

Transcultural Research – Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global Context

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Transcultural History

Theories, Methods, Sources

 Springer

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Preface

With the end of the Cold War, the twenty-first century started unexpectedly early, accompanied by the sounds of new national anthems and the rather unspecific term of globalisation. While trade indeed fostered global networks, an increasing number of new or reunited nation states required their own invention of tradition, taking the established form of national histories. In the Library of Congress catalogue, of the 190 general histories of Kazakhstan available in 2010, more than 60% were published after the 1990s, when the former Soviet republic became a sovereign state, and a member of the United Nations. The same is true of the many other states emerging from the former Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Since then, history has shown an ambivalent interest in both border crossing, transgressive, “transnational” phenomena *and* nation states in all imaginable varieties, from liberal democracies to authoritarian and even failing states. In asking what kind of history the twenty-first century needs, we should first of all mention a certain imbalance: a well-established and still useful toolbox for national histories fails to nurture a historical narrative, which observes developments that cross borders of nation states and societies, and which has the globe rather than certain territories in mind. For the twenty-first century, the oft-quoted citation “past is prologue” reads the other way around: the global present lacks a historical narrative for the global past.

It would be presumptuous to offer such a global narrative as *histoire totale*—and yes, introducing transcultural history for this purpose might just add another conceptual approach to an already long list of transnational, transterritorial and transgressive histories. Nevertheless transcultural history might serve as a conceptual wild-card, questioning the territoriality of historical concepts and offering a narrative that aims to overcome cultural essentialism by focusing on crossing borders of all kinds. Thus, the historical view we are presenting here does not present the totality of territories but rather the changing awareness of transgression. We look beyond the evocation of territoriality, and of social, political and cultural coherence with the aim of knowing more about the living conditions of moving societies, which are sometimes thrilling and sometimes dangerous. This approach

also reflects critically on the way history is constructed, asking who formed history in the past and who succeeded in shaping what we call the master narrative. Focusing on borders and questioning coherence, transcultural history is based on a self-reflexive awareness of its own historical background. Postcolonial studies with their critical claim of “provincialising Europe” provided substantial input into the discussion about the distance between Eurocentric universalism and access to globality by analysing transgressive moments beyond the imagined community of the nation. However, we are trained European historians, and our aim is to present a useful approach to global history, showing first of all how a Eurocentric but universal historiography removed or essentialised certain topics in Asian history. In this regard, we gratefully draw on the manifold experiences that the collaborative research project at Heidelberg University has provided. Colleagues and students from different disciplines have made “Asia and Europe in a Global Context: Shifting Asymmetries in Cultural Flows”¹ a thrilling intellectual experience that we hope to share with other historians and cultural scientists interested in the development of global, imagined communities.

As an empirical discipline, history is based on source material, analysed according to rules resulting from a strong methodological background. We need examples to find out whether applying the approach proposed gains us new information on limited historical topics, or, rather, new insights based on analytical tools applicable to other questions than those mentioned in this book. We therefore decided to critically question how the work of analysis should be done, and whether established methods are still useful in a transcultural context.²

Readers might not spend their time on all chapters of this booklet in a similar way. In fact, the text suggests three different points of entry, which can be accessed relatively independently of each other. Part I on theories and concepts discusses the mechanics of history as an academic discipline. It deals with how this discipline—invented and spread as an apparent output of Western academia—copes with a globalised world, oversteps national borders, and resolves a Eurocentric past. This part might be of interest to professional historians, but also to colleagues working in transdisciplinary fields, who depend on knowing how the mechanics of historiography changed in the twenty-first century, if at all. Part II engages with methodological questions. Some of our readers, perhaps students working on their theses, might want to start there. Academics dealing with historiography on a daily basis might not need to reacquaint themselves with the historical-critical method that is well known to professional historians. However, the purpose of this book is to show how a new paradigm is translated into practice, and from this point of view, even professional historians might be interested in critically investigating whether the

¹Asia and Europe in a Global Context, “Home,” accessed March 10, 2011, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/>.

²Additional aspects of the argumentation used in this book were previously tested in shorter essays. See Madeleine Herren, “Shifting Identities and Cosmopolitan Machineries,” in *Transcultural Turbulences*, eds. Christiane Brosius and Roland Wenzlhuemer (Berlin: Springer Verlag, 2011), 67–82.

disciplinary basics have changed under the influence of a global perspective—or to put it even more explicitly: does global *history* refer to a global *historiography*? One finding indeed confirms the still useful, albeit incomplete methodological toolbox historians are dealing with. The booklet closes with a third chapter on sources—which is admittedly the most incomplete part—even though we do attach importance to the question of empirical evidence, the so-called source material. The examples chosen cannot tell us satisfactorily the extent to which a transcultural approach reaches new historical findings, although the new way of reading well-known sources does indeed present aspects that were overlooked until now. Of course, the even more interesting point is whether the introduction of a new, transcultural way of addressing questions to the past might reveal a cosmos not known before. Although much more work remains to be done, our aim is to present ongoing research on global social networks of ordinary people, proposing a method of looking into a global imaginary not yet known. The idea of combining theories, methods and sources in one booklet may seem overly ambitious; however, it came about in a particular and thrilling circumstance: for the humanities at Heidelberg University, a Cluster of Excellence offered the chance to investigate “Asia and Europe in a Global Context: Shifting Asymmetries in Cultural Flows.” This project has amalgamated different disciplines and started collaborative research in a process that brings together young scholars from all around the world. However, their attempts to define common historical grounds clearly demonstrates the need to find a new, appropriate way of accepting different historicities by critically explaining concepts, methods, and sources.

Reflections on methods, however, are closely connected to the main aim, the search for a global narrative. We enter the past at the end of World War I and look at the well known Paris Peace Conference, observing the multiplication of new borders; and the variety of transgressing institutions, concepts, actors, men and women inventing themselves as global subjects, but sharing a bitter experience with almost all local societies at this time, namely the awareness of having relatives buried in far distant places due to globalised wars.

Acknowledgments

This book has benefitted greatly from the special research environment that the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context” created at Heidelberg University. This platform offered a unique opportunity for lively debates among scholars from different disciplines, backgrounds, and generations. We are grateful to our colleagues and the students from the History Department who participated in these debates, and critically discussed our attempts to reach a less Eurocentric and more global historical narrative. We would also like to express our gratitude to Lisa-Marie Zoller and Christopher Blundell and especially to our editors, Dr. Andrea Hacker and Richard Littler, who saw us through the challenge of formulating this book in English.

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Introduction: What is Transcultural History?

1 Paris 1919: A Perturbingly Interconnected World beyond National Histories

In 1919, shortly after the end of World War I, the Paris Peace Conference created a magic moment of reordering international relations on a global scale. Contemporary observers described this moment in unusual metaphors. For E. J. Dillon, an Irish journalist and former professor of oriental languages, Paris in 1919 went beyond Western-shaped urban cosmopolitanism and turned into “a vast cosmopolitan caravanserai.”³ On the streets of Paris appeared “once mighty viziers [who] shivered under threadbare garments in the biting frost,”⁴ Armenian survivors of the massacre seeking justice, kings who had lost their crowns, and dictators who expected international legitimation. Transboundary biographies dominated in Paris at a time when one of the best known experts on the difficult situation in the Near East was a 28-year-old British colonel with a degree in medieval history: Lawrence of Arabia, “the most interesting Briton alive.”⁵ Indeed, rather unusually for a diplomatic event, the Paris Peace Conference brought into the foreground media stars who crossed the fine but rigid lines of diplomatic hierarchies because they were well suited to new information technologies. Lawrence of Arabia’s handsome orientalism inspired press photographers. Newsreel men liked Nicholas Murray Butler, who was not a diplomat, but the president of Columbia University. His voice lent itself to the not yet fully developed microphone and recording technologies.⁶ Global voices in and on Paris orchestrated the new finding of an

³ Emil Joseph Dillon, *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference* (New York and London: Harper, 1920), 4.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ James Thomson Shotwell, *At the Paris Peace Conference* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1937), 131.

⁶ Charles Peden, *Newsreel Man* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1932), 15.

international order. Far beyond the usual diplomatic secrecy, an international civil society shaped and influenced the Peace Conference and the awareness of global connectivity in a way that left significant marks on the daily life of Paris. Expensive restaurants and war profiteers, communist revolutionaries and Russian aristocrats belonged to the picture Dillon could not refrain from describing in minute detail. He encountered a “dreamy unreality in the city where the grimmest of realities were being faced and coped with. (. . .) Chinamen, Japanese, Koreans, Hindus, Kirghizes, Lesghiens, Circassians, Mingrelians, Buryats, Malays, and Negroes and Negroids from Africa and America were among the tribes and tongues forgathered in Paris to watch the rebuilding of the political world system and to see where they ‘came in.’”⁷ In this overwhelming global panorama, Dillon did not even come close to specifying all the signs of globality in 1919. In his view, the vision of a new global order heralded opportunities for a future world and offered a global perspective beyond national or local interests. After World War I, however, many more people than the small group of politicians, refugees, and adventurers, who were able to meet in Paris, became aware of places previously unknown to them. Death had become the defining global reality: millions of soldiers had been killed in action. Death was a daily occurrence, a sad fate for millions of surviving relatives. As Dillon chillingly mentioned, unburied corpses still lay on battlefields that could be easily reached within an hour’s drive of Paris⁸. The experience of loss changed lives deeply. Rudyard Kipling, well-known for his pre-World War works celebrating British imperialism⁹, now contributed to *The Times* as a member of the British Imperial War Graves Commission. He promised remembrance in “every part of the world,” and the opening of adequate memorials “from the vast and known cities of our dead in Flanders and France to the hidden and outlying burial grounds of a few score at the ends of the earth.”¹⁰ Global mourning had ambivalent consequences and conveyed a highly visible nationalist impulse, especially for those seeking independence in 1919. The war memorials in Gallipoli, Turkey, became places of nationalism for Australians. But the simple presence of death on foreign soil also changed the identities of the respective places and challenged local mourning rituals—the graves of Chinese “coolies” in the deepest provinces of France expressed the close proximity of a non-Western world. Widows haunting Paris, demanding access to cemeteries in irrevocably wounded landscapes, sent a twofold message to the world, which was convened in Paris: besides border crossing mourning, which even overruled the state’s requirement of individual identification

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 27.

⁹ For the self-concept of Kipling as an “imperialist, as a citizen of a world-wide empire” see Carl David af Wirsén, “Presentation Speech for Rudyard Kipling as the winner of the Nobel prize of literature in 1907,” accessed March 10, 2011, http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1907/press.html.

¹⁰ “War Graves: Work of Imperial Commission, Mr. Kipling’s Survey,” *The Times*, February 17, 1919, 4.

by passports,¹¹ not all the dead were victims of war. Death overruled the proclamation of armistice on November 11th, 1918. The Spanish flu continued to kill globally and did not spare the photographers hired by relatives to take pictures of the cemeteries where their loved ones were buried,¹² nor experts planning the world of tomorrow at the Peace Conference in Paris.¹³ In 1919 therefore, beyond the territorial change proposed by diplomats, the concept of territoriality itself came under discussion. Men who had fought for a two-meter advance in the battlefields of Flanders now had to accept the end of living within clearly defined borders and face the threat of constant, unpredictable and contradictory change. While borders multiplied with the creation of new states, fast border crossing information technologies documented the dense, global entanglement of ideas, concepts, and people. Even to those who did not move and had no access to aeroplanes and cars, radio and newspapers showed an inevitably global world. This awareness of worldwide entanglements influenced both the negotiations and the public far beyond the experiences of great diplomatic conferences. A description of what diplomats and the public experienced in 1919 would have to include films and pictures, which at this time started to encroach on the territory of language and challenge the notion of information transfer as a written form of communication. In mentioning the mediality of the Paris Peace Conference, we also need to consider the transborder fear of a global spread of strikes and communist revolution, and the foundation of an *Association des hommes nouveaux*, a group of “new men” that drew together war invalids, surviving relatives, reformist circles, and cooperation between Asia and the West.

Within the community of historians, the significance of what happened in Paris in 1919 is virtually uncontested. However, it is told either from a national perspective or follows the structures of international relations. Usually, the historical narrative elaborately avoids the disturbing interferences of national, social, and cultural arguments during the Peace Conference, because it may be easier to concentrate on the power shifts that affected clearly specified territories than to explain the irritating coincidence of multilayered and porous borders on a global scale. Although only mentioned as an example, 1919 Paris gives us an idea of the importance of border crossing and entanglement, both of which are major focuses of a new transcultural history.

¹¹ The Times announced the government’s decision to abstain from requesting passports for relatives visiting graveyards.

¹² In February, the British War Office explained that the delayed delivery of these pictures was partly due to staff “depleted by illness”. See “14,000 Photographs of War Graves,” *The Times*, February 24, 1919, 11.

¹³ In the second week of February 1919, 279 persons died in Paris. See “La grippe,” *Le Figaro*, February 23, 1919, 3.

2 Paris 1919 in the Historians' Eyes

While the above mentioned missing pieces of global entanglement still suffer from a paucity of information, the obvious difference between the interpretation of the Paris Peace Conference found in school and history books, and a transcultural approach is only too clear. Even in books addressed to academic historians, the peace-making process is told from a national perspective. Therefore, questions answered in this context aim to explain territorial changes, focus on who successfully influenced the big powers' representatives, and whether the Versailles treaty paved the way for a second world war. In these histories, the global entanglement, which in autobiographical literature between 1919 and 1939 is often described under the title "what really happened at Paris,"¹⁴ is sidelined. Although there is a growing interest in global history today,¹⁵ global aspects are still debated less as a driving force than as an additional topic in an ever growing and confusing list of scientific turns and fields of history.¹⁶ Of course, rarely will economic historians express doubt that a narrative of global economy started in 1919—after all, the British economist John Maynard Keynes attended the Paris Peace Conference and wrote sarcastic commentaries about the decisions of leading politicians.¹⁷ And yes, valuable work has been done on how transnational organisations that were present in Paris provided an example of international lobbying.¹⁸ However, the histories of the same global event—the Paris Peace Conference in 1919—differ widely according to their place of origin. While European historians discuss the Versailles treaty as a major failure that led to the next worldwide war, the Australian National Archives proudly displays it as "Documenting a Democracy."¹⁹ Indeed, the Versailles treaty gave the British dominions and India the first opportunity for signatory power, which can be read as an acknowledgment of sovereignty. How then should a history of the Paris Peace treaties be told? The ambivalent evaluations of Versailles, between success and catastrophe, produced their own historical consequences, separating the global moment of 1919 quite clearly into Western

¹⁴ E.g. Edward Mandell House and Charles Seymour, *What Really Happened at Paris; the Story of the Peace Conference, 1918–1919* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1921).

¹⁵ Matthias Middell, *Welt- und Globalgeschichte in Europa, World and Global History in Europe* (Köln: Center for Historical Social Research, 2006). Christopher A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World 1780–1914, Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).

¹⁶ Caroline Walker Bynum, "Perspectives, Connections and Objects: What's Happening in History Now?," *Daedalus* 138, no. 1 (2009).

¹⁷ John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920).

¹⁸ See Leila J. Rupp, *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), 210ff.

¹⁹ "Documenting a Democracy: The Treaty of Versailles 1919 (including Covenant of the League of Nations)," National Archives of Australia, accessed March 10, 2011, <http://www.foundingdocs.gov.au/item.asp?sdID=94>.

and non-Western memories. The differing perception of a multilateral treaty is a familiar tool in the historian's toolbox, but, as we have seen, the diplomatic deliberations and their results—namely multilateral treaties—occupy just a small corner of the global stage set in Paris. Can history provide a way of depicting the whole panorama—a transcultural *histoire totale*, including the fear of Spanish flu, the Chinese mourning for relatives buried in France, and the photographers who did good business selling pictures of war graves? Attempts in this direction need source material other than the treaties' texts and protocols of deliberation. They also need to question the basic assumption that history as an academic discipline gathers its primary or even all of its evidence from written source material. A transboundary and transcultural approach therefore challenges ordering categories (a history of Versailles for Australia, Europe or the world?), questions historical methods (introducing non-written sources, the sounds and smells of Paris instead of the text of treaties?), and scrutinises the function of history as social glue, which at this time comes in the form of national history.

3 Gaining a Global Picture: Analytical Concepts

In deliberating these issues, we have already left Paris and are observing the mechanics of academic methods, the way in which the past is transformed into history. With the requirement that history should present a global picture, but aware of local schemes of interpretation, the academic community provides several analytical concepts, namely *entanglement*, *hybridity*, *intersectionality*, and *transculturality*. Useful for creating a global approach, each of these concepts challenges well-established ordering principles, but primarily the territoriality of history that is deeply embedded in the historical narrative of the nation. Explicitly or not, all of these recently created concepts have neglected the question of which topic or era might have a paradigmatic character for global history. Rather, this debate grapples with the fact that history as an academic discipline and the methods it uses were created during the development of the modern Western universities in the nineteenth century. History, therefore, became closely connected to the idea of Western nation building. In contrast, the concepts mentioned above try to avoid methodological and disciplinary Eurocentrism or at least question claims to and monopolies on interpretation.

1. *Entanglement* focuses on the historical development of border crossing networks and creates a transnational history with a strong tradition in Western historiography.²⁰

²⁰For an introduction see Sebastian Conrad and Dominic Sachsenmaier, *Competing Visions of World Order: Global Moments and Movements, 1880s–1930s*, Palgrave Macmillan Transnational History Series (New York: Palgrave, 2007). For network theories see: Manuel Castells and

2. *Hybridity* introduced the need—or possibility—to adapt, translate and imitate, and developed within the postcolonial debate.²¹
3. *Intersectionality*, used recently in gender research, questions the multiple ways in which social inequality develops.²²
4. *Transculturality* renounces comparatism and focuses on contact zones, adaptation and exchange processes, modes of translations, and moments of crossing borders in a global context.

4 Transcultural Issues

At a glance, transcultural history introduces a global view of the past by focusing on processes of border crossing. Instead of attaching the past to clearly defined entities such as eras, territories, nations, classes, or states, transcultural history focuses on incompatibilities, tensions, and disputes which develop whenever people, objects, concepts, or ideas transgress the ruling orders of their respective time. The permeability of borders provides information on the acceptance or rejection of entanglements in the respective society.

Transcultural history, therefore, is driven neither by progress nor by the idea of a linear flow of time, where the past predicts the present. Rather, this approach assumes that the pulse of historical development is sustained by the perturbing awareness of a world existing outside the respective mind maps, an awareness that gains visibility each time limits and borders are established or changed. Each generation has found different answers for this tension between border-protected local identities and the lure of global openness. In almost every case, passing through borders is also much more than just a question of travelling, and always influences both those who stay and those who leave. If an individual crosses borders, s/he challenges social coherence and may cause a dangerous form of loneliness. As a collective enterprise, border crossing is simply a form of conquest, but frequently it is borders that move, not people. As a consequence of the world order newly created in 1919, people had new passports, which turned relatives into aliens and made old family possessions inaccessible. Today, in an era of globalisation and rapid communication technologies, there is a rising awareness

Gustavo Cardoso, eds., *The Network Society: From Knowledge to Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2006).

²¹ Peter Burke, *Cultural Hybridity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009). Joel Kuortti and Jopi Nyman, *Reconstructing Hybridity: Post-Colonial Studies in Transition* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007).

²² Janet Siltanen and Andrea Doucet, *Gender Relations: Intersectionality and Beyond* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). Gudrun-Axeli Knapp, “‘Intersectionality’ - Ein neues Paradigma der Geschlechterforschung,” in *Was kommt nach der Genderforschung? Zur Zukunft der feministischen Theoriebildung*, ed. Rita Casale (Bielefeld: 2008).

that borders were never hermetically closed. Transparency and permeability, however, vary in place and time.

Compared to nationally focused histories, a transcultural approach highlights topics that have tended to be neglected in historical research for the time period between 1850 and 1939. A transcultural history presents:

1. Events and practices intended to introduce self-representation on a global stage (official, semi-official and non-official international conferences, transborder expeditions, markets and fairs including World's Fairs and universal exhibitions, presentations of universal knowledge in different forms e.g. encyclopaedias, museums).
2. Shifting objects of contested origin (spoils of war), or those valued for their foreign character, forms of standardisation (Esperanto, road signs, pictograms).
3. Institutions and movements with opportunities for global membership (international organisations, transnational secular and religious communities), and/or global topics (globally spreading diseases, pollution, protection of nature, anarchism, terrorism).
4. Border crossing information and its financing; the question of transgression costs (multilateral treaties on exchange of publications, organisation of and access to global bibliographies)
5. Places and spaces with extraterritorial and international character (including international settlements, ports, postal offices, sanitary stations, the seven seas, the air and foreign cemeteries).
6. People living transboundary lives under different labels (cosmopolitans, internationalists, international civil servants, migrants, pirates²³, proselytes, impostors).

Although not an exclusive enumeration, nor limited to the time period mentioned, these fields are useful for testing foreign influences in local contexts. To gain an idea of which global events, institutions, places and people influenced local identities or changed under local influence, special attention is given to encounters between Asia and Europe. We do not delude ourselves that we can overcome a Western point of view, but hopefully we can present a tool for uncovering the ambivalent meaning of globality as an expression of Eurocentrism or as an umbrella term for transcultural entanglement.

²³ Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 2002). Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000). For this approach, slavery is the key element in their historical rationale. In addition, the metaphor of the ship and the introduction of new media, especially music, as a neglected form of communication introduce a methodologically innovative aspect. Transculturality, however, presumes that the motley crew are also inside well-established societies, and not exclusively outside.

5 Methodological Key Elements of Transcultural History

5.1 *Establishing and Crossing Borders, Limits, Thresholds, Frontiers*

As explained extensively in the following pages, history is, in this approach, more about constructivism than discovery or reconstruction. Search strategies and source materials are therefore closely connected to the theoretical framework. The second part of this book is, however, about methods and asks whether the usual way of framing research questions, finding source material, and making appropriate interpretations are still valid. Although most of the methodological tools work adequately, there are still some additional elements to mention: crossing borders not only shapes the preferred topics of transcultural history, but also directs the selection of source material. Crossing borders is connected to a framework of rules, sanctions, processes of identification and legitimation, and the need for translation and adaptation—all leaving traces in different forms, all therefore producing vast amounts of source material. In 1919, reports on the Paris Peace Conference mentioned a global public, but also testified to the sudden need for identification papers—a substantial change compared to the pre-world war situation, when passport legitimation was the exception rather than the rule, and did not need visual evidence in the form of a photograph. In 1919, passes for journalists were needed, as were special passports for the families of those attending the Peace Conference; for relatives visiting the cemeteries; for the experts, who had to line up for French library cards, and for the American soldiers, who needed red or white tickets to visit different sectors of Paris. We do not even mention the administrative background that accompanied this form of legitimation, nor the increase of standardisation in people's appearance on the photographs for identification, and the multiplying dynamics that arose from the existence of both a civilian *and* a military administration.

Transcultural history, therefore, implies the inclusion of a broad range of different media (texts, images, sounds). Methodologies in turn demand further consideration, as does the question of the availability of source material. Generally, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries offer a wealth of sources, which answer almost all imaginable questions. However, a transcultural approach needs sophisticated reflections on sources, due to the simple fact that the availability and storage of source material follows national concepts of preservation, and avoids addressing varieties of entanglement.²⁴ Since source material is preserved and organised in

²⁴ Statistical research on migrants is illustrative of this point of view. An American study of immigrants and their children based on a census published in 1927 explained that the available official statistics gave details on parentage for “the white population only”, see Niles Carpenter, *Immigrants and their Children 1920, a Study Based on Census Statistics Relative to the Foreign Born and the Native White of Foreign or Mixed Parentage* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1927), 2.

categories that correspond to national history, documents of contested, foreign origin are much more difficult to find. These documents had and still have a smaller chance of preservation. The problem is that this coincidence of dense national traditions and weak transboundary documentation can result in claiming and constructing an authenticity which may never have existed. Of course, the same reservation is also true for all cosmopolitans and internationalists, who arrange evidence in such a way that a global entity, rather than a web of borders, can be seen. Even in a globally connected world with a growing amount of available digitised material, knowing about the “order of things” is crucial. People and objects on the move leave local traces, but classifying systems—most of them developed in a national context—are rarely connected to each other. Moving persons, objects, and even ideas run a higher risk of neglect, and rarely do heritage preservation efforts or archives focus on transboundary processes.

5.2 “*Ce n’est pas une pomme*”: Denying Borders by Claiming Authenticity

The Paris Peace deliberations raise another methodological challenge, that being the fate of prey and booty. Now legally protected, some examples of cultural heritage embarked on long careers as spoils of war²⁵—transcultural entanglements *par excellence*. For instance, the Versailles treaty obliged the German government to return the skull of Sultan Mkwawa, the leader of a rebellion in German East Africa in the 1890s. Several skulls attributed to Mkwawa started a lengthy odyssey and remained of political importance until recently, when the (original) skull came back to Tanzania. Other items embarked on similar odysseys, because article 247 of the treaty connected art with reparations. As replacement for the destruction of the famous library of Leuven, for example, the German government had to offer manuscripts, paintings and precious objects. The article partly even specified works of art which had to return to Belgium. Many of the listed van Eyks²⁶ and other paintings, however, had been displayed legally and for a long time in German

²⁵ Jürgen Kleist and Bruce A. Butterfield, *The Spoils of War: the Bright and Bitter Fruits of Human Conflict*, Plattsburgh Studies in the Humanities, vol. 5 (New York: Lang, 1997). Ana Filipa Vrdoljak, *International Law, Museums and the Return of Cultural Objects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

²⁶ The Treaty of Versailles mentioned *The Mystic Lamb* by the van Eyk brothers. Created in the 15th century, therefore long before the Belgian state existed, the altarpiece experienced adventurous travels: hidden during the Reformation, brought to Paris among spoils of war during the Napoleonic regime, sold to the Prussian king, given back to Belgium as a consequence of the Versailles treaty and taken back to Germany as war booty, the masterpiece ultimately returned to Ghent.

museums.²⁷ This historical transformation of art's function from a German art collecting tradition to Belgian heritage in a context of reparation provides an example of ordering and reordering the past across borders. Further examples can be found in other peace treaties: frequently repatriation claims concerned objects that were originally created as a transcultural, or at least transregional, expression of power. In 1919, the Pope, as well as the Italian and French governments, discussed to whom the insignia of the Holy Roman Empire should be transferred, arguing that Charlemagne was a Frank, and the insignia of power were Christian symbols. American newspapers even reported on the claims of the city of Palermo, arguing that the coronation coat used by the rulers of the Holy Roman Empire since the 12th century had been made by Islamic craftsmen under Norman rule, and therefore belonged to Sicily.²⁸ The American art dealers calmed a debate that, if prevailing, would have brought back to Istanbul the famous quadriga of San Marco in Venice. However, the debate on restitution shows shifting political and cultural borders, the explosive force of transcultural entanglement when used to claim a rarely existing authentic origin, and the role of history as a powerful argument in the asymmetrical discourse of power.

6 Transcultural History beyond Paris 1919

British, German, Indian and Chinese histories and all other national histories told different versions of what happened in Paris in 1919. These various interpretations of the past are obviously present in schoolbooks, since the respective history of the nation is an important element in national policies of education. Moreover, schoolbooks are the most convincing way of demonstrating how history has contributed to identity building. Therefore, new approaches to history as an academic discipline must always discuss the impact of historiography and reflect on the history of history.

Tensions between a national and more global telling of history will shape this presentation. The obvious imbalance between the many national, imperial and territorial histories, and the few approaches that tell a history of global interconnectivity, will be discussed from a theoretical and conceptual perspective in the first part, and from a methodological point of view in the second. History as an empirical discipline needs source material. Examples of newly detected transcultural source materials and models of interpretation are mentioned in Part II.

²⁷ Andrea Gattini, "Restitution by Russia of Works of Art Removed from German Territory at the End of Second World War," *European Journal of International Law* 7, no. 1 (1996): 70f.

²⁸ G. S. Adam, "Demand Royal Booty," *The Washington Post*, May 30, 1919, 1.

Part I: Theories and Concepts

1 Introduction

A border crossing transcultural history substantiates what is known as global history. Despite the overwhelming interest in global history and its transformation into a disciplinary melting pot, the nature of its potential contributions remains a matter of conjecture. Africanists point to the connections between globality and the Asian boom, complaining bitterly about a mix of market-related strategies and a shift in public interest from *Out of Africa* to *Slumdog Millionaire*. Indeed, regarded in this light, globalisation does seem to be replacing one blind spot with another. Instead of an additive approach that connects the continents, the thrilling aspect of a new global approach develops mostly from *Globalizing the Research Imagination*.²⁹ This is the title of a collection of essays investigating the influence of globalisation on the social sciences and humanities. Behind all topics that explain global influences in whichever time and space, globality transforms the practice of research and oversteps disciplinary boundaries. Transcultural history will therefore have to introduce a shifting perspective from identifying entanglements to focusing on the asymmetric tensions inevitably connected to global coherence. The idea of an intertwined world of cultural exchange, instead of clearly specifiable, connected entities, is the starting point of research. The first step, therefore, is to return to the question of how history as an academic discipline works.

