boehmer / Rouven Kunstmann / Priyasha Mukhopadhyay / Asha Rogers (eds.): The Global Histories of Books. Methods and Practices (New Directions in Book History series), Berlin / Basingstoke: Springer International Publishing / Palgrave Macmillan 2017, 334 p.

Reviewed by
Cécile Cottenet, Marseille

This collection of essays, edited by scholars whose expertise evinces a global outlook, is the result of two workshops organized at the University of Oxford in 2014, and the University of Melbourne in 2015. In the wake of recent scholarship aiming at

displacing the nation-state as an analytical category¹ and intersecting book history and post-/de-colonial studies, these eleven chapters explore the lives of the global book within and without the British empire, in a trans-imperial movement.

In their introduction, Boehmer, Kunstmann, Mukhopadhyay, and Rogers humbly present the collection as an attempt, neither fully-representative nor comprehensive, to showcase “instances of interaction and connection as compelling alternatives” (p. 4) to national histories. The editors thus readily acknowledge that global perspectives in cultural history and print culture are no longer controversial; yet, they rightfully suggest that much remains to be written to further our understanding of the multiple ways in which books, and the assumptions and representations of empire they may convey, circulate and are received across boundaries and in multiple locations.

As the subtitle “Methods and Practices,” indicates, the singular case studies all proceed from practice up, rather than from theory down. They also draw on a vast range of methodologies and approaches, from the history of geography and of literature, mobility studies, theories of globalization, literature, sociology and network theory, to library and print culture. This vast array of practices testifies to the growing importance of transnational and global perspectives in cultural history and print culture; however, it also makes it difficult for the editors, in the introduction, to fully articulate the different interpretive frames and concepts offered by the contributors, at times emphasizing practices over methods. The chapters focus on the means and conditions, as well as the effects, of moving

books across frontiers, cultures and empires from the 18th to the 21st century, with specific attention to the 19th century. The richness of archival work in many of the essays, conducted across several countries and indeed for some, across several continents, is undeniably one of the strengths of the collection. The editors should further be commended for including scholarship by early-career scholars, thereby encouraging innovative perspectives and raising novel questions; and for complexifying the imperial framework by encompassing the mobility of texts and books in different languages besides English – including Arabic, French, Chinese, Persian, Afrikaans and Xam, to give a few – without obscuring the reader’s understanding. Ultimately, the beautiful cover art efficiently appeals to our colonial imagination, as it conjures up visions of past voyages.

To present such a diverse array of case studies without losing the complexity of this volume is delicate. Fundamentally, the overarching question implied by all four sections under which the essays are grouped – “Colonial Networks,” “Global Genres,” “Reading Relationships” and “Cultural Translation” – is what makes books move globally. What, indeed, are the mechanisms by which books, ideas and representations circulate? And ultimately, what are the effects of such mobilities, on the text themselves and on social as well as ideological planes?

Three central issues seem to inform the essays: networks, routes, and commensurability. The contributions consider the composition and workings of different networks: of scholars (Hansun Hsiung, Zahra Shah); of book trade professionals, savants, and consumers, as in Katherine

Parker's study of the circulation of cartographic knowledge; and networks within the book market, encompassing literary agents (Ben Holgate, David Carter), or illustrating the interdependence between literary series and textbooks, as in Gail Low's essay. Interestingly, commercial networks seem to have at times fostered unexpected routes, and the volume uncovers nodes and centres outside the colonial metropolises, such as Buenos Aires (Holgate). Carter demonstrates that Australian texts sometimes bypassed or went beyond the expected route between "colonial outpost" and imperial centre, with London being not only a restricting factor, but also an "accelerator" of sorts in helping to bring Australian texts and books to America. Possibly one of the most intriguing chapters is Alexander Bubb's study of the eccentric and excentric readings of Dickens and other British 19th-century authors in the colonies, highlighting the role played by serendipity in "chance encounters" of books and texts.

One compelling issue is that of global genres and the issue of commensurability. What makes the "translatability" of texts? What allows for the mobility of a text from one language, and from one culture, to the other, is a central interrogation of the last section on "Cultural Translation". Is the universality of texts, whether "real" or built through interpretation, a prerequisite for their translatability? This question underlies in particular Hsiung's analysis of the translation of textbooks for deaf students, as well as Evelyn Richardson's study of the translation of Homer into Arabic, and Kate Highman's focus on the translation/adaptation/appropriation of South African kukummi narratives, reworked as

mythical tales by South African English and Afrikaans writers in the 21st century. Furthermore, what is lost and what is gained in such translations/adaptations?

The notion of commensurability of texts will perhaps appeal more specifically to scholars concentrating on inter-linguistic global histories of books. In this respect, the global scope of the collection is somehow mitigated by the fact that all the authors work within English-language academia, which is bound to influence their vision of colonial and post-/de-colonial issues, even extending as they do their interrogations beyond the British Empire. The volume will profitably lead to a discussion with scholars focusing on other empires, who may perhaps build on a different or complementary scholarship: we might imagine parallels between Gail Low's exploration of Caribbean textbook publishing and the Francophone textbook in the Caribbean, or in other French colonies; or wonder how texts and books moved to and across Cameroon in the days of German, British and French occupation. That this book should actually foster such interrogations and comparisons is certainly one of its merits.

In her afterword, Elleke Boehmer again underlines the "quality of mixed ambition and caution" (p. 324) of the essays. Her own humble caution leads her to refrain from developing connections with her field of expertise, World Literature, which will certainly yield other insights into the circulation of texts. This small regret notwithstanding, this rich and diverse collection of essays certainly proves a valuable addition to the growing scholarship on the global histories and transnational circulation of books. It also provides professors

with fascinating case studies to examine with their students.

Note:

- 1 See M. Lyons, National Histories of the Book in a Transnational Age, in: *Mémoires du Livre/ Studies in Book Culture* 7 (2016) 2; J. G. Con-

nolly et al. (eds.), *Print Culture Histories Beyond the Metropolis*, Toronto 2016, A. Burton, I. Hofmeyr (eds.), *The Books that Shaped the British Empire: Creating an Imperial Commons*, Durham 2014, or M. F. Suarez, H.R. Woudhuysen (eds.), *The Book. A Global History*, Oxford 2013.

ANNOTATIONEN

Carola Lentz/David Lowe: Remembering Independence (= Remembering the Modern World), London / New York: Routledge 2018, xii + 244 p.

In 2018 “Remembering Independence”, co-authored by Carola Lentz and David Lowe, appeared as the fifth book in the Routledge series “Remembering the Modern World”.

The title is slightly misleading as in reality the book does not focus on collective memories and commemorations of (national) independence in general, but only of decolonization in Africa and Asia. The countries that are dealt with in detail are Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Namibia and Papua New Guinea.

The book consists of an introduction, six chapters, and a section with final reflections. It also contains a twelve pages long index that allows for detailed search of individual facts. The first chapter sketches the conceptual framework and introduces the ‘media’ where the remembrance of independence takes place. The books, museums, monuments, heroes, martyrs, and national days highlighted in this chapter presage the following chapters 2 to 4. These deal with independence days as mediating moments between past, present and future (chapter 2), the iconic national

heroes around which both unity and division, inclusion and contestation crystallize (chapter 3), and the smaller “martyrs, victims, and anti-heroes” of liberation who vie for a place in the national gallery (chapter 4).

The two last chapters of the book add a spatial and temporal dimension to the analysis. In chapter 5 regional differences as well as the concentration of commemoration in specific places – typically the capital cities – is used to ‘map’ the remembering of independence. Chapter 6 in turn deals with the temporal flexibility in choosing which past is remembered for which future as part of contemporary political agendas.

Richly illustrated and replete with insightful examples, this book gives an agreeable access to the politics and practices of national remembrance and identity in post-colonial Africa and Asia.

Geert Castryck

Trevor Burnard/John Garrigus: The Plantation Machine: Atlantic Capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2016, 350 pp.

The co-authored book, *The Plantation Machine*, appears in an active and important book series at the University of Pennsylvania.

nia Press, “The Early Modern Americas”, that is devoted to “explor(ing) neglected aspects of early modern history in the western hemisphere.” This book certainly hits the mark. Though either case alone could hardly claim to be “neglected” over the course of the last decades, comparative studies involving slave societies in different imperial contexts are rare. This book demonstrates the value of such a difficult endeavour.

The authors, who are both well-known experts on Saint-Domingue and Jamaica respectively, combine their in-depth archival knowledge to show the differences and similarities – while highlighting the parallel development – of French and British Caribbean plantations and slavery in the two most important, or rather productive, plantation colonies. The purpose of their book is not to develop categories for comparison. Rather, the book offers “a twin portrait of societies moving along parallel pathways” (p. 8). What they aim to accomplish, therefore, is not just a comparison of two local slave societies but to illustrate the central importance of the “integrated” plantation system in European imperial projects in the mid to late eighteenth century, therefore prior to the later integrated system in Cuba. This is just one example of how this book refines our historical knowledge of slavery in the Caribbean. Finally, the authors demonstrate not only the workings of the plantation “machine”, but the extent to which production methods on sugar plantations and the wider reverberations of that system in Saint-Domingue and Jamaica influenced French and British imperial policy and metropolitan societies. Moreover, these slave societies and plantation systems are

important to understanding the history of capitalism.

The book consists of ten chapters. Several paint a picture of certain aspects of life on the islands (e.g. chapters on urban life and internal enemies) while others are temporal or based on events (e.g. chapters on the Seven Years’ War and the American Revolution). Therefore, the book contains thematic and narrative chapters. Each chapter considers the topic or event on both islands but depicts the islands separately and successively within each chapter. This narrative style gives the reader the experience of observing the “twin portrait” of these societies that the authors want to impart. There are also illustrations and maps that support the text as well as an extensive index.

This book is recommended for historians of the Atlantic, slavery, the Caribbean, early modern empires, the Age of Revolutions, race, and capitalism.

Megan Maruschke

Marcel van der Linden: *Workers of the World. Eine Globalgeschichte der Arbeit* (= *Globalgeschichte*, Bd. 23), Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag 2017, 503 S.

Marcel van der Lindens großartige Essay-sammlung (zuerst 2008 bei Brill, Leiden erschienen) ist nun auch vollständig in deutscher Sprache verfügbar. Ihre Bedeutung als Markstein bei der Herausbildung einer tatsächlich global orientierten Geschichte der Arbeit kann kaum überschätzt werden, denn der Verfasser schöpft aus dem Reichtum seiner Erfahrungen mit Forschungsansätzen, die den

Eurozentrismus der älteren Geschichte von Arbeit und Arbeiterbewegung herausfordern, fundamental in Frage stellen und an verschiedenen Stellen inzwischen überwunden haben. Die Zentralität der sog. doppelt freien Lohnarbeit erweist sich als regional begrenzt und die vielfältigen Übergänge zwischen den entlohten und nicht bezahlten Arbeitsformen geraten damit überhaupt erst in den Blick. Dies geschieht in diesem Band sowohl in theoretischer Abstraktion wie in höchst anschaulicher Darstellung anhand von Beispielen aus beinahe allen Weltregionen. Damit erweist sich der Autor als aufmerksamer und sensibler Beobachter einer außerordentlichen Komplexität der Kommodifizierung von Arbeitskraft, wo andere sich die Realität anhand der Idealtypen zurechtbogen, die sie für ihre Konstrukte von Kapitalismus und Proletariat zu benötigen glaubten. Wenn aber die vielen Abstufungen unfreier Arbeit oder nicht vollständig freier Lohnarbeit in das Panorama einbezogene werden, lässt sich zweierlei erkennen: Auch wenn sich der Kapitalismus über den ganzen Erdball ausgedehnt hat, bedeutet dies eben nicht, dass bereits alles und alle komplett kommodifiziert ist/sind. Diese Vielfalt wiederum stellt enorme Anforderungen an die Bildung von Allianzen zwischen den höchst unterschiedlichen Interessenlagen, weshalb sich van der Linden in den Teilen II (Mutualistische Varianten) und III (Formen des Widerstands) seines Buches sehr ausführlich den Folgen eines erweiterten Begriffs von globaler Arbeitsgeschichte für eine Globalgeschichte der Bewegungen von Ausgebeuteten widmet. Vom Streik über den Konsumentenprotest zur Gewerkschaftsbewegung reicht der Bogen bis zum Internationalismus der Arbei-

terklasse, aus dem van der Linden schließlich eine Abfolge von fünf Stadien in deren Entwicklung ableitet. In der ersten Phase definierte sich die Arbeiterklasse selbst (bis 1848); daran anschließend entwickelte sie einen subnationalen Internationalismus (1848–1870); woraufhin eine Übergangsphase zu nationalen Organisationsformen zu beobachten sei (1870–1890) und fortan die internationale Zusammenarbeit dieser nationalen Organisationen dominierte (1890–1960), während sich nach 1960 eine neue Transformationsphase anschliesse, weil der in nationalen Gewerkschaftsbewegungen verankerte Internationalismus durch Dekolonisierung, neue Regionalismen und schließlich den Zusammenbruch des Ostblocks erschüttert wurde. Ob sich allerdings das hoffnungsfroh beschriebene Szenario eines transnationalen Internationalismus entfalten kann, bleibt auch reichlich zehn Jahre nach der Erstveröffentlichung der Prognose offen. Einerseits ist vielleicht der Optimismus heute sogar schwächer als Marcel van der Linden 2008 unter Verweis auf bevorstehende Krisen und Rückschläge anzunehmen bereit war (S. 317). Andererseits hat der Verfasser in den Folgejahren seine Arbeitskraft der Organisation von tatsächlich global aufgestellten Untersuchungen einzelner Branchen gewidmet. Dabei zeigt sich, dass der hohe Organisationsgrad der Arbeiterbewegung in der nordatlantischen Region ein wichtiger Faktor ist, ihm aber die Inspirationen aus anderen Weltregionen gegenüberstehen, die viel länger mit Sklaverei und anderen Formen der Zwangsarbeit konfrontiert waren und deshalb ihre eigenen Vorstellungen von historischer Gerechtigkeit in den neuen Internationalismus einbringen. Teil IV des

Bandes schließlich erörtert theoretische Konzepte, in die sich die neue Globalgeschichte der Arbeit einfügen bzw. durch die sie eine entscheidende Erweiterung erfahren könnte, darunter Immanuel Wallersteins Weltsystemtheorie, ethnologische Langzeituntersuchungen einzelner Gemeinschaften und ihrer Kombination von Arbeitsformen zur Bewältigung schwieriger Umweltbedingungen und die feministisch inspirierten Überlegungen zu Subsistenzarbeit.

Alles in allem gehört der Band, wie schon viele Rezensent*innen seit Erscheinen der englischen Erstausgabe angesichts der enormen konzeptionellen und darstellerischen Leistung des Verfassers betont haben, in jede auch nur minimal ausgestattete Bibliothek mit globalhistorischem Anspruch.

Matthias Middell

Alexandra Köhring / Monica Rüthers (Hrsg.): Ästhetiken des Sozialismus. Populäre Bildmedien im späten Sozialismus (= *Socialist Aesthetics. Visual Cultures of Late Socialism*), Köln: Böhlau Verlag 2018, 333 S.

Dieser Sammelband analysiert die Vielfalt und Widersprüchlichkeit sozialistischer Bildkulturen. Dabei stellt er besonders deren Beziehungen zur Kunst- und Industrieproduktion, zu Alltagspraktiken und politischen Bildprogrammen heraus und untersucht zugleich ihre Einbettung in grenz- und blocküberschreitende Transfers. Er geht auf eine Konferenz zu „Visual Cultures of Socialism“ an der Universität Hamburg im Jahr 2015 zurück.

Der Hauptteil umfasst etwa zur Hälfte deutsch- und englischsprachige Beiträge zu populären visuellen Medien in verschiedenen sozialistischen Ländern. Er spannt den Bogen von den 1920er Jahren bis in die postsozialistische Erinnerungskultur, mit einem Schwerpunkt auf die Jahrzehnte nach dem Stalinismus. Die Autoren untersuchen politische und diskursive Rahmungen dieser Bildwelten ebenso wie unterschiedliche Formen ihrer Produktion und ihres Konsums. Ihre Texte befassen sich mit sozialistischer monumentaler Denkmalkunst und deren Transfer nach Asien und Afrika, sowjetischen Bildpostkarten im Spannungsfeld von offizieller Bildwelt und alltäglichem Gebrauch, Schaufensterdekorationen und Bilderzeitschriften für Kinder, Warenverpackungen im sowjetischen Konsumsystem, sozialistischer Produktgestaltung in der DDR und in internationalen Designdebatten, Modediskursen und Aneignungen westlicher Trends in der Tauwetterperiode, Folklore-Shows in Litauen zwischen sowjetischer Nationalitätenpolitik und lokalen Alternativmodellen, darüber hinaus mit Bildpolitiken, Zensurpraktiken und Handlungsspielräumen in der zentralen polnischen Bildagentur sowie der Aneignung sowjetischer Bildprogramme in privaten und institutionellen Fotoalben.

Als „Zugabe“ enthält der Band kurze Einführungstexte zu ästhetischen Debatten anhand von Schlüsselbegriffen der sozialistischen Kunst- und Wahrnehmungstheorie. Sie sind mit den Beiträgen des Hauptteils durch Schlagworte verbunden. Vorgestellt werden Leitbegriffe wie „Realismus“ und „Neues Sehen“, aber auch „Organisch“, „Faktura“ oder „Groteske“. Der Band bietet darüber hinaus zahlreiche

schwarz-weiße Abbildungen sowie zwölf Farbtafeln. Er liefert damit hochinteressante Einblicke in die visuelle Kultur sowie die Alltags- und Konsumkultur der sozialistischen Länder in transnationaler Perspektive.

Antje Dietze, Leipzig

Thi Hanh Nguyen: Les Conflits Frontaliers Sino-Vietnamiens de 1883 à nos Jours, Paris: Editions Demopolis 2018, 403 p.

The book is part of the research series of Demopolis Publishing, which is dedicated to “support the processes of reflexion and enrichment of knowledge within the humanities and social sciences.” This book was published as a common effort of the Labex TransferS – the research excellence initiative of the Ecole Normale Supérieure – and the Hanoi National University of Education (HNUE) and is the second and updated edition of the author’s doctoral thesis, originally published in 2007. The originality of this book is based on the author’s extensive archival work and in-depth analysis of French and Vietnamese sources. The author is a historian, professor at the HNUE and expert on Sino-Vietnamese History. The purpose of her monograph is not to give a definitive history of both countries’ entangled history and of the still on-going border conflicts. Rather, the book gives a *longue-durée* perspective of the understudied Sino-Vietnamese border conflicts’ history. With this book, the author demonstrates how over the course of almost two and a half centuries French,

Japanese, and US American interferences complicated the already conflicted terrestrial and maritime border conflicts that existed between China and Vietnam. Throughout the monograph, the author shows the interplay of power relations and interests of the different nations. A special focus lies in France and China, the main powers in the history of the conflict. Indeed, France’s colonial game played in Vietnam with the establishment of its sovereignty over the Annam Empire against China is an important part of the story. China’s relationship with Vietnam is ambivalent: China plays an integral part in Vietnamese domestic issues, especially against US American capitalism, while at the same time viewing its border to Vietnam as a strategic issue where it is necessary to retain authority.

The book consists of three parts, which are organised chronologically. The first part deals with the history of the Sino-Vietnamese border prior to 1885 in order to set the context for the following parts. The second part analyses how the border conflict between China and Vietnam was impacted throughout the period of French colonial involvement in Vietnam between 1885 and 1954. The third part covers the easing and eventual solving of the border conflict since 1954 and shifts the focus to present-day conflicts between the two nations.

This book is recommended for historians of Sino-Vietnamese relations, Empire, French colonialism, and border conflicts.

Yasmine Najm

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Empires reconfigured

Ed. by Matthias Middell and Alessandro Stanziani



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Inhaltsverzeichnis

Editorial	7
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Aufsätze

<i>Matthias Middell</i> Empires in Current Global Historiography	9
<i>Gabriela Goldin Marcovich / Silvia Sebastiani</i> Empire, Enlightenment, and the Time Before: Global Contexts for Writing the History of Mexico	23
<i>Yaruipam Muivah / Alessandro Stanziani</i> Forced Labour at the Frontier of Empires: Manipur and the French Congo, 1890–1914	41
<i>Ulrike von Hirschhausen / Jonas Kreienbaum</i> “Neocolonialism” Revisited: An Empirical Enquiry into the Term’s Theoretical Substance Today	65
<i>Margot Lyautey / Marc Elie</i> German Agricultural Occupation of France and Ukraine, 1940–1944	86

Forum

<i>Salvatore Ciriaco</i> The Early Modern “Silk-Road”. The Role of European, Chinese, and Russian Trade Reassessed	118
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Rezensionen

- Arnd Bauerkämper / Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe (eds.): Fascism without Borders. Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe from 1918 to 1945, New York / Oxford 2017
Victor Lundberg 135
- Ralph Callebert: On Durban's Docks: Zulu Workers, Rural Households, Global Labor, Rochester 2017
Jonathan Hyslop 138
- Elleke Boehmer / Rouven Kunstmann / Priyasha Mukhopadhyay / Asha Rogers (eds.): The Global Histories of Books. Methods and Practices (New Directions in Book History series), Berlin / Basingstoke 2017
Cécile Cottenet 140

Annotationen

- Carola Lentz / David Lowe: Remembering Independence (= Remembering the Modern World), London / New York 2018
Geert Castryck 144
- Trevor Burnard / John Garrigus: The Plantation Economy. Atlantic Capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica (= The Early Modern Americas), Philadelphia 2016
Megan Maruschke 144
- Marcel van der Linden: Workers of the World. Eine Globalgeschichte der Arbeit (= Globalgeschichte, Bd. 23), Frankfurt am Main 2017
Matthias Middell 145
- Alexandra Köhring / Monica Rüthers (Hrsg.): Ästhetiken des Sozialismus. Populäre Bildmedien im späten Sozialismus (= Socialist Aesthetics. Visual Cultures of Late Socialism), Köln 2018
Antje Dietze 147
- Thi Hanh Nguyen: Les Conflits Frontaliers Sino-Vietnamiens de 1883 à nos Jours, Paris 2018
Yasmine Najm 148
- Autorinnen und Autoren 149

Editorial

With this issue, *Comparativ* includes three new features. Firstly, in a short intro the editors of the journal relate themes and arguments of the single issue to the wider programmatic concerns of *Comparativ*. Since its founding in 1991, the journal has published new research on world and global history at the crossroads of a wide range of area studies by means of thematic issues in which a selection of articles presents one topic from different and yet integrated angles. In this way, *Comparativ* serves to bring joint inquiries to the fore and provides a forum for collaborative studies on connections and comparisons along the many scales that have become relevant for the flows of past and present people, ideas and goods as well as for the ever renewed attempts to control such fluidity. Secondly, we complement our book review section with an annotation section that provides an increasing number of shorter summaries of newly released works. In doing so, we respond to the growing number of monographs and edited volumes that make it increasingly more difficult to gain an overview of, select and assign books for reviewing. Thirdly, *Comparativ* has been incorporated into the DOI system, which assigns persistent identifiers to the single article to increase the integration into as well as retrieval from digital databases and library catalogues.

This special issue presents global perspectives on empires and imperial constellations, which aim at feeding into the current lively discussion about the place of empires in world and global history as much as in the social sciences and history at large. This discussion reacts to a dual observation: On the one hand, and for a long time, social scientists and scholars from the humanities have taken for granted that the era of empire is over and done with and that historical development was a directed process “from nation-state to empire”. On the other hand, ‘empire’ was a frequently used trope in public debates about imperialist behaviour and in fact continues to be. Military interventions have been seen through this lens, and international organizations have been criticized for imperial(ist) politics while many one-to-one interstate relations also often appear as

imperial in nature. The articles collected here somehow parallel the effort made by the authors in a book on empire and the social sciences recently edited by Jeremy Adelman (London: Bloomsbury 2019).

What we can learn from the recent interest in imperial histories is that we obviously miss an important part of modern history when reducing statehood to the national, which large parts of the social sciences do when remaining attached to the context of their foundation during the emergence of nation-states in the second half of the nineteenth century. This is particularly interesting since it is exactly the ambition of social sciences to find explanations at a world level and not only at national level. But to analyse societies and economies as national containers driven mainly by their internal tensions and contradictions is not enough to grasp the impact of border-transcending entanglements and connections that were to a large extent organized by empires. It is therefore no wonder that the renewed interest in imperial histories and imperialism – and the role social scientists played within this framework to make the empire work – went hand in hand with the rise of global histories since the 1990s.

But, of course, empires are not fixed entities either; they have seen as much transformation as other spatial formats. The empires of the Atlantic world are quite different from what imperialist behaviour today insists on calling an empire of the twenty-first century. A decisive turning point, so it seems to us, was the revolutionary period after 1776 when Europe as well as the Americas saw empires dissolving under the attacks of nation-builders who ironically right from the beginning distinguished between new principles at home and the continuation of imperial features – including enslavement and other forms of coerced labour – in the colonies where citizenship was denied to the unfree.

This fundamental transformation, at the same time, secured the establishment of nation-states and the survival of empires so that a new spatial format emerged that can be called a nation-state with imperial extension. This hybrid format has seen a successful career at least until the times of decolonization. Success means that the most ambitious hegemonic powers of the world since the 1820s used this format to organize their positioning in the world and their ways of controlling global flows. To study the variants of this format over time and space may help us to overcome the often lamented methodological nationalism, to overcome the simplistic opposition of Eurocentric and postcolonial perspectives and to better understand global integration as an asymmetric process.

None of these imperial configurations was able or even intending to integrate the whole world, instead integrating its very specific world of transregional linkages but never with a planetarian scope. Studying empires therefore can also be an invitation to understand global processes as the result of competing globalization projects instead of misinterpreting globalization as a natural process without alternatives. At the same time, we may better understand why resistance to global integration often uses the rhetoric of independence and sovereignty – given the imperial(ist) experience many people in the world had been confronted with.

Matthias Middell / Katja Naumann

Empires in Current Global Historiography

Matthias Middell

There is no doubt: empires strike back, not only in history but also in historiography. This famous expression of colonies that impact the (former) imperial metropolis has been inspired by the manifold experiences coming from the everyday presence of people, material resources, and cultural patterns circulating across imperial spaces. The renewed, and surprisingly growing, interest in the study of empires by historians – as well as far beyond a narrow institutional understanding of the discipline – takes inspiration from a whole series of observations. The old narrative “from empire to nation”, which reflected the ideas of historians at the end of the nineteenth century as well as during the moments of massive decolonization, now seems outdated. The nation-state is obviously not the only and final stage in world history – replacing everything that came before. This insight is fed both by the observation that nation-states are not the only spatial format with which societies react to the global condition – both at the end of the nineteenth as well as during the twentieth and at the beginning of the twenty-first centuries – and by the disillusionment with the failed dream of anti-colonial activists that the declaration of independence would mean immediate sovereignty over the definition of transregional connectedness. Decolonization, on the contrary, turned out to be a lengthy and painful process leading to different forms of dependency than those existing during the colonial era but not to what the myth of the sovereign nation-state promised. The debate about ongoing economic connectedness at times of state independence¹ has promoted the idea that worldwide capitalism may function as an all-encompassing empire within which the individual nationalized state and society lose importance – as well as freedom to choose

1 T. Bierschenk/E. Spies (Hrsg.), 50 Jahre Unabhängigkeit in Afrika. Kontinuitäten, Brüche, Perspektiven, Köln 2012.

their own way in dealing with global capital flows.² The idea of empire propagated by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri has only influenced the discussion for a short time since the metaphorical use of empire in this interpretation – despite the reference to debates about imperialism at the beginning of the twentieth century – has not convinced that many historians. Their idea of empire was too much part of an ideology of globalization that had its “fifteen minutes of fame” in the 1990s, insisting on a couple of arguments: there is a completely new situation in the world due to now overmighty globalization, which there is no real alternative to and which makes necessary the development of a completely new societal analysis in order to invent a new type of interpretation as well as to invent (and political create) new anti-systemic forces to challenge the recently emerged power relations.

Part of the ambitious new interpretation of the world was to declare the nation-state dead³ and no longer a meaningful framework of struggle between various social forces.⁴ This globalization ideology, which by far was a perspective not only of the left⁵ but also among mainstream liberals and conservatives, met resistance from those who argued that the nation-state still remained a major theatre of social conflict and/or resistance to tensions emanating from global and transregional entanglements.

Slowly, historians also began to address the challenge that was embedded in this globalization ideology by insisting on globalization being not so much a new thing but a long-lasting process that gave birth to very different features over time. Global history – which undoubtedly is based on the long tradition of world history writing – received new societal relevance because it became an essential part of a very fundamental debate across the world: Do we share the discourse of newness that was characteristic of that globalization ideology or do we insist on the long historicity of globalization? If the latter, then of course the issue of diachronic comparison comes to the fore and historical research gains new importance as a way to interpret the present and forecast the immediate and long-term future. It is evident that historians are not good at predicting such a future, but they may provide historical references together with the context for a (cautious) reapplication – as it happened with the term empire. In a world that was no longer organized into stable blocs separated from one another by an iron curtain and based upon the principle of (more or less sovereign) nation-states, uncertainty emerged concerning the spatial configuration of world order. It is clear that the transformative process towards a new world order – or rather orders in the plural – takes time, and from the beginning, the outcome of such a process is not yet clear. Nevertheless, the slowly emerging structure needs a language to describe these orders even before they can be completely

2 M. Hardt / A. Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge, MA 2000.

3 K. Ōmae, *The End of the Nation State. The Rise of Regional Economies*, New York 1995.

4 M. Albrow/R. Fellingner, *Abschied vom Nationalstaat. Staat und Gesellschaft im globalen Zeitalter*, Frankfurt a. M. 1998.

5 On the contrary, it found its first worldwide remarked expression in the famous controversy between Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington about the new situation after the end of Cold War – both definitively beyond any suspicion of being part of any kind of left.

understood. A multitude of terms have been tested and some have survived the public debate over their applicability better than others. “Region” is always a candidate since it lacks any precise meaning when it comes to the scale at which a region is identified. It can be both a substate region and a region that encompasses more than one or two states; it can also be used to characterize territorial units crossing borders, and one can even take the frontier as a specific form of a region. Region can be used for territories with clearly drawn borders surrounding a coherent physical space, but they can also be characterized by fuzzy limitations. The term region has the advantage of being useable in almost all dimensions of human interaction – there are economic as well as linguistic, cultural, and administrative ones as well as many more. A region might be connected to power and authority, but this is not a necessary component of the meaning given to regions.

Therefore, the apparent advantage of the term “region” at times of uncertainty concerning the emerging new spatial order turns into a disadvantage. While the “regional” was already used in the 1990s when it comes to the description of alternatives to the national, other terms remained attractive as well – among them, evidently the notion of empire. Historians and those searching for historical references started testing if this particular term carries a meaning that represents an alternative to the world that was lost with the end of the Cold War. This process can be understood as a sequence of attempts that placed individual layers of meaning on the term empire, thereby carrying more or less strong resonance in the social debate.

To understand, global capitalism as empire has turned the relationship between transformations in finance and economy, on the one hand, and in the political organization of societies, on the other hand, somehow upside down. Modern capitalism appears to be borderless and only to be understood as a global system – just as an ever-expanding empire. In a way, this builds on the world-systems theory of Immanuel Wallerstein, who, however, had been much more careful with the term empire because he had anchored his study of the world system to a detailed analysis of early modern economic and state development.⁶ Although the book by Hardt and Negri gave the term empire not only new prominence but also a critical connotation, they followed, to some extent, Karl Marx in his dialectical thinking about capitalism, which they (like him) characterized as exploitative, on the one hand, and as unavoidably expanding, on the other hand.

In this perspective, empire remained a metaphor for expansion towards planetarian coverage and not very much more. The terminological confusion of empire and capitalism as a global economic order, however, encountered other strands of the debate, especially the one regarding the USA as the only remaining superpower after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. This led to the question if the USA is the new empire governing the world and guaranteeing its (democratic and capitalist) order. While some answered that

6 I. Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*. vol. I: *Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, New York, London 1974; vol. II: *Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600–1750*, New York et al. 1980; vol. III: *The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730–1840s*, San Diego et al. 1989.

question with a list of recommendations to the US administration what it could learn from historical attempts by empires such as the British one in the nineteenth century to organize worldwide hegemony,⁷ others were more careful with historical parallels and insisted on the new situation within which the US played their role at the beginning of the twenty-first century.⁸

Another dimension of interest in empires had to do less with capitalism and international relations and more with increasing mobility and the resulting diversity within societies as a consequence of globalization. Sociologists, like Ulrich Beck, predicted that deterritorializing effects of global processes and the increasing power of transnational companies escaping any control by state authorities would undermine the strict framework of nation-states together with their arrangements for welfare and of democracy and would in the end rather repeat patterns that had been typical for early modern societies (e.g. empires).⁹ This interpretation calls to mind a triptych, with the nation-state and its strong capacity to exercise control via territorialization over its population in the middle, but the pre-national/-imperial history before the emergence of the nation-states on the left is more likely to become the blueprint for the future situated on the right.¹⁰

Beck's sociology resonated not only with his British colleagues but also with developments in the field of geography, where a new political geography shattered existing paradigms in its own discipline and more specifically in the field of international relations. John Agnew has argued that it is no longer sufficient to remain in what he calls a "territorial trap"¹¹ and to imagine the world as being covered by competing and interacting but above all sovereign states. He has demonstrated how much other disciplines depend on innovation within geography. This was echoed by a strong and growing constructivist strand within geography,¹² becoming step by step a larger movement now called the spatial turn and impacting the humanities and social sciences in the one way or the other.¹³ The central argument is that this spatial turn, with its claim that space does not

7 N. Ferguson, *Empire. The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power*, New York 2002; N. Ferguson, *Colossus. The Rise and Fall of the American Empire*, London 2005.

8 C. J. Calhoun/F. Cooper/K. W. Moore, *Lessons of Empire. Imperial Histories and American Power*, New York 2006; C. S. Maier, *Among Empires. American Ascendancy and its Predecessors*, Cambridge, MA 2006.

9 U. Beck (Hrsg.), *Politik der Globalisierung*, Frankfurt a. M. 1998, pp. 10–19.

10 U. Beck, *Was ist Globalisierung? Irrtümer des Globalismus – Antworten auf Globalisierung*, Frankfurt a. M. 2002, pp. 24–47. This rather pessimistic interpretation goes hand in hand with an attempt to show sociological interpretation a way out of its methodological nationalism and to become fit for future debates about a renewal of democracy and global citizenship.

11 J. Agnew, *The Territorial Trap. The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory*, in: *Review of International Political Economy* 1 (1994) 1, pp. 53–80.

12 As a short summary: B. Werlen, *Andere Zeiten - Andere Räume? Zur Geographie der Globalisierung*, in: M. Ott/E. Uhl (eds.), *Denken des Raums in Zeiten der Globalisierung*, Münster 2005, pp. 57–72; B. Werlen/T. Brennan (eds.), *Society, Action and Space. An Alternative Human Geography*, London 1993.

13 J. Döring/T. Thielmann (eds.), *Spatial Turn. Das Raumparadigma in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften*, Bielefeld 2008; B. Warf/S. Arias (eds.), *Spatial Turn. Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, London 2009; M. Middell/K. Nauermann, *Global History and the Spatial Turn. From the Impact of Area Studies to the Study of Critical Junctures of Globalisation*, in: *Journal of Global History* 5 (2010), pp. 149–170; F. Williamson, *The Spatial Turn in Social History: A Review of Recent Research Trends*, in: *European History Quarterly* (2014), pp. 703–717.

exist per se but is produced by and during social interaction, would exactly fit the historical moment of uncertainty about future spatial configurations. Globalization – having undermined the seemingly stable order of a hierarchy of scales (from the local via the regional and the national to the international) with the (elites of the) nation-state at the all-controlling centre – invites creative observation and thinking of new products of the space-making activities of individual as well as collective actors. One may doubt from the historian's perspective that this was the first unique point in history where such an uncertainty came to the fore,¹⁴ but this objection does not change much in the general direction of the debate at the beginning of the new millennium. There was a fast-growing interest in transcending the long-lasting obsession with the national and in discovering either new or returning spatial formats.

As a solution to this problem, the new idea of global governance was launched – meaning to many authors involved in the debate the upscaling of regulatory regimes from the national to a (rather under-defined) global level. Undoubtedly, it was not completely new to dream of a world government that overcomes national egoisms and fulfills the expectations of social justice at a larger scale than thus far possible.¹⁵ The United Nations comes to mind, but with the failed reform attempt undertaken by Kofi Annan around the millennium, this ended rather in disillusionment again. Partly in parallel, the discussion of a so-called new regionalism emerged – somehow renewing the interest in regional configurations that had reached its last peak among social scientists and historians in the 1970s. But the new regionalism paradigm was not so much interested in regionalist movements undermining the absolute sovereignty claim of nation-states but rather at looking into possibilities of alliances built by nation-states to regulate or even avoid conflict as well as formulating coordinated answers to challenges emanating from powers and processes outside the region. Since the new regionalism idea was first made use of by political scientists, the central idea of sovereign states sharing rather than losing sovereignty has not been given up, and the connection to the debate over empire has remained loose. However, one can draw a line from the newly discovered relevance of such regional alliances based upon power and sovereignty sharing to three aspects:¹⁶ to the debate about non-national spatial formats that react to a slowly emerging new world

14 Stuart Elden already a couple of years ago insisted on the historicity of a concept such as territory, and one can read the age of revolutions around 1800 as another moment of uncertainty that gave rise to a new spatial semantics around the notions of nation and nation-state, while at the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth century notions like transnational nation and imperialism indicated another, probably similar, shift. On these different "spatial turns" or moments of respatialization, see S. Elden, *The Birth of Territory*, Chicago 2013; M. Maruschke/ M. Middell (eds.), *The French Revolution as a Moment of Respatialization*, Berlin/Boston 2019; K. K. Patel, *Nach der Nationalfixiertheit. Perspektiven einer transnationalen Geschichte*, Berlin 2004;

15 J. M. Hanhimäki, *The United Nations. A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford/New York 2008; M. Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace. The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*, Princeton 2009; E.-M. Muschik, *Managing the World. The United Nations, Decolonization, and the Strange Triumph of State Sovereignty in the 1950s and 1960s*, in: *Journal of Global History* 13 (2018) 1, pp. 121–144.

16 J. Agnew, *Sovereignty Regimes: Territoriality and State Authority in Contemporary World Politics*, in: *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95 (2005) 2, pp. 437–461.

order (or the perceived need for one), to new forms of capitalism, and to new features of circulation and flows undermining the existing patterns of territorialization.¹⁷

Historians reacted to this public interest in imperial configurations, first of all, with an intensification of research on many different historical cases.¹⁸ The 2010s were particularly rich in new publications on empires, both old and new. Large empires became the subject of global comparison.¹⁹ Colonization and the resulting power asymmetry between metropolises and colonies²⁰ were compared within a larger, and global, spectrum and no longer reduced to the classical Western European examples.²¹ This resulted in a series of global histories of empire²² and undermined the idea that empires belong definitively to the past. It would be too long to list here all the achievements of this recent historiography that has been addressing topics as different as the impact empires and colonial configurations had on knowledge orders, labour regimes, network building and mobility, disease management, and resources mobilized from colonial peripheries for global competition, to name a few. The more we have learned from this literature, the more the idea of an imperial past transforming into a national present has vanished.²³ Legacies and remains of empires are shining through many social realities of today's world. Post-colonialism reminds its readers that colonialism does not end with the formal declaration of state's independence and that it remains a tangible reality not only in the former colonies but also in the former metropolises.

Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper brought these arguments into a coherent interpretation when publishing their world history of empires.²⁴ This history neither ends with

17 S. Marung/M. Middell (eds.), *Spatial Formats under the Global Condition*, Berlin/Boston 2019.

18 For former developments in the field of imperial historiography, see, e.g., Anne Friedrichs, *Das Empire als Aufgabe des Historikers. Historiographie in imperialen Nationalstaaten: Großbritannien und Frankreich 1919–1968*, Frankfurt a. M. 2011; U. von Hirschhausen/J. Leonhard, *Zwischen Historisierung und Globalisierung. Titel, Themen und Trends der neueren Empire-Forschung*, in: *Neue Politische Literatur* 56 (2011) 3, pp. 390–402.

19 P. F. Bang/C. A. Bayly (Hrsg.), *Tributary Empires in Global History*, New York 2011; P. F. Bang/D. Kolodziejczyk (eds.), *Universal Empire. A Comparative Approach to Imperial Culture and Representation in Eurasian History*, Cambridge/New York 2012; and, finally, as part of this collective research: P. F. Bang/W. Scheidel (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the State in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean*, New York 2013.

20 F. Cooper/A. L. Stoler, *Between Metropole and Colony. Rethinking a Research Agenda*, in: F. Cooper (ed.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, Berkeley 1997, pp. 1–56.

21 K. Barkey/M. von Hagen (eds.), *After Empire. Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building. The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman, and Habsburg Empires*, Boulder 1997; A. Etkind, *Internal Colonization. Russia's Imperial Experience*, Cambridge 2011; O. Bartov/E. D. Weitz (eds.), *Shatterzone of Empires. Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands*, Bloomington 2013; B. Gainot/M. Vaghi (eds.), *Les Indes orientales au carrefour des empires*, Paris 2014; R. Crowley, *Conquerors. How Portugal Seized the Indian Ocean and Forged the First Global Empire*, New York 2015; S. Faroqi, *The Ottoman Empire and the World around It*, London 2004; C. Aydin, *Regionen und Reiche in der politischen Geschichte des langen 19. Jahrhunderts*, in: S. Conrad/J. Osterhammel (eds.), *1750–1870. Wege zur modernen Welt*, München 2016, pp. 35–253.

22 J. Frémeaux, *Les empires coloniaux dans le processus de mondialisation*, Paris 2002; J. D. , *After Tamerlan. The Global History of Empire*, London/New York 2007; J. Darwin, *The Empire Project. The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970*, Cambridge 2011.

23 J. Esherick/H. Kayali/E. van Young (eds.), *Empire to Nation. Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World*, Lanham, MD 2006.

24 J. Burbank/F. Cooper, *Empires in World History. Power and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton, NJ 2010.

nationalization nor with decolonization,²⁵ and neo-imperial policies of the 2010s – be it on the Crimean Peninsula or in the Near East – seems to confirm this lesson.

But when there is no longer a unidirectional pathway from former features of statehood to the nation-state, then the interest in these former features becomes legitimate again. This has led to discussions about the appropriateness of imperial features in managing diversity as a possible answer to the growing importance of mobility, mixed societies, and interwoven or hybrid identities. Whereas this strand of debate seems to place empire in a rather positive light and puts emphasis on its flexibility in managing social constellations characterized primarily by diversity, the opposite is also true and has been highlighted by studies on the German Reich²⁶ or Stalin's Soviet Union as (failed) empires,²⁷ which insisted on exercising disproportionate (or even genocidal) violence and oppressive features in holding the empire together.

The debate led to two major characteristics that have been brought to the fore again and again in the many studies about individual empires. The first was their expansion through conquests and the incorporation of areas as a result of wars, dynastic marriages, and settlements. Already the great empires of antiquity were compared to the previously dominating city-states as wide-ranging domains, admired for how they dominated their respective hemisphere. However, this was always accompanied by the warning not to overstretch such a dominance. The larger the lands imperial elites held under their formal control, the more they became dependent on an ever-increasing (and costly) military apparatus as well as on the collaboration of local elites – both elements that have served as an explanation for the decline of empires.

Such warnings found legitimation in the second characteristic of empires, which speaks against a long-term preservation of the wide area of rule: empires are based on legal inequality of their inhabitants. The privileges of a core population correlated with the oppression and dependent legal situation of many of the peripheral populations that came to the empire through conquests and colonization. This legal depriveleging had increasing consequences when mobility between the peripheries and the centres of empires became greater and speeded up. The management of such differences turned out to be ever more complicated and visibly discriminating, thereby mobilizing discontent. These two characteristics led to a contradictory relationship between empires and territorialization, which was relatively slow until the eighteenth century. Out of necessity, empires build administrations and infrastructures. However, these primarily serve the military control of the area ruled and the primacy of military and dynastic interests, even though the transport of economic goods and the political integration of provinces also

25 M. Thomas/A. S. Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: From "High Imperialism" to Decolonisation*, in: *The International History Review* 36 (2014) 1, pp. 142–170; M. Thomas/A. S. Thompson (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, Oxford 2018.

26 As an overview: S. Baranowski, *Nazi Empire. German Colonialism and Imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler*, Cambridge/New York 2011.

27 V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*, Chapel Hill 2007.

became stimulated. During most of their existence, empires build on the great independence of their provinces and subareas.²⁸

The expansion of empires has repeatedly not only met political resistance but also intellectual opposition, which emphasizes the illegitimacy of an order based on legal inequality. The criticism of the enslavement of the Indians already started with Las Casas in the sixteenth century, and this criticism intensified in the eighteenth century up until the destruction of France's imperial past as an *ancien régime* to be definitively overcome, which was contrasted with the sovereignty and equality of rights of all citizens established by the revolution. However, just a few years after the storming of the Bastille, the ideas of equality and freedom combined perfectly with the conquering strategies under Napoleon's renewed imperial rule,²⁹ and already since the early part of 1790, planters tried to turn the argument of freedom and autonomy towards a new legitimation of slavery. Against the expectations, the result of the French Revolution was therefore, paradoxically, not the format of a nation-state, which guaranteed all its citizens equality before the law but instead a (long-term toxic) mixture of popular sovereignty and continuation of imperial practices for the expanse of a renewed colonial empire: nation-state cum empire, so to speak.

France does not stand alone in this respect. The British Empire, which emerged after the Seven Years' War,³⁰ has not even hidden its imperial character³¹ in the name and the tension between the national and the imperial remains to this day (with the open Irish question becoming acute again due to the hard Brexit) a fundamental ambivalence. Spain and Portugal also insisted at the Congress of Vienna that the abolition of slave trade should only be fixed for territories north of their own possessions on the West African coast,³² and they remained, despite all the liberal revolutions of the 1820s and independence successes in Latin America, a mixture of nation-state and empire.³³ Dynasties and parliaments found long-lasting compromises in constitutional monarchies.³⁴ But even republics did not give up their imperial expansion into so-called empty areas – as the American settlement in the West of the continent shows.³⁵

28 P. Perdue, *Boundaries, Maps, and Movement: Chinese, Russian, and Mongolian Empires in Early Modern Central Eurasia*, in: *International History Review* 20 (1988), pp. 263–286; J. Sand, *Subaltern Imperialists: The New Historiography of the Japanese Empire*, in: *Past and Present* (2014) 225, pp. 273–288.

29 C. Belaubre/J. Dym/J. Savage (eds.), *Napoleon's Atlantic. The Impact of Napoleonic Empire in the Atlantic World*, Leiden 2010.

30 F. McLynn, *1759. The Year Britain became Master of the World*, New York 2004.

31 G. B. Magee/A. S. Thompson (eds.), *Empire and Globalisation. Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c. 1850–1914*, Cambridge/New York 2010.

32 H. Duchhardt, *Der Wiener Kongress. Die Neugestaltung Europas 1814/15*, München 2013, pp. 94–96.

33 G. B. Paquette, *Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions: The Luso-Brazilian World, c. 1770–1850*, Cambridge 2013.

34 J. Leonhard/U. von Hirschhausen, *Empires und Nationalstaaten im 19. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 2009; G. D. Schäd, *Compting Forms of Globalization in the Middle East: From the Ottoman Empire to the Nation State, 1918–1967*, in: A. G. Hopkins (ed.), *Global History. Interactions between the Universal and the Local*, Basingstoke/New York 2006, pp. 191–228.

35 F. Schumacher, *Reclaiming Territory. The Spatial Contours of Empire in US History*, in: Marung/Middell (eds.), *Spatial Formats*, pp. 107–148.

This became the basis of the second wave of modern colonization, emerging around 1870. Now also newly formed nation-states like Germany and Italy sought their place in the sun and strived to gain colonies.³⁶ And they certainly did so under the impression that the contemporaries regarded nation-state cum empire as the more efficient type of state when it came to influencing the world order.³⁷

In 1918, Lenin and Wilson seemed to have marked an end point to this history.³⁸ Many people hoped for the promised decolonization, which they perceived to be embedded in the concept of the right to self-determination of the peoples, considered to be opposed to the logic of imperialism. This turned out to be an illusion, even if the losers of the First World War had to temporarily renounce their imperial extensions. But they were already back as global players in the 1930s and especially Japan, Italy, and Germany tried again to build murderous empires.³⁹

The United Nations was founded in 1945 on the principle of an equality of nations but gave its central founding members – with their right to veto in the Security Council – a double-edged sword, which could be used not only to maintain the world order, but also to protect their own expansion spaces and the development of a respective hemisphere.⁴⁰ Decolonization therefore progressed slowly and the Cold War era was first and foremost a conflict between two superpowers with global spheres of influence, which were often treated like imperial supplementary areas, especially in Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa.⁴¹

The idea that the 1989 revolution would end this spatial format with the dissolution of the Soviet Union two years later turned out to be a premature vision again.⁴² New conflicts inspire new imperial ambitions as the wars of the last two decades in Central Asia, the Middle East, or Eastern Europe demonstrate. What has changed, and is still changing, is the context of such a spatial format: technology makes classical borders of territory more and more porous and resource distribution (from energy supply to industrial sites, from working infrastructures to human resources, which increasingly become the central issue in knowledge societies) is so unequal that it increasingly collides with

36 S. Conrad/J. Osterhammel, *Das Kaiserreich transnational. Deutschland in der Welt 1871–1914*, Göttingen 2004; S. Conrad, *Globalisierung und Nation im Deutschen Kaiserreich*, München 2006; E. R. Dickinson, *The German Empire: an Empire?*, in: *History Workshop Journal* (2008) 66, pp. 129–162; S. Berger/A. Miller (eds.), *Nationalizing Empires*, Budapest 2015.

37 R. A. Butlin, *Geographies of Empire. European Empires and Colonies, c. 1880–1960*, Cambridge/New York 2009.

38 B. Meissner, *Lenin und das Selbstbestimmungsrecht der Völker*, in: *Osteuropa* 20 (1970), pp. 245–261; E. Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment. Self-determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, New York 2007; about the difficulties to characterize the Soviet Union properly: R. Suny/T. Martin (eds.), *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, Oxford 2001.

39 R. Pergher, *Mussolini's Nation-Empire. Sovereignty and Settlement in Italy's Borderlands, 1922–1943*, Cambridge 2017.

40 A. G. Hopkins, *American Empire. A Global History*, Princeton 2018.

41 D. C. Engerman, *The Second World's Third World*, in: *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 12 (2011) 1, pp. 183–211; F. Cooper, *Citizenship, Inequality, and Difference. Historical Perspectives*, Princeton 2018.