This book's first chapter on historiography starts with the "mechanics of history." It follows the fine lines that separate enduring, from making and explaining history. The aim is to understand how the shaping of history as a Western academic discipline influenced aims and objectives of research, and whether historical research was based on a global concept. As the following two parts explain, the meaning of what historians considered to be global or universal history changed

²⁹ Jane Kenway and Johannah Fahey, *Globalizing the Research Imagination* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008).

substantially between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The question is why Western historians of a certain period were not interested in Asian history, even when they had access to source material. On the basis of nineteenth century historiography, the discussion focuses on the price of concentrated Western nation building. Developed under the umbrella of modern science, nineteenth century historiography differs sharply from its predecessors. In the eighteenth century, historians, who were merely interested in the mode of unintentional discovery expressed by the concept of “serendipity,”³⁰ regarded Asia with curiosity and admiration. In the nineteenth century, European historians invented the Orient as underdeveloped, thus confirming Western progress. The history of historiography explains how the world came to have a Western past, while history lost its global scope.

During and shortly after World War I, Western historiography changed dramatically and became more interested in global topics. In the early 1920s, in an open, connected world shaped by international agencies that were multiplying on a global scale, historical approaches again made a substantial turn. Historiography provided valuable input for political propaganda, and justifications for both democracy and/or racial forms of ideological hegemony. For both extreme nationalism and the extension of extraterritorial activities, the past appeared to be a promising source of legitimation. Although historiography changed again under the influence of World War II and the following Cold War, in regard to global approaches, the tools and methods of historiography had found their characteristic shape.

Based on necessary information regarding the mechanics of historical research, this chapter on historiography explains the research design of transcultural history, its characteristics and main objectives, the meaning of transculturality, and the new impact of a transcultural historiography. Starting with the umbrella term of culture, the chapter introduces the history of the concept and explains the manifold meanings of transculturality that have developed since the 1930s. These debates illustrate which aspects of the past are rising to the surface of historical research.

The theoretical and conceptual chapter on historiography concludes by identifying the challenges and issues introduced by a transcultural approach. It shows how structure and agencies have changed, how transcultural history focuses on flows of information, and how it presumes different historicities instead of chronological linearity and transcultural topics instead of individual heroism. The question remains as to what new insights can be expected. Transcultural history see-saws between historical relativism—a constructivist approach with its main focus on the present—and objectivism, which still believes in the reconstruction of

³⁰ Serendipity appeared as a concept in Western literature in the middle of the eighteenth century and referred to a tale from Sri Lanka. In the discourse of the enlightenment, the main characters, three princes travelling through the world, gained knowledge not by systematic discovery but by accidental sagacity and open-minded curiosity. Robert K. Merton and Elinor Barber, *The Travels and Adventures of Serendipity: A Study in Sociological Semantics and the Sociology of Science* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004).

historical facts. Choosing the appropriate equilibrium will depend on the selected source material. Hence, in each part of this publication, empirical evidence from the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries will not only explain the consequences of shifting research designs, but also try to enliven the as yet bloodless idea of globalisation with colours, smells, stories, beliefs, and concepts.

2 Historiography

2.1 *The Mechanics of History*

To start with hard facts: the past is gone forever, and even the most brilliant historian will never be able to reverse the flow of time. Nevertheless, traces of the past are an obvious companion of everyday life wherever a human society might appear on the surface of the globe. Earlier generations living close to the Indus or the Rhine shaped cities and landscapes, created landmarks of remembrance and gave memories a framework of ritual and tradition, thus ensuring the survival of the past in the present and future. However, remnants of the past have at different times influenced present societies in various ways. There is an important difference between the past and history. The former concerns forgotten relics, the latter stands for a meaningful, politically relevant embodiment of the past—addressed, of course, to present and future generations.

History is a powerful tool for human orientation, and creates social coherence and individual identity, but the concept of history has at the same time a blurred, multilayered and imprecise meaning. Having a history belongs to the catalogue of human rights. It is an expression of cultural diversity and part of traditional beliefs that today are protected by various international conventions.³¹ But claiming interpretative authority and denying or manipulating history remains an ever-present attribute of power.

A fine literary example of the latter can be found in George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Winston, the novel's key figure, works for the Ministry of Truth and rewrites source material, while unwanted evidence disappears forever in "memory holes."³²

³¹ See footnote 128

³² George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* reflected World War II experiences. Memory politics turned to an important field of research, e.g. in the concept of Pierre Nora, who saw in memory sites (*lieux de mémoire*) the creation of a collective memory. See Jacques Le Goff and Pierre Nora, *Constructing the Past: Essays in Historical Methodology* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

2.2 *The Framing of History as an Academic Discipline in the Nineteenth Century*

In the nineteenth century, the dilemma of using the past as a powerful argument on the one hand, and the impossibility of restoring what is gone forever on the other, gained a new dimension. In this period, the understanding of science and its institutional background, the university, changed. Scientific practice developed, with its differentiation of theory and methods and its secular division into disciplines.³³ History was part of this process and became an academic discipline shaped by professional historians. In nineteenth century scientific discourse, one question deeply influenced the academisation and professionalisation of history: what is the difference between science and the humanities? What is history, if a scientific approach is a systematic way of gaining knowledge based on a method that governs the collecting of evidence and a theoretical concept that fits empirical evidence into an analytical structure? How are theory and methodology connected? Normally, research on social behaviour is at first concerned with methods for acquiring evidence, while in more formal sciences, such as mathematics, the theoretical approach is much more at the core of research. Because in all disciplines science implies objectivity, how can a historian, deeply involved in his own history, sustain objective distance? How can she or he meet the requirement of results being reproducible independently of the place and the persons involved in the research? Even more importantly, what is the appropriate language? Science prefers a conceptual language that is understandable to all researchers working in the same discipline, regardless of whether they are trained in the English speaking environment of Harvard or the Swiss-German environment of Berne. Scientific language gains more incisiveness when we think of the periodic table of elements. For chemists, biologists and physicists, water is understood to be a combination of the two elements oxygen and hydrogen. In contrast, historians do not have a universal terminology; instead of defining the phenomenon as H₂O they have to contend with the shifting meaning of “water” across time, cultures and languages. The language problem becomes even greater when the results of historical research—consisting only of language—are considered.³⁴

In view of these fundamental questions, a lack of a theoretical framework is not surprising. The historians’ response is generally to present source material and methodological advice, at best counterbalanced with theoretical reflections. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche criticised accumulating fragments from the past as “*Blinde Sammelwuth*” (blind collection craze) and alluded to the tunnel

³³ Jörn Rüsen, *Historische Orientierung: Über die Arbeit des Geschichtsbewusstseins, sich in der Zeit zurechtzufinden* (Köln: Böhlau, 1994).

³⁴ As an introduction to the fundamental epistemic problems of history see Chris Lorenz, *Konstruktion der Vergangenheit: eine Einführung in die Geschichtstheorie*, Beiträge zur Geschichtskultur, Bd. 13 (Köln: Böhlau, 1997).

vision that an obsession with the past might introduce.³⁵ This hunter-gatherer historiography and the occasionally “antitheoretical” approach to the past³⁶ enhanced popular interest in history. Indeed, history serves society’s need to create an identity legitimised by long lasting—and usually not newly invented—traditions.³⁷ Following this path, history developed into the “most important pedagogic technology of identity formation”³⁸ by establishing, using, and enforcing the principal master narrative of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the history of the (Western) nation.

2.3 *Differences between the Social and the Academic Function of History*

To the present day, the obvious social utility of history is a source of opportunity and misunderstanding. Historians feel uneasy with certain expressions of public interest, with attempts to reanimate or “re-enact” the past, as historical reenactments always gloss over the risks and daily dangers of the past: to play a medieval knight is fine, to have his life expectancy is not. The historians’ work neither aims at the reanimation of the past nor the collection of historical evidence in a museum. Historians are neither bookish misanthropes nor whip-cracking copies of Indiana Jones. The past is not a wild jungle or a cross on a map waiting for audacious exploration. All these clichés should be read as a changing acceptance of history and its academic value by the society concerned. They always entail the question of who was addressed as a historian, and how close to the ruling power the historian’s position developed.³⁹ There is a fine line between historians and history being a topic of historical research and the academic framework of history as a discipline. Historians do not discover, but primarily take a constructivist approach. Before the selection of appropriate evidence—the “source material”—is made, a decision concerning rationale and objectives represents the metacognitive structural design of historiography. This is the place of theoretical and methodological reflection. The first and most thrilling step in historical research therefore starts

³⁵ See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben*, *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*, Teil 2 (Leipzig: Fritzsche, 1874), Kapitel 3.

³⁶ Prasenjit Duara, “Why is History Antitheoretical?,” *Modern China* 24, no. 2 (1998): 105–20.

³⁷ “Invention of tradition” is a strong historical concept introduced by Eric Hobsbawm (see below, note 48). For the identity building function of invented traditions see the introduction of national holidays and founding myths in the nineteenth century. As an example see the role of the legendary freedom fighter Wilhelm Tell for the Swiss nation building. Jean François Bergier, *Wilhelm Tell: Realität und Mythos* (München: List, 1990).

³⁸ Duara, “Why is History Antitheoretical?,” 107.

³⁹ Lutz Raphael, *Geschichtswissenschaft im Zeitalter der Extreme: Theorien, Methoden, Tendenzen von 1900 bis zur Gegenwart* (München: C.H. Beck, 2003).

with a twofold disclosure of aims and objectives: why now? Contemporary interest in certain aspects of the past is not accidental. The appearance of historical topics therefore tells as much about the present interest in aspects of the past as about the past itself.⁴⁰ Reflections on contemporary interests include the apparent paradox that recent change, e.g. the end of Cold War and the rising importance of Asia, nourishes the need for a rewriting of history.

For and against what is the research aimed? Do historians follow coincidence or inconsistency within the discipline? Do they follow a concept of a national history more interested in identity building than in transboundary elements? What is the contemporary value of the results? Legitimation? Unmasking totalitarian misuse of power? To provide democratic societies with the necessary insight into the past, with the hope of fostering good governance? To bring back forgotten memories? To give victims a chance to speak from the past and to re-establish the chain of memories? To ensure that future generations will avoid mistakes made in the past? To provide contextual knowledge in a present challenged by the dynamics of change?

All these reflections are highly valuable and closely connected to a fundamental insight into what history is and how this discipline works. Above all, history is a process of transformation, including and excluding aspects of the past by giving them the value of remembrance. Masterfully described by Michel Foucault, this process of including and excluding follows certain rules that are embedded in the philosophical and theoretical understanding of the discipline.⁴¹ These rules or ordering principles are, of course, for their part influenced by historical change. Their modification, however, has fundamental consequences and the power to delete or promote historical topics. Theories and methods, therefore, primarily reflect aspects of changing these ordering principles and are based on the understanding of history as an ordering power—an assumption that is more far reaching than a collection of historical facts: when Egyptian pharaohs deleted their precursor's name, they destroyed the memory of a particular ruler. When in the nineteenth century historians stated *quod non est in actis non est in mundo*,⁴² they accorded preference to official sources and excluded non-written memories from the understanding of what history is, with far reaching consequences. Furthermore, it was not even necessary to mention that historical findings were always based on written evidence: non-written material from the past such as pictures, rituals and

⁴⁰ This concept follows the idea of discourse analysis and the assumption of a dominant master narrative. For an example of how master narratives can shape historiography see James Elkins, *Master Narratives and their Discontents*, Lectures in the Theory of Modernism and Postmodernism (London: Routledge, 2005).

⁴¹ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1970).

⁴² A legal principle stating that what is not in the files (i.e. documented in written form) is not part of the world (i.e. does not exist). First used for the documentary evidence of the state, this principle privileges governmental collections, first of all the national archives that developed from the nineteenth century into an additional attribute of sovereignty.

traditions simply disappeared from the historians' horizon. Following this approach, illiterate people were objects of historical descriptions, but not subjects capable of creating their own history.⁴³ Modern historiography is still deeply influenced by the ordering principles introduced in the nineteenth century, e.g. the significance of the nation, the Western model of modernity, the organisation of society and state, and the preference for written source material. The following discussion highlights the tensions between the global past and Western history by using the history of historiography. Looking at how historians have done their work provides an opportunity to slip into the pathologist's role. A careful analysis of how historiography (mis)used the past shows its sometimes terrible consequences, and is probably the only way to learn from history.

2.4 *The Nineteenth Century: How the World Acquired a Western Past and Historiography Dismissed a Global Scope*

2.4.1 Establishing and Following the "Master Narrative" of the Nation

The dominant interest in nation-building gave the young academic discipline of history one of its most powerful arguments. Nation, nation-building, and national identity established the overarching coherence of the historical narrative. This specific way of telling history was summarised much later as a "master narrative."⁴⁴ With the modern nation as its underlying motif, the history of historiography has a clearly Western focus. In contrast, the *global* focus of historiography is still a rarely mentioned topic (albeit one of rising importance), and was only recently introduced by Georg G. Iggers and Q. Edward Wang.⁴⁵ What follows does not however present a survey of historiographical development in general, but is closely related to the question of transcultural entanglements in historiography. The question is how the

⁴³ For an example of this approach see Hegel: "Afrika ist kein geschichtlicher Weltteil. Was wir eigentlich unter Afrika verstehen, das ist das Geschichtslose und Unaufgeschlossene, das noch ganz im natürlichen Geiste befangen ist." Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, ed. Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel, Werke in zwanzig Bänden, Bd. 12 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986), 129.

⁴⁴ Konrad Hugo Jarausch and Martin Sabrow, "'Meistererzählung': Zur Karriere eines Begriffs," in *Die historische Meistererzählung: Deutungslinien der deutschen Nationalgeschichte nach 1945*, ed. Konrad Hugo Jarausch and Martin Sabrow (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 9–32.

⁴⁵ Georg G. Iggers, Q. Edward Wang, and Supriya Mukherjee, *A Global History of Modern Historiography* (Harlow: Longman, 2008). Q. Edward Wang and Franz L. Fillafer, eds., *The Many Faces of Clio: Cross-Cultural Approaches to Historiography*, Essays in Honor of Georg G. Iggers (New York: Berghahn, 2007). Including the subaltern studies' debate: Manfredi Merluzzi, *Ad limina: percorsi storiografici di frontiera*, Scienze storiche, filosofiche, pedagogiche e psicologiche, 349 (Roma: Aracne, 2008).

globe acquired a Western past, when at the same time Western historiography all but ignored the world as a historical topic. In other words, while creating a Western past for a global present, historians did not disregard the process of globalisation, but bypassed what the social sciences describe as globalism. And with globalism or globality, a “state of the world involving networks”⁴⁶ gains its own significance.

Nineteenth century history confirmed a progressivist and nationalist approach and explained the contemporary success of societies, states, and persons with the way in which they developed in the past. Linear chronological development, in which nation building was crucial, shaped national histories, but also Marxist historiography. Evolutionary approaches confirmed the idea of telling a history wherein some societies acquired a “manifest destiny” of superiority. The same pattern can be found in a historical approach where history is driven by the genius of extraordinary people—a concept used by the influential English historian Thomas Carlyle in his numerous biographies. Nineteenth century historians found themselves light-years away from the medieval annalist who merged secular and religious events in the name of God. They were now chair holders, civil servants, professionals, and experts in strategies of development, busy claiming their position in the Western model of the modern university and defending their reputation as researchers against the growing world of modern science. Of course, these historians did not limit their research interest to the history of Europe and the United States. But extra-European topics gained more importance as objects of study, or served as examples contrasting Western modernity with Asian or African backwardness. Much more crucial than a single example of Eurocentrism in historiography is an insight into the structural conditions of Eurocentrism. As mentioned above, a historically organised past always gravitates towards three aspects: place, time, plus the idea of connecting them in an ordering system, which claims universality by using a verifiable scientific method. This last point—the assumption that history produces scientific and therefore universally sustainable knowledge—should be understood in the light of its political context: academic history developed in the West at a time when Europe was acting as the global powerhouse with imperialism as its ideological rationale.

2.4.2 *Weltgeist* versus Serendipity

Historians no longer played the role of curious travellers who produced knowledge from serendipity, an acknowledged form of insight in the enquiring and enlightened eighteenth century. The (Western) historians of the nineteenth century were initially interested in ordering principles, in mind-mapping the world, and finding not accidental, but scientific explanations for developments. Neither did they act at the periphery of social attention: in this age of historicism both traditionalists and

⁴⁶ Robert O. Keohane, *Power and Governance in a Partially Globalized World* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 193.

modernists, although sometimes difficult to distinguish, were desperately searching for legitimation in the past. Modernists stressed the idea of a global spread of enlightenment, and indeed the beginning of modern, scientific historiography coincides with a universal interest in history. But interest in history also served conservative legitimation. After the French revolution, supporters of the *ancien régime* translated prerogatives previously given by divine right into traditions, fostering the idea that the past is a safer and better orientation in life than the uncertain future. Both modernists and traditionalists shared the common belief that the new, secular form of monopolised power, the nation, was the embodiment of a collective history, which went far beyond the invention of the nation state. As one example, the clear narrative of continuity that grew from the recently founded German nation's emphasis on being rooted in the Holy Roman Empire. Another is the construction of a Hellenic nation, whose uncertain construction in 1830 gained stability in connecting the new nation to the ancient world of the fifth and fourth centuries BC. Historians played a major role in inventing and recounting such forms of continuities. They prepared the coherence of the so-called "imagined community,"⁴⁷ constructing and presenting a common, national history as social glue. Following the master narrative of the nation, the common past was intended to offset contemporary asymmetries in political participation and their gender- and class-dependencies. Each nation that was created in the nineteenth century needed a founding history, as well as (apparently) historical flags, anthems, rituals and symbols. It was a golden age for historians and their ability to invent traditions.⁴⁸

The rising interest in the history of the nation, and the political importance of historians, such as Thomas Carlyle in Victorian England, or Heinrich von Treitschke in Germany, almost had society forget that there was a blind spot in Western historiography, which happened to be, astonishingly enough, the rest of the world. At first sight, this statement seems more than brave, since a powerful endorsement came from no lesser person than G. W. F. Hegel. In his *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* the world was crucial for his reasoning on the philosophical background of history. In contrast to eighteenth century historiographers, Hegel replaced the coincidental collection of artefacts with a governing concept. A *Weltgeist* (world spirit) now brought reason into history. In Hegel's world, reason develops like a tree: old cultures, understood as roots, contribute to the results of reflection, which appear later as fruit. With the introduction of a "law of historical development" chronology had "de-globalised" the world into consecutive periods, giving some regions importance, while others disappeared. Hegel told his students that the "Orientals" had contributed to the concept of freedom, but added that only the individual could be free. Continuing along this line, Greeks and

⁴⁷ The "imagined community" expresses a key element in modern histories of the nation, introduced by Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

⁴⁸ Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

Romans had reflected on freedom enjoyed by privileged groups, while freedom as a human attribute belonged, according to Hegel, to the European “we.”⁴⁹ The spatial sequence of chronology deeply⁵⁰ influenced nineteenth century historians and gained wide popular appeal.⁵¹ Hegel himself increasingly followed Clío’s unerring march to the west. In subsequent versions of his lecture on the philosophy of history, interest in Indian and Chinese contributions decreased,⁵² as did that of nineteenth century historiography. Although historians acted as an international scientific community, and wrote on topics other than their own nation, a global approach to the past receded.

At first glance, the thesis of a decreasing interest in a universal historical approach seems somewhat absurd in the light of a globally connected nineteenth century. However, the more telegraphs, steamboats, and railways connected different cultures, and the more objects, information, and people crossed boundaries, the more the question of who tells whose history became a question of who will dominate the future. Therefore, the lack of a global concept in historiography should be understood as a competitive strategy, and not as an expression of missing information. Going into the ‘history of history’ in the nineteenth century, this assertion can be verified from three different angles:

1. Asian demands for a globally applicable historiography
2. The minor interest in universal history, regarded as a topic of education rather than of research
3. The minor role of history in competitive discourses on border crossing concepts labelled as “internationalism.”

⁴⁹ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, ed. Eduard Gans and Karl Hegel, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1848), 24. Hegel is again gaining importance in recent debates on universal history. It is indeed an interesting approach to go into Hegel’s reflections on slavery and, with the revolution of the slaves in Haiti, start thinking about Europe’s leading role as a result of influences from the periphery. See Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009).

⁵⁰ For an example see Frederic H. Hedge, “The world’s history is not an aimless succession of events [. . .], but a process and a growth. The ages are genetically as well as chronologically related”, in Frederic H. Hedge, “The Method of History,” *The North American Review* 111, no. 229 (1870): 323.

⁵¹ One of the most efficient carriers of knowledge, the popular encyclopedia, spread the idea of contributing a glorious past and a difficult present to the East, or told the history of Western discovery. For an example of the latter see “Indien,” in *Meyers Konversationslexikon*, 5. gänzlich neu bearbeitete Auflage (Leipzig und Wien: Bibliographisches Institut, 1896), Bd. 9, 203f.

⁵² See Karl Hegel, Vorrede zur zweiten Auflage: “In den späteren Vorträgen hingegen wurden China und Indien, der Orient überhaupt, kürzer durchgenommen und der germanischen Welt mehr Zeit und Aufmerksamkeit zugewendet.” Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, XXI.

2.4.3 The Asian Start of Global Historiography

As Iggers and Wang explain,⁵³ Asian perception of Western historiographical tradition did not start as the more or less informal development usually described as ‘influence’ resulting from incidental contacts between intellectuals. In the case of China, Rudolf G. Wagner accentuates the political value of having a “new history” as an already Japanese dominated path to the future.⁵⁴ Due to the fact that history as dynastic history belonged to intellectual resources controlled closely by the state, history bureaus in China, Korea, Vietnam and Japan neither stopped working on their history of ruling dynasties nor did they ignore the new way that history was being approached in the West. The initiative for transferring historiographical concepts across cultural borders, and therefore starting a global historical narrative, came from Japan, and its use did not just copy Western knowledge in the catch-up race of “modernisation.” Rather, this “new history” developed into a powerful instrument designed to shape a master narrative within Asian societies.⁵⁵ By contrast, Western historiography of the nineteenth century seemed rather reluctant to consider global approaches, and global historians remained, if anything, at the periphery of the scientific community. This statement does not ignore the translation of imperialism into imperial histories. However, the academisation of the humanities had an ambivalent result: the introduction of universal scientific methods crossed borders of language and culture. This simple fact was not limited to objects of research, but produced new topics at the same time. Anderson gives a good example of this ambivalence by referring to folklore studies:⁵⁶ in Europe, folklore studies accorded academic value to vernacular cultures and provided nationalism with the illusion of cultural authenticity from the past. When historians in the Philippines used the same intellectual framework, indigenous history no longer started with the Spanish conquest, and other borderlines began to appear: those between an elite history and a no less academic discipline, folklore studies.

Under the conditions of the nineteenth century, academic universalism and the notion of Western exceptionalism required and excluded each other simultaneously. While academic universalism seems to present unbiased analytical tools, the results of research have often, suspiciously enough, confirmed European exceptionalism. Factors far from the academic world intensified this process: not only the

⁵³ Iggers, Wang, and Mukherjee, *A Global History of Modern Historiography*.

⁵⁴ Rudolf G. Wagner, “Importing a ‘New History’ for the New Nation: China 1899,” in *Historicization = Historisierung*, ed. Glenn W. Most, *Apoemata*, 5 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001), 275–92.

⁵⁵ Anderson’s latest publication masterfully unfolds the idea of historical exceptionalism, pointing first of all to a Western orientated Japan, which moved onto the Western mind-map after the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-05. This typification discounts the global impact that the Philippine independence movement had from the late 1860s onward. Benedict Anderson, *Under three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 2007).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

availability of information and faster communication technology, but also the existence of anarchists, revolutionary terrorists, and dissidents who were forced to flee their repressive states, created a globality that the state-supporting historians of the nineteenth century hurried to build strong borders against. Because historians preferred world histories that were drawn as a chronological cultural evolution leading from an Asian past to a Western future, they were troubled by interferences on a global scale outside national or imperial borders. This can be seen in the Japanese difficulties organising Western historiographical knowledge.

In 1878, the Japanese legation in London welcomed a young scholar, who enrolled in Cambridge under the name Kenicho Sueymatz.⁵⁷ The young law student had accepted the request to find a historian in London who would write a Western historiography for Japan. He hired Gustavus George Zerffi who was instructed to examine French and English historical methods.⁵⁸ What happened next is a good example of how globalisation and nationalism, modern science and popular interest, Asian and Western concepts interfered with each other. Zerffi exemplifies the complexity of transcultural entanglement, which neither developed as planned nor revealed long lasting consequences. Suematsu had a clear idea of what Zerffi should deliver, namely a European model of history-writing for Japanese historians. The twenty-three year old Japanese student gave Zerffi precise instructions in twelve points, which were later printed in the first part of the book. The Japanese outline focused primarily on famous historians from Greek antiquity to contemporary English, French and German historians. Zerffi then had to present a concise description of history, and how it was written in the past. He had to specially discuss universal histories and the methods used to develop a research question. Interestingly, Suematsu, who complained about Japan's close combination of historical facts and philosophical reflections, demanded a *histoire totale*: not only facts about wars, rulers, and "debates in the parliament," but also the "history of the people, the rise and progress of useful and ornamental arts, of religious sects, and of all those numerous changes which have taken place in the life and the manners of successive generations, and above all, the modes of thinking."⁵⁹ With philosophical reflections subordinated to 'facts' the ordered Western historiography had to demonstrate how sometimes historians became revolutionaries.⁶⁰ Suematsu's guideline ended with the most distinguished aim of history, which is "to teach men (. . .), that they may steer clear of the errors of their forefathers," and "to establish (. . .) those

⁵⁷ Also named as Kenicho Suematsu (1855–1920).

⁵⁸ William Gerald Beasley, *Historians of China and Japan*, ed. School of Oriental and African Studies, Historical writing on the peoples of Asia, 3 (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 274ff.

⁵⁹ Instructions, in Gustavus George Zerffi, *The Science of History* (London 1879), xi. The mentioning of the parliament is especially interesting, since Japanese parliamentarism refers to German and British models, although the National Diet had not yet start working at this time.

⁶⁰ The text mentions Voltaire. *Ibid.*, xii.

laws, customs and institutions which will best promote and accelerate the permanent and progressive amelioration of their own country and of the human race.”⁶¹

Zerffi’s publication was both far from the Western ideal of progressive development *and* counter to the Japanese plans. Thus, possibly the first book on the scientific value of history, reflecting the discipline’s transcultural input, resulted from an Asian request, but did not meet Japanese expectations, nor enhance British influence. Suematsu’s choice of Zerffi seems a good one. He was a gifted, extraordinarily self-assured lecturer, a member of the well-known British Royal Historical Society, interested in the Vedas, in Arabian culture and spiritism. However, he was not a trained academic historian and his public success was based on racism and a popular understanding of evolution. It is possible that he used the role of historian as a disguise to hide his appointment as a spy in the Austro-Hungarian secret service.⁶² With the transcultural biographical background of a Jewish revolutionary who had to escape Hungary in 1848, he delivered a tribute to the Hegelian understanding of history, instead of a study on French and English historical methods. Mentioned by the German Ludwig Riess, who taught history at Tokyo University in 1887,⁶³ as “one of the earliest attempts at a history of history” Zerffi’s *The Science of History* inadvertently established a German foundation of Japanese historiography. Yet the complete disregard of this monograph in Western research literature documents the ignorance of transboundary topics mentioned above. Rarely has a publication of this range encountered such a degree of deliberate neglect in the scientific community, although admittedly it was not widely published. A Japanese translation was postponed for almost ten years,⁶⁴ and Western historians did not review it. Today, the book is among those rare examples of nineteenth century publications, which, contrary to expectation, is not available in European libraries with the exception of London. However, Zerffi tried to make use of his experience. Mentioning the Japanese mandate and presuming an interest in *Weltgeschichte* in continental Europe, he launched a debate on universal history in Great Britain, using the most explicit racism to argue for a rapprochement between history and evolutionary science.⁶⁵ Zerffi’s activities provide a good

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, xiii.

⁶² Tibor Frank, *From Habsburg Agent to Victorian Scholar: G. G. Zerffi, 1820–1892*, East European Monographs, vol. 576 (Boulder, Colorado: Columbia University Press, 2000).

⁶³ Iggers, Wang, and Mukherjee, *A Global History of Modern Historiography*, 142.

⁶⁴ The translation of Zerffi’s *The Science of History* was published with the title *Shigaku* (史学) in 1887/1888. “shi” means *history* and “gaku” *study* oder *science*.