42 Q. Slobodian, *Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism*, Harvard 2018.

traditional means of territorialization that were developed within agrarian and early industrial societies.

As a consequence, empires have seen a steady transformation and their relationship with territorialization has changed dramatically over time. To grasp some of the major trends found in these transformations was the intention of a workshop held in Leipzig in September 2018. It was the product of a continuing fruitful cooperation between the Global History Centre at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris, under the strong leadership of Alessandro Stanziani, and the Leipzig Research Centre Global Dynamics. Some of the papers presented at the workshop were reworked by the authors in the light of the stimulating comparative debate that took place. While empire has become an object of intensified interest in many historiographies, there are still important differences in the focus of empirical work and historiographical references. Archives in different countries give access to different empires, and this may facilitate differently designed comparisons. The time that has passed since decolonization in France and Germany is different, and therefore the colonial past has an impact that differs too. The writing of imperial histories consequently has deeper or shorter roots, feeds different narratives, and uncovers different facets of global history, which is the shared horizon of this collective effort. To complement such perspectives and to make comparisons across the boundaries of continents and historical epochs was the first goal of the successfully achieved cooperation.

But there is more to it. Global history as a field cannot limit itself to traditional comparison, where the entities to be compared are conceptualized as largely isolated from each other. On the contrary, global history starts from the assumption that societies are increasingly interdependent and entangled and that mobility leads to the growing circulation of people and, as a consequence, of cultural patterns. Already in his famous speech on comparative history at a congress in 1928 in Oslo,⁴³ Marc Bloch addressed this issue by insisting on the fact that we have to fundamentally distinguish between a (relative easy) comparison that focuses on two or more cases being independent from each other and the (much more complex and challenging) form of comparison that takes into consideration the multiple entanglements between the objects compared. The contributions to this issue present various ways to cope with this challenge and to compare imperial configurations that are undoubtedly connected to each other through the migration of actors and circulating objects as well as mutual observation and the resulting learning processes.

The first article by Gabriela Goldin Marcovich and Silvia Sebastiani guides us back to the Atlantic world's empires⁴⁴ but looks at it from the angle of newly emerging voices claiming authority for the interpretation of history and society in the Americas. The ex-

43 M. Bloch, *Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes*, in: *Revue de synthèse historique* 46 (1928), pp. 15–50.

44 J. M. Fradera, *The Imperial Nation. Citizens and Subjects in the British, French, Spanish, and American Empires*, Princeton, Oxford 2018.

amples of Francisco Javier Clavijero, who wrote a monumental *Storia antica del Messico* (1780/81) and José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez, who edited the *Gazeta de literatura de México* (1784–1795) in Mexico City (the capital of New Spain) and who commented on Clavijero's history for never publishing a Spanish edition serve the purpose to bring to the fore the enormous transformations the Spanish (as well as other European) empire(s) underwent in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. By following the traces of these important enlightenment figures, we are introduced to the first period of decolonization and the breakdown of empires in modern history. It became a challenge to the knowledge order established over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but it was obviously not the end of imperial experiences and circumstances in Central America. Alzate, who tried (unsuccessfully) to enter the intellectual landscape of Spanish enlightenment at times when Humboldt sparked massive interest in knowledge about the Americas, saw his ambition to be published in Madrid vanish with the increasing tensions within the Bourbon empire. In the 1820s, however, his texts were finally published in London, where the victorious empire of a decades-long competition systematized knowledge about the formal and informal parts of its imperial zone of influence. Creole insights were now considered important, especially those about Mexico, which was seen as a potential hub of global trade. The same holds true for Clavijero's history of Mexico, which, after its publication in London, became a source for British imperialism, and it was later used in its subsequent Mexican editions as an intellectual component of the emerging Mexican state-building. With these two exemplary cases, we see very clearly scientists with their intellectual production at the service of changing imperial configurations before and after the great transformation of the Atlantic world. But what had been useful for the expansion of empires later became reread and appropriated for the purpose of a slow nation-building.

Yaruipam Muivah and Alessandro Stanziani turn the page from intellectual history of empires to the question of labour relations and they compare two important cases of nineteenth-century empire-building, namely British India and French Congo with regard to the effect of abolition. The old discussion about the reasons, ways, size, and consequences of discontinuing first slave trade and later on the use of slaves in the many situations, ranging from plantations to households⁴⁵ to many more, cannot be solved by general assumptions. Instead, it is only through careful reconstruction of the local and regional configurations – because there were so many legal possibilities to continue manumission of all kinds, as we know in much more detail from global labour history – that a truly insightful approach can be taken.⁴⁶ The two case studies first of all confirm the contradictory character of abolition in the colonies, both British and French. Whereas the transformation towards double free proletarians became over the nineteenth century a universally accepted norm in the metropolises that made enslavement and slavery a

45 See the impressive overview of the historical varieties of slavery provided by M. Zeuske, *Handbuch Geschichte der Sklaverei. Eine Globalgeschichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, Berlin/Boston 2019.

46 M. van der Linden, *Workers of the World. Essays toward a Global Labor History*, Leiden/Boston 2008.

shameful act – and an argument now turned against the Indians and Africans in terms of civilizing missions necessary before they may be allowed to become independent – the opposite development had to be observed in the colonies where a weak colonial state declared to be forced to accept local customs. The legal heterogeneity of empires, which was always one of the main characteristics of this spatial format, transformed into an even more contradictory combination of different (and in fact mutually exclusive) norms concerning the rights and the freedom of people living the space of what was called an empire. The article addresses the labour relations within such a space, but the conclusions go beyond that social dimension of the late nineteenth-century realities. Empires had changed (or were about to change) into nation-states with imperial extensions – openly accepting the contradictions between the legal foundations of its different parts. The gap between these parts were covered, on the one hand, by legitimating discourses full of racism and Eurocentric hubris and, on the other hand, by violent oppression of emancipatory ambitions.

Margot Lyautey and Marc Elie combine forces to compare the German Reich's expansion to the west in 1940 and to the east a year later. In both cases, food provision for the German population – and the troops needed to establish and secure the new colonialism – became a central issue and provides the opportunity to compare methods and consequences of the massive requisition of grain and other foodstuff. The underlying dream of an autarkic continental economy and the planned reduction of the Soviet population by starvation were, as the authors show, distinct features of a nevertheless coherent policy that followed a certain vision of the future German empire. Securing food supply became a geopolitically grounded obsession, against the background of the experience made with blockades during World War I, and many specialists of agriculture were mobilized to plan a new imperial configuration that was organized around the procurement of food and – as a consequence – the dramatic plunder of Eastern Europe with the deadly consequences for the important parts of its population. This method took, without any doubt, inspiration from other forms of colonialism; however, the extreme military and police presence as well as the connectedness of the territories allowed for a much more severe exploitation and control of the occupied land. A large apparatus was established and squeezed grain out of the farmers' lands. However, it became clear already in 1942 that the dream of an autarkic continental economy with a highly industrialized Germany and food-supplying Russia and Ukraine failed and transformed into a nightmare for all those who were not close enough to the privileged military, to the industrial workers (essential for the weapons production), and the Nazi apparatus. The fact that this imperial attempt came with genocide and mass starvation and was only to be stopped by the joint forces of major powers of the world made the price visible people had to pay for these radicalized imperialist dreams.

While addressing a situation many decades later, the article by Ulrike von Hirschhausen and Jonas Kreienbaum deals with a similar constellation as the study of Creole emancipation before and after 1800, which opens this issue, namely the disillusionment with political independence in Africa in the 1960s, which has led to the notion of neo-co-

lonialism. The term, coined by the Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah, in 1961, mirrors the frustration of the time when formal independence had not resulted in the hoped-for economic development. Nkrumah repeated the rhetorical trick already used by Lenin in his book on imperialism as the latest form of capitalism half a century before and declared neo-colonialism the last stage of imperialism, claiming that final liberation will follow dialectically the current misery. The renewal of the debate about neo-colonialism since the 1990s, however, shows that such hope for immediate change was premature. The term now is used by alter-globalization movements to relate former anti-imperialism with the current critique of a neo-liberal variant of globalization, but the authors demonstrate that such historical analogy produces its flaws. By comparing research on British India in the nineteenth century and Zambia's waltz with international capital in the later twentieth century, they come to the conclusion that economic interventions from outside in both cases remained limited and that their outcome depends much more on indigenous agency than the traditional understanding of neo-colonialism suggests. For our discussion about the many historical variants of empire, we can draw from this rereading of the neo-colonialism debate at least two conclusions. First, there was a shift from a political understanding of imperial rule to one that looks primarily at the economic dimension and loads the notion of empire with the meaning of organized economic exploitation. The agents of such exploitation in many cases are not explicitly mentioned, for example as individual companies or political elites of the former colonial metropolises, but often vaguely addressed as either societies of the North (and thus addressing the complicity even of the worker in the North profiting from the redistributive effects of neo-colonial political economy and global inequality) or international alliances (organized in multinationals⁴⁷ or in institutions like the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank governing via credits and "adjustment programmes"⁴⁸). With this shift, second, a transformation of the understanding of empire goes hand in hand, leaving the territoriality of former empires behind and defining them rather as a structural complex than a concrete geographical configuration. Empires have always been characterized by incomplete territorialization and fuzzy borderlands instead of clear-cut borders. Notwithstanding, with the debate about neocolonialism and the primarily economic dimension of power asymmetries involved, empire loses more and more its geographical appearance. One of the effects is that there is no clearly identifiable centre but a multitude of them, and the term empire converges with an understanding of control over (parts of) the world.

Empires, we can conclude from these examples, have survived for much longer than the older historiography assumed, but at the same time they underwent massive transformations and were no longer the empires of medieval or early modern times (or even before).

47 A. Dupont Chandler/B. Mazlish (eds.), *Leviathans. Multinational Corporations and the New Global History*, Cambridge/New York 2005.

48 S. Randeria/A. Eckert (eds.), *Vom Imperialismus zum Empire. Nicht-westliche Perspektiven auf Globalisierung*, Frankfurt a. M. 2009.

The most recent hype around the notion of empire (and its references to the debate about imperialism) indicates that the path of the concept has not yet come to an end. However, empire-building at times of increasing demand for national and even regional independence and autonomy as well as at times of the many overlapping transnational and transregional ties looks quite different from similar activities in the past. Expanding into neighbouring lands and long-lasting annexation of foreign territories becomes more and more the exception.⁴⁹ With the current respatialization of the world that privileges hubs and urban centres of innovation (“global cities”⁵⁰), corridors,⁵¹ and enclaves⁵² over vast territories of “remote areas”,⁵³ the traditional empire-building appears costly and unprofitable. But this, as we know from historical examples, has not hindered people from trying it again.

49 But as cases in the Near East show these exceptions still exist and continue to raise anti-imperialist mobilization.

50 For the conceptualization of these trends, see S. Sassen, *The Global City. Introducing a Concept*, in: *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 11 (2005) 2, pp. 27–43.

51 S. Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights. From Medieval to Global Assemblages*, Princeton 2006.

52 C. Baumann/A. Dietze/M. Maruschke (eds.), *Portals of Globalization in Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, Leipzig 2017.

53 S. Sassen, *When Territory Deborders Territoriality*, in: *Territory, Politics, Governance* 1 (2013) 1, pp. 21–45.

Empire, Enlightenment, and the Time Before: Global Contexts for Writing the History of Mexico

Gabriela Goldin Marcovich / Silvia Sebastiani

ABSTRACTS

Dieser Beitrag untersucht die unterschiedlichen Wege und Werke zweier mexikanischer Kreolen, die es durch die Vertreibung der Jesuiten 1767 auf beide Seiten des Atlantiks verschlug. Francisco Javier Clavijero (1731–1787) schrieb in den Päpstlichen Staaten, damals ein bedeutendes Zentrum alten Wissens in Europa, die monumentale *Storia antica del Messico* (1780–1781). José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez (1737–1799) gab in Mexiko-Stadt seine *Gazeta de literatura de México* (1784–1795) heraus und schrieb Notizen zu Clavijeros Geschichte für eine nie veröffentlichte spanische Ausgabe. Dieser Artikel lenkt die Aufmerksamkeit weg von der „Auseinandersetzung der Neuen Welt“ mit gegenüberstehenden europäischen und amerikanischen Stimmen und konzentriert sich stattdessen auf die sehr reiche, aber noch immer nicht untersuchte Debatte unter mexikanischen Kreolen. Er verweist darauf, dass das Exil Clavijero und Alzate in unterschiedliche imperiale Konfigurationen versetzte, was erhebliche Auswirkungen auf ihre politischen Agenden und erkenntnistheoretischen Ansätze hatte. Durch die Untersuchung der Strategien, mit denen sie ihre internationale Glaubwürdigkeit als lokale Experten für Mexikos vorkoloniale Geschichte und architektonische Relikte profilierten, wird auch die variable Rezeption von Clavijeros und Alzates Werken erkundet, in einer Zeit, die durch bedeutende imperiale Transformationen gekennzeichnet war.

This article examines the different trajectories and works of two Mexican Creoles, separated by the Jesuits' exile in 1767 in two different sides of the Atlantic. Francisco Javier Clavijero (1731–1787) wrote the monumental *Storia antica del Messico* (1780–1781) in the papal states, then a major center of antiquarian knowledge in Europe. José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez (1737–1799) edited his *Gazeta de literatura de México* (1784–1795) in Mexico City and wrote notes on Clavijero's history for a never published Spanish edition. This article shifts attention away from the “dispute of the New World” opposing European and American voices and concentrates in-

stead on the very rich but still unstudied debate between Mexican Creoles. It suggests that the exile placed Clavijero and Alzate within different imperial configurations, and this had significant implications on their political agendas and epistemological approaches. By investigating the strategies that they employed for shaping their international credibility as local experts of Mexico's pre-colonial history and architectural remains, this article also explores the fluctuating reception of Clavijero's and Alzate's works in a period characterized by significant imperial transformations.

The "dispute of the New World" entered a new phase in the 1780s, one characterized by the direct "*prise de parole*" of American Creoles, coming both from the Spanish and the Anglophone sides of the continent.¹ These new voices delineated an Atlantic world, linking Europe and the Americas, the British and Spanish empires, via the Pontifical States. They provided distinct and original perspectives about the nature, inhabitants, and history of America. American Creoles paid close attention to the antiquities in the New World and its natural history, while challenging the diminishing view championed by Enlightenment *philosophes* such as Buffon, Raynal, Cornelius de Pauw, or William Robertson.² It is not our aim to repeat this well-known story. What matters here is to stress the imperial and transimperial dimension of this intellectual "polemics" – as Gerbi called it –, focusing on the tensions among Mexican Creole savants in the age of the Enlightenment.

Deep changes took place in both the European and American chessboard in the second half of the eighteenth century. The Spanish empire underwent administrative, economic and political transformations as result of the Bourbon reforms, which aimed at countering the French and especially the British threat. The Seven Years' War (1756–1763), the first commercial conflict on a world scale, was a crucial event which marked a significant weakening of Spain in front of "the making of the British empire" in America as well as in Asia.³ Among the principal events following the Treaty of Paris, three are particularly relevant for the scope of this article. First, the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Bourbon States in 1767 and the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773, which modified substantially the contours of scholarly life in the Catholic World. Within this context, nearly four thousand Jesuits, mostly coming from the Spanish empire, arrived in the Papal States. Second, the American Revolution (started in 1776), which constituted the first defeat of European imperialism on a world scale, and brought Enlightenment ideas to the Constitution of the United States in 1787. Third, the start of the French Revolution (1789), which soon came to be interpreted as a direct result of the spirit of the Enlighten-

1 A. Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World*, Pittsburgh 2010 [1955].

2 On Creole historiography, see D. A. Brading, *The Origins of Mexican Nationalism*, Cambridge, UK 1985, pp. 3–23; Id., *The First America. The Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots and the Liberal State. 1492–1867*, Cambridge, UK 1991; A. Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination*, New Haven, CT/London 1990, pp. 91–116. See also Ch. Stewart (ed.), *Creolization: History, Ethnography, Theory*, Walnut Creek 2006; R. Bauer / J. A. Mazzotti (eds.), *Creole Subjects in the Colonial Americas: Empires, Texts, Identities*, Chapel Hill 2009.

3 Ch. A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire*, Cambridge, UK 1988; Id., *Imperial Meridian. The British Empire and the World, 1780–1830*, London/New York 1989.

ment. These events produced a profound reconfiguration of the intellectual poles of the Enlightenment on a global scale, while also contributing to a new way of writing history, and in particular the history of the New World.⁴

In this article we examine the trajectory and the works of two Mexican Creoles: Francisco Xavier Clavijero (or Francesco Saverio Clavigero in the Italianized form, Veracruz 1731–Bologna 1787), author of a monumental *Storia antica del Messico* (1780–1781), who, as a Jesuit, experienced the exile and was sent to the papal states in Italy; and José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez (Ozumba 1737–Mexico City 1799), polymath and editor of the *Gazeta de literatura de México* (1784–1795) who, being a secular priest, remained in Mexico, where he became a very active intellectual figure. They were two major characters of a group of savants which has been identified by historiography as the “Mexican Enlightenment”,⁵ and which also included the erudite Antonio de León y Gama (Mexico City 1735–Mexico City 1802) and the Jesuits Francisco Javier Alegre (Veracruz 1729–Bologna 1788) and Pedro José Márquez (Rincón de León, Guanajuato 1741–Mexico City 1820).⁶ After the Jesuits’ expulsion, this group was split on two opposite sides of the Atlantic – a peculiarity which had major political as well as epistemological consequences in their writings and exchanges, as we try to show in what follows.

Clavijero and Alzate display many similarities, both on a sociological and on an intellectual level. The fathers of both had immigrated to New Spain marrying with creole women, and both had Basque origins. Alzate studied in the Jesuit College of San Pedro y San Pablo in Mexico City, where Clavijero, six years older than him, was teaching in the 1750s. Both had a keen interest in the antiquities and in the natural history of Mexico, to which they dedicated a considerable amount of their intellectual production. From this perspective, both took part in the Enlightenment “dispute of the New World”. However, they developed very distinct historiographical genres, had different scopes and aims, and addressed diverse audiences. If Clavijero responded to the European *philosophes* with a monumental history of ancient Mexico, Alzate employed the most agile strategy of punctual interventions, which he published in his periodical gazettes – an editorial format which had spread all over Europe in the previous decades and that he employed for addressing Mexican issues.

4 J. Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World. Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World*, Stanford 2001.

5 Ch. E. Ronan, *Francisco Xavier Clavigero, S.J. (1731–1787), Figure of the Mexican Enlightenment: His Life and Works*, Rome/Chicago 1977; R. Moreno, Alzate, educador ilustrado, in: *Historia Mexicana* 2 (1953) 3, pp. 371–389; Id., *La filosofía de la ilustración en México y otros escritos*, Mexico City 2000; A. S. García, *Dos científicos de la Ilustración Hispanoamericana: J. A. Alzate y F. J. de Caldas*, Mexico City 1990.

6 Other members of this group were, on the Jesuit side: Diego José Abad (Jiquilpan 1727–Bologna 1779), Francisco Javier Alegre (Veracruz 1729–Bologna, 1788), Rafael Landívar (Guatemala 1731–Bologna 1793), Andrés Cavo (Guadalajara 1739–Rome 1803), Juan Luis Maneiro (Veracruz 1744–Mexico City 1802), Andrés Guevara y Basoazabal (Guanajuato 1748–Placencia 1801); and, among those who remained in Mexico City, José Ignacio Bartolache (Guanajuato 1739–Mexico City 1790), and Benito Díaz de Gamarra y Dávalos (Zamora 1745–Mexico City 1783). See G. Goldin Marcovich, *¿Una generación del 67? Trayectorias sociales y redes intelectuales novohispanas después de la expulsión*, in: I. Fernández Arrillaga et al. (eds.), *Memoria de la expulsión de los jesuitas por Carlos III*, Madrid/Alicante 2018, pp. 175–184.

The locality from which they wrote had significant influence on their scholarly productions, as well as in the circulation of their works. Clavijero's forced exile in the Pontifical States placed him in one of the major centres of antiquarian knowledge in Europe, whereas Alzate wrote his gazettes from Mexico City, the capital of New Spain. Clavijero's history circulated widely in Europe and was translated into English and German, also reaching the newborn United States. If Alzate was a correspondent of European academies and institutions, to which he sent various specimens and maps, he remained at the margins of European debate over the eighteenth century. By distantiating them, the exile also placed the two Mexican savants within different imperial configurations, with distinct political as well as intellectual agendas.

Historiography has focused on the Creole responses to European *philosophes* within the context of the "dispute of the New World", stressing their "local expertise" as well as the ways in which American patriotism shaped their epistemological interventions.⁷ Instead, the debates among Mexican savants, as well as their different political and historiographical perspectives, have been left unexplored. In this article, we suggest a shift in attention away from the polemics between European and American voices to concentrate on the very rich 'internal' exchanges among Mexican Creoles. In so doing, we intend to question a major historiographical construction that pretends that the Mexican Creoles shared a unique and monolithic viewpoint. On the contrary, in our opinion, not only did they follow various strategies and employ different tools in addressing European *philosophes*, but they also expressed diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives while dealing with Mexican history, both natural and civil.

Our article interrogates these different approaches by focusing on the direct, as well indirect, debate between Clavijero and Alzate, which opens up critical questions, such as: what is history? When does it start? What are the instruments and what are the reliable sources upon which its legitimacy might be founded? How could Creole savants establish their intellectual authority and recognition from different localities? What does it mean to write from Bologna or from Mexico City? What are the epistemological implications of their specific discourses in the political arena? In order to address these questions, we attempt to bring together intellectual and imperial histories and shed light on the negotiations of knowledge in different settings of the Atlantic world. This is also a way to investigate the role played by Mexican savants in the Enlightenment debate.

Writing the History of Mexico in Bologna

Clavijero was born in Veracruz in 1731. He began his studies in Puebla where he entered the seminary but then decided to become a Jesuit, so he went to the Colegio de Tepozotlán in 1748. He developed a great interest in the new European philosophy (Descartes and Leibniz, especially), and played an important role in introducing it into the univer-

7 This is the case of the already mentioned crucial works by Gerbi, Brading as well as Cañizares.

sity curriculum.⁸ After some time spent in Puebla, he was sent to Mexico City to the Colegio San Pedro y San Pablo. It is in this period that Clavijero became the mentor of a group of young students who were drawn to reformist ideas. Important intellectual figures emerged from this group in the following decades, including Alzate.⁹

In the aftermath of the royal decree of 1767, which expelled the Society of Jesus from all the Spanish territories following the example of Portugal (1759) and France (1764), 678 Jesuits from New Spain were conducted *manu militari* to the port of Veracruz, while their goods and possessions were expropriated.¹⁰ Jesuits sailed on a long journey, lasting several months, during which they were also held in prisons for some time at La Havana, Cadiz, and finally in Corsica, which was then in the midst of a civil war. Diplomatic negotiations between Spain, France, the Republic of Genoa, and the Papacy took place in relation to their settlement. The majority of the expelled priests coming from the Mexican province landed in Bologna in September 1768, where they reorganized the life of the order.¹¹ They relied on the pension that the Spanish crown provided them, supplementing it with private masses. Clavijero lived in Ferrara with other Jesuits for a couple of years and then settled in Bologna in the palazzo Herculani.

After a difficult first year, the living conditions of the banished priest seemed to stabilize, in spite of the uncertainties about the duration of the expulsion as well as the future of the order, especially after the death of Clement XIII in 1769. The suppression of the Society in 1773 by Pope Clement XIV's bull *Dominus ac Redemptor* marked a new exile for Clavijero, a spiritual one.¹² Two manuscripts in Clavijero's hand address the question of the suppression of the Society, who thus transgressed the prohibition imposed on (ex-) Jesuits to write on this subject: he depicted Jesuits as modern Templars, who were victims of an international conspiracy. This was, according to him, the most terrible among many errors of his own "unphilosophical century".¹³

Throughout his banishment in Italy, Clavijero found himself at the heart of the "lieu des savoirs antiquaires":¹⁴ the papal states were then a lively intellectual hub, full of very rich libraries and collections, which attracted erudite scholars from all over Europe – among whom the names of Johann Joachim Winckelmann and Alexander von Humboldt are just the most well-known. Furthermore, from Bologna Clavijero could be in touch with

8 B. Navarro, *La introducción de la filosofía moderna en México*, Mexico City 1948.

9 G. Méndez Plancarte, *Humanistas del siglo XVIII. Introducción y selección de Gabriel Méndez Plancarte*, Mexico City 1941.

10 E. M. St. Clair Segurado, *Expulsión y exilio de la provincia jesuita mexicana, 1767–1820*, San Vicente del Rapiel 2005.

11 E. Giménez López, *Jesuitas españoles en Bolonia (1768–1773)*, in: U. Baldini / G. P. Brizzi (eds.), *La presenza in Italia dei gesuiti iberici espulsi. Aspetti religiosi, politici, culturali*, Bologna 2010, pp. 125–157.

12 M. Batllori, *La cultura hispano-italiana de los Jesuitas expulsos: españoles-hispanoamericanos-filipinos, 1767–1814*, Madrid 1966; Id., *Entre la supresión y la restauración de la Compañía de Jesús, 1773–1814*, in: *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu XLIII* (1974), pp. 364–393; St. Clair Segurado, *Expulsión y exilio*; I. del Valle, *Escribiendo desde los márgenes: colonialismo y jesuitas en el siglo XVIII*, Mexico City 2009.

13 Clavijero, *Carta sobre el juicio que formará la posteridad sobre la destrucción de los jesuitas* (probably written in 1776), Ms. 187, Fondo Sorbelli, Biblioteca Estense di Modena. See also MS 193, *ibid.*

14 A. Romano (ed.), *Rome et la science moderne entre Renaissance et Lumières*, Rome 2008.

other erudite ex-Jesuits in exile, who had also landed in the Pontifical States and were engaged in writing the histories of various parts of America: from Chile to Guatemala, Argentina, Ecuador, Filipinas...¹⁵ One of his regular correspondents was the Spanish Jesuit Lorenzo Hervás y Panduro, who set out to write a universal encyclopedia of all the languages.¹⁶

Clavijero was neither a unique nor an isolated voice among the Jesuit Creoles, but he deserves special attention as he was one of the first to enter a stage which had been, until then, the prerogative of European scholars. His *Storia antica del Messico*, printed in two volumes in 1780–1781 in the Pontifical town of Cesena, was a major contribution to historiography, while Clavijero also penned a short treatise on the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe and a *Historia de la Antigua o Baja California* (1789), published posthumously in Venice.¹⁷ Originally written in Spanish, but published in Italian, the *Storia antica del Messico* was a pre-Columbian history, which aimed to provide evidence of the period preceding the conquest. It consisted of ten books, chronologically ordered and covering a large time-span, from the late-sixth century to the capture of the last Mexican monarch in 1521. The leitmotiv of the history was an Enlightenment question: that of the formation, growth, and fall of empires. The protagonist of the narrative was the Aztec empire, swept away by the Spanish empire, itself in decline in Clavijero's time. The *Storia* was dedicated "by a Mexican" to a Mexican institution, the "reale e pontificia università degli Studi di Messico", considered to be the only institution appropriated for writing Mexican history. Clavijero lamented the absence of a chair of Antiquity, without which the comprehension of Mexican paintings had been lost even in Mexico. At the same time, he advocated for the construction of a museum, in which to preserve all the ancient monuments, statues, and documents: this was the necessary foundation of any historian.¹⁸ A preface on the historical method and an "Account of the writers on the Ancient History of Mexico" strengthened this point.

Nine "Dissertations", dedicated to Count Gian Rinaldo Carli – author of the *Lettere Americane* (1780) which compared pre-Columbian history to Italian antiquities¹⁹ – closed the *Storia antica del Messico*. These repeated, in polemical and oratorical form, the

15 The names of the Jesuits writing about America in this period include Giovanni Ignacio Molina on Chili, Juan de Velasco, José Jolí, and José Manuel Peramás on Quito, Paraguay, and Rio de la Plata, Filippo Salvatore Gilij on Orinoco.

16 A. Astorgano Abajo, Hervás y Panduro y sus amigos ante la mexicanidad, in: M. Koprivitz Acuña (ed.), *Ilustración en el mundo hispánico: preámbulo de las independencias*, Tlaxcala 2009, pp. 201–254.

17 Francesco Saverio Clavigero, *Storia antica del Messico*, cavata da' migliori storici spagnuoli, e da' manoscritti, e dalle pitture antiche degl'Indiani: divisa in dieci libri, e corredata di carte geografiche, e di varie figure: e dissertazioni sulla terra, sugli animali, e sugli abitatori del Messico, Cesena, Per Gregorio Biasini, all'Insegna di Pallade, 1780–1781; Breve noticia sobre la prodigiosa y renombrada imagen de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de México, Cesena, Gregorio Biasini, 1782; Id., *Storia della California: opera postuma*, Venezia, M. Fenzo, 1789.

18 Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursúa, viceroy of Spain between 1771 and 1779, had disposed to collect the antiquities in a museum within the Royal University of Mexico City, where he also founded the first chair on the pre-conquest history. But both the museum and the chair lived very shortly. See M. Achim, *From Idols to Antiquity. Forging the National Museum of Mexico*, Lincoln / London 2017, p. 12.

19 See Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World*, pp. 233 ff.

topic previously expounded as “historical truth”. Each dissertation took as an argument one of the themes of the Enlightenment “thesis” about America: Clavijero challenged the supposed strangeness and malignant nature of the American continent, the assumption that American animals were small in comparison to those of the Ancient World, dealt with the question of how America was peopled and to the “true” origins of syphilis. He insisted, in particular, on the physical and moral constitution of the Americans, who were far from being weak and effeminate as Buffon and Cornelius de Pauw had imagined, while dealing with their culture and religion.²⁰

Clavijero used the instruments of criticism as elaborated by European Enlightenment against Enlightenment itself. From a rhetorical point of view, he followed a twofold strategy, both ironical and provocative, by denouncing the whimsical theories of European philosophers, who never left their countries but who claimed the right (and the knowledge) to write the history of others. It was as a missionary as well as an American voice “in the field” that Clavijero undertook to ridicule and to “provincialize” histories produced by an armchair scholar in, and from, enlightened Europe. Clavijero created an imaginary and sarcastic dialogue with, on the one hand, the European philosophers and, on the other hand, his potential reader. This rhetoric, which continually resorted to pathos, to exclamation, and moral judgment, led to the condemnation of the opposing party in an imaginary court.

In order to strengthen an alternative “*régime d'historicité*”²¹ to that of the European Enlightenment, Clavijero had to shape his authority differently. One of his literary strategies was to base his legitimacy on his status as a Creole. As such, not only could he speak on the behalf of all the Americans, but he was also the one who knew and brought sources from America to Europe. He claimed to be able to understand and speak the Nahuatl, and to have direct and close knowledge of the “indigenous” inhabitants of the New World, as well as their “original” documents. The *Storia antica del Messico* was the fruit of his lifetime interest for the indians.²²

The renewed attention paid to the most ancient history of Aztecs led Clavijero to adopt a historiographical perspective which questioned the idea that written documents were the only reliable sources for history. While denouncing the distorted vision through which the written culture of Europe failed to recognize the worth of other cultures, he upheld the use of iconographic, archaeological, as well as pictographic materials. His approach marked a break from the method adopted by Enlightenment *philosophes* such as the Scottish Presbyterian William Robertson, who had built his highly respected *History of*

20 Dissertations on the Land, the Animals, and the Inhabitants of Mexico: in which the Ancient History of that Country is confirmed, many points of Natural History illustrated, and numerous Errors refuted, which have been published concerning America by some celebrated modern Authors. On Clavijero's *Storia*, we follow here the argument advanced by Silvia Sebastiani, What constituted historical evidence of the New World? Closeness and distance in Robertson and Clavijero, in: *Modern Intellectual History* 11 (2014) 3, pp. 675–693.

21 F. Hartog, *Régimes d'historicité. Présentisme et expériences du temps*, Paris 2002.

22 See Félix de Sebastián, *Memorias de los padres y hermanos de la Compañía de Jesús de la provincia de Nueva España*, Fondo Sorbelli, Biblioteca Estense di Modena, Ms A 532, vol. 2, pp. 66–67.

America (1777) relying on Spanish sources, while dismissing the validity of the Indian ones. On the basis of these sources, Robertson had enchained American societies to the first stage of human development, that of “savagery”, where the European *conquistadores* would have found them. Clavijero, by contrast, considered Mexican paintings and codices as the most authentic, and so reliable, historical records witnessing the greatness of the Aztec empire, swept away by the Spanish. In so doing, he criticized the Enlightenment narrative of European expansion, based only on European written documents.²³ However, his history remained Eurocentric for three major reasons: first, it was developed within an antiquarian perspective by maintaining a constant parallel with European classical antiquity; second, its epistemological framework remained that of a conception of human history conjured as an illustration of sacred history; third, it justified the evangelizing mission, so ending up attenuating his criticism of European empires.

Clavijero's *History of Mexico* in Britain and Back to (the Other Side of) America

Clavijero's *Storia Antica del Messico* was translated into English by Charles Cullen, one of the sons of the well-known Edinburgh physician William Cullen, and published in London in 1787 by Robinson's family, which emerged from the mid-1780s as a major publisher of the Scottish Enlightenment on the London market.²⁴ The *History of Mexico* had a strong impact in both Britain and its former empire, the United States, founded in the same year: 1787. Cullen dedicated his translation to John Stuart, Earl of Bute, a Scotsman who was Prime Minister of Great Britain in 1762–1763 and signed the Treaty of Paris which ended the Seven Years' War, while also being one of the principal patrons in Scotland. Lord Bute's patronage, Cullen's family circle, and Robinson's editorial milieu represented for Clavijero's *History* a veritable guarantee for wide distribution in the anglophone world and beyond.

Becoming available in English, Clavijero's work immediately confronted what was then Britain's most authoritative American history: the already mentioned *History of America* by the Principal of the University of Edinburgh William Robertson (Borthwick 1721–Edinburgh 1793). The comparison was exacerbated by Cullen's introduction, which

23 Cañizares, *How to Write the History of the New World*; J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vol. 2: *Narratives of Civil Government*, Cambridge, UK 1999, pp. 316–328, and vol. 4: *Barbarians, Savages and Empires*, Cambridge, UK 2005, pp. 157–204. On the providential role of European expansion in Robertson's work, see S. J. Brown (ed.), *William Robertson and the Expansion of Empire*, Cambridge, UK 1997; S. Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment. Race, Gender and the Limits of Progress*, New York 2013, ch. 3.

24 Francesco Saverio Clavigero, *The History of Mexico: Collected from Spanish and Mexican Historians, from Manuscripts, and Ancient Paintings of the Indians* [...]. Translated from the Original Italian, by Charles Cullen, Esq., 2 vols., London, G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1787. The Robinson family were booksellers active in 1764–1830: George Robinson (?–1811), George Robinson (1736–1801), James Robinson (?–1803 or 1804), John Robinson (1753–1813). See R. B. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book. Scottish Authors and their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland and America*, Chicago 2006, p. 390 and Appendix.

contrasted Robertson's elegant style with Clavijero's authentic argument. Numerous reviews published in the main British journals of the period (from the *Monthly Review* through the *Scots Magazine*, the *Critical Review* or the *London Chronicle*) also proposed the confrontation between the two authors, sometimes favouring one approach while sometimes favouring the other. The article "America" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the major British work of organized knowledge in the eighteenth century, dramatically changed in the span of ten years, between the second edition (1778) based on Robertson's narrative, and the third (1788) inspired by Clavijero's work.²⁵

Robertson himself, at the time considered one of the major historians in Europe, engaged in a direct debate with Clavijero, answering the (ex)Jesuit's "great asperity" in the fifth and last revised edition of his *History of America*, published in 1788.²⁶ The answer was a negative one, by which Robertson confirmed the validity of his own historical method and hierarchy of reliable sources. The European "discovery" and conquest of America, which Robertson placed at the outset of his narrative, disclosed his historical project and the place covered in it by the New World, while also stressing the positive evaluation of the Spanish Empire.²⁷ Book VIII, which closed Robertson's *History*, moved from the destruction of Aztec and Inca empires through the improvement of the whole of American society in almost every field of knowledge, economics, and morals, that occurred especially in the last century of Bourbon rule.²⁸ American progress remained, according to Robertson, the consequence of Spanish imperialism – in spite of Clavijero's efforts of praising the Aztec empire.

The English translation of Clavijero's *History of Mexico* served as the basis for the German translation, published in Leipzig in 1790, and as such was quoted by the naturalist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach in the third edition of *De generis humani varietate native*²⁹, so becoming part of the huge anthropological debate then taking shape. It also crossed the Atlantic: it was first published by the Scottish emigré Thomas Dobson in Philadelphia in 1804 and then in Richmond (Virginia) in 1806, in several editions.

Clavijero's *History* provided a historical model to scholars of the newborn United States also in search of their own past. Benjamin Smith Barton and Thomas Jefferson took Clavijero as a crucial reference while dealing with North American Antiquities. In par-

25 S. Sebastiani, L'Amérique des Lumières et la hiérarchie des races. Disputes sur l'écriture de l'histoire dans l'*Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1768–1788), in: *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 67 (2012) 2, pp. 327–361. This article develops in detail the historiographical polemics between Robertson and Clavijero.

26 William Robertson, *The History of America* (1777), V ed., 3 vols., London 1788. See Sebastiani, "L'Amérique des Lumières et la hiérarchie des races", and "What constituted historical evidence of the New World?"

27 St. J. Brown, An Eighteenth-Century Historian on the Amerindians: Culture, Colonialism and Christianity in William Robertson's *History of America*, in: *Studies in World Christianity* 2 (1996), pp. 204–222; K. O'Brien, *Narratives of Enlightenment. Cosmopolitan History from Voltaire to Gibbon*, Cambridge, UK 1997, pp. 93–166.

28 Robertson's plan of writing about British America was interrupted by the outbreak of the American Revolution.

29 The third edition of Blumenbach's *De generis humani varietate native* was published in Göttingen in 1795, while the first edition dated back to 1776. For an English version, see *The Anthropological Treatises of Blumenbach and the Inaugural Dissertation of John Hunter on the Varieties of Man*, transl. and ed. by Th. Bendyshe, London 1865, pp. 192, 293. Blumenbach also quoted Robertson several times, together with other Enlightenment naturalists and historians.

ticular, the “Account of several remarkable vestiges of an ancient date, which have been discovered in different parts of North America”, that introduced Barton’s *Observations on Some Parts of Natural History*, published in London in 1787, was intended to provide proof of a glorious past in North America, parallel to that of Mexico. Barton, who in 1787 was a student of medicine at the University of Edinburgh under William Cullen and took issue against the Principal William Robertson, became an important intellectual figure of post-colonial America: from 1789 he taught Natural History and Materia Medica at the College of Philadelphia, where he introduced Blumenbach’s classifications of human race, together with a new attention toward language and antiquities.³⁰

Barton proposed to compare the ruins of Kentucky or Ohio to those of Mexico: if they were less spectacular, it was nonetheless possible to lay claim to the same monumental and cultural tradition for North America, too. When the new state began to look west, Mexico mattered strongly, as Samuel Truett has put it: “the fact that Mexican history came to the US frontier by way of New Spain added a new layer of entanglement, in which prior appropriations at the borderlands of one empire found new significance at the acquisitive edges of another”.³¹ By discovering, at the margins of Europe, another Creole voice, coming from another empire, Barton could enrich his historical view with perspectives borrowed from the Mexican past. But whereas he rooted the new nation in a monumental natural history, Clavijero had focused more on the cultural foundations of American history, in connection to Nahua peoples.

The newborn United States was at the frontier with Mexico, but Mexican history entered the United States from Europe, via the Atlantic. It is within these transatlantic and transimperial interactions – and competitions – that Clavijero’s work has to be placed.

Tensions Within the Spanish Empire: Alzate Follower and Critic of Clavijero

In 1783 the editor Antonio de Sancha (Torija 1720–Cádiz 1790) announced the forthcoming Spanish edition of Clavijero’s *Storia antica del Messico*. The Court had addressed a letter to Clavijero asking him to send his Spanish original manuscript to Sancha, probably on the advice of some people in Madrid, who were very interested in his work.³² Sancha, the main printer in Madrid, intended to publish the most elegant and complete edition of Clavijero’s history, to which he planned to add maps and illustrations. He

30 See S. Sebastiani, *Anthropology beyond Empires: Samuel Stanhope Smith and the Reconfiguration of the Atlantic World*, in: L. Kontler et al. (ed.), *Negotiating Knowledge in Early Modern Empires: A Decentered View*, New York 2014, pp. 207–233.

31 S. Truett, *The Borderlands and Lost Worlds of Early America*, in: E. Countryman / J. Barr (eds.), *Contested Spaces of Early America*, Philadelphia 2014, pp. 300–324, quotation p. 319. See also P. Hämäläinen / S. Truett, *On Borderlands*, in: *Journal of American History* 98 (2011) 2, pp. 338–361.

32 Charles Ronan asserts that, with all probability, the person behind the idea of Clavijero’s Spanish edition was Manuel Lardizabal y Uribe (1739–1820), a Mexican-born lawyer who had studied at the Colegio de San Ildefonso and had emigrated to Spain to continue his education. See Ch. E. Ronan, *Clavijero: The Fate of a Manuscript*, in: *The Americas* 27 (1970) 2, pp. 113–136, esp. note 7, p. 114. In the next pages we follow Ronan’s article.

first sent the manuscript to the Council of Castile, which entrusted Pedro de Luján, el Duque de Almodóvar, with its revision. The latter reviewed it positively, except for what he considered Clavijero's partiality towards Las Casas and his use of some sources he deemed unreliable.³³

Around the same time when Sancha announced the Spanish edition of Clavijero's *Storia antica del Messico*, about fifty copies of the Italian edition arrived at the University of Mexico City, to which – as we have mentioned – the work was dedicated. As soon as he heard about Sancha's project, José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez prepared some notes to be added to Clavijero's Spanish edition.³⁴ Alzate was very confident that his comments soon would be published in Madrid, as he mentioned this affair in his publications.³⁵ But this was not the case. His notes provide, however, unique insight into the reception of Clavijero in New Spain and the relation between locality and the production of knowledge within the boundaries of the same empire.

José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez was born in a town near Mexico City in 1737. When the family moved to Mexico City, Alzate studied in the Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo, where Clavijero was teaching; so, their friendship might date back to 1750, as Charles Ronan has suggested.³⁶ Alzate became a secular priest and started working at the Arzobispado just before the expulsion of the Jesuits. In spite of the distance, he remained somehow in contact with Clavijero. Speaking about Clavijero's circle at the Colegio, his biographer Juan Luis Maneiro (Veracruz, 1744–Mexico City, 1802), at the time his student and then his closest friend during exile, named specifically Alzate, “whose literary works arrive to us from time to time even if the vast sea separates us”.³⁷ Clavijero was one of the most cited authors in Alzate's writings, often qualified as “*el sabio*” or “*el insigne*”. But a close reading makes it also emerge some divergences, which are worth to be emphasised.

In his *Descripción de las antigüedades de Xochicalco*, a short treatise on the ruins of Xochicalco published as a supplement to the *Gazeta de literatura* in November 1791, Alzate quoted Clavijero in the opening epigraph, thus implying that he was fulfilling his wish of preserving and studying Mexican antiquities. In the preliminary remarks, he noted that the similarity between their ideas did not depend on copying each other, but was

33 Ibid. p. 117. Pedro Francisco Jiménez de Góngora y Luján, first Duke of Almodóvar (1727–1794), edited the Spanish translation of Raynal's *Histoire des deux Indes*, “with the comments by a Catholic Spaniard”, under the pseudonym Eduardo Malo de Luque. The first volume was published by Antonio de Sancha in 1784.

34 Alzate's manuscript notes for book VI and VII (vol. II) are kept in the National Library of Mexico and are reproduced in R. Moreno de los Arcos, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, in: *Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl* 10 (1972), pp. 359–392. Roberto Moreno also found the notes for books I and II in the Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia de México and published them in: *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia Antigua de Clavijero (Addenda)*, in: *Estudios de cultura náhuatl* 12 (1976), pp. 85–120. The notes for the remaining books have not (yet) been found.

35 See for instance, Alzate, *Gaceta de Literatura de México* [ed. 1831], vol. 2, p. 53.

36 See Ronan, Francisco Javier Clavijero, note 100, p. 34.

37 Juan Luis Maneiro, Joannis Aloysii Maneiri... De vitis aliquot mexicanorum aliorumque qui sive virtute, sive litteris Mexici inprimis floruerunt, 3 vols., Bononiae, ex typographia Laelii a Vulpe, 1791–1792, vol 3, p. 49. “[...] Josephus Alzateus, cujus assiduas in litteris vigilias interdum audimus, tametsi mari immenso disternimur.”

the result of “treating the same subject with sincerity and the help of the critic”.³⁸ If the emphasis Alzate put in stressing that he read Clavijero “*only after*” having published his own treatise might seem excessive and, as such, a bit suspicious, his approach to the ruins differed from that of the *Storia antica del Messico*. Alzate presented his treatise as a personal report of his visit to the ruins, written in the first person – in contrast with the impersonal account adopted by Clavijero’s history. Unlike Clavijero who also presented himself as a local expert of Mexico but never quoted his indigenous informants directly, Alzate referred often to the “natives” who accompanied him in his excursions and that he called “*prácticos*”: the role they played in his narrative is indeed significant.³⁹ Alzate’s intervention addressed first of all an internal question: he denounced both the precarious state of preservation of the ruins and the pernicious activities of those hacienda’s owners who used their territories as carriers. But, at the same time, his *Descripción de la antigüedades* – published on the occasion of the arrival, in Mexico, of Malaspina’s expedition, to whom he dedicated his treatise – clearly shows that Alzate aspired to reach an international and scientific audience.

Alzate’s complex relationship with Clavijero, made of admiration but also of criticism, emerges in the clearest way in the notes he wrote on the *Storia antica* around 1789–1790.⁴⁰ By then, Alzate was established as one of the most important intellectual figures of New Spain and had been publishing his *Gazeta de literatura de México* for half a decade. He was also a correspondent member of the French Academy of Sciences since the 1760s.⁴¹ In his gazettes he dealt with a variety of topics related to “useful” sciences, mainly physics, chemistry, and natural sciences, but also history and geography.⁴² Alzate is neither systematic nor monolithic in his interests and interventions; but, by constantly referring to his gazettes’ articles in his other publications, he weaved thematic threads and gave a sense of coherence to his work as a whole, despite the dispersion of the materials. Along with the antiquities, one thread was his long-standing interest in the Mexican Indians.

The notes that Alzate wrote on books VI and VII of *La storia antica del Messico*, dealing with ancient Mexicans’ religion, rites, and political, military and economic organization, are particularly interesting. His style of commentary was the same he used for annotating the excerpts of foreign authors he translated and published in his gazettes. Roberto Moreno maintains that Alzate followed Clavijero in his vindication of the Indians before

38 Alzate, *Descripción de la antigüedades de Xochicalco*, in: *Gaceta de Literatura de México*, 1831, vol. 2, p. 265. In the Advertencia, Alzate asserted: “Ni el abate Clavijero se valió de mi débil ensayo, ni yo tuve original que copiar; nos expresamos con identidad, lo que no es de extrañar, pues tratando del mismo asunto con sinceridad y con el auxilio de la crítica, era preciso vertiésemos las mismas ideas.”

39 In his reference to his indigenous informants, Alzate also stressed their “superstitions”. See, *ibid.*, pp. 28–30.

40 On the datation of Alzate’s notes, see Moreno, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, pp. 360–364.

41 P. Bret, Alzate y Ramírez et l’Académie Royale des Sciences de Paris: la réception des travaux d’un savant du Nouveau Monde, in: P. Aceves Pastrana (ed.), *Periodismo científico en el siglo XVIII: José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez*, Mexico City 2001, pp. 123–205.

42 A sample of Alzate’s writing has been recently edited by M. Achim, *Observaciones útiles para el futuro de México: selección de artículos 1768–1795*, Mexico City 2012.

and after the conquest, against two different enemies: the European *philosophes* who had diminished their physical and intellectual capacities in their writings, and the political mistreatments of Indians by the authorities of New Spain.⁴³ Alzate, however, disagreed with Clavijero on some important details, such as the estimations of the number of human sacrifices, which he maintained to be less numerous than usually stated, siding with Las Casas.⁴⁴

Beside pushing forward the “Lascasian” agenda, Alzate challenged the central argument on which Clavijero had constructed his authority as a Creole historian: his first-hand knowledge about American nature, peoples, and original documents. The insistence on the local expertise and the epistemological value of the eyewitness in opposition to the philosophical and distant history of armchair Europeans was a leitmotiv of the *Storia antica del Messico*. However, Alzate, from his position *sur place*, challenged this very point, stressing that Clavijero had spent over twenty years in exile, and was therefore far away from the Mexican sources, specimens, and monuments he was speaking about. While applying to Clavijero the same criticism the latter had raised against European writers, Alzate pointed to an important contradiction lurking throughout the work of the banished Jesuit: Clavijero had couched his own history in a language of closeness, but he was writing from a distant space and time, being in Bologna and dealing with the Aztec past.⁴⁵

This was particularly true for natural history, for which Alzate often relied on his own observations. For instance, he disputed Clavijero’s observations about the axolotl, an endemic species living in the lakes of Mexico City. Clavijero noted, following the writings of Francisco Hernández (1514–1587), the sixteenth-century author of the *Mexican Treasury*, that this “aquatic lizard” had a uterus and menstruated. In his text, Clavijero took aim at Jacques-Christophe Valmont de Bomare (1731–1807) who doubted this characteristic, dismissing the authority of the French naturalist, on the ground that the latter had never seen such a specimen in person, and was therefore not trustworthy. Alzate, on the contrary, wrote in his notes to Clavijero’s history that “Bomare was right to doubt about this phenomenon [menstruation], as by its dissection I have verified that this is false”.⁴⁶ In so doing, Alzate reasserted his deeper degree of intimacy and experience, in which he rooted his own scientific credibility. On November 1790, Alzate devoted a full issue of his gazette to the axolotl. Briefly referring to “a work that I’ve

43 Moreno, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, p. 369.

44 Clavijero records that Las Casas “reduces these sacrifices to such a small number, that we are left to believe, they amounted not to fifty, or at most not to a hundred”, whereas other sources – including Zumarraga, the first archbishop of Mexico – reported that the number of victims was 20,000 per year or even more. Clavijero took an intermediate position here, while stressing that he did not understand why Las Casas, who used Zumarraga’s testimony, contradicted him on this issue. See Clavijero, *History of Mexico*, vol. I, book VI, chap. 20, pp. 280–283. Alzate, on the contrary, noted: “I do not know why our author [Clavijero] disagrees with Las Casas’ opinion”. See note 13, in Moreno, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, p. 379.