⁶⁵ Gustavus George Zerffi, “On the Possibility of a Strictly Scientific Treatment of Universal History,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 3, no. 1 (1874): 380–94. Combining racism with the measuring of brains and contemporary ethnology, Zerffi repeated a widespread popular historical approach: “The Black is pre-historical, and continues without; the Yellow has developed to a certain degree, and then remained stationary; and only the White is progressively historical and has influenced, and still influences, and will influence the destinies of the world.” Zerffi, “On the Possibility of a Strictly Scientific Treatment of Universal History,” 389. For the same argumentation see Zerffi, *The Science of History*, 56.

example of the complex and ambivalent use of a global approach, where the opportunity to introduce Western supremacy relied on multilayered entanglements, which make visible how the proclaimed Western academic, objective interpretation of the past always runs the risk of non-Western refutation. Zerffi therefore highlighted the idea of finding “everywhere law and order” and proposed to “utilise the past in order to promote our own welfare and that of humanity, by tracing law and order in the destinies of man.”⁶⁶ Strictly denying free will as a force in history and distinguishing between people with and without history, the proclamation of a universal development of humanity prevented him from pointing to the obvious fact that well differentiated stages of development came closer to a political statement than a description of existing facts.

2.4.4 The Shifting of Global Topics from Research to Education

Despite Zerffi’s explicit language, until the turn of the century, the English-speaking scientific community’s interest in global or world histories remained rather weak. The futility of Zerffi’s plea confirmed a popular trend: globality remained less a scientific topic than an educational one; a matter of public interest, but not serious enough for historical research. Those historians interested in the world joined the *Société d’histoire diplomatique*, a French professional organisation that was open to international membership and based on member correspondence. From 1887, this association published a *Revue d’Histoire Diplomatique* that was designed to act as an intermediary between diplomats and historians.⁶⁷ International, though not global, interest clearly restricted to the state’s institutions of foreign relations provided the legitimatory background. Historians—in this area exclusively male—⁶⁸ who presented their expertise to the arcane sphere of the elite working in foreign offices, cleverly manoeuvred themselves closer to power. However, the repositioning of historians from annalists to experts with political influence had a non-negligible price and far reaching consequences: firstly, even the most modern nation states in the West—most of them still monarchies—left foreign relations to the old elite, i.e. to aristocrats with an apanage instead of a salary.⁶⁹ This situation made modern experts’ advice necessary, but also created a specific social context that relied on backward traditions. Secondly, these historians focused on governmental structures and institutions, and although the very fact of

⁶⁶ Zerffi, *The Science of History*, 772.

⁶⁷ For the programme see “La Société d’Histoire Diplomatique,” *Revue d’histoire diplomatique* 1 (1887).

⁶⁸ One hundred years later, feminists started alluding to the exclusion of women in diplomatic history and international relations, see Cynthia Enloe, *The Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

⁶⁹ Matthew Smith Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy: 1450–1919* (London and New York: Longman, 1993), 123.

their work demonstrated the limits of traditional diplomacy, they preferred to adopt the mechanics of foreign relations rather than point to the growing importance of civil society's transboundary networks. Therefore, nineteenth century modern or contemporary history had a global perspective, but preferred an institutionalised point of view with an understanding of the world as a playground of great men and sovereign states, which, in the historians' literature, appeared as personalised actors.

This historiographical mainstream, however, provided the basic premise for one of the most interesting quarrels among the numerous German historians' debates. When Karl Lamprecht, a historian from Leipzig, presented a cultural history and introduced social, economic and psychological reflections, he caused a storm of protest within the German scientific community. Indeed, only rarely could more tension be imagined than that between the analysts of high politics and someone who assigned historical importance to art and other such ornamental elements.

While German colleagues fervently tore holes into Lamprecht's argumentation, mentioning errors and even plagiarism, his approach found a global public and transnational attention, both of which are rarely mentioned today. Never accepted by his German colleagues, and relegated to the margins of the discipline for the rest of his life, Lamprecht started his international career on the most global platform that the nineteenth century could offer, the World's Fair. During the universal exhibition held in Saint Louis in 1904, Lamprecht gave a lecture on *Historical Development and Present Character of History* at the International Congress of Arts and Science. Although German chair holders might have understood Lamprecht's performance in St. Louis as confirmation of exclusion, the Congress itself developed as a highly attractive and prestigious global platform, which included the participation of a highly profiled Japanese delegation. Furthermore, the history panel included "A general survey of the History of Asia," delivered by Henri Cordier (1849–1925). In his attached *vita*, the famous French orientalist mentioned his position as "Chinese Mandarin of the third class, with decoration of 'Precious star', third degree."⁷⁰ Although the published contributions to the Congress do not describe the attending public, it is most likely that at least some Japanese delegates listened to Lamprecht.

One year after the congress, an English translation was already published with other lectures, including one on universal history.⁷¹ Here, Lamprecht rejected an

⁷⁰ Howard Jason Rogers, ed. *International Congress of Arts and Science [1904 in St. Louis]*, vol. 2: Political and Economic History, History of Law, History of Religion (London and New York: University Alliance, 1908), 86.

⁷¹ Karl Lamprecht, *What is History? Five Lectures on the Modern Science of History*, trans. E. A. Andrews (New York and London: Macmillan, 1905). The contribution started with a provocative first sentence: "History is primarily a socio-psychological science." (Lecture 1: "Historical Development and Present Character of the Science of History", p. 3). The same contribution was published in Volume 2 of the 15-volumes of congress publications, which was published in 1908. The introduction to this volume came from Woodrow Wilson, president of Princeton University in 1904 and later president of the United States. See Rogers, ed. *International Congress*

event-oriented chronological narrative and introduced the idea of a dynamic exchange where the “unity of history” does not appear in historical events, “but in the liquid, as it were, ethereal elements which are destined to influence universal history through long periods of time. These are the products of the higher intellectual activity, moral and religious principles, art, poetry, and science; these are the influences which become the chief constituents in the great stream of world history.”⁷²

A considerable amount of literature has been published on Lamprecht and his success in the United States and Latin America.⁷³ However, we still do not know enough about the influence Lamprecht had in Asia, nor has there be sufficient investigation into how much the discourse on *Culturgeschichte* as a marginalised field within the discipline initiated a discourse on a global, national border transgressive approach to history. The 1904 Congress of Arts and Science presents a valuable starting point for gaining an idea of how the highly nervous debates on differentiation between academic disciplines influenced epistemologies. Ordering questions and normative explanation, saying, for example, that international law displaced religion on a global scale,⁷⁴ give an impression of the multilayered forces that proved decisive in assigning a topic to an analytical framework. But again, between 1870 and 1914 the term “universal history” is rarely used in leading scientific journals, which reveals a rather uncomfortable inconsistency between the history of the modern nation and a religion-driven approach that worries about the declining importance of Israel, a land far from being a nation state at the time.⁷⁵

2.4.5 Popular Interest in the World and the De-Historisation of Non-Western Areas

The situation was different when publications addressed a wider public or had an educational scope, and in this context, extra-European topics had a more prominent platform than within the discourse of diplomatic history. It is interesting to note that the shift from research to education did not result in a decrease in public attention, in fact, quite the reverse happened. Archaeology and ancient history satisfied the public demand for bringing Asian history into the context of the glorious Western past. In 1900, Benjamin Ide Wheeler, president of the University of California,

of Arts and Science [1904 in St. Louis], vol. 2. The spread of congress publications is impressive. A smaller version had been published in 1904 in 8 volumes.

⁷² Lamprecht, *What is History? Five Lectures on the Modern Science of History*, 208.

⁷³ Roger Chickering, *Karl Lamprecht: A German Academic Life (1856–1915)*, Studies in German Histories (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1993).

⁷⁴ See contribution of Woodrow Wilson, who welcomed the congress members as president of Princeton University, in Rogers, ed. *International Congress of Arts and Science [1904 in St. Louis]*, vol. 2, 3–20.

⁷⁵ For an example see George H. Schodde, “Israel’s Place in Universal History,” *The Biblical World* 10, no. 4 (1897): 272–76.

successfully credited Alexander the Great with the “Merging of East and West in Universal History.”⁷⁶ Telling for the contemporary dominance of imperialism and nationalism is the fact that the publication appeared in a “Heroes of the Nations” series and presented Alexander the Great merely as a “sower,” rather than a conqueror. Carefully mentioned by contemporary reviewers, parts of the book were published beforehand in a popular journal, *The Century Magazine*,⁷⁷ and even the reviewer in the well-established *American Historical Review* came to a populist conclusion, referring to the so-called Boxer rebellion in China: “Had Alexander penetrated further into India, and into China, and performed there too his work of sower, European civilisation might not at this moment be confronted with so ghastly a problem.”⁷⁸

Public interest in a more globalised history was complemented by educational literature. Until 1890, the great chairs in Heidelberg, Paris and London wrote on Luther and the German nation, King Friedrich II of Prussia, and the French Revolution, while the International Congresses of Historical Studies started to support Western dominated networks, quarrelled about how many (Western) languages besides Latin should be used, and forced the ordering principle of history by epochs into a Western schema. Extra-European history, on the other hand, shifted to geography and cultural anthropology, to indology and the numerous associations devoted to Asian studies located initially in Great Britain and France. Oriental history, a field initiated in the late eighteenth century, moved from a merely historical to a philological approach. For nineteenth century Western historians the rich, old written sources from Asia were relevant as literary, fictional texts, but not as historical source material.⁷⁹

Within the discipline, however, certain historians chose to take a different position from the strict, diplomacy-related and national history-accentuating approaches. Celebrated as the first Japanese to occupy a history chair in the US, Kan’ichi Asakawa (1873–1948) did not miss a single opportunity for elegant and vitriolic comments on his Western colleagues’ ignorance of Japanese research literature and source material.⁸⁰ And although a global narrative was placed at

⁷⁶ Benjamin Ide Wheeler, *Alexander the Great: The Merging of East and West in Universal History* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1900).

⁷⁷ ———, “Alexander the Great,” *The Century Magazine* 57/58 (1898/99). The Alexander series started in November 1898 and ended 12 contributions later in October 1899.

⁷⁸ [Unsigned], “Review: [Alexander the Great],” *The American Historical Review* 6, no. 1 (1900): 113–15.

⁷⁹ This critical approach found its way into a popular encyclopedia. F. J. Goldsmid took the opportunity to write a Britannica article on Persian history and explained that Oriental history held only little attraction for the West. See Frederick John Goldsmid, “Perplexities of Oriental History,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (New Series)* 2, no. 4 (1885): 365–89.

⁸⁰ Asakawa wrote on F. Brinkley, *A History of the Japanese People (New York 1915)*: “One may ask (...) if Brinkley’s failings as a catholic historian are not most evident along some of the most important lines of his work; his weakness seems manifest on the cultural side in its deeper features, and is still more lamentable on the entire institutional side”. The review ends in praising the book

the periphery, far away from the master narrative of contemporary historiography, it brought together and developed Asian and European histories. In the review literature, two publications were often, although quite indignantly, mentioned, namely Vincent Adams Renouf's *Outlines of General History* and a German series of world history, *Weltgeschichte*, published by Hans F. Helmolt in eight volumes between 1899 and 1907.⁸¹ Both were written for educational and public use rather than as examples of sophisticated historical research; both however, combined the presentation of extra-European histories with a global approach.⁸²

When in 1909 Renouf—an American historian—published his *Outlines of General History*, the book was addressed to “eastern scholars.” Indeed, before being appointed Professor of History at the Imperial China University in 1906, he worked in the Chinese Maritime Customs Service (中國任海關總稅務司), one of the Chinese institutions where modern internationalism and Western imperialism interacted. With a background working in a mostly traditional bureaucracy, and with the aim of introducing a new tax system and organising reparation payments as compensation for losses due to the Boxer Rebellion, Renouf reduced the book's part on national history drastically to a general outline. As critically mentioned by his American reviewers, Renouf kept the discussion of the United States constitution to one page. Instead he mentioned the growing importance of communication networks, telegraph lines, and newspapers, and came to the conclusion that “the modern transformation of Japan and China is at least as significant as any other event or period in the world's history.”⁸³ However, such global approaches, in which the master narrative of the nation approximated an awareness of globalisation, remained uncommon in nineteenth century historiography. Historians, occupied primarily with the invention of national traditions and the integration of new political groups, such as workers, left the perception of global interconnectedness to other disciplines.

2.5 Which Discipline is Truly Global? Competitive Scientific Discourses and Internationalism

Focusing on the question of which academic discipline had successfully established an analytical tool to explain an apparently more and more interconnected world at

as the best available in the West. K. Asakawa, “Review: [A History of the Japanese People],” *The American Historical Review* 21, no. 3 (1916): 600f.

⁸¹ Vincent Adams Renouf, *Outlines of General History* (New York: Macmillan, 1909). Hans F. Helmolt, ed. *Weltgeschichte*, 9 vols. (Leipzig and Wien: Bibliographisches Institut, 1899–1907).

⁸² In the case of the German *Weltgeschichte*, the first three volumes were dedicated to America, Asia and Africa, an approach justified by the growing political importance of the Far East.

⁸³ James A. James, “Review: [Outlines of General History],” *The American Historical Review* 15, no. 3 (1910): 673f.

the turn of the century, most historians answered from a national point of view. Diplomatic history became the leading paradigm. It focused on the high politics of establishing power and treaty making, with the sovereign states as major actors. However, it was mostly limited to those who were called major powers and located in the West. Transboundary aims based on a strong national point of view characterised almost all academic disciplines in the late nineteenth century.

2.5.1 International Professional Associations and the Search for Border Crossing Topics

Almost all academic disciplines founded international professional associations before World War I, because having members all over the globe established evidence of political importance. Therefore, the shaping of research designs with global scope remained a predictable development, as did the need for explicitly global or at least far reaching examples. Of course, the ever dominant master narrative established an asymmetrical discourse in which Western topics remained superior. But in a globalised century, proving superiority depended on two aspects: the successful inclusion of transboundary phenomena within the discipline, and the inclusion of non-Western topics and members from non-Western countries under Western interpretation. The consequences might differ from discipline to discipline, but these two characteristic traits came to public attention. Science and the humanities showed an increasing interest in transboundary negotiation processes called “arbitration.” Arbitration expressed the hopes of pacifists in peaceful conflict-solving procedures, but failed politically in the Hague Peace Conferences in 1899 and 1907. However, the idea of replacing political and military power by expert decision came to the attention of international law and fascinated trade unionists, the Universal Postal Union and even some historians.⁸⁴

The broad, disciplinary border crossing interest in arbitration in almost every branch of the social sciences and humanities had its counterpart in a highly visible shift of extra-European topics from the merely exemplary to the conceptual. For the Marxist concept of development Asian despotism and the Asian mode of production explained the development in historical materialism. In sociology, Max Weber developed his theory of the Asian society, which he based on Hindu and Buddhist influences on economies and modernisation. In turn, this approach found an attentive public in Japan, but, significantly, only in the young discipline of Japanese

⁸⁴ In both Hague Peace Conferences in 1899 and 1907 introduction of arbitration in international law discussed an intermediary use by limiting arbitration to international organisations. In addition, the Universal Postal Union treaty gave the model for the arbitration clause discussed in The Hague. See James Brown Scott, ed. *The Proceedings of the Hague Peace Conferences, Translation of the Official Texts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1920).

political economy rather than in history.⁸⁵ To quote another approach, the sociologist and philosopher Ludwig Stein based his theory of evolutionary optimism on the difference between Buddhism/Confucianism and Judaism/Christianity/Islam.⁸⁶ In his point of view, European dominance in Asia depended on the static backwardness of Asian religions.

2.5.2 Internationalism and International Organisations: The Merging of Science and Politics

While arbitration and the inclusion of extra-European members in transboundary networks characterised the border crossing potential of humanities and social sciences in general, some newly created disciplines focused explicitly on globality in the late nineteenth century. One of the most successful global approaches, albeit hidden behind legal formalism, developed around the *American Journal of International Law* and the *American Political Science Review*, both newly founded in 1907. Here, the intriguing new input consisted of the introduction of international organisations and international congresses as new agencies in international politics. Rather unspectacular at first sight, the revolutionary impact of this idea becomes more evident when the semi-official character of most of these institutions is taken into account: the lack of formal extraterritorial rights for even governmental foundations and the rich variety of these organisations, from the Universal Postal Union to the Red Cross, from the international nomenclature of causes of death to the international administration of states' debts. These organisations were the starting point of international administrations, institutions and persons in legal limbo, who were neither accepted as diplomats nor exclusively national. The leading figures in the interpretation of this phenomenon combined international law with political science and developed an international administrative law. International administration had, in their opinion, the "advantage of operating largely in a field that has not been occupied as yet by systematised methods and historic traditions."⁸⁷ Again, it is no coincidence that the extra-European perspective played an important role. Although most international organisations had their seats in Europe, non-European memberships demonstrated their cohesive potential. In contrast to the narrative of modernisation and Western exclusiveness, international organisations gained power by inclusion, not by exclusion. Whoever wanted to make use of an international organisation as an attractive, global agency had to pay the price of including entities that had until now been on the Western periphery.

⁸⁵ Wolfgang Schwentker, *Max Weber in Japan: eine Untersuchung zur Wirkungsgeschichte 1905–1995* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998).

⁸⁶ Jacob Haberman and Ludwig Stein, "Rabbi, Professor, Publicist, and Philosopher of Evolutionary Optimism," *The Jewish Quarterly Review (New Series)* 86, no. 1–2 (1995): 91–125.

⁸⁷ Paul S. Reinsch, "International Administrative Law and National Sovereignty," *The American Journal of International Law* 3, no. 1 (1909): 6.

And whoever wanted to question Western decision making made use of international organisations. For example, although it was without a voice in diplomatic gatherings, and without formal sovereignty, Egypt gained a remarkable position in international organisations. Moreover, internationalists pointed to the already introduced practice that, with these organisations, even non-sovereign colonies were given a voice.⁸⁸ Paul S. Reinsch, an expert in international law and an American diplomat, was one of the most important representatives of this form of internationalism. An extremely productive author, he wrote the key study on public international unions, on arbitration, on open diplomacy, on the Pan-American conferences, and on colonial institutions, and in 1913 went as the United States Minister to China. In contrast to the leading historical approach in the nineteenth century, which relegated India and China to a glorious but faded past, Reinsch was fascinated by Asian spirituality, in which he saw the source of an intellectual energy capable of transforming Western influences with a specific Asian imprint.⁸⁹

2.5.3 The Concept of Internationalism

In extending the discussion on the growing importance of global concepts to the question of how competitive discourses developed, the concept of internationalism is crucial. The blurred label of “internationalism” became a buzzword in the late nineteenth century debate on transnational networks. Pacifists, feminists, experts, heirs, endowments, world fairs, and international organisations all used the new label of internationalism as a concept on a newly arranged mental map.⁹⁰ The rising degree of confusion becomes apparent when asking the simple question: in which subject area was the first American thesis on internationalism written? In the *American Economic Review*’s list of doctoral dissertations in political economy, John Culbert Faries’ *The Rise of Internationalism* (from Columbia University) was labelled a work on socialism—a more than surprising allocation as the author came

⁸⁸ Denys P. Myers, “Representation in Public International Organs,” *American Journal of International Law* 8 (1914).

⁸⁹ Paul S. Reinsch, “Energism in the Orient,” *International Journal of Ethics* 21, no. 4 (1911): 407–11 and “Intellectual Life in Japan,” *The North American Review* 194, no. 670 (1911).

⁹⁰ The Austrian pacifist Alfred H. Fried described his booklet *Das internationale Leben der Gegenwart* as a travel guide to the discovery of an international space structured by international organisations and multilateral treaties. The artist and architect Hendrik Christian Andersen sent plans for a global capital to different governments before World War I. It had an Eiffel-tower-like centre which served as centre of communications. The metaphor of the tower was a well-known sign of transcultural globality. A “column of progress” (Siegessäule) decorated the San Francisco World’s Fairs in 1915. See Stella George Perry and Alexander Stirling Calder, *The Sculpture and Mural Decorations of the Exposition: A Pictorial Survey of the Art of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition* (San Francisco: P. Elder and company, 1915).

from a missionary background.⁹¹ The book established different international actors beyond exclusively government-controlled international relations and underlined the significance of international organisations, World's Fairs, the connectivity between universities, and the transboundary activities of associations and foundations. The author gave special attention to the development of auxiliary or international languages and presented the international Opium Conferences as a political expression of internationalism. Recently reedited in 2008, *The Rise of Internationalism* never received any academic feedback, and its author later published on handicapped and disabled soldiers and artificial limbs. The book however, provides a valuable introduction to the multilayered activities labelled as internationalism before World War I. Later forgotten in the history of international relations, internationalism introduced as a Western concept in the late nineteenth century the idea of semi-official cooperation between an internationally active civil society, experts and governments. In 1899 and 1907, the Hague Peace Conferences presented crucial moments in internationalism, since an international civil society held their meetings at the same time as the diplomats.⁹²

2.6 How World War I and Propaganda Prepared New Grounds for Global Approaches

At first glance, there are good reasons for assuming an end to all competitive debates about globality with the outbreak of World War I. However, member states continued to pay their fees to established international organisations and in 1915 the World's Fair, which still attracted international congresses, opened in San Francisco. As usual, governments reflected on the coming new world order shortly after war broke out. But this time, long distance communication and border crossing networks gave substantially more room to public reflections than similar situations had done previously. Numerous women's congresses for peace convened, secret socialist meetings accompanied the Soviet takeover in Russia, and, at the very beginning of the war, the American carmaker Henry Ford invited pacifists onto his ship, the Oscar II, cruising towards Europe in the firm belief that he would bring back a peace agreement in December 1914. With *The New York Times'* regular account of seasick pacifists and finally with Ford's return to his desk, such activities

⁹¹ Faries worked in the Presbyterian city mission in Minneapolis before he set out on a year-long journey through Asia and the Levant in 1894. Based on these experiences he became a lecturer on the Orient in Minneapolis and made his way as a publisher. He therefore did not obtain his PhD until he was in his late 40s. For his *curriculum vitae*, see: John Culbert Faries, *The Rise of Internationalism* (New York: W.D. Gray, 1915).

⁹² Madeleine Herren and Cornelia Knab, "Die Zweite Haager Friedenskonferenz und die Liberalisierung des politischen Informationsmarktes," *Die Friedens-Warte. Journal of International Peace and Organization* 82, no. 4 (2007).

do not seem worth mentioning further. This is indeed the case when such public interventions are regarded as an additional feeble mission for peace in a long series of more serious official activities, including the Chinese government's and the Pope's offers to mediate. The situation acquires a different meaning when public activities are taken as unofficial counterparts of governmental propaganda. Both sides addressed a civil society and a public opinion beyond borders with an impact heretofore unknown and in a way that overruled existing censorship. The value of public opinion increased in 1917, when the Russian revolutionary government and the American president laid down their respective concepts of a new world order. This crucial moment of reorientation was a high point for historical concepts; reordering the past in an affirmative or dissociative way, influencing both the contemporary political debate and the position of history within academic disciplines. While historians concentrated on the question of war guilt in a national context, Wilsonian idealism and endowment money from Carnegie and Rockefeller enabled the establishment of chairs in international relations worldwide.

Both conventional historians and international relations scholars faced a unique situation after World War I when the introduction of a new international order stressed the invention of tradition and drew public attention. Leon Trotsky provided historians with explosive new source material and embarrassed Western governments with the publication of the Tsar's secret treaties. The President of the United States, on his part, established a Committee on Public Information. Its chairman, George Creel, declared "Selling America" to be the main aim and globalised the idea of the "melting pot" as a fight for public opinion by sending out people, producing films and pictures and spreading American news by telegraphy and radio around the globe. In the last year of the war, a thousand words per day came from the United States to Europe through the telegraph stations in Paris and London, while the stations in Darien covered Latin America. Messages portraying the American way of life were also sent from New York to San Diego, from there to the station of Cavite, which then handed over to Shanghai and Tokyo.⁹³

2.6.1 The End of the European Westphalian Order and the Beginning of Global Cooperation

Historians participated in the discussion on the increasing public support for border crossing internationalism versus traditions of governmental decision making in the small circles of the Western Great Powers. In debates about the appropriate tradition for international decision making, the Congress of Vienna (1814/15) acquired the significance of a watershed, dividing those who still believed in the European tradition of diplomacy from those who preferred to include internationalism in a global concept. In 1918, the British historian Charles K. Webster

⁹³ George Creel, "Public Opinion in War Time," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 78 (1918): 190.

conducted a study on the Congress of Vienna. The historian worked in uniform, since he was writing about the congress by order of the British Foreign Office. At this time, the American President Wilson—also a professional historian—had already renounced the Congress of Vienna as an outdated, autocratic institution of peace making, closely connected with the Westphalian order established in 1648.⁹⁴ This struggle between European traditions and the newly developed concepts in internationalism came to a head during the Paris Peace Conferences. The peace treaties combined in one document a traditional peace treaty with the establishing of the League of Nations, the foundation of new international institutions. The research literature frequently mentions the burden that the newly founded League of Nations had to bear with the fact that it was established in the same document in which reparations and war guilt were recorded. However, a less often mentioned but important consequence of this combination was the drifting apart of diplomatic historians focusing on the war guilt question, and the international relations specialists on the other. As part of political science, international relations attracted and partly monopolised research into different forms of international cooperation in the name of the League of Nations. Seasoned and newly active internationalists and cosmopolitans alike supported this new academic field.

The League of Nations was based on sovereign member-states and even perpetuated colonial rule in the mandates' commission, but there was also a hidden possibility of new and more global activities. A small international administration, a covenant with the promise of reviewing job applications in a gender-blind process, an immense variety of technical and intellectual forms of cooperation worldwide, and new international agencies in the form of foundations and endowments, all went into shaping a globally connected world after the end of World War I.

Again, taking a step back and thinking in terms of historiography, what happened in Paris and later in Geneva established a new border crossing platform and invited historians to follow new patterns when ordering the past, e.g. along the lines of world labour, world economy, world health, not to mention a critical investigation of the global spread of racism and antisemitism. Following the approach outlined above, the history of historiography provides evidence of how the disciplines adapted to the new situation after 1919. And as a further step, the blind spots created by the ordering principles established after World War I stimulate thought about who now called for a global approach.

⁹⁴ Charles Kingsley Webster, *The Congress of Vienna, 1814–1815* (London: Oxford University Press, 1919), III. Cf. Woodrow Wilson, “Address of the President of the United States Delivered at a Joint Session of the Two Houses of Congress, February 11, 1918,” in *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918*, ed. United States Department of State, Supplement 1: The World War, Volume I, Part I: The Continuation and Conclusion of the War - Participation of the United States, 109f., accessed March 11, 2011, <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS-idx?type=turn&id=FRUS.FRUS1918Supp01v01&entity=FRUS.FRUS1918Supp01v01.p0200&q1=Count%20von%20Hertling%27s%20reply%20is.>, 2011.

2.6.2 Disciplines with a Global Approach after World War I

The contemporary academic competition for global approaches developed in a foreseeable way: after 1919, internationalism became institutionalised in border crossing education and intellectual exchange programmes. In addition, the first chairs created in international relations gave a new impetus to the study of international organisations and international administrative law. Moreover, scholars involved in these academic frameworks participated in discussions about the public desire for a new form of public diplomacy. Mostly related to political science departments, international relations professors adopted the so-called idealistic or Wilsonian approach; afterwards, when the brave new world fell apart, this was energetically opposed by the so-called school of realism.⁹⁵

With World War I as a key element and a main focus history substantially grew as an academic discipline, in which conflicting approaches to globality developed. For European historiography, World War I guaranteed the political importance of the academic discipline, which was closely linked to the so-called *Kriegsschuldfrage* (question of war guilt). Rarely has historical research so obviously influenced political decision making,⁹⁶ and rarely has a topic shaped historiography to such an extent (although for different reasons, a more global than Western historiography comes close to the same result).⁹⁷ Indeed, the recently emphasised decolonising effect of World War I had much more than mere psychological significance.⁹⁸

However, pointing to the more or less expected rise of national histories outside of the West does not answer the question of how a global approach developed. Marxist historiography and the French school of the *Journal des Annales* introduced a history of structural change. These approaches overcame the history of the nation by introducing the universal master narratives of labour, production and consumption. Increasingly, a competitive understanding of history emphasised the excluded parts of the past and abandoned the narrative of unilinear development. One of the most important contributions to the debate was Walter Benjamin's unfinished work *Arcades*—named after the Paris arcades—a spirited plea against historicism and cultural history. History needs, in Benjamin's view, materiality and

⁹⁵ John Baylis and Steve Smith, *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁹⁶ The publication of historical source material proving the innocence of the respective government started shortly after World War I with the *Farbbücher* and continued with the publication of foreign relations documents. See Sacha Zala, *Geschichte unter der Schere politischer Zensur: amtliche Aktensammlungen im internationalen Vergleich* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2001).

⁹⁷ The German war guilt statement of Fritz Fischer grew into the so called Fischer-Kontroverse, a crucial moment when political history was confronted by the approaches of newer forms of social history. See John Anthony Moses, *The Politics of Illusion: The Fischer Controversy in German Historiography* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1975).