45 Sebastiani, *What constituted historical evidence of the New World?*

46 “En lo demás tuvo razón Bomare para dudar del fenómeno que se refiere, pues por la disección he verificado ser falso.” See Moreno, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia Antigua de Clavijero* (Addenda), p. 356, note 102.

prepared on the history of New Spain, and which I hope will be published very soon by D. Antonio de Sancha"⁴⁷, he did not mention explicitly Clavijero but reasserted his agreement with Bomare and delved into a full examination of the axolotl, retorting to first-person narrative and relying heavily on Indian informants. He concluded that the axolotl syrup was a good medicine against tuberculosis and suggested that it should be commercialized.

Alzate, thus, used a variety of literary strategies to intervene both on local and on international levels, in the hope of being published in Europe. He stressed the importance of the knowledge he was revealing to Europeans, and to Spaniards in particular, either for their physical well-being (such as the cure for tuberculosis) or for the well-being of the empire through the development of commerce – benefitting the empire at broad as well as New Spain's economy. With his gazettes, Alzate could achieve several goals: he could bring the latest European scientific contributions to New Spain but also gather and make available Mexican riches and particularities to Europe. In this way, he could contribute, from his locality, to the scientific international discussions. The flexibility and regularity of this literary genre, while providing a running commentary of the local affairs (within the limits of the censorship requirements), also allowed him to organize the enlightened sociabilities in Mexico City.⁴⁸

The emphasis on locality emerging from Alzate's notes could be read as a political commentary on the current state of Indians and ancient vestiges alike. One could roughly categorize Alzate's notes of the books VI and VII in three sets: anthropological observations, curious facts and political comments. His notes doubled down on the local expertise by providing a glimpse of how things were in the present. Many notes provided information on whether modern Indians still behaved as the ancient ones described by Clavijero: whereas the latter affirmed, for instance, that the Indians used to burn incense for the idols in all their houses, Alzate explained that "nowadays the Indians burn incense for the saints in their chapels".⁴⁹ On the one hand, this presentist gaze reinforced

47 "En una obra que trabajé sobre la historia de Nueva España, y que espero se publique muy en breve por D. Antonio de Sancha, expuse observaciones seguras acerca del ajolote o axolotl, pez raro por su organización, y de que se han vertido muchas falsedades..." See Alzate, *Gaceta de Literatura de México* [1789–1795], Puebla, 1831, vol. 2, p. 53.

48 See G. Goldin Marcovich, *La circulation des savoirs entre l'Europe et la Nouvelle Espagne au XVIIIe Siècle. Les Gazettes de José Antonio De Alzate y Ramírez, Mémoire de Master*, Paris, EHESS, 2012. For more on Alzate's naturalist practices and his criticism vis-à-vis the European classificatory system, see R. Moreno de los Arcos, *Linneo en México: Las controversias sobre el sistema binario sexual, 1788–1798*, Mexico City 1989; and more recently: H. Cowie, *Peripheral Vision: Science and Creole Patriotism in Eighteenth-Century Spanish America*, in: *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 40 (2009) 3, pp. 143–155; M. Achim, *From Rustics to Savants. Indigenous Materia Medica in Eighteenth-Century Mexico*, in: *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 42 (2011) 3, pp. 275–284.

49 "En el día acostumbran los indios en sus oratorios incensar a los santos." Alzate, note 14 to Clavijero's Vol. II, Lib. VI, Chap. 21, in Moreno, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, p. 379. See also note 11, p. 378. A similar idea was also expressed in note 21: whereas Clavijero wrote that the ancient Mexicans sent their children to school, Alzate noted that "even today the Indians try to send their small children to colleges" ("hasta el día procuran los indios dedicar sus prequeños hijos a los colegios"), *ibid.*, p. 380. He added that there was more demand than supply and that some had tried to open schools for Indian children but had faced many difficulties.

Clavijero's credibility in his confrontation with the European polemicists; on the other, it served as a local and punctual intervention. If Clavijero merely hinted his disagreement on the way Indians were treated by local authorities, Alzate gave it full development. In book VII, chapter 14 dealing with the "Division of the lands, and titles of possession and property", Clavijero compared the ancient land property system of the Indians to the Spanish (and European) feudal system. "In the Mexican empire" – he wrote – "as far as we can find, real fiefs were few in number; and if we are to speak in the strict sense of the civil law, there were none at all; for they were neither perpetual in their nature, as every year it was necessary to repeat the form of investiture, nor were the vassals of feudatories exempted from the tributes which were paid to the king by the other vassals of the crown."⁵⁰ This rather fair system, he seemed to conclude, somehow had been preserved by the Crown through benevolent legislation, but had been abused by individuals and judges. "The catholic kings have assigned lands to the settlements of the Mexicans, and made proper laws to secure to them the perpetuity of such possessions; but at present many villages have been deprived of them by the great power of some individuals, assisted by the iniquity of some judges."⁵¹

Alzate, in his notes, went further: "ever since the Indian peoples have been deprived of the administration of their lands, these [lands] have become totally useless to them: it sounds like the property is theirs, but they cannot make any use of them [these lands] or have the slightest profit from them".⁵² He provided a list of examples to illustrate his point: Tlatelolco, Iztacalco, Mexiucá. If we understand this correctly, these lands assured a rent, but the Indians, according to Alzate, were ignorant of this economic system and so derived no benefit from it: "why would the Indians care about the publication of how much of their riches have been used in the National Bank, if they ignore that there is such a Bank and if both the capitals and the profits are so useless to them?"⁵³ Locality played on a multiplicity of scales, in New Spain but also in Madrid, where Clavijero's *History* was supposed to be published.

Historiographical Failures and New Imperial Competitions

The Spanish publication of Clavijero's history never saw the light of day in Spain. When Sancha sought the approbation of the Council of the Indies, he encountered insurmountable difficulties. "The appearance of the *Storia antica* in Italy" – writes Ronan – "had caused a very unfavorable reaction among a number of the exiled Spanish Jesuits

50 See Clavijero, *The History of Mexico*, vol I, Book VI, Ch. XIV, p. 349.

51 Ibid. p. 350.

52 "Desde que se quitó a los pueblos de indios la administración de sus tierras les son absolutamente inútiles: suena por suya la propiedad, pero no pueden hacer ningún uso ni sacar de ellas el más mínimo provecho". Alzate, note 26 in Moreno de los Arcos, *Las notas de Alzate a la Historia antigua de Clavijero*, p. 382.

53 "¿Qué importa a los indios que se publique que sus caudales han utilizado tanto o cuanto en el Banco Nacional, si ellos ignoran que hay tal Banco y tan inútiles les son las utilidades como los principales?" Ibid.

living in that country.”⁵⁴ They considered it as having defended Mexican Indians, while being “highly insulting to Spain”. Therefore, as soon as the Majorcan Jesuit, Ramón Diosdado Caballero, who was sent to Rome, heard the news about the forthcoming edition of Clavijero’s history in Spanish, he wrote a strong refutation with the intent of “repairing the scandal it had provoked”.⁵⁵ Diosdado sent a letter to Gálvez, the former *Visitador general* of New Spain, at that time Minister of the Indies, warning him about Clavijero’s work and hoping to publish his own refutation – *Observaciones americanas y suplemento crítico a la historia del ex- Jesuita Don Francisco Xavier Clavijero* – under his patronage as an antidote to the Spanish edition.⁵⁶ So, although the censors provided positive reviews of Clavijero’s manuscript to the Council of the Indies, Gálvez stalled the publication, with the intention of revising it on the basis of Diosdado’s observations, that he intended to publish.⁵⁷ One of the censors of Diosdado’s “Observaciones” hailed his efforts “to refute an American in the middle of Italy” as an action “proper to a noble heart, truly Spanish, and worthy of great praise”, while stressing that Diosdado successfully refuted “the Raynals and Robertsons”.⁵⁸ This in itself did not prevent the publication of Clavijero’s history in Spain, as the book was further sent to censorship with Diosdado’s “Observaciones” and its reports: the censors deemed Clavijero worth publishing, whereas they considered Diosdado’s observations as full of errors and lacking in good faith. However, the opposition levelled by Diosdado and backed by Gálvez stalled the publication so effectively that the entire project was eventually forgotten, awaiting a final revision which the appointed person never made.⁵⁹ Diosdado’s opposition casts light on the complexity of stances concerning the place of America and American history within the Spanish empire, as well as among the (ex)Jesuits.

As for Alzate, he never reached the audience he expected to and his notes remained manuscript. Around the same time, Alzate asked the Crown to be named “royal chronicler of the Indies” and proposed a geography of America.⁶⁰ His request was endorsed by the Viceroy Revillagigedo who commended the high quality of Alzate’s works and his devotion to the homeland and the king.⁶¹ In Madrid, Juan Bautista Muñoz had no objections but the members of the Academia de la Historia expressed their opposition to such a title.⁶² The task of a chronicler, they explained, was to “adjust history to the political interests of the Nation, and the rights of the Crown, defending them against the

54 Ronan, *Clavijero: The Fate of a Manuscript*, p. 118.

55 Diosdado to Gálvez, Rome, August 5, 1784, AGI, Patronato 296, fols. 1–3, quoted in Ronan, *Clavijero: The Fate of a Manuscript*, p. 118.

56 *Ibid.* p. 119.

57 *Ibid.* p. 121.

58 Miguel de San Martín Cueto to José de Gálvez, November 12, 1785, AGI, Patronato 296, fols. 4–31v, quoted in Ronan, *Clavijero: The Fate of a Manuscript*, p. 122.

59 *Ibid.*, pp. 125–134.

60 “Expediente sobre que la Cámara de Indias tenga presente para Prebendas, à D.n Josef Antonio de Alzate...”, 1777–1791, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, México, 1883.

61 *Ibid.*, June 26, 1790.

62 Juan Bautista Muñoz (Museros 1745–Valencia 1799) was appointed by Charles III Cosmographer of the Indies in 1770. In 1779 he was charged with the writing of a “History of the New World” that was to counter the philo-

declamations and rumors of the rival nations, or the conquered provinces". Thus, in the view of the Academia de la Historia, the main purpose of history was political, and had to counter both foreign enemies and internal dissenters. By consequence, the chronicles should, according to them, "at all times reside at the Court, so that he would write his history under the sight of the tribunals".⁶³ In this imperial logic, writing from Italy or from New Spain was equally problematic, as both places were distant from the courtly oversight.

Alzate had remained on the sidelines of the European debate, despite his efforts, all along his life, to take direct part in it. His work would enter the European debate only after his death, via Alexander von Humboldt, who first made his name documenting his travels to Spanish America. In his *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain* (1811), Humboldt stressed the achievements of the Bourbons in New Spain, while relying much on both Alzate and Clavijero. His *Political Essay* was, in turn, appropriated and reinterpreted by the Mexican nationalist historiography during the 19th century.⁶⁴ In Europe, Humboldt's "comprehensive description" made the "previously opaque Spanish possession transparent, instilling the belief that Mexico was pivotal to the control of world trade."⁶⁵ Particularly in Britain, Mexico came to be perceived as a strategic site for global commerce, not only for its geographical position nearly equidistant between Europe and Asia, but also because it appeared full of resources to be exploited and possibilities for foreign investments.⁶⁶ The knowledge developed by Mexican savants was now put at the service of British imperialism.

The new imperial logic which developed in the wake of the Atlantic revolutions and the disintegration of much of the Spanish Empire had a direct impact on Clavijero's reception. When Clavijero's *Storia* finally appeared in Spanish in 1826, it was not published in Madrid but in London. It was printed by the German publisher Rudolph Ackermann (Schneeberg 1764–London 1834), who produced more than eighty titles in Spanish, seizing the profitable opportunities opened by the commercial blockade with Spain in

sophes views on Spain and its history in the Indies. For a detailed account of the historiographical stances of the Academy and its inner workings see Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to write the history of the New World*, ch. 3.

63 "Informe de Don Juan Bautista Muñoz", January 26, 1791 and "Informe de la Academia de la Historia", April 29, 1791, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, México, 1883, "Que es también del cargo del cronista, ajustar la historia a los intereses políticos de la Nación, y derechos de la Corona, sosteniéndoles contra las declamaciones y rumores de las naciones rivales, o de las provincias conquistadas. Que por esta razón es una de las máximas fundamentales de estos Reynos, y señaladamente de las Indias, que el Cronista, en todos tiempos haya residido en la Corte, para que escriba su historia a la vista de los Tribunales."

64 L. E. O. Fernandes, *Patria Mestiza. A invenção do passado nacional mexicano (séculos XVIII e XIX)*, São Paulo 2012; Id., *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain: Humboldt and the history of Mexico*, in *HiN – Humboldt im Netz. Internationale Zeitschrift für Humboldt-Studien* (Potsdam/Berlin) XV (2014) 28, pp. 24–33, <http://www.unipotsdam.de/u/romanistik/humboldt/hin/hin28/fernandes.htm>.

65 N. Rupke, *A Geography of Enlightenment: The Critical Reception of Alexander von Humboldt's Mexico Work*, in: D. N. Livingstone / Ch. W. J. Withers (eds.), *Geography and Enlightenment*, Chicago 1999, pp. 319–339, quotation p. 330.

66 *Ibid.*, pp. 331–333.

the newly independent republics of Spanish America.⁶⁷ The *Historia antigua de Megico* which was published in England, to be sold (especially) in Latin America, was not the original text written by Clavijero but it was a translation from the Italian, made *ex novo* by José Joaquín de Mora (Cádiz 1783–Madrid 1864), a Spanish liberal writer who had exiled in London in 1823, after the French invasion.⁶⁸ Between 1823 and 1826, Mora was the most prolific collaborator of Ackermann’s publishing venture for overseas, deeply contributing to build his Spanish catalogue.⁶⁹ Mora’s translation of Clavijero’s *Historia* was reprinted in Mexico in the 1850s, while another translation by the Bishop of Puebla, Francisco Pablo Vázquez, was published by Juan R. Navarro in 1853. The original Spanish text written by Clavijero, instead, appeared in 1945 only,⁷⁰ whereas Alzate’s notes remained dispersed in Mexican archives.

During the uncertain process of Mexico’s nation-building, Creole historiography became unpopular.⁷¹ The National Museum of Mexico, founded in 1825 by presidential decree, responded to Clavijero’s prospect of preserving Mexican ancient monuments and documents in one space, but had to adapt the eighteenth-century model of “collecting and studying antiquities and natural history” to the “new formation of economic and social power both in Mexico and in the transatlantic world”.⁷² With the independence of Mexico, another imperial configuration took shape, together with a different political, geopolitical and intellectual agenda.

67 E. Roldán Vera, *The British Book Trade and Spanish American Independence: Education and Knowledge Transmission of Knowledge in Transcontinental Perspective*, Aldershot 2003.

68 F. S. Clavijero, *Historia antigua de Megico sacada de los mejores historiadores españoles y de los manuscritos y de las pinturas antiguas de los indios ... traducida del italiano por José Joaquín de Mora*, 2 vols., London, R. Ackermann, 1826.

69 During his collaboration with Ackermann, Mora wrote, edited and translated an impressive number of works in Spanish, ranging from history to catechism, geography, political economy, education of women, as well as Spanish and Latin grammars, literature, and journals. At the end of 1826, he left England and moved first to Argentina and then to Chile. For a list of Ackermann’s Spanish publications, including those by Mora, see Roldán Vera, *The British Book Trade and Spanish American Independence*, pp. 243–259. On the Spanish liberal exile in England in the 1820s, see the classic study by V. Lloréns, *Liberales y románticos: Una emigración española en Inglaterra (1823–1834)*, Madrid 1968, esp. pp. 229–257. See also F. Durán López, *Versiones de un exilio. Los traductores españoles de la casa Ackermann (London, 1823–1830)*, Madrid 2015.

70 F. J. Clavijero, *Historia antigua de México. Primera edición del original escrito en castellano por el autor*, ed. and introd. by M. Cuevas, 4 vols, Mexico City 1945.

71 This is clearly shown by D. Brading in *The Origins of Mexican Nationalism*, Cambridge, UK 1985. See also chapters “Civilisation and Barbarism” and “Mexican Leviathan” in Brading’s *The First America*.

72 Achim, *From Idols to Antiquity*, pp. 15–16. This study stresses the uncertainties of the first four decades of the National Museum and shows that the alliance between archeology and state power took shape in the 1870s only. It is by that time that the museum came to be identified with its antiquities.

Forced Labour at the Frontier of Empires: Manipur and the French Congo, 1890–1914

Yaruipam Muivah / Alessandro Stanziani

ABSTRACTS

Dieser Aufsatz beleuchtet die vielfachen Beziehungen zwischen Zentren und Frontier-Zonen des französischen und des britischen Imperiums in Asien und Afrika mit Blick auf die Zirkulation von Ideen sowie die sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Dynamiken. In Fallstudien zu Manipur und Nordost-Indien einerseits sowie Französisch-Kongo andererseits diskutieren die Verfasser Sklaverei, freie Arbeit und in Frage gestellte Souveränitäten. Aus dieser Perspektive wurde die Produktion einer Peripherie weniger als ein Gegensatz von metropolitanem Zentrum und seinen Kolonien wahrgenommen und praktiziert, sondern vielmehr als die Herausbildung von Räumen zwischen den Imperien.

This article stresses the interrelations in terms of the circulation of ideas and the economic and social dynamics between various core and frontiers of the French and the British Empires in Asia and Africa. In taking the case of Manipur and North-East India, on the one hand, French Congo on the other hand, the question of slavery, free labor, and disputed sovereignties will be discussed. From this perspective, the making of a periphery was conceived and practised at the interstices of empires rather than as an opposition between the mainland core and its colonies.

Debates about abolition of slavery have essentially focused on two interrelated questions: (1) whether nineteenth- and early twentieth-century abolitions were a major breakthrough compared to previous centuries (or even millennia) in the history of humankind, during which bondage had been the dominant form of labour and human condition; and (2) whether they express an action specific to Western bourgeoisie and liberal civilization. It is true that the number of abolitionist acts and the people con-

cerned throughout the extended nineteenth century (1780–1914) has no equivalent in history: 30 million Russian peasants, half a million slaves in Saint-Domingue in 1790, 4 million slaves in the US in 1860, another million in the Caribbean at the moment of the abolition of 1832–1840, a further million in Brazil in 1885, and 250,000 in the Spanish colonies were freed during this period. Abolitions in Africa at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century have been estimated to involve approximately 7 million people.¹ Yet this argument has been criticized by those who have argued that the abolitionist legal acts take into consideration neither the important rate of manumission and purchase of freedom in Islamic societies, in areas such as Africa, South-East Asia, and the Ottoman Empire,² nor the important rate of manumission in Russia and Brazil prior to general abolition, nor the legal and social constraints on freed slaves and serfs.

The question is whether these legal tools benefited emancipated slaves and new indentured immigrants or only local and / or colonial elites. We intend to answer this question and examine its main terms: the state, labour, and rights. Instead of the nation-state, we strongly place the role of the empire centre stage; instead of the ahistorical opposition between free and unfree labour, we stress their historical co-evolution and definitions; and instead of abstract rights, we look for law in action and concrete distribution of rights and obligations inside and between the empires.³ Thus, this article seeks to provide answers that go beyond these standard oppositions between “before” and “after” the abolition, on the one hand, and between the “West” and “the rest”, on the other hand. We will emphasize interrelations in terms of the circulation of ideas and the economic and social dynamics between the various cores and frontiers of the French and the British empires in Asia and Africa. Within this broader context, abolitions at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century look unique if compared to previous movements. The European societies were moving to high industrialization: the Second Industrial Revolution, the welfare state and finance, and in this perspective new imperialism were related much less to sugar and cotton than to rubber and minerals. Yet, technical difficulties were still very important, specifically in Central Africa, and therefore geopolitical stakes played a central role, while, unlike former abolitionism, public opinion did not produce massive movements, even in Britain.

In particular, we will focus our attention on two frontier colonies: the French Congo and Manipur. While the abolition of slavery in Sudan, Senegal, and Guinea and French West

1 S. Drescher, *Abolitions. A History of Slavery and Antislavery*, Cambridge, UK 2009.

2 On these debates, see, among others, J. C. Miller, *Slavery and Slaving in World History: A Bibliography, 1900–1996*, Armonk, N.Y. 1999; C. Meillassoux, *Anthropologie de l’esclavage*, Paris 1986; M. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, New York 1980; O. Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*, Cambridge, MA 1982; J. Watson (ed.), *Asian and African Systems of Slavery*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1980; W. G. Clarence-Smith (ed.), *The Economics of the Indian Ocean Slave Trade*, London 1989; G. Campbell (ed.), *The Structure of Slavery in the Indian Ocean, Africa and Asia*, London 2004.

3 Some references: D. Hay/P. Craven (eds.), *Masters, Servants, and Magistrates in Britain and the Empire, 1562–1955*, Chapel Hill 2004; L. Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures*, Cambridge, UK 2002; R. Roberts, *Litigants and Household. African Disputes and Colonial Courts in the French Soudan, 1895–1912*, Portsmouth 2005. For more references, see here after.

Africa (FWA)⁴ in general has been widely explored,⁵ the process in the French Congo and French Equatorial Africa (FEA)⁶ has received less attention (apart from studies such as those by Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch).⁷ The main focus of these works have been capital and concession companies. Starting from these works, we then will put emphasis on labour while seeking to introduce the Congo experience into a comparative and global perspective. In particular, we will study the case of Manipur, in North-East India. Like the French Congo, this area has been the object of only a few works.⁸ Progressively annexed by the British at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, the absence of natural resources was not attractive to the British economically. However, the abundant supply of labour – in the form of various forced labour – and the strategic geographical location, sandwiched between the British territory of Assam and the expanding imperial Burmese Empire, meant that controlling the state became a very important issue for British imperial interests.

In the major debates in Indian and African studies, some have underlined the hypocrisy of the colonial state regarding its real aim, that is to say to exploit bonded labour. Others have taken the opposite position, arguing that colonial officials were motivated by genuine anti-slavery feelings and that it was only the impotence of the colonial state that limited this impetus.⁹ In both cases, the question concerned the strength and power of the colonial state. James Scott has emphasized the role of the nation-state and the

- 4 In 1895, the colonial government decided to federate its West African colonies. Thus, Senegal, French Sudan, Guinea, and Ivory Coast formed a new administrative entity called French West Africa (FWA). Yet, in practice, the government of the FWA was only settled in 1904–1905. Dahomey was added in 1899, Niger and Mauritania in 1904, and Upper Volta in 1919.
- 5 Among others, see M. Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule in French West Africa*, Cambridge, UK 1998; R. Roberts, *Two Worlds of Cotton. Colonialism and Regional Economy in the French Soudan, 1800–1946*, Stanford 1996; B. Fall, *Le travail forcé en AOF*, Paris 1993; B. Barry, *La Sénégalie du XVe au XIXe siècle; traite négrière, Islam, conquête coloniale*, Paris 1988; D. Bouche, *Les villages de liberté en Afrique noire française, 1887–1910*, The Hague 1968; J.-L. Boutiller, *Les captifs en AOF, 1903–1905*, in: *Bulletin de l'IFAN* 30, ser. B (1968) 2, pp. 511–535; D. Cordell/J. Gregory, *Labour reservoirs and population: French colonial strategies in Koudougou, Upper Volta, 1914 to 1939*, in: *Journal of African History* 23 (1982) 2, pp. 205–224; M. Klein, *Islam and Imperialism in Senegal: Sine-Saloum 1847–1914*, Stanford 1968; P. Manning, *Slavery, Colonialism and Economic Growth in Dahomey, 1640–1960*, Cambridge 1982; F. Renaut, *Libération d'esclaves et nouvelle servitude: les rachats de captifs africains pour le compte des colonies françaises après l'abolition de l'esclavage*, Abidjan 1976; R. Roberts, *Warriors, Merchants and Slaves: the State and the Economy in the Middle Niger Valley, 1700–1914*, Stanford 1987; H. Brun-schwig, *Noirs et blancs dans l'Afrique noire française ou comment le colonisé devient colonisateur (1870–1914)*, Paris 1983.
- 6 AEF is the French acronym for l'Afrique équatoriale française. The general government of the AEF was officially designed in 1910. According to its 1910 boundaries, French Equatorial Africa included Gabon, Middle Congo, Ubangi-Chari, and Chad. Before that date, in 1898, Gabon, the Congo and the interior areas were combined into an immense colony, called the French Congo.
- 7 C. Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo (AEF) au temps des grandes compagnies concessionnaires, 1898–1930*, Paris/La Haye 1972.
- 8 L. Hrangchal, *Revisiting the Boi System of Lushai Hills*, in: *Journal of North East India Studies* 4 (2014) 2, pp. 41–54; L. Dzuwicheu, *Road and Rule: Colonialism and the Politics of Access in the Naga Hills, 1826–1918*. Dissertation, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi 2005.
- 9 J. Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*, Princeton 2000; Roberts, *Litigants and Households*.

attempts by state officials in a wide variety of contexts.¹⁰ However, contrary to Scott's argument, his ideal types (city-states, Asian despotic states, and European nation-states) often evolved according to colonial, not just national, realities, and the effort to translate models into practices was hindered by the weakness of colonial administrations and actively opposed by local populations.

In this sense, Scott's elaboration of Schendel's "Zomia" and its people is one of the few works that tries to create the idea of frontier and its people from the "frontier" itself; still, this is also done through the voices and writing of the "frontiersmen" (here in the American sense of the term), who happen to have a different voice.¹¹ Scott's work has generated a lot of lively debate among many scholars, and in the process, much praise has been garnered for the originality of the theory. At the same time, many scholars who have worked on a specific region within the Zomia have questioned the validity of his theory for specific tribes/people and if it has been overgeneralized.¹² Scholars who have studied North-East India (which is included in the Zomia) have also highlighted some of the problems of including this part of India in his characterization of Zomia.¹³ Though the term Zomia was conceived from one of the tribes of the North-East Frontier, many of the propositions Scott makes do not find their fullest expressions until the last quarter of the nineteenth century among many of the frontier tribes in the North-East Frontier.¹⁴ Unlike Scott, we refer to empire instead of nation-states and we use Zomia as a heuristic to discuss the construction of empires, rights, and labour. From this standpoint, frontiers of the empire do not necessarily only refer to hills in South-East Asia, but also to Central Africa and similar places (the far north, for instance), which were hard to penetrate and exploit and where violence and coercion persisted well beyond the official abolition of slavery.

Slavery and Abolition in British Africa: Transplanting India to Africa ...

Debates on African and colonial history tend to focus on the transformation of politics, labour, societies, and economies under European "imperialism". The abolition of

10 J. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, New Haven, CT 1998.

11 W. van Schendel, *Geographies of Knowing, Geographies of Ignorance: Jumping Scale in Southeast Asia*, in: *Environment and Planning: Society and Space* 20 (2002) 6, pp. 647–668; J. Michaud, Editorial: *Zomia and Beyond*, in: *Journal of Global History* 5 (2010) 2, pp. 187–214; J. Scott, *The Art of not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*, New Haven, CT 2009. For the criticism on the lack of voices from the Zomians, see B. G. Karlsson, *Evading the State: Ethnicity in Northeast India Through the Lens of James Scott*, in: *Asian Ethnology* 72 (2013) 2 (Performing Identity Politics and Culture in Northeast India and Beyond), pp. 321–331.

12 Karlsson even writes: "Scott is not afraid of generalizations and make comparisons shamelessly over time and space." Karlsson, *Evading the State*, p. 326.

13 See J. J. P. Wouters, *Keeping the Hill Tribes at Bay: A Critique from India's Northeast of James C. Scott's Paradigm of State Evasion*, in: *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* 39 (2012), pp. 41–65.

14 Scott maintains that this idea of Zomia becomes unviable after the 1950s, but many of the main foundations of Zomia had become obsolete by the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

slavery,¹⁵ the relationship between direct and indirect rule,¹⁶ and the economic dimension of empire¹⁷ are among the most common themes. Discussions concern the relative strength of “local” and “colonial” actors and institutions,¹⁸ the tensions especially between domination and local agency, and the costs and benefits of the empire.¹⁹

We aim to take some of these topics into consideration here, notably the importance of the labour question and of African agency. Abolition was not an indigenous African concept: masters could free slaves through manumission, and slaves could sometimes redeem themselves. In most cases, manumissions were extremely important, especially in Islamic areas. In some Muslim societies, freed slaves became hereditary clients, while in non-Muslim societies slave origins were remembered when it came to questions of marriage, inheritance, and rituals.²⁰ Instead, full-scale abolition was a Western European idea, although it took different forms in Britain, France, the Netherlands, Spain, and Portugal.²¹ Each European power therefore exported its own idea or ideas of what abolition and freedom meant. The British began by fighting against the slave trade, as they had done in the Atlantic world almost a century earlier. They focused their efforts on the slave trade in the trans-Saharan region and the Red Sea, but they gradually enlarged their scope of action to the Gold Coast and other western parts of Africa and then down to the Cape Coast. Colonial methods, competition between colonial states, and the weight of humanitarian motives compared with political and economic goals were the underlying issues. British officials sought to avoid confrontation with Islamic authorities, chiefly regarding the practice of concubines, which was left intact; Islamic customary law was invoked to justify its legitimacy. A number of British colonial elites were of the opinion that control of the colonies should be achieved through agreements with local chiefs, whereas a sudden abolition of all forms of dependency described as slavery might bring about the collapse of local economies and societies and hence of imperial authority.²²

15 A few references (more in the following parts): S. Miers/I. Kopytoff (eds), *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives*, Madison, WI 1977; P. Lovejoy/J. Hogendown, *Slow Death of Slavery: The Course of Abolition in Northern Nigeria, 1897–1936*, Cambridge 1993; Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*; S. Miers/R. Roberts (eds.), *The End of Slavery in Africa*, Madison, WI 1988.

16 K. Mann/R. Roberts (eds.), *Law in Colonial Africa*, Portsmouth 1996; F. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question. Theory, Knowledge, History*, Berkeley, CA 2005; A. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*, Stanford 1996; Cooper, *Decolonization*; M. Chanok, *Law Custom and Social Order. The Colonial Experience in Malawi and Zambia*, Cambridge 1985; Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*.

17 M.E. Chamberlain, *The Scramble for Africa*, London 2014; A. Zimmermann, *Alabama in Africa*, Princeton 2010; K. Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 3, *Global Empires and Revolutions*, Cambridge 2012. R. Austen, *African Economic History*, London 1987; G. Austin/S. Broadberry, *The Renaissance of African Economic History*, Introduction, special issue *Economic History Review* 67 (2014) 4, pp. 893–906.

18 F. Cooper/A. L. Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, Berkeley 1997.

19 J. Millar, *The Problem of Slavery as History*, New Haven, CT/London 2012; D. D. Cordell/J. W. Gregory (eds.), *African Population and Capitalism: Historical Perspectives*, Boulder 1987; D. Cagneau, *L'Afrique des inégalités. Où conduit l'histoire*, Paris 2006; P. Bairoch, *Economics and World History: Myths and Paradoxes*, Chicago 1993; J. Marseille, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français. Histoire d'un divorce*, Paris 1984; D.K. Fieldhouse, *Economics and Empire*, London 1984.

20 S. Miers/R. Roberts, Introduction, in: Miers/Roberts (eds.), *The End of Slavery in Africa*, pp. 3–68.

21 Drescher, *Abolitions*.

22 Lovejoy/Hogendown, *Slow Death*.

From the start, as regards slavery, and not just the slave trade, British leaders explicitly took India as a model. In Africa, as in India, sovereignty, colonial rule and slavery were interconnected. In 1866, Zanzibar was made “so far as concerns the administration of justice to British subjects, a part of Her Majesty’s Indian Empire.”²³ The subsequent extension of Indian law into continental Africa was a result of the expansion of British power from Zanzibar into the interior.²⁴ A subsequent order in council from the Foreign Office confirmed this outcome and some 20 Indian acts were introduced in different parts of British Africa. These Indian laws and procedures were not turned into British rules but coexisted with “native customs” and Islamic law. Thus, the Protectorate Court sitting in Mombasa, which could appeal to Zanzibar and its subordinate courts, exercised jurisdiction over all British and non-British protected subjects as well as nationals of foreign countries. The Native Courts, whether presided over by tribal chiefs, headmen, or British officials, were meant to enforce “native custom”. As in India, the adoption of legal codes in Africa followed the principle of indirect rule. In India, indirect rule emerged first in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and then again in response to the Sepoy Mutiny. The British adopted the same principle in Africa, where Henry Maine’s approach found a staunch supporter in Frederick Lugard.²⁵ During this period, local forms of slavery were considered “mild”, as they had been in India almost a century earlier, compared with “real” (chattel) slavery and were quite often described as domestic dependency.²⁶ Lugard himself stressed the difference between domestic and chattel slavery (the former prevented idleness). When he arrived in Buganda in December 1890, he therefore declared it was necessary to avoid any direct interference in slaveholding and abolition (a source of chaos).²⁷ In his opinion, slaves should be emancipated only in places under direct protectorate rule like Zanzibar.

These views gradually changed: in the Gold Coast, an ordinance forbidding slaveholding was issued in 1874, whereas in several other areas this did not become the accepted attitude until the 1880s. Tolerance of local practices of bondage came under attack for two main reasons: first, they had been adopted for pragmatic purposes, namely to collaborate with local chiefs in managing the colonies and recruiting labour. Neither aim was achieved inasmuch as the collaboration was limited, and the chiefs failed to provide the labour force required (by the colonial state as well as by private companies) while continuing their slave traffic. Change did take place when the British abolitionist movement escalated its campaign against African practices and British tolerance.²⁸ The Protestant movement in Britain and missionaries in Africa intensified their actions. As in previous

23 H.F. Morris/J. Read, *Indirect Rule and the Search for Justice: Essays on East African Legal History*, Oxford 1972, pp. 112–113.

24 T. Metcalf, *Imperial Connections*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 2007, p. 24.

25 K. Mantena, *Alibis of Empire. Henri Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism*, Princeton 2010.

26 Miers/Kopytoff, *Slavery in Africa*; Miers/Roberts, *The End of Slavery*.

27 Rhode House Library, Oxford, Lugard Papers, Mss. British Empire, 30–99; printed version of Lugard’s diaries: M. Perham/M. Bull (eds.), *The Diaries of Lord Lugard*, Evanston 1959, 4 vol. In particular, vol. 1, pp. 171–173.

28 Cooper, *From Slaves to Squatters*, pp. 61–64.

cases of abolition, humanitarian aims, religion, moral values, and economic interests converged in support of the radical abolition of slavery itself and not merely the slave trade. Evangelical philanthropy allied with “Burkean” colonial abolitionism to eradicate all forms of slavery in Africa. Yet it was the mistreatment and murder of people subjected to slavery rather than the desire to abolish slavery per se that finally spurred them to act. They received the backing of a third movement asserting “the elementary rights of humanity”. This movement comprised workers’ unions, the Aborigines’ Protection Society, and groups of British merchants who defended the principle of trading directly with “natives” without the colonial state acting as the middleman. From this standpoint, free trade and free labour were joined together, exactly as labour unions combined anti-colonialism and local workers’ rights.

This political reorientation created a dilemma for colonial officials: how could they reconcile maintaining law and order with the political necessity of defending humanitarianism? The reactions and timing varied from one colony to another, even though a general trend was at work. With the support of the anti-slavery movements in Britain, the colonial administration and the public blamed the “barbaric and backward” attitudes of the Africans, who were accused of enslaving their fellow Africans. This argument was used to justify the “civilizing mission” of this or that European country and furnished the basis for discussions between Great Britain, France, Germany, and Belgium at the Brussels conference convened in 1889 to define the criteria for partitioning Africa. All the participants strongly advocated the introduction of free labour, order, and discipline.²⁹ This process was supposed to take place in two stages (once the territory was occupied, of course): slaves would first be freed and then a genuine labour market would be set up. Yet the Brussels Conference Act of 1890 left procedures against slavery to the discretion of each imperial power. Great Britain took an extreme position with regard to both stages: it pushed much harder than the other powers for the abolition of the slave trade; it adopted a far more careful attitude towards the abolition of slavery by using “the case of India” as an example; and, at the same time, it kept its Masters and Servants Acts alive in its new African acquisitions as the foundation and expression of “free” labour much longer than the other colonial powers. It was therefore up to the colonial state to determine the measures best suited to facilitating the transition to a free labour market while simultaneously guaranteeing that order would be maintained. The transplantation of anti-vagrancy laws and the Masters and Servants Acts to Africa were their response to this dilemma. This helps to explain the attention that European authorities devoted to labour rules after emancipation.

Europeans, and the British in particular, needed manpower for their companies and firms, colonial state infrastructure and public works as well as military recruits and household servants. Despite the denunciation of new colonial forms of slavery by mis-

29 F. Cooper, *From Free Labour to Family Allowances: Labour and African Society in Colonial Discourse*, in: *American Ethnologist* 16 (1989) 4, pp. 745–765.

sionary critics,³⁰ in many British and French areas (Ubangi-Shari, Coastal Guinea, Sudan, Somalia, and Northern Nigeria)³¹ fugitive slaves, “vagrants” (i.e. freed slaves with no official contract of employment), and “disguised slaves” freed by the colonial authorities were still captured and eventually re-enslaved.³² Several measures were adopted to increase the supply of labour force and orient it towards colonial instead of local actors: raising the amount of taxes to be paid in labour as well as economic policies unfavourable to local economies such as mandatory low crop prices, specific crops required, etc.³³ Passes limited free labour mobility, while access to higher-paid jobs was limited for Africans. In fact, the colonial officers were firmly convinced that the African continent could not be developed unless Africans learned that they were not free to choose where, when, and how to work. A campaign was launched against vagrancy, theft, alcoholism, and interpersonal violence; the goal was not only to control African labour, but also to promote labour discipline for the benefit of the black elites.³⁴ Within these broader approaches, which were more or less common to the various areas in Africa, concrete policies varied from one place to another inside each empire (British policies were different in Zanzibar, Kenya, the Cape, and the Gold Coast) and between empires, although transimperial commonalities occurred as well. Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, like Portuguese Angola and French Algeria, gave priority to a cheap supply of manual labour, direct forms of taxation, and pre-emptive rights over land granted to white settlers. Here we find a major shift compared to earlier periods in the relationship between labour institutions in Britain and its colonies. Until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, colonial practices and institutions of free labour had been an extension of mainland institutions, in particular of the Masters and Servants Acts, apprenticeship, and vagrancy rules. In the colonies, they were extreme variants of those in Britain, with even more statutory and procedural inequalities between masters and servants (or indentured immigrants). Henceforth, the creation of the Masters and Servants Acts in Africa no longer meant transplanting and locally adapting British rules, but a deliberate decision to impose specific legislation considered outmoded in the home country. The new Masters and Servants Acts were adopted in Africa precisely at the moment when they were repealed in Britain (1875). In this case, the civilizing mission was based on two judgments: that Africans must be educated (and the law served this purpose) and, at the same time, that they were backward in their development and therefore old British rules rather than contemporary ones were more appropriate for the African context.³⁵ As a result, unlike the previous colonial period, following the repeal of the Masters and Servants Acts in Britain and the emergence of the welfare state, the path of labour and freedom in the

30 K. Grant, *A Civilized Savagery: Britain and the New Slavery in Africa, 1884–1926*, New York/London 2006.

31 See the different chapters by D. Cordell, M. Klein, R. Roberts, L. Cassanelli, J.S. Hogendorn, and P. Lovejoy in: Miers/Roberts, *The End of Slavery*.

32 P. Lovejoy, *Transformations of Slavery*, Cambridge 2000.

33 Fall, *Le travail forcé*, in particular chapters 2 and 3, p. 54 ff.

34 TNA, CO 533/16, W.D. Ellis minute, 12 oct. 1906; *Eastern African Protectorate*, no. 8, 1906.

35 G. St.J. Orde Brown, *The African Labourer*, London 1933, reprint 1967.

colonies (especially African) diverged from the one in mainland Britain. While British workers in Britain were enjoying increasing protection and welfare, labouring people in the colonies still were under unequal labour and legal rules. From this perspective, welfare and its national orientation intensified rather than reduced inequalities within the empire and among labouring people in particular.³⁶

... and Back: From Africa to Manipur

Manipur emerged from the “Seven Years’ Devastation”³⁷ (1819–1826), with its population almost reduced to a handful of thousand (about 3,000 adults) from about 4–6 lakh (a unit numbering 100,000) before the Burmese invasion³⁸ and its land desolated. Many of the Manipuris escaped to Cachar and the British territory of Sylhet. There in Cachar, many Manipuris were kidnapped or abducted and sold as slaves in Sylhet, while many Manipuris in Sylhet, facing hardship, sold their children into slavery.³⁹ The majority of the population were taken as captives by the Burmese and made slaves and dispersed to the various parts of the Burmese Kingdom.⁴⁰ The Indian law commissioner on slavery reported the number of Manipuris detained as slaves in the district of Arracan and Chittagong to about 3,000 or 4,000.⁴¹ So when Manipur was finally free from Burmese occupation in 1826, with the help of the East India Company, the population was only a few thousand and was in need of men to repopulate the valley and of labour to rebuild the kingdom from scratch.

The process of rebuilding started almost immediately after the signing of the Treaty of Yandaboo in 1826. Gambhir Singh, the raja of Manipur, took up the process of rebuilding the country at the same time he subjugated and brought most of the hill tribes under control before his death in early 1834, a policy also followed by his uncle and successor Nara Singh. Many of the subjugated hill tribes were forced to come down to the valley and work.⁴² The raja also forced many of the fugitive Manipuris in the hills to come

36 Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society*, pp. 342–348; Idem, *From Slaves to Squatters*, pp. 235–254.

37 The occupation of Manipur by the Burmese from 1819 to 1826 is known as *Chahi Taret Khuntakpa* or “Seven Years’ Devastation” in the annals of Manipur history due to the sheer size of its destruction. Many of the old structures were leveled, most of the fields became jungle, and the valley was almost depopulated.

38 The only person to give this number is Col. James Johnstone. See J. Johnstone, *My Experience in Manipur and the Naga Hills*, London 1896, p. 86. But this number is highly improbable, and the total population of the state might only have been around a couple of hundred thousand.

39 Indian Law Commission, *Report from the Indian Law Commissioner Relating to Slavery in the East Indies*, 1841, p. 23.

40 Ibid., p. 103.

41 Ibid., p. 104.

42 Many worked on major projects in the state like building bridges, roads, canal, river embankment, etc. India Office Records and Private Papers, Mss Eur D485: 1904, *Manipur State: Diary of Manipur*, pp. 193, 201 (this manuscript is a one of the many versions of the Cheithrol Kumpapa, or the Manipur Chronicle); L. J. Singh, *The Lost Kingdom* (Royal Chronicle of Manipur), Imphal 1995, pp. 123, 126–127, 129.

down to the valley and resettled them again.⁴³ More subjects under the raja meant more labour and taxes to reconstruct his capital.

The British were not silent observers in these developments; instead, most of the military expeditions to subjugate and, in the process, to capture slaves were done not only in the presence of British officials but with an active participation of the British officials and the government's support, which continued until the mid-nineteenth century.⁴⁴ Manipur was not a rich princely kingdom, but in the geopolitics of the nineteenth century with the Burmese Empire rapidly expanding towards its north-west, its position was crucial for the defence of not only the British province of Bengal but also the newly acquired territory of Assam, where tea had been recently discovered. Manipur also played another important role because the kingdom, with its army supported by the British, was crucial in quelling discontent and raids in the region.⁴⁵ For these reasons, a strong and stable princely state was necessary and, in this development, the British overlooked much of the violence and many of the atrocities committed by the state.

The lack of money and resources were substituted by manpower in the form of coerced / forced labour, which were used extensively in every imaginable way. In pre-colonial Manipur, slavery (both chattel and bonded) along with *lallup* – a forced labour system where every male subject between the age of 16 and 60 years were made to provide free labour for 10 days in every 40 days, totalling about 90 days a year to the state – and tributary labour from the hill people formed an important function that met most of the needs of the state.

The colonial officers posted in Manipur did not make much of a distinction between chattel and bonded slaves but no doubt recognized the differences. Most of the chattel slaves were owned by the raja, and a minority of them were owned by the royal family, high officials, and the priestly class, to whom the raja had given the slaves as a present for marriage (in case of the royal family) or for their service to the state. These chattel slaves were the absolute property of the owner and could be given or sold as the owner pleased. Most of these chattel slaves were settled by the raja in a separate community, and they were also liable to be called up for *lallup* and as well cultivated the land they got for serving in the *lallup*, in addition to cultivating the land of the raja and doing other works for the raja.⁴⁶ Compared to the bonded slaves, the slaves in possession by the raja seemed

43 M. W. McCulloch, *Account of the Valley of Munnipore and of the Hill Tribes*, Calcutta 1859, p. 9.

44 The British government provided arms and ammunition to the raja's army even after the Manipur Levy was disbanded in 1934. The Manipur chronicle records many expeditions where British officials were also present. See Nithor Nath Banerjee Papers, Mss Eur D485: 1904; Singh, *The Lost Kingdom*; S. N. Arambam Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur: The Cheitharon Kumpapa*, Original text, translation and notes, vol. 3, Delhi 2013. Even British official acknowledged their role, R. Brown, *Statistical Account of Manipur*, Calcutta 1874, p. 71.

45 The British used the Manipuri army to crush the Khasi revolt and to control the Nagas in the north as well as were part of the British expeditionary forces (and sometimes leading the expedition) against the Lushais in the south.

46 Every person who performed their service were entitled to about two acres of land for cultivation, on which the state collected tributes. It was a way of expanding the agricultural land.

to be more independent as they lived in their own houses and when not working for the raja carried on with their own lives.

The bonded slaves in pre-colonial Manipur were mostly in the possession of private individuals. Most of these bonded slaves had fallen to their present status due to debt. With the signing of the Treaty of Yandaboo, raiding expedition for slaves had been hindered on both sides, and the British had discouraged the enslavement of the hill tribes.⁴⁷ The coming of the British had instituted the use of money in an unprecedented way, penetrating deeply both the valley society and the hill communities of the state. Very soon, many of the tribal communities began to include in their traditional marriages demands for more material things and money – to meet the demand, many fell into debt. There are no records by the British or the Manipur authorities on the number of bonded slaves in pre-colonial Manipur, but many of the rich and influential families had one or more, and at times these bonded slaves were sent as a substitute for the master's *lallup*.⁴⁸ The bonded slaves were generally treated well, but they seemed to be exploited badly at the same time. They lived in the same house as the master and depended on the master for food, clothes, and shelter.

Bonded slaves were of two kinds in Manipur – *minai* and *asalba* – which Captain Gordon, in his dictionary published in 1837, describes as bondmen, but the term *minai* is also used to describe slave in the same dictionary, indicating that the Manipuris did not distinguish much between the two.⁴⁹ Theoretically, the bonded slaves were in the service of the master for such term until they could repay the money they had taken. But in practice, they remained bonded forever as the interest on the money they first took continued piling up, thereby remaining in debt for perpetuity. Even the children born to such a person also became the property of the master, and in the long run they became chattel slaves but in the possession of private individuals.

Forced labour in pre-colonial Manipur was widespread both in the valley and the hill areas. Many colonial officers used the term “slave like” for the inhabitants of the valley, saying that the raja could do whatever he liked with them and any kind of work could be extracted from them. This, in a way, was somewhat true as the raja, by various means, could make any of his subjects perform any duty he wished. But the people who performed the forced labour lived a very different life from those in slavery. They were not dependent on the raja for their livelihood, and their only connection with the raja was when they went to report for their service. In the case of some distant hill tribes, unlike the slaves in the valley, they were very independent. Forced labour was provided for a limited number of days in a year, and in case of the number of days being extended longer than the stipulated time, then the labour was compensated. In the case of slavery,

47 This did not mean raiding came to an end, rather the treaty marked a period after which the British government, through its political agent in the state, provided checks and balances on such activities between Burma and Manipur. Internal raiding for slaves continued till the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

48 Arambam Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur*, p. 19.

49 C. J. A. Gordon, *Dictionary of English, Bengálí, and Manipurí*, Calcutta 1837.

this was not so because the master was the absolute owner of the slaves when under his possession.

The scarcity of “voluntary” labour was a serious problem in the state, particularly because the wet rice cultivation was basically labour intensive, and the Manipuri raja solved this problem through the *lallup* system.⁵⁰ In exchange for land, the raja received labour, taxes, tribute, etc. But power was not exclusively derived from owning land but how he utilized his taxes and labour. Power begets more power, and the king of Manipur was no exception to this. In pre-colonial Manipur, *corvée* performed by the inhabitants of the valley, slavery, and tributary labour by the hill tribes and the various works performed by the *Lois*⁵¹ were some of the important forms of labour that kept the country running until the takeover of the administration by the British in the last decade of the nineteenth century. These systems formed the backbone of the economic activities until the British took over the administration of Manipur in 1892 and in some way continued to play an important role after 1892.

The British – from company to government – had spent most of the nineteenth century building relations and trying to open up the state while making Manipur more dependent on them. Constructing roads on a grand scale; signing agreements that prohibited monopoly by the raja, free trade, and the free movement of people; and introducing Western education – all these were designed to give the British an upper hand in the politics of the region. The raja of Manipur was not blind to the British’s design, and many efforts were directed to counter the growing influence of the British in the state. The late nineteenth-century European imperial expansion in Africa and Asia saw the British come to power in the state and the region. The policy followed by the British in the region was one of consolidating their power, and, in achieving this, many consolations were given to the ruling elites. One such consolation was the continuation of the use of forced labour, including bonded labour. This consolation came at a cost because the British – claiming to be the advocate of modern civilization and freedom – were criticized by many for allowing such practices to be part of their rule. Practices like *lallup* was abolished and the chattel slaves of the raja were set free with the introduction of the British rule. But along with the abolition of *lallup*, the British also simultaneously expanded the *pothang* system to include all male members of the state.⁵² The British emancipated the slaves of the raja – mostly who originated as captives of expeditions and therefore constituted “true slaves” – but slavery as a system were never attacked, and the practice of making and keeping *manai* (bonded labour) practice lingered throughout the

50 K. Ruhini Kumar Sharma/O. Ranjit Singh, Outlining Pre-Colonial Economy of Manipur, in: J. B. Bhattacharjee (ed.), State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur, Delhi 2010, p. 149.

51 *Lois* are the outcaste people in Manipur; they do not regard themselves as Meetei but claim that they are the original inhabitants of the valley who were outcaste when the various Meetei tribes, led by the Ningthouja clan, came to power in the valley.

52 *Pothang* was a forced labour system where every adult male was required to give the state labour without remuneration for specific tasks. The service also included providing food and lodging for government officials and guard duties.

colonial period. In the hill areas, much of the labour practices remained the same under colonial rule. The British promoted their old rhetoric that such practices were part of the traditional society and that such labour was necessary for the stability of the region. When the British introduced indirect rule in the region, they did so with some preconceived notion of various tribes in mind. With regard to the British decision to introduce indirect rule, D.R. Lyall, the deputy commissioner of the Chittagong Division, in his note on the future management of the South Lushai Hills (dated 2 January 1890), writes:

*The nature of the people is such that for any attempt at governing minutely would be expensive, and our knowledge of the people and their custom is small. I would, therefore, recommend that for the present system the government through chiefs should be fully recognized.*⁵³

The British, after coming to power in Manipur, divided the administration of the state into two separate units – the valley under the rule of the raja (but until 1907, the British political agent acted as the head of the state in the “interest” of the minor raja), while the administration of the hill areas was placed directly under the administration of the political agent. The period between 1891 and 1907, Gangmumei has argued, can be classified as a period of direct British rule as the political agent had a free hand in all matters.⁵⁴ While in the valley the British introduced many changes after coming to power, none affected the people more than the decision of the British to introduce privatization of land as well as taxes on land. The administration of the valley and the hill was formally separated by the British after coming to power. The political agent was put in charge of running the hill administration without any other European officer to help him in the affairs.

Manipur comprises more than 90 per cent of what James Scott calls “shatter zones or zones of refugee”,⁵⁵ and the population making up these “zones of refugee” are the various tribes that the British labelled “savages” and “primitive”. But Scott says that our received wisdom of what is “primitive” is often a secondary adaptation – their own political choice – adopted by the people to evade state-making. He writes:

*Hill people are best understood as runaway, fugitive, maroon communities who have, over the course of two millennia, been fleeing the oppressions of state-making projects in the valleys – slavery, conscription, taxes, corvée labour, epidemics, and warfare.*⁵⁶

On the one hand, the hill tribes – the Nagas and the Kukis – were resisting changes, mostly state-making machinery like forced labour and taxation, introduced by the Manipur state. On the other hand, they were trying to hang on to their old ways at the same time the Manipur state was also resisting the attempt of the British to introduce changes

53 J. Zorema, *Indirect Rule in Mizoram*, Delhi 2007, p. 80.

54 Gangmumei Kamei, *Colonial Policy and Practice in Manipur*, on Imphal Free Press, kanglaonline.com/2011/08/colonial-policy-and-practice-in-manipur/ (accessed on 2 August 2011).

55 Scott, *The Art of not Being Governed*, p. x.

56 *Ibid.*, p. ix.

in the state. The British, after coming to power in 1891, did introduce many changes in the state, and many of the old practices were abolished. Their campaign against slavery was not limited to the British Empire but took place on both sides of the Atlantic; in the Indian subcontinent, however, they took a more gentle approach, translating many of the slave systems, which were necessary for the region, that were mutually beneficial to both the master and the slave. But they were not so much against the use of forced labour and very well understood the importance of such service in the state and the region. *Lallup* was abolished not so much because the British in the region were against the use of forced labour but because of economic reasons. The British could do so because with the abolition of *lallup* another form of forced labour – *pothang* – was revived, expanded, and introduced to the general population, so therefore the vacuum was immediately filled by another. The British did not introduce any new forms of a forced labour system after coming to power as this would have meant that the government was sanctioning the use of forced labour, and this would have run counter to the narrative of “civilization” the British were advocating during this period – that of a free and just society. But the British took many of the existing forced labour practices that, in the pre-colonial period, were limited to few of the raja’s subject, expanding the scope of the system to include almost everyone in the state.

The late nineteenth century and the remaining period of colonial rule was spent by the British in trying to consolidate their power in the region with the help of the ruling elite class like the raja and the *pibas* (the head of the clans) in the valley or the chief in the hill areas, and, in their endeavour, many of the old forms of forced labour were allowed to be continued. At the same time, much of the labour owed to the rulers and chiefs was most of the time appropriated for British imperial use. They argued for the continuation of the systems on the grounds that this labour was given as tribute and that abolition of such practices would lead to open rebellion from the ruling elites. But their real concern was that if such practices were abolished, then they would not receive any labour, and many of the state mechanisms that depended on such labour would suffer.

The British consciously kept some of the “unfree” forms of labour in the state, especially among the hill areas, as labour was not willingly provided, and economically it made more sense. Economic reasons, which were in some way responsible for the abolition of *lallup*, were also in some way the reasons for retaining some form of forced labour in hill areas and the introduction of a new form of forced labour in the valley. This policy of extracting tributary labour would later be imposed on the tribes inhabiting the Lushai Hills and be a source of hardship for the people.⁵⁷

57 MSA, Annual Report on the Native States and Frontier Tribes of Assam for the year 1897–98, Shillong: Assam Secretariat Printing Office 1898, p. 22. The labour policy followed by the British in the Lushai Hills made it mandatory for each house to supply one coolie to work for ten days a year.

The French Congo

Several works have pointed out the contradictions between France's revolutionary principles and the forms of labour in its colonies.⁵⁸ Along a similar line, some have revealed the economic interests behind French colonization in Africa⁵⁹ while others have denied it.⁶⁰ Authors closely related to the theory of world-system economies have also highlighted the rentier mentality of French colonizers and the gap between an ideology that advocated free labour and the practice of forced labour.⁶¹ More recently, some historians have taken a new approach, emphasizing the complexity of French policies.⁶² Alice Conklin, for example, has shown that liberal ideals were not mere window dressing for oppressive policies, but in fact set limits on the amount of coercion the colonial administration was permitted to use.⁶³ This view partly reflects recent trends in comparative colonial legal history: instead of expressing the yoke of colonialism, the multiplication of labour rules paved the way to complex social dynamics in which colonized peoples could claim and exercise rights attributed to them in theory but of little avail in practice.⁶⁴ In Senegal, Louis Faidherbe had initially championed the assimilationist principle according to which French citizenship could be granted to all those who embraced the French political and "civilization" principles. Support for this approach gradually crumbled in the 1880s and the 1890s, when Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza, among others, advocated the principle of association based on his experience in Equatorial Africa. According to this position, the main objective was to establish broad sovereignty and develop trade relations. Finally, by imitating its neighbour, the Belgian Congo, the principle of incorporation – founded on concession companies – prevailed at the turn of the century in the French Congo as well. In this case, French companies took control of the soil and had rights over labour as well.

Many believed that Africans still were too backward to be assimilated; thus policies had to take into consideration local attitudes and customs and to seek alliances with local chiefs. By the end of the nineteenth century, the possibility of assimilating Africans had been rejected both in mainland colonial circles influenced by racist trends in the social sciences and by the governor of the FWA, Ernest Roume, who considered it politically dangerous.⁶⁵ Thus, even if the Third Republic overcame previous attitudes towards Africans as "barbarians", it simply wanted to legitimate the presence of its subject within the republic, not to grant them full rights. Indeed, the rejection of assimilation was

58 Renault, *Libération d'esclaves*; Brunschwig, *Noirs et blancs*.

59 Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*.

60 Marseille, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français*.

61 Fall, *Le travail forcé*.

62 Cooper/Stoler, *Tensions of Empire*.

63 Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*.

64 L. Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures*, New York 2002.

65 Conklin: *A Mission to Civilize*, p. 77.

tantamount to saying that Africans were not yet capable of comprehending the meaning of freedom.⁶⁶

Thus, French colonial policy remained in place, although major budgetary constraints were imposed upon it. At the turn of the century, balancing the budget and cutting expenses were both priorities on the political agenda. Such a balance seemed difficult to achieve, as the state was increasing its social intervention during the same period. Initial forms of social protection, along with the centralization of measures formerly handled by municipal authorities (control over markets, roads, etc.), put increasing pressure on the national government budget. In view of the limited political support for the occupation of Africa, the resources allocated for colonial policy implementation became the subject of intense negotiations. The need to balance the budget was underscored not only by those opposed to colonial expansion but also by liberals who were afraid of deviating from financial orthodoxy.

Labour in French Equatorial Africa: From Local Slavery to Colonial Bondage

Before the arrival of the French, slavery was practiced in the future territories of the FEA, as in other areas of Africa.⁶⁷ For example, eastern Ubangi-Shari had been integrated into the Muslim economy of the Sahel and the Nile basin mainly by Arab and Muslim merchants that penetrated the region between 1820 and 1850 in search of ivory and slaves.⁶⁸ After that date, the demand for slaves was even greater in the Islamic world in general, especially in the Nile valley. The arrival of the Khartoumers in Sudan launched the slave trade. A genuine slave-based mode of production existed in the region. The land was desert, agriculture was abandoned, ivory was intended for export, and the population formed a reservoir of slaves for the Islamic world. Towards the 1890s, when the French first penetrated the area, several decades of slavery and slave trade had already depopulated most of the villages and altered the activities and settlements of the remaining population.

Domestic and other forms of slavery were widespread in Gabon before the arrival of the Europeans, but they further expanded when the colonists came around the middle of the nineteenth century. At the time, slaves were used as porters, farm labourers, and servants.⁶⁹ Animist tribes, such as the NGao and the Babu, were systematically raided by the sultans of north and northeast Upper Ubangi. The sultanate of Bangassu drew much of its strength from capturing slaves, who were then sold to the sultans in Sudan. Rafai and

66 Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*, p. 176ff.; M. Klein, *The End of Slavery in French West Africa*, in: H. Suzuki (ed.), *Abolitions as a Global Experience*, Singapore 2016, pp. 199–227.

67 Lovejoy, *Transformations of Slavery*, pp. 76–80, 191–212.

68 D. Cordell, *The Delicate Balance of Force and Flight: The End of Slavery in Eastern Ubangi-Shari*, in: Miers/Roberts, *The End of Slavery*, pp. 150–171.

69 E. M'Bokolo, *Le Gabon pré-colonial: étude sociale et économique*, in: *Cahiers d'études africaines* 17 (1977) 66–67, pp. 331–344.

Semio, the other two sultanates of Upper Ubangi, were created during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In theory, the sultans wielded absolute power in these entities; in reality, they shared it with clan chiefs. Bonded labourers, particularly the Nzakara and Zande peoples, were at the bottom of the social hierarchy, along with slaves from various other ethnic groups. When the Europeans appeared, the sultanates became their main collaborators and slave suppliers. Chad fell under the influence of the Sudanese caliphate of Sokoto, which possessed a huge contingent of slaves living on plantations, in villages, or even in trade centres.⁷⁰ Along the southern edge of the desert, nomadic merchants and herders owned numerous slaves acquired through desert raids or trading in the savanna. These slaves were used for heavy labour such as building dams, drenching animals, etc. In the Congo equatorial basin, large numbers of slaves were engaged in agriculture (tobacco, vegetable salt, and sugarcane). In inland areas, slaves were usually associated with clan organization: they could be seized and had an exchange value precisely because they were not members of a clan. They could as well be incorporated afterwards into one of the local clans. In this sense, slavery allowed clans to widen their line of descendants.⁷¹ In all these regions, the characteristics of slavery were modified by the arrival of the Europeans. In the Lower Congo, the Mpongwe lost their role as middlemen between neighbouring African populations and the Europeans and became servants or low-level employees in colonial stores.⁷² Similarly, the Loango and Bakongo clans further south could no longer act as brokers but instead became porters or even bonded labourers on coffee and cacao plantations. The inland population put up a longer resistance to European penetration, but in the north, the sultanates signed agreements with the Belgians and the French allowing them to engage in the slave trade until World War II.⁷³ France adopted strategies similar to those of Britain.⁷⁴ At a conference held in 1892, the French authorities declared that there were more servants in their colonial territories than slaves. As servants, the Africans could not be liberated because their status in no way violated French law. When the French first began penetrating into the area, they encountered enormous difficulties in establishing posts and an organized administration. In this context, they were careful not to adopt aggressive politics against slavery, which would complicate an already fragile situation. The elimination of slavery was not central to coping with economic development or depopulation.⁷⁵ The lack of military forces encouraged military elites to use local slaves for their operations, and many civilian colonial officers had no problem with slavery.⁷⁶ The openness of the region made it hard to force abolition without causing the flight of an already limited population. Indeed, slavery and

70 Lovejoy, *Transformations of Slavery*, p. 193.

71 *Ibid.*, p. 246.

72 G. Sautter, *De l'Atlantique au fleuve Congo. Une géographie du sous-peuplement*. République du Congo, république gabonaise, Paris 1966.

73 Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, p. 76.

74 Conklin, *A Mission*, pp. 11–38; Cooper/Stoler, *Tensions of Empire*, Introduction, pp. 1–156.

75 P. Manning, *Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa*, Cambridge 1998.

76 ANOM FM SG GCOG/XIV 1 et 2 recrutement de travailleurs Kroumen.

the slave trade were a threat to the colonial project by removing the people who collected rubber, ivory, and other products. However, many families who populated the area, notably the Fang, preferred to mix the market and autonomy, combining farming with hunting, gathering, and fishing. They had no dead season, and when they sold to the market, they did not intend to do it according to French requests in terms of products and prices. Thus, the French collected taxes and tended to break up lineages in order to enhance control. Chiefs were supposed to collect taxes, but the young were often aggrieved that the chiefs would not pay taxes on their behalf and broke away to form their own small lineages.⁷⁷ At the same time, the French collected taxes related to the export of these products. In reality, this vague definition of “genuine slavery” was used to negotiate workforce availability with the local chiefs. During periods when preserving the alliance with clan chiefs was the top priority, African labourers were called “servants”. When, on the contrary, the manpower requirements of the colonial companies became critical or the colonial authorities wanted to flex their muscles in the direction of the local chiefs, the same labourers were referred to as “slaves” and thereby “freed” so they could be more or less reclaimed by the companies and the French authorities.⁷⁸ Thus, in the 1890s, the French established posts where they hoped to gather fugitive slaves, and at the same time they signed treaties with local chiefs.⁷⁹ At first, missionaries accepted fugitive slaves and tried to establish *villages de liberté*, similar to those that had been set up in Sudan in 1894/95.⁸⁰ In those years, the French still lacked the strength to solve their dilemma. They needed good relations with the local chiefs and a labour force: if they pushed their demands too far, they risked losing both the chiefs’ support and the labour force; if they did not, they could not consolidate their position. Like the British in other areas, the French sold weapons to some chiefs, thus supporting warfare and enslavement and weakening their own position.⁸¹ Yet they continued to sell weapons to local chiefs without even mentioning slavery in their treaties until 1904.⁸² Officially, French policies aimed to achieve three objectives: abolish slavery, gradually introduce new labour rules, and create a genuine labour market. It never occurred to anyone that the new rules could be the same as those in force in France. Forced labour was included to meet the demands of both the colonial authorities and private companies;⁸³ it was seen as necessary to help

77 Manning, *Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa*, p. 37.

78 On this ambivalence in FWA, see Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*, pp. 178–185.

79 ANOM MI 131MIOM/3 Gaston Gaillard, *Traité de protectorat, de commerce, de personnes avec les chefs Zoubia et Coumba*, 28 août 1891.

80 ANOM FM SG Soud/XIV/1. See also Bouche, *Les villages*.

81 ANOM AEF GGAEF 2D/9 Mission Dybowski, 1892. Also J. Dybowski, *La route du Tchad du Loango au Chari*, Paris 1893.

82 ANOM FM MIS//12 Mission scientifique et économique par Auguste Chevalier. Also A. Chevalier, *Mission Chari-lac Tchad, 1902–1904*, Paris 1907.

83 Fall, *Le travail forcé*; F. Renault, *L’abolition de l’esclavage au Sénégal. L’attitude de l’administration française 1848–1905*, in: *Revue française d’histoire d’outre-mer* 58 (1971) 1, pp. 5–80.

improve the “barbarian Africans”⁸⁴ and cope with the lack of manpower.⁸⁵ At the same time, France continued its “redemption”⁸⁶ practices and the colonial authorities tried to persuade the chiefs to enforce the labour rules rather than impose them themselves. French policies did change, however, with the rise of the anti-colonial movement in France and the 1889 conference in Brussels (where the British tried to force the other colonial powers to adopt their anti-slavery policies). Between 1903 and 1905, slavery was declared illegal, first in the FWA and then in the FEA. In 1905, official French statistics, based on an unidentified calculation method, reported 2 million slaves in the FWA out of a population of 8 million.⁸⁷ According to the new strategy, it was necessary to eradicate slavery in order to break the resistance of the local chiefs and put an end to their “disloyalty”.⁸⁸ Colonialist discourse and the “civilizing mission” gained renewed momentum, along with the rhetoric about “vestiges of feudalism”. Such vestiges were said to prevail in Africa; the civilizing and colonizing mission was thus viewed as a new chapter of the revolution in France.⁸⁹ Civilization was associated with private property, a free labour market, and social stability. This was not pure rhetoric, however; a number of colonial officers sincerely believed it. Nevertheless, they all expressed disappointment at the attitude of the Africans who, despite the “revolution” and the contribution of civilization, continued to “cheat”, that is they did not behave as the colonial authorities had hoped. Instead of “independent peasants” and urban workers, the French found themselves confronted with populations that migrated from one empire to another, often with the changing seasons.⁹⁰ In 1905, slaves began a massive exodus throughout French Sudan, in spite of attempts on the part of the French to reconcile masters and slaves.⁹¹ The refugee communities in Sudan posed a threat to the demographic stability of eastern Ubangi-Shari.⁹² Refugees and slave raiding were difficult to distinguish,⁹³ while incidents between the French and local population increased.⁹⁴ The regular army and concession militias intervened in joint acts of violence.⁹⁵

To counter these tendencies, the French authorities, again like the British, introduced highly repressive work discipline. The former slaves were not supposed to work wherever

84 ANOM Equatorial Africa, government, G 1 AEF 2H/8, From the Governor of Cameroon to the Minister of Colonies, September 14, 1917.

85 ANOM, G 1 AEF 2H/8, From the Governor of Cameroon to the Minister of Colonies, September 14, 1917.

86 Cordell, *The Delicate Balance*.

87 Boutiller, *Les captifs en AOF*, p. 520.

88 ANOM, GGAEF, 4(1) D2. N'Djolé, Rapport du capitaine Curault, administrateur de la région de l'Ogouou sur le groupement hostile de Mikongo et la nécessité d'une répression immédiate contre le chef Ngoua-Midoumbi et ses partisans, *Années 1906*.

89 ANOM Equatorial Africa, government, G 1 AEF 2H/8.

90 Lovejoy, *Transformations*, pp. 254–262. Also Renault, *L'abolition de l'esclavage au Sénégal*, pp. 5–15.

91 Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*, pp. 159 ff; R. Roberts, *The End of Slavery in French Soudan, 1905–1914*, in: Miers/Roberts, *The End of Slavery*, pp. 282–307; M. Rodet, *Les migrantes ignorées du Haut-Sénégal, 1900–1946*, Paris 2009.

92 Cordell, *The Delicate Balance*, pp. 205–224.

93 ANOM AEF GGAEF 3D/3. Mission Fillon.

94 ANOM FM 2 AFFPOL/19. Incidents du Bas M'Bomou.

95 ANOM, GGAEF 8Q58.

and whenever they thought best: if they did not have a proper labour contract, they could be found guilty of vagabondage; if they left before their task was completed, they would be sentenced for desertion.⁹⁶ Such measures proved ineffective, however, due to the unwillingness of the various colonial authorities to cooperate with each other – the French, British, Belgian, German, and Portuguese were all competing for manpower and always ready to recover fugitives.⁹⁷ The coercive measures were also weakened by competition within the French Empire itself, between different regions or even between companies and public authorities. In 1904/05, the Congo was definitively placed under French administrative control; its territory was divided into four main areas: Gabon, Middle Congo, Ubangi-Shari, and Chad. A general commissar directly oversaw the Middle Congo, while a lieutenant governor ruled Gabon.

However, the economic exploitation of the area was difficult: in 1902, the value of the FEA's exports was 1.6 million (in current US dollars), compared with 13.1 million for the FWA. By 1913, the latter had reached 29.2 million dollars in exports, while FEA exports stagnated.⁹⁸ The colonial powers, particularly France and Belgium, developed an interest in the Congo and Gabon only with the rise of steamboat navigation, when it became possible to use the Congo River to transport products and link up with the various European empires in Africa. It should be emphasized that the French government was generally reluctant to finance its colonies and preferred to concentrate its limited allocations in the FWA.⁹⁹ During this period (1900–1920), France adopted the concession system, that is to say it granted operating monopolies to private enterprises. From this standpoint, the colonial policies in the FEA differed significantly from those in the neighbouring FWA, where concessions were seldom awarded and private companies dominated. Despite these advantages, few companies invested in the FEA prior to World War I and almost none before 1900. French capitalists preferred Turkey, Russia, and Indochina to Africa, particularly Equatorial Africa, which was considered too difficult to exploit profitably. By 1903, only one-third of the companies set up in the previous ten years were still in operation; they merged over the next few years to the point where, in 1909, only six companies controlled all French activities in the FEA.¹⁰⁰ Until the 1920s, these companies ran a predatory economy, trying to obtain a maximum amount of resources with minimum investment and maximum coercion. Their operations were not very profitable.

The only certitude was that population was scarce. Thus, the commercial traffic between Stanley Pool (a lake) and the Upper Congo, linking Boubangui, Batéké, and Bakongo, included slaves, manioc, ivory, and European goods. This trade was carried out by the

96 ANOM, GGAEF 2H 15.

97 ANOM, G 1 AEF 2H/8.

98 D. Fieldhouse, *The Economic Exploitation of Africa: Some British and French Comparisons*, in: P. Gifford/W. R. Louis (eds.), *France and Britain in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule*, New Haven, CT 1971, pp. 659–660.

99 Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, pp. 120–127.

100 Ibid.

Fang people from the Gabonese coast to the Moyen-Ogooué province.¹⁰¹ Outside this circuit, the French army, the concession companies, and the colonial state had to resort to porters, whom they constantly criticized for their native indolence and laziness.¹⁰² This argument was to prove useful to the concession companies in suggesting the need for coercion.¹⁰³ In the absence of any explicit governmental authorization on this point – but with all the ambiguities mentioned earlier – the concession companies were able to recruit labourers either directly or through tribal chiefs. Most often, the companies and the government chose to work with the chiefs. However, the authority of the local chiefs was often limited to their own villages, and in any case they seldom supplied all the manpower requested.¹⁰⁴ The companies usually paid in kind, arguing that local workers did not understand the meaning of money. Some chose the approach used by planters in Assam and the Mascarenes: they kept wages not only to help Africans save, but also to protect themselves against possible misconduct.¹⁰⁵

Tensions mounted, especially over portage. The French authorities and the concession companies had an enormous need for porters.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, the companies abused the porters: They not only did not pay them, but they also extended their *engagement* longer than stipulated in the initial agreement.¹⁰⁷ This type of forced labour generated a considerable amount of resistance and desertion.¹⁰⁸ The French military authorities then turned to various forms of forced requisition: women were taken hostage until the men presented themselves.¹⁰⁹ Later on, some concessions adopted the same principle, which was the source of the main scandals in the French Congo at the time.¹¹⁰ Wages were very low or even non-existent in view of the extremely hard labour involved; recruiters carried out manhunts around deserted villages, notably in the Cercle de Gribingui area.¹¹¹ The French League of Human Rights denounced the abuses,¹¹² but little was done concretely to stop these practices.

Violence was not the only problem; due to the requisition of manpower by the colonial powers, there were not enough labourers for the local farms. Collaboration between the colonial authorities, concession companies, and local chiefs was more harmonious in the Upper Ubangi, particularly in the territory of the sultanates.¹¹³ The three small

101 Sautter, *De l'Atlantique au fleuve Congo*, pp. 825–829.

102 ANOM FM SG GCOG/XIV, 1 et 2.

103 *La Dépêche coloniale*, 23 décembre 1903; Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*, p. 103.

104 ANOM, GGAEF 8Q58.

105 ANOM, GGAEF, 8Q59, Libreville, Rapport d'inspection de la Société du Haut-Ogooué, Année 1908.

106 ANOM, GGAEF, 2H 15, Correspondance du Commissaire général du Gabon au Commissaire général dans les possessions françaises et dépendances, Année 1907.

107 ANOM, GGAEF, 2H 15.

108 ANOM, GGAEF, 8Q59, Libreville, Rapport d'inspection.

109 ANOM, FP, PA/16(V)/5 (mission Brazza, notes); FP/PA/16(V)/3 (criminal cases, women).

110 *Ibid.*

111 *Ibid.* See, in particular, Bobichon, Report on portage.

112 ANOM FM 2AFFPOL/19, Observations of the French League for the Protection of Human Rights and the Womens International League for Peace and Freedom on the system adopted by the large concessions.

113 E. Assidon, *Le commerce captif: les sociétés françaises de l'Afrique noire*, Paris 1989.

potentates of Bangassu, Rafaï, and Semio relied on slaves they acquired through raids or trade.¹¹⁴ Encouraged by the French authorities, the Compagnie (later Société) des Sultanats decided to seek the support of these potentates and their workforce.¹¹⁵ The idea was to exchange European products, already widely used by the elites of the sultanates, for rubber produced by the sultans' slaves.¹¹⁶ However, the local chiefs either did not supply the manpower they had promised, or they failed to provide sufficient numbers to satisfy the French companies.¹¹⁷ The often violent clashes with the local population increased,¹¹⁸ notably in response to the actions of militias employed by the concession companies.¹¹⁹

Huge debates took place in France at the turn of the century concerning their political, legal, and economic legitimacy.¹²⁰ All these aspects were linked to the role of the colonial state: on the one hand, it delegated much of its authority to the concessions on the pretext that it lacked the necessary financing to become directly involved in African colonization. On the other hand, that same colonial state thought the concession system lent itself to fraud and abuse.¹²¹ This twofold connection between the colonial state and the concessions, already of considerable importance with regard to profits and taxation, became even more problematic when it came to labour and violence against local populations. The fact that taxes could be paid in kind and in labour and not necessarily in cash made it difficult to separate taxation and labour. The payment of taxes through concession companies thus paved the way to the worst abuses, and local workers were compelled to work for the companies to redeem their "debts" to the colonial state.¹²² Violence was widely used to enforce this rule.¹²³

Conclusion – Colonial State and Free Labour: Universal Meanings vs Local Practises

In India, the return to indirect rule during the second half of the nineteenth century once again went along with renewed tolerance towards "local customs". The British showed

114 E. de Dampierre, *Un royaume Bandia du Haut Oubangui*, Paris 1967.

115 ANOM FM/2AFFPOL/21, sociétés concessionnaires, Société des sultanats.

116 ANOM, FM, 2AFFPOL/4 (compagnies concessionnaires); FM/2AFFPOL/21.

117 ANOM, FM, 2AFFPOL/25 (sociétés concessionnaires, recrutement de la main d'œuvre indigène); 2AFFPOL/29, Société des Sultanats.

118 ANOM FM, 2AFFPOL/1 (commission des concessions, réclamations formulées par des collectivités indigènes).

119 ANOM FM, 2AFFPOL/13 (compagnies concessionnaires) et 2AFFPOL/29, Société des Sultanats.

120 On these debates, see Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo*; J. D. Saint-Marc, *Des compagnies privilégiées de colonisation. De leur création et de leur organisation dans les possessions françaises*, PhD, Bordeaux 1897; M. Hamelin, *Des concessions coloniales. Étude sur les modes d'aliénation des terres domaniales en Algérie et dans les colonies françaises du Congo*, Paris 1898.

121 H. Cuvillier-Fleury, *La mise en valeur du Congo français*, Paris 1904; Union Congolaise, *Les sociétés concessionnaires du Congo français depuis 1905. Situation financière, plantations, main-d'oeuvre (1906–1908)*, Paris 1909.

122 G. A. Nzenguet Iguemba, *Colonisation, fiscalité et mutations au Gabon, 1910–1947*, Paris 2005.

123 ANOM, GGAEF, 8Q58 and 8Q59.

similar attitudes in a completely different context, namely Africa. They initially exported their notion of the colonial state developed in India, seeking agreements with local chiefs while tolerating local forms of slavery. It was only when these alliances collapsed and the abolitionist movement reinforced its position regarding Africa that direct rule and the prohibition of slavery developed.¹²⁴ Considering the Lushai Hills and the French Congo as a “non-state space”, as postulated by Scott, is also not novel or unique considering that understanding frontier has been studied from such a perspective.¹²⁵ But by the term “non-state space” should not mean that the state was not present in their discourse or that state did not want to do anything with these people in the hills and frontiers. Zomia was always within the realm of the state and within the discourse of the state because controlling these areas were crucial for the peace, prosperity, and stability of the state. The notion of Zomia also hardly fits with the French Congo. The French pursued their civilizing mission, but the possibility of imposing these attitudes was greater in Senegal than in the Congo. It was undoubtedly more difficult to establish a colonial state in the Congo: more power was attributed to military than to civilian colonial authorities, and it was accompanied by more violence and abuses. In the FWA, the civilizing mission was a topic of discussion and policy debates;¹²⁶ in the FEA, debates focused on the relative strength of military vs civilian power and the brutal exploitation of local resources. In short, the “colonial state” encompassed various institutional actors: private companies (in India and the Congo), state officials, and law courts. For institutional and ideological reasons, these actors advocated and tried to practice different policies with regard to sovereignty and slavery. Some were genuine abolitionists, some were merely opportunistic abolitionists, and still others were hostile to local autonomy and because of that, they fought local forms of slavery. Efforts to implement abolitionist aims ran up against these diverse attitudes within the administration as well as lack of organization and information. In addition, local societies, which presented a similar variety of attitudes, also played an active role; chiefs, merchants, slaves, and former slaves transmuted the initial, often contradictory aims of the colonial powers into something else. In the end, the top-down activity of the state was certainly stressed in many – though not all – colonial contexts, but it tended to be an aim and ambition more than a historical reality. Colonial and post-colonial studies have often confused aims, goals, and practices. At the same time, we should not exaggerate the opposite interpretation and focus exclusively on the lack of power of the colonial state. Even when the colonial state was weak, as Herbst has pointed out, and even when the state was a private company, aided if neces-

124 Morris / Read, *Indirect Rule and the Search for Justice*.

125 Scott, *The Art of not Being Governed*, p. 13. For discourse on frontier as a “non-state space”, we just have to look at any literature published by the colonial authorities where frontier is portrayed as a “lawless” and “uncivilized” space inhabited by the “savages”, which is contrasted with the organized and law abiding subject in their directly administered area. See Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North East Frontier of Bengal* by Alexander Mackenzie, Calcutta 1884; Sir Robert Reid, *History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam From 1883–1941*, Delhi 1942, etc.

126 Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule*, pp. 178–196.

sary by military and paramilitary forces, the violence was extreme. Just because the ideal type of efficient state was not achieved does not mean the state did not matter. While British norms and perceptions translated into various forms of bondage and slavery in India, and thereby helped perpetuate slavery well after its official abolition, those institutions nevertheless predated any British intervention. The solution adopted in India and the practices that were accepted did not result solely from British influences, but rather from the interaction between those influences and local labour relationships and values. Europeans did not create slavery in India and Africa, but they transformed its existing forms and introduced new ones. Oppositely, Henri Maine has identified status with despotism and ancient societies, like India and its castes. Starting from this experience, he has reached the conclusion that the legal opposition in Britain itself between masters and servants was no longer acceptable.

Such mutual influence between the mainland and its colonies did not necessarily lead to more “freedom” in the colonies and convergent paths between the two. Indeed, it was quite the contrary. Although the rhetoric assimilating slaves into proletarians was widespread in both France and Britain during the first half of the nineteenth century, it reflected a political and ideological attitude occasionally espoused by conservatives and by some labour associations as well. The Indian experience encouraged people like Henri Maine to support the abolition of the Masters and Servants Acts in Britain while keeping coercion alive in India. Worse still, the French constantly sought to impose their own categories and values in what they believed was their civilizing mission. In this effort, they tried to limit the influence of local and colonial values and attitudes.

Finally, at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, it was no more a question to discuss the abolition of slavery in the European colonies, but, quite the opposite, to occupy new territories in the name of freedom. The scramble for Africa responded to this goal. From this standpoint, the colonies were no more an extension of the mainland, but – being its extreme variation – rather its negation. There was no question of granting any kind of welfare to liberated Africans; instead, a transition period of cultural and technical apprenticeship was required before they could understand and practice freedom. The state and the welfare state enhanced one each other in France and Britain, while in the frontier colonies weak colonial states, military presence, violence, and coerced labour were bound together.

“Neocolonialism” Revisited: An Empirical Enquiry into the Term’s Theoretical Substance Today

Ulrike von Hirschhausen / Jonas Kreienbaum

ABSTRACTS

Der Begriff des „Neokolonialismus“ geht davon aus, dass auch nach der formalen Unabhängigkeit ehemaliger Kolonien von den europäischen Empires weiterhin eine ökonomische Abhängigkeit der Staaten von den Metropolen und Institutionen des Westens fortbesteht. In den 1960er und 1970er Jahren hat sich der Begriff zu einer zentralen Analysekategorie antikolonialen Denkens entwickelt und wird im Zeichen der gegenwärtigen Globalisierung heute erneut als Erklärungsfaktor verwandt. Der vorliegende Aufsatz testet den analytischen Gehalt des Terminus, indem er ihn an zwei konkreten historischen Beispielen überprüft. Es handelt sich um die ökonomischen Interventionen des Britischen Empire im indischen Bengal zwischen 1870 und 1930 und das Eingreifen internationaler Finanzinstitutionen im zentralafrikanischen Sambia im Rahmen sogenannter Strukturanpassungsprogramme in den späten 1970er und 1980er Jahren. Trotz gewisser Kontinuitäten in den ungleichen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen über die politische Dekolonisation hinaus, so argumentiert der Aufsatz anhand der beiden Fälle, ist das Konzept des „Neokolonialismus“ als analytisches Werkzeug wenig hilfreich. Es vernachlässigt die Agency lokaler Akteure, übersteigert die Macht der imperialen bzw. neokolonialen Metropole und ist blind für die tatsächliche Wandlungsfähigkeit internationaler Wirtschaftsbeziehungen. Der Aufsatz plädiert stattdessen für den Begriff des „globalen Kapitalismus“, der die ambivalenten Motive und Folgen ökonomischer Interventionen besser erfassen kann, ohne existierende Machtungleichgewichte zu verschleiern.

The term “neocolonialism” refers to the situation of former colonies remaining dependent on the metropolises and institutions of the West even after they achieved formal independence from the old European empires. In the 1960s and 1970s the term became a central category of analysis for anticolonial thought and even today, in the face of another wave of globalization, it serves as an explanatory factor. This essay examines the term’s analytical power by confronting

it with two specific historical case studies. These are the British Empire's economic intervention in Indian Bengal between 1870 and 1930 and the engagement of international financial institutions in central African Zambia in the name of structural adjustment during the late 1970s and 1980s. Notwithstanding certain continuities in unequal economic relations beyond the point of political decolonization, the essay argues that the concept of "neocolonialism" is not helpful as an analytical tool. It neglects local agency, overemphasizes the power of the imperial or neo-colonial metropole and ignores the actual transformation of international economic relations. Instead, the article advocates the term "global capitalism", which better grasps the ambivalent motives and consequences of economic interventions without disguising existing power differentials.

*Neo-colonialism is [...] the worst form of imperialism.
For those, who practice it, it means power without responsibility
and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress.*
Kwame Nkrumah, 1965

As a concept Neo-colonialism is as disempowering as the conditions it portrays.
Robert J. C. Young, 2001

Neocolonialism came up with the experience of post-colonial economy. The term seemed to catch the very situation of many former colonies in Africa, the Middle East and Asia after formal independence in the 1950s and 60s. Their new political sovereignty did not go along with economic autonomy, but seemingly was accompanied by a perpetual economic dependence on the former metropolises in the West.¹ For Kwame Nkrumah, anticolonial leader and first president of Ghana, who coined the term in 1961, invisible modalities – economic, ideological, political, and cultural – secured an ongoing control of the former imperial centres over nominally independent nations, above all through new forms of corporate and financial forms of capital: "The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside."² Nkrumah's personal experiences had been crucial for developing the concept. In 1957, when his country had just achieved political inde-

1 See for the term's connotation and definition: International Encyclopedia of Human Geography, Amsterdam 2013, p. 360ff.; The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration, ed. by I. Ness, vol. II, p. 523ff; see also the entry "neoliberal globalization and migration", *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 2290ff.; B. C. Smith, Understanding Third World Politics. Theories of Political Change and Development, chapter 3, The Politics of Neo-Colonialism and Dependency, pp. 54–76, 3rd ed. Bloomington 2009; R. J. C. Young, Postcolonialism. A Historical Introduction, chapter 4, Neo-colonialism, pp. 43–56. For an introduction into dependency theories, closely related to the concept of neo-colonialism, see, for instance, W. L. Bernecker/Th. Fischer: Dependency Theories, in: Itinerario 22 (1998) 4, pp. 25–43; A. Ziai, Development discourse and global history: from colonialism to the sustainable development goals, London 2016.

2 Kwame Nkrumah, Neo-Colonialism. The Last Stage of Imperialism, London 1965, p. ix. Nkrumah first used the term in *idem*, I speak of Freedom. A Statement of African Ideology, 1961; for similar statements on inde-

pendence, he had been overly sanguine. Now that the former Gold Coast was liberated economic development would quasi-automatically follow, as he believed. The former student of theology at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania phrased his famous motto in biblical terms: "Seek ye first the political kingdom, and all things shall be added upon you", and he promised to turn Ghana into an industrialized paradise within a decade. A few years later, however, his ambitious development schemes had failed, not the least due to depressed prices cocoa, Ghana's main export commodity, fetched on world markets. Also, Ghanaian attempts at industrialization had brought important parts of the economy into the hands of multinational companies. Now his training as an economist and his contact to Marxist influenced intellectuals, like C. L. R. James, during his years in the United States seemed of greater importance. Obviously referencing Lenin, in 1965 Nkrumah explained economic failure as the result of neo-colonialism, "the last stage of imperialism".³

The concept of neocolonialism soon became an integral part of African and Latin American anti-imperial theorizing and with time a constituent of broader left-wing analyses of the Third World's political economy and critical development work up to the 1980s. Afterwards it fell out of fashion due to the dominance of economic principles as marketization and liberalization and the fragmentation of Third World unity facing debt crises and the success of the Asian "tigers".⁴ With the advent of globalization in general, and the obvious failure of structural adjustment programmes in Africa and elsewhere, the term is experiencing a new renaissance since the late 1990s, not always in wording, but certainly in substance. Anti-globalization movements put their critique of corporate power, the enlarged role of finance capital in the impoverishment of the Global South and of the "imperialistic" role of multilateral development institutes as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank in the centre of their protest. On the website of the World Social Forum, founded in 2001 as a network to coordinate anti-globalization movements, neocolonialism is prominent and its use is entirely consistent with Nkrumah's definition.⁵ The political and cultural meanings of the term loom even larger in today's anti-globalization critique, focusing on fields like land concessions and pros-

pendence, see *Africa and the West. A Documentary History*, vol. 2, *From Colonialism to Independence, 1875 to the Present*, Chapter 5, pp. 149–183.

- 3 Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana. The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, London 1957, p. 164. *Idem*, *Neo-Colonialism. On Nkrumah's biography and thought*, see D. Birmingham, *Kwame Nkrumah. The Father of African Nationalism*, Athens 1998; B. Davidson, *Black Star. A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah*, Oxford 2007; B. Lundt/Ch. Marx, *Kwame Nkrumah 1909–1972. A Controversial African Visionary*, Stuttgart 2016; A. Biney, *The Political and Social Thought of Kwame Nkrumah*, New York/Houndmills 2011, pp. 131–133. On the situation in Ghana see also F. Cooper, *Africa Since 1940. The Past of the Present*, Cambridge 2009, pp. 161–163; R. S. Gocking, *The History of Ghana*, Westport/London 2005, pp. 115–145.
- 4 See, for instance, G. Garavini, *After Empires. European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South 1957–1986*, Oxford 2012, pp. 241–249; M. Mazower, *Governing the World. The History of an Idea*, London 2012, pp. 343–377; V. Prashad, *The Darker Nations. A People's History of the Third World*, New York/London 2007, pp. 207–259.
- 5 The Charter of Principals specifies the Forum is opposed "to neoliberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism". <https://fsm2016.org/en/sinformer/a-propos-du-forum-social-mondial/> (accessed 4 October 2018). See also E. N. Sahle, *World Social Forum: Re-imaging Development and the Global*

pecting rights, multilateral aid donors, military invasions, or biodiversity. The political renaissance of the concept as an explanation of the consequences of globalization has spurred our thinking to reassess the term historically. Which definition of colonialism does the term carry and is it consistent with current historical research on colonial economy, informed by global history? Can neocolonialism adequately describe the relations between the newly independent states of the Global South and their former metropolises in the 1970s and 1980s? And finally, though only in a preliminary way, is the term a conceptual tool capable to explain the features and consequences of current globalization, as its proponents claim?

Neocolonialism as an analytical tool underwent varied critique of historians and political scientists alike. A key element is the high “level of generality” devoid of conceptual precision and historical specification while reducing the function of Third World states to external economic intervention and influences from outside.⁶ This is precisely the point our analysis takes as a starting point by focusing on two distinct historic economies over time, one colonial, one postcolonial. The first example is a “classic” case of imperial intervention that is British India between 1870 and 1930, with a particular focus on Bengal and Western India under formal colonial rule. The second case takes up the example of Zambia since the late 1970s and the way the African state dealt with the “structural adjustment programmes” of IMF and World Bank, where, as one historian recently noted, “the ‘hidden hand’ of neo-colonialism appears to show itself in a rather concrete and threatening form.”⁷ Focusing on the dynamics of these two economic interventions we attempt to probe the seemingly clear-cut historiographical periodization assuming an end of colonialism after formal decolonization as much as the equally suggestive rhetoric of an informal continuity of colonial control of the Global South through agencies of the West.

The term neocolonialism following Nkrumah’s lead also today refers mainly to economic intervention assumed to result in exploitative relations between states of the Global South and Western centres of capital. Given the scope of this paper with its aim to proceed historically through a vast and rich field of research, it deliberately leaves the political and cultural aspects of neocolonialism out of the analysis. Mainly three aspects define economic intervention as our prime concern. First, economic intervention contains a direct interference in the sovereignty of a foreign economic policy, often supported by political pressure or military means. Second, the intervening party often attempts to open the economy of a peripheral region for the global market. Transfers of commercially valuable raw materials and commodities from local plants in various parts of the colonial world consequently result in a closer entanglement between centres and peripheries with

South Beyond the Neo-Colonial Gaze, in: J. Blau / M. Karides (eds.), *The World and US Social Forums: A Better World is Possible and Necessary*, Leiden 2008, pp. 223–238.

6 See Smith, *Understanding Third World Politics*, p. 73. For an impressive empirical study to deconstruct “Neo-Colonialism”, see N. J. White, *British Business in Post-colonial Malaysia 1957–70. “Neo-colonialism” or “disengagement”?*, London 2004.

7 D. Rothermund, *The Routledge Companion to Decolonization*, London / New York 2006, p. 274.

the intention to favour the former. Third and finally, economic intervention is often accompanied by pressure on the indigenous society to specialize on few raw materials or food crops. This way, it has the capacity to enforce a more homogenous labour force increasingly dependent on international monopolies.

With this definition of economic intervention as an operational device, our paper proceeds in four steps. It first sketches briefly the genealogy of the concept and its fore-runners, particularly with regard to India in the 19th and to Africa in the 20th century. Second, forms and consequences of British economic intervention in 19th-century India concerning its manufactural system, its export situation and the labour market are discussed with a special focus on global history's new perspectives. Third, the impact of the "structural adjustment programmes" on late 20th-century Zambia imposed by international organisations are explored, looking particularly at the retreat of the state and the reopening of its economy to the world market. Fourth and finally, the question whether postcolonial economy is coined by an informal continuity of colonial control or whether alternative economic frameworks can better characterize these constellations is discussed and a preliminary answer given.

I. From "Drain" to "Neocolonialism": Criticising Colonial Economics

"Foreigners come here and in a short time earn enough to live in comfort back home, and our country is being pumped dry in the process."⁸ The popular sentiment that *Jnananeshan*, the mouthpiece of the Young Bengal movement, expressed in 1834, echoes arguments exchanged since the East India Company's intrusion into Bengal around 1760 until today. The basic narrative of "drain" as the dominant paradigm for India's economic situation under British rule and thereafter maintains that imperial intervention enriched Britain's economic stability while removing resources from India capable of pushing its own modernization. The concept served basic needs of the Indian nationalistic movement since the late 19th century and has remained a core argument of subsequent postcolonial governments as well as historiography in the 20th century. The way historians applied this formula was by trying to present evidence of gains and losses between India and Great Britain, keeping data, processes, and arguments within the realm of one centre and one periphery. This way, economic questions became often renationalized by reducing a variety of agents and agencies to two camps: an indigenous, national periphery and an imperial core. The debate has been relentless, but obviously failed to come to any broadly accepted result. The strong political agenda, which "drain" carries, is probably one reason, why, as David Washbrook has put it, "the battle may [...] have generated more heat than light."⁹

8 Jnananeshan, 9 August 1834, quoted in S. Sarkar, *Bengali Entrepreneurs and Western Technology in the Nineteenth Century. A Social Perspective*, in: *Indian Journal of History of Science* 48 (2013) 3, pp. 447–475, quote 447.

9 D. Washbrook, *The Indian Economy and the British Empire*, in: D. Peers/N. Gooptu (eds), *India and the British Empire*, Oxford 2012, pp. 44–74, quote p. 45.

The basic idea that Britain “drained” India’s wealth leading to exploitation and impoverishment makes it appear a direct forerunner to the term “neocolonialism”, appearing in the 1960s. Paul Baran, André Gunder Frank, and others discovered the Indian nationalistic texts, which presented models of colonial exploitation and used it for their own work on terms-of-trade, dependency theory and world inequality.¹⁰ For Raúl Prebisch, the long-standing head of the Economic Commission for Latin America, raw material exports from Latin America or other poor regions on the periphery of the world economy structurally fetched ever lower prices compared to the industrial products of the metropolises. This inevitably led to the frustration of all the development plans of the world’s poor countries.

In the following decades, the Economic Commission for Latin America turned into the breeding ground for dependency theory, which in turn caught the attention of future African leaders, Nkrumah being among the “perhaps most influenced”.¹¹ Although the concepts of “drain”, “terms-of-trade” and “neocolonialism” differ in their temporal and regional origin, as well as in their focus on colonialism versus postcolonial times, the similarities in substance are obvious. All concepts argue that economic relations between North and South were per se exploitative serving exclusively the interests of Western centres of power and capital. This can include a forced extraction of surplus through colonial states, unequal exchange between states of the Global South and North, or intervention through transnational banks and multilateral development agencies.

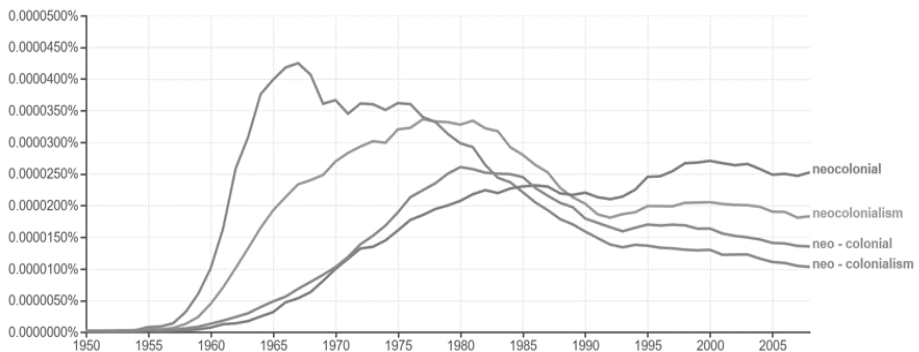
The critique which concepts like “drain” or “neocolonialism” as analytical concepts have earned centres on the static geography of power implied in which colonial or postcolonial actors exert almost no economic agency of their own. Assuming their genuine powerlessness and passivity underestimates the impact colonized actors as well as the independence movements themselves made and rather perpetuates stereotypes of helplessness while showing sympathy. The changing modes of agency, resistance, accommodation or assertion within colonial and postcolonial relations are therefore not adequately reflected in such theories. Besides, these concepts carry a moral standing, often arguing with a generic sense of unjustness, which particularly in the case of “neocolonialism” often overshadows its analytical content. Despite these shortcomings, “neocolonialism” seems to be back on the political agenda. A view at Google Ngram (see graph, next page), a tool to chart the frequency of use of any expression in the millions of books Google digitized during the past years, shows the gradual recovery of the term, which becomes even more pronounced if you limit the search to American English.

10 See T. Roy, *The British Empire and the Economic Development of India (1858–1947)*, in: *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History* 34 (2015) 2, pp. 209–236, at p. 212.

11 R. Vokes, *African Perspectives on Development*, in: T. Binns/K. Lynch/E. Nel (eds.), *Handbook of African Development*, New York 2018, pp. 10–18, here p. 12f. A key text for terms-of-trade theory is R. Prebisch, *The Economic Development of Latin America and Its Principal Problems*, New York 1950. See also E. Dosman, *The Life and Time of Raúl Prebisch, 1901–1986*, Montreal 2009. And on dependency theory Bernecker/Fischer, *Dependency Theories*.

The terms' revivification often couched in related terms like "re-colonisation" or "neo-liberalism" as a process seems to indicate that a certain understanding of colonial economic relations informs today's explanations of North-South relations better than current analytical terms seem capable to. Still working as a combative catchword for postcolonial elites and activists, it also recently reappeared as an analytical concept in the social sciences. Mark Langan, for instance, has very recently argued that "the concept of neo-colonialism, as originally proposed by Nkrumah, remains valid for critical assessment of African countries' position within the globalised market economy."¹² A brief and very selective account of India's economy under colonial rule and the ways Indians themselves dealt with the British intervention will provide a first historical grounding of the consequences of economic intervention and puts neocolonialism, so to say, under a historical stress test informed by global history.

Bibliometric analysis of the terms 'neocolonialism' and 'neocolonial', 1950–2008¹³



II. Indian Economy under British Rule in a Global Context

Situating Britain's intervention in India's economy has been an object of an extremely extensive historiography without coming to a consensus so far. Mainstream Indian interpretations tend to presume that market integration with the imperial economy stunted the pattern of indigenous development and tended to explain India's "underdevelop-

12 M. Langan, *Neo-Colonialism and the Poverty of "Development" in Africa*, London 2018, p. 27. See also A. Ziai, *Neokoloniale Weltordnung? Brüche und Kontinuitäten seit der Dekolonisation*, in: *APuZ* 44–45 (2012), pp. 23–30.

13 Google Ngram Viewer, https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=neocolonialism+per+cent2Cneo-colonialism+per+cent2Cneo-colonial&year_start=1950&year_end=2018&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=&direct_url=t1+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cneocolonialism+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cc0+per+cent3B.t1+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cneo+per+cent20-per+cent20colonialism+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cc0+per+cent3B.t1+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cneocolonial+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cc0+per+cent3B.t1+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cneo+per+cent20-per+cent20colonial+per+cent3B+per+cent2Cc0 (accessed 3 October 2018).

ment” primarily through Britain’s “development.”¹⁴ Recent economic research informed by global history refrains from such renationalizing of economics and rather tries to situate India “as a crucial pivot in a multilateral system of imperial economy and force”, as David Washbrook has proposed.¹⁵ Given this state of research the following remarks based on current research do no more than simply highlight selective cases with special regard to the key markers of economic intervention as defined above: interfering with a foreign economic policy, opening the economy to global markets, and pressing the cultivation of certain crops.