⁹⁸ Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

specific attention to the memory of those excluded from historical remembrance. Benjamin's complex work gained the attention of postmodern and postcolonial approaches.⁹⁹ In his understanding, history should always include the forms of suppression and the exclusions that a historical narrative is based on. Taking this idea as an expression of the 1930s' complex debate on the meaning of the past, the question of how historiography informed a master narrative and why a certain group of experts gained a monopoly of interpretation affirms its importance: at least for the twentieth century, the history of historiography cannot be told as a story of discoveries, but as a struggle for the monopoly of interpretation of the past.

In the traditional field of history as an academic discipline, the methodology still came close to Western ideas of development, with capitalism as its driving force. In addition, the separation of topics, which resulted in diplomatic conferences being interpreted by diplomatic historians, only created blind spots. The Paris Peace Conferences may indeed live up to their description as a rather conventional form of peace making. However, these conferences also need fresh examination as the beginning of a reformulated, readapted and much more global form of international bargaining. Until now, research on the Paris Peace Conferences and the League of Nations has mostly adopted the analytic method of separating interfering influences into single lines, instead of studying the initial conditions of multilayered tangles. Consequently, there is a rich literature available on the rising importance of socialist internationalism due to the political success of socialist and communist parties after World War I.¹⁰⁰ But rarely are overlaps mentioned between internationalism as a key leftist term, a continuation of the older middle-class internationalism, and a specificity of expert-related networks. From the same perspective, the foundation and functioning of the International Labour Organisation, planned as a *cordon sanitaire* against communist takeover, provided a rich platform of newly founded institutional possibilities for a more global form of international participation. However, neither the simultaneity of participating in the ILO without membership in the League, nor the coincidence of tripartism, diplomacy, and the participation of non-sovereign members, are at the centre of analytical interest in historiography.

2.6.3 Paris 1919: The Development of Dense Global Networks

More convincing conclusions are needed about the role of the Paris Peace Conference as a nucleus of competing global concepts, as a great fair, a meeting point of those who had been approached as allies during the war and now hoped to make

⁹⁹ Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*, Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989). Michael P. Steinberg, *Walter Benjamin and the Demands of History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

¹⁰⁰ Zara S. Steiner, *The Lights that Failed: European International History, 1919–1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 130ff.

gains in Paris. As a significant characteristic of this form of peace making, which differs from older forms of congresses, the inclusion of non-European and non-Western countries is crucial. Additionally, the new participants in international politics broke through the small exclusive circle of sovereign states. Already in Paris and later Geneva, some functioning transboundary networks were astonishingly successful.¹⁰¹ For others, internationalism turned into an expression of exclusion,¹⁰² and some were just mentioned so as to demonstrate how to control an “exotic” community.¹⁰³ In all cases, transboundary networks seriously affected the contemporary mental map, since the availability of source material changed substantially: nineteenth century internationalists described their approach as “discovery”.¹⁰⁴ After World War I, systematic research and collection of source materials constructed globalism as a self-contained field with a specific past. For example, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace financed hundreds of books on the social and economic history of World War I, and made available in their Far East collection compilations of treaties that had been difficult to acquire until then.¹⁰⁵ The International Labour Organisation’s book series covered working conditions in all member states, from Belgium to India. Other endowments made similar attempts, and various platforms and groups, such as the Institute of Pacific Relations, maintained transboundary networks in their journals and book series.¹⁰⁶ All of these and the League of Nations’ intellectual cooperation and education institutions contributed to the formation of a rich encyclopaedic literature, published with the aim of presenting the broad spectrum of participating institutions rather than the unique features of single Western nations.¹⁰⁷ Of course, in the light

¹⁰¹ E.g. international women’s organisations; see Rupp, *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women’s Movement*.

¹⁰² Even before national socialist ideology and politics merged internationalism with communism and antisemitism, Henry Ford published “The International Jew” in the early 1920s. Henry Ford, *The International Jew: The World’s Foremost Problem*, 4 vols., Reprint of a Series of Articles Appearing in “The Dearborn Independent” (London: The Britons, 1920–22).

¹⁰³ In 1919, American newspapers celebrated the idea of a “cosmopolitan army”, mentioning the Chinese, and even Inuit fighting in the American Army in Europe. See [Unsigned], “Cosmopolitan Heroes; Winners of D. S. C. in 77th—Gassed Chinaman Who Would not Leave His Post,” *The New York Times*, May 4, 1919.

¹⁰⁴ See introduction to Alfred Hermann Fried, *Das internationale Leben der Gegenwart* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1908). According to Fried, the international land already exists but needs a travel book: “Das, was man so oft als Utopie bezeichnet hat, ist Wirklichkeit.” *Ibid.*, III.

¹⁰⁵ E.g. John Van Antwerp MacMurray, ed. *Treaties and Agreements with and Concerning China, 1919–1929*, Pamphlet series of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of International Law, no. 50 (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1929).

¹⁰⁶ Tomoko Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific: The United States, Japan and the Institute of Pacific Relations in War and Peace, 1919–1945*, Routledge Studies in Asia’s Transformations (London: Routledge, 2002).

¹⁰⁷ For an example see: John Eugene Harley, *International Understanding: Agencies Educating for a New World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1931). Harley’s list of agencies is impressive and includes academic institutions and courses, international organisations with educational

of World War II all these attempts to create global connectivity between East and West seem to document a history of failure. Following this approach, the coincidence of different forms of globalism with various aspects of internationalism and cosmopolitanism appears to be an expression of faded hopes as well as the political failure of the newly established League of Nations.¹⁰⁸

2.6.4 The Growing Importance of International Organisations and the Impact of War

What unspoken assumptions underlay the great variety of contemporary global concepts? With the outbreak of World War II in mind, historiography leans towards the assumption that global concepts cannot survive periods of political tension. However, border crossing contacts established in 1919 were still politically active in the 1930s. Publications on international organisations represented a still growing interest in institutionalised forms of border crossing. The number of international organisations increased between 1936 and 1938.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, although the League of Nations came under increasing pressure in the 1930s, even fascist states in Europe and Asia developed comparable forms of—admittedly closely monitored—global approaches.¹¹⁰

In addition, the steadily growing importance of propaganda to economics and politics suggests that the alleged fading-out of global entanglements is a methodological problem rather than the description of a contemporary development. In the blind spot of methodological nationalism,¹¹¹ mostly unnoticed by historiography, Western-Asian competition on global data developed. In the late 1930s the League of Nations lost its monopoly on providing the authoritative data collection on international organisations. Shortly after the foundation of the League, its secretariat collected information about international organisations and regularly published their latest forms in several editions of the *Handbook of International Organisations*.¹¹² At first glance, the handbook seems to be a rather dry read of minor importance; however, only in this dataset did the connection between the League and networks of various kinds become visible. Although in the League's covenant

endeavours (which covers most of the existing official and nongovernmental organisations), and the major endowments and foundations.

¹⁰⁸ Zara S. Steiner, *The Triumph of the Dark: European International History, 1933–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

¹⁰⁹ *Handbook of International Organisations: Associations, Bureaux, Committees, etc.*, (Geneva: League of Nations Publications, 1938). Former editions: Geneva 1921, 1923, 1925, 1929, 1931 [Supplement] and 1936.

¹¹⁰ Peter J. Katzenstein and Takashi Shiraishi, *Network Power: Japan and Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997). For the fascist new Europe see George P. Blum, *The Rise of Fascism in Europe* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1998).

¹¹¹ Daniel Chernilo, “Methodological Nationalism: Theory and History.”

¹¹² See above, footnote 109.

the value of a border crossing flow of information was clearly mentioned, adequate funding did not exist, and an institutionalised, categorising relationship between international organisations did not become effective until the foundation of the United Nations. Again, asymmetrical tensions between Asia and Europe show the growing importance of a political field later described by American political science as “soft power.”¹¹³ In 1934 the Japanese government published the first edition of the *Handbook on International Cultural Organisations* bilingually, in English and Japanese. The new Japanese handbook, which listed mostly organisations that had their headquarters in Japan, claimed a geopolitical shift of international organisations that contrasted with the data in the League’s handbook, where the overwhelming majority still had their seat in Europe.¹¹⁴

Contemporaneously, Japanese intellectuals insisted on the global awareness of international Asian networks. Herbert Newhard Shenton, professor of sociology at Columbia University and secretary of the International Auxiliary Language Association, came in for heavy criticism, when he conducted a survey of the languages used during international congresses. Shortly after his book, with the pleasant title *Cosmopolitan Conversation*, was released in 1933, Samitaro Uramatsu doubted “whether the book will be of any considerable use,” pointing to the lack of “oriental” networks.¹¹⁵ The debate on who was influencing the obviously powerful network of international organisations continued even during the war: a national socialist organisation, the *Deutsche Kongress-Zentrale*, planned to publish a fascist version of the League of Nations’ handbook. The manuscript of the German *Handbook of International Organisations* was ready for publication when the war ended.¹¹⁶

This further raises the question of which approach can provide a useful analytical tool for the interpretation of ambivalent discourses that seem extremely national and at the same time universal. They are highly sensitive to missing elements of border crossing networks on the one hand, and, on the other, to their usefulness for aggressive propaganda.

¹¹³ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

¹¹⁴ None of the organisations in the Japanese Handbook were mentioned in the League’s Handbook, not even the Asiatic Society of Japan, founded in 1872, which is now located in the German Club and is one of the few with foreigners in leading positions. Also in contrast to the League, the Japanese dataset provided the opportunity to present Manchukuo as a new factor in international relations, while the League carefully avoided mention of the Manchurian puppet state as a member in an international organisation. For different editions of the League’s *Handbook of International Organization* see above, footnote 109.

¹¹⁵ Samitaro Uramatsu, “Review: [Cosmopolitan Conversation],” *Pacific Affairs* 7, no. 2 (1934): 238.

¹¹⁶ Hoover Institution Archives (Stanford) Online Archive of California, “Register of the Germany. Deutsche Kongress-Zentrale Records, 1870–1943,” accessed March 11, 2011, http://www.oac.cdlib.org/view?docId=tf0d5n9790;query=DKZ;style=oac4;doc.view=entire_text#hitNum1.

Starting with the statement that in the nineteenth century Western historiography told a history of European expansionism, but left out the globe, the explanation above gives an answer to the question of what kind of historical evidence documents the idea of global networks and transboundary contacts after World War I. Indeed, in the shadow of semi-official contacts, dense activities developed across borders on a global scale. Newly established chairs of international relations analysed these border crossing activities, while historians preferred diplomatic history and national concepts of international relations.

The following part will discuss how to bring global activities into, and sometimes back into, the focus of historiography.

3 Transcultural History

3.1 *Culture and Historiography*

While for post World War I history, nation and national identities, the history of political decision making, and institutions still remain at the centre of historical research, Prasenjit Duara directs historiographical attention to culture. Before discussing Duara's contribution in terms of its global value, it is important to classify the periodic demand for culture as an indicator of methodological and theoretical differentiation within historiography. As explained above with the example of Lamprecht, *Kulturgeschichte* challenged the assumption of the historicity of intentional actions reserved for states and statesmen. Nearly half a century after Lamprecht, at the end of the Cold War, a "new cultural history" challenged both the more traditional national history, and the German *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* (history of society). The latter approach had been established as a critical counterpart to the national histories of political decision making.

3.1.1 The Impact of Culture

What is the significance of culture from a historiographical point of view? Culture appeared to complement social history's lack of subjective life experiences, to bring in *Alltagsgeschichte* (everyday history) and gender. Furthermore, borrowing from the American anthropologist Clifford Geertz, the new cultural history presented an appropriate methodology known as "thick description".¹¹⁷ Culture

¹¹⁷ Debates on Geertz within the historical academic community describe the difficult process of differentiation between social and cultural history. While in the case of social history the structures of economy and power are behind culture, the idea of culture introduced by Geertz shapes reality. From this point of view, culture loses its additive character as the expression of a superstructure

as an umbrella term challenged the ordering principles of historiography. It questioned privileged economic interests and political decision making and, explicitly or not, asked the question whether there is a “reality” beyond language and culture, or whether a set of symbols shape reality. Under the influence of globalisation, this question became even more complex. Cultural entanglements now gained attention as “global cultural flows”.¹¹⁸ Although more in the background, critical discussion of social history discovered hidden forms of methodological nationalism, pointing to the fact that not only the widespread national histories but also social history still worked with an implicit but rarely mentioned *national* research design.¹¹⁹ Older concepts, primarily transnationalism and civil society, now acquired a cultural dimension, and brought to the fore previously neglected historical agencies.¹²⁰ The ongoing discussion, however, developed more convincingly around method than content. Although linked to calls for “multiarchival research,” it rarely departed from Western topics for reasons of language competence. Furthermore, addressed or not, cultural dimensions in international relations and in economic and political history had rarely been dissociated from the question of the extent to which culture as a superstructure influenced what historians usually regard as the basic factors: power, violence, institutionalised bargaining, enforceability of obligations, responsibility towards victims, and belief in universal values such as human rights and the protection of nature. As long as historiography goes along with enlarging the superstructure and preserving the basics, nothing particularly disturbing happens. However, most historians will agree that things changed fundamentally after the end of the Cold War.

3.1.2 Historiography after the Cold War Ended: Subaltern Studies and Historicities

Apart from the widely accepted statement that “there is no new paradigm of historical studies,”¹²¹ the question of what exactly has changed finds different answers within the academic community. The American political scientist Francis Fukuyama published *The End of History* in 1989, announcing the successful

with economy as its driving force. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

¹¹⁸ The leading scholars in this field are anthropologists. See Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

¹¹⁹ Jürgen Kocka, “Einladung zur Diskussion,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft: Zeitschrift für historische Sozialwissenschaft* 27, no. 3 (2001).

¹²⁰ In the history of international relations, non-governmental organisations now gained significance as expressions of world culture, and performative aspects found attention in international politics. John Boli and George M. Thomas, *Constructing World Culture: International Nongovernmental Organizations since 1875* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999), 13–15. Jürgen Osterhammel, *Weltgeschichte* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2008).

¹²¹ Iggers, Wang, and Mukherjee, *A Global History of Modern Historiography*, 379.

conclusion of a continuous progression towards the final establishment of liberal democracy. Although controversial in terms of its political perspective, Fukuyama's diagnosis finds confirmation less in the changing topics of historiography than in the challenge that confronted history in postcolonial debates.

Since the 1990s, history as the sum of authoritative, universally applicable rules separating the past from the present has indeed started to disappear. However, there is an option of it being replaced by different and entangled forms of historicities, and the opening of a global discourse.

The crucial impulse came from subaltern studies, a movement founded by the Indian historian Ranajit Guha in the 1980s. Since then, the label "subaltern studies," an expression originally coined by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, has appeared in various contexts and found a different expression. Dipesh Chakrabarty's book *Provincialising Europe* influenced Western historiography in two respects: by questioning Western rationality towards religion and by proposing to replace the term "scientific universalism" with a term naming its place of origin, which is Europe. Homing in on a critical investigation of Western elite historiography, the debate reverts to Frantz Fanon and Edward Said, i.e. to decolonisation discussions and Orientalism in the post World War II era. But not until the end of the Cold War, when historiography was faced with the problem of conceptualising a global history instead of a history of globalisation, did subaltern studies start to play a crucial role. This was for two reasons. Firstly, subaltern studies left the discourse of measuring the difference in development and modernisation by critically analysing the discourse of elite historiography.¹²² The idea of a genuine national historiography can be suspected of elitism, whether it is a matter of self-perception or the perception of others. Thus, subaltern studies prefer a "history from below" to an Indian history of the Indian nation. This statement sounds familiar to the large community of labour historians, but rather than suppressing elite postcolonial debate it calls for the overcoming of stereotypes and essentialism. Secondly, as a result of this debate, the notion of culture has changed from historically saturated shared values to a substantially transgressive power, characterised at best as hybridity, as a power of transformation.

3.1.3 Multiculturalism and Critical Theory in the Dispute Concerning Cultural Integrity and Guarantees of Diversity

This dynamic understanding of culture replaces the more static national entities as historical actors and facilitates an inclusion of transboundary movements. Culture avoids understanding networks as simple events and helps to focus on contact zones and entanglements. A cultural approach can analyse thresholds and borders, look

¹²² For subaltern studies as a method for "deconstructing historiography" see María do Mar Castro Varela and Nikita Dhawan, *Postkoloniale Theorie: eine kritische Einführung*, Cultural Studies, Bd. 12 (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2005).

behind masks, and can always present the aspect of translation and the effects of multiplication that go into aspects that are never stable, always negotiable, and fluid.¹²³

The changing concept of culture and the assumed blurring of cultural borders contradict critical theory on one hand, and multiculturalism on the other.¹²⁴ For critical theory, the existence of a normative framework guarantees liberal citizenship, while a blurred concept of culture “undermines its own application, such that nothing empirical can actually conform to it.”¹²⁵ There is a difficult dilemma with nationhood as a carrier of liberal rights, but equally as the excluder of immigrants, indigenous people, and foreign nationals from citizenship. At the core of the debate, therefore, we perceive alternative concepts of multicultural nationhood or cosmopolitanism.¹²⁶ The highly controversial question is whether or not a multicultural concept presupposes a modification or elimination of the heritage of liberal-democratic nationhood, and whether or not a cosmopolitan justice seems preferable—regardless of the consequences in terms of weakened sovereignty and the elimination of those forms of cultural authenticity that are not compatible with human rights.¹²⁷ The idea of multiculturalism on the other hand, takes the ambivalent approach of protection by integration. Here too debates are concerned with the difference between cultural integrity and guarantees of diversity, with the ambivalent political consequences of the United Nations’ cultural diversity protection on one side, and the clear statement from the same organisation that human rights override the value of traditions and culturally determined behaviour on the other.¹²⁸

¹²³ Courageous readers should see Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994). As a more general introduction, see Stephan Moebius, *Kultur - Theorien der Gegenwart*, 2nd ed. (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2011).

¹²⁴ For a short introduction to critical theory see Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, “Critical Theory,” accessed March 11, 2011, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/critical-theory/>.

¹²⁵ Nikolas Kompridis, “Normativizing Hybridity/Neutralizing Culture,” *Political Theory* 33, no. 3 (2005): 319.

¹²⁶ Although in taking a global perspective the debate itself has a clearly shaped origin, e.g. when pointing to the European Union’s supranational structure, where legal ontology replaces democratic participation.

¹²⁷ For an insight into this debate see Seyla Benhabib et al., *Another Cosmopolitanism: Hospitality, Sovereignty, and Democratic Iterations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 13ff. Here, Benhabib starts with the discussion between Karl Jaspers and Hannah Arendt about the Eichmann trial and opens up a Kantian approach to debate. The book goes back to one of the core texts in Western discussions of cosmopolitanism: Immanuel Kant’s essay on perpetual peace. Benhabib underlines the fact that Kant protected foreigners by introducing the concept of hospitality, and relies on an ongoing debate, initiated by Jacques Derrida’s interpretation of Kant’s essay.

¹²⁸ Taylor Cox, *Cultural Diversity in Organizations: Theory, Research, & Practice* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1994). The United Nations Convention on Cultural Diversity (2001) found a substantial extension in the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005). But again, the cultural policy of the UN is closely connected to the affirmation of cultural sovereignty and to the independence of cultural policy of its member states. See UNESCO, “Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural

In these ongoing debates, historical examples play a crucial role, and reordering the past has become a key method for presenting blind spots on a global scale. However, unable to speak outside its methodological and theoretical frameworks, which have come under the suspicion of being Western-focused, and closely connected to its own past, the discipline got caught in its own web. After the “end of history,” a global orientation seemed helpful. The ongoing levelling of subspecialties, the shift from era to area, and intensified interdisciplinary cooperation based on the inclusion of source material beyond written sources, fed into the trend of a less national, more global history. However, as Iggers and Wang suspect, an increase in world and global histories, which might be enlarged by international, new international, and universal histories, has not (yet?) led to a sea change. Indeed, the consensual opening of the national paradigm did not create a new theory convincing enough to replace the strong master narrative of the nation.¹²⁹ The question, therefore, is what benefits can be expected from “transcultural history”?

3.2 *Why Transcultural History: What is New? What is Different?*

A closer, not nationally limited concentration on the ambivalent, transgressive functioning of culture might help open up new discourses that analyse under which circumstances certain parts of the past transform into global history, and whether the aspect of border crossing should develop its own historicity. Transcultural history should also specify certain topics that present different reactions to defining, creating, blurring and destroying borders from the perspective of societies that are organised into different entities, but also in regard to individual lives. Since history is closely connected to empirical evidence, this approach seeks to include source material that would otherwise remain forgotten in the “memory holes” of the past. Topics and questions that shed light on a transcultural history should make visible a wide variety of blind spots that are also of explanatory value for other forms of historiography.

In connecting the history of historiography to theoretical concepts and to the source material provided, and in explaining analytical tools and their application, our suggestions are a framework rather than an already established narrative. This approach, however, approximates our idea of closely coordinating teaching and research to give students from an early stage the necessary tools for exercising intellectual creativity within the guidelines of academic research. The following

Expressions.” Accessed March 10, 2011, http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=31038&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

¹²⁹ Iggers, Wang, and Mukherjee, *A Global History of Modern Historiography*, 390. As mentioned by Iggers and Wang it is also true that Immanuel Wallerstein, André Gunder Frank, et al. have worked with global approaches for a long time, not to mention contemporary concepts such as *Weltpolitik* (world politics), which is difficult to use for the nineteenth century outside an imperialistic context.

section discusses transcultural history's new aspects and how it differs from acknowledged standards of historiography.

3.2.1 Transculturality: Combining Culture and Border Crossing

Transculturality is the key concept of a not yet stable theory in contemporary cultural studies. The concept has a Latin-American prehistory going back to complex American relations in the late 1930s. At that time, the Cuban internationalist Fernando Ortiz¹³⁰ responded to the U.S.-American anthropologists' discourse on *acculturation*. Instead of accepting that a dominant culture shapes, but also enhances a 'minor' one by an osmotic process, Ortiz insisted on reversing the perspective, highlighting a loss of genuine culture as a consequence of acculturation. This counter-hegemonic concept reflected the contemporary political situation.

At the time, culture provided a screen for competing political concepts. The most famous and oft-quoted example of such a cultural history with political impact is Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West*. Presenting a world history, Spengler ascribed different cultures with specific characteristics and a life span from early childhood to death. Although several cultures exist in this conservative model, they are conceived of as having parallel, distant lives.¹³¹ Besides the global spread of Spengler's idea with the support of the British historian Arnold J. Toynbee, social scientists fervently debated the notion of diffusionism, an idea that culture spread simply through contagion rather than through the conservation of authentic heritage. Although close to the 1920s idea of global exchange, of internationalism and the enhancement of border crossing communication under the influence of growing governmental propaganda and cultural nationalism, Ortiz, with the concept of transculturation, pointed out the dark side of border crossing diffusion.

As one of the busy internationalists with strong national (Cuban) roots, Ortiz created an idea which regained importance in the debate on decolonisation after World War II. Transculturalisation as the territorial specialty of Latin America¹³² underwent a substantial change after the end of the Cold War, when the narrative of decolonisation gained a global perspective. Concepts, such as creolisation, lost their former Latin-American particularisation. Therewith the question arose as to whether creolisation should change from an emancipatory description of suppressed (non-Western) societies to an expression presenting a globally

¹³⁰ For biographical information about Ortiz, who made a career as diplomat, politician and scholar, see: Mauricio A. Font and Alfonso W. Quiroz, eds., *Cuban Counterpoints: The Legacy of Fernando Ortiz*, Western Hemisphere Studies (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005).

¹³¹ For the impact Oswald Spengler had on the idea of world history, see Prasenjit Duara, "The Discourse of Civilization and Pan-Asianism," *Journal of World History* 12, no. 1 (2001): 99–130.

¹³² For the historical development of the concept see Diana Taylor, "Transculturating Transculturation," *Performing Arts Journal* 13, no. 2 (1991): 90–104.

interconnected world, therefore a world no longer caught in centre-periphery relations. For both history and anthropology this approach has raised problems: from a historical point of view, this form of conceptual globalisation undermines the original political intention of Ortiz's concept. From an anthropologist's perspective, the global approach blurs the term's spatial characteristics.¹³³ With the idea of an unavoidable worldwide entanglement, locating difference and authenticity becomes a difficult task. Transculturality, therefore, opens a debate on the appropriate use of the analytical description of new forms of dependency.

3.2.2 The Renaissance of Transculturality in a Newly Shaped Global History

The discussion was given a new turn by the German philosopher Wolfgang Welsch in the 1990s. He introduced the term transculturality as a "puzzling form of cultures today"¹³⁴ and proposed a focus on processes of entanglement instead of thinking of cultures as comparable entities. The transcultural approach enriched the debate on methods and the theoretical framing of global history that started after the Cold War in a merging of sociology and political sciences with publications on new international history and new diplomatic history. Within this debate, cultural and institutional aspects have moved to the fore, unfolding a new interest in border crossing historical developments in at least four different areas:

Firstly, after the Cold War interest in the historical development of international organisations grew as a result of the increasing importance of international non-governmental organisations.¹³⁵ This was a topic that had belonged to international relations since 1919. International organisations provide methodological access to cultural contact zones and complex forms of institutional entanglements. Historians have been able to work out how states, experts, private associations and diplomats used international associations of different origin to shape the agenda of international politics to their own ends. Following this approach, multiplied agencies have widened the view to institutions and movements with global membership, and to

¹³³ For this debate see Viranjini Munasinghe, "Theorizing World Culture through the New World: East Indians and Creolization," *American Ethnologist* 33, no. 4 (2006): 549–62. An answer by Ulf Hannerz, one of the representatives of global culture, is in the same volume.

¹³⁴ Wolfgang Welsch, "Transculturality: The Puzzling Form of Cultures Today," in *Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World*, ed. Mike Featherstone and Scott Lash (London: Sage, 1999).

¹³⁵ Boli and Thomas, *Constructing World Culture: International Nongovernmental Organizations since 1875*. Ulrich Beck, *Living in World Risk Society*, *Teorie del diritto e della politica* (Torino: Giappichelli, 2008). ———, *Was ist Globalisierung? Irrtümer des Globalismus, Antworten auf Globalisierung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997). For historians still very helpful: Craig N. Murphy, *International Organization and Industrial Change: Global Governance since 1850* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1994). Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

the historical impact of international congresses, universal exhibitions and markets.¹³⁶

Secondly, transnational history and research on civil society cooperate in conceptualising a connected, entangled or intertwined history. This field has gained a substantial new focus with the advent of imperial history and the inclusion of postcolonial studies.¹³⁷ Following this approach, transcultural history may develop the right tools to explicate the history of transnational secular and religious communities, and to analyse border crossing groups, ideas, and concepts ranging from the Interparliamentary Union to anarchists.

Thirdly, although at first glance a question of academic labels, the heated debates on how to develop a historical narrative that is aware of global responsibilities went a step further when East-West relations gained paradigmatic value. Global history therefore turned into ideas about world order and globality with a strong focus on Asia. In contrast, the development of world market economies, the hot topic of a first wave of publications on globalisation, has receded.¹³⁸

A fourth characteristic in recent development sees global history turn into an interface of interdisciplinary research with a focus on cultural studies. Within this discussion, a debate on the key concept of “networks” with a crucial contribution from (historical) anthropology is developing.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Madeleine Herren and Sacha Zala, *Netzwerk Aussenpolitik: Internationale Kongresse und Organisationen als Instrumente der schweizerischen Aussenpolitik, 1914–1950* (Zürich: Chronos, 2002). Madeleine Herren, *Hintertüren zur Macht: Internationalismus und modernisierungsorientierte Aussenpolitik in Belgien, der Schweiz und den USA, 1865–1914*, Studien zur internationalen Geschichte, Bd. 9 (München: Oldenbourg, 2000).

¹³⁷ Sebastian Conrad, Shalini Randeria, and Beate Sutterlüty, eds., *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus: Postkoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt am Main and New York: Campus, 2002). Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000). Dieter Gosewinkel, *Zivilgesellschaft - national und transnational* (Berlin: Sigma, 2004). Helmut K. Anheier, Marlies Glasius, and Mary Kaldor, *Global Civil Society Yearbook 2009* (London: Sage, 2009). John A. Hall and Frank Trentmann, *Civil Society: A Reader in History, Theory and Global Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005). Of specific importance within this group are newly shaped national histories that connect the national narrative to transnational aspects. See Ian R. Tyrrell, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective since 1789* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). Sebastian Conrad and Jürgen Osterhammel, *Das Kaiserreich transnational: Deutschland in der Welt 1871–1914* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004). For new imperial history see Kathleen Wilson, *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

¹³⁸ Iggers, Wang, and Mukherjee, *A Global History of Modern Historiography*. Conrad and Sachsenmaier, *Competing Visions of World Order: Global Moments and Movements, 1880s–1930s*. Steffi Richter, *Contested Views of a Common Past: Revisions of History in Contemporary East Asia* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2008).

¹³⁹ Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Ulf Hannerz, *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places* (London: Routledge, 2000).

3.2.3 The Role of East-West Relations and the Shifting of Culture from Civilisation to Globality

Compared to transnational concepts in historiography, e.g. *histoire croisée*, entangled histories, connected histories, contact zone histories, and the approaches that point to transnational platforms as mentioned above, transcultural history puts the conceptualising power of the nation into perspective. Without denying that the master narrative of the nation is crucial for modern history, transculturality gains a different perspective by focusing on the shifting notion of culture. In addition to Welsch's approach, culture is regarded as a form of entanglement in constant flux, but also as a concept which changed substantially from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. As Prasenjit Duara explains, cultural values conveyed as "civilisation" changed fundamentally from a Western-driven concept of civilising "the other" in the nineteenth century to a spiritual and moral value that nourished global discourse after World War I.¹⁴⁰ Always closely connected to nationalism and imperialism, colonisation and decolonisation, culture also presents a platform of contended values. Focusing on entanglements, a transcultural approach always addresses the argument of culture in a deconstructionist way. It is important to mention the fear and aggression that lies beyond the evoked rhetoric of "East meets West." At the same time, Asian philosophy played its part in Western discourse as a remedy against the often evoked decline of the West. Referring to Welsch's metaphor of the puzzle, a transcultural approach avoids the harmonious picture, mistrusts the idea of a harmonious coincidence, and focuses on the hair-line cracks that separate the pieces of the puzzle.

3.2.4 Searching for Examples of East-West Discourse after World War I

An initial look at East-West discourses after World War I shows an overwhelming presence of transcultural entanglements that allegedly present a global narrative: the label "international" merged with the newly discovered concept of "intercultural" relationships.¹⁴¹ Vaguely described as an "interchange of cultures," this topic was on the agenda of several Institute of Pacific Relations conferences, and made its way into the American newspapers as "cultural relations between East and West." Finally, the concept turned into a slogan in President Roosevelt's World's Fair speech in 1938 as "interchange of thought, of culture, and of trade."¹⁴² The "East

¹⁴⁰ Prasenjit Duara, "The Discourse of Civilization and Decolonization," *Journal of World History* 15, no. 1 (2004): 1–5.

¹⁴¹ In international relations journals the term "intercultural" did not appear before the late 1920s. For an early use of this term see: Elizabeth Green, "Conference Trends in China: A General Indication of Round Table Discussion," *Pacific Affairs* 5, no. 1 (1932): 25.

¹⁴² "Roosevelt's World Fair Speech," *The Washington Post*, July 1, 1938, 11.

meets West” rhetoric shaped global discourses and legitimised a variety of League of Nations activities.

However, the same rhetoric also turned an apparently harmonious meeting of the World Fellowship of Faiths into the almost perfect platform for Japanese nationalism. As a Shinto priest explained, the only way to preserve peace would imply Western support for Japan’s expansionist policy as an intercultural duty.¹⁴³ Again, the nationalistic sound was far from being “authentic.” The same priest did missionary work in the United States and supported a dense transboundary network. With the advent of World War II, however, the idea of cultural entanglement changed in the reading of the US administration from a jigsaw piece in the picture of global cooperation to evidence for the threat scenarios of internal espionage. The priest spent the years from 1941 to 1945 in American internment camps and faced hearings of the Alien Enemy Hearing Board, which had carefully collected information about contacts with Asian and axis states.¹⁴⁴

3.2.5 Transcultural Topics

There is no need for a transcultural approach to tell the Shinto priest’s story. However, a transcultural research design transposes the meaning of this biography from an exclusively individual experience to a pattern that shaped the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. People living transboundary lives, using labels such as cosmopolitanism or piracy, appear as characteristic social phenomena rather than marginal occurrences limited to migration. These patterns can be found in other contexts, situations, places, and time segments. Even more importantly, the aforementioned puzzle’s fragmented picture is not just a metaphor. It is important to ask about the material foundation of transcultural entanglements, and whether special (exclusively urban?) surroundings are needed, and how, during the period in question, the puzzle pieces together a global landscape.¹⁴⁵

Rich material, not limited to the obvious transcultural entanglement in places like Shanghai or Harbin, is available for the 1920s and 1930s. Tensions between

¹⁴³ Founded in 1929, The World Fellowship of Faiths is an interesting mix of an older forerunner (World Parliament of Religions), a movement within the British Empire, scientific interest in religions, and a pacifist movement. The international congress held in 1933 received extensive press coverage. Yoshiaki Fukuda, presented as “official representative of the Konhokoyo Shinto sect of Japan”, made the statement in favour of Japanese expansionism. See John Evans, “Japan Must Have Room To Expand, Shintoist Warns,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 30, 1933, 8. His statement against the League of Nations policy in Manchuria lit the fuse for an already explosive message. See Charles Frederick Weller, ed. *World Fellowship: Addresses and Messages by Leading Spokesmen of all Faiths, Races and Countries* (New York: Liveright, 1935).

¹⁴⁴ Nobusuke Fukuda, “An Issei’s Six Years of Internment: His Struggle for Justice,” accessed March 11, 2011, <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2008/5/8/enduring-communities/>.

¹⁴⁵ Arjun Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 7(1990): 296f.

transcultural materiality and the urgent need for the adaptation and reinterpretation of culturally defined habitats substantially enlarge the research design. As mentioned in the introduction's list of transcultural issues, a transcultural history opens up new fields of research. From the aforementioned source material produced by international gatherings and organisations, to the challenge of investigating transboundary lives, transcultural history attracts topics that have remained out of historiography's reach until now. The question of transgression costs, and the economic value of border crossing flows of information, needs further research.

Moreover, shifting objects that are either of contested origin or valued for their foreign character invite a debate on material culture.¹⁴⁶ In this respect, the political impact of shifting objects goes beyond the topic of spoils of war. A characteristic example can be found in Chicago. In 1922 the *Chicago Tribune* launched a competition inviting designs for a new office building. Plans were received from all over the world.¹⁴⁷ The resulting Tribune Tower presented what architects and sponsors regarded as visual cosmopolitanism. It aped a French gothic cathedral, and, even worse, embedded in the walls there were artefacts of an awkward variety, partly paying homage to the East-West narrative: tiles from the Forbidden City in Beijing, and also a Chinese tombstone—not from China but from Luzon in the Philippines. The narrative of this strange building has an ongoing and long-lasting history. In 2008 the American Artist John Seward Johnson answered the tower's globalism with a new interpretation of an American painting, created shortly after the opening of the Tribune Tower, in the 1930s. Johnson cited Grant Wood's famous painting "American Gothic," but used the form of two statues. The frowning couple, originally icons of an anti-internationalist, anti-modernist, agrarian, Iowa-based America, now has a suitcase, labelled with foreign destinations. This almost perfect retelling of what the Tribune Tower had started just across the street plays with the ambivalent meaning of global icons. Whether the couple confirms that narrow-minded prejudices travel or the couple enjoys the foreign surrounding of the tower, cannot be answered with certainty. Still, the message seems obvious: global contexts and transcultural entanglements do not always follow the narrative of liberal cosmopolitanism, and global objects might have only loose connections with the ephemeral moments of transcultural exchange. Moreover, transcultural objects do not necessarily display transboundary lives, and their value as documents of travelling conditions remains questionable. With Johnson's couple in front, the Tribune Tower transforms into a souvenir shop, which addresses collectors of memorabilia, but not the traveller. The question is, whether the history of the twentyfirst century will highlight the tensions between confronting globalism and the certainty that living on borders was and still is dangerous for most people, except a few chosen cosmopolitans.

¹⁴⁶ "Editorial," *Journal of Material Culture* 1, no. 1 (1996): 5f.

¹⁴⁷ Katherine Solomonson, *The Chicago Tribune Tower Competition: Skyscraper Design and Cultural Change in the 1920s*, Modern Architecture and Cultural Identity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

3.2.6 Historical Assumptions and Claims of a Transcultural Historiography

At first glance, the twenty-first century qualifies for new arrangements and openness. With the end of the Cold War, a period of structural change began: change in the political order, with the end of bipolar international relations; in economics, with the end of continuous economic growth; and change in social coherence, with the end of party-driven forms of communication. This list can also be read in a different light: the rising importance of globalisation; the growing power of non-governmental agencies; the obvious importance of networks penetrating established entities such as national states, political parties and citizens' associations. Historians have the twofold objective of locating dominant elements in the past and analysing the consequences of these new histories for the ordering principles of those assumptions that decide how history should be written in the twenty-first century. What are the most important tasks for a transcultural historiography? What new understandings can be expected?

Creating global perspectives: As explained above, history as an academic discipline is a Western way of thinking and deeply influenced by the historical context of its introduction in the nineteenth century. Key elements of historical thinking, e.g. the specific use of time and space, should be carefully reinterpreted in light of non-Western traditions. Furthermore, this topic should address the tensions between local and global understandings of the past.

Introducing a concept of multiple agencies by methodological plurality: This way out of a westernised approach brings the assumption of linear developments into perspective. In order to provide an innovative start, Shmuel N. Eisenstadt introduced the idea of multiple modernities.¹⁴⁸ Since then, the idea of multiple agencies has been regarded as more important than the idea of presenting source material relating to a clearly nameable actor (the state or worker, for example). The question is whether multiplication replaces universalistic approaches in general. From the point of view of nineteenth century historiography, wherein European history corresponds to universal history, the idea of thinking in different historicities seems helpful. The idea was introduced by French philosophers—first among them Jacques Rancière.¹⁴⁹ According to this perspective, the way in which the past transforms into history is culturally biased and produces different analyses of the past. But, on the other hand, a growing interest in environmental history and the insight needed to understand the destruction of nature calls for an approach that is able to produce universal statements for phenomena not limited to national or cultural borders. In this case, the claim of universality is an antidote to

¹⁴⁸ Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities," *Daedalus* 129, no. 1 (2000). ———, ed. *Multiple Modernities* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002).

¹⁴⁹ Jacques Rancière, *Les noms de l'histoire: essai de poésie du savoir* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1992).

personal and national voracity, and history a mode of reflection about global concerns.

Safeguarding different approaches within the discipline and fostering different, complementarily usable methodologies: The introduction of new ordering principles does not erase previous interpretations of the past. The objective is not a replacement of diplomatic history with transcultural history. Rather, methodological self-consciousness and the introduction of interdisciplinarity based on knowledge of more than one method should serve as the starting point for new findings. With a more global, network-centred, culture-orientated historiography, additional aspects of the past will become visible. However, the aims and objectives will always critically reflect on what lies beyond its reach.

Focusing on exchange processes across cultures, transcultural history should observe repressive reactions. The analytical tools used should also bring those limits of the past to the surface, which are carefully hidden below a harmonious rhetoric or the effort to use transcultural entanglement as a step towards a pacifist, harmonious world.

4 Fighting Zombies: Methodological Challenges of Transcultural History

Transcultural history excludes certain aspects of established historical methodologies. In the following part, fundamental differences will be mentioned, while iterative, more detailed methodological advice and an introduction to the use of material culture and other not yet established source material (e.g. music) will be discussed in the second part of the book.

4.1 From Spatial Storage to Flows of Information

The French philosopher and historian Michel Foucault described in his ingenious book *The Order of Things* the shifting of episteme, which is accompanied by a change in places and institutions where science is conducted.¹⁵⁰ In the nineteenth century, history focused on the archive (non-published material mostly produced by governmental administration), the library (publications), and the museum (artefacts, material culture). These places became national institutions financed, supported, and run by public money and deeply influenced by the ruling power.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*.

¹⁵¹ This form of storage became closely connected to the “imagined community” of the nation. Until the twenty-first century, whenever a new state was founded, a national archive, library, and/or museum would appear. For a recent example, see the archives of Belarus that had a long list of

Once institutionalised, archives, libraries and museums often conducted their own imperialistic politics, but also became objects of looting during wars.¹⁵² History therefore not only asks how to gain access to the past with certain methods and theories; history also describes an—of course changing—attitude towards the way in which information is preserved, protected, institutionalised and therefore localised.¹⁵³

4.1.1 Storage and Research

Naturally, critical historians know that what is preserved in such institutions presents an incomplete selection of the past. How ambiguous such a preservation of the past can be becomes obvious when looking at Napoleon I as an example of how asymmetrical power relations are closely connected to memory policy. Napoleon had the idea to open a central archive and immense library, both of which served a whole series of new and ambivalent possibilities in centralising historical information: archives, museums and libraries turned into public domains and offered academic justification for looted material.

The ambivalence of preserving and manipulating the past overshadows all forms of information storage. Simultaneously centralised information helps us to understand political decision making after a certain period of time has elapsed. This form of delayed information¹⁵⁴ has confirmed the historian's new role as custodian of the past. In democratic systems access to the archive presents a possibility of holding former officials accountable for their governance. The continuous governmental preservation of the past yields a collection, the ordering principle of which is the production of empirical evidence within the framework of the national state, which contributes to methodological nationalism. Of course, there is no unrestricted access to everything a government produces. In addition, the so-called hermeneutic circle explains the impossibility of finding evidence without prior knowledge of its

changing names according to the respective government: Archives of Belarus, "Department of Archives and Records Management under the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Belarus," accessed March 11, 2011, <http://archives.gov.by/eng/index.php?id=713043>. More examples can be found in the development of national archives in the newly created African states.

¹⁵² Although protected by international law, looting of archives was the standard practice of Western imperialists. Discussions about granting Asian states similar protection started with the Boxer intervention in China. See G. G. Phillimore, "Booty of War," *Journal of the Society of Comparative Legislation* 3, no. 2 (1901): 214–30.

¹⁵³ For an overview on the history of archiving: Sebastian Jobs and Alf Lüdtkke, eds., *Unsettling History Archiving and Narrating in Historiography* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2010).

¹⁵⁴ The Library of Congress, founded in 1800, is a good example of the problem of information availability in a democratic system. The founders' argumentation focused on the parliament's need for information comparable to that which was available to the government. See Library of Congress, "History - About the Library," accessed March 11, 2011, <http://www.loc.gov/about/history.html>.

existence. Confronted by the immense quantity of material preserved in national archives, search strategies are crucial.

4.1.2 Transcultural Collections

Does a transcultural approach pose different basic questions? First of all, a history of transcultural collections should be researched more systematically from various points of view: where can we expect to find the evidence that is needed to produce a transcultural history? One possibility is to consider the source material produced by and about international organisations, since these institutions merely transfer rather than collect information. Although the source material of international organisations is still difficult to access and mostly limited to Europe,¹⁵⁵ extra-European participation enhanced their importance as global players. This rather underestimated factor can significantly contribute to three potential research strategies for tracing the transboundary move of objects: one focuses on surveys on extra-European, for instance Asian collections founded in Europe after World War I.¹⁵⁶ Another, more recent search for looted cultural property mostly pertains to National Socialist era provenance.¹⁵⁷ And a third makes use of colonial collections and universal libraries that contributed to the utopian idea of making global knowledge available.

Transcultural source material is not restricted to international organisations and shifting objects. Internationalists have collected their own international databases, which need critical and careful investigation. For example, Paul Otlet, the Belgian internationalist and father of hypertext, used his considerable fortune to make available information about international organisations. He opened the so-called Mundaneum, an international university, and the Institut International de Bibliographie. These institutions used decimal classification and therefore followed global, not lingual or national rules of documentation.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ For a first orientation see UNESCO Archives Portal, “An International Gateway to Information for Archivists and Archives Users,” accessed March 11, 2011, <http://www.unesco-ci.org/cgi-bin/portals/archives/page.cgi?d=1>.

¹⁵⁶ For the spread of such collections see the International Federation of Library Associations. The organisation was founded in 1927, and the librarian of the League of Nations, T.P. Sevensma, acted as secretary of the Federation. William W. Bishop, “Review: The ‘Actes’ of the International Library Committee,” *The Library Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (1936).

¹⁵⁷ The Nazi-Era Provenance Internet Portal, “About the Portal,” accessed March 11, 2011, http://www.nepip.org/public/info/about.cfm?menu_type=info. lootedart.com, “The Central Registry of Information on Looted Cultural Property 1933–1945,” accessed March 11, 2011, <http://www.lootedart.com/>. The Art Loss Register, “Home,” accessed March 11, 2011, <http://www.artloss.com/>.

¹⁵⁸ Paul Otlet, *Traité de documentation: le livre sur le livre, théorie et pratique* (Bruxelles: Mundaneum, 1934).

4.1.3 The Political Value of Information and its Forms of Presentation

Since the late nineteenth century, information has become a buzzword. The various international organisations founded since then have had unstable legal statuses, not yet well established structures, and weak financial backgrounds—but all, without exception, have followed the principle of transboundary information. Where information flows crossed borders, and who was entitled to give and receive information—these questions gained an importance, which, from a transcultural point of view, superseded the partly weak activities of institutions. Of course, in the nineteenth century the boom in governmental statistics had a major influence on information, and the foundation of Western-shaped statistical offices in Asia provides an interesting insight into specific problems of finding a common language for global standards (e.g. chemical elements). Interestingly, the discourse on information became increasingly detached from the issues at hand and turned into a sheer expression of quantity. Museum collections with thousands of objects that were never exhibited, and kept in their original mailing boxes, demonstrate the anarchy of information where knowledge, in analogy to industrial production, became measurable output.¹⁵⁹

A transcultural approach will follow the flows of information and the influence of communication technologies, but it must also consider formal aspects when questioning carriers of information. Telegraphy and telephones revolutionised communication and accelerated political decision making; generations of historians learned the careful analysis of telegrams and connected this newly created source to key events in modern history.¹⁶⁰ New border crossing activities created new forms of information: the almost explosive increase in international associations, conferences and congresses in the second half of the nineteenth century created new events, but also introduced the question of what an appropriate carrier of information is, and how information can cross cultural borders. At first sight, the information consists of myriads of rather boring protocols of international meetings. But some reflected on their own forms of information transfer. In 1893, during the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the already mentioned Parliament of Religions published a report of more than 1000 pages. The report was organised in the form of a parliamentary protocol, at a time when neither parliaments nor the publication of regular protocols were fully established even

¹⁵⁹ In the early twentieth century, museum builders preferred a “pyramidal” design, where the basement, as the largest part of the building, provided vast storage rooms. See Benjamin Ives Gilman, “The Museum Design as Tested by Experience,” *Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin* 22, no. 133 (1924).

¹⁶⁰ For an example see the Ems telegram of 1870, a crucial document in the history of the Franco-Prussian War. “The Ems Telegram,” accessed March 11, 2011, <http://www.uncp.edu/home/rwb/Ems%20Telegram.htm>.

in the West.¹⁶¹ The protocol gave a quotable aspect to this event, in a form that was influenced by diplomatic offices and Western association laws. Using it had far reaching consequences: in a protocol, the audience has no active role, which in this case meant that the numerous women present at the congress simply disappeared from the written documentation. However, by introducing a transcultural approach, the complexity becomes even greater.

4.1.4 Visual and Aural Information

The implementation of Western forms of documentation erased the transgressive participation of women, but other hitherto silent participants emerged when another border was crossed: the use and scale of different languages forced the organisers to introduce new meeting protocols. In contrast to the anti-modernist evocation of traditions and eternal truth, the congress used the latest technical equipment. During this congress, women and delegates from Asia made their appearance on new platforms and gained not a written, but pictorial or even audio presence: “By the aid of modern machinery, almost sentient in its perfection, with the help of the phonograph, stenography, and the myriad duplicated records of stereotyped modern printing, future generations shall listen almost to the very tones of those who met at the World’s Columbian Exposition in brotherly love to exchange pearls of wisdom for the gold of truth! The wonderful prophecy of the Bible, that ‘Brethren should meet and dwell in amity,’ has been realized!”¹⁶²

This example might also be taken as evidence for the close connection between theoretical reflections on the range of international public spheres and the need for close attention to patterns of historical interpretation.

4.2 From Chronology to Historicities

While questions of space are indeed crucial for history as an academic discipline, for the various reasons mentioned above, time as an ordering principle seems less manipulative, and the close connection to history is obvious. Indeed, history without time seems hardly imaginable. However, the use of time, even measuring the past in units of time, is far from being an objective and therefore incontestable method. With the introduction of real time scales instead of mythical or religious narratives, history became one of the most important ideological motors of progress, where elapsing time became the measure of efficiency and productivity.

¹⁶¹ Walter R. Houghton, ed. *Neely’s History of the Parliament of Religions and Religious Congresses at the Worlds Columbian Exposition* (Chicago: Neely, 1893).

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 8f.

4.2.1 Specifying Actors and Events by Inventing Chronologies

The process of gaining distance from religious and mythological narratives widened the gap between Western modernisation and non-Western cultures.¹⁶³ Without going into this further, let us merely note that the introduction of timelines and chronologies is closely connected to the invention of a historiography of events, where chronology indirectly, rather than analytically, specifies the causality of the narrative.

A chronological form of listing and remembering history furnishes activities with clearly fixed and institutionalised beginnings and ends, e.g. the beginning and end of rule, declarations of war and armistices, but also treaties, since these kinds of dated documents usually carefully regulate how they come into effect. How problematic the introduction of timelines is becomes evident when the beginning of changing habits is sought, or the transformation of individual preferences in common styles. From a global point of view, the presentation of history in epochs demonstrates an additional difficulty. The characteristics and breaks of epochs might fit regional history but miss a historical narrative.¹⁶⁴

Therefore, chronology is, first and foremost, just another ordering principle; one of various analytical tools which help to label certain aspects of the past as history, while the rest of the past sinks into personal memories and traditions. Since the differentiation between people with and without history goes back to ordering principles of this kind, and since a Western understanding of time characterises historiography, the question is whether the discipline itself can be truly global. Indian contemporary discourse occasionally denies that history as an academic discipline can shape a non-Western memory.¹⁶⁵

From a transcultural perspective, it is not enough to essentialise the differentiation of Western business and Asian timelessness as one of several proofs of Western dominance. Demonstrating the use of Asian philosophy in Western esoteric circles may just be another expression of historicising the dichotomy of an assumed difference between Asia and Europe.¹⁶⁶ A more interesting insight develops when the argument of timelessness develops transcultural potentiality in situations

¹⁶³ For an introduction to this problem see the re-edition of Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

¹⁶⁴ In European history, 1919–1939 is called the “interwar period”—a concept not transferable to Asia, where war between Japan and China ended in 1939.

¹⁶⁵ Tej Ram Sharma, *Historiography: A History of Historical Writing* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing, 2005).

¹⁶⁶ Places such as “Monte Verità” in Ascona, Switzerland, where colonies promoting alternative lifestyles started in the late nineteenth century, and had a strong connection to Buddhism and Asian cultures. Members of the Theosophical Society and Asian art collectors frequently went to Monte Verità. Robert Landmann, *Monte Verità, Ascona: Die Geschichte eines Berges* (Berlin: Schultz, 1930).

of conflicts and in contexts distant from the discourse of “eternal cultural value.” For example, in League of Nations papers and Western political science texts, the inability to regulate the various Chinese-Japanese conflicts, and even Western interpretations of political change in China, all appeared under the umbrella of timelessness.¹⁶⁷ The cliché of timelessness as a Chinese characteristic should be regarded as a projection of Western incapacitation, as a remarkable transformation of an international failure to a national characteristic.

4.2.2 The Introduction of Different Historicities

Mindful of the debate on taxonomies and time, on history as a subjective and contestable process of including and excluding discourses, we may conclude that there are different historicities. Indeed, it is perhaps worth enlarging Appadurai’s notion of different “scapes” by allocating various forms of historical memories to them. It is certainly fascinating to understand globality as interference between different forms of border crossing memories, instead of attributing in advance a universal character to certain agencies.¹⁶⁸

The introduction of historicities implies giving up the universality of epistemological power, a serious step which needs counterbalancing with the characteristics of transcultural history. Although transcultural historicities may be pleonastic, it seems better to confront at least one serious methodological problem: as a method for focusing on transboundary entanglements on a global scale, transcultural history rejects comparison, one of the well-established methods in historiography.¹⁶⁹ Networks and transgressive processes impede thought about (cultural) entities that are balanced against each other. Of course, the development of alternatives through comparison still functions well in the historian’s daily work—for example, comparing how traders’ families from Hyderabad established contact with the West poses an interesting question. However, for modern history, one of the biggest

¹⁶⁷ Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-Sen: An Exposition of the San Min Chu I* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1937). Similar arguments can be found for other Asian countries, e.g. in the case of Korea, “Land of Eternal Calm”.

¹⁶⁸ Arjun Appadurai, ed. *Globalization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003). Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, eds., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2006). Patrick Finney, *Palgrave Advances in International History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005). Margarete Grandner, Dietmar Rothermund, and Wolfgang Schwentker, eds., *Globalisierung und Globalgeschichte* (Wien: Mandelbaum, 2005). Frank Lechner and John Boli, eds., *The Globalization Reader*, 3rd ed. (Malden: Blackwell, 2009). Bruce Mazlish and Akira Iriye, eds., *The Global History Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2005). Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt. Eine Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (München: C.H. Beck Verlag, 2009).

¹⁶⁹ Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka, eds., *Geschichte und Vergleich: Ansätze und Ergebnisse international vergleichender Geschichtsschreibung* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1996). The book shows how helpful comparative histories are, but the contributions also explain the nation-state as the most often compared entity when an international perspective is involved.

challenges lies in pursuing methodological nationalisms, or “zombie categories,” as Daniel Chernilo calls them.¹⁷⁰ Indeed, thinking about the nation as a natural direction in human socialisation, and understanding modern history as a combination of capitalism and the modern state, offers an unpretentious and globally applicable model. Deeply embedded in the discipline’s history, as explained above, methodological nationalism underestimates non-national agencies, multiplies the blind spots in Asian modern historiography, and might even support nationalism in its most dangerous forms. The introduction of historicities, therefore, should be carefully protected against opening a backdoor to the legitimization of nationalistic approaches.

4.3 From the Big Powers’ Great Men to Transcultural Bodies and Transboundary Biographies

4.3.1 Disclosing the Gendered View of International Relations

The difference between regional and global history is not a question of distance, perhaps not even of space, but certainly of gender. In modern historiography the more international and global the research focus or topic, the less women are involved, not only as historical figures but also as female researchers.¹⁷¹ Two explanations seem obvious. In nineteenth century historiography, leading figures decided what part of the past was worthy of remembrance. No women could be found in such situations, and the discovery of international relations as a male-dominated space grew with the expansion of foreign relations administration. In short: nineteenth century diplomats had spouses and perhaps lovers; however, they certainly did not have female colleagues.

This rather self-evident image changes fundamentally when the richness of nineteenth century border crossing activities are considered. Photographs documenting international congresses clearly show the ladies’ big hats. Leading figures such as the Nobel Prize winner Bertha von Suttner celebrated their appearance at international gatherings. Such photographs, which gave visibility to the first

¹⁷⁰ Daniel Chernilo, “Methodological Nationalism: Theory and History,” in *Annual Conference of the International Association of Critical Realism*, (London 2008). Accessed March 11, 2011, http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/law/events/0708/iacr/papers/Chernilo_Methodological_Nationalism.pdf. Debates on methodological nationalism are closely connected to sociological globalisation discourses, but also accompany the process of European integration, see Beck, *Was ist Globalisierung? Irrtümer des Globalismus, Antworten auf Globalisierung*. For an overview on methodological nationalism see Daniel Chernilo, *A Social Theory of the Nation State: Beyond Methodological Nationalism* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

¹⁷¹ Relatively late, after the end of the Cold War, feminist historians started to mention this point. See J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).

female academics, female experts working as factory inspectors in the governments' social policy administration, and, increasingly, women's associations, are perhaps only small corrections when considered in a national context. What women share globally is the simple fact that, until the 1920s, they had no political rights, though they did have free access to different international platforms. Female internationalists were tremendously successful in international lobbying,¹⁷² and even remarkably strong in non-Western countries, as an Indian example demonstrates: Founded in 1917, the Indian Women's Association supported Mahatma Gandhi's opposition movement and carefully covered international congresses at the same time. In 1931, the Indian movement was enlarged to an All Asian Women's Conference, which presented a transcultural program that aimed to "sift what is appropriate for Asia from the Occidental influences (education, dress, freedom of movement, cinemas, machinery)" while preserving the common "oriental" culture.¹⁷³ The All Asian Women's Conference gave Shrimati Sarojini Naidu an international platform. Naidu, president of the Indian National Congress from 1925, is a striking example of the asymmetrical picture of transcultural bargaining. Asian women gained increasing visibility in and through the League of Nations, as delegates to the ILO, as factory inspectors, and in international education organisations. This development challenged the Western mental map, since the women's appearance in international relations became a deliberately mentioned new attribute of those Wilsonians who carried out the new public diplomacy in Geneva. Very few women reached a high rank in the League of Nations' secretariat.¹⁷⁴ However, the very presence of women with diplomatic passports challenged male-dominated foreign relations for two reasons: firstly, once they were appointed, female diplomats represented their country and could therefore not be treated with disrespect. Secondly, the idea of Western progress had been turned upside down because newly founded countries, including the Soviet Union, led this development, while most of the older great powers still banned women from diplomatic careers.¹⁷⁵

4.3.2 The New Man and the New Woman: The Global Appearance of Transcultural Bodies

In the Roaring Twenties, cosmopolitan places such as Geneva and Shanghai, and international administrations located in urban surroundings, prepared the stage for

¹⁷² See Rupp, *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement*.