Britain’s prime interests in India lay in military needs, revenue operation, and the expansion of overseas commerce. The backdrop of enforcing these aims with brute force was an astonishing abstinence of interest in domestic markets. A first short inquiry into India’s artisan production and the role of weavers, merchants, and consumers in small towns in Western India after 1870 challenges the notion of intervention as an over-arching colonial scheme.¹⁶ The first half of the 19th century with imperial expansion into India had brought about a disruption of pre-existing commercial networks with Indian and African states ceasing to act as main customers of cloth. A deep depression between 1820 and 1850 gave way to a changed constellation for small-scale artisans representing a major employment group and constituting around 10 million people in the early twentieth century.¹⁷ In the Bombay presidency, the centre of India’s textile industry, the availability and cheaper price of machine-made yarn often imported from England enhanced the Indian weaving family’s ability to tailor its products to buyers’ specifications. By flexibly using machine-made materials for their handmade cloth the production became closer associated with international capitalism, shifting the artisan economy from a precolonial global context to a new reliance on imperial networks for their raw material.

A further reason for the gradual reinvigoration of handloom weaving after 1870 were new forms of demand. The “drain” argument shares with the paradigm of “neocolonialism” the bias against analysing consumption patterns privileging production at the expense of demand. Because of the British encouraging and enforcing sedentary agriculture, peasants became increasingly consumers of the cloth market. The Indian “Adivasis”, for example, a group of rural poor, came to reside in regions of sedentary agriculture developing new ideas of modesty. Men adopted the dhoti, women the sari, both made by small producers in Western India’s small towns. A further source of expanded demand came from large urban centres like Bombay, Ahmedabad and Poona, where new styles of public life and new forms of social expectation triggered new kinds of buying patterns. Here, the shares of industrialized cloth in the total market of the Bombay presidency

14 See L. Chaudhary, Introduction, in: L. Chaudhary (ed.), *A New Economic History of Colonial India*, London 2016, pp. 1–14.

15 Washbrook, *The Indian Economy*, p. 54. See for an early forerunner K. N. Chaudhuri, *India’s International Economy in the Nineteenth Century: An Historical Survey*, in: *Modern Asian Studies* 2 (1968) 1, pp. 31–50.

16 See for the following above the painstakingly researched study of D. Haynes, *Small town capitalism in Western India. Artisans, Merchants, and the Making of the Informal Economy, 1870–1960*, Cambridge 2012.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 2 f.

declined while the handloom-made held theirs. One reason was that men tended to consume mill-manufactured cloth while women tended to wear fabrics woven on handlooms serving also as a marker of group and caste distinction. When the members of a Provincial banking inquiry interviewed the Sholapur-based entrepreneur L. K. Tikekar in 1929 about the competition from textile mills, they seemed surprised about his answer. Tikekar was very confident about the competitiveness of local weavers' adaption to new demands.

*You don't think the mills will be able to compete with the handloom weavers' asked one questioner. "No", replied Tikekar, "because Sholapur is famous for its sarees. They require a mixed weaving which requires a special care to be taken".*¹⁸

Crucial for the artisanal economy was the increasing role of artisan-capitalists, often weaver-masters who combined maintaining shops, shaping consumer choices, and selling clothes to outside localities. While ordinary artisans lived mostly under poverty, this group of artisan-capitalists often disposed of intimate knowledge of the production process, had family members or employees to forge new markets some distance away and tried to cultivate new buyers for the products they manufactured. The "karkhandars", as they were called, combined the functions of consumption, production, management, and marketing in one entity, the artisan joint family, which was critical for the expansion of India's informal economy. The emergence of an artisanal capitalism, located in small towns, however, could emerge as it did, through the relative absence of the colonial state. The clerks of the British Raj carried mostly a stereotype of the artisan as a traditional figure and never came to terms with the capitalist character of the artisanal economy. Half-hearted efforts to institutionalize weaver-cooperatives in order to "protect" them against the fast pace of transformation or to promote technical improvements never had a real impact on the majority of Western India's artisans. While strongly acting in the agrarian realm the colonial administration exercised almost no real intervention into the artisans' production, representing a major sphere of employment in 19th-century India. In sum, the example of the artisan economy shows the agency of entrepreneurs pushing new demands, market-orientated peasants, craftspeople using their technical expertise, skilled factory workers investing extra-money into their own workshops, and traders selling outside their own localities – barely influenced by the state at all. In contrast to traditional assumptions of colonialism involving a strong economic intervention in a foreign economy, the British state exercised almost no intervention in the sphere of artisanal economy. The artisans themselves rather developed flexible modes to deal with economic changes induced by international trade. While "drain" does not capture this historic constellation adequately, "small town capitalism", as Douglas Haynes has proposed, does rather better denote this indigenous and largely independent agency within the Raj.

A second aspect of “economic intervention” relates to the enforced opening of a peripheral economy for products from the metropole with the intention to favour the interests of the core. This pattern has been extensively shown through the well-known case of the cotton industry, enforcing the exports of raw material in India while importing ready-made textiles from England in the first half of the 19th century. A less familiar example is the rise of Bengal’s jute manufacturing industry into the world’s leading export commodity since 1900. Jute cultivation in Bengal had resulted in a new word for the “golden fibre”, as one official of the east India Company noted in 1791:

*We are continuing our searches for a new Article for Export to Great Britain [...] We sent Samples of clean Hemp of this country and one of Jute (we know no English name for this) the material of which Gunnies and the Ropes used in cording Bales is made.*¹⁹

When British entrepreneurs and agents started to install jute mills along Calcutta’s Hugli River since the 1860s, the mills made large profits paying dividends of up to 25 per cent the year to their mainly English and Scottish shareholders. No British industrialist who perceived Calcutta as a sole supplier of raw jute to the mills in Scottish Dundee in these years would have imagined the product, its export markets as well as its ownership to take a different direction.

In the second half of the 19th century, almost exclusively British managing agencies adopted the Scottish technology, build up factories around Calcutta and launched a technical and commercial head-on competition with the long-standing mills in Great Britain. While handloom goods found their vent locally, machine made articles were sold predominantly abroad only to transcend imperial markets very soon. The growing global demand for jute as a packaging product led to the unprecedented growth of the Bengal industry. A prime catalyst of this development were the markets of the US, Australia, New Zealand, and China. While these markets had absorbed less than 16 per cent of Bengal’s foreign exports in 1875, this figure rose to about 75 per cent in 1910.²⁰ Comparative advantages compared with the long-standing mills in Britain were labour costs, with wages at about 50 per cent of those of British workers, and an efficient colonial railway infrastructure lowering transportation costs considerably. Another comparative advantage came from the heavy prohibitive tariffs a number of jute manufacturing countries in Europe and North America imposed on their export goods since the 1870s. The colonial state in contrast completely refrained from any state patronage of the jute industry marking a sharp difference to the discriminatory practices employed by East India Company officials in the first half of the century. In 1911, ca. 90 per cent of the total

19 Quoted in: I. Ray, Struggling against Dundee: Bengal jute industry during the nineteenth century, in: The Indian Economic and Social History Review 49 (2012) 1, pp. 105–146, quote 106.

20 Bengal Administrative Report, 1867–77, p. 165, quoted in Ray, Struggling against Dundee, p. 125. A government report in the 1870s had already concluded: “The Indian mills now command a practical monopoly of the Asiatic and a large portion of the American and Australian markets and have in the past years largely extended their exports to China. This has deprived the Dundee manufacturers of some of the main outlets for their trade, and their demand of raw jute has consequently fallen.”

global demand were supplied by India alone while Scottish Dundee, the former centre of the Jute industry, was not able to compete anymore with Indian prices and output. The labour-intensive industry required both skilled and an unskilled workforce, bringing about substantial job opportunities for those regularly employed. A large number of employment was generated also indirectly through the forward and backward streams of the industry as well as by agriculture being closely linked to the jute cultivation. Indrajit Ray has calculated the ratio of direct employment in the factories of the Bengal jute industry versus indirect employment around 1900. He estimated around 236,000 employed workers and 8 million indirectly employed people constituting a large informal sector securing livelihoods from the Jute industry.²¹

Until 1900 primarily British entrepreneurs and capitalists profited from bringing the local product to global markets exploiting cheap labour, land, and other resources. An explosion in trading profits came with World War I, when gunny demands increased rapidly through military needs. The prosperity of the industry continued through the 1920s and early 30s and brought the emergence of Indians taking over ownership and opening up their own mills in Calcutta. A key agent in this transition were the Marwaris, an ethno-linguistic group that had migrated from Rajasthan to Bengal, acting as brokers, bankers, and industrialists.²² They had dominated the trade in raw jute since 1900 and introduced *fatka* (speculation) making millions on the stock markets and on hedge transactions. The British interest in short-term profit played in the hands of these Indian entrepreneurs and investors who increasingly used *fatka* to buy British shares. Soon the Marwari traders accumulated so many shares of British companies that their patriarchs became elected onto British boards even before 1914. The Fort Gloster Jute Mills in Calcutta show this transition exemplarily: While 1874 witnessed 119 shareholders, among them 105 foreigners and 14 Indians, the same mill in 1890 had 73 foreign shareholders and 79 Indian.²³ Omkar Goswami has vividly pictured the different styles British and Indian businessmen employed in their business:

While British managing agencies maintained plush offices, quarters with tennis courts, [...] sponsored rugby leagues and regattas [...] and spent an enormous time sending memos to each other, the Marwaris sat in more austere premise, worked longer hours, flogged both machines and workers, executed deals on word of mouth and went about unobtrusively making (largey undeclared) money.²⁴

The tremendous profits induced a very large entry of new mills after the war owned by Indians, which were not as strong in terms of capacity as the British but steadily under-

21 Calculation *ibid.*, p. 139.

22 See O. Goswami, Then came the Marwaris. Some aspects of Change in the Pattern of Industrial Control in Eastern India: Indian Economic and Social History Review 22 (1985), pp. 225–2549.

23 T. Sethia, The Rise of the Jute Manufacturing Industry in Colonial India: A Global Perspective, in: Journal of World History 7 (1996) 1, p. 90.

24 O. Goswami, Collaboration and Conflict. European and Indian Capitalists and The Jute Economy of Bengal, 1919–1939, in: The Indian Economic and Social History Review XIX (1982) 2, pp. 141–179, quote 154.

mined the formal structure of industrial collaboration. The grandson of Aditya Birla, a Marwari, who accumulated a conglomerate of mills in the 1920s, remembered his grandfather's first effort to break the British monopoly: "It was very difficult for grandfather to establish this jute mill. Whenever he would buy some land to establish this mill, the English and Scots would buy land and all around to prevent him from building the jute mill."²⁵ In 1925 the British undercapitalisation had effected in 60 per cent of the shares of all Bengal Jute companies to be in the hands of Marwaris.²⁶ The introduction of Jute to global markets, in sum, had first favoured predominantly the interests of British investors and agency houses. Gradually, Indian groups emerged as traders soon to take over ownership and, since the 1920s, build their own mills. A growing participation of Marwari entrepreneurs in India's largest export earner after 1918 made a European enclave into a capitalist sector whose profits favoured both British and Indian economic actors.

Given these historic constellations, "drain" as a category seems too static and too one-directional to capture the development of Bengal's jute industry. Here, the colony outstripped the metropolis and matured from a supplier of raw material into the world's leading jute manufacturer. In contrast to the cotton industry, the colonial state showed almost no sign of interference, probably because the industry generated substantial revenues in the form of income tax and served Britain in adjusting its trade settlement in the global market. Finally, "drain" neglects local agency as a decisive factor in the colonial economy. While profits in the first decades definitely favoured metropolitan elites, ownership soon changed and the majority of the booming jute industry after 1900 belonged to Indians. "Global capitalism" eventually denotes a more fitting term to capture the multiple factors and ambivalent realities of this unique story.

A third aspect of economic intervention focuses on possible colonial efforts to transform exports of manufactured goods into exports of primarily agricultural commodities. The Indian national historiography has focused strongly on such a conjectural relationship between colonial rule and decline of industries, conceptualised in the still very influential paradigm of "deindustrialisation".²⁷ Empirical investigations whether this event actually took place, however, remain scarce. Some current works, among them Sven Beckert's narrative of cotton as a global commodity, stress the colonial state's power to effectively coerce a change of cultivation.²⁸ Economic history in contrast does rather point to the limits of such coercive intervention due to a variety of interconnected factors. An exemplary case to reassess the question of economic intervention into the agrarian sphere

25 Quoted in Sethia, *Jute Manufacturing*, pp. 90f.

26 See Goswami, *Collaboration and Conflict*, p. 143.

27 See I. Ray, *The myth and reality of deindustrialisation in early modern India*, in: Chaudhary (ed.), *A New Economic History of Colonial India*, pp. 52–66.

28 See S. Beckert, *Empire of Cotton. A Global History*, New York 2014; L. D. Satya, *Cotton and Famine in Berar 1850–1900*, Delhi 1997; M. Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts. El Nino famines and the Making of the Third World*, London 2001.

in the second half of the 19th century is the colonial state's effort to employ a "cotton imperialism" in Dharwar, Western India, which Sandip Hazareesingh has investigated.²⁹ Western India was the pre-eminent location of India's cotton production where colonial ideas to "improve" the fibre, and therewith stimulate both output for export and taxing potential of the peasants concentrated. Dharwar comprised of 4500 square miles and three different climate zones. The Dharwar peasants cultivated their land fully only, when the weather prospects seemed to support harvest, while resisting further cash crop cultivation out of fears to enhance tax charges. The crisis of cotton supplies in the face of the American Civil war in the 1860s pushed the British India Office to privilege the cultivation of American over indigenous cotton and had them set up a Colonial Cotton Department in 1863. This development denotes a more interventionist mode of organising colonial power than the British had hitherto practised in that sector. For a short time, on the height of the American supply crisis, colonial officers tried to monitor peasants to cultivate only American cotton, a different and finer fibre, instead of the indigenous Kumta cotton. Legal acts prosecuting peasants for cotton mixing and confiscating mixed varieties proved unsuccessful and showed how limited imperial capacity for economic control actually was.

Ecological constraints added to counteract the colonial improvement programme. The ever-increasing value of teak led to rampant deforestation affecting the climate of Dharwar for cotton cultivation. Overall drop in rainfall and consequently in atmospheric moisture had strong effect on the cotton plant, above all the American cotton fibre that the Cotton Department had favoured. In 1880, the Department had to admit, that "much of the land formerly devoted to exotic (American) cotton was turned to the cultivation of the indigenous fibre". In the same year the Dharwar peasants had cultivated the indigenous "Kumta" crop which was more resistant to climate change over an area of 439,251 acres while the American one covered only mere 77,121 acres.³⁰ A further factor interacting with the peasants' agency as well as with environmental conditions was the state's changed stand towards intervention. The global recession starting in 1873 reinforced laissez-faire doctrines and led to the dissolution of the Cotton Department altogether in 1883. In the early 1880s the colonial improvement programme seemed to have lost any impetus.

In short, the colonial state's effort to push a cotton improvement programme and broaden cultivation in line with its export interests met with a number of constraints since the 1860s. The Dharwar peasants resented the cultivation design imposed from above and preferred the indigenous fibre as part of a diverse, risk-reducing cropping system. Climatic changes plus the state's own demise from its cotton programme added to the "cotton imperialism's" failure in 19th century Dharwar.

29 See S. Hazareesingh, *Cotton, Climate and colonialism in Dharwar, western India, 1840–1880*, on which the following is based.

30 See for quote and numbers *ibid.*, p. 15.

III. Zambia's Waltz with International Capital and the Question of Imperial Intervention

After independence in 1964 Zambia had no need to borrow from international capital sources, though it was eagerly trying to 'develop' its economy as so many other post-colonial countries. The central African state was home of vast copper resources and the corresponding mining industry, which generated sufficient revenue to finance the attempts of the Zambian government to diversify its economic base into manufacturing, build up a health and education sector. Also, in the late 1960s, President Kenneth Kaunda launched a "Zambianization" campaign. KK, as he was called, a trained teacher still in his forties and proponent of a moderate form of African socialism, aimed at the control of the commanding heights of the Zambian economy – i. a. taking over 51 per cent of the copper industry. Then, after a rather successful decade, the interrelated oil and world economic crisis of 1973–1975 came, effectively derailing the economy. Suddenly, Zambia's oil import bill more than doubled from \$ 50 million in 1972 to more than \$ 125 million in 1974. World-wide inflation additionally caused great increases in prices of imported capital goods, spare parts, and inputs to keep mining and manufacturing industries running. At the same time, recession in Western industrial countries made the demand and price for copper slump. All this seriously threw Zambia's balance of payments off track.³¹

Kenneth Kaunda's government decided to borrow money to tide over what it hoped would only be temporary problems. It took out short-term loans on the so-called Eurocurrency markets now flush with petrodollars. Debts with short repayment periods rose from \$ 53 million in 1974 to nearly \$ 470 million in 1975 and about \$ 840 million in 1978.³² But as copper prices stayed depressed, foreign exchange remained scarce despite outside credit, imports had to be restricted, manufacturing industries and agriculture were starved of inputs and consequently operating at low capacity. This was also true of the copper mines whose output declined from 702,100 metric tons in 1974 to 584,800 five years later.³³ Thus the economy shrank throughout most of the late 1970s and 1980s, the balance of payments problems remained, while debts mounted. By the late 1970s, Zambia was at the brink of bankruptcy. It approached Western governments, for instance asking the Federal Republic of Germany for \$ 100 million "programme loan assistance" and securing another \$ 100 million aid package from the United States in 1978.³⁴ Finally, unable to service its commercial debts, Zambia began talks with the IMF

31 J. Kreienbaum, *Der verspätete Schock. Sambia und die erste Ölkrise von 1973/74*, in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 43 (2017), pp. 612–633; also M. Larmer, *Mineworkers in Zambia. Labour and Political Change in Post-colonial Africa*, London 2007, pp. 42–58; M. Burdette, *Zambia. Between Two Worlds*, Boulder / Aldershot 1988, pp. 64–132.

32 See Republic of Zambia, *Financial Report for the Year Ended 31st December 1974*, Lusaka 1975, p. vi; *Financial Report 1975*, p. vi; *Financial Report 1978*, p. vi.

33 Burdette, *Zambia*, p. 99.

34 Bundesarchiv Koblenz, B 102/213012, *Besuch führender Persönlichkeiten aus Sambia*, Dez. 1966 bis Feb. 1976, Government of the Republic of Zambia, *Economic and Technical Co-operation Between the Federal Republic*

on whose standby facility it had drawn in a small way since 1971.³⁵ But now money only came with strings attached.

The IMF and the World Bank had both been established as a consequence of the Bretton Woods talks in 1944. From the beginning IMF lending was based on the notion that debtors needed to set their "house in order" so that they would be able to repay credits. In order to assure this homework was done, the fund formulated conditions which debtor countries had to fulfil in order to get money.³⁶ From the late 1970s onwards conditionality grew in importance. This had to do with a broader shift in economic theory and especially development economics. Up to this point the World Bank had supported the dominant view in "developing countries" that they should use earnings from the export of primary commodities to foster industrialization. Problems in "development" seemed to stem primarily from exogenous problems, mainly fluctuating prices for raw materials.³⁷ In 1981 two influential reports then marked a paradigm change. The so-called Bates and Berg reports both placed the prime problems with economic "development" in the domestic arena – corruption, excessive state-intervention, and an over-reliance on industrialization were blamed.³⁸ This was in line with the wider turn to what was soon dubbed "neoliberalism" and its cry for privatization, free trade, and pro-market reforms. Identifying the principle problems of 'development' within debtor nations themselves, now made conditionality seem ever more important to make them ready for successful growth.

While the first minor IMF-credits to Zambia in the early 1970s had been non-conditional, this changed with the next "standby arrangement" in 1976. Now, the credit over 62 million Special Drawing Rights (SDR)³⁹ was based on the condition that the Zambian government would put a ceiling on money supply and credit in order to curb inflation and devalue the Kwacha by 20 per cent. A decisively bigger agreement along similar lines followed in 1978.⁴⁰ Following another oil price shock and accompanying world recession in 1979–82, which further exacerbated Zambia's economic and financial position Kaunda's government dealt out a giant 800 million SDR loan with the Fund. This credit line, the second largest to an African country, which was to be released in tranches

of Germany and the Republic of Zambia, 3 February 1976, esp. pp. 6 and 47f.; A. DeRoche, *Asserting African Agency: Kenneth Kaunda and the USA, 1964–1980*, in: *Diplomatic History* 40 (2016), pp. 975–1001, at p. 993.

35 See C. Fundanga, *The Role of the IMF and World Bank in Zambia*, in: B. Onimode (ed.), *The IMF, The World Bank and the African Debt*, vol. I. *The Economic Impact*, London/New Jersey 1989, pp. 142–148, at p. 143; Burdette, *Zambia*, pp. 122f.

36 Burdette, *Zambia*, p. 122; N. Woods, *The Globalizers. The IMF, the World Bank, and Their Borrowers*, Ithaca 2006, pp. 39–64.

37 See the *World Bank Operations Evaluation Study: G. G. Bonnick, Zambia Country Assistance Review*, Washington 1997, p. 2.

38 R. H. Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa. The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 2005 [1981]; World Bank, *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa. An Agenda for Action*, Washington 1981.

39 An international reserve asset created by the IMF in 1969.

40 <http://www.imf.org/external/np/fin/tad/extarr2.aspx?memberkey1=1080&date1Key=2018-04-30> (accessed 16 May 2018); Fundanga, *IMF and World Bank in Zambia*, p. 143.

between 1981 and 1984 and was mainly used to pay back foreign creditors, came along with stiffer conditions. It called for another currency devaluation, lower imports, a reduction in price controls for many staple goods, rigorous foreign exchange restrictions for Zambians while liberalizing rules for foreign company accounts and finally a limit on wage increases.⁴¹ These conditions obviously meant a direct interference with Zambia's domestic economic policies.

Economically, however, these prescriptions did not work. As Zambian mines, industry, and also agriculture were all heavily dependent on imported inputs – machines, spare parts, raw materials, and fertilizers, a legacy of both colonial rule and post-independence import-substitution industrialization – devaluation had doubtful effects. It made imports more expensive and thus contributed to the starvation of the Zambian economy which operated at ever decreasing capacity.⁴² From 1977 to 1987, the Zambian GNP per capita shrank by 26 percent.⁴³ Devaluation and the reduction of price controls for essential goods also led to increasing inflation, which could not be balanced with higher salaries given the wage increase restrictions. This seriously ate into average household budgets and led to a wave of strikes in July 1981.⁴⁴ With economic decline and unpopular medicines prescribed by international financial institutions, the UNIP-government was fast losing its legitimacy. It soon turned out that Zambia could neither live with or without IMF and World Bank credits. Given the constantly depressed copper prices, it could not make do without their money. But accepting the medicine from Washington entailed domestically highly unpopular policies, while also not setting the economy on a sustainable track.

The consequence was an on-off-relationship between Zambia and the international financial institutions. Domestic unrest frequently led to government criticism of their policies and non-compliance with conditions – for instance the reintroduction of food subsidies. This was in turn answered by IMF and World Bank by suspension of payments. “Facing the cutoff from vital funds”, Marcia Burdette comments, “again and again the G[overnment of the] R[epublic of] Z[ambia] knuckled under and implemented more ‘stabilization’ policies.”⁴⁵ By 1984, Zambia's foreign debt had grown to \$ 4 billion and it needed 65 per cent of its foreign exchange earnings for debt servicing, making it the most heavily indebted country in sub-Saharan Africa and thus reducing its bargaining position vis-à-vis its international creditors.⁴⁶ With every new credit line conditions became more intrusive. In 1985 the IMF urged Zambia to introduce an “auction system” for the allocation of foreign exchange, with the consequence that 99 per cent were conceded

41 Burdette, Zambia, p. 122f; J. Ihonvbere, Structural Adjustment and Democratization in Zambia, in: M. S. Smith (ed.), *Globalizing Africa*, Trenton/Asmara 2006, pp. 325–342, at p. 333.

42 Fundanga, IMF and World Bank in Zambia, p. 144.

43 Ihonvbere, Structural Adjustment, p. 334.

44 Ibid., p. 331 f.

45 Burdette, Zambia, p. 123.

46 Larmer, Mineworkers, p. 52; Ihonvbere, Structural Adjustment, p. 334. On the strong bargaining position of the IFIs in Africa in general, see Woods, *The Globalizers*.

to foreign multinational companies. Obviously, the Fund tried to re-open the Zambian economy for private capital from abroad. A year later, in December 1986, implementation of an IMF agreement led to the doubling of mealie meal prices, the local staple food. The results were strikes and widespread rioting. Kaunda decided to listen to the streets rather than the IMF, scrapping the auction system, freezing the price for essential goods again and announcing a New Economic Recovery Programme under the theme of "Growth from Own Resources". Without donor support, however, the state had no means to pay salaries to teachers and civil servants or buy drugs for hospitals.⁴⁷

Finally, in the face of economic collapse and the sharp deterioration in standards of living, opposition mounted and UNIP had no choice but to grant the first multi-party elections since 1973, when Zambia had become a one-party state. In October 1991, Frederik Chiluba's Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) won a land-slide victory over Kaunda's UNIP. As the long-standing chairman of the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions he had been among the staunchest critics of "structural adjustment". But only months before taking office Chiluba turned from Saulus to Paulus suddenly supporting macro-economic reform. Finally, World Bank and IMF had a willing local ally to implement "adjustment".⁴⁸ Unfortunately, the results were rather worse than better with Zambia's economic decline continuing at increasing speed. Formal sector employment halved as many of the former parastatals could not compete on open markets after privatisation and closed down. Agricultural output further declined, making the country increasingly dependent on food aid. Spending on education and health greatly diminished, while HIV/AIDS spread, reducing life expectation to the mid-30s.⁴⁹ This rapid economic downturn, to be sure, was not only the result of "structural adjustment", but first of all of the continuation of depressed copper prices and also to some extent of the siphoning off of monies by corrupt elites. However, adjustment certainly did not work out as either Washington based economists or most Zambians had hoped.

Did the intervention of international financial organisations in Zambia carry the hallmarks of earlier imperial economic interventions as identified in the introduction? To a large extent they certainly did. First, conditions attached to structural adjustment funds obviously meant serious infringements into the sovereignty of Zambia's economic policy. The devaluations of the Kwacha, the scrapping of food subsidies and the freezing of wages were highly unpopular among most Zambians and nothing the UNIP government would have enacted without pressure from Washington. In 1989, Zambia even had to accept an IMF-approved expatriate governor for its central bank in order to secure funding.⁵⁰ The leverage used, however, differed from 19th century cannon boat diplomacy or

47 Larmer, *Mineworkers*, pp. 52–54; Ihonvbere, *Structural Adjustment*, pp. 332–338; Zambia, National Commission for Development Planning: *New Economic Recovery Programme: Interim National Development Plan*, July 1987–December 1988, Lusaka 1987.

48 On Chiluba's turn around see Larmer, *Rethinking African Politics*, pp. 252f.

49 Miles Larmer, *Reaction & Resistance to Neo-Liberalism in Zambia*, in: *Review of African Political Economy* 32 (2005), pp. 29–45, here 30f.

50 Ch. S. Adam/A. M. Simpasa, *The Economics of Copper Price Boom in Zambia*, in: A. Fraser/M. Larmer (eds.),

direct state intervention as in the case of cotton production in Dharwar. The freezing of essential funds proved sufficient to make Kaunda's government follow the prescriptions, at least to some extent.

However, these infringements were dependent on a certain willingness to cooperate by Zambian actors. The on-off-relationship between the international financial institutions in Washington and Zambia in the 1980s was an expression of the lack of enthusiasm for "structural adjustment" within the UNIP government and of the limited power the Fund and Bank could wield without collaborators at the right positions. Deference of their prescriptions at times went so far that Kaunda openly criticized them, trying to use them as a convenient scapegoat on whom he could blame Zambia's economic ills, while trying to conceal UNIP's part in the story. This situation only changed with the triumph of Chiluba's Movement for Multi-Party Democracy in 1991. As in the case of India, and in many other imperial scenarios, what happened on the ground was at least as much shaped by local actors, sometimes serving as intermediaries, as by the metropole. While Africans appeared as powerless "pawns" in Nkrumah's writings on neocolonialism, Zambian actors, especially those in high politics, obviously possessed agency, enacting or blocking adjustment policies as it served them. Particularly in the fields of food subsidies and monetary devaluation Kaunda proved that he was not simply accepting orders from Washington.⁵¹

Second, despite the immediate goal to put Zambia in a position to repay its debts, IMF and World Bank conditions aimed at re-integrating the country into the world economy. These international organizations functioned as "globalizers" as Ngaire Woods has argued.⁵² Their interventions reversed post-independence attempts to reduce the country's dependence on Western industrial states and especially Southern African settler regimes by diversifying the economy and nationalizing bigger businesses. Now, the parastatal sector was re-privatized including, in the 1990s, the crucial copper mines. By the year 2000 large parts of the copper industry were back in the hands of Anglo-American Corporation, one of the mining multinationals which had dominated Zambian mining in colonial times. Controls on foreign capital were scrapped and the former inward-looking strategy of import substituting industrialization was abandoned. It all served to open Zambia's formerly "closed economy"⁵³ to the world market.

Third, as in colonial times Zambia was supposed to be integrated into the world economy in a specific way, as a producer of a single commodity: copper.⁵⁴ It was to be a classic mono-economy, whose only other economic activity was agricultural production, largely for domestic consumption. Naturally, this decision had consequences for the Zambian work force. A small class of Zambian businessmen began to profit from Washington

Zambia, Mining, and Neoliberalism. Boom and Bust on the Globalized Copperbelt, Houndsmill / New York 2010, pp. 59–90, here 64.

51 Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, New York 1963, p. 174; also compare Biney, Nkrumah, p. 132 f.

52 Woods, *The Globalizers*. See also J. E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, New York 2002.

53 Larmer, *Neo-Liberalism*, p. 30.

54 Cf. Larmer, *Mineworkers*, p. 47.

induced reforms, especially with the privatizations of parastatal companies commencing in the 1990s. These profiteers were often former managers of said parastatals who had been able to accumulate some capital during the 1970s and 1980s and were now able to bid for these firms.⁵⁵ While they were frequently making huge personal gains, most other groups within Zambian society suffered. This was especially true for the formerly rather privileged mineworkers and those employed in public service. For many of them the new labour regime that came with economic decline and "structural adjustment" was unemployment and a struggle for survival in the informal economy. They either went back to the land or, especially women, tried to make a living from street vending.⁵⁶ Finally, while the IMF, the World Bank, and Western governments were making very considerable sums available to help Zambia reschedule its debts and help with its "development", the net transfer soon changed direction. As most of the money was only loaned, initially often on commercial conditions, by 1985 the African country was obliged to transfer greater sums to the IMF for interest payments and debt repayments than it was receiving.⁵⁷ As Kenneth Kaunda complained, the "heavy external debt burden" had turned Zambia into a "net exporter of financial resources at a time when the country was in dire need of resources to keep the economy afloat."⁵⁸ The ghost of "drain" was still around.

IV. Conclusion

This paper aims to reassess the term "neocolonialism" by contrasting the theoretical concept with empirical inquiries into two cases of economic intervention, one colonial, and one postcolonial. What do they say about the question of postcolonial economy to be coined by an informal continuity? At first sight, similarities and differences stand out between the British colonial state's intervention in India in the 19th and international institutions engagement in Zambia in the 20th century.

First, the state as intervening actor. In 19th century Bengal the colonial state enforced serious infringements into the sovereignty of a foreign, the Mughal state, above all through tax collection and military means. The same state refrained, however, from intervention in a variety of other economic sectors, as the artisanal economy, or proved too weak to enforce its own programmes, as the failure to introduce American cotton in Dharwar in the 1860s shows. In the late 20th century, in contrast, international financial institutions were the key actors. Although former imperial powers, and especially the United States,

55 Larmer, *Neo-Liberalism*, p. 31.

56 J. Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity. Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*, Berkeley et al. 1999; K. Tranberg Hansen, *The Informalization of Lusaka's Economy: Regime Change, Ultra Modern Markets, and Street Vending, 1972–2004*, in: J.-B. Gewald/M. Hinfelaar/G. Macola (eds.), *One Zambia, Many Histories. Towards a History of Post-Colonial Zambia*, Leiden 2008, pp. 213–239.

57 P.-A. Andersson, *Foreign Aid, Debt, and Growth in Zambia*, Uppsala 2000, p. 40.

58 Quotation in Ihonvbere, *Structural Adjustment*, p. 336.

have a lot of clout in both World Bank and IMF,⁵⁹ direct interventions of states into the domestic affairs of other formally sovereign states have become increasingly unacceptable. Equally vanished has the possibility that economic interventions serve to prepare for the formal takeover of a territory as has so often been the case during the 19th century. To re-colonize Zambia when it was unable to service its debts, as famously happened in Egypt in the 1880s, has never been an option. Indirect interventions through international financial organizations however escape these restrictions to some extent, giving the term “neocolonialism” in this respect a certain probability.

Second, the consequences of interference. While the term “neocolonialism” carries the assumption of colonial intervention to be per se exploitative, the selective inquiries into colonial peripheries rather point to the limits of intervention. The colonial state in India while acting strongly in the fiscal, military, and legal realm simultaneously left large sectors of the economy and certain employment groups to themselves. Tirthankar Roy went so far as to state, “the Empire neither helped nor obstructed the growth of trade and industry”.⁶⁰ Thus, an understanding of colonialism to go hand in hand with deep and “successful” intervention faces historic realities showing rather the limits and failures of such efforts. The Zambian example confirms that observation to a certain extent in that interventions of international financial institutions hardly delivered the results sought after in Washington. Without sufficient support of Kaunda’s government and in the face of popular opposition on the streets the liberalization programme devised by Western economists was only introduced reluctantly and in a piecemeal fashion. The concept of “neocolonialism” in this respect misses explanatory power because it builds on the wrong assumption that the colonial state was capable to successfully intervene in peripheral regions economically while current research rather highlights the “long arms and weak fingers” of empires.⁶¹ Cutting off the funds from Washington, however, was a form of intervention, severely felt in Zambia. The diachronic examples from the colonial and postcolonial time point rather to the conclusion that economic intervention had a stronger impact on Zambia’s postcolonial domestic markets and society than in colonial India where colonial power concentrated on fiscal, military, and legal governance but refrained from intervention in large parts of the domestic economy.

Third, indigenous agency. The cases presented here show the strong economic agency of Western Indian cloth artisans, Bengal jute investors and Dharwar cotton peasants in dealing with the changes induced by the colonial regime as by the international economy. In all three examples, the economic actors made forceful attempts to adapt to the changing character of colonialism, often closely associated with or even forging industrial capitalism while in other instances successfully resenting coercive means of crop cultivation. Equally, the different approaches of two consecutive Zambian president’s to “structural adjustment” highlight the importance of local cooperation or non-cooperation. While

59 Cf. Woods, *The Globalizers*.

60 Tirthankar Roy, *The British Empire*

61 See F. Cooper, *Colonialism in question. Theory, Knowledge, History*, Berkeley 2005, p. 197.

Kaunda repeatedly blocked "adjustments" in the fields of food subsidies and currency devaluations when local opposition mounted, frustrating economists in Washington along the way, his successor was far more willing to follow IMF prescriptions. The term "neocolonialism" in contrast sees non-Western societies and agents predominantly as objects of Western dynamics and elites, whereas the colonial and postcolonial cases presented here rather show a situational interplay of being object to (post)colonial pressure while simultaneously acting as subjects in transforming and undermining it.

Fourth, fluidity and stasis. Paradigms as "neocolonialism" describe the relation between Western states and non-Western regions as rather static. The former are in a position of strength pushing economic development in latter regions for their own interest. The case study of the Bengal Jute industry, however, illustrates the fluidity of the situation. Colonial elites in time outstripped the metropolis making large profits from the demand of global markets and turning the old core-periphery model upside down. The Zambian case, in contrast, highlights the static elements. In the post-colonial period, the central African state remained roughly at the same position in the world economy it had occupied in late-colonial times. It was solely an exporter of copper and an importer of industrial goods, energy, know-how, and at times food from industrialized countries. The Zambian experience also holds true for most of Africa and many other parts of the Global South. Other countries, however, the richest oil states, the East Asian "tigers" and, of course, China broke with the old pattern. Frequent recent accusations of their current "neocolonialism" in buying up African land and resources testify to the fact that they have quit the ranks of the world's "have-nots" and joined the core-states of the global economy.

Given the understanding of "imperialism" and "neocolonialism" as all-powerful processes, its neglect of local agency, and the fluidity in world economic relations we hold that the concept of "neocolonialism" is not helpful as an analytic device. Nevertheless, its insistence on the continuity of certain unequal economic relations between post-colonial states and former metropolises is a valid point, as the Zambian example underlines. But rather than to ascribe these continuities to the machinations of some undefined "neocolonial" forces, we understand them as a consequence of a world shaped by global capitalism in both the 19th and 20th centuries. "Global capitalism" better captures the often conflicting interplay of the state and private economic actors and takes the limits of imperial power into account as much as the extent of local economic agencies. Above all, the term provides for a better framework to explain the fluidity of economic relations between different world regions in a decisively non-static global geography of power.

German Agricultural Occupation of France and Ukraine, 1940–1944

Margot Lyautey / Marc Elie

ABSTRACTS

Dieser Aufsatz vergleicht und vernetzt die nationalsozialistische landwirtschaftliche Ausbeutung von Frankreich und der Ukraine. Sie trägt zu unserem Verständnis der Prinzipien, Funktionsweise und Auswirkungen der Ernährungs- und Agrarpolitik im NS-Reich sowohl im Westen als auch im Osten bei. Wir befassen uns zunächst mit der allgemeinen Ernährungs- und Beschaffungspolitik des Dritten Reiches und wie sie sich auf die Völker und die Landwirtschaften in Europa unterschiedlich ausgewirkt hat: Wie haben die Nationalsozialisten eine Agrarpolitik für ihr ganzes Reich konzipiert, geplant und gestaltet? Wir zeigen, wie der Traum von einer autarken kontinentalen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft („Großraumwirtschaft“), die Pläne zur Kolonisierung vor allem des Ostens, aber in geringerem Maße auch des Westens (der „Generalplan Ost“ in seinen verschiedenen Varianten) und der Wille, große Teile der sowjetischen Bevölkerung durch Hunger zu zerstören (der „Hungerplan“) sowohl in Visionen als auch in Umsetzungen miteinander interagierten. Zweitens vergleichen wir, wie deutsche Besatzer die landwirtschaftliche Ausbeutung in ihren wichtigsten landwirtschaftlichen Eroberungen durchführten. Wie haben deutsche Agronomen die Landwirtschaft der von ihnen dominierten Gebiete Ukraine und Frankreich verändert? Mit welchen Ergebnissen? Wir zeigen, dass sie sich in beiden Fällen in erheblicher Weise auf die existierenden Machtstrukturen stützten. Drittens unterstreichen wir die Zusammenhänge und Transfers zwischen diesen beiden Besatzungsregimen: die Praxis, Landarbeiter massenhaft umzusiedeln, um den Bedarf an Arbeitskräften in der Agrarproduktion zu decken, den Einsatz von deutschen „Landwirtschaftsführern“, die Tätigkeit der Landbewirtschaftungsgesellschaft Ostland sowohl in der besetzten Sowjetunion als auch im besetzten Frankreich und den Anbau der Gummipflanze Kok-sagyz.

This paper compares and interconnects Nazi agricultural exploitation of Ukraine and France. It contributes to our understanding of the principles, workings, and implications of the food and agriculture policy in the Nazi empire both in the West and in the East. We are dealing first

with the food and procurement policy of the Reich and how it diversely impacted peoples and agricultures in Europe: how did the Nazis imagine, plan, and craft an agricultural policy for their whole empire? Specifically we show how the dream of an autarkic continental economic community ("Großraumwirtschaft"), the plans to colonize mostly the East but to a lesser extent the West, too (the "Generalplan Ost" in its several variants), and the will to destroy large swathe of the Soviet population by starvation (the "Hungerplan") interacted with one another both in visions and in implementations. Second, we compare how German occupants carried out agricultural exploitation of Ukraine and France, which were the main agricultural acquisitions of Nazi Germany. How did German agronomists set about to transform the agriculture of the countries they dominated? With what results? We show that both in the East and in the West they relied on existing administrative structures. Third, we underline connections and transfers between these two occupation regimes: the practice of forcibly and massively moving peasants to fit production needs, the institution of German agricultural managers to rule local farmers ("Landwirtschaftsführer"), the establishment of the Ostland farming company both in the occupied Soviet Union and occupied France, and the culture of the rubber-plant kok-sagyz.

Introduction

Since the groundbreaking work by Aly and Heim,¹ historical research has amply demonstrated how the racial and expansion policies of the Nazi regime were linked to its food and resource policy.² Questions of grain and oilseed procurement were linked to the Eastern drive and to the extermination of Jews, Sinti, and Roma, and to the starvation of prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian Poles, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Russians, and others. To feed the German army high rations and to sustain the population of the Reich with sufficient food supplies, the German government organized starving rations in occupied territories and destroyed ethnic minorities and captives. Not only the long-term colonial vision – and its carrying out – of a Europe under German dominion with a de-industrialized, de-urbanized, and re-agrarianized Eastern Europe, freed from Jews, Communists, and "useless" persons, led to organized mass killings; but the organization of the food procurement from occupied territories to the Reich was a major factor bringing about intentional devastation and death by shooting, hanging, gazing, and hunger in the *Generalgouvernement* and the occupied Soviet territories.³

Although agriculture and agricultural sciences under the Nazis in Germany proper are well studied,⁴ contemporary historiography has long shown little interest for German

1 G. Aly/S. Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung: Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine Neue Europäische Ordnung*, Hamburg 1991.

2 C. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde: die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weißrußland 1941 bis 1944*, (2nd ed.), Hamburg 2012; A. J. Kay, *Exploitation, Resettlement, Mass Murder: Political and Economic Planning for German Occupation Policy in the Soviet Union, 1940–1941*, New York 2006; T. Tönsmeier/P. Haslinger/A. Laba (eds.), *Coping with Hunger and Shortage under German Occupation in World War II*, Cham 2018.

3 Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*; W. Lower, *Nazi Empire-building and the Holocaust in Ukraine*, Chapel Hill 2005; K. C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule*, Cambridge, MA 2004.

4 G. Corni/H. Gies, *Brot – Butter – Kanonen: Die Ernährungswirtschaft in Deutschland unter der Diktatur Hitlers*,

agricultural policies in the occupied territories, in the West and East. Comparing and interconnecting how Germans diversely exploited peasants in their European colonies is a task ahead of us.⁵ The goal of this paper is more modestly to provide the reader with an understanding of the principles, workings, and implications of the food and agriculture policy in the Nazi empire both in the West and in the East. We are dealing first with the general food and procurement policy of the Reich and how it diversely impacted peoples and agricultures in Europe: how did the Nazis imagine, plan, and craft an agricultural policy for their whole empire? Specifically we show how the dream of an autarkic continental economic community (*Großraumwirtschaft*), the plans to colonize mostly the East but to a lesser extent also the West (the *Generalplan Ost* in its several variants), and the will to destroy large swathes of the Soviet population by starvation (known in the historiography as the *Hungerplan*) were distinct but interacted with one another both in visions and in implementations.

Second, we compare how German occupants carried out agricultural occupation in the territories they occupied, taking two case studies, Ukraine and France, which were the main agricultural acquisitions of Nazi Germany. How did German agronomists set about to transform the agriculture of the countries they dominated? With what results? We show that, notwithstanding vastly different occupation regimes, they relied on existing administrative structures to a considerable extent in both countries. Third, we underline interconnections between these two occupation regimes: the practice of forcibly and massively moving peasants to fit production needs, the institution of German agricultural managers to rule local farmers (*Landwirtschaftsführer*), the *Ostland* farming company both in the occupied Soviet Union and occupied France, and the culture of the rubber-plant kok-sagyz.

Berlin 1997; S. Heim (ed.), *Autarkie und Ostexpansion: Pflanzenzucht und Agrarforschung im Nationalsozialismus* (Geschichte der Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft im Nationalsozialismus, Bd. 2), Göttingen 2002; G. Gerhard, *Nazi Hunger Politics: A History of Food in the Third Reich*, Lanham 2015; T. Saraiva, *Fascist Pigs: Technoscientific Organisms and the History of Fascism*, Cambridge, MA 2016.

- 5 Brandt's famous work from 1953 does not draw a comparison, but describes parallel case studies (K. Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II. Volume II. Management of Agriculture and Food in the German-Occupied and Other Areas of Fortress Europe. A Study in Military Government*, Stanford 1953). Most importantly, it is historiographically outdated, as it can be read as justifying and disculpating Nazi occupation policies. Klemann and Kudryashov (H. A. M. Klemann / S. Kudryashov, *Occupied Economies: An Economic History of Nazi-Occupied Europe, 1939–1945*. London / New York 2012) devotes only a few pages to agricultural questions. Tooze's masterpiece (*The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy*, London 2006) has more on agriculture, but not organized in a systematic East-West comparison. The most important work to date on Nazi agricultural occupation in the East is Gerlach's on Belarus (Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp. 231–371) and on the Agrarreform under German occupation of Soviet territories (C. Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*, in: *Besatzung und Bündnis, Deutsche Herrschaftsstrategien in Ost- und Südosteuropa*, Berlin / Göttingen 1995, pp. 9–60). If a lot has been written on food supply and the black market in France (among others F. Grenard, *Les Scandales du ravitaillement : détournements, corruption, affaires étouffées en France, de l'Occupation à la Guerre froide*, Paris 2012), the work of Cépède is still the most comprehensive one on French occupied agriculture and agricultural policies (M. Cépède, *Agriculture et alimentation en France durant la IIe Guerre mondiale*, Paris 1961).

Map 1



I. Reorganizing Europe Agriculture to serve German Priorities: Hunger and Agricultural Specialization in the Nazi Empire

That Germany should become the centre of an autarkic continental trade system was an important tenet for many anti-liberal economists in inter-war Germany. The desire to free Germany from overseas imports and from dependency toward the Anglo-saxon powers in its food deliveries led to the idea of building an autonomous *Großraumwirtschaft* by coalescing the agricultural efforts and potentials of all countries of continental Europe, including the European part of the Soviet Union. It was believed that Germany could not solve its agricultural problems within its borders only, even expanded back to their 1914 state.⁶ The countries of Europe would enter a common food market protected from outside competition and oriented toward the needs of Germany. Such a trade entity promised to yield Germany cheap and diversified food produces. It would offer a life insurance against any British-led continental blockade. The experience of the blockade during WWI obsessed many Nazi leaders who convinced themselves that the war was

6 Herbert Backe, a specialist of grains production in Russia, came to prominence after the launch of the Four Year-Plan in 1936, where he was in charge of food policy.

lost from the moment morale dwindled on the home front: maintaining good food supplies in Germany had the highest priority in case of a new world conflict. NSDAP leaders and army generals shared this vision with central economic actors.⁷ Herbert Backe, the leading agricultural politician behind the Nazi food policy and Minister for Agriculture from 1942, wrote during the war: “In place of the international world economy the *Großraumwirtschaft* steps in, characterized by the coalition of peoples of the same or related races in the same space.”⁸ Such an integrated agricultural space would allow for a healthy specialization of the regions of Europe and end the soil-destroying monocultures and overseas extensive farming, Backe argued. To replace them, the Germans were teaching occupied “backward” nations of Europe how to intensify production and embrace “food freedom” (*Nahrungsfreiheit*) from overseas imports.⁹

Food and agricultural specialists played a prominent role in designing and implementing the Nazi food policy in Europe, which was at the same time a colonial and a racial policy. Many Nazi politicians and higher bureaucrats who played a major role in the racial policy in occupied territories were trained in agronomy in the broad sense: Heinrich Himmler, Herbert Backe, his secretary SS-Gruppenführer Hans-Joachim Riecke, Theodor Oberländer, Otto Schiller, etc. Countless experts and academics in agricultural sciences helped devise occupation plans and supervise occupation of European countries. Remarkably, several of them were born or had lived in the former Russian empire or in the Soviet Union. Analyses of the “overpopulation” of Poland, Ukraine, Russia, and of the “Russian grain question” during the 1920s–1930s played a key role in how Nazi Germany envisioned its dominion over Europe, with the intersection of food and demographics constructed as a “geopolitical” issue which needed a territorial solution if Germany was to survive in the long run: the *Großraumwirtschaft* was truly based on a “geopolitics of starvation”.¹⁰

The *Generalplan Ost* was an immense and long-time SS-led endeavour to design the future of continental Europe under German hegemony. The plan, in its many and evolving variants, set out to colonize and germanize regions to the East and to a lesser extent to the West of the Reich in several decades after the war. Some 31 million people from the occupied Soviet territories were to be deported to Siberia – this made out two-thirds of the local population planned to survive war and genocide – and the rest would be enslaved by ten million German colonists. Ukraine was to become an enormous Germanized territory deep into Soviet / Russian territory, reaching to the Volga.¹¹ Already during the war the SS experimented with colonization in Ukraine.¹²

Parallelly to the *Generalplan Ost*, German war planners crafted concrete plans to occupy the Soviet Union. They divided the Soviet Union in two sections, along a line stretching

7 Corni/Gies, *Brot – Butter – Kanonen*, p. 499.

8 H. Backe, *Um die Nahrungsfreiheit Europas: Weltwirtschaft oder Großraum*, Leipzig 1942, p. 216.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 235.