¹⁷³ *Handbook of International Organisations: Associations, Bureaux, Committees, etc.*, 264. (In the 1938 edition.)

¹⁷⁴ Dame Rachel Crowley headed the Opium section of the League of Nations.

¹⁷⁵ Madeleine Herren, "Die Liaison. Gender und Globalisierung in der internationalen Politik," in *Politische Netzwerkerinnen. Internationale Zusammenarbeit von Frauen 1830–1960*, eds. Eva Schöck-Quinteros et al. (Berlin: Trafo, 2007), 183–204.

the so-called new man and new woman, a hotly debated idea in the construction of transcultural bodies. New man accompanied by new woman, or *la Garçonne*, gained visibility through the controversial form of androgyny. Of course, it would be interesting to speculate whether or not these new men were merely the artificial projections of expressionist painters and poets. But a transcultural approach focuses on the strange ambivalence of conformity and deviance.

Almost all societies created concepts of the new man. The Soviet regime invented the new Soviet revolutionary man. Chinese officials presented themselves in coats named after the German foreign minister Stresemann in an explicitly modern, Western way. The fascist regime celebrated the new fascist man with a well-trained, athletic body. Fascist propaganda presented Il Duce, Benito Mussolini, stripped to the waist and working in the Pontine Marshes, thus emphasising the physicality of the new man.

In short, there were widely differing manifestations of the new man. Physical appearance, however, became a competition about who would occupy the social spaces that were now accessible to different social classes and different regions of the world. The coincidence of social and spatial shifting interfered in the Geneva milieu of internationalists. What is an appropriate appearance for an international civil servant, a newly invented and truly global position? The need to look different implied crossing the borders of traditions. It is even difficult to say who braved the longer border crossing process: the former Austrian *Hofrat* (privy counsellor) now addressed as a *geistiger Arbeiter* (intellectual worker), or the Chinese intellectual educated in Paris?

4.3.3 Transcultural Biographies: Examples of Both Sexes

Some biographies illustrate the different positions of people transforming into the transcultural body that the League's secretariat and its organisations presented. For example, the Austrian historian Adolph Dopsch informed the League of his changing living conditions, and described the dramatic change from the *Hofrat*-like position of a professor in Emperor Franz Joseph's Vienna to his new position as an intellectual worker in small republican Austria, where he now faced the problem of unheated office rooms.¹⁷⁶ Compared to this situation, international civil servants in Geneva may have had more comfortable, but no less difficult lives. Egon Ranshofen-Wertheimer, a member of the League of Nations' information section and of Jewish background, had the bitter experience of finding out how unsafe and unprotected the transcultural body could become when he transformed from an international civil servant to a stateless person. The League paid him off, paving his way to London and the United States in 1939, but did nothing against the German

¹⁷⁶ Alfons Dopsch, *Austria: Conditions of Intellectual Work and Workers*, Enquiries into the Conditions of Intellectual Work (Geneva: League of Nations Publications, 1924).

invalidation of his Austrian passport in 1938.¹⁷⁷ The Indian Jal Jamshid Dalal, a young Oxford alumnus, former captain of his college football team and secretary of college cricket, worked almost 13 years for the League before he resigned in 1940. However, his personnel files do not suggest the prototype of a transcultural new man. First of all, Dalal was bored and worked so poorly in the minorities' questions section that his supervisor intervened. As a disciplinary action (!), Dalal had to take over the Czechoslovakian files. In the mid-1930s, the highly political question of German minorities in Czechoslovakia therefore lay in the hands of an official who was forced into this job without any German language competence. After his (understandable) failure his duties were reduced to "work of secondary importance" such as archival research, the organisation of meetings, and translation.¹⁷⁸ A completely different perspective emerges from the personnel files of Wou Saofong. The highly esteemed Chinese lawyer with a French Ph.D. entered the Secretariat for ten years in 1928. As a liaison officer, he influenced the Chinese press, the intellectual milieu in China, and Western perception in the sub-committee on China at the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation in Paris. The photograph in his personnel file shows his preference for perfectly styled, made-to-measure Western business suits. However, the busy author and internationalist carefully kept his Western public life separate from his Chinese private life. In 1931, he had to disclose to the League's administration a secret marriage in China, which, he explained, was the result of an arrangement made by his parents. He was divorced nine years later and remarried, also in China.¹⁷⁹

The League's secretariat fostered female transcultural biographies in different positions. But the women from all over the globe that worked in Geneva remain still an unexplored and therefore faceless group. This is especially true for the numerous translators and clerks, the shorthand typists and servants. Although this group confirms the well-known notion that administrative posts for women increased with the introduction of mechanical devices, the female clerks in Geneva were often overqualified, as their previous appointments confirm. Marie de Regel, a Swiss born in Petrograd in 1894, for example, worked as a clerk in the League's administration for nine years from August 1926. Before she entered the secretariat, she had done research in the Bodleian Library and was a translator in the League of the Red Cross Societies in Paris.¹⁸⁰ Besides the (expected) presence of women in rather low ranking administrative services, the ladies were present in every imaginable category of the international civil service. Most of these female representatives of the League contributed to the increase of transboundary networks, although not always by choice. Some of them survived political turbulences in their home countries due to the offer of a Nansen-passport, an

¹⁷⁷ League of Nations Archives Geneva, "Personnel File: Egon Ranshofen Wertheimer."

¹⁷⁸ League of Nations Archives Geneva, "Personnel File: J.J. Dalal."

¹⁷⁹ League of Nations Archives Geneva, "Personnel File: Wou Saofong." Cf. especially: Declaration de rectification de fait concernant mon etat civil, 15.10.1931

¹⁸⁰ League of Nations Archives Geneva, "Personnel File: Marie de Regel."

international identity card for stateless persons.¹⁸¹ Therefore, a typology of transcultural biography faces great social diversity. For example, the typist Tamara Goetze, born in Petrograd in 1900, spent almost twenty years in Geneva. With her Nansen-Passport she remained in the difficult situation of a stateless person with a transboundary life by fate rather than by choice. Other women working for the League belonged to aristocratic networks that had old traditions of transnational travelling. Although not in a high ranking position, the Lithuanian princess Gabrielle Jeanne Anne Marie Radziwill had a model international career. She brought an already existing border crossing network to Geneva. Like many of the female international civil servants, she had her first transboundary experiences as a nurse during World War I. Radziwill worked for the Russian Red Cross in hospitals at the Russian-Persian front.¹⁸² In addition, she had close contacts to international women's organisations, primarily to the Indian women aristocrats. However, as a former Russian princess Radziwill was the member of a society that had disappeared. She had connections instead of qualifications, and her work did not always satisfy, especially when compared to the work done by women experts such as British health specialist Dame Rachel Eleanor Crowdy, who, in the 1920s, was the most celebrated woman in Geneva. A British subject, Crowdy too had worked in France and Belgium during World War I, and her experience and well-established international contacts made her a valuable international expert even after her marriage in 1939. During World War II, she worked as regional advisor for the British Ministry of Information and reported on social conditions in bombed cities. Crowdy eventually retired as head of the League's Social Questions and Opium Traffic Section.¹⁸³

Even short term fellowships for positions that covered a few weeks or months but required administrative, border crossing efforts brought women to Geneva. For example, Béatrice Olga Elisabeth Zukotynska, a librarian working at the University Library in Lwów, spent three weeks in the Information Section in 1932.

4.3.4 New Cosmopolitans Drive Cars

At first glance, all these highly different biographies deny the existence of a transcultural embodiment, and even question the usefulness of a transcultural approach to biographical research. However, before the 1929 stock market crash and the consequent depression affected the world, the American press featured the League's cosmopolitan staff and gave visibility to a new generation of modern diplomats. Dame Rachel Crowdy was presented as an athletic new woman diplomat, while Secretary General Eric Drummond was shown as light-handedly

¹⁸¹ League of Nations Archives Geneva, "Personnel File: Tamara Goetze."

¹⁸² League of Nations Archives Geneva, "Personnel File: Gabrielle Jeanne Anne Marie Radziwill."

¹⁸³ League of Nations Archives Geneva, "Personnel File: Dame Rachel Eleanor Crowdy."

steering both the giant machine of the League and his Ford coupé.¹⁸⁴ It is exciting to see how closely League officials complied with these (mechanical) dynamics of modernity, how pragmatically they translated the machine as a metaphor of new international relations and a counterpoint to traditional, arcane diplomacy. However distant from each other Ranshofen-Wertheimer, Dalal, and Wou were, they shared one characteristic in emphasising their public appearance: they all drove cars. The League's personnel files almost burst with exemption claims from customs declarations for the newly hired officials' cars—and with fines issued by the Geneva police department. A closer look into customs declarations and moving companies' invoices does indeed give the transcultural body a more specific appearance, albeit from an unexpected angle. Contrary to expectations, the personal belongings that international officials from Shanghai and Vienna chose to take to Geneva are very similar: cars, pianos, typewriters, and radios are frequently mentioned in moving lists. The new man had a transcultural body, but the border crossing approach demonstrates another and more significant characteristic, namely limitation. Transboundary lives were closely observed. A carefully administrated list of annual leaves of absence coincided with the obligation to declare one's national home base, which in times of permanent political revolution could be a difficult declaration to make. It was carefully checked for its political value by the League's administration. Therefore, the League as an international platform and an ideal example of transcultural entanglement and cosmopolitan freedom became a system of multilayered, complex rules, which created constant administrative needs. Payments for travelling expenses raised the question of residence, which in turn acquired political importance when the League expanded the number of temporary collaborators, aiming "to improve relations with distant countries by developing a system of short-term appointments."¹⁸⁵ China, for example, shows that the enhancement of globality led to a closer monitoring of expatriates and emigrants, who were not eligible, according to the League's own specifications.¹⁸⁶

As a biographical approach, transcultural history provides the necessary analytical tools to bring to the surface the complex lives of transboundary biographies and point to the fact that the transcultural embodiment was based on rules and limits, where pretending and deceptive strategies had to counterbalance the fact that legal security belonged to those who preferred not to move.

¹⁸⁴ William Atherton Du Puy, "300 Look after Business of 52 Nations at Geneva," *New York Times*, July 29, 1923, XX4. Sarah Wambaugh, "League Work from inside," *New York Times*, August 14, 1921, 75.

¹⁸⁵ Société des Nations, ed. *Dix-septième session ordinaire de l'Assemblée de la Société des Nations, composition de la Commission de Contrôle: deuxième rapport présenté par la quatrième commission à l'Assemblée* (Genève: Société des Nations, 1936).

¹⁸⁶ As one example see the personnel files of Wou K'uan, who was hired because he apparently lived in China, communicated through diplomatic representatives and successfully hid his residency in Paris. See League of Nations Archives Geneva, "Personnel File: Wou K'uan."

5 Conclusions: The Transcultural Grave

Borders, limits, frontiers and boundaries confirm a pervasive mythological metaphor: for each severed head of the Hydra two will grow in its place. With each delimitation begins a dynamic process of limitation. Transcultural history faces the Hydra and renounces comparative methods by focusing on transboundary processes of exchange. Following border violations and sanctions, transcultural history gives visibility to undeclared cultural limits, to border crossing actors, to a range of actions that define transboundary controls, and a way of arriving at a self-reflective historiography.

What are we giving up by following this line of thinking? Are we replacing a collective, meaningful history with the history of a cosmopolitan elite? Are we endangering progress towards personal freedom, an undoubtedly useful part of Hegel's philosophy of history? Introducing fragmentation and competing borderlines, proposing the concept of differing historicities may destroy the intellectual tools needed for the development of a universal history. The twenty-first century will probably desperately seek a new universal history, since pollution, global warming, and infectious diseases represent only a few examples for which a global approach is needed. The question is whether or not this new universal history will develop in the Hegelian sense, as a state centred pattern of rules, based on Western enlightenment.

A further development of subaltern studies and a transfer of this approach to the well established entities of nineteenth century historiography can invigorate a non-elitist, global history from below. There is an interesting trend, which was brought to the debate by Gopalan Balachandran and further elaborates the idea of subaltern cosmopolitanism.¹⁸⁷ New discussions reflect on the use of subaltern studies' approaches in international relations research. The question of whether "the Subaltern can speak to/in International Relations"¹⁸⁸ may gain an additional dimension, because new forms of relational search options—presented, for example, by the database LONSEA—¹⁸⁹ will widen the scope, probably suggesting a history of subaltern diplomacy.

At least several attempts to develop a new universalism have been made. The political scientist Susan Buck-Morss, for example, is in favour of "approaching the universal not by subsuming facts within overarching systems or homogenizing

¹⁸⁷ Gopalan Balachandran, "South Asian Seafarers and their Worlds," in *Seascapes: Maritime Histories, Local Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges*, ed. Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal, and Karen Wigen (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007).

¹⁸⁸ Fabrice Argounès, "De l'usage des Subaltern studies en Relations internationales: Can (and How) the Subaltern speak to/in International Relations?," *Dynamiques internationales* 1(2009), accessed March 13, 2011, http://www.dynamiques-internationales.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/DII_FArgounes_Subaltern_1009.pdf.

¹⁸⁹ LONSEA – League of Nations Search Engine, "Searching the Globe through the Lenses of the League of Nations," accessed March 13, 2011, <http://www.lonsea.de/>.

premises, but by attending to the edges of systems, the limits of premises, the boundaries of historical imagination in order to trespass, trouble, and tear these boundaries down.”¹⁹⁰ There is growing academic interest in libertarian movements; in anarchism¹⁹¹; in the revolutionary motley crews; in the Black Atlantic; in the unruly sailors, pirates, men and women at the scene who shaped cosmopolitan contact zones.¹⁹² However, most of these approaches see in these newly discovered outcasts a history not only suppressed by the master narrative of the nineteenth century, the history of class, race and the nation, but also one that flourished in early modern history, coming to an end in the nineteenth century.

Within European history, a main aim is to (re)discover the important contributions to enlightenment and revolution by persons other than the acknowledged actors, citizens and workers. The historiographical approach advocated follows the idea of “porosity” and the introduction of historical ordering principles as an evocation, and not as a copy of the past. Ordering principles always need boundaries and there is always a transgressive force involved.¹⁹³ In contrast, transcultural history gets closer to the potential conflict not only between established actors but also within the society in question. The focus on multiplying boundaries opens a history of misunderstandings, of wrong translations and insecurities. Often enough, mimicry and heterotopic communication do not serve as the outcast’s safe haven, but can be found in the centre of power, in the allegedly universal rules that stop being universal when migrants are concerned.

The question still remains whether transcultural history fosters, against its declared intentions, the history of an elite. Cultural sensitivity and a wider perspective may come at the cost of history being reduced to researching the select few who crossed borders, visited World’s Fairs, participated in international congresses or just appreciated arbitrary aspects of foreign life. Even if migration is considered to be an important, non-elitist part of transculturality, the question remains whether there is a social awareness of entanglement, or whether Little Italys and Chinatowns point to forms of transculturality where foreign cultures establish distinction on a tentative basis. In a period of globalisation, the understanding of what a foreigner is grew in complexity, as can be seen in the shifting concept of the expatriate, which is of growing importance in the twenty-first century. An expatriate as a “tentative foreigner” may not be interested in making contact with his or her surroundings, and the same may be true for those who always reside in one place. Both may ignore global interconnectivity or prefer imagining parallel lives, despite all obvious daily

¹⁹⁰ Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History*, 79.

¹⁹¹ Anderson, *Under three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination*.

¹⁹² Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*. Marcus Rediker, *Villains of all Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004). Stefanie Michels, *Schwarze deutsche Kolonialsoldaten: mehrdeutige Repräsentationsräume und früher Kosmopolitismus in Afrika* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2009).

¹⁹³ Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History*, 111–12.

evidence of entanglements. Transculturality therefore, must avoid the pitfall of applying the mobile lifestyle of our current age, and bear in mind the imagination of foreignness as a phenomenon unconnected to everyday life.

The investigation of graves, for example, can yield evidence for how societies manage transcultural entanglements in certain ways at different times. Such investigations will also reveal whether the constructivist transcultural approach holds up when investigating times that are distant from today's mobility. Rarely are societies more involved in cultural entanglement than when deciding the location and appearance of graves. Before the end of World War II, the dead were not repatriated, although there were exclusive exceptions. Instead, culminating in the catastrophic losses of World War I, each war produced transcultural memory sites, which were mentioned in the peace treaties, and introduced global forms of mourning and remembrance. With the framework of mourning in place, World War I's endless fields of identical tombstones with foreign language names showed a new form of globality. The poppy, for example, acquired metaphoric meaning and became the symbol of remembrance throughout the British Empire. In 1915/16 Australian soldiers, as well as combatants from India and New Zealand, died in the battles of Gallipoli, a Turkish peninsula that controlled access to the Black Sea. The cemeteries in Gallipoli became highly nationalised places, important for the national identities of Australia, New Zealand, India and Canada. The same applied to cemeteries elsewhere. With Chinese "coolies" buried in Flanders fields, for example, and not in some urban cosmopolitan cemeteries, this process of identity-building became a *global* phenomenon.

One might object to regarding a world war as a transcultural factor, because of its cruel, fatal efficiency; however, as mentioned above, the way to handle the dead already had a transcultural prehistory. A new and no less transcultural aspect came with the introduction of cremation into liberal Christian and Jewish societies at the end of the nineteenth century. The complex controversy surrounding the new transferability of corpses increased reflections on Hindu and Buddhist practices in the West. Western supporters of cremation had already mentioned Indian and Buddhist traditions as transcultural background.¹⁹⁴ But citing this Asian precedence to find an old cultural tradition that could fill the European gap also provided an opportunity to confirm Western supremacy: as a matter of course, all liberal Western cremationists mentioned the British as enlightened rulers who had stopped the barbaric burning of Indian widows. However, in the 1920s, the appearance of Asian burials in Europe, the Western adoption of Asian practices, and the mention of mixed rituals demonstrated first attempts at global forms of mourning, all transcultural in nature.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴ William Eassie, *Cremation of the Dead: Its History and Bearings upon Public Health* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1875).

¹⁹⁵ "Mixed Rituals Mark Funeral: Jewish and Buddhist Burial Ceremonies Used Brass Band Gives Services Touch of Modernity Wealthy Shanghai Foreigner Mourned by Chinese," *Los Angeles Times*, July 19, 1931, C13.

Part II: Methods

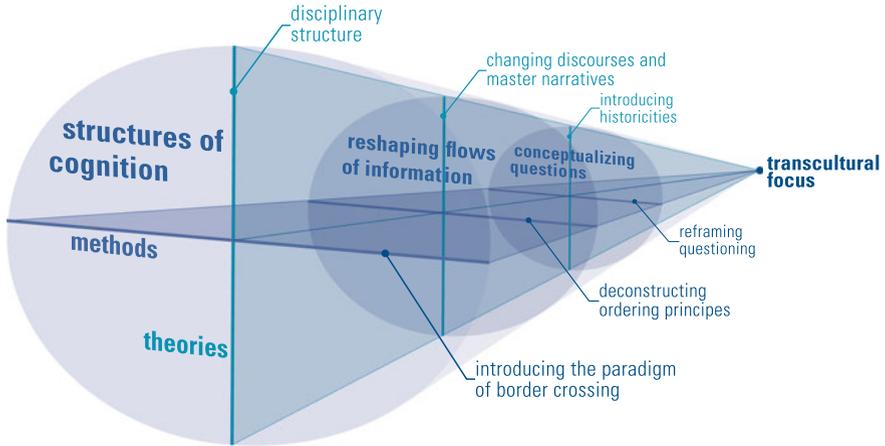
1 Introduction: Adapting Methods to Transcultural Topics or Developing Transculturality as a Method

The question of whether well-established methods are flexible enough for transcultural topics evokes a rather technical answer: since transculturality crosses borders the source material should also have been produced by corresponding multilayered agencies. With this in mind, we can then explain to what extent traditional methods should adapt to new fields. Firstly, source material is not limited to written texts. Oral traditions, intangible heritage, and visual representation of the past require a well-equipped toolbox. Even texts—still a key element in historical research—need a specific awareness of transcultural aspects. Multilingual texts and questions of translation play an increasing role in historical research.

To what extent the method used in historical research should be criticised as culturally biased is a much more complicated and difficult issue. On one side, analytical tools and methods of questioning the past are closely related to the historical development of the discipline, and therefore drenched in methodological Eurocentrism. On the other side, transculturality as just another constructivist approach does not come closer to the “real” past.

Since the awareness of this problem might open an additional window that shows the complex mechanics of how the past turns into history, the graph below clarifies the process of cognition and explains the methodological focus of transcultural research (see Graph 1).

Presupposing the close entanglement between theoretical and methodological issues, this part will investigate transculturality as a method, not just as an additional field of topics. By asking how historians acquire information, and how they know what the crucial questions are, the methodological discussion highlights two key terms of historical research. Getting information and shaping the most relevant research questions are the highlights of daily academic practice. However, we will see that even an apparently inconspicuous bibliography can mislead the researcher.



Graph 1 Focusing on transcultural aspects of history requires a new research approach not only in terms of theory, but also in terms of methodology

Although this part provides some topics very common to historical research, the aim is to merge daily practice with the questioning of transcultural entanglements. Transculturality, therefore, will be discussed in this part as a method for gaining information and asking questions, as an analytical tool to overcome an essentialist understanding of cultures, which is, if nothing else, helpful for a globalised twenty-first century.

2 Changing Structures of Cognition

2.1 Structures of Cognition and Establishing New Paradigms

Since Thomas S. Kuhn's groundbreaking study of the structure of scientific revolutions, it became crucial to know how academic disciplines develop beyond a mechanical understanding of research that enlarges knowledge by collecting information.¹⁹⁶ Kuhn located revolutionary change in the modification of the disciplinary matrix. Referring to the Copernican revolution, Kuhn gives us a good idea what the oft-quoted change of paradigm means: the sun, not the earth, became the centre of the universe. Of course, this example poses two questions: firstly, does transculturality introduce a sea change or just a new label, and secondly, how do we use the valuable scientific literature that has been written up until now? The results achieved by applying these research designs will tell us whether or not transculturality will become the accepted paradigm of twenty-first century historical

¹⁹⁶ Thomas Samuel Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

research. However, the debate about a new shaping of history as an academic discipline raises scholars' awareness of the culturally biased form of knowledge production. In explaining changing paradigms, Kuhn did not need to discuss problems that became crucial for the twenty-first century: is there a universal scientific method, or is it always culturally biased? Do we have to abandon the idea of science, as impartial and neutral? The awareness of global dimensions has established the need for the discussion of ontology rather than epistemology, the fundamental question of what all human beings have in common rather than the finer differences between epistemologies, where the question of how we know what we know is crucial. Lorraine Daston offered the example of clouds to explain the problem:¹⁹⁷ In 1896, an International Cloud-Atlas introduced the possibility of connecting "the same words to the same things,"¹⁹⁸ an enterprise that consolidated on a multilingual level "collective habits of perception, even of ill-defined objects," and was even understood and used in a moment of "all-at-one-ness" outside the scientific community.¹⁹⁹

Such examples invite the investigation into the burgeoning of communities with special attention to the history of science in its global context. Research literature, therefore, is crucial as source material for a transcultural history. In the same way that a professional dealing with primary sources requires certain rules and questioning techniques, the research literature that we encounter during our research has to be critically evaluated regardless of the actual paradigm. Just as with primary sources, it is necessary to acquire additional knowledge about the research context in which those works originate. Here we are also guided by presuppositions, i.e. implicit assumptions, models and structures of thinking.

Apart from the necessity of reading carefully and generally observing information in a critical light, historians need to master techniques of systematising knowledge and insights. Likewise, they need to have a firm grasp of the various methods and theories in history as well as a firm understanding of the history of the discipline.

Compared to a transcultural research design, the major problem with research literature is a mostly unspoken, indirect but obvious form of methodological nationalism and Eurocentrism.

In some cases, this (self-) critical dealing with literature can lead to us increasingly challenge established opinions and seek to replace them with new theories. Sometimes the reading of academic literature can also bring about a correction in our own point of view, thus allowing us to phrase our initial hypotheses more precisely. Yet, most of all, this is where the results of the information process should be collated to provide practical consequences. After an interdisciplinary and globally orientated search for literature, the transcultural approach seeks to unveil and question the typical Eurocentric foundations of Western literature. The omnipresence of Eurocentrism is clearly visible. Simply open a random page of one of the world histories or, even more appropriately, a chronologically ordered

¹⁹⁷ Lorraine Daston, "On Scientific Observation," *Isis: Journal of the History of Science in Society* 99, no. 1 (2008).

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*: 104.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*: 106.

reference work.²⁰⁰ Then highlight in red everything that is European or Western, and in yellow everything that shows other cultures not presented as agencies in their own right, with their own traditions and role perceptions, but instead as objects of European power politics. The result is astonishing. It is not only the explicit, but also mostly the presupposed hypotheses and theories that we need to uncover and replace in a transcultural practice of reading.

2.2 The Methodological Focus of Transcultural History: Clash or Convergence?

“On hot days the cool water of a river usually invites for a refreshing and purifying bath.” Used in an everyday context, this sentence makes sense; nobody would claim this to be untrue. If one were to ask a chemist, however, what an ordinary river was made of, his/her answer would not simply be “water.” Amongst all the water molecules a chemist would detect an impressive variety of organic molecules, minerals, metals, etc. In fact, one would be hard-pressed to find in nature any large quantities of pure water, that is to say H₂O only. As it is with “water,” so it is with “culture,” especially if one is acquainted with the broad notion of “culture” that has established itself in the humanities over the last few decades. The way in which academics in cultural and social studies proceed is quite similar to the way the chemist transforms the broad notion of water into a subject specific cosmos. Under the influence of the cultural turn, the everyday notion of “culture” has become an analytical tool that describes what societies share in terms of common ideas, values, institutions and practices. Looking at things from this perspective, is the way that the natural scientist deals with the phenomenon of water, and the way the cultural scientist deals with culture, really that far apart?

On the one hand, certain common considerations are obvious. Just as the chemist must decide whether he/she wants to examine water in different aggregate states and distinguish snow from hail and ice, or whether the presence or absence of certain minerals is important, a historian must decide about inclusion and exclusion. Should culture describe differences? Can we think about a society as a whole rather than differentiating between nations and parties? Or should historians better analyse exterior influences, effects of overlap and hybrid forms, for example by proving that something seemingly typical, such as Swiss chocolate, is really just a result of import, adaptation and translation?

On the other hand, there are also very clear differences, especially if we stick to the example of “water.” A chemist would always insist that water is defined as H₂O, regardless of what state it is in, whether it is polluted or not, whether in Osaka or

²⁰⁰ This might be even true in modern electronic world histories. See e.g. HyperHistory Online, “Over 2000 Files Covering 3000 Years of World History,” accessed March 11, 2011, http://www.hyperhistory.com/online_n2/History_n2/a.html.

Berne, whether used for baptism in a Christian context or in Indian cleaning rituals. But historians would not be as certain. In particular, there are those who are interested in the overlaps, described as transculturality, and would question any claims of certainty regards the meaning of water. To them, the importance of water varies from place to place and depends on cultural context. Water, a necessity shared by all human beings that literally submerges all kinds of borders, is a good example of how a transcultural history can simultaneously include political and cultural institutions.

Water supply became one of imperialism's most pressing issues in the late nineteenth century. As late as 1942, some historians legitimised the British rule in India by mentioning the 75000 miles of irrigation channels built under British rule.²⁰¹ Barrages, monuments of Western economic and technical supremacy, became transcultural landmarks and were named after Western officials instead of geographical locations. The "Lloyd Barrage," today known as Sukkur barrage, is a striking example of the political struggles beyond the uncontested need to make water available: as *Time* magazine insinuated, the opening of the dam, which in 1932 was the largest in the world, gave "long-nosed Viceroy Lord Willindon (. . .) time off from his troubles with Indian Nationalists."²⁰² The dam was Britain's token gesture to India in an attempt to undermine Gandhi's mass movement. Its opening presented a "platform glittering with native princes and staff officers."²⁰³ The barrage, today in Pakistani territory, provided an important argument in debates over the cost of British rule in India.

Even in the spheres of diplomacy and high politics water played an interesting role. In Paris in 1919, the establishment of national borders found its counter project in the confirmation of certain rivers as international zones, administered by international administrations.²⁰⁴ The Paris Peace Conference confirmed transboundary rivers as independent spaces, exempt from state sovereignties.²⁰⁵ Free waterways

²⁰¹ Kate Louise Mitchell, *India without Fable: A 1942 Survey* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1943), 254.

²⁰² "INDIA: Lloyd Barrage," *Time*, January 25, 1932, accessed March 11, 2011, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,742985,00.html>.