10 A. Dallin, *German Rule in Russia 1941–1945. A study of occupation policies*, London 1957, p. 310.

11 C. Madajczyk/S. Biernacki, *Vom Generalplan Ost zum Generalsiedlungsplan*, München 1994.

12 Lower, *Nazi Empire-building*, pp. 171–179.

from Arkhangelsk to the north and to Astrakhan to the south (the A-A line): west of this line lied enough land to feed Germany and counter the effects of a maritime blockade.¹³ Further, Herbert Backe divided the Soviet Union into surplus regions (Ukraine, South Russia, North Caucasus) and deficit regions (Central Russia with Moscow, Northern Russia with Saint-Petersbourg, Belarus): with industrialization, the Bolsheviks had forced urbanization and so considerably modified the grain balance, he argued; instead of exporting grain, the producing regions had to support growing cities. Backe proposed to counter this – in his view – wrong development by reagrarianizing the Soviet Union: the deficit regions had to be cut off from supply, with cities left to starve, whereas the surplus regions would produce for Germany. Ukraine, with its rich soils, would become the true granary of Europe.¹⁴ These ideas were endorsed by Hitler and the higher command staff. If they could not be implemented to the fullest, they had nonetheless dire consequences for the Soviet population: during the siege of Leningrad 1.5 million people died of hunger. In Ukraine, Kiev and Charkov were cut-off from the countryside leading to an unknown number of deaths by starvation. That Kiev had to starve was a common mantra among German occupying forces.¹⁵ A capital of 851,000 inhabitants before the war, Kiev had less than 300,000 inhabitants by mid-1943. An unknown part of this tremendous drop is explained by excess deaths by starvation and related diseases.¹⁶ Among 3.35 million Soviet POWs, at least 2 million died of starvation or execution. High number of Jews in ghettos and patients of psychiatric hospitals and other closed establishments died of starvation.¹⁷

France and Ukraine were major acquisitions in agricultural terms for the German conquest strategy: with these two countries under its yoke, Germany and its empire, it was thought, could become self-sufficient and resist the sea blockade. This turned out to be wrong. Relatively quickly after the invasion of the Soviet Union, it occurred to the agricultural command that given the problems of lacking workforce, agricultural inputs, and machinery, Ukraine could never replace Germany's future food production in the foreseeable future.¹⁸ What is more, notwithstanding the terrible sufferings imposed by the occupants onto the population, Ukraine could never in the course of the war feed completely the occupation forces and the three million fighting men and their horses.¹⁹

13 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, p. 56.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 58; Gerhard, *Nazi Hunger*, p. 25.

15 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, pp. 164–186.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 186; "Kiev" in *Bol'shaya sovetskaya entsiklopediya*, Moscow 2008, online: <http://bse.sci-lib.com/article060949.html> (accessed on 8 October 2019).

17 C. K. Priemel, *Occupying Ukraine: Great Expectations, Failed Opportunities, and the Spoils of War, 1941–1943*, in: *Central European History* 48 (2015), pp. 31–52, at p. 46.

18 H.-J. Riecke, *Aufgaben der Landwirtschaft*, in: *Ostaufgaben der Wissenschaft: Vorträge der Osttagung deutscher Wissenschaftler (24.–27. März 1942, Berlin)*, hrsg. vom Hauptamt Wissenschaft d. Dienststelle Rosenberg, 1942, pp. 28–37.

19 H.-E. Volkmann, *Landwirtschaft und Ernährung in Hitlers Europa 1939–1945*, in: *Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen* xxxv (1984), pp. 9–74.

Table 1a. Deliveries of major agricultural products from France‡ to Germany† (1940–1944)

Foodstuffs	France
Bread Grain (wheat, rye) (tons)	2 950 000
Secondary cereals (oat, barley) (tons)	2 431 000
Straw° and hay* (tons)	3 788 000
Meat (tons)	891 000
Eggs° (thousand)	311 300
Fats (margarine, tallow, oils) (tons)	51 200
of which	
Oils (tons)	39 400
Butter (tons)	88 000
Potatoes* (tons)	752 000
Sugar* (tons)	99 000
Wine (hectoliter)	10 400 000
Milk (hectoliter)	1 445 000
Cheese (tons)	45 000

Sources: Cépède, *Agriculture et alimentation en France durant la I^{re} Guerre mondiale*, pp. 356–160; ° Rapport sur l'organisation de la disette en France sous l'occupation, 15.04.1945, pp. 9–10, 1990072/1, Archives nationales; * M. Weinmann, *Die Landwirtschaft in Frankreich während des 2. Weltkrieges unter dem Einfluß der deutschen Besatzungsmacht*, Tübingen 1961, pp. 92–102.

‡ Both occupied and “free” zones.

† Both to occupying troops and deliveries to the Reich.

Tables 1a and 1b give an overview of the total deliveries from France and the Soviet Union to Germany during the whole conflict. These data should be handled with care because there is an uncertainty as to the amount of food that was misappropriated by German occupants and so did not enter the official statistics of deliveries to the Wehrmacht and to the Reich. In the case of France, this amount is estimated and accounted for in the data series;²⁰ for the case of the Soviet Union and Ukraine (which made roughly 60% of all Soviet procurements to Germany), the volumes looted are not taken into account. They reached far greater proportions in Ukraine than in France. Moreover, in both cases, the data includes comestibles both for occupying troops and deliveries to the Reich.

20 Note that deliveries of potatoes and sugar were partially compensated with imports from Germany.

Table 1b. Deliveries of major agricultural products from occupied Soviet territories to Germany† (1941–1944) (tons, rounded)

Foodstuffs	occupied Soviet territories
Bread Grain	5 016 400
Feed Grain	4 135 500
Oilseeds	952 100
Livestock and meat	563 700
Eggs (thousand)	1 078 800
Oils	20 500
Butter	206 800
Potatoes	3 281 700
Sugar	401 000

Source: Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies*, p. 129.

† Both to occupying troops and deliveries to the Reich.

In the Soviet case, the great majority of foodstuffs did not reach the Reich but was consumed by the German troops and occupying administration: 80% of all cereals, 88% of the meat and virtually all potatoes. Only by oilseeds did the Reich get the lion's share (¾) of what the occupied USSR produced.²¹

II. Agricultural Occupation in France and Ukraine

Although France and Ukraine were part of one economic design, the respective roles assigned to them within the continental hierarchical food system of “fortress Europe” bore vastly different occupation regimes. It was not only a question of racial ideology and colonial utopia though. Both local/national and front conditions were extremely different, and these differences had, too, tremendous consequences for the survival of local populations.

In the Reichskommissariat Ukraine (and in other parts of the pre-1939 occupied Soviet territories, with the exception of Northern Caucasus) German occupiers did not bother to negotiate with the local population and to take into account not only their aspirations, but their most fundamental human needs. German occupiers tolerated no autonomy, no self-government above the village level.²²

21 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, p. 129.

22 Erich Koch, Reichskommissar for Ukraine, ordered his subordinates to treat the population of Ukraine in a “hard and uncompromising” way, with the “constant threat and the use of punishment and reprisals, even when no direct provocation for such exists” (quoted by Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 52).

In France, German authorities preferred to deal with a weakened domestic French authority in Vichy than having the French government flee to North Africa and continue to lead the war from there. The point was to exploit France at its full industrial and agricultural potential for German needs, while using the already functioning French administration and hence without many occupation troops.

Occupation in France

The Armistice treaty of June 1940 defined two zones of occupation (later called “occupied zone” and “free zone”), separated by the guarded “demarcation line”. A large military occupation apparatus was established in the Northern occupied zone. The Alsace-Moselle was factually annexed to the Reich and both *départements* Nord and Pas-de-Calais were placed under the authority of the German military command in Belgium. A third zone was created in the North-East even though it was not stated in the Armistice treaty: the “forbidden zone”, where the return of French refugees was prohibited, and whose western border (the “North-East line”) was also guarded. The point was to prepare this zone for eventual German settlement and annexation and hence to bring France back to its medieval borders, according to a memo addressed to Hitler in 1940.²³

Backwardness of French Agriculture

France was the major economy among occupied countries.²⁴ Therefore it had a very significant role to play to support Germany’s war effort. But according to many German experts at that time, even though French agriculture benefited from favourable conditions for production (good weather, great ratio of arable land against population, fertile soils, etc.), it was not developed to its full potential. German authorities supposedly had to fight the backwardness of French agriculture in order for France to completely realize its role in the new European food economy:

*It is an intolerable state that in France there are currently 5.5 million hectares of uncultivated land, [...] while in Germany we are trying to pull even small surfaces of arable land from the sea to increase our cropping areas. The great battle for agricultural production in Europe, [...] will soon make the deplorable aspect of uncultivated land and hundreds of abandoned villages disappear in France.*²⁵

Lauenstein, director of *Ostland*, a German farming company that is discussed below, described French countryside in 1941 in the following terms: “Vast extents of good land

23 P. Schöttler, Eine Art Generalplan West. Die Stuckart-Denkschrift vom 14. Juni 1940 und die Planungen für eine neue deutsch-französische Grenze im Zweiten Weltkrieg, in: Sozial.Geschichte: Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts 3 (2003), pp. 83–131.

24 M. Boldorf / J. Scherner, France’s Occupation Costs and the War in the East: The Contribution to the German War Economy, 1940–44, in: Journal of Contemporary History 47 (2012) 2, pp. 291–316.

25 H. Backe, Complément sur la conférence faite par M. le Secrétaire d’État Backe le 9 juillet 1941 à Paris, Paris 1941.

were left in fallow for years, perhaps decades, the cattle was in deplorable state”.²⁶ Agriculture specialist Dr. Vageler was also very critical:

*As to fundamental research in Agriculture and Forestry, in particular for pedology and local lore [Standortkunde], it seems that France is the most backward country in Europe. [...] Especially the tillage methods and the dominant assumptions on the matter are widely outdated and completely irrational.*²⁷

A Techno-Administrative Structure

The occupation authorities headquarters were in Paris in the Hotel Majestic, under the supervision of the Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich (MBF). The Agriculture and Food supply group was inside the Economy department and organized around three divisions: Group I Agricultural Production, Group II Food supply, Group III Headquarters of the *Ostland* company, which managed numerous French farms in North-Eastern France, in the forbidden zone. The staff was composed of civilian military-government officials, who usually were experts in their field before the war. In order to control the activity of every French administrative branch at each geographical level in the occupied zone, the German military administration territorial structure paralleled the French. A group *Agriculture and Food supply* was created in each *Feldkommandantur* with 1 to 3 specialists.²⁸ Dr. Fritz Reinhardt,²⁹ the chief of the *Agriculture and Food supply* department in Paris had only a small staff of experts to assist him with the extensive administrative work involved, hence he had to rely heavily upon the French administration.³⁰ The German authorities did not manage directly, but they overlapped with the French services, while monitoring them. They were no substitute to the French authorities although they often threatened to replace them.³¹ Until December 1942 this organization concerned only the “occupied zone” in the Northern part of France. After 1942, *Agriculture and Food supply* officials were set up also in Southern France but spread farther apart than in the North. The German influence on agriculture in the “forbidden zone” of North-Eastern France was far stronger than in both previous zones, as we will see later.

26 Lauenstein to the personnel of Ostland company in France, 3.06.1941, Archives départementales des Ardennes, 12 R 106, quoted by J. Mièvre, L’« Ostland » en France durant la Seconde guerre mondiale: une tentative de colonisation agraire allemande en zone interdite. Annales de l’Est, Mémoire 46, Université de Nancy II, 1973, p. 47.

27 Dr. Vageler, Research programme for the year 1943/44, 15.09.1943, Bundesarchiv Berlin Lichterfelde (BAL), R 73/15317.

28 The Feldkommandanturen corresponded essentially to the level of the French départements.

29 Fritz Reinhardt (1898–1965) was trained in agronomy at the University of Halle (Diplomlandwirt and then Doctor in natural sciences), member of the NSDAP since 1929, of the SS since 1934. He was an expert on fertilizer questions and the combating of insects and plant diseases. Before the war he worked in the Agriculture department of IG Farben, for the Reichsnährstand, and for the Ministry of the Reich for Food and Agriculture where he was personal referent to State Secretary Backe.

30 Brandt, Germany’s Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II, p. 506.

31 G. Eismann, Hôtel Majestic: ordre et sécurité en France occupée, 1940–1944, Paris 2010, p. 139.

Fitting German Needs and Intensifying French Agriculture

German authorities tried to influence French agriculture to make it fit German needs. They demanded – and obtained – the adoption of specific laws, for instance to create a Plant Protection Service, to fight against the Colorado Potato Beetle, to regulate seeds. They imposed cropping plans and they decided personnel policy.³² While German authorities had a more practical influence on agriculture in the occupied zone, they also tried to gain control over French agriculture as a whole, notably influencing Vichy's legislation, which had to be applied in both zones.

A major instrument to increase food exports from France was to diminish French rations. It resulted in lower official food rations than anywhere else in the countries Germany occupied in the West-Denmark, Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, Belgium, the Netherlands, or Norway.³³ At the end of 1943, the bread ration in France was lowered to 300 grams against 350 g in 1940, and meat was set at 120 g per week against 360 g in 1940.³⁴ These diminutions allowed to import more food products to Germany to maintain high rations in Germany. Indeed, in 1943, as bread rations were lowered in France, the country provided more bread grain than ever before in the war, accounting for 46% of German imports.³⁵ Table 2 displays the lowest and highest rations for occupied France, occupied USSR and Germany.³⁶

The goal of German officials was to make French agriculture more productive especially for specific crops needed for the food supply of occupying forces and of German civilians in the Reich: fodder to sustain meat production, oilseeds to supply fats, and grain. In order to orient French agricultural production towards German needs, the German military authorities in Paris designed cultivation plans. For each agricultural campaign Reinhardt and his staff negotiated mandatory surfaces and obligatory crops with the French Ministry of Agriculture (wheat, oil seeds, beets, oats, etc.) for the occupied zone, and after 1942 for the whole French territory. Those plans had then to be enforced locally by German officials in the *Feldkommandanturen* and by French Agricultural Services.

32 Among others dismissal of the French minister of Agriculture and choice of the head of the Corporation Nationale Paysanne, Archives nationales, 19900072/1.

33 Klemann/Kudryashov, *Occupied Economies*, p. 108.

34 H. Umbreit, *Der Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich 1940–1944*, Boppard am Rhein 1968, p. 310.

35 Michel's report "Der Beitrag des französischen Raumes zur Kriegswirtschaft", 1944, pp. 12–14 Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv (BA MA) RW 35/1446.

36 For Ukraine, only specific strata of the population, working for the Germans, were entitled to rationing at all. The others had to find food all by themselves (Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*).

Table 2. French, Soviet and German lowest and highest food rations (grams per week)

	France, August 1942		Occupied Soviet territories, March 1943		Germany, April 1942	
	Lowest Ration (Elderly)	Highest Ration (Heavy Labour)	Lowest Ration	Highest Ration (Heavy Labour)	Lowest Ration	Highest Ration (Heavy Labour)
Meat	193	397	100	350	300	850
Fats	101	151	50	250	206	575
Bread	1 400	2 450	1 500	4 000	2 000	4 400
Potatoes	1 092	1 092	2 500	4 500	–	–
Sugar	190	247	–	150	–	–

Sources: France: Cépède, *Agriculture et alimentation en France*, p. 388; USSR: Volkman, *Landwirtschaft und Ernährung*, p. 47; Germany: *Ibid.*, p. 67.

Fertilizers were of course a crucial product in this “battle for production” to increase yields, but they were only available very scarcely. Michel Cépède estimated that the amount of synthetic fertilizers available to French farmers during the war was under 55% of the (already low) pre-war consumption, and even under 35% after 1943.³⁷ Their allocation was henceforth of strategic importance and was decided upon by Reinhardt in Paris. Fertilizers were allocated in priority to crops “of first importance”.³⁸

To make French agriculture produce more, the Germans extended cultivated surfaces by reducing the amount of uncultivated land. According to German agricultural experts, France had 1,5 million to 5 million hectares of land remaining uncultivated.³⁹ For them it was a clear sign that French agriculture was in need for intensification. German authorities launched the *Brachlandaktion* (“Fallow action”) to recultivate 400,000 ha uncultivated and fallow lands.⁴⁰ But soon experts had to understand that considering the scarce means of production – fertilizers, workforce, farm machinery, and gasoline – it was not profitable to cultivate each and every piece of land.⁴¹ Recultivation targets were reduced to 120,000 ha from which only 45,000 ha were indeed recultivated during the 1943/44 campaign.⁴² German officials had more success in modifying crop rotations to reduce fallows.⁴³ Out of the 820,000 ha of fallows inside rotations in 1942 in the occupied zone, only 480,995 ha were left in January 1944.⁴⁴

The German military authorities in Paris were determined to boost the French oil seeds production to meet Berlin’s autarkic goals. However, oil seeds were not commonly grown in France, mainly because fats were imported from the colonial empire.⁴⁵ Indeed France grew oilseeds only on 11,470 ha during in 1936/37 against 50,000 ha in Germany.⁴⁶ During the 1941/42 campaign oil seeds cultivation accounted for 37,900 ha, already 3.3 times more than in 1936/37. German authorities in Paris planned to extend those areas to 250,000 ha in 1942/43 and then to at least 400,000 ha in 1943/44.⁴⁷ Each *département* was assigned a minimum surface area to crop in oilseeds, which corresponded to

37 Cépède, *Agriculture et alimentation en France*, p. 236.

38 Meeting at the Majestic, 18.01.1943, 19900072/1, Archives nationales.

39 The width of this range indicates that those figures were part of a discourse to delegitimize certain agricultural practices like fallowing. See Backe, *Um die Nahrungsfreiheit*, p. 230 and H. Backe, *La Mission de l’agriculture en Europe: conférence faite à Paris, le 9 juillet 1941*, Corbeil 1941.

40 See Reinhardt’s report one year after the introduction of *Landwirtschaftsführer* in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

41 Letter from *Sicherheitspolizei* to Dr. Brandt, personal staff of the *Reichsführer-SS*, 3.02.1944, BAL, N 19/1305. See also the reports on *Brachlandumbruch* in AJ/40/793 (3), Archives nationales.

42 On the *Brachlandaktion* see AJ/40/793 (1)–(3), Archives nationales.

43 See *Berichte über den Einsatz der La-Führer*, 6.01.1944, AJ/40/793 (3), Archives nationales.

44 See Reinhardt’s report one year after the introduction of *Landwirtschaftsführer* in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

45 For the period 1935–1938 the domestic production for oilseeds accounts for only 4,5% of the French metropolitan consumption, G. Bertrand, H. Neveux, M. Agulhon, and M. Gervais, *Histoire de la France rurale*. ed. by G. Duby and A. Wallon. 4 vols, Paris 1992, vol 4, p. 74.

46 According to uncorrected data from *Statistique agricole annuelle 1945*, Ministère de l’Agriculture, Paris 1947; *Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich*, Berlin 1880–1942.

47 According to Reinhardt’s Report on the action of *Landwirtschaftsführer*, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales, and box AJ/40/793 (7) on oilseeds, Archives nationales.

an expected amount of oilseeds production at the end of the year. Then local officials had to enforce the plan and monitor agricultural productions in farms, to make sure that the foreseen areas were indeed cultivated with oilseeds. Sowing seeds had to be imported from Germany, usually in exchange for French seeds of other plants (vegetable or fodder plant). Specific propaganda towards farmers was designed to incline them to cultivate more oil seeds. But oilseeds were hard to crop, because they need significant amount of fertilizers, which were lacking throughout the war.

Statistical data about agricultural production during the war is highly uncertain because it was based on statements from the peasants themselves. They had direct personal interest to declare a lower production in order to be less taxed. Following the same reasoning, the French state had every interest to show low production data to the German authorities. While keeping this uncertainty in mind, Table 3 shows us that area allocated to oilseed still rose during the war, contrary to almost any other crop.⁴⁸ Sunflower appeared for the first time in French agricultural statistics in 1943 and as a whole cropping area of oilseeds was multiplied by 25 between 1937 and 1944.⁴⁹ This clearly reveals a singular path for oilseed production. Total yearly production of oilseeds jumped from an average of 13,000 tons before the war to 31,000 t in 1942, and 132,000 t in 1943. But this rise masks a drop in productivity from 1.09 ton per hectare before the war to 0.6 t/ha in 1943.⁵⁰ This is at least partly due to the serious shortage of chemical fertilizers.⁵¹

48 Only pastures, tobacco, flax and fallows stayed the same or rose between 1939 and 1944 according to uncorrected data from *Statistique agricole annuelle* 1945.

49 According to uncorrected data from *Statistique agriculture annuelle* 1945, pp. 510–512.

50 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, p. 543.

51 Around 50% of the pre-war availability until 1942, then 35% in 1943, and only 9% in 1944, Cépède, *Agriculture et alimentation en France*, p. 236.

Table 3. Acreage in France‡ from 1937 to 1944 for major crops (hectares)

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	Progression 1939–1944
Total arable land	19 485 728	18 510 980	17 719 435	17 492 161	17 377 859	17 164 313	- 12 %
of which							
Wheat	4 583 979	4 252 266	4 364 989	4 279 516	4 227 345	4 163 418	- 9 %
Other Cereals	5 282 967	4 459 606	3 915 908	3 806 408	3 798 751	3 697 269	- 30 %
Potatoes	1 278 878	1 061 295	829 316	777 205	796 423	796 527	- 38 %
Oils Seeds	7 586	8 580	15 149	37 858	242 097	284 772	+ 3 654 %
Flax	47 610	31 869	23 702	34 289	49 108	49 457	+ 4 %
Pulses	261 310	242 746	215 731	221 541	222 852	172 977	- 34 %
Fallows	no data	no data	no data	2 264 857	1 769 490	1 827 337	–
Pastures	11 485 960	11 847 090	12 680 632	12 161 027	11 757 531	12 023 637	+ 5 %

Sources: Statistique agricole annuelle 1945, p. 453–522 and Statistique agricole annuelle 1943, p. 111 and p. 181.

‡ French metropolitan territory without the départements Moselle, Bas-Rhin, and Haut-Rhin for which no data was submitted.

Occupation in Ukraine

Invasion, Plunder, and Destruction

The German invasion of the Soviet Union encountered tremendous military successes in the summer and fall of 1941 and again in the fall of 1942. With their advance into Soviet territory, the Germans occupied 40% of the grain fields and 45% of the livestock of the whole Soviet Union, both mainly located in Ukraine.⁵² The Reichskommissariat Ukraine counted 17 million inhabitants on 340,000 square kilometers at the beginning of 1943.⁵³

Contrary to earlier campaigns to the West, South-East, and East, the German armies entered an immense space devoid of power structures. First, the Soviet Union was centrally organized around a double hierarchy: state organs and party organs ran their echelons from the top to the bottom. No significant economic life could take place outside their reach. Power structure and infrastructure were deliberately destroyed both by the Germans forces and the Soviet authorities, far beyond the destruction wrought by combat. Because Germans led a *Weltanschauungskrieg* to destroy the Soviet state, they killed party members en masse, who were executives in companies, farms, and administration, and destroyed the Soviet party and state hierarchies. Their effort at annihilating the Soviet state in the occupied territories were seconded by the Soviet leadership who ordered highly successful “scorched earth” strategy which left the German armies with a devastated country and a dead economy.⁵⁴

As a result, all systems of distribution, collection, and exchange between enterprises and farms ceased to function. In agriculture since collectivization, no farm could operate without precise orders coming from the party hierarchy at the local, regional, republican, and central level: plans and calendars of sowing and harvesting were set by this hierarchy, not by the farms. What every farm had to sow and harvest, where and when, with what machinery and for what price was the sole responsibility of the bureaucratic apparatus, and indeed, of Moscow. With the invasion, this whole system evaporated.⁵⁵ In the summer 1941 peasants did not begin harvest before receiving orders from the Germans or the Banderites, the Ukrainian insurrectionary army.⁵⁶

Therefore, contrary to the occupation of France, that of Ukraine and other parts of the Soviet Union required to organize a new power structure replacing the old one. There was no “collaborating” government to collaborate with. We will see soon that this replacement meant that German occupiers reproduced to a great extent the Soviet power structure in the village. Furthermore, a fundamental question had to be solved of how far the German occupier should go with the reconstruction of the destroyed economy. This question provoked important debates and was never entirely decided, with positions

52 Dallin, *German Rule in Russia*, p. 320.

53 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reichskommissariat_Ukraine (accessed on 27 September 2019).

54 Priemel, *Occupying Ukraine*.

55 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, p. 56.

56 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 130.

ranging from the total destruction of the industry to create a purely agricultural land, to that of re-building a strong industrial base to serve the needs of the war economy.⁵⁷ In Ukraine, many peasants welcomed the Germans as liberators, even if the German forces committed atrocities.⁵⁸ Peasants were undernourished and extremely poor. The majority of peasants were women, because men had been drafted to the army, deported or killed during the dekulakization drive of the early 1930s.⁵⁹ The 1941 harvest was excellent but less so in the Left Bank (East of the Dnieper) because combats and Soviet-style evacuation had destroyed crops more extensively than in western Ukraine.⁶⁰

Immediate Exploitation, Long-Term Colonization, or Land Reform?

The German occupying forces and administration followed at the same time three competing and intertwined goals until their departure in the spring of 1944. The first was to exploit peasants and their lands to the utmost in order not only to feed the army – 4 to 6 million men, plus administrative personnel both German and local – but to bring substantial amount of grain and oilseed to the Reich to maintain the comparatively high life standard of the German population.

To guarantee extreme exploitation, many military authorities and administrators proposed to keep the kolkhoz system: resuming “collective” farming was the best way to pressure the peasants to give as much grain as possible. As a leading German expert wrote in 1943: “From the viewpoint of acquisition the kolkhoz system appeared as ideal” mainly because the “peasant does not get his hands on the agricultural commodities that his work produces” and “the state keeps in their hands how much they want to give away to the village population.”⁶¹ By contrast, allowing for the distribution of land parcels among the peasants would have brought chaos, many believed, and made the control of the peasant work and output over hundreds of thousands of farms almost impossible, not to speak about the lack of machinery, draft animals, managing experience, and agronomic knowledge among workers of collective farms. Backe himself was a supporter of keeping the kolkhozes.

But the idea of immediate exploitation was in tension with another, far reaching and long-term goal: that of colonizing Ukraine. Himmler and the SS, who were strong players among the occupying forces, were keen to create a tabula rasa of Ukraine, “freeing” it from Jews, Communists and rebels in order to create a new land aristocracy exploiting the Ukrainian peasants in large plantations. Their desired model was that of giant exploitation, the former Soviet state farms, but managed in the guise of Prussian Junker latifundiae. In that they agreed with those who wanted to keep the collective farms. But they opposed them in that they favoured colonization by German settlers, an intention

57 Priemel, *Occupying Ukraine*.

58 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 125.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 129.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 131.

61 O. Schiller, *Ziele und Ergebnisse der Agrarordnung in den Besetzten Ostgebieten*, Berlin 1943, p. 3.

which could only disorganize production in the short run and bring heavy conflicts with local peasants and Ukrainian nationalist organizations.

A third idea was that of a land reform: splitting up the collective lands and distribute plots among the former *kolkhozniki*. It was favoured by many in the Ministry for Eastern Affairs (*Ostministerium*) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The great majority of peasants wanted to return to family farming, and effectively used the disappearance of Soviet power to split up the *kolkhozes*.⁶² The goal of de-collectivization was therefore to gain strong support among the population, especially among the Ukrainian peasants who resented the Soviet system for the imposition of the *kolkhozes*, the famine of 1932–33 and continuing food shortages, punishment operations, and humiliations. Furthermore, it would have been, it was thought, a clear national and international signal that the campaign against the Soviet Union was a liberation war aimed at freeing the peoples of the Soviet Union from Moscow's dominion and from the Stalinist regime.⁶³

It is important not to overstate the significance of these tensions. They were never that important as to hamper significantly the agricultural exploitation of Ukraine. Moreover, the different goals were not contradictory: Long-term colonization plans were compatible with the effort to raise output by quickly reorganizing the farm economy.⁶⁴ During the whole occupation, the advocates of full exploitation succeeded in imposing their views at every step, even if some efforts in the direction of easing centralized controls over farms and redistributing land to peasants were made.⁶⁵ So there was no real dilemma between giving the peasants what they asked for and jeopardizing the supplies of the military and civilians, on the one hand; and keeping the *kolkhozes* to guarantee the output and losing the support of the peasants, on the other hand. Feeding the Reich and its armies had steadily the highest priority and was the only systematically and persistently pursued goal of the occupation.

From Kolkhozes to Cooperatives: An Unachieved Reform

Notwithstanding the relentless goal of procuring as much grain and other foodstuffs as possible from the Ukrainians, some changes were introduced at the beginning of 1942. A new Agrarian Order (*Agrarordnung*) was passed into law by Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories Alfred Rosenberg in February. A compromise between the different visions of the agricultural occupation, it was penned by Otto Schiller (1901–1970), an expert in Soviet agriculture: Schiller had worked in seed production in the

62 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 128.

63 Prior to the German retreat land privatization occurred in rare cases to reward collaborators and to antagonize the peasantry and the rebels in partisan regions. V. Yu. Vasiliev / R. Yu. Podkur / S. D. Galchak / D. Beyrau / A. Weiner, *Zhizn' v okkupatsii. Vinitskaya oblast'. 1941–1944 gg.*, Moscow 2010, pp. 464–465. The "Proclamation concerning the introduction of property in land of family farmers" of 3.06.1943, declaring the privatization of lands, is usually seen as a failure with no concrete realizations. Dallin, *German Rule in Russia*, pp. 360–363; Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, pp. 670–671. However, see a dissident view in Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 177.

64 Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*.

65 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*.

Volga region and North Caucasus in the 1920s and had been agricultural attache to the German embassy in Moscow in 1931–1936.⁶⁶ Now a high-ranking functionary within the Ostministerium, he had been tasked with elaborating a reform concept for Soviet agriculture and supervising its implementation. The *Agrarordnung* has received extensive, even disproportionate treatment in historiography, from Brandt and Dallin in the 1950s to Corni / Gies and Gerlach in the 1990s. Remarkably, Otto Schiller himself has played a leading role in extolling the significance of his work in the occupied territories and setting the tone in the historiography.⁶⁷ But it is important to remember that the great majority of Soviet peasants never left the kolkhoz under German rule.

The kolkhoz system was maintained as the major organizational form of agricultural production in Soviet occupied territories with the exception of the territories annexed by the Soviet Union in 1939–1940 under the secret protocol of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact: the Baltic countries and the Eastern regions of Poland and Romania.⁶⁸ More than 80% of kolkhozes were maintained in Ukraine.⁶⁹ They were renamed “communes”, but the system of control and exploitation created by the Stalinist leadership in the 1930s was maintained and hardened, as shown in a study of the Kirovograd region (right-bank Ukraine).⁷⁰ The German military and civil administration stepped into the Soviet apparatus’ shoes to control the village: the key enforcement measures were taken at the district level staffed with the Ukrainian administration inherited from Soviet times, but led by a German district farm leader (*Kreislandwirt*) replacing the party first secretary. Regional farm leaders (*Gebietslandwirte*) sat higher up, at the regional level. In the kolkhozes the chairman was replaced by a village leader (*starosta*).⁷¹ Like in Soviet times, it rained down ominous instructions on the kolkhozes from the district administration: when and what to sow, when and how to harvest, to enforce work discipline and so on. The language of these orders, demanding for instance the “over fulfillment of the daily work norms,” strikingly resembled the Soviet one.⁷²

The kolkhoz system was all about mandatory procurements. To enforce it, the Stalinist leadership had introduced a wage payment system called *trudodni*, which allowed to exploit the peasants without jeopardizing the procurement campaign. Peasants received their salaries in kind only after the harvest had been secured by the authorities. The peasants were given an enlarged family plot, but taking care of a bigger plot and working for the kolkhoze would conflict exactly like during Soviet times. Above the kolkhozes, the

66 Ibid., pp. xxvi–xxvii; Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform*.

67 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, pp. 93–97. Brandt gives the text of the *Agrarordnung* in English in full, pp. 665–670; Schiller was a leading author of this sum. Dallin, *German Rule in Russia*, pp. 325–339; Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*; Corni / Gies, *Brot – Butter – Kanonen*, pp. 543–548.

68 Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 347.

69 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 134.

70 I. Petrenko, *Natsists'kij okupatsijnij rezhim na Kirovogradshhini 1941–1944 rr.* Kirovograd Tsentral'no-Ukrains'ke vidavnistvo, 2004, p. 183.

71 Ibid., p. 184.

72 Ibid., p. 187, 190.

Soviet Machine-Tractor Stations (MTS) concentrated the appliances and were responsible for harvesting to ensure that the peasants could not take grain for themselves. But there were few machines left after the Soviet retreat and what was left was in bad shape.⁷³ Gasoline was lacking.⁷⁴ The occupiers soon forced the peasants to give back to the kolkhoze the cows and horses they had shared among themselves when Soviet power left the village. But there were so few animals (mostly cows were used for farming for lack of draft animals) and machines that agricultural work was done mostly by hand during the war, including plowing and harvesting.⁷⁵

To discipline the peasants, the German occupying forces applied more violence than their Soviet precursors, forcing children under 14 to work in the fields, fining and jailing peasants and using them for forced labour for low norm fulfilment, taking hostages to pressure communities, shooting and hanging for non-compliance or as examples.⁷⁶ Medals and gifts were used as carrots.⁷⁷ Deportation to Germany was an ever present threat. All in all, the kolkhoz remained the dominant farm organization over the whole occupation period because it gave to the German occupants great control and exploitation levers.⁷⁸

The *Agrarordnung* reformed land tenure around three gradations: the kolkhoz, the co-operative, and private ownership. The second step, presented in the *Agrarordnung* as intermediary, was Schiller's favoured form. Given the lack of machinery and horses, it made sense to help peasants to share appliances and means for agricultural works. The kolkhoz fields were cut into equal strips. Each farmyard received a strip in each field. This distribution did not take the family size or the number of its workers into account, as had been the case in the *mir* village organization before the Revolution. Plowing and seeding was done collectively, but each peasant harvested individually his allotted strips. The cooperatives in the *Agrarordnung* were tightly controlled by the German administration, which imposed the crop plan. The members of the cooperative were collectively responsible before the Germans. But because field maintenance was done individually, underperforming workers could be easily spotted and punished.⁷⁹ The MTS retained the heavy equipment, whereas draft animals were distributed among the peasants.⁸⁰ Schiller's design offered a way to maintain control over the peasants and to maximize production: Splitting up the kolkhozes without privatizing land, but keeping the peasants organized around a few obligatory common assignments, and ensuring that the peasants would maximize production.

73 Ibid., p. 211.

74 Ibid., p. 214.

75 Ibid., pp. 191–192.

76 Ibid., p. 189.

77 Ibid., pp. 195–196.

78 Vasiliev / Podkur / Galchak / Beyrau / Weiner, *Zhizn' v okkupatsii*, p. 464.

79 Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 349.

80 Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*, p. 17; O. Schiller, *Ziele und Ergebnisse der Agrarordnung in den Besetzten Ostgebieten*. Berlin 1943; Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, pp. 668–669.

The implementation of the *Agrarordnung* was paradoxical: where the distribution of land plots to the peasants could have had the most economical, political and ideological impact – in the Ukraine – the reform was carried on slowly. And where the reform's expected impact was the least – in the other Soviet territories – it was implemented to the fullest. As a result, whereas 20% of the collective farms were transformed into cooperatives in the regions under control of Army Groups North and Centre, at the end of 1942 it was the case of only 8% of them in Ukraine. It reached 16.8% in August 1943.⁸¹ For Belorussia Gerlach finds a stabilization of the total cultivated area and, as in France, a reduction of fallows, which he partly explains with the change in agricultural organization squeezing more work out of the peasants.⁸² Whether the cultivated areas were maintained in Ukraine and whether the *Agrarordnung* provoked a similar intensification is not decidable given the lack of relevant case studies.

Cooperatives were not only about raising production and giving more leeway to the peasants. Gerlach shows that the German occupiers sought to enhance political control on the peasants: not every peasant was entitled to an allotment. In densely inhabited regions of Western Ukraine, the occupiers decided to have a minimum allotment size of 4-7 hectares, irrespective of the number of peasants. In these regions, the cooperatives made many families landless. For instance, in Kirovograd region, of 81 courtyards only 66 were allotted land (6 hectares each). 15 families were left without land because they had not fulfilled the “minimum amount of workdays”.⁸³ Furthermore the *Agrarordnung* was a means to exclude politically “unreliable” villagers and “scroungers”, and more generally all those whom the occupiers considered superfluous peasants. Those who did not receive land were deported to Germany for compulsory work or shot by the police if not compliant.⁸⁴

We have seen in this second part the main characteristics of German agricultural policies both in occupied France and Ukraine. They show different strategies for one common goal: extracting as much foodstuffs and resources from occupied territories. Both of them show that the Germans, regardless of the tremendous differences in occupation practices in both countries, relied heavily on existing structures and norms to exploit land and people: the French agricultural administration and the Soviet kolkhoze. The ideas of maintaining existing structures to guarantee the procurement of a maximum amount of comestibles, and changing how agriculture worked (“modernizing”) in order to raise outputs in the future were in tension. We will now look at the imperial side of Nazi agricultural and Food supply policies which enabled transfers between East and West.

81 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, p. 134.

82 Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 330.

83 Petrenko, *Natsists'kij okupatsijnij rehzhim*, p. 204, 207.

84 Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*, pp. 20–21.

III. Administrating the Countryside in Occupied Territories: Transfers between East and West

Although very different in nature and practice, the occupation of North-Eastern France and of the Ukraine grew more interconnected toward the end of the war. German officials had plans to colonize both regions after the war. As occupation of France hardened in 1942, German occupiers transferred control mechanisms of agricultural production from the occupation of Poland and Soviet territories to France, particularly to the Forbidden Zone. We will dwell on two German institutions created not only to exploit, but to transform agriculture of occupied territories: the *Landwirtschaftsführer* and the *Ostland* company.

One example of those transfers are forced migrations, more or less temporary, in agriculture. Indeed, Germans moved hundreds of thousands of agricultural workers within the Eastern occupied territories to take part in harvesting in the sparsely settled Southern and Eastern steppes of Ukraine. To free up land to settle Volksdeutsche, the German administration deported Ukrainian peasants of Zhitomir region to South Ukraine.⁸⁵ In North-Eastern France, as workforce was lacking in the fields, German authorities resorted to the same pattern of forced migration: from January 1943 on, at least 20,000 Poles were deported from the region of Lodz to the *départements* Ardennes, Meuse, and Meurthe-et-Moselle.⁸⁶

Global Change for the Nazi Empire: The Crisis of 1942 / 1943

To understand why occupation practices and institutions were transferred from the East to the West in the second half of the occupation, we have to return to a dramatic change which affected the whole Nazi empire at the turn of 1942–1943. At this time several crises came to a head. First, on the Western front, at the end of 1942, the allied forces freed Northern Africa. Consequently, the French government and the Reich lost access to raw materials including food produces and fertilizers.⁸⁷ Second, on the Eastern front, the Wehrmacht lost the strategic initiative and began a slow retreat after its defeat at Stalingrad (February 1943). As a result of these setbacks, the German leadership strengthened its grip both in Germany and in the occupied territories. Declaring “total war” they demanded that all resources be fully exploited for the military effort. German occupiers intensified requisitions of raw materials, workers, and finished products.

In France in the first years of occupation, the economic exploitation consisted in requisitions but also in purchases on the black market. To keep the extent of these purchases secret, German offices financed them with occupation funds, that is with the money paid

85 Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*, pp. 34–35.

86 A. François, *Les Polonais déportés dans les Ardennes pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale*, in: *Revue Historique Ardennaise* 48 (2016), pp. 155–176.

87 F. Grenard / F. Le Bot / C. Perrin, *Histoire économique de Vichy: L'État, les hommes les entreprises*, Paris 2017, p. 102; Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 328.

on a daily basis by the French government to the German occupation forces.⁸⁸ In 1942 black market purchases sky-rocketed, running to about 8 million RM per day – more than one-third of occupation funds. Aside from soldiers, German agencies, seeking consumer goods and raw materials, and the Wehrmacht agencies, purchasing goods for the troops, became black market clients on a large scale.⁸⁹

From the beginning of occupation MBF chief economist Elmar Michel criticized black market purchases by Germans: they undermined the goal of exploiting France over the long term, which required a policy of reconstruction, not looting. Michel was successful in finding allies within the Ministry of Finances in Berlin, and finally, in March 1943, Berlin forbade the German army to enter black market operations.⁹⁰ As a consequence of this limitation of the Wehrmacht's liberalities, German authorities began demanding the French Ministry of Agriculture more output via heightened planned requisitions. Michel calculated that whereas France had yielded 12% of its grain output to Germany in 1942, it was already 17% the following year. As far as meat was concerned, the raise was from 15% to 23%, on the background of a rising agricultural output (see table 4).

In Ukraine, the Wehrmacht pillaged the countryside to a far broader extent than in France, and basically without any outside control. Based on the principle that the Army had to feed itself from the land it occupied and on the ideas that Ukraine was the bread-basket of Europe and that its inhabitants were inferior Slavs, the German military expected to live off comfortably from the villagers. Even the agricultural department of the Army's own Economic Command set one of its main tasks to "protect the farming enterprises and their means of production from seizures by our own troops". It had to send *Landwirtschaftsführer* to the zones immediately behind the front line to organize food procurement for the Army and prevent uncontrolled seizures by the military.⁹¹ In 1942, after first tensions appeared in the Reich with food supply, the Army had to feed itself more intensely from the land, leading to an unprecedented looting campaign in the summer. It is important to notice that the army requisitioned not only food products and cattle, without compensation. They took horses and cars for their own transportation needs so that the farming activities were slowed down or made impossible.⁹²

88 Boldorf / Scherner, *France's Occupation Costs*, p. 299.

89 Ibid., p. 306.

90 Grenard, Le Bot, Perrin, *Histoire économique de Vichy*, p. 107.

91 Denkschrift der Wirtschaftsorganisation Ost über den Einsatz der Landwirtschaftsführer im Schwarzerdegebiet Südrusslands, auf der Krim und in Transnistrien, anonymous, BA MA MSG 2/1268.

92 Volkmann, *Landwirtschaft und Ernährung*, p. 49.

Table 4. French production and deliveries to the Reich, 1941–1943

French production (tons)					Deliveries to the Reich (in percentage of the French production)		
	1941	1942	1943	Progression 1942–1943	1941	1942	1943
Bread grain	3 756 000	4 013 000	4 193 000	+ 4,5 %	+ 14,6	+ 12,1	+ 17,0
Fodder grain	3 002 000	2 466 000	2 712 000	+ 10 %	+ 20,1	+ 18,6	+ 25,3
Meat	1 142 000	914 000	976 000	+ 6,8 %	+ 14,5	+ 15,3	+ 23,3
Butter	–	111 000	118 000	+ 6,3 %	–	+ 1,8	+ 15,3
Vegetables	1 440 000	1 408 000	1 408 000	0	+7,0	+ 7,0	+ 7,6
Fruits	4 883 000	911 000	913 000	+ 0,2 %	+ 4,5	+ 6,5	+ 12,9
Wine (1000 hL)	49 428	47 429	47 585	+ 0,3 %	+ 4,1	+ 5,8	+ 10,4

Source: Michel's report "Der Beitrag des französischen Raumes zur Kriegswirtschaft", 1944, p. 12 (Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv RW 35/1446).

Simultaneously with the interdiction to enter black market deals in France, Hitler forbade uncontrolled confiscations by the Wehrmacht in the East in spring 1943. From now on the troop had to report on their requisitions and needs to the military economic command.⁹³ This heightened control of military behaviour contributed to good procurement results in Ukraine and in Belorussia in 1943, notwithstanding the growing influence of partisans and the lack of workforce and machinery.⁹⁴

Ruling the Peasants: The Landwirtschaftsführer from East to West

In Ukraine, the Germans ruled over 100,000 farms and 3,000 mechanization enterprises (MTS), which needed a centralized bureaucratic apparatus to function.⁹⁵ The Economic Command Staff East of the Wehrmacht (*Wirtschaftsführungsstab Ost*) created a new control structure over agriculture to replace the Soviet one. But in fact, the Germans compromised with the existing structure, and all in all they kept a lot of what Soviet administration had created, as we have seen earlier. A key echelon in the hierarchy was the *Landwirtschaftsführer* (La-Führer, La-Fü), controlling farm activities of a group of kolkhozes. When the Wehrmacht transferred to German civil authorities of the Reichskommissariat Ukraine, the whole agricultural bureaucracy was transferred, including the 14,000 La-Führer. In the territories (in Ukraine and elsewhere) which remained under military rule, the same system of agricultural control remained in place.

On average, one La-Führer had 108 collective farms under his responsibility.⁹⁶ Even if assisted by translators and local agronomists, this made impossible for him to visit regularly every farm. Most La-Führer were farmers from Germany who had no command of either the Ukrainian or the Russian language and were ignorant of the natural conditions for farming, especially in the Ukrainian steppes to the East.⁹⁷

In January 1943, Backe, who monitored closely French agriculture, demanded to raise productivity “by any means necessary”, especially to cultivate fallows.⁹⁸ For Reinhardt, this could only be possible if the German and French agricultural administrations would get both more qualified workforce, vehicles, and gasoline. His request was backed by the *Militärbefehlshaber* himself and resulted in the establishment of 182 German *Landwirtschaftsführer* in March 1943 and in the liberation of 550 French agronomists, with whom they were supposed to work.⁹⁹

There were 788 La-Führer stationed all over France in April 1944, aged between 32 and 55. Many had worked for the *Reichsnährstand* before the war and were considered by their hierarchy as having a strong experience with the German *Erzeugungsschlacht*

93 Ibid., p. 50.

94 Ibid., Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 320.

95 Dallin, *German Rule in Russia 1941–1945*, p. 320.

96 Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*.

97 Ibid.; Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*.

98 “in weitreichendem Umfange alle Maßnahmen”, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

99 Letter from Stülpnagel to the Army High-Command, 13.02.1943; letter from Wi III/1 to the *Bezirkschef* A, B, C and Commander from Gross-Paris, 15.02.1943, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

(Battle for production).¹⁰⁰ An undefined number of them came from occupied Ukraine and Poland and had to undergo training at the *Wehrwirtschaftsersatzabteilung V* in Gera. Others had not worked in the East, but came directly from farms in Germany. They were often older or unable to fight and for these reasons were sent to France to supervise agriculture.¹⁰¹

The La-Führer were assigned to reinforce the local *Agriculture and Food supply* groups at the level of the *Feldkommandanturen*. Each La-Fü had to advise on 55,000 hectares of agricultural land on average. Only 70% were equipped with a car.¹⁰² The rest of them had to travel by bike. Added to the fact that only about 10% of them spoke French this made it complicated if not impossible to complete their mission of counsel.¹⁰³

According to Reinhardt, La-Führer in France “will serve as agricultural advisers and not as production controllers [as they did in Ukraine].”¹⁰⁴ Their mission was to increase French agricultural production according to German needs, mainly by enforcing the cropping plans. Concretely they had to make sure that the cultivated area that had been planned for each crop was effectively cultivated. Those cultivation plans were designed every year in Paris by Reinhardt’s group at the MBF, in negotiations with French authorities, to ensure deliveries to Germany and food supply. Each of them had a notebook (*Taschenbuch für Landwirtschaftsführer*) containing a short agricultural lexicon, main figures on French agriculture, specifics on the most common French varieties of wheat and oats and advice on how to introduce new crops.

The La-Fü first assessed wastelands and uncultivated areas and prepared their recultivation.¹⁰⁵ They also assessed the numbers of abandoned farms.¹⁰⁶ They then spent most of their time “advising” French farmers.¹⁰⁷ They organized meetings with farmers, mayors, trustees, and French agricultural services, sometimes showing movies on “good” agricultural practices. Those meetings were often followed by farm and field inspections to show one good and one bad example of farming in the village.¹⁰⁸ La-Führer also had to be available one day a week at their office for counseling, which was about every aspect of

100 67% apprenticeship or agricultural winter school, 9% agronomist, 2% state examined farmer, 22% without any degree. According to *Befehlshaber* South-West about 121 La-Führer, 25.08.1943, AJ/40/793 (2), Archives nationales.

101 Among others before being stationed in France, Gustav Bubritzki worked for the *Milch- und Fettanstalt* Ukraine and Joachim Lipke was *Gebietslandwirt* in the Russian steppe. AJ/40/460, Archives nationales and RH 36/258, BA MA. Eduard Linberg was employed by the Ostland in occupied Poland and transferred in 1943 to the Ostland company in occupied France, BA MA, RH 36/259.

102 Reinhardt’s report one year after the introduction of *Landwirtschaftsführer* in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

103 Report of the *Befehlshaber* South-West, 25.08.1943, AJ/40/793 (2), Archives nationales; BA MA RH 36/368 and RH 36/369.

104 *Entretien du Majestic*, Reinhardt to Bonnafous, the French Minister for Agriculture and Food Supply, 29.04.1943, 3W 75/1, Archives nationales.

105 Report of the *Befehlshaber* North West to the MBF in Paris about the La-Führer’s activities, 13.01.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

106 “Mission and provisional tasks of the La-Führer”, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

107 More specifically with the 400 French agronomes that were released in early 1943.

108 AJ/40/793 (3), Archives nationales.

farm management: fertilization through synthetic and organic products, fight against the Colorado potato beetle, cultivation of oilseeds, new crops (mainly soy and kok-sagyz), animal husbandry conditions.¹⁰⁹ The La-Führer advocated for a more intensive and productivist agriculture.

But La-Führer also assessed agricultural activity: production, size of herds, measure of cultivated areas, silos, etc. They established statistical data in order to correct French statistics and monitored the deliveries for food supply.¹¹⁰ The establishment of La-Führer was a clear sign that the Germans distrusted the French authorities down to the regional level and preferred to take the matter of food requirement in their own hands. Their establishment was a complete surprise for the French, who did not appreciate this extra German monitoring over the whole country.¹¹¹

In their monitoring of agricultural production, La-Führer fought against the black market, in accordance with the policy adopted in Paris. Some of them were specifically responsible for the collection of milk and fats, key products for the (German) food supply. Alongside their agricultural mission, the La-Führer were also supposed to monitor the “political atmosphere”, not unlike the control functions they exerted in Ukraine. Their daily contact with rural population make them precious assets, providing “important intelligence material.”¹¹²

A large survey of soil was conducted starting 1943 in the formerly “occupied zone” with the goal to create “soil maps as a basis for the cultural planning of the [Ostland] and the MBF.”¹¹³ Such maps would provide the occupation authorities with a better knowledge of the territory, a first step towards ecological occupation. The point was to scientifically assess the potential for yield improvement of cultivated area, to test the worthiness of re-

109 They advocated for the building of manure pits. MBF group Wi III/1 to the Befehlshaber and Feldkommandanturen, 27.04.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales. They checked for the mandatory signs in front of each potato field and for farmers who did not spray properly. Reinhardt's report one year after the introduction of Landwirtschaftsführer in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales. Letter from MBF division for agricultural production to the 3 district chefs, 08.06.1944 : “The Landwirtschaftsführer are instructed to support the increase of the acreage for oilseeds in any manner. Protests are to be kept to a minimum.” AJ/40/793 (7), Archives nationales, Lyautey translated. Reinhardt's report one year after the introduction of Landwirtschaftsführer in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales. Better use of pasture, and building of silos for animal feed. MBF group Wi III/1 to the Befehlshaber and Feldkommandanturen, 27.04.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales. See also AJ/40/793 (3), Archives nationales.

110 Reinhardt's report one year after the introduction of Landwirtschaftsführer in France, 4.05.1944; template for reports on the activity of La-Führer, 10.09.1943, both in AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

111 Letter from French Minister for Agriculture and Food Supply Bonnafeux to Reinhardt, 12.04.1943: “You even declared that the liberation of 545 [French] agronomists that I demanded a few months ago was related to the acceptance of the establishment of those agricultural counselors in the occupied zone by my Department. This condition has never been brought to my attention and I am very surprised to see it invoked today (...) This is why I am bound to demand you in the strongest and the most insistent manner to please renounce to the implementation of those counselors.” AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales, translated by Lyautey.