²⁰³ Ibid. The name Lloyd Barrage cites Sir George Ambrose Lloyd, who started the project as Governor of Bombay in 1923. Ravi Baghel and Marcus Nüsser, "Discussing Large Dams in Asia after the World Commission on Dams: Is a Political Ecology Approach the Way Forward?," *Water Alternatives* 3, no. 2 (2010).

²⁰⁴ See part XII of the Versailles Peace Treaty on Ports, Waterways and Railways. Monica Juneja, "Das Visuelle in Sprache übersetzen? Der wissenschaftliche Diskurs und die Polyvalenz indischer Bilder," accessed March 12, 2011, http://www.zeitenblicke.de/2008/2/juneja/index_html.

²⁰⁵ River administrations are the oldest forms of modern international organisations and are active until today. For an example, see the Central Commission for Navigation of the Rhine, established by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. The Danube commission followed and today an 'international water law' is a key element of international decision making: International Water Law Project, "Addressing the Future of Water Law and Policy in the 21st Century," accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/>. For the history of international river regimes see Franz Knipping, Hans von Mangoldt, and Volker Rittberger, *Das System der Vereinten Nationen und seine Vorläufer* (Bern and München: Stämpfli & Beck, 1995).

and river shipping lanes were issues wherein specialists at the Paris Peace Conference overruled the politicians' positions and gave a platform to persons not usually associated with peaceful cosmopolitanism. One example would be the British Admiral Ernest Trowbridge, who controlled the Danube at the end of World War I.

Today, the United Nations has made water an issue of international importance. The convention on the protection of transboundary watercourses, the development of an international "water law," and the combination of international law, civil liability, and resource management help clarify the transcultural reading of H₂O.²⁰⁶ The history of water has yet to be written. An attempt at such a history must follow a transcultural approach, because the debate needs the disclosure of cultural, political, and economic differences.

Following this line of thought, the study of foreign cultures can offer an insight into the constructivist perception of culture, probably resulting in the conclusion that there is no authentic culture, but always a transboundary bricolage. However, in spite of the omnipresence of cultural transfer processes and adaptations, powerful dissociation and differentiation processes shape cultural communities in a highly visible way. Claiming cultural authenticity, societies established monopolies of interpretation. For example: nineteenth century antisemitism and the antagonistic border debate about civilisation and culture between France and Germany illustrate the pertinence of investigating whether or not societies accept cultural diversity.

Omnipresent processes of adaptation or interaction are therefore less important than figuring out how small scopes of actions are, whether they change, and if they do, in which directions. As already mentioned, the humanities play a decisive role in setting borders. In the case of adaptation, one culture gradually blends into another. Consequently, history develops almost imperceptibly so that, although it remains philologically interesting, subtle long-term realignments are hardly—or at least with difficulty—palpable at the level of primary sources. For this reason we suggest a concept of transculturality (as already outlined in the first section of the book)²⁰⁷ that emphasises border crossing and border violation. The following section therefore explores how to gain empirical evidence (e.g. source material) that documents the highly dynamic and volatile setting of borders in different times. Of course, the question of whether this approach makes a difference to our understanding of the past remains crucial.

²⁰⁶ For the recent development see UN Water, an "inter-agency mechanism" established in 2003 within the United Nations. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, "Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes," accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.unece.org/env/water/>.

²⁰⁷ See above: Introduction, [chapter 4](#): "Transcultural Issues" and [chapter 5](#): "Methodological Key Elements".

2.3 *Methodological Premises of a Transcultural History*

Like every other method, transcultural history looks at the past from a certain perspective. It prioritises a certain set of sources over others and selects the relevant information with very specific premises; it reads both historical evidence and research literature in a critical and interpretative way, and finally produces a new interpretation of the past from the entirety of material in a constructivist manner.

In order for this to be done in a way that is result-orientated and consistent with the theory, a transcultural historian requires a rather comprehensive methodological toolbox. Some elements of conventional historical methodology are still analytical tools for transcultural history without requiring any large adjustments. Yet it is important to leave behind other parts of the framework of rules set by European historiography of the nineteenth century. A history of border violations and transcultural negotiation processes has to consider at least two sides. We might even decide to follow Gerard Delanty, who argues that confronting local and/or national traditions with global events is not enough, since this form of confrontation always influences the local, national, and the global. Where can we find and document this kind of cosmopolitan imagination?²⁰⁸ The ongoing debate on seaport cities offers an example of the merging of multilayered histories. Most historians agree that ports are cosmopolitan places with specific social rules. There is, however, an increasing interest in the idea of a “port society” with a presumed existence outside even the coastline. Initiated by the diaspora debates in Jewish history, this idea removes border violations and transcultural negotiations from a concept that is limited to individual biographies.²⁰⁹ To live on borders might indeed be dangerous, but it is also a special form of social cohesion. As mentioned by Chris Rumford, civil societies as well as states can be analysed with a focus on their border making power.²¹⁰ This involves thinking and analysing in a network-like way and is committed to the description of conflicting interdependences. Even though method and approach may still be dependent on the perspective, often in a Eurocentric sense, a transcultural historiography is always aware or makes itself aware of its own perspective. As opposed to other theoretical approaches, the nationalist, cultural, or social conditions of every historical analysis are not just echoed as implicit presuppositions. Rather, the transcultural tool of the historian will, due to the relational structure of border violations, bring all of Chernilo’s “zombies” to light and thematise them explicitly.²¹¹

²⁰⁸ Gerard Delanty, *The Cosmopolitan Imagination: The Renewal of Critical Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

²⁰⁹ David Cesarani, *Port Jews: Jewish Communities in Cosmopolitan Maritime Trading Centres, 1550–1950* (London: Frank Cass, 2001). Chris S. Monaco, “Port Jews or a People of the Diaspora? A Critique of the Port Jew Concept,” *Jewish Social Studies* 15, no. 2 (2009).

²¹⁰ Chris Rumford, *Citizens and Borderwork in Contemporary Europe* (London: Routledge, 2008).

²¹¹ See above: Theories and Concepts, [chapter 4](#): “Fighting Zombies: Methodological Challenges”.

An inherent feature of every transcultural historiography is a global level of analysis. As part of global history, transculturality prefers interactions and asymmetries between different cultural spheres. It is particularly interested in globally circulating ideas, and in competing claims for a monopoly of interpretation on international and transnational levels. From a methodological point of view, thinking globally avoids reintroducing cultural essentialism through the backdoor of transcultural entanglement. However, there are some difficulties to avoid: analysing places and situations of dense transcultural interaction presumes cultural authenticity in less entangled fields. Transculturality therefore is nothing more than a very special case, and cultural essentialism an unspoken implication. Transcultural history needs to pay special attention to two issues: firstly, what is truly new globally and not just an addition of national histories? Secondly, how can we make sure that “global” has more than a spatial definition? Debates on the differentiation between the local and/or national on a first level, global on a second, and cosmopolitan on a third help to find an adequate approach.²¹² The same is true for concepts operating on multiple levels.²¹³ Recent attempts to research the history of the United Nations offer an example of the consequences: the United Nations is no longer understood to be a platform for decision making between sovereign member states. The newest literature differentiates between a “second” and a “third” United Nations. The second UN includes research on international administration. The third UN encloses all those who work as experts and NGOs in the United Nations’ fields without being a formal member.²¹⁴

A transcultural method does not isolate well-confined agencies, organisations, institutions, and states at the expense of the interactions between them. Quite the contrary, a multiarchival, multilingual research design should highlight transboundary networks and entanglements. Although literature is available on the difficulties of understanding what “networks” are, historians should bear in mind their constructivist understanding: networks (and entanglements) are functional. They are outside the historians’ preferred ordering categories, such as events, concepts, or institutions, and even in the most sophisticated archives’ inventories there are no “networks” mentioned. The art of historical research consists of having the knowledge needed to understand that there is a potential for noncompliance beyond each proclamation of norms and rules. It is therefore crucial not to lose contact with the well known master narratives of the period mentioned. To tell a transcultural history of the Paris Peace Conference does not make sense without mentioning World War I as a political argument crucial for the postwar situation. It is extremely helpful, however, to carefully analyse the meaning of history as mentioned in the source material. What insights do we gain? Restitution, a major topic with both a transcultural background in global history and a special impact

²¹² Delanty, *The Cosmopolitan Imagination: The Renewal of Critical Social Theory*.

²¹³ Highly important reading for historians is: Eisenstadt, “Multiple Modernities.”

²¹⁴ See Thomas G. Weiss, Tatiana Carayannis, and Richard Jolly, “The ‘Third’ United Nations,” *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 15, no. 1 (2009).

after 1919, always implies a rewriting of history, a proposition that adapts the past to the present. Conflicting explicatory historical narratives, for example about looted material and booties of war, help us to understand what a given society defined as transculturality without explicitly mentioning the term.²¹⁵

Taking the classical Greek meaning of *methodos* (μεθοδος “path of investigation”) literally, historians should avoid following a unidirectional path and instead explore different levels of abstraction. The question is whether or not global concepts influence local settings, or how and why originally local practices suddenly result in worldwide dynamics. Taking this into consideration we will provide examples of source material where such forms of entanglements appear. Especially helpful are World’s Fairs and international organisations as well as ways of dealing with death, a topic equally relevant for all human societies.

A transcultural approach is not limited to the search for and examination of texts. Departing from the limitations of classical historiography, we suggest a much broader notion of sources. There is a wealth of visual and aural material available. Allowing such primary sources not only includes material beyond textual evidence, it also underlines the interdisciplinary character of transcultural history. Historians with more than one methodological and disciplinary background might have a considerable advantage.

Source material however, remains closely connected to space, time, and the question of agency. The difference lies in the critical investigation into why certain artefacts of the past became history and gained acknowledgement as source material, while others disappeared.

3 Getting Information

3.1 *The Historical Value of Information*

In 2001, the Nobel Prize in Economics was given to a group of researchers who had introduced the concept of asymmetrical information. George Akerlof, Michael Spence and Joseph Stiglitz insisted on the economic value of knowing when buyers and sellers have different information.²¹⁶ Almost the same is true for historiography. As we saw earlier, history is an empirical discipline and we need source material for gaining results. At the same time, the process of how to access source material is highly biased. How societies organise access to the past not only depends upon their aims and expectations but also results from the established storage strategies. In addition, information is based on a certain materiality, which separates the academic disciplines involved.

²¹⁵ Vrdoljak, *International Law, Museums and the Return of Cultural Objects*.

²¹⁶ See George A. Akerlof, “Nobel Prize Lecture, December 8, 2001, at Aula Magna, Stockholm University,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://nobelprize.org/mediaplayer/index.php?id=501>.

For a long time, historiography preferred written sources and neglected oral, aural, and visual traditions. Historians preferred libraries, museums and archives and avoided including the nontextual material that the past left for us. As the history of the discipline is closely related to the imagined community of the nation, methodological nationalism shapes even those research designs that are not related to the history of the nation. Statistics or diplomatic correspondences are therefore collected in national entities and prepared for comparison, while information on transboundary topics contradicts the commonly used ordering principles. For trans-cultural research, these rather trivial facts provide methodological difficulties when transforming information into a key term of historical research.²¹⁷

This rather complex background influences the procedure of gaining information, which is always the starting point for every researcher. Of course, information does not describe a data collection that is composed in an objective way. Data—an umbrella term for source material of all kinds—only becomes “information” because of a specific research interest, against the background of previous knowledge, on the basis of an interpretative technique, and in the form of verbal realisation. By way of an example, for a farmer (or city planner, or family house owner) who is digging a trench, a piece of pottery in the soil is normally little more than an obstacle affecting his spade. For an archaeologist, who recognises it to be part of a bowl, and who knows the products typical of a cultural community, this shard can become a piece of information that supports his thesis that around 3900 BC there was a settlement of the Cortaillod culture in this very place.

Information describes a two-way communication. Only what you ask for will be answered, while other important knowledge still remains in a status nameable as “raw data.” Talking about raw data is actually only a methodological device used to describe what precedes the information. Raw data should be understood as transcendental objects; they lie beyond the possibilities of our cognition, because our own way of looking at the world and at the past is always slanted. Being aware of filtering knowledge in a particular manner during the process of selecting information describes the normal daily practice of research, but for a transcultural approach it is of an even higher importance.

The process of getting information comprises of steps and skills, such as the search for literature, creating bibliographies of primary and secondary sources, and a professional handling of resources, such as encyclopaedias, source editions, journals, etc. A special challenge for a transcultural gain in information is the

²¹⁷ Significantly, “information” is not mentioned in the major encyclopedia of historical key terms, *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, although the history of the concept fits well in the approach used by its authors, Werner Conze and Reinhardt Koselleck. Access to information also indicates the distance between a democratic society—where the sovereign citizen needs information for political decision making—and the *Ancien Régime*, where feudal division is related to arcane fields. Additionally, information gained a certain materiality and its production, transfer, and availability had the power to shift borders, as explained by the French philosopher Etienne Balibar in his concept of the “polysemic nature of borders”. Etienne Balibar, *Politics and the Other Scene* (London: Verso, 2002), 81ff.

overcoming of linguistic and disciplinary limitations. The common fixation on Anglo-Saxon or other European historiographies has to give way to a practice of research that does not only respect but actively includes the efforts and accomplishments of other disciplines and the understanding of science in other cultures. Getting information in a transcultural context has to handle more intermediaries than expected within the same culture or the same concept and ordering principles. Most of nineteenth and twentieth centuries sources already present hybrid forms of adapted or rejected fields of entanglement. For the media saturated nineteenth and twentieth centuries, getting information does not imply a process of discovery, in which a crucial document is waiting in a dusty corner of an archive.

3.2 *Turning Information into a Research Design*

3.2.1 Looking for New Insights

Value and quality of information are closely connected to the research design. They depend on conceptualising a questionnaire around the problem that needs to be solved. This research design process includes, very simply, the disclosure of what the researcher wants to know, analyse, or prove, and explains the manner of access to the past, the hypotheses used, the theoretical approach, and the choice of source material. Since history is first of all an empirical discipline, the choice and the very existence of source material are crucial. This rather trivial aspect often turns out to be difficult and is closely connected to the procedure of preservation. Often, material simply did not survive, and newer material did not always survive as well as older material. For example, before the use of paper in Asia, palm leaves were typically used and have since proved to be more resistant than paper to the humid climate. Gaps in collections of historical sources, restricted files, or terms of copyright can prevent access to central documents. Therefore, information about reasons and mechanisms of storage techniques and specific cultures of archival preservation is crucial, as are insights into the reasons why sources did not survive.²¹⁸ Was the material deleted because it was considered too uninteresting to be kept? Does the mediality of the material allow for duplication, or was the letter unique, written by a single person and therefore forever lost when it was destroyed? Do we know enough to say that certain source material disappeared because it was too controversial to be preserved? Are there restrictive rules and laws for preservation and does the researcher have any chance to access the material? Historians have to bear in mind how significantly access modalities changed throughout

²¹⁸The same is true for today's digital archives. In this case too we must always ask who has privileged access to exclusive databases and who decides what will be digitised and openly published on the web?

history. Today, the model that gives legal access to governmental documents is spreading.²¹⁹ Documents, once released by freedom of information requests in the USA, are available to all researchers. For those working on intellectual history, a visit of the FBI site might give new insights.²²⁰

A preservation history might detect looting—something that is especially interesting when working in a global and transboundary context, because places of preservation are sometimes far away from the places described in the sources.²²¹ Such issues are useful for tracking down the borders we are interested in. For these reasons, a research design, though it should be phrased precisely enough at the beginning of research, should never be too tightly and rigidly framed; it is only normal that there will be unexpected challenges due to the lack of source material and of course new insights that change the thesis during research.

In spite of all the case by case difficulties that need solving, there is still a set of rules that helps turn information into a research design. Therefore, a viable historical research question . . .

1. . . . includes transboundary perspectives but is not too broad.

When looking for a manageable topic we suggest starting by questioning the territoriality of the respective fields of interest and asking how costly transgressions can be.²²² One of the key elements of a transcultural topic is its contested affiliation of space and place.²²³ Asking why an object, a subject, or a concept is regarded in a certain historical context as foreign, as identity building, or as border crossing is

²¹⁹ For worldwide documentation of this process see Freedom Info, “The Global Network of Freedom of Information Advocates,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.freedominfo.org/>. For the history of the US Freedom of Information Act see The National Security Archive, “The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA),” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/foia.html>.

²²⁰ From the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League founded in 1937 to the files on Albert Einstein, the FBI gives access released files based on the Freedom of Information Act. However, the documents are still partly blackened. Federal Bureau of Investigation, “Freedom of Information Collection,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.fbi.gov/foia/foia-collection/>.

²²¹ See above, footnote 157: looted art.

²²² Territorial affiliation and time belong to the historical points of reference. The fact that environments shape societies is not at all new. It is the importance of space that makes shaping a global history a long lasting concept. See Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris: A. Colin, 1949). However, the so-called spatial turn in history means more than new reflections on the connectivity between geography and history.

²²³ Spatial histories do not understand the environment as a given fact that shapes and influences societies. Rather, spaces are seen as being made by humans. Spatial history encompasses urban spaces, but also invisible, virtual, and intellectual spaces. The Republic of Letters, for example, was never a state. Nevertheless, it brought together intellectuals from different places in a kind of space. In the twenty-first century, spatial history is accompanied by certain IT-equipment, with models of collaborative research and a strong focus on digital visualisation. For an example see Stanford University, “The Spatial History Project,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/project.php?id=997>.

the first step in this direction. Use concrete examples, select exemplary events, ask for reasonable temporal limits, investigate representative people. This gives you structure and makes it easier to decide what is really important.

2. . . . is not a summary and paraphrasing of relevant overviews.

At the moment, a transcultural approach has neither the disadvantage of being already covered by an overwhelming quantity of literature, nor the advantage of the scientific community agreeing on a few, but important publications. Therefore, innovative ideas are needed from all levels of academic research.

3. . . . is not descriptive but explicative.

Transcultural history can tell stories about what happened in 1919 Paris beyond the debate on what the Peace of Versailles meant for the prospective development of European history. To follow Lawrence of Arabia in his daily routine may be of interest if the research question is not limited to describing the person. The question is why knowledge about him is important. The discovery of source material is just an intermediary step and a summary of sources does not count as a research result.

4. . . . considers current tendencies in research and oversteps the boundaries between area studies and the discipline of history.

Good research ties in with the research community's dialogues. For historians, the World Wide Web offers spaces where different platforms realise the Republic of Letters that the philosophers of enlightenment had in mind.²²⁴ For transcultural history the variety offered by Humanities and Social Sciences Online, or h-net, permits the overcoming of disciplinary borders and encompasses the difference between history as a discipline and history as a part of area studies.

3.2.2 Examples: A Transcultural Approach to Biographies, Institutions, Visual Source Material

As an empirical discipline history needs examples to show how a transcultural approach differs from Western historiography. Taken from the 1920s and 1930s, our preferred time frame, the following examples present the potential of a transcultural biography (Jan Christiaan Smuts); a global intergovernmental organisation (League of Nations) and a lesson on how high politics and popular culture interact (Hergé's hero Tintin).

²²⁴For disciplinary historians H-Asia-Net provides an interesting platform: H-Net, "H-Asia: Asian History and Studies Discussion Network," accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.h-net.org/~asia/>.

1. Jan Christiaan Smuts - Life and Work

The title “Jan Christiaan Smuts - Life and Work” suggests a traditional biography of an important male political figure, in this case the national hero and founder of the South African Republic. Indeed, in more than 100 publications on Smuts he appears as a romantic lover, as a general, a statesman, an internationalist promoting the League of Nations, and as a scientist involved in the debate about holism. Research on Smuts may be, and has been, done from a national perspective.²²⁵ However, a transcultural approach will instead investigate the transboundary aspect of his career. In a transcultural research design, the changing centres of gravity are important parts of the key questions. Therefore, Smut’s shifting role in historiography—from supporting the narrative of white nation building in South Africa, to illustrating critical considerations of racist ideologies, to informing today’s focus on Smut’s deliberation with Gandhi—²²⁶ reflects the changing interest in presenting global coherence or nationalism in the twenty-first century. The methodological innovation of such a study is therefore not evident. Smuts, with his many changing political posts and liaisons on the one hand, and his work as a scientist on the other, is at least an enigmatic figure who is not entirely inappropriate for consideration from a transcultural perspective, or indeed from the aspect of border violations. A more concise, focused and quite acceptable question could thus be derived from a general idea, such as “The contribution of Jan Christiaan Smuts to the creation of the mandate system from the perspective of former colonies.” Another approach could reconstruct Smut’s global connections, for example based on his membership in the World Brotherhood Federation.²²⁷

2. The Role of the League of Nations on the Path to World War II

Discussing the role of the League of Nations on the path to World War II completely lacks reference to a transcultural approach; instead such a title uses the vocabulary of classic political history, where institutional agencies dominate, namely states and intergovernmental organisations. Secondly, even with methodological characteristics of a transcultural paradigm, the issue would still not be feasible. Neither would it be clear where such an analysis should start and end in terms of content, nor which comprehensible, intersubjective criteria for assessing the League’s role could be taken. It would also be entirely unclear why certain documents would ultimately be chosen from the endless sea of potential sources.

²²⁵ For a bibliographical overview see Antony Lentin, *General Smuts, South Africa: The Peace Conferences of 1919–23 and their Aftermath* (London: Haus Publishing, 2010).

²²⁶ See the special attention on the “Gandhi-Smuts compromise” in South African History Online, “Jan Christiaan Smuts, 1870–1950,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/bios/smuts-j.htm>.

²²⁷ See: LONSEA - League of Nations Search Engine, “World Brotherhood Federation, Officers,” accessed March 13, 2011, <http://www.lonsea.de/pub/org/510>.

The topic has been studied extensively, but not exhaustively.²²⁸ The problem is that the League of Nations, a multilayered entity, is narrowed down to World War II—which we can only know *ex post*, while the sources produced before the war could, of course, not have anticipated it.

When applying a transcultural approach this methodological problem increases. The introduction of border crossing not limited to national borders also destroys the easiest way of telling stories by following time lines. Both could happen—that crossing borders brings objects, concepts, persons in a new “chronoscape,”²²⁹ or that parallel time frames open. In this case, it is interesting to ask whether transcultural entanglements collide in different understandings of time, or whether the awareness of different chronologies point to the future of a historical narrative with a polycentric world. Whatever the historian’s choice may be, reflections on the narrative’s time frame gain a crucial place in the methodological settings. Thus, researchers must face the hardly feasible challenge of how to deal with the extensive scientific discourse in this vast topic area. This study would not lead to more than random platitudes and speculations on a trite question. However, accessing the League as the first formally acknowledged global platform where non-Western states were at least able to claim political awareness of a global instead of a Western international system might start a re-evaluation of the League, which is today, as a failed institution, a rather marginalised topic within post World War I international history.

3. The Other Lytton Report. Hergé’s Representation of the Sino-Japanese Conflicts in *Tintin et le Lotus Bleu*

In 1936, the well-known Belgian comic-strip author Hergé (George Prosper Remi, 1907–1983) published a new Tintin adventure titled *Le Lotus Bleu* (The Blue Lotus). The comic poses a variety of innovative research questions when analysed from a transcultural perspective and calls attention to a type of primary source that is otherwise rarely examined. The title—“The Other Lytton Report. Hergé’s Representation of the Sino-Japanese Conflicts in *Tintin et le Lotus Bleu*”—arouses interest and implies that here both politics and everyday popular culture mingle in an explosive way. Hergé’s artistic work was strongly influenced by a Chinese friend

²²⁸ Struggling with chronology is a characteristic of newer literature, see, for example, the works of Zara Steiner, a well-known scholar of interwar European history, who insists in her latest publication that the time setting makes a difference: “Differently from most historians, I have shown that the management of the European state system in the decade after 1919, while in some ways resembling that of the past, assumed a shape that distinguished it both from the pre-war decades and the post-1933 period.” Steiner, *The Lights that Failed: European International History, 1919–1933*, vii.

²²⁹ For the methodological problems of chronology see Lorenz, *Konstruktion der Vergangenheit: eine Einführung in die Geschichtstheorie*.

and he had good connections to the Far East.²³⁰ The original edition of this comic-strip can be seen as a civil society's attempt to exert a subtle influence on politics and the public. Though this appears a promising start, it is also evident that this topic will suffice only for an essay. Hergé translated high politics into a visual story that combines political incidences (the Mudken incident, the Lytton Commission) with Western prejudice, while also giving an accurate portrayal of Chinese aspects as explained to him by his Chinese friend. The comic-strips therefore provide a fertile field of material that is qualified to elaborate on the visualisation of international relations, the difference between pictorial messages and text, and the translation of information from newspapers into a Western narrative. This allegedly low-brow fare needs high level research. Nowadays, the original edition of this comic-strip can only be located after much effort, while the contemporary edition, which is readily available, reduced exactly those political allusions that would be interesting to examine.²³¹

3.3 *Bibliographies: the Art of Hiding Transcultural Entanglement*

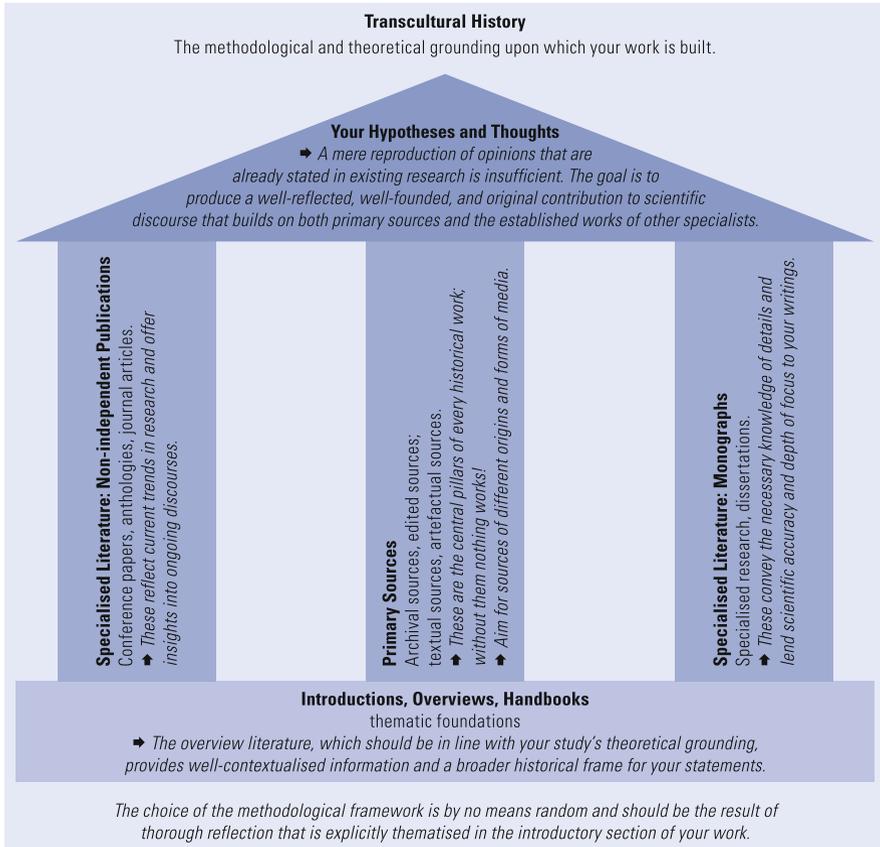
3.3.1 **Searching and Finding Literature: the Daily Practice of a Complex Mechanism**

Creating a bibliography and achieving a balanced selection of literature is an almost subconscious automatism, a daily practice in historical research. As a first step, this chapter, which is based on a graphical overview of search strategies, explains the complex mechanism of decision making behind the well-established method of bibliography creation. A second step reveals how to deconstruct the ordering principles of bibliographies. A third discloses asymmetrical information transfer in the history of bibliographical collections.

Visually speaking, the structure of a research bibliography resembles the architecture of a Greek temple.

²³⁰ The artist Zhang Chongren (1907–1998), see Think Shanghainese, “Zhang Chongren (张充仁),” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.thinkshanghainese.com/lang/en-uk/culture-matters/people-2/art/zhang-chongren/>. World Expo Shanghai 2010, “Zhang Chongren Memorial Hall,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://shanghai.cultural-china.com/html/Travel/Memorial/200811/27-2179.html>.

²³¹ Hergé [Georges Prosper Remi], *The Blue Lotus*, The Adventures of Tintin Series. The comic-strip was published in the 1930s in the Belgian newspaper “*Le Petit Vingtième*”, and later in different versions. Hergé did not know China from his own experience. For an overview of the most important editions see Tintinologist.org, “The Blue Lotus,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.tintinologist.org/guides/books/05bluelotus.html>. The first edition can be found online: Hergé [Georges Prosper Remi], “Les aventures de Tintin en Extrême Orient,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.bellier.org/le%20lotus%20bleu%20petit%20vingtieme/vue1.htm>.