112 In their reports “ist kurz auf Beobachtungen über die politische Haltung und Stimmung der französischen Bauernschaft einzugehen”; “wichtiges Nachrichtenmaterial”. Reinhardt's report one year after the introduction of Landwirtschaftsführer in France, 4.05.1944, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales.

113 Title of the project, Research Programme 1943/44, Imperial Institute for foreign and colonial forestry in Hamburg, 15.09.1943, BAL R 73/15317. Note that the “occupied zone” concentrated most of France's agricultural production. Not any map has yet been found in the archives.

cultivating wastelands and to rationalize the use of synthetic fertilizers knowing precisely what the soils' requirements for each nutrient were.

In the context of "the inevitability of having to replace the lost Ukrainian soil yields", this work was considered vital for the war (*kriegswichtig*).¹¹⁴ La-Führer collected more than 17,500 soil samples overall. The survey was supervised by Dr. Vageler, head of the Department of *Agriculture and Forestry* of the German institute in Paris and analyses were performed in his home university, the Imperial Institute for foreign and colonial forestry in Hamburg. The survey showed a less acute soil acidification than expected, which meant some fertilizer phosphate could be saved for the German armaments industry.¹¹⁵ However the results showed that expectations on the re-cultivation of wasteland were to be reconsidered given the very low availability of synthetic fertilizers.¹¹⁶

La-Fü were present not only in occupied USSR or France, but in several European countries under German dominion: in Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, Greece, and some parts of Romania.¹¹⁷ In November 1943 an order of Hitler forbade any further transfer of La-Fü from the East to the West: they were to serve in combat units on the Eastern Front.¹¹⁸

To Modernize and to Colonize: Ostland and LBGU

German authorities saw farming in France and the Soviet Union as backward, mainly because, in their view, the land and the soils were not used intensively enough. As British and French colonizers, German planners and administrators pursued the goal of modernizing the agriculture of their Western and Eastern colonies, in Ukraine and the French Forbidden Zone.¹¹⁹ To this effect they set up special corporations which pursued several goals: to regroup land in bigger farms, develop mechanization, the use of fertilizers, both synthetic and natural, "rationalize" tillage, and introduce new varieties. In all these aspects, there is a lack of historical information. More research is needed on what Germans agricultural specialists did precisely in their experimental farms in Ukraine and France, and what they wanted the La-Fü to require from the French and Ukrainian peasants.

In the East, collective farms were already big enough, mostly. A Farming Corporation Ukraine was formed (*Landbewirtschaftungsgesellschaft Ukraine*, LBGU) to manage the farms.¹²⁰ It controlled deliveries and producers. But purchase, storage, handling, processing, imports, and exports were managed by another German enterprise, the *Zentralhan-*

114 Letter from Heske to Marcus, Reichsforschungsrat, 11.03.1944, BAL R 73/15317.

115 Letter from Reinhardt to Vageler, 16.03.1944, BAL R 73/15317.

116 Letter from *Sicherheitspolizei* to Dr. Brandt, personal staff of the Reichsführer-SS, 3.02.1944, BAL, N 19/1305.

117 Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*, p. 38; order from Oberst Matzky and Major Krantz, 30.11.1944, BA MA, RW 19/3160.

118 Hitler's order (Führerbefehl), 27.11.1943, quoted in letter of WFST/Org. (1. Staffel), 14.12.1943, BA MA RH 4/491.

119 For French North Africa see D. K. Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome: Environmental History and French Colonial Expansion in North Africa*, Athens 2007.

120 Brandt, *Germany's Agricultural and Food Policies in World War II*, p. 83; Gerlach, *Die deutsche Agrarreform und die Bevölkerungspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten*, p. 32.

delsgesellschaft Ost für landwirtschaftlichen Absatz und Bedarf GmbH (ZHO or ZO).¹²¹ LBGU had the same functions as the Agricultural Corporation *Ostland* (of its full name *Ostdeutsche Landbewirtschaftungsgesellschaft*), which was active in Poland and France. *Ostland*¹²² was a farm management company, involved in occupied Poland starting early 1940, and beginning in summer 1941, in occupied Soviet territories. Its purpose was to manage seized farms and prepare estates for the German agrarian colonization to come. In France, the company was active as soon as September 1940 in the Forbidden Zone.¹²³ In order to maintain agricultural production at a normal level, the implementation of the company was very fast, mostly on abandoned farms. But “poorly managed farms”, according to German criteria, were also brought under the *Ostland*’s authority. At its height, the company managed 11,500 French farms on 170,000 hectares of farmland, and more than half of agricultural land in the *département* Ardennes. The goal of this enterprise was to apply German “national-socialist” methods to French agriculture in order to boost its production: regrouping of land and mechanization, agronomic trials in experimental fields, selected high-quality seeds, synthetic fertilizers, etc. *Ostland* set up 35 experimental station in the Forbidden Zone.

The management of the workforce was also national-socialist: every estate (around 450 hectares) was under the rule of a German chief of culture, who led non-German farmworkers. They were French or foreign, some of which were deported to Eastern France.¹²⁴ The workforce was accounted according to their productivity and each group had a productivity factor.¹²⁵

Even though the purpose of *Ostland* might have been, at the beginning of the war, to prepare the area for a potential annexation, and although French refugees were not allowed back in the “Forbidden Zone” where the company was active, no German settlers were ever sent to France in the farms managed by this company. The colonization plans remained plans and only Wehrmacht officials worked in those farms, without their families.

The *Ostland* company was both a showcase and a first implementation of those “German” methods in France.¹²⁶ Not only the new way of production were tested (in ploughing for example), but also new varieties and crops (soy and kok-sagyz among others),

121 Corni / Gies, *Brot – Butter – Kanonen*, p. 537; Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 57.

122 Not to be mistaken with the *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, which was the military administrative entity that managed the Baltic States, Belarus and the North-Eastern part of Poland starting 1941. The company changed its name to “Reichsland” after 1941 to avoid any misunderstanding.

123 For more information of the *Ostland* company in France, see Mièvre, L’“*Ostland*” en France; M. Lyautey, L’*Ostland* en France pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, *Mémoire de master de l'EHESS*, 2017, 184 pp. and the work of A. François, *Les Polonais déportés*.

124 More than 600 foreign Jews from Paris and 20,000 Poles were deported in order to work for the *Ostland* in North-Eastern France.

125 1 for men; 0,7 for women; 0,3 for youth; 0,5 for Jews, and 0,3 for POW of colour. 12R 143, Archives départementales des Ardennes.

126 The *Militärbefehlshaber* himself describes the goal of *Ostland* to be “a german example of agriculture in order”. Letter from Stülpnagel to Oberkommando Wehrmacht, 13.02.1943, AJ/40/793 (1), Archives nationales (Lyautey translated).

before they could be considered for a wider use on the whole French territory. Several agronomic trials were also designed to scientifically prove the superiority of German varieties over French ones, to then be able to extend their cultivation all over the country.¹²⁷ Colossal means were put into this company, especially considering the war condition: tens of thousands of men and women for the workforce, hundreds of tractors, fuel, fertilizers, seeds, chemical products, and sprayer to fight the Potato beetle, etc.

But *Ostland* was also thought as a place where a new “elite of German farmers learns to think on a large scale, to work and compare in a European way, to use the soil with the aim of achieving a maximum in nutrition, not ideologically, but nevertheless obsessed with the idea of German exemplary performance.”¹²⁸

The Germans exported farm appliances to the Forbidden Zone of France and to the occupied Soviet Union. Under the *Ostackerprogramm*, ZO brought 7,000 tractors, 20,000 generators, 250,000 steel plows, 3,000,000 scythe, thousands bulls, cows, boars, and stallions to the Soviet occupied territories.¹²⁹ In France, *Ostland* brought 433 tractors, 373 ploughs, 116 trucks and other appliances, mainly from Lanz, a German manufacturer of farm equipment. This material remained in France after liberation and played an enduring role in the mechanization of agriculture locally. In Ukraine, the *Ostackerprogramm* contradicted the radical plunder which occupation forces practiced, first during the German advance in 1941, and second during the German retreat in 1943–44, and other occasions (summer 1942).

Kok-sagyz’s Travel from Soviet Kazakhstan to France via Occupied Ukraine

Germans pushed to introduce new crops in French and Ukrainian farming. This drive was motivated by specific demands of German war industry and German food economy. For instance, oilseeds were in high demand, so Germans forced French farmers to cultivate rapeseed. An interesting case is that of the rubber plant kok-sagyz, which made its way from Kazakhstan to Ukraine, Poland, and France during German occupation. Several countries during WWII were interested in the industrial properties of dandelions, including the Soviet Union, Germany, and the USA.¹³⁰

Heim has extensively studied how German scientists and the SS developed research on kok-sagyz plants, the extraction of rubber from it (especially in Auschwitz) and its farm-

127 “Der Aufbau der Versuchsabteilung der ‘Reichsland’ im besetzten nordfranzösischen Gebiet”, Dr. Leitzke, 12R 99, Archives départementales des Ardennes.

128 “Hut ab vor ihrer Leistung! Eine landwirtschaftliche Elite”, Zeitungsdienst des Reichsnährstandes, n163, 21.07.1941, BAL, R 3601/2353.

129 Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp. 323–324.

130 In the USA, pedologist Marlin Cline worked on dandelions, trying unsuccessfully to turn it into crops. John M. Duxbury, Memorial statement on Marlin G. Cline (1909–2009), online on: https://ecommons.cornell.edu/bitstream/handle/1813/19175/Cline_Marlin_G_2009.pdf (accessed on 8 October 2019). There is still interest in turning dandelions into rubber for the tire industry. Ludwig Burger, Tire makers race to turn dandelions into rubber, Reuters, 20 August 2014, online in: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-dandelion-rubber/tire-makers-race-to-turn-dandelions-into-rubber-idUSKBN0GK0LN20140820> (accessed on 8 October 2019).

ing.¹³¹ Germans relied heavily on literature, researchers, equipments, fields and seeds from the Soviet Union.¹³² Basically, they transferred under their control the research being done on kok-sagyz in occupied Soviet territories. The SS plundered equipments, secured institutes, deported scientists and libraries to Germany and to their research facilities in Auschwitz. For that, men were sent to Ukraine, including the Crimea, and the North Caucasus, searching for anything kok-sagyz related. Two Russian scientists are named, a certain Nikitin and Yakov Alexeievich Popov as being used by the SS for research on kok-sagyz, but there were many more.¹³³

The SS wanted to develop kok-sagyz in France. The crop was introduced for the 1944–1945 campaign, to use as an ersatz for rubber. It was a special demand from the Reichsführer-SS and cultivation was planned on at least 2,500 ha in regions where sugar beets yields were high (North-Eastern France mostly and also around Paris and Orléans). Seeds were provided by Germany. The crop was ultimately tested in 59 farms in the summer 1944. The SS even planned to deport 180,000 additional Poles as workforce to develop French kok-sagyz production.¹³⁴

Conclusion

In this paper we have attempted to take an integrated and connected view of Nazi domination of Europe. Going beyond serialized case studies and comparison of occupational regimes, we have looked at how personal, material and intellectual circulations within its empire shaped the colonial visions and occupation practices of Nazi Germany in three areas: displacement of peasants, cultivation of strategic plants like kok-sagyz, and political and economic control at the district level via the *La-Führer*. Deepening the research on what agricultural practices and seeds were imposed, and widening the geographical scope to include other occupied countries is a task ahead of us.

Already in 1942 it occurred to the German occupiers that the new acquisitions to the Reich to the East and to the West could not substantially relieve its agriculture from its productive tasks. Both in Ukraine and France, ideas of greatly intensified farming and rising outputs crushed against the workforce shortfalls and material shortcomings. The *Großraumwirtschaft* never materialized and autarkic agricultural development remained a dream, and actually a nightmare for millions of Europeans who were not near the top of the Nazi food chain.

131 S. Heim, *Plant Breeding and Agrarian Research in Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institutes 1933–1945: Calories, Caoutchouc, Careers*, New York/Berlin/Heidelberg 2008, pp. 103–120.

132 In the occupied territories of the Soviet Union, though, the general contempt for the kolkhoze system and for Ukrainian and Russian agricultural practices among occupying forces was combined with a great and sustained interest in the advances of Soviet agronomy among German researchers. From the first day of the invasion to the last day of occupation, German occupiers translated the best works of Soviet agronomists and tried to maintain agricultural research on the bases of Soviet agricultural institutes. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p. 332.

133 Heim, *Plant Breeding*, p. 110–111.

134 See AJ/40/793 (11), Archives nationales.

Agronomists played a leading part in this lamentable history. Riecke, Schiller, Backe, Reinhardt, and many lesser colleagues participated in the initiation and unfolding of the great genocide and starvation which characterize WWII. Placed by the Nazi regime at key positions within the occupation apparatus, they endorsed the goal of building an empire premised on a hierarchy of food production and food entitlement which led to millions of deaths by hunger. On the ground they controlled the most numerous of all occupation apparatuses, as well as a large network of monitoring functionaries and procurement enterprises. Squeezing the most grain and oilseeds out of the farms was their major task. As the war persisted, intensifying production became a ubiquitous objective to which they committed themselves. Constraining the locals to produce technical crops which were necessary for Germany's war effort was another priority. If they happily failed in their grand scheme of colonization and autarky, they proved frighteningly successful in fulfilling these three tasks at the cost of the local populations.

FORUM

The Early Modern “Silk-Road”. The Role of European, Chinese, and Russian Trade Reassessed¹

Salvatore Ciriaco

ABSTRACT

Dieser Aufsatz untersucht den historischen und zeitgenössischen Ort des europäischen und asiatischen Handels im Kontext der sogenannten „Seidenstraße“. Der Erfolg und die Konkurrenz der heutigen chinesischen Wirtschaft wird als Ursache für die sinkende Bedeutung der westlichen Volkswirtschaften auf den Weltmärkten angesehen, aber die Realität *ist* und *war* in der Vergangenheit viel komplexer. War die Industrielle Revolution ein grundlegender Wendepunkt? Insbesondere in Zentralasien waren die institutionellen und wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen weitaus differenzierter, als man von der Vorstellung der „Seidenstraße“ als bloßer Ost-West-Transitroute annehmen könnte. In diesem Sinne betrachte ich die Zusammenhänge zwischen der maritimen und der Seidenstraße. Ich interpretiere die wachsende Präsenz Russlands auf den zentralasiatischen Märkten ab dem 16. Jahrhundert im Zusammenhang mit dem chinesischen Vormarsch in Westasien. Die englischen Ambitionen und die englische Präsenz in Südasien (Indien) betrafen auch die zentralasiatischen Märkte und standen in direktem Wettbewerb mit der Expansion Russlands. Diese wirtschaftlichen und institutionellen Beziehungen haben die Geopolitik des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts, in der sich das allgemeine Konzept der Seidenstraße entwickelte, tiefgreifend beeinflusst.

This paper investigates the historic and contemporary place of European and Asian trade in

1 I would like to thank Professor Peter Burschel, director of the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel (Germany), for allowing me to draw widely on the material housed in that library, without which I could not have completed this paper. The English translation was provided by Jeremy Scott.

the context of the so-called "Silk Road". The success and the competition of the present-day Chinese economy is seen as the cause of the declining role of Western economies in world markets but the reality *is* and *was* much more complex in the past. Was the Industrial revolution a fundamental turning point? In Central Asia in particular the institutional and economic rapports were much more nuanced than one might be led to believe by the notion of the "Silk Road" as a mere route of East-West transit. It is with this in mind that I consider the rapports between the maritime road and the silk road. I interpret the growing presence of Russia in the Central Asian markets from the sixteenth century onwards in connection with the Chinese advance in Western Asia. The English ambition and presence in Southern Asia (India) was also concerned with central Asian markets and was in direct competition with Russian expansion. These economic and institutional rapports went on to have a deep influence on 19th and 20th century geopolitics, in which the general concept of the Silk Road developed.

The Traditional Silk Road and the Maritime. Products and International Competition

This article aims to examine trade along the famous Silk Road between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. The term 'Silk Road' itself is said to have been coined by the nineteenth-century German geographer Ferdinand von Richthofen in discussing centuries of trade along the harsh desert routes of Central Asia that linked such places as Samarkand, fabled cities that were also great centres of manufacture. In such commerce, silk clearly epitomized the important luxury goods imported into Europe from Asia. However, that was not the only product carried from China to the West: porcelain, tea and, earlier still, paper and gunpowder (basically a large part of the era's technological know-how) played a no less essential role in East-West trade. And nowadays, after centuries of western dominion which meant that the predominant flow of trade was West-East, we are once again in a situation in which it is the goods flowing out of the Orient that are playing an increasingly dominant role in international commerce.²

It is no coincidence, therefore, that the expression "New Silk Road" is closely connected to the resurgence of China's strategic interest in the West, a "revival" of the influence of Eastern civilization, which, as in the past, cannot be seen in isolation from economic/technological issues. The economic success of present-day China is, furthermore, closely linked to the declining role of some Western economies in world markets. Indeed, the new Silk Road is thus known as the "Belt and Road Initiative", which aims to link the whole of Asia to China and afterwards connect it to some European terminals. Which ones are selected to become such destinations is another aspect of the current interna-

2 The image of the "Silk Road" has to be assessed bearing in mind other views of the relationship between Asia and Europe, which bring together religious aspects of the issue and the question of the various political and economic powers involved. Philippe Forêt and Andeas Kaplony, for example, have identified a "Buddhist Road", a "Mongol Road", an "Islamic Road" and a "Mediterranean Road" (The Journey of Maps and Images on the Silk Road, London/Boston 2008, pp. 1–5). Useful material in a large historical perspective is offered by U. Hübner et al. (eds.), *Die Seidenstraße. Handel und Kulturaustausch in einem eurasiatischen Wegenetz*, Hamburg 2001.

tional competition. Certainly, as in the heyday of Chinese civilization from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, the number of Chinese products flowing towards Europe nowadays seems to be much higher than that of European products being exported to Asian markets. In the past this trade deficit would ultimately be compensated for by the West's technological superiority, with the machines of the Industrial Revolution enabling European nations to become firmly established in Asian markets. But in the future?

Limiting our present discussion to a focus on Central Asia, the area of the continent traversed by the Silk Road, one observes the emergence of two directions of long-distance trade in luxury goods that, in general terms, can be seen as running east-west and north-south. This trade flow was, for reasons regarding both climate and environment, irregular, depending upon the numerous caravans whose passage also had an influence upon the life of local nomadic peoples. Yet, despite its irregularity, such trade stimulated the growth of empires, which, in turn, developed to control / exploit the movement of luxury products with the introduction of taxation, resulting in powerful geopolitical interests being, quite literally, invested in commerce. There is no question that von Richthofen and Western historians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries focused primarily on the commercial aspects of the Silk Road and less on the issues relating to taxation and the control exercised by the political entities in Central Asia. However, alongside this "east-west trade" there was also a "north-south trade", commerce that also involved local nomadic societies.³ Both the "east-west" and "north-south" trade stimulated interest in controlling this area and its resources, bringing into play the Chinese Empire, the Russian Empire (whose influence is generally underestimated by historical discussions of the period concerned with this issue), and European trade companies.⁴ Furthermore, within the complex world of Central Asia, greater attention should also be placed on

3 J. A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass. Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in Qing Central Asia, 1759–1864*, Stanford 1998, p. 99; idem, *The Silk Road. A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford 2013. There is a vast bibliography on the legendary Silk Road. One can now consult P. Frankopan, *The Silks Roads. A New History of the World*, New York 2015, even if – in spite of a title that suggests this is just another study of the Silk Road – this work aims to explore the various levels of the relationship between "East" and "West" (an aspect that is brought out by the title of the German translation: *Licht aus dem Osten: Eine neue Geschichte der Welt*, Berlin 2016). Also see V. Hansen, *The Silk Road. A New History with Documents. With Coverage of the Mongols and Marco Polo*, Oxford 2017. For the strictly Italian aspect of the question, see F. G. Bruscoli, *Bartolomeo Marchionni, "homem de grossa fazenda" (ca. 1450–1530). Un mercante fiorentino a Lisboa e l'impero portoghese*, Florence 2014; M. Spallanzani, *Mercanti fiorentini nell'Asia portoghese (1500–1525)*, Florence 1997.

4 Without going into all details of a vast literature on the role played by Western trading companies, I would like to mention M. Morineau / S. Chaudhuri (eds.), *Merchants, Companies and Trade Europe and Asia in the Early Modern Era*, Paris / Cambridge, UK 2007; L. Dermigny, *La Chine et l'Occident. Le commerce à Canton au XVIII^e siècle, 1719–1833*, 3 vols, Paris 1964; S. Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia 1500–1700. A Political and Economic History*, London 1993; N. Steensgaard, *Carracks, Caravans and Companies. The Structural Crisis in the European-Asian Trade in the Early 17th Century*, Odense 1973; L. Blussé et al. (eds.), *Companies and Trade*, Leiden 1981; G. Souza, *The Survival of Empire: Portuguese Trade and Society in China and the South China Sea, 1630–1754*, Cambridge, UK 1986; J. C. Boyajian, *Portuguese Trade in Asia under the Habsburgs, 1580–1640*, Baltimore / London 1993; C. Jacqueland, *De Séville à Manille, les espagnols en mer de Chine*, Paris 2015; E. Erikson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade. The English East India Company, 1600–1757*, Princeton 2016; F. Gipouloux, *La Méditerranée asiatique. Villes portuaires et réseaux marchands en Chine, au Japon et en Asie du Sud-Est, XVI^e–XXI^e siècles*, Paris 2009.

such nomadic peoples as the Zunghars, the Jurchen, and the Kazakhs, all who certainly interacted with the larger political entities.⁵

As far as European traders are concerned, they – and Italians in particular, from the time of Marco Polo onwards – played a role in opening up such terrestrial trade routes, even if (for both international and domestic reasons) they would subsequently be almost entirely excluded from them. During the Middle Age one might cite not only Marco Polo⁶ but also other merchants and numerous missionaries, such as Giovanni da Pian del Carpine, Odorico da Pordenone, and Giovanni da Montecorvino (all of whom who tried to convert Asian populations).⁷ Thereafter, national trade companies and monopolies appeared, better organized to exploit such commerce and enjoying the substantial protection provided by emerging nation-states. It is true that Tuscany and Genoa tried to establish similar companies, but these regional states did not have the same success as the Dutch East India Company (VOC) or as the companies set up by the Portuguese, Spanish, English, French, Swedes, or Danes.⁸

Another aim of our article is comparing the fortunes of the ancient Silk Road with those based on commerce of the new Maritime Silk Road, the latter being considered more profitable and seen as a central axis of relations between East Asia and the West.⁹ In the

5 P. C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, Cambridge, MA 2005.

6 Hans Ulrich Vogel's recent work puts an end to the hypothesis that Marco Polo never actually reached China: Marco Polo was in China. *New Evidence from Currencies, Salts and Revenues*, Leiden/Boston 2013. His arguments are confirmed by the two Orientalists Mark Elvin and Philippe Ménard in their prefaces to his book.

7 The issue of the role of Catholic missionaries and of Italian trade in the Middle Ages is too sizeable to be dealt with here. On these questions see *Relation des voyages en Tartarie de Fr. Guillaume de Rubruquis*, Fr. Jean du Plan Carpin, Fr. Ascelin, et autres religieux de S. François et S. Dominique, qui y furent envoyez par le Pape Innocent IV et le Roy S. Louys [...] (recueilly par Pierre Bergeron), Paris 1634. The drive to convert the peoples of Asia would continue into the Early Modern period; see the bibliography by C. Wessels in: *Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia, 1603–1721*, The Hague 1924, as well as the following works: C. K. Pullapilly / E. J. Van Kley (eds.), *Asia and the West. Encounters and Exchanges from the Age of Explorations. Essays in Honour of Donald F. Lach*, Notre Dame 1986; J. W. Witek, *The Seventeenth-Century European Advance into Asia. A Review Article*, in: *The Journal of Asian Studies* 53 (1994) 3, pp. 867–880.

8 T. Iannello, *Progetti di istituzione in Italia di Compagnie commerciali per il Giappone*, in: A. Tamburello (ed.), *Italia – Giappone, 450 anni*, vol. I, Rome/Naples 2003, pp. 75–77. Luca Molà's research into the role played by Italian cities is a good starting-point here (see: Venezia, Genova e l'Oriente: i mercanti italiani sulle Vie della Seta tra XIII e XIV secolo, in: M. A. Norell (ed.), *Sulla Via della Seta. Antichi sentieri tra Oriente e Occidente*, Turin 2012, pp. 124–166). However, G. Marcocci's essay *L'Italia nella prima età globale (ca. 1300–1700)*, in: *Storica* 60 (2014), pp. 7–50, overlaps with the aims of the present study, with its goal of tracing the course of Italian trade in a problematic period of Italian history. One source that is still useful in reconstructing the Italian presence in international markets is A. De Gubernatis, *Storia dei viaggiatori italiani nelle Indie orientali: pubblicata in occasione del Congresso geografico di Parigi, con estratti d'alcune relazioni di viaggio a stampa ed alcuni documenti inediti*, Livorno 1875. Given the close relations that existed between the Republic of Venice and the subcontinent, India should be a focus of particular study, see A. Grossato, *Navigatori e viaggiatori veneti sulla rotta per l'India. Da Marco Polo ad Angelo Legrenzi*, Florence 1994. A traditional yet still useful is the edition by D. Carruthers, *The Desert Route to India, Being the Journals of Four Travellers by the Greath Desert Caravan Route between Aleppo and Basra, 1745–1751* [1929], Farnham 2010.

9 R. Kauz (ed.), *Aspects of the Maritime Silk Road: From the Persian Gulf to the East China Sea*, Wiesbaden 2010; R. Ptak, *Die maritime Seidenstrasse. Küstenräume, Seefahrt und Handel in vorkolonialer Zeit*, Munich 2007. The most recent works stress that "the contrast between land and maritime routes might not have been as sharp as normally assumed" (see my own: *Luxury Production and Technological Transfer in Early Modern Europe*, Leipzig 2017, pp. 258–259).

period after the Yuan dynasty, the Silk Road was also believed to be increasingly dangerous. But were ships and the maritime route really so much safer than the old terrestrial roads? In any case, it is true that the Italians seemed to have been the first to lose out because of the opening of a new maritime route to the East (as well the shift of commercial activity away from the Mediterranean towards the Atlantic).¹⁰

Their near-complete absence from this sea-borne trade with Asia is highlighted both by historians and by the silence surrounding this argument, found in contemporary sources.¹¹ Nevertheless, while the Italians were directly affected by the shifting balance between the Silk Road and the maritime route, a more nuanced account has to be given when discussing the various other actors and political-economic factors at play in Central Asia. Indeed, I would stress that trade along the Silk Road continued to occupy a certain role and, even more critically, the commerce flowing through Central Asia helps to explain what would take place during the nineteenth century between the major political and economic actors, both Western and Eastern countries.

A supportive argument could draw on the figures put forward by Williamson and O'Rourke. They estimate that between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries world trade grew by around 1.06 per cent per year. For his part, Angus Maddison claims that from 1500 to 1820 annual growth in the gross domestic product of both China and Western Europe was only around 0.4 per cent. If one is to believe these figures and what they say about the relationship between gross national product and intercontinental trade, the divergence in development over these two centuries between Asian and European countries was not that dramatic (certainly in Europe, internal demand, and thus a relative increase in the spending power of domestic consumers, occupied an essential role in stimulating European development). Furthermore, it does not seem that there were any decisive improvements in transport technologies or any decrease in the costs borne by merchant ships, all of which remained fairly constant over these centuries: it would only

10 Given the complexity of relations between Europe, Asia, and the Americas (even if only in quantitative terms), it is difficult to propose a straightforward revisionist account. Jan de Vries stresses the fact that "the cumulative value of British, French, and Dutch imports from the New World exceed[ed] those from Asia by nearly a factor of three (J. de Vries, *Limits of Globalization in the early modern world*, in: *The Economic History Review* 63 [2010] 3, p. 728). Asian trade – involving the overheads of distant travel and the need to penetrate established networks – never enjoyed the profit margins that plantation products traded across the Atlantic yielded to landowners in European colonies (idem, *Connecting Europe and Asia: a Quantitative Analysis of the Cape-route Trade, 1497–1795*, in: D. O. Flynn et al. [eds.], *Global Connections and Monetary System, 1470–1800*, Aldershot 2003, pp. 82–85). Furthermore, I. Blanchard, converting Jan de Vries' calculations in guilders into figures in pounds sterling, has calculated that in 1802 "this Eurasian commerce, which encompassed wares carried through both the trans-continental and local nomadic trade-system, crossing Russia's Asiatic frontiers from Central Asia [...] was only valued ca. £160,000", while just 30 years previously "the value of goods transported by way of the Cape maritime route to Europe amounted to ca. £4,820,000", see Blanchard, *The "Great Silk Road"*, ca. 1650 / ca. 1855, in: M. A. Denzel et al. (eds.), *Small is Beautiful? Interlopers and Smaller Trading Nations in the Pre-industrial Period*, Stuttgart 2011, pp. 262–263.

11 B. Yun-Casalilla, *Iberian World Empires and the Globalization of Europe 1415–1668*, Singapore 2019, esp. pp. 51–88; S. Bernabéu Albert (ed.), *La Nao de China, 1565–1815. Navegación, comercio e intercambios culturales*, Sevilla 2013; W. L. Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, Manila 1985; J. L. Gasch-Tomás, *Asian Silk, Porcelain and Material Culture in the Definition of Mexican and Andalusia Elites, c. 1565–1630*, in: B. Aram/B. Yun-Casalilla (eds.), *Global Goods and the Spanish Empire, 1492–1824: Circulation, Resistance and Diversity*, New York 2014, pp. 153–173.

be with the revolution brought about by steam power in the nineteenth century that these factors would come into play.¹²

Such data is instructive, but it does not help one to quantify the impact of European trade on Asian affairs. And such complications are increased by the scarcity and poverty of local sources; by the primitive way in which many Asia products were traded (sometimes through the simple truck system, a tributary system within the many areas controlled by the Chinese authorities); by the complicated fiscal system used in collecting taxes from the nomadic populations inside Central Asia; by the continuing contraband between the different nations interested in the Asian trade; and by the growing conflict between the emerging nations and the numerous merchants operating inside Central Asia (Russians, English, Afghans, and Indians). All these aspects make attempts at precise quantification of Western interests inside Asia seem wishful thinking. As Jack Goldstone stresses when discussing the role of American silver and the supposed impact of its declining influx on political affairs of China (particularly during the crisis of the Ming dynasty in the seventeenth century): "silver bullion played a role far out of proportion to its scale in the economy". Much more substantial influences on the internal affairs of China were the control of the borders, the role of the agriculture, recurrent famine, and dynastic conflict between Chinese rulers. Indeed, the total volume of European trade "was never more than just over 1 percent of China's economy, and was generally 0.2–0.3 percent. The complete cessation of such trade (the arrival of the silver) would hardly have been noticeable in the over-all economy".¹³ At the same time, the relative closure of China as well as of Tokugawa Japan – and their relative disinterest in commercial expansion beyond their own borders – created more opportunities for Westerners to become involved in Asian affairs.¹⁴ Arms and military force also influenced the Europeans' ability to impose their presence upon Asian markets – an issue that is covered in a whole range of post-colonial studies that I can only cite here.¹⁵

12 R. Findlay/K. A. O'Rourke, *Power and Plenty: Trade, War and the World Economy in the Second Millennium*, Princeton 2007, pp. 305, 378–79.

13 J. A. Goldstone, *East and West in the Seventeenth Century: Political Crises in Stuart England, Ottoman Turkey, and Ming China*, in: *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30 (1988) 1, p. 115. W. S. Atwell, on the contrary, has no doubts about the effects of imported silver on the Chinese economy, see: *Another Look at Silver Imports into China, ca. 1635–1644*, in *Journal of World History* 16 (2005) 4, pp. 467–489.

14 It should not be forgotten that the Asian continent had for centuries being particularly attractive for European countries, which were in many ways less advanced, particularly with regard to technology. The reason why relations developed as they did – and particularly why the fleets of the eunuch Admiral Zheng did not continue their exploration of the African and Arabian coast in the first decades of fifteenth century – remains a controversial point (one compelling and convincing interpretation is that this was due to the fact that Chinese policy was primarily concerned with managing internal affairs: Ying Liu et al. (eds.), *Zheng. He's maritime voyages (1405–1433) and China's relations with the Indian Ocean world: a multilingual bibliography*, Leiden 2014).

15 A wealth of economic and cultural insights can be found in the essays that make up P. Burschel/S. Jüterczenska (eds.), *Begegnen, Aneignen, Vermessen. Europäische Expansion als Globale Interaktion*, Stuttgart 2016. Also see G. Wade, *Asian Expansions: An Introduction*, in: idem (ed.), *The Historical Experiences of Polity Expansion in Asia*, Abingdon 2015, p. 18. On the idea of "cosmopolitanism", see G. Marcocci, *Renaissance Italy Meets South Asia: Florentine and Venetians in a Cosmopolitan World*, in: J. Flores et al. (eds.), *Cosmopolitanism in the Early Modern World: The Case of South Asia (16th–18th Centuries)*, Paris 2015, pp. 45–68. On the notion of "interconnected worlds", see S. Subrahmanyam, *Mondi connessi: la storia oltre l'eurocentrismo (secoli 16.–18.)*, Rome 2014; G.

What is certainly true is that both short- and long-distance trade existed before the emergence of nation-states and the structure within which they existed.¹⁶ Thus, as Chaudhuri underlines, at the time of the Portuguese arrival in India in 1498, “there had been no organized attempt by any political power to control the sea-lanes and the long distance trade of Asia. The Iberians and their north European followers imported a Mediterranean style of warfare by land and sea into an area that had hitherto had quite a different tradition”¹⁷. Similarly, Michael Pearson examines the fiscal policy followed by Asia to reveal a very different approach to that found in European financial policies. The first tended to focus on revenue from the taxation of agricultural produce, while within European states an increasing role was played by the fiscal revenue generated by maritime trade: “the issue of sea revenues is a key to understanding European expansion”.¹⁸

The common perception of Asian countries in decline has undoubtedly been accompanied by the perception of European maritime trade in expansion and the decreasing significance of the Silk Road. And it was during this period that Italian merchants, unable to compete with such major institutions as trade companies, were forced to operate under the umbrella of Portuguese and Spanish trade organizations or join forces with individual merchants.¹⁹ Future research is required to cast more light on the limited

Marcocci, *Indios, cinesi, falsari: Le storie del mondo nel Rinascimento*, Bari 2017. Within this specific historical context, lucid and telling arguments for historians to reconsider the East and re-evaluate the supposed centrality of the West are advanced in J. Goody, *L'Oriente in Occidente. Una riscoperta delle civiltà occidentali*, Bologna 1999. However, one cannot forget the fundamental lessons to be learnt from the pioneering studies by Joseph Needham and his successors in the volumes on Science and Civilisation in China, published by Cambridge University Press from 1954 onwards.

- 16 M. Middel, *Portals of Globalization as lieux de mémoire*, in: *Comparativ* 27 (2017) 3–4, pp. 70–71. However, this does not mean that one should read the relative closure of China, Japan, and India without reference to the forces driving European expansionism, a process that defined the character of this entire period of history. The evolution in European economies and political systems proceeded in tandem with a process that saw the formation of the modern state, a revolution in the organization of military and naval power, and a growth in trade that triggered, or accelerated, the process of “globalization”. For Immanuel Wallerstein, this process began in the sixteenth century, while Janet Abu-Lughod argues that it actually got underway during the course of the thirteenth century, thanks to the roles played by both China and the Arab world. For his part, Wallerstein tends (wrongly) to underestimate the role played by Asia, above all because he regards this continent as having been excluded from the key structure of “centre – semi-periphery – periphery” during the Early Modern period. The vision that inspires such interpretations is clearly related to the very contemporary debate regarding global trade and national interests, inevitably inviting us to consider the real effects of the process without forgetting that “global expresses a certain multi-layered connectedness of all historical realms – it entails relations, flows, and influences at a cultural, social and political level”. See on this point D. Sachsenmaier, *China and Globalization*, Paper presented to the Conference: *Globalization, Civil Society and Philanthropy*, New York 2003, p. 2; see also D. Sachsenmaier, *Global Perspectives on Global History. Theories and Approaches in a Connected World*, Cambridge, UK 2011. Certainly, once met with some scepticism, A. G. Frank’s arguments with regard to the return of China into world markets (see: *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*, Berkeley / Los Angeles, 1998) are now taken much more seriously.
- 17 K. Chaudhuri, quoted by T. Andrade, *Asian States and overseas expansion, 1500–1700. An approach to the Problem of European Exceptionalism*, in: Wade (ed.), *The Historical Experiences of Polity Expansion in Asia*, p. 53.
- 18 M. N. Pearson, *Merchants and States*, in: J. D. Tracy (ed.), *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires*, Cambridge, UK 1991, p. 48.
- 19 Fully-developed research on this issue can be found in B. Crivelli / G. Sabatini (eds.), *Reti finanziarie e reti commerciali. Operatori economici stranieri in Portogallo, XVI–XVII secolo (=Rivista di Storia Economica XVIII [2015] 2)*. In particular, N. Alessandrini, *Reti commerciali genovesi a Lisbona nel secolo XVII: elementi di commercio*

presence in Asia of Italian merchants (minority groups which also included Armenians, Greeks, and Jews) and on how well they were able to resist changing circumstances and the growing competition from Western Trade Companies.

That being said, it is undeniable that Italy, and particularly Venice, throughout the seventeenth century remained a major destination for the Asian products, even if these were also flowing into many other European ports. Iranian silk, for example, remained a fundamental luxury Asian product that affected the trading relations between Asia and Europe as a whole: key players in this trade were the Armenians and the city of New Julfa, created by the Safavids during the seventeenth century, with the express purpose of facilitating the increase of silk exports from Iran to expanding European markets.²⁰ And this sector of Persian silk was one in which the role played by Venice was far from insignificant as well the capacity of the entire peninsula to tackle the Asian raw and manufactured silk production.²¹

It has to be considered that in each area of what today is called the Middle East one can identify specific local strategies. The Ottoman Empire, for example, was among the competitors closely connected to Indian markets, exporting horses, grain, and cotton and importing jewellery, spices, and fine silks; the Sunni Islam practised by the Ottomans was a significant factor in the rivalry with Safavid Iran.²² For its part, Iran also developed its own cultural and economic strategy in other directions, as is reflected by the diplomatic relations the Safavids maintained with Siam.²³ The fall of the Safavid dynasty at the end of the seventeenth century, a period when the Dutch and English navies were becoming more relevant factors in the East, contributed to the growing importance of the maritime route, even if Central Asian markets continued to exist.

globale, pp. 275–298. See also N. Alessandrini/A. Viola, *Genovesi e fiorentini in Portogallo: reti commerciali e strategie politico-diplomatiche (1650–1700)*, in: *Mediterranea. Ricerche storiche* 28 (2013), pp. 295–322. On the fundamental role of Genoa inside Latin America, see C. Brilli, *Genoese Trade and Migration in the Spanish Atlantic, 1700–1830*, Cambridge, UK 2016.

- 20 S. D. Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The global trade networks of Armenian merchants from New Julfa*, Berkeley 2010; R. W. Ferrier, *Trade from the mid-14th Century to the End of the Safavid Period*, in: P. Jackson/L. Lockhart, *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 6, *The Timurid and Safavid Periods*, Cambridge, UK 1986, pp. 472–490. See also: *A Journey to Persia. Jean Chardin's Portrait of a Seventeenth-century Empire*, transl. and ed. by R. W. Ferrier, London / New York 1996, pp. 165–186.
- 21 On this issue, see my contribution "Chinese Silk and European Trade. A Balance (16th–19th century)", in: Ciriaco, *Luxury Production*, pp. 253 sqq.
- 22 A. C. S. Peacock, *The Economic Relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Southeast Asia in the Seventeenth Century*, in: A. T. Gallop/A. C. S. Peacock (eds.), *From Anatolia to Aceh. Ottomans, Turks and Southeast Asia*, London 2015, pp. 63–73. On the geographical exploration undertaken by the Ottoman empire, and the (not always fully exploited) scope for increased trade that resulted there from, see the arguments advanced by G. Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*, Oxford 2010.
- 23 G. Rota, *Diplomatic Relations between the Safavids and Siam in the 17th Century*, in: Kauz (ed.), *Aspects of the maritime silk road*, pp. 71–84.

2. Russian Expansion: From the West to the East

After the decline of Genghis Kahn's empire, both the Timurid and the Yuan dynasty, which governed China, were far from being minor players in what was transpiring in Central Asia, which was experiencing the arrival of new players: the Russians, the English, large nomadic populations, and the Moghuls in India as well as numerous Asian regions (independent from or economically connected to China). Regarding the Silk Road, most traders were limited in transporting their wares from one place to another – that is to say, they did not complete the entire route from east to west. Furthermore, this route was strongly influenced by climate change, as Jan Blanchard observes: rain fall “and abated temperatures resulted in more verdant grass growth in Mongolia” moving progressively southward of the great silk road”.²⁴

The direction of trade was influenced by this climate change. One route affected was towards the northern shore of the Black Sea (to Kaffa in the Crimea) and towards Taman on the Sea of Azov, with Western merchants carrying their wares through Istanbul over the Black Sea and then passing on through Kaffa to Trebizond and Persia beyond. Another was in the direction of Indian markets through the Central Asian khanates – Kokhand, Bukhara, and Khiva – which acted as way stations for merchants passing along the Silk Road. In this sense, the traditional demand/offer of products exchanged along the Silk Road experienced a new lease of life. The newcomers, such as Russians and the English, interacted with numerous populations and tribes – engaging with their interests and activities – inside Central Asia, which were dependents of the Celestial Empire – a literary name for the Chinese Empire – and, before that, of the Dzungar dynasty, which governed from 1678 to 1754/58. It seems that during the phases that experienced climate improvement, described by Blanchard, the area at the eastern end of the Silk Road in the Tarim Basin enjoyed factors that were favourable for trade throughout the seventeenth century. Cities such as Karashar, Kucha, Aksu, Ush, Kashgar, Yarkand, Khotan, and Turfan could profit from “a trading network that linked China, the Middle East, India, Transoxania, Russia, and Siberia”.²⁵ A favourable fiscal system, founded on a low tax rate (even on foreign trade), was introduced by the Dzungar dynasty and would be upheld by the Chinese authorities after the fall of the former dynasty. Of great importance, this fiscal policy was then followed by the Chinese authorities themselves in their expansion toward the West, as has been highlighted by Peter Perdue.²⁶

24 Blanchard, *The “Great Silk Road”*, p. 255.

25 *Ibid.*, pp. 253–275. For an investigation of the cartographical aspects of this, see J. Tucker, *The Silk Road. China and the Karakorum Highway. A Travel Companion*, with a foreword by P. Theroux, London / New York 2015, pp. 122–164.

26 Another issue of strategic importance for China and its westward expansion was the matter of borders and the empire's attitude to its neighbours and competitors, be they Russians, the British at Canton, or such nomadic populations as the Kazakhs and Zunghars (these latter finally becoming subjects under Chinese rule). See Perdue, *China marches West*, pp. 402–403 and 518–519; N. Di Cosmo, *Ancient China and Its Enemies: The Rise of Nomadic Power in East Asian History*, Cambridge, UK 2002; *Idem*, *State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History*, in: *Journal of World History* 10 (1999) 1, pp. 1–40; H. R. Clark, *Frontier Discourse and China's Maritime*

On the opposite side of Central Asia, Russian expansion eastward, which started in the sixteenth century, was certainly inspired by such fiscal policy. The north-south trade route became increasingly valuable after the conquest of Kazan and the foundation of Astrakhan on the Caspian Sea in the sixteenth century, connecting the southern market with the northern – and with Arkhangel'sk in particular, a port through which Russian commerce flowed to Western Europe (especially the Low Countries). Already in the fifteenth century, Kazan's importance is unmistakable, with the city linking economic interests in Moscow with an area that reached as far as Bulgaria as well as the Muslim world. Already by the beginning of that century, "Russian merchants from Moscow, Pskov, and Novgorod operated regularly in the territory of their Muslim neighbour to the east, the khanate of Kazan, where Bulgars, central Asians, and Cherkassy also resided".²⁷ Even the colonization around the Aral Sea during the sixteenth century is a clear expression of the interest in Central Asia, which ultimately led to Russian control over many central Asian states.

It was Peter the Great who had profited from the fall of the Safavid dynasty after the invasion of the Afghani, entering the valuable silk trade and even trying to control the entire Iranian economy.²⁸ Part only partially successful attempt to gain access to the Indian market, this push in the direction of Persia and Afghanistan was meant to complement (and counterbalance) the role played in the north by the foundation of the city of St. Petersburg. Elsewhere in Russia, by the early years of the seventeenth century one of the many major routes for the silk trade already ran in the direction of Siberia and Arkhangel'sk on the White Sea.²⁹ As Edmund Herzig points out:

raw silk could follow a number of different routes from the production area to Europe and these were: 1) overland to Bursa and Istanbul and onward by sea, or by land across the Balkan peninsula to the Adriatic; 2) overland to Aleppo in Syria from where it was trans-

Frontier: China's Frontiers and the Encounter with the Sea through Early Imperial History, in: *Journal of World History* 20 (2009) 1, pp. 1–33. For more in-depth discussion of the political history and characteristics of the numerous peoples of Central Asia (Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, Turkmen, Tatars, Uzbeks, Kalmyks, etc.), see the fundamental work N. Di Cosmo / A. J. Frank / P. B. Golden (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia. The Chinggisid Age*, Cambridge, UK 2009. On the issue of the "East influenced the West", an interpretation that takes the opposite view to J. Goody: i.e. the reciprocal influence of the West on the East (see footnote 14) is to be found in I. Bellér-Hann, *Silk Road Connectivities and the Construction of Local History in Eastern Xinjiang*, in: *Comparativ* 28 (2018) 4, pp. 93–119. Also see B. Teissier, *Russian Frontiers: Eighteenth-Century British Travellers in the Caspian, Caucasus and Central Asia*, Oxford 2011, where the reports by these travellers make it clear that, in direct competition with the Russians and Chinese, the British were interested in events in Central Asia. On this issue, also see M. Hue (Évariste Régis), *Travels in Tartary, Tibet, and China during the years 1844–56*, transl. by the French, London 1856; A. Beer, *Geschichte des Westhandels im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, Wien 1864, vol. 1, pp. 370–404.

27 E. Monahan, *The Merchants of Siberia. Trade in early Modern Eurasia*, Ithaca/London 2016, pp. 96–97.

28 Teissier, *Russian frontiers*, p.181.

29 Venice itself was present in this port. As Stefano Villani stresses, when the Russian ambassadors were in Tuscany with the aim of opening up trade relations with Italian cities, one of their primary goals was "to encourage Venice to use the commercial base of Arkhangel'sk, and obtain the right for Russians to purchase luxury Venetian fabrics without having to pay customs duties", see Villani, *Ambasciatori russi a Livorno e rapporti tra Moscovia e Toscana nel XVII secolo*, in: *Nuovi Studi Livornesi* 14 (2008), pp. 37–95. My thanks to the author for pointing this out.

ported to the port of Iskenderun and onward by sea; 3) overland to Izmir and onward by sea; 4) across the Caspian to Astrakhan from either Rasht/Anzali in Gilian or Sham-akha/Niyazabad in Shirvan, then up the Volga to Moscow and onward either overland to Central Europe or by way of the Baltic or the White Sea to Holland and England; 5) overland across Iran via Isfahan to Bandar Abbas and onward by sea via the Cap route.³⁰

A particularly dynamic role here was played by Dutch ships, which themselves carried silk and caviar towards Italy specifically and the Mediterranean in general. According to one estimate (which may be seen as applicable in a broader sense):

[T]he Sephardi silk broker Sebastian Pimentel reported that in 1630 only 20 per cent of Dutch silk imports were arriving from the Mediterranean. This means the rest, 80 per cent of Persian silk reaching the Netherlands, was arriving via other routes, including from the Dutch East India Company circumnavigating Africa or from Dutch merchants in Russia. According to Jonathan Israel's estimates, in 1630 four hundred bales of Persian and Armenian silk reached Western Europe via Moscow and Arkhangel'sk [...] and only three hundred silk bales reached Western Europe from Levant and Italy. Thus, bearing in mind the silk traded by the VOC, one might estimate that a good one-fifth of the total silk arriving in Europe came from Russia.³¹

Raw silk was shipped directly from the Iranian market to the Russian market and there was “a considerable increase in the export of raw silk through Astrakhan, which varied from 20,000 to 100,000 kilograms per year at the turn of the eighteenth century”.³² The considerable Russian interest in the Italian market included finished silks and fabrics³³ as well as two exports that would become of vital importance for trade with European markets: caviar and rhubarb (the latter was a medicinal plant for which there was great demand amongst seventeenth- and eighteen-century European consumers, and the trade therein was a monopoly controlled by the Moscow authorities).³⁴ It is no coincidence that it was with the grand duke of the silk-producing Tuscany that Tsar Aleksei Mikhailov signed a commercial agreement in 1658, granting the former a monopoly over the caviar trade within the Italian market in return for the payment of an agreed sum – the grand duke obtained the concession that half of that payment would be calculated in “silk, as was the common practice at Arkhangel'sk”.

Certainly, Russian expansion in Central Asia took advantage of the growing prominence of the Asian khanates, showing an increasing interest in what for Europeans was “the

30 E. Herzig, The Volume of Iranian Raw Silk Exports in the Safavid Period, in: *Iranian Studies* 25 (1992) 1–2, p. 62.

31 Monahan, *The Merchants of Siberia*, p.60.

32 N. G. Kukanova, quoted by A. Stanziani, *After Oriental Despotism. Eurasian Growth in a Global Perspective*, London 2014, p. 80.

33 See R. Mazzei, *Sete italiane nella Russia della seconda metà del Seicento. La produzione lucchese alle fiere di Arcangelo*, in: *Rivista di Storia Economica* (2015) 2, pp. 473–515.

34 In Gemelli Careri's description of the rich array of goods traded in Asia, we are told that the best rhubarb was that grown in Bhutan and sold by the Tartars, see *Giro del mondo del Dottor Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri*, Tomo secondo contenente le cose più vedute nella Persia, Venice 1719, p. 3..

East" and for Russians might also be "India" (as Manohan calls attention to, "the term 'India' in early Russian sources could encompass an area much larger, including even China"³⁵). It is now widely accepted that by the end of the seventeenth century "Russia was heavily integrated in the expanding European world economy, linked to colonial economies of the English and Dutch via Arkhangel'sk and with the Silk Roads trade through the Volga-Caspian and Siberian trade routes".³⁶ As already mentioned, while Arkhangel'sk served as Russia's window to the West, it was Astrakhan, at the mouth of the Volga River into the Caspian Sea, that became its window to the "Orient".³⁷ This is evidenced by a small but active community of Indian merchants, who were part of a much vaster network that extended from Lahore and Multan to Kandahar, Isfahan and Bukhara, linking the north of India with Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asia, and Russia.³⁸ At the same time, as Nicolaus Visscher points out, Persian goods were travelling up the Volga to Astrakhan.³⁹ All of this confirms the existence, in parallel with a complex of Western interests, of Asian interests, which although perhaps being more traditional in character were extremely important.

The Russians were skilled at exploiting divisions among the tribal nomadic peoples of the region (above all, the Kazakhs), and they managed to penetrate such trading centres as Kokhand, Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khivan (in modern-day Uzbekistan), taking advantage of the role played by these cities' merchants. Without them, it would not have been possible to establish trade with Kabul, Herat, Kashmir, and the Chinese cities of Xinjiang.

Bukhara, for example, had no industries that worked raw materials, and so it was purely a trading centre. The city was particularly significant as its merchants supplied Orenburg and the Russian fairs of Nijni and Novgorod with not only cotton (a major commodity) but also dried fruit, rice, raw and dyed silk thread, silk fabrics, shawls, and indigo. Caravans under the control of the Kyrgyz⁴⁰ ran from Bukhara to Kashgar, which remained independent from China until the empire conquered the whole of Xinjiang in 1758. This state of affairs enabled the Russians to export not only their own goods but also those which came from Central Europe, such as cloths, fine coral, pearls, cochineal, cloth of gold, velvet, silver and gold wire, German otter-skins, marten-skins, copper, sugar, hides, large mirrors, wheel rims, needles, glass-wares and Russian nankeens. In

35 Monahan, *The Merchants of Siberia*, p. 362. Also see M. Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier. The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1500–1880*, Bloomington/Indianapolis 2002; D. N. Druhe, *Russo-Indian Relations, 1466–1917*, New York 1970.

36 Monahan, *The Merchants of Siberia*, p. 53.

37 Findlay/O'Rourke, *Power and Plenty*, p. 303.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 244. Manuzzi was more focused on the institutions and social aspects of India than on economic issues. On his presence in the subcontinent, see P. Falchetta (ed.), *Storia del Mogol di Nicolò Manuzzi veneziano*, Milan 1986. See also the comments made by Subrahmanyam in *Mondi connessi*, pp. 183–219.

39 N. Visscher, *Atlas minor*, Amsterdam [ca 1710].

40 5,000 to 6,000 camels were used per year. The load of a single camel was estimated to be 60 ducats in value, which was calculated to be RUB 3,500,000–4,000,000. A single camel could carry 18 to 20 pud, a pud being the equivalent to 40 Russian pounds or 36 Chinese pounds (Bokhara: its Amir and its People, translated from the Russian of Khanikoff by the Baron Clement A. De Bode, London 1845, p. 220).

turn, “Kokhand merchants brought to Bukhara fine white cotton sheets to be dyed, silk stuffs, which were more durable than those of the Bukharans, and about 500 puds (ca. 8 tons) of raw silk of inferior quality to that of Bukhara. Tashkent sent to Bukhara much the same merchandise but in lesser quantity”.⁴¹ Bukhara had a large population (Florio Beneveni, who visited during his travels of 1721 to 1725, mentions 15,000), with a sizeable number of Jewish traders closely linked to the Russian fairs of Nijni and Novgorod (the latter a city that was emblematic of the traditional Russian interest in expansion into Central and Southern Asia). Astrakhan, too, seems to have been equally important as a trading centre. At the crossroads of Eurasian trade, the north-south routes from Russia along the Volga intersected with the merchandise arriving from the Silk Road that was directed towards the ports of the Caspian Sea, Persia and beyond – trade which saw the involvement of Armenians, Indians, Persians, and different Tatar groups.⁴² Nevertheless, the number which some sources give for the population of Astrakhan in 1740 – a total of 100, 000 – seems excessive, even if it is taken up by Tesseir: we know that in 1811 the population numbered only 37,000, which had increased to just 42,800 by 1863.⁴³ Both sericulture and manufacture were developing widely inside this area, which was at the centre of the Silk Road and looked westward towards Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Persia, connecting these regions to China. Eighteenth-century Russian interest in this strategic area (and in Bukhara in particular) is entirely understandable, and equally understandable is the interest shown here by the English East India Company, which was looking towards India (a focus that would have decisive consequences in the future). It is no accident that a treaty was signed in the first half of the eighteenth century by Russians and British to guarantee equal profits from Central Asian trade, especially with regard to that moving through Bukhara and Kiakhta. However, it seems that throughout the eighteenth-century Russia profits in Bukhara did not match those obtained by the British.

While Bukhara and Kashgar were important in Russian trade with China, it seems evident that the major centre for this commerce was Kiakhta, through which passed porcelain plates (decorated with the Greco-Roman designs in demand among European consumers), cotton, Japanese lacquer work, artificial flowers, sugar, tobacco, rice, rhubarb, ginger, musk, and musical instruments. In fact, the rhubarb from Tartar territories was considered better than that from India, and there was no question that the rhubarb that came via Central Asia was better than that transported to Europe by ship, which was exposed to excessive humidity during the voyage. Another central export from China to

41 Ibid., pp. 144, 208, 212, 215–217; William Coxe, *Account of the Russian Discoveries Between Asia and America. To Which Are Added, The Conquest of Siberia, And The History Of The Transactions And Commerce Between Russia And China*, London, J. Nichols for T. Cadel, 1780, pp. 231–243 and 332–343.

42 Tesseir, *Russian Frontiers*, p. 232; N. Di Cosmo, *A Russian Envoy to Khiva: the Italian Diary of Florio Beneveni*, in: *Proceedings of the XXVIII Permanent International Altaistic Conference: Venice, Wiesbaden 1989*, pp. 73–114.

43 See H. Palli et al., *La démographie historique en URSS (avant 1917)*, in: *Annales de démographie historique* (1986), pp. 379–391. This source was kindly pointed out to me by Maurice Aymard, of the *Maison des Sciences de l’Homme* in Paris, whom I would also like to thank for his painstaking reading of the present article.

Russia was tea; exports had begun earlier than the 18th century and were linked with the trade in rhubarb itself (the finer quality of this latter came from Kiakhat, while that from Kashgar was of a lesser quality). It is true that the tea itself still had to compete with the green tea from India (over which the British had a monopoly), but it is nevertheless the case that tea would long remain the key Chinese export not only towards Russia but also to European markets. According to some sources (yet to be assessed and compared), the Chinese tea that was sent to Russia was sometimes believed to be of higher quality than the tea that China exported to Europe.

As for silk, the other vital product, while it is true that the Chinese had banned the export of raw silk, there was also sizeable flow of contraband through Kiakhta, given the great demand for such silk on the Russian market. In effect, the Russians enjoyed considerable advantages in their overall trade with Kiakhta, given that they could export their furs and livestock to the city: for example, when the Chinese were at war with the nomad Kalmyks, these latter depended upon Russians for the supply of horses. So, while it has been calculated that in 1777 Russia actually had a trade deficit in this area (1,484,712 as opposed to 1,313,621 roubles), over the long term it had everything to gain from such trade. Nor should one forget that it exported not only its own fabrics but also those imported from Europe (British, French, and Prussian).

Nevertheless, it was Orenburg more than Kiakhta that became the strategic hub of the internal Asian trade. It even surpassed Astrakhan thanks to its varied commerce: partly luxury items from the Far East and partly traditional ones, such as horses, camels, pelts, and utensils from Russia. It is undeniable "that caravan commerce was revived and that there was a shift from the Iran-Caspian-Astrakhan line to overland routes through Central Asia to Orenburg".⁴⁴ Trade was largely managed by central Asians and Tatars from Kazan and Orenburg to the detriment of Russian merchants themselves; like other European merchants inside Asian markets, these latter were dependent on native interpreters and guides.⁴⁵

3. English, Chinese, Russians: The Italian Avatar

What was happening in Central Asia, however, should not lead one to underestimate the role of maritime trade and the dominance of a port such as Canton, thanks to the growing presence of the British, whose activity there reveals the existence of clear trade links with India – links whose "colonial" nature is not less evident than the "Russification" in Central Asia over the course of the nineteenth century.⁴⁶ With regard to tea, for example, in 1800 Canton would export some 23 million pounds worth, while "only" 2.5 million

44 Stanziani, *After Oriental Despotism*, p. 84.

45 This issue was already raised by D. Lombard, *Questions on the contact between European companies and Asian societies*, in: L. Blussé et al. (eds.), *Companies and Trade*, Leiden 1981, pp. 180–187.

46 U. Hofmeister, *Civilization and Russification in Tsarist Central Asia, 1860–1917*, in: *Journal of World History* 27 (2016) 3, pp. 411–442.

pounds worth passed through Kiakhta (the quality, and therefore the price, of tea could vary depending upon where it was being exported to – for example, Siberia, Britain, Europe or Russia).⁴⁷ The two centres of Canton and Kiakhta thus alternated in standing, even if the latter – due to its geographical position (in the heart of Siberia) – was definitely a fundamental hub for the export of furs and skins, often of very high value (such as beaver, winter fox, sable, etc.). In fact, for a long time, such products and the duty on them would make a sizeable contribution to Russian revenues, even if there were complex negotiations with the Chinese over those taxes: the Chinese wanted to reduce such duties in order to increase their trade with Russia but at the same time expected to be able to levy high exit taxes on their own goods.⁴⁸

The key goods that reflected the future commercial destinies of the two nations were the raw silk and cotton imported from China via Bukhara and Kiakhta. The case of raw silk might be seen as emblematic of the overall situation, given that in 1751 it accounted for 24 per cent of the total Chinese imports into Russia but by the end of the century made up no more than 12 per cent. Russia, however, would continue to import raw silk from Iran as well as wool and cotton from both China and India – all to supply a process of industrialization that may not have matched the phenomenon to be seen in the British Isles but would remain significant for some decades to come. Still, there is no question that most of Russia's exports would continue to be made up of "bulk goods with a low ratio of value to weight, such as hemp and flax, wax and tallow, hides, skins and leather, pitch and tar, timber, and increasingly over time grain".⁴⁹ Just like China's foreign trade, Russia's would be linked throughout the eighteenth century to classic exotic products, and only in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would the formulation "luxury products versus mass products" see the latter prevail.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, in the case of Russia, the process of a "modern" development seems to have been largely underappreciated by traditional historiography.⁵¹ Furthermore, even it is difficult to deny the importance of maritime traffic and the penetration of British interests and trade originating in Southern Asia (especially India), during the nineteenth century Russia's control of markets

47 On this point, see M. Mancall, *The Kiakhta Trade*, in: Ch. D. Cowan (ed.), *The Economic Development of China and Japan*, London 1964, p. 44.

48 M. I. Sladkovskii, *History of Economic Relations between Russia and China*, Jerusalem 1966, pp. 32–33. See this text for the role of caravans financed by the Russian state in the export of furs and other products (due to pressure from the Russian state itself, that trade was gradually to be taken over by private entrepreneurs). On the fiscal systems in Russia and China (the latter perhaps dating back further and generally more efficient), see P. Gatrell, *The Russian fiscal state, 1600–1914*; K. G. Deng, *The continuation and efficiency of the Chinese fiscal state, 700 BC–AD 1911*; and R. Bin Wong, *Taxation and good governance in China, 1500–1914*, in: B. Yun Casalilla et al. (eds.), *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History 1500–1914*, Cambridge, UK 2012, pp. 191–212, 340–352 and 365–372 resp.

49 Finlay/O'Rourke, *Power and Plenty*, pp. 299–304, esp. p. 302 over time grain and bar iron.

50 P. Verley, *Marché des produits de luxe et division internationale du travail (XIXe–XXe siècles)*, in: *Revue de Synthèse* (2006) 2, pp. 359–378. See also S. Richter/G. Garner (eds.), „Eigennutz“ und „gute Ordnung“. *Ökonomisierungen der Welt im 17. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden 2016, pp. 485 sq; Ciriaco, *Luxury Production*.

51 On this issue, see Stanziani, *After Oriental Despotism*, pp. 107sq.

inside Central Asia would become firmly established and remain a defining feature of the political history of the region⁵² until the implosion of the Soviet Union.

If we are interested in the role Italian merchants did play in that region over these centuries, the limited information that is available provides us only with just one figure: Florio Beneveni, originally from Ragusa (Dubrovnik), appointed as a Russian envoy on a mission to Khiva in 1725, which is described in the journal that he wrote in Italian. His mission to Central Asia took place at a time when there were many Europeans at the court of Peter the Great, and Russia was expanding into the Central Asian khanates.⁵³ Indeed, this Russian expansion was not limited to Asia but, as I have underlined, was also in the direction of the Mediterranean, through the increased importance of the Black Sea. Perhaps comparable to Astrakhan on the Caspian Sea, Kaffa would become an important port on the Black Sea after the waning fortunes there of the Genoese and Venetians, a transition that merits more attention.⁵⁴

A no less essential role would be played by the ports of the eastern Mediterranean as well the traditional terminals of Asian caravans, first and foremost those connected to Aleppo.⁵⁵ This latter destination remained vital throughout the eighteenth century, the port continuing to be the final destination of the German products transported by the Venetian ships (fustians, worked cottons, and metal ware). On the other hand, Venice remained the final destination for the luxury products transported by caravans from the Middle East – at that time, Baghdad, Basra, and ancient Babylon.⁵⁶ Iran and India also have to be considered in this larger picture. For example, the presence of the Republic of Venice inside the Indian peninsula was very relevant – think, for instance, of the role of diamonds and the techniques for cutting the stones developed by Venetian artisans.⁵⁷ Nor should one overlook the fact that certain Chinese products began to compete with such typical Venetian objects as false coral on international markets. Undoubtedly, the trade between Venice and these Mediterranean ports (Alexandria and Aleppo) has to be

52 E. Allworth (ed.), *Central Asia. 130 Years of Russian Dominance. A Historical Overview*, Durham / London 1994.

53 Di Cosmo, *A Russian Envoy to Khiva*, pp. 73–114. As was pointed out to me by Maurice Aymard, the reference is to Dubrovnik (Ragusa) and not to the Ragusa in Sicily, as Di Cosmo himself interprets it.

54 "Like Astrakan, Kaffa was a great entrepôt and the most important port within the Khanate. Strong walls and ditches surrounded it. Its population was some 80,000 souls including some 5,000–6,000 Raya Greeks, Armenians, Catholics and Jews. [...] The town's trade was enormous. Yet even at this time the wares brought to it by way of the "Great Silk Road" constituted only a tiny part. The vast majority of the goods bought and sold at Kaffa were brought from, or despatched to, lands within the Ottoman trade-system of the Black Sea and the Turkish lands beyond the Bosphorus" (Blanchard, *The "Great Silk Road"*, p. 274). On the role of the Black Sea, see G. Harlaftis, *Black Sea and its maritime networks, 1770s–1810s. The Beginnings of its European Integration*, in: G. Nigro (ed.), *Maritime Networks as a Factor in European Integration (The 50th Settimana di Studi dell'Istituto Internazionale F. Datini, Prato 13–17 May 2018)*, Florence 2019; the argument there is already sketched out in Harlaftis et al. (eds.), *The New Ways of History*, London 2009.

55 A. Morana, *Relazione del commercio di Aleppo ed altre scale della Siria e Palestina*, Venice 1799.

56 L. Reinhardt, *Erben einer späten Seidenstrasse. Der Markt von Aleppo in osmanischer Zeit (16.–18. Jahrhundert)*, in: *Die Seidenstrasse. Handel und Kulturaustausch in einem eurasischen Wegenetz*, Hamburg 2001, pp. 237–250.

57 S. Ciriaco, *Diamonds in Early Modern Venice. Technology, Products and International Competition*, in: *Italian Technology from Renaissance to the Twentieth century (History of Technology 32 [2014])*, now in *Luxury Production*, pp. 229–252.

considered inside the framework of the economic relations between Russia and other major Italian economies, for instance the Republic of Venice, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, and Genoa (however, it should be stressed that that latter was increasingly more interested in the Atlantic economy).

Thus, not only does Russia's economic penetration into Central Asia have to be taken into account but also its expansion towards the Black Sea, where it came up against European powers – a circumstance that would become the origin of the “Eastern Question”. Furthermore, Istanbul and Izmir on the Turkish coast, as well as Alexandria on the Egyptian coast (with land links to the Red Sea), have to be considered as vital terminals for trans-Asian trade. Through these ports, northern European markets and such central European centres as Vienna and Leipzig were connected to Asia.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the emergence of many Central Asian states – for example, Kazakhstan – and the exploitation of many mineral and fuel resources (gas and petrol) have given the continent an undeniable advantage, with harsh consequences for the West. There is no question that the strategic reaction here of Europe – and especially the US – has not been adequate. Peter Frankopan writes about a “road to catastrophe” and a “the road to tragedy”.⁵⁸ Interestingly, however, one can see the emergence of a new Silk Road following the same path as the old one – which tends as well to ignore desert areas. This new “Road”, nevertheless, is more a conduit for the flow of products and fuel resources than the exchange of discoveries and know-how as it was in the past (think of the technologies of silk and paper manufacture). How the West should intervene in the future depends on its capacity to react and to develop a wide-ranging political-economic response to the current situation, accepting – as Fernand Braudel stresses – that there are necessary limits to any such reaction.⁵⁹

58 Frankopan, *The Silk Roads*, chapt. 24 and 25.

59 F. Braudel, *Les ambitions de l'histoire*, 2, Préface de Maurice Aymard, Paris 1997, pp. 97–125.

REZENSIONEN

Arnd Bauerkämper / Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe (eds.): Fascism without Borders. Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe from 1918 to 1945, New York / Oxford: Berghahn Books 2017, 373 p.

Review by
Victor Lundberg, Malmö

Fascism is now an international movement, which means not only that the Fascist nations can combine for purposes of loot, but that they are groping, perhaps only half-consciously as yet, towards a world system.¹

As early as 1937, George Orwell pinpointed the significance of the transnational character of fascism. He underlined its potential to dismantle the world we know and threaten the rights we have won and defended during the twentieth century. 80 years later, fascism with its underlying transnational ambitions is unfortunately present on the international political scene again. Today it appears in a neo-fascist costume, with a new combination of beguiling rhetoric, appalling ideas and clumsy political behaviour, but nevertheless, it is

still fascism in its core of strong nationalism and chauvinism, and of anti-democracy, anti-communism, and anti-humanism. From Washington to Budapest, Brasilia to Moscow, Manila to Warsaw, neo-fascism is seeking power. Warning signals from brilliant historians as Federico Finchelstein and perceptive politicians as Madeleine Albright are now as vitally important as once George Orwell's.²

In "Fascism without borders", the editors Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe are very modest when emphasizing the importance and topicality of their book. In their outstanding introduction, they primarily focus, in a very illuminating and clarifying way, transnational fascism from a historical perspective. They start with defining the three dimensions of "transnational fascism": a) fascism was in fact a transnational political movement; b) fascism was in the historical context perceived as a transnational phenomenon; and c) fascism can analytically be approached with a transnational perspective (p. 2). Then they continue to scrutinize "fascism as a transnational political alternative to democracy" in interwar Europe (p. 16). In this, Bauerkämper and Rossolinski-Liebe write pleasurably and concisely with great expertise and analytical abilities. It is pure educational delight to read this.

As the editors initially point out, historical research that focus on the transnational dimensions of fascism are still very rare (pp. 1, 6). However, this volume connects to a small but very important field of historical research, where the most studies are quite recently published.³ In all, this book consists of thirteen chapters, the introduction and the afterword excluded. In fact, the contributions can be divided into three themes. First, there are three essays in this book that stands out with a distinctively conceptual and intellectual ambition. They analyse central key notions and ideas within interwar fascism that had the obvious and strong potential to break national boundaries and bring fascists in interwar Europe together: Johannes Dalfinger about the *völkisch* elements throughout fascist Europe; Aristotle Kallis about violence and creative destruction “at the heart of the fascist history-making project” in Europe (p. 41); and Matteo Pasetti about the corporatist ideas as a central political cornerstone, overcoming national borders. These three intelligent essays dig analytically in the overlooked and contradictory intellectual history of fascism with a true transnational perspective.

Second, there are a group of essays that focus on national case studies, specific movements, and personalities, and their various international relations and transnational aspirations: Raul Carstocea about the international relations around the legionary leader of the Romanian Iron Guard, Ion I Mota; Monica Fioravanzo about the idea of a New European Order (NEO) within Italian fascism; Anna Lena Kocks about the relations and circulations of ideas about leisure among Italian and British fascists; Goran Miljan about the in-

terrelated organization of youth activities within the Croatian fascist group Ustasha and the Slovak Hlinka Party; Claudia Nin-hos about the obscure channels between Portugal and Germany beyond the German Kulturpropaganda; Marleen Rensen about the French fascist intellectual Robert Brasillach; and Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe about the meaning of inter-fascist conflicts between National Socialists and national fascist groups in Austria, Romania, and Ukraine. These seven essays – the backbone of this book – are all qualitative, empirically based and well written, but some of them maybe slip a little when it comes to staying true to the transnational main theme; internationalism is not the same as transnationalism.

Third, there are three essays on the fringe of this book that all have in common that they deal with antifascism: Kasper Braskén about communist antifascism; Silvia Madotto about universities as the centres of transnational antifascism activism in France and Italy; and Francesco Di Palma about transnational channels between antifascist activists in European exile. This is where the weakness of this book is revealed. These three essays are unfortunately not fully compatible with the qualified and well-defined theme around transnational fascism that the editors initially point out. The general idea that “transnational activities of fascists and antifascists were interrelated” (p. 361) is not really convincing or underpinned by these essays. Of course, were antifascists often related to fascists because of their nature as a collective political reaction against them. But does that really mean the opposite; that fascists actually were related to the antifascists in general? According to

this, it also unclear, what is really meant by dubious suggestions like: “a new history of communist antifascism should be written in close relation to transnational fascism” (p. 304). Here it becomes obvious that international antifascism, not only during the interwar period, need to be more critically investigated by historical research that is able to explore the complex antifascist grey-scale from factual and ideologically manifested (communist, syndicalist, social democratic, and radical liberal) antifascism, via political strategies and party tactics within and between the different antifascist actors, to totalitarian, anarchist, irresponsible, and adolescent, versions of antifascist disguises.⁴

However, this does not take away the strength and importance of this splendid book. It illustrates and problematize interwar fascism in Europe as an organic and multifaceted political force field, something Arnd Bauerkämper (in his interesting but too short afterword) portrays as: “fascist ultranationalism did not exclude a sense of common mission or solidarity, giving rise to a wide scope of relations, from mere perceptions to contacts, interactions, transfers, and processes of learning” (p. 355). On the basis of the essays, he also underlines that entanglements, conflicts, and antagonism were a significant factor in these “multiple asymmetries that characterized relations between fascists” (p. 357). On the other hand it is also essential to keep in mind the strong common concept of violence – which Aristotle Kallis in one of the sharpest essays of this book highlights as “the violent pursuit of the fascists ‘new order’” (p. 56) – that ties European fascists together and unifies them, not at least discursively and practi-

cally. This also reminds us about Robert O. Paxton’s important and clarifying definition of fascism as, beyond ideology and politics, a question of “a form of political behaviour”.⁵ Twentieth century fascism is in that sense like a rat: it is adaptable and could orientate and reproduce itself everywhere; it behaves nasty and completely unscrupulous; and it shuns the day, preferring the darkness.

In conclusion, the sheds new light on this; fascism’s overlooked but lethal capacity to emerge and amalgamate above national (and other) borders. This transnational “fascist spirit” (p. 208) that Marleen Rensen picks out in her shining contribution, must continue to be historically investigated and observed, not least because it is through that kind of knowledge we can stand stronger as democratic and humanitarian societies in the future. We may never forget George Orwell. This book helps us not to do that.

Notes:

- 1 G. Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, London 1937, p. 200. Also quoted in this volume, p. 5.
- 2 M. Albright, *Fascism. A Warning*, New York 2018; F. Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism in History*, Oakland 2017.
- 3 See, for example, M. Albanese, P. del Hierro, *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century. Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network. A Modern History of Politics and Violence*, London 2016; N. Alcade, *War Veterans and Fascism in Interwar Europe*, Cambridge 2017; A. Costa Pinto, K. Aristotle (eds.), *Rethinking Fascism and Dictatorship in Europe*, Basingstoke 2014; M. Durham, M. Power (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Transnational Right*, Basingstoke 2010; M. R. Gutmann, *Building a Nazi Europe. The SS’s Germanic Volunteers*, Cambridge 2017; A. G. Kjøstvedt, A. Salvador (eds.), *New Political Ideas in the Aftermath of the Great War*, Cham 2017; A. Mammone, *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*, New York 2015; Ph. Mor-

- gan, Fascism in Europe, 1919–1945, New York 2003.
- 4 See, for an excellent example, H. Garzia, M. Yusta, X. Tabet, Ch. Climaco (eds.), *Rethinking Antifascism. History, Memory and Politics, 1922 to the Present*, New York, Oxford 2016.
 - 5 R. O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, London 2004, p. 218.

Ralph Callebert: *On Durban's Docks: Zulu Workers, Rural Households, Global Labor*, Rochester: Rochester University Press, 2017, 256 S.

Reviewed by
Jonathan Hyslop, Hamilton

Recent years have seen a shift of historical scholarship on South Africa, in the direction of transnational perspectives. This new work has had a salutary effect on a historiography previously characterized by a considerable degree of national exceptionalism and even, at worst, parochialism. It has also highlighted, for the first time, the maritime dimension of modern South African history, with considerable attention given to port cities and their linkages across the world. Yet in its more simplistic manifestations, the new work has tended toward an over-optimistic celebration of 'cosmopolitanism' and 'global mobility'. Simultaneously, we have seen something of a decline in the strong tradition of South African labour history. While there has been much attention to global cultural flows and the travels of radical anti-coloni-

al politicians, working class life and struggles have become somewhat neglected.

Ralph Callebert's *On Durban's Docks* is an important corrective to all of these trends. It is an account of the harbour workers of South Africa's most important port during the Twentieth Century (with a focus on the 1930s to 1950s). The study is in the best traditions of labour history and of modern African social history, drawing on an extensive programme of oral history interviews and on deep archival work. While recognizing the benefits of a more global understanding of South Africa, Callebert fundamentally questions the centrality this has been given, and the implicit optimism that has come with it. He stresses the relative disconnection of Durban's dockworkers from the wider world, and simultaneously he shows the depth of their exploitation. At a deeper conceptual level, this approach is linked by Callebert to a questioning of accounts of globality which are steeped in a universalist view of the diffusion of wage labour and economic rationalism. He charges such approaches with a failure to grasp the specificity of the African context.

Callebert sees dockworkers as constrained by segregationist laws and by linguistic barriers in their interactions with passing ships.¹ Poverty meant that they consumed little of what was imported through Durban. He shows how workers' self-definition was bound up, not with their position as workers, so much as with their aspirations to be heads of rural households and to accumulate cattle. They seldom desired to settle in the cities, and to this extent, the migrant labour system was not simply a product of state coercion. Their footholds in the countryside represented a zone in

which they could escape from the racial domination of the city. There, the workers could establish themselves as patriarchs, marrying through the acquisition of cattle as bride price (*ukulobola*), and remaining in touch with the ancestral spirits (*amadlozi*). The homestead was their primary cultural and emotional reference point. For Callebert, this means that generic accounts of 'proletarianization' and 'urbanization' are inherently unsatisfactory.

Callebert shows that migrancy did change social patterns, but not only in the ways that are usually imagined. Rural women became more central to the management of households, in the absence of their menfolk. Men did not only rely on waged work, but rather combined it with other economic strategies in the city, in order to accelerate their path toward the satisfaction of returning to the land. Many started small side businesses in Durban, and many traded in goods pilfered in the harbour. Callebert here challenges any idea of the dockworkers as 'pure' proletarians – the crucial thing, for him, is the interface between rural and urban economies, and between wage labour, small scale trade and homestead farming.

This leads the to a much broader point, and it is here that the wider interest of Callebert's work lies. He makes an extensive critique of simple notions of economic man. While the cattle which migrants sought to accumulate had economic value, their primary significance was as a source of cultural meaning. Here, Callebert links his work to the insights of Karl Polanyi. His research supports Polanyi's objections to the idea of a universal, profit-seeking economic rationality. Rather, Polanyi points to the ways in which economic

behaviour is embedded in social political and religious life. Dockworkers engaged in small trade not because of any innate entrepreneurial impulse, but as a way of pursuing their vision of a meaningful life in the places from which they had come. Thus, Callebert challenges what he characterizes as 'eurocentric' conceptions of economic behavior, whether Smithian or Marxist.

As a locally-focussed social history, Callebert's book is exemplary. His descriptions of the economic strategies of the dockworkers, of their living and working conditions in the city and their linkages to their rural homes, of the petty 'crimes' which helped them to survive, and of the cooperative economic initiatives in which workers were involved are superb. His section on labour politics is valuable for its emphasis on the role of nationalism in militancy, and for not shying away from the difficult issue of the deep antagonism between the dockworkers and Durban's Indian community. The anti-Indian feeling was horrifically manifested in massive violence against Indians in a massive 1949 riot, in which dockers played a central part. This clash becomes more comprehensible in the light of Callebert's demonstration of how important small trade was to the dockworkers as a source of their livelihoods. Indians, as a dominant force in retail, were competitors.

The assertion of a Polanyian position in the book is of great value. While there has been some interest in Polanyi in South Africa, he tends mainly to have been invoked by leftist social scientists making a critique of 'neo-liberalism'. Thus, he simply stands as a critic of market economics. The much deeper Polanyian argument that societies

are held together by non-economic factors, tends to be ignored by these scholars, who simply want to use him to attack free market economics, in the name of a more egalitarian economic model. They do not take on board the extent to which Polanyi's thinking would also challenge their own tendency to undervalue the cultural and religious dimensions of the social world. A real engagement with the fundamentals of Polanyian thought, as advocated by Callebert, is long overdue in South Africa. Having said that though, Callebert's critique of South African Marxist scholarship may be a little overstated. He charges this tradition with exaggerating their differences with liberals over the centrality of class as opposed to race, with not considering the cultural level of analysis and with engaging in a functionalist type of analysis of the relation between racist policies and capitalism. Yet while some of this is indeed true of the 1970s 'structuralist' Marxist writing on South Africa (Legassick, Wolpe, the 'Poulantzians') and in some of the South African left industrial sociology literature focusing on 'labour process' theory in the 1980s, Callebert paints with too broad a brush here. The whole Marxist-influenced social history movement since the 1970s, for instance in the work the Johannesburg History Workshop, strongly emphasized the need to deal with issues of culture and to avoid functionalism, and radical industrial sociology also became, over time, much more nuanced in dealing with issues of race. And in an era of populism in South Africa, in which a smokescreen of African nationalist racial rhetoric obscures the growing gap between the condition of the working poor and the wealth of the new African and old white elites, there is

surely nothing wrong with paying at least some renewed attention to the question of class.

Nevertheless, this is a stellar contribution to labour and social history, which not only is essential reading for Southern Africanists, but should be of significant interest to a much wider world of historical and social science scholarship.

Note:

- 1 A problem in the book is a somewhat loose use of the term 'apartheid'. I would say that it is important to recognize a distinction between the somewhat loosely organized and often customary segregationism of pre-1948 period, and the intensely regulated and bureaucratized apartheid policy introduced by the National Party regime in 1948.

Elleke Boehmer / Rouven Kunstmann / Priyasha Mukhopadhyay / Asha Rogers (eds.): The Global Histories of Books. Methods and Practices (New Directions in Book History series), Berlin / Basingstoke: Springer International Publishing / Palgrave Macmillan 2017, 334 p.

Reviewed by
Cécile Cottenet, Marseille

This collection of essays, edited by scholars whose expertise evinces a global outlook, is the result of two workshops organized at the University of Oxford in 2014, and the University of Melbourne in 2015. In the wake of recent scholarship aiming at

displacing the nation-state as an analytical category¹ and intersecting book history and post-/de-colonial studies, these eleven chapters explore the lives of the global book within and without the British empire, in a trans-imperial movement.

In their introduction, Boehmer, Kunstmann, Mukhopadhyay, and Rogers humbly present the collection as an attempt, neither fully-representative nor comprehensive, to showcase “instances of interaction and connection as compelling alternatives” (p. 4) to national histories. The editors thus readily acknowledge that global perspectives in cultural history and print culture are no longer controversial; yet, they rightfully suggest that much remains to be written to further our understanding of the multiple ways in which books, and the assumptions and representations of empire they may convey, circulate and are received across boundaries and in multiple locations.

As the subtitle “Methods and Practices,” indicates, the singular case studies all proceed from practice up, rather than from theory down. They also draw on a vast range of methodologies and approaches, from the history of geography and of literature, mobility studies, theories of globalization, literature, sociology and network theory, to library and print culture. This vast array of practices testifies to the growing importance of transnational and global perspectives in cultural history and print culture; however, it also makes it difficult for the editors, in the introduction, to fully articulate the different interpretive frames and concepts offered by the contributors, at times emphasizing practices over methods. The chapters focus on the means and conditions, as well as the effects, of moving

books across frontiers, cultures and empires from the 18th to the 21st century, with specific attention to the 19th century. The richness of archival work in many of the essays, conducted across several countries and indeed for some, across several continents, is undeniably one of the strengths of the collection. The editors should further be commended for including scholarship by early-career scholars, thereby encouraging innovative perspectives and raising novel questions; and for complexifying the imperial framework by encompassing the mobility of texts and books in different languages besides English – including Arabic, French, Chinese, Persian, Afrikaans and Xam, to give a few – without obscuring the reader’s understanding. Ultimately, the beautiful cover art efficiently appeals to our colonial imagination, as it conjures up visions of past voyages.

To present such a diverse array of case studies without losing the complexity of this volume is delicate. Fundamentally, the overarching question implied by all four sections under which the essays are grouped – “Colonial Networks,” “Global Genres,” “Reading Relationships” and “Cultural Translation” – is what makes books move globally. What, indeed, are the mechanisms by which books, ideas and representations circulate? And ultimately, what are the effects of such mobilities, on the text themselves and on social as well as ideological planes?

Three central issues seem to inform the essays: networks, routes, and commensurability. The contributions consider the composition and workings of different networks: of scholars (Hansun Hsiung, Zahra Shah); of book trade professionals, savants, and consumers, as in Katherine

Parker's study of the circulation of cartographic knowledge; and networks within the book market, encompassing literary agents (Ben Holgate, David Carter), or illustrating the interdependence between literary series and textbooks, as in Gail Low's essay. Interestingly, commercial networks seem to have at times fostered unexpected routes, and the volume uncovers nodes and centres outside the colonial metropolises, such as Buenos Aires (Holgate). Carter demonstrates that Australian texts sometimes bypassed or went beyond the expected route between "colonial outpost" and imperial centre, with London being not only a restricting factor, but also an "accelerator" of sorts in helping to bring Australian texts and books to America. Possibly one of the most intriguing chapters is Alexander Bubb's study of the eccentric and excentric readings of Dickens and other British 19th-century authors in the colonies, highlighting the role played by serendipity in "chance encounters" of books and texts.

One compelling issue is that of global genres and the issue of commensurability. What makes the "translatability" of texts? What allows for the mobility of a text from one language, and from one culture, to the other, is a central interrogation of the last section on "Cultural Translation". Is the universality of texts, whether "real" or built through interpretation, a prerequisite for their translatability? This question underlies in particular Hsiung's analysis of the translation of textbooks for deaf students, as well as Evelyn Richardson's study of the translation of Homer into Arabic, and Kate Highman's focus on the translation/adaptation/appropriation of South African kukummi narratives, reworked as

mythical tales by South African English and Afrikaans writers in the 21st century. Furthermore, what is lost and what is gained in such translations/adaptations?

The notion of commensurability of texts will perhaps appeal more specifically to scholars concentrating on inter-linguistic global histories of books. In this respect, the global scope of the collection is somehow mitigated by the fact that all the authors work within English-language academia, which is bound to influence their vision of colonial and post-/de-colonial issues, even extending as they do their interrogations beyond the British Empire. The volume will profitably lead to a discussion with scholars focusing on other empires, who may perhaps build on a different or complementary scholarship: we might imagine parallels between Gail Low's exploration of Caribbean textbook publishing and the Francophone textbook in the Caribbean, or in other French colonies; or wonder how texts and books moved to and across Cameroon in the days of German, British and French occupation. That this book should actually foster such interrogations and comparisons is certainly one of its merits.

In her afterword, Elleke Boehmer again underlines the "quality of mixed ambition and caution" (p. 324) of the essays. Her own humble caution leads her to refrain from developing connections with her field of expertise, World Literature, which will certainly yield other insights into the circulation of texts. This small regret notwithstanding, this rich and diverse collection of essays certainly proves a valuable addition to the growing scholarship on the global histories and transnational circulation of books. It also provides professors

with fascinating case studies to examine with their students.

Note:

- 1 See M. Lyons, National Histories of the Book in a Transnational Age, in: *Mémoires du Livre/ Studies in Book Culture* 7 (2016) 2; J. G. Con-

nolly et al. (eds.), *Print Culture Histories Beyond the Metropolis*, Toronto 2016, A. Burton, I. Hofmeyr (eds.), *The Books that Shaped the British Empire: Creating an Imperial Commons*, Durham 2014, or M. F. Suarez, H.R. Woudhuysen (eds.), *The Book. A Global History*, Oxford 2013.

ANNOTATIONEN

Carola Lentz/David Lowe: Remembering Independence (= Remembering the Modern World), London / New York: Routledge 2018, xii + 244 p.

In 2018 “Remembering Independence”, co-authored by Carola Lentz and David Lowe, appeared as the fifth book in the Routledge series “Remembering the Modern World”.

The title is slightly misleading as in reality the book does not focus on collective memories and commemorations of (national) independence in general, but only of decolonization in Africa and Asia. The countries that are dealt with in detail are Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Namibia and Papua New Guinea.

The book consists of an introduction, six chapters, and a section with final reflections. It also contains a twelve pages long index that allows for detailed search of individual facts. The first chapter sketches the conceptual framework and introduces the ‘media’ where the remembrance of independence takes place. The books, museums, monuments, heroes, martyrs, and national days highlighted in this chapter presage the following chapters 2 to 4. These deal with independence days as mediating moments between past, present and future (chapter 2), the iconic national

heroes around which both unity and division, inclusion and contestation crystallize (chapter 3), and the smaller “martyrs, victims, and anti-heroes” of liberation who vie for a place in the national gallery (chapter 4).

The two last chapters of the book add a spatial and temporal dimension to the analysis. In chapter 5 regional differences as well as the concentration of commemoration in specific places – typically the capital cities – is used to ‘map’ the remembering of independence. Chapter 6 in turn deals with the temporal flexibility in choosing which past is remembered for which future as part of contemporary political agendas.

Richly illustrated and replete with insightful examples, this book gives an agreeable access to the politics and practices of national remembrance and identity in post-colonial Africa and Asia.

Geert Castryck

Trevor Burnard/John Garrigus: The Plantation Machine: Atlantic Capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2016, 350 pp.

The co-authored book, *The Plantation Machine*, appears in an active and important book series at the University of Pennsylvania.

nia Press, “The Early Modern Americas”, that is devoted to “explor(ing) neglected aspects of early modern history in the western hemisphere.” This book certainly hits the mark. Though either case alone could hardly claim to be “neglected” over the course of the last decades, comparative studies involving slave societies in different imperial contexts are rare. This book demonstrates the value of such a difficult endeavour.

The authors, who are both well-known experts on Saint-Domingue and Jamaica respectively, combine their in-depth archival knowledge to show the differences and similarities – while highlighting the parallel development – of French and British Caribbean plantations and slavery in the two most important, or rather productive, plantation colonies. The purpose of their book is not to develop categories for comparison. Rather, the book offers “a twin portrait of societies moving along parallel pathways” (p. 8). What they aim to accomplish, therefore, is not just a comparison of two local slave societies but to illustrate the central importance of the “integrated” plantation system in European imperial projects in the mid to late eighteenth century, therefore prior to the later integrated system in Cuba. This is just one example of how this book refines our historical knowledge of slavery in the Caribbean. Finally, the authors demonstrate not only the workings of the plantation “machine”, but the extent to which production methods on sugar plantations and the wider reverberations of that system in Saint-Domingue and Jamaica influenced French and British imperial policy and metropolitan societies. Moreover, these slave societies and plantation systems are

important to understanding the history of capitalism.

The book consists of ten chapters. Several paint a picture of certain aspects of life on the islands (e.g. chapters on urban life and internal enemies) while others are temporal or based on events (e.g. chapters on the Seven Years’ War and the American Revolution). Therefore, the book contains thematic and narrative chapters. Each chapter considers the topic or event on both islands but depicts the islands separately and successively within each chapter. This narrative style gives the reader the experience of observing the “twin portrait” of these societies that the authors want to impart. There are also illustrations and maps that support the text as well as an extensive index.

This book is recommended for historians of the Atlantic, slavery, the Caribbean, early modern empires, the Age of Revolutions, race, and capitalism.

Megan Maruschke

Marcel van der Linden: *Workers of the World. Eine Globalgeschichte der Arbeit* (= *Globalgeschichte*, Bd. 23), Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag 2017, 503 S.

Marcel van der Lindens großartige Essay-sammlung (zuerst 2008 bei Brill, Leiden erschienen) ist nun auch vollständig in deutscher Sprache verfügbar. Ihre Bedeutung als Markstein bei der Herausbildung einer tatsächlich global orientierten Geschichte der Arbeit kann kaum überschätzt werden, denn der Verfasser schöpft aus dem Reichtum seiner Erfahrungen mit Forschungsansätzen, die den

Eurozentrismus der älteren Geschichte von Arbeit und Arbeiterbewegung herausfordern, fundamental in Frage stellen und an verschiedenen Stellen inzwischen überwunden haben. Die Zentralität der sog. doppelt freien Lohnarbeit erweist sich als regional begrenzt und die vielfältigen Übergänge zwischen den entlohten und nicht bezahlten Arbeitsformen geraten damit überhaupt erst in den Blick. Dies geschieht in diesem Band sowohl in theoretischer Abstraktion wie in höchst anschaulicher Darstellung anhand von Beispielen aus beinahe allen Weltregionen. Damit erweist sich der Autor als aufmerksamer und sensibler Beobachter einer außerordentlichen Komplexität der Kommodifizierung von Arbeitskraft, wo andere sich die Realität anhand der Idealtypen zurechtbogen, die sie für ihre Konstrukte von Kapitalismus und Proletariat zu benötigen glaubten. Wenn aber die vielen Abstufungen unfreier Arbeit oder nicht vollständig freier Lohnarbeit in das Panorama einbezogene werden, lässt sich zweierlei erkennen: Auch wenn sich der Kapitalismus über den ganzen Erdball ausgedehnt hat, bedeutet dies eben nicht, dass bereits alles und alle komplett kommodifiziert ist/sind. Diese Vielfalt wiederum stellt enorme Anforderungen an die Bildung von Allianzen zwischen den höchst unterschiedlichen Interessenlagen, weshalb sich van der Linden in den Teilen II (Mutualistische Varianten) und III (Formen des Widerstands) seines Buches sehr ausführlich den Folgen eines erweiterten Begriffs von globaler Arbeitsgeschichte für eine Globalgeschichte der Bewegungen von Ausgebeuteten widmet. Vom Streik über den Konsumentenprotest zur Gewerkschaftsbewegung reicht der Bogen bis zum Internationalismus der Arbei-

terklasse, aus dem van der Linden schließlich eine Abfolge von fünf Stadien in deren Entwicklung ableitet. In der ersten Phase definierte sich die Arbeiterklasse selbst (bis 1848); daran anschließend entwickelte sie einen subnationalen Internationalismus (1848–1870); woraufhin eine Übergangsphase zu nationalen Organisationsformen zu beobachten sei (1870–1890) und fortan die internationale Zusammenarbeit dieser nationalen Organisationen dominierte (1890–1960), während sich nach 1960 eine neue Transformationsphase anschliesse, weil der in nationalen Gewerkschaftsbewegungen verankerte Internationalismus durch Dekolonisierung, neue Regionalismen und schließlich den Zusammenbruch des Ostblocks erschüttert wurde. Ob sich allerdings das hoffnungsfroh beschriebene Szenario eines transnationalen Internationalismus entfalten kann, bleibt auch reichlich zehn Jahre nach der Erstveröffentlichung der Prognose offen. Einerseits ist vielleicht der Optimismus heute sogar schwächer als Marcel van der Linden 2008 unter Verweis auf bevorstehende Krisen und Rückschläge anzunehmen bereit war (S. 317). Andererseits hat der Verfasser in den Folgejahren seine Arbeitskraft der Organisation von tatsächlich global aufgestellten Untersuchungen einzelner Branchen gewidmet. Dabei zeigt sich, dass der hohe Organisationsgrad der Arbeiterbewegung in der nordatlantischen Region ein wichtiger Faktor ist, ihm aber die Inspirationen aus anderen Weltregionen gegenüberstehen, die viel länger mit Sklaverei und anderen Formen der Zwangsarbeit konfrontiert waren und deshalb ihre eigenen Vorstellungen von historischer Gerechtigkeit in den neuen Internationalismus einbringen. Teil IV des

Bandes schließlich erörtert theoretische Konzepte, in die sich die neue Globalgeschichte der Arbeit einfügen bzw. durch die sie eine entscheidende Erweiterung erfahren könnte, darunter Immanuel Wallersteins Weltsystemtheorie, ethnologische Langzeituntersuchungen einzelner Gemeinschaften und ihrer Kombination von Arbeitsformen zur Bewältigung schwieriger Umweltbedingungen und die feministisch inspirierten Überlegungen zu Subsistenzarbeit.

Alles in allem gehört der Band, wie schon viele Rezensent*innen seit Erscheinen der englischen Erstausgabe angesichts der enormen konzeptionellen und darstellerischen Leistung des Verfassers betont haben, in jede auch nur minimal ausgestattete Bibliothek mit globalhistorischem Anspruch.

Matthias Middell

Alexandra Köhring / Monica Rüthers (Hrsg.): Ästhetiken des Sozialismus. Populäre Bildmedien im späten Sozialismus (= *Socialist Aesthetics. Visual Cultures of Late Socialism*), Köln: Böhlau Verlag 2018, 333 S.

Dieser Sammelband analysiert die Vielfalt und Widersprüchlichkeit sozialistischer Bildkulturen. Dabei stellt er besonders deren Beziehungen zur Kunst- und Industrieproduktion, zu Alltagspraktiken und politischen Bildprogrammen heraus und untersucht zugleich ihre Einbettung in grenz- und blocküberschreitende Transfers. Er geht auf eine Konferenz zu „Visual Cultures of Socialism“ an der Universität Hamburg im Jahr 2015 zurück.

Der Hauptteil umfasst etwa zur Hälfte deutsch- und englischsprachige Beiträge zu populären visuellen Medien in verschiedenen sozialistischen Ländern. Er spannt den Bogen von den 1920er Jahren bis in die postsozialistische Erinnerungskultur, mit einem Schwerpunkt auf die Jahrzehnte nach dem Stalinismus. Die Autoren untersuchen politische und diskursive Rahmungen dieser Bildwelten ebenso wie unterschiedliche Formen ihrer Produktion und ihres Konsums. Ihre Texte befassen sich mit sozialistischer monumentaler Denkmalkunst und deren Transfer nach Asien und Afrika, sowjetischen Bildpostkarten im Spannungsfeld von offizieller Bildwelt und alltäglichem Gebrauch, Schaufensterdekorationen und Bilderzeitschriften für Kinder, Warenverpackungen im sowjetischen Konsumsystem, sozialistischer Produktgestaltung in der DDR und in internationalen Designdebatten, Modediskursen und Aneignungen westlicher Trends in der Tauwetterperiode, Folklore-Shows in Litauen zwischen sowjetischer Nationalitätenpolitik und lokalen Alternativmodellen, darüber hinaus mit Bildpolitiken, Zensurpraktiken und Handlungsspielräumen in der zentralen polnischen Bildagentur sowie der Aneignung sowjetischer Bildprogramme in privaten und institutionellen Fotoalben.

Als „Zugabe“ enthält der Band kurze Einführungstexte zu ästhetischen Debatten anhand von Schlüsselbegriffen der sozialistischen Kunst- und Wahrnehmungstheorie. Sie sind mit den Beiträgen des Hauptteils durch Schlagworte verbunden. Vorgestellt werden Leitbegriffe wie „Realismus“ und „Neues Sehen“, aber auch „Organisch“, „Faktura“ oder „Groteske“. Der Band bietet darüber hinaus zahlreiche

schwarz-weiße Abbildungen sowie zwölf Farbtafeln. Er liefert damit hochinteressante Einblicke in die visuelle Kultur sowie die Alltags- und Konsumkultur der sozialistischen Länder in transnationaler Perspektive.

Antje Dietze, Leipzig

Thi Hanh Nguyen: Les Conflits Frontaliers Sino-Vietnamiens de 1883 à nos Jours, Paris: Editions Demopolis 2018, 403 p.

The book is part of the research series of Demopolis Publishing, which is dedicated to “support the processes of reflexion and enrichment of knowledge within the humanities and social sciences.” This book was published as a common effort of the Labex TransferS – the research excellence initiative of the Ecole Normale Supérieure – and the Hanoi National University of Education (HNUE) and is the second and updated edition of the author’s doctoral thesis, originally published in 2007. The originality of this book is based on the author’s extensive archival work and in-depth analysis of French and Vietnamese sources. The author is a historian, professor at the HNUE and expert on Sino-Vietnamese History. The purpose of her monograph is not to give a definitive history of both countries’ entangled history and of the still on-going border conflicts. Rather, the book gives a *longue-durée* perspective of the understudied Sino-Vietnamese border conflicts’ history. With this book, the author demonstrates how over the course of almost two and a half centuries French,

Japanese, and US American interferences complicated the already conflicted terrestrial and maritime border conflicts that existed between China and Vietnam. Throughout the monograph, the author shows the interplay of power relations and interests of the different nations. A special focus lies in France and China, the main powers in the history of the conflict. Indeed, France’s colonial game played in Vietnam with the establishment of its sovereignty over the Annam Empire against China is an important part of the story. China’s relationship with Vietnam is ambivalent: China plays an integral part in Vietnamese domestic issues, especially against US American capitalism, while at the same time viewing its border to Vietnam as a strategic issue where it is necessary to retain authority.

The book consists of three parts, which are organised chronologically. The first part deals with the history of the Sino-Vietnamese border prior to 1885 in order to set the context for the following parts. The second part analyses how the border conflict between China and Vietnam was impacted throughout the period of French colonial involvement in Vietnam between 1885 and 1954. The third part covers the easing and eventual solving of the border conflict since 1954 and shifts the focus to present-day conflicts between the two nations.

This book is recommended for historians of Sino-Vietnamese relations, Empire, French colonialism, and border conflicts.

Yasmine Najm

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