Graph 2 The essential pillars of a research bibliography

Such a building needs solid foundations and a roof supported by strong pillars. Just as from an architect’s perspective every element is necessary to make the building long lasting and aesthetically appealing, it is crucial for the historian to include and consider all current types of publication. The importance becomes obvious when reflecting the different purposes of scientific texts, as shown in the graph below.

A balanced research bibliography results from following a step by step procedure (Graph 3).

3.3.2 Discovering Blind Spots by Deconstructing Bibliographies

Historians deconstruct the ordering principles of bibliographies by explaining the historical context of their origins. This strategy helps to trace the whereabouts of documents that are stored or hidden in the farthest corners of archives and libraries.

<p>TIPS AND HINTS</p> <p>Check how recent this literature is and start with a book that is no older than two years. Also use the most current issues of relevant journals, if they contain lists of appropriate literature.</p>		<p>TIPS AND HINTS</p> <p>As opposed to large libraries, the libraries and reading rooms of departments and institutes are usually organised by topic area. Browsing these stacks is a good first step when approaching a topic. It is particularly useful because you can immediately gauge the relevance of a work and take notes if necessary.</p>
<p>Non-independent Bibliographies</p> <p>In the appendix of a book or other text.</p>	<p>References in Footnotes</p> <p>Stay critical: Who cites whom? Does an author have blind spots? Be aware of citation networks!</p>	
<p>Search Via Snowball System</p> <p>Starting from bibliographic references in already viewed works one can find other useful works by tracing them back.</p>		<p>Local Search</p> <p>Browsing the stacks of a library that is organised by subject areas.</p>
<p>Unsystematic Bibliographising</p> <p>Unsystematic Bibliographising uses incompressive tools for the search. This makes sense for a first orientation about the topic.</p>		
<p>Bibliographising</p> <p>Bibliographising is not a one-time task but a continuing process, the product is constantly refined. The process must be documented: what has been done, what still requires work? The results must be backed up: a database of its own or a programme for managing bibliographies (all viewed literature, even that which is not useful, should be recorded and given a brief comment). The use of a specialised programme for managing literature, such as <i>Zotero</i>, ensures a consistent standard for bibliographising.</p>		
<p>Systematic Bibliographising</p> <p>Systematic Bibliographising uses specific tools for a comprehensive search for primary and secondary literature. After familiarisation with the topic you should produce a catalogue of questions or a word map of key terms to be used for the search.</p>		
<p>Meta-Bibliographies and Indexes of Databases</p> <p>These tools are crucial for getting an overview, e.g. the <i>UNESCO Archives Portal</i>, the <i>National Archives Access to Archival Databases</i>, <i>OAIster</i>, the <i>Digital Collection of the LoC</i>.</p>		<p>Metacatalogues</p> <p>These are search engines that harvest several catalogues simultaneously, e.g. <i>WorldCat – The World’s Largest Library Catalog</i>, <i>KVK – Karlsruhe Virtual Catalog</i> or <i>ISI Web of Knowledge</i>.</p>
<p>Bibliographies and Databases</p> <p>Try to make equal use of printed and electronic indices.</p>		
<p>General Bibliographies</p> <p>These are thematically very broad, e.g. <i>International Bibliography of Periodical Literature in the Humanities and Social Sciences</i>.</p>	<p>Subject Bibliographies</p> <p>Bibliographies for a particular discipline or subject, e.g. <i>International Medieval Bibliography</i>.</p>	<p>Specialised Bibliographies</p> <p>Bibliographies on individual epochs or subject areas, e.g. <i>Bibliography on International Peacekeeping</i>.</p>
<p>TIPS AND HINTS</p> <p>It is crucial how up-to-date a bibliography is. Therefore, make sure to distinguish between</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical period (What historical period is covered by the works in the bibliography?) • Reporting period (When were the works in the bibliography written?) • Publication Period (When was the bibliography published?) <p>Distinguish further between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed bibliographies, e.g. <i>Nelson, Bibliography of South Asia, London 1994</i>. • Ongoing bibliographies, e.g. <i>Bibliography of Asian Studies, 1969ff</i>. <p>Reflect on the criteria used for selection and categorisation in bibliographies and databases and ask yourself where the gaps are. With printed bibliographies use the index. Consult a review first to see whether an interlibrary loan is worth your time and effort. Use online databases which offer short summaries of a source along with its bibliographical details, such as <i>Historical Abstracts</i>. Full-text databases such as <i>JSTOR</i> can provide valuable additions and save time.</p>		<p>TIPS AND HINTS</p> <p>Do not only search for titles or authors but via related terms or indices too. Include keywords in foreign languages. Beware of different spelling and transliteration conventions. Use available options for truncation and filtering during electronic searches. Remember that library catalogues only list independent publications; for articles in journals and anthologies use bibliographic databases. Ensure that you find any and all collections (with an OPAC), that specialises on your topic.</p>

Graph 3 Survey of search strategies

Although creating bibliographies is sometimes a rather unattractive task, it nevertheless ultimately represents, if conducted in the right way, a veritable art.

Keeping in mind the transboundary aspect of bibliographies, the following advice of how to use information may present a slightly shifted focus compared to other search strategies:

1. The quality of a bibliography depends on completeness, accuracy, and spatial and temporal balance. The primary sources section should include a multiarchival approach that considers different media and languages. In the literature section readers should expect to find a broad selection of overviews (introductions and handbooks), specialised research literature (journal articles, monographs, texts from anthologies or congressional reports and congress papers) and auxiliary resources (such as articles from encyclopaedias). The territoriality of bibliographical research may be of some importance. The same is true for the question of what and when key texts were translated and made available outside the places of publication.
2. A good search strategy is aware of its own weaknesses and gaps and explains what and why some aspects are missing. In addition, historians need a panoramic view that is not limited to bibliographies relevant to the topic under investigation. Relevant questions are: which databases or gateways could be particularly fruitful? Can a library or an archive be used, even without knowing the language?²³² Using a local research library suddenly ceases to be the first step and in fact becomes the final step, giving either the required book's call number or, in many cases, certainty of its absence from the library's holdings.
3. Transcultural topics call for a combination of different bibliography strategies. The systematic approach outlined above reveals the gaps that require closing. An initial, unsystematic list is drawn up of literature of valuable preliminary work done by other researchers. Full-text, searchable source material may help to solve the problem of missing ordering structures. Additional material is sometimes waiting to be discovered if the cunning historian asks where a bibliography would place topics which obviously do not fit within the categories used. Sometimes the category "general" or "miscellaneous" hides gems.
4. Moreover, for transcultural research multilingualism is crucial. For a general understanding of the line of argument in a foreign text, a rudimentary knowledge of the language can aid a decision about the opportunity of starting a collaborative research project.
5. Apart from linguistic barriers a transcultural approach aims to overcome disciplinary limitations. When selecting bibliographies, transdisciplinary latitude is useful. Other subjects and methods help to specify blind spots and sharpen the research question. For this reason it is highly recommended to look at the databases or bibliographies of related subjects.

²³² See National Archives of Japan, "Home," accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.archives.go.jp/english/index.html>. —, "Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR) (アジア歴史資料センター(アジ歴))," accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.jacar.go.jp/>.

3.3.3 Manipulating the Past: Asymmetrical Information Transfers in Bibliographies

It is important to remember that for researchers bibliographies are just intellectual tools. Due to the development of information technologies, bibliographical research changed and published bibliographies lost their position as unique tools of information. However, for historical research, the crucial question is who published bibliographies, and which parts of knowledge gained a bibliographical visibility while others did not. As collections of (published) information about the world beyond local knowledge, bibliographies, even bibliographies of bibliographies, have a long and not exclusively Western history. However, things changed in the nineteenth century, when the national bibliography was created. From then on, the territoriality of publication shaped worldviews. In addition to the spread of Western classification systems, which introduced a universal system for naming for plants and animals, the introduction of national bibliographies differentiated between those who published and those who became objects of description. Of course, scientific communities had their own publications, and something like the abovementioned *International Cloud Atlas* seemed to present a cosmopolitan alternative. But even with explicitly international bibliographies in mind, the national approach dominated and was closely connected to international politics. National bibliographies not only became a crucial element of the imagined community, but also had an impact on political structures. The production of national bibliographies was the major task of national libraries, which were mostly founded in the nineteenth century.²³³ Moreover, these libraries became the operational part of multilateral agreements signed in Brussels in 1886 that regulated the exchange of information.²³⁴

Since the late nineteenth century, bibliographies have been an example of manifold activities that are aimed at language-independent classification systems²³⁵ and at transcription and translation tools. In this context, bibliographical collections of information play a major role in debates about realizing utopian ideas of a

²³³ John Feather and Rodney Paul Sturges, *International Encyclopedia of Information and Library Science*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2003).

²³⁴ This convention grouped a small circle of Western states. But the International Exchange Service established in Brussels in 1886 provided exchange services to states that did not sign the convention, but adhered in an informal way—Japan, among others. See *Handbook of International Organisations: Associations, Bureaux, Committees, etc.*, (Geneva: League of Nations Publications, 1938). UNESCO, “Convention concerning the Exchange of Official Publications and Government Documents between States, 1958,” accessed March 12, 2011, http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13036&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

²³⁵ Melvil Dewey, *Classification and Subject Index for Cataloguing and Arranging the Books and Pamphlets* (Amherst: Lockwood & Brainard Company, 1876).

worldwide share of information.²³⁶ Political crises and wars confirm *ex negativo* the political value of bibliographical information and show how closely connected learned societies, bibliographical exchange of information, and politics came. After World War I, the scientific communities served their respective countries, and these responsibilities and coherences did not just disappear after armistice. On an international level, the former allied states founded the International Research Council, renamed the International Council of Scientific Unions in 1931. This organisation of academies excluded the former enemy states, and German complaints about being isolated shaped the discussion in the 1920s.

Therefore, there are good reasons to look beyond the development of bibliographies within a global context.²³⁷ For example, the participation of Asian states in international organisations with bibliographical focus gives important insights into the political value of information exchange.²³⁸ A transcultural approach not only confirms that tools of information transfer also have a history; it also shows that the historicity of ordering principles opens new perspectives and an awareness of topics, concepts, and subjects across the master narratives: in times of national bibliographies, which cover nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, the rather difficult process of establishing pools of global information presented an often used chance to question Western domination. In addition, all these explicit transboundary concepts help to specify what is beyond the mainstream of the master narratives. In the 1930s, the International Council of Scientific Unions replaced its former intention of excluding the enemy with the aim to “guide international scientific work in fields where no competent associations exist.”²³⁹ Furthermore, specialists in bibliographical information transfer often provide examples of transboundary careers and biographies with a strong element of foreign cultural concepts.

Theodore Deodatus Nathanael Besterman (1904–1976) serves as an example of a specialist in the creation of transboundary bibliographies.²⁴⁰ After World War I, he mingled in the esoteric circles of the Theosophical Society, published on the

²³⁶ Crucial for this development was the abovementioned Paul Otlet, founder of the International Institute of Bibliography (1895, Brussels), later renamed as International Institute of Documentation.

²³⁷ For an overview see Feather and Sturges, *International Encyclopedia of Information and Library Science*.

²³⁸ China and India belonged to the International Federation of Library Associations (founded in 1929).

²³⁹ *Handbook of International Organisations: Associations, Bureaux, Committees, etc.*, (Geneva: League of Nations Publications, 1938), 164.

²⁴⁰ Theodore Bestermann published a world bibliography of bibliographies, see: Francesco Cordasco, ed. *Theodore Besterman, Bibliographer and Editor: A Selection of Representative Texts*, The Great Bibliographers Series, No. 9 (Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1992).

history of bibliographical compilation,²⁴¹ headed the UNESCO information department after World War II, and became a specialist for French Enlightenment and Voltaire.²⁴² Another example is Henri Cordier (1849–1925), the editor of the *Bibliotheca Sinica*. He too was a collector of information with bibliographical intentions. After 1918, the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation in Paris, one of the League of Nations' most important networks for information transfer, took on the challenge of making bibliographical information globally accessible. Among other search tools, the Institute edited the *Index Translationum*, a list of translated works. Published in 1932, the first issue limited the works to Western language translations. However, the Institute published its own series of translations from Japanese and the idea spread fast, even in times of war. In 1940 reviewers mentioned an *Index Translationum* which was published in the English version of the *Quarterly Bulletin of Chinese Bibliography*.²⁴³

3.4 Research Literature: Information Beyond Pretension

3.4.1 A Box Scheme for Thinking Outside the Box

In research literature knowledge appears to be refracted in several ways by differing perspectives. For historians it is important to understand what older literature can reveal, and what is outside contemporary knowledge. It is crucial to know whether or not research literature follows the master narrative, and no less critical to assess whether the historian's own experiences inform his or her work. For example, the difficult and multilayered historical interpretations of the end of the Cold War show how critically all these aspects influence the choice of historical topics and their presentations.²⁴⁴ In order to develop a sense for these issues, we propose following an established procedure of analysis of research literature, as explained in Graph 4.

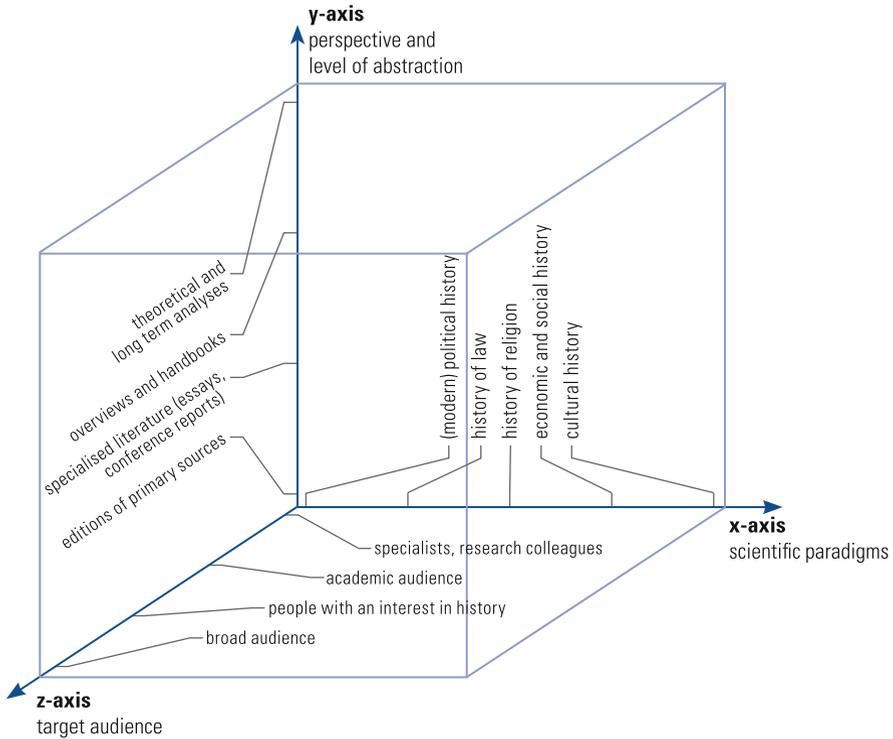
Since different settings of categories are possible, the graph below can be read in various ways. Moreover, as the following discussion shows, recent developments in historiography undo the rigid classification in three of the graph's parameters. Transcultural history as an approach, as it has come up in recent debates,

²⁴¹Theodore Bestermann, *A World Bibliography of Bibliographies and of Bibliographical Catalogues, Calendars, Abstracts, Digests, Indexes, and the Like*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (London: C. Batey, 1947).

²⁴²Henry Colin Gray Matthew, ed. *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: From the Earliest Times to the year 2000*, 60 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol. 5, 529.

²⁴³O. L., "Review: 'Quarterly Bulletin of Chinese Bibliography (English Edition)'" *Pacific Affairs* 13, no. 4 (1940): 488.

²⁴⁴See Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, "Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars," accessed March 12, 2011, http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=topics.home&topic_id=1409.



Graph 4 Visualisation of parameters for an analysis of research literature

incorporates elements from political history, modern cultural history and, depending upon the thematic focus, concepts from social or religious history or the history of ideas. While older works can in many cases be placed within one of the above classic paradigms, more recent texts prefer hybrid forms. Again, it is important to mention that the paradigms in the graph are subject to change.

It is perfectly possible that some of these hybrid forms may have the potential to become a leading paradigm within the next decade.

The x-axis describes the scientific paradigms. On the y-axis both perspective and the degree of abstraction are indicated. The key questions are: how much is the text’s argument guided by primary sources? Which functions do primary sources have? Are they immediately discussed and commented on, or does the work in question give potentially highly complex theoretical explanations that are presented against a historical background or a historically well-founded model of periodisation?

The z-axis indicates the relevance of the target audience. It makes a difference whether a text has been written for academics who are conducting research in the same or a related field; whether the information has been adapted to schools, or whether the text is intended to entertain a general audience.

3.4.2 The Tunes of Transcultural Research

Since the late 1980s, the segmentations and amalgamations of theoretical paradigms have consistently been among the most influential developments in academic historiography. New approaches grew out of the conglomerate of theories, complementing elements of existing models and recombining with them creatively to form new ones, as did transcultural history. However, this has led to a situation wherein, at present, there is no longer a set canon or handbook that could claim to explain exactly how to write history. The question arises, therefore, as to how we can reliably acquire background knowledge in a global society that has not yet produced a definitive transcultural historiography. In order to achieve transcultural progress in knowledge we must therefore use existing literature to open up the historical context central to our question. Ultimately, this boils down to using literature not only as a medium of information but also reading it carefully so that readers will not be taken in by its theoretical and methodological presuppositions. The fact that historical interpretations always originate in a particular historical context is hardly new and is something that historians have generally been wary of.

Transcultural history gains visibility in conceptual multiplicity and border crossing networks. Terms and concepts considered as singular entities opened new perspectives when presented in their multiple guises; “historicities” rather than a “history” dismiss the idea of the one and only universal concept of history. “Multiple modernities” rather than one path towards modernity question the unidirectional way of progress. In addition, transcultural history examines interconnections and networks rather than strictly causal schemes of action and reaction.

If we want to evaluate existing literature according to transcultural criteria, we must reflect on the circumstances of the work’s genesis more so than its content. For this we must ask ourselves: what did the historiographer choose for his or her subject and why? How, in which surroundings and why did they position the individual elements within the overall panorama? What was left out? We consider these historically conditioned forms and practices of inclusion and exclusion as central; they tell a lot about the time in which a historical work was written.

Classical historical works, the master narrative of which is the “nation”, are particularly interesting for their sections and remarks concerning border transgressions and violations. They are often not explicitly thematised, but can certainly be discerned, if this kind of literature is read against the grain. Instead of reading historical works simply as a direct source of information and accepting everything that is presented therein, we suggest a reading practice with three meta-cognitive levels:

Firstly, highlight elements that reach beyond or break up the traditional pattern of a nation state, such as scientific networks, religious rituals, cosmopolitans, etc.

Secondly, it is crucial to see where such developments, biographies or connections were *sui generis* placed by classical historiography. In which chapter(s) do they occur? How are they as incompatible elements linked to what was in line with the pattern of a nation state? Are they presented as a cumbrous foreign body or does

the author try to modify them interpretatively and squeeze them somewhere into the national pattern?

Finally, one should ask which other attributions or positionings would have been possible and what is omitted or obscured by the chosen order of things. Contemplating the possible and effective thematic attributions that can be gained brings about an extra horizon of knowledge, which makes transcultural processes visible where they were not explicitly thematised, and promotes a relativising view of literature.

3.4.3 The Transcultural Reading of Non-Transcultural Literature

When reading historical works, one has to remember that every era has its standards, its particular perception, and thus its own historiography. (Ours too is only a conditional one.) When approaching a text it is best to do so in four steps, which take you from a very general examination to the search for specifically transcultural information; from a positive first appreciation to an increasingly critical dialogue with the work.

1. Reading and information: a first, uncritical reading of the text

Questions to consider: What new things and what general information does the text provide? What are the author's main hypotheses? Which paragraphs are particularly typical of the mode of presentation in the book as a whole? What specific information does the text contain to answer my research question?

2. Contextualisation and labelling: first level of meta-cognition, i.e. an analysis of the text according to the aspect of inclusion; an examination of the table of contents with the question in mind of which emphases the book has.

Questions to consider: Which outstanding qualities does the book have and what are its mistakes or argumentative flaws? Which topics does the book deal with in detail? What picture of the time or subject matter does the book convey? As what does the object of my specific interest appear? In which chapter or context does it occur?

3. Background information and deepening of analysis: getting additional information on the author and work. (For more information on this see the analytical framework below.) Note: When getting background information one must always contemplate its authorship. Is it, for example, an uncritical self-portrayal or is it an outsider's perspective; and, if the latter, is it by somebody who represents a similar view of history or a completely different one?

Questions to consider: Why does the (transcultural) object, in which I am interested, appear in a certain chapter? Which historical circumstances may have led to this positioning?

4. Change of perspective and critique: second level of meta-cognition, through the application of other possible arrangement criteria and through the search for interference by the arrangement criteria according to the aspect of exclusion.

Questions to consider: What is pushed to the background or completely left out due to the presentation at hand? In what other relations or contexts could the object of my interest have appeared also? What remains unmentioned due to the chosen attributions and positionings?

Considering the above, it can be said that transculturality is by no means limited to as yet undiscovered source material. It starts with a different form of reading, which is aware of inclusion and exclusion processes and thus reflects on what is not mentioned and why. By doing so, one lays the foundations for shaping new objectives and questions. A transcultural gain in knowledge ultimately requires a way of reading in which the balance of emphasis is redefined by shifting it from the centre to the periphery. Thus, our interest should centre precisely upon where the exclusion begins; at the periphery of a work, where resides all that is just about visible enough to be deciphered. The aim is not to invalidate established historiography or to ignore its findings, but to critically reflect on the past outside the confines of established historiography in order to prepare a fruitful discussion about the consequences of the principles of arrangement within a work. The essential condition necessary for shaping new questions is therefore to read existing literature carefully, since new paradigms cannot develop out of an intellectual void.

3.4.4 Sirens Promising Objective Knowledge: The Example of the Encyclopaedia

The reference book is one of the most common academic genres—almost every society has tried to collect, preserve and provide general knowledge in a way suitable for efficient and easy access. In the form of encyclopaedias these books went with travellers all over the globe; they gave practical hints to farmers, taught women how to behave, provided an insight into Western habits for Asian scholars, and, most of all, fostered the illusion that universal knowledge exists in printed form. The presumed globality and objectivity, the gospel of universal, timeless knowledge and the editors' news orientated selling strategies make the encyclopaedia an academic genre that lends itself particularly to transcultural research.

The entry on India in *Meyer's Konversations-Lexicon*, one of the most widely spread encyclopaedias in German speaking households, illustrates the transcultural potential of such texts. In the 1896 edition, India had an entry of almost one page in length, and at first glance presented a rather dry geographical description. The geographical description was given exclusively through the Western author's eyes. The entry starts with the remark that ancient Greeks had only "dürftige Nachrichten"

(poor knowledge) of India,²⁴⁵ an interesting comment in a time when Europe believed that the beginnings of human culture exclusively lay in the Greek *poieis* of the fifth century BC. The unspoken prejudice is remarkable in that the introduction of differentiation is only detectable when compared to the entry on Europe, which is presented as “unbedingt der wichtigste unter den fünf Erdteilen” (unconditionally the most important of the five continents).²⁴⁶

Although we realise that the encyclopaedia’s point of view is dangerous and manipulative, the readership seems almost global and unlimited. The offer of providing fast and concise information obviously seems attractive when it answers questions such as: who was Toyotomi Hideyoshi? What were the precise causes for the 1879–1883 War of the Pacific? Which terms do other cultures use for what we call religion, and how have the meanings of these words developed over time? Which states became independent from the former colonial powers in 1960 and what did the borders of those states look like then? Typical questions such as these occur frequently when writing historical texts. To answer them it can often be helpful to consult reference works, especially when considering that a few concise points of information may suffice. General encyclopaedias, such as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, may offer an answer to all of these questions; however, they are not particularly suitable in a university context. Firstly, the information they provide is not detailed enough and secondly, they do not link it to research. Furthermore, there are more than enough subject-specific encyclopaedias with various objectives and possible uses at our disposal. Thus, the challenge is to find the right reference work, which is up-to-date and suitable for the research question at hand. To be more precise, the encyclopaedia’s ordering principles (indices, bibliography, etc.) should be as much in line with the structure of the research question as possible.²⁴⁷ Investigating the issue of national independence, for example, would be difficult with an alphabetical encyclopaedia, though easier with a chronological one. On the other hand, to find out who Hideyoshi was, it would be advisable to consult a biographical encyclopaedia that specialises on Asia.

However, the biggest danger in using encyclopaedias is being seduced by their purported objectivity.²⁴⁸ By suggesting that they contain definitive knowledge and common sense interpretations, works in the encyclopaedic genre can be treacherous, and yet these suggestions have in some respects become one of their principle

²⁴⁵ “Indien,” in *Meyers Konversationslexikon*, 5. gänzlich neu bearbeitete Auflage (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1895), Bd. 9, 203f.

²⁴⁶ “Europa,” in *Meyers Konversationslexikon*, 5. gänzlich neu bearbeitete Auflage (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1895), Bd. 7, 37.

²⁴⁷ For general information on search strategies and information retrieval see Reginald Ferber, *Information Retrieval: Suchmodelle und Data-Mining-Verfahren für Textsammlungen und das Web* (Heidelberg: dpunkt-Verlag, 2003).

²⁴⁸ For the history of scientific objectivity see: Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007), [chapter 7](#).

characteristics.²⁴⁹ This holds especially true for the majority of general encyclopaedias and even, in a more restricted manner, for specialised ones.²⁵⁰ These too are by no means free of errors, one-sidedness, or even ideological undertones. Thus, as with every other medium of information, when dealing with encyclopaedias, a highly critical approach is required. For those who master this, encyclopaedias can gain a whole new dimension; they can be used and examined as primary sources. In fact, encyclopaedias are wonderful sources for evidence regarding the perception of, and the emphasis placed upon, anything by a certain group or society.²⁵¹ An obvious example is the perception of India by English historians during the time of the British Empire.

With transnational research questions, using an older encyclopaedia as a primary source often makes sense and can be very fruitful.²⁵² In such cases it is also worthwhile looking at general encyclopaedias. National encyclopaedias, for example, were usually intended to influence the forming of cultural identity and thus aided the spread of many a stereotype.²⁵³ One of the best ways to see that knowledge is not a matter of fact, but a construct dependent on socio-historical norms and fashions, is to read what earlier generations thought to be remarkable and how they wrote about it.²⁵⁴ A culture not only stores knowledge for pragmatic reasons but also for the purpose of self-promotion. It is therefore not only of interest what is known (or symptomatically unknown) to a society but how the elements of

²⁴⁹ Paul Michel and Madeleine Herren, “Unvorgreifliche Gedanken zu einer Theorie des Enzyklopädischen: Enzyklopädien als Indikatoren für die Veränderungen bei der Organisation und der gesellschaftlichen Bedeutung von Wissen,” in *Allgemeinwissen und Gesellschaft: Akten des internationalen Kongresses über Wissenstransfer und enzyklopädische Ordnungssysteme*, ed. Paul Michel, Madeleine Herren, and Martin Rüesch, *Berichte aus der Geschichtswissenschaft* (Aachen: Shaker, 2007). Panagiota Alevizou, “‘As we Think’: The Emergence and Evolution of Digital Encyclopaedias.” (PhD, University of Sussex, 2008).

²⁵⁰ For a short overview of the history of general encyclopaedias and their political impact see Ines Prodöhl, *Die Politik des Wissens. Allgemeine Enzyklopädien im 'Dritten Reich', in der Schweiz und in der SBZ/DDR* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2010).

²⁵¹ For methodological presuppositions of the encyclopaedic genre and for cultural bounds of knowledge see Ryan Bishop and John Phillips, “Of Method,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no. 7&8 (2007): 270–72.

²⁵² There are some ongoing research projects that can help with the critical assessment of encyclopaedic works. See Asia and Europe in a Global Context, “D11 - Hidden Grammars of Transculturality: Migrations of Encyclopaedic Knowledge and Power,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/d-historicities-heritage/d11.html>. See also the affiliated Zurich Project: Allgemeinwissen und Gesellschaft, “Enzyklopädien als Indikatoren für Veränderung der gesellschaftlichen Bedeutung von Wissen, Bildung und Information,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.enzyklopaedie.ch/>.

²⁵³ Nadine Kavanagh, *Conjuring Australia: Encyclopaedias and the Creation of Nations* (Saarbrücken: Südwestdeutscher Verlag für Hochschulschriften, 2009).

²⁵⁴ Richard Yeo, “Classifying the Sciences,” in *Eighteenth-Century Science*, ed. Roy Porter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

that knowledge are organised. The forms in which knowledge is presented often give away more than the knowledge itself.²⁵⁵

4 Questioning and Prejudice

4.1 *Introduction: Where Are the Borders of Europe? Biased Positions*

During collection and reading, primary sources undergo processes of interpretation and contextualisation. We question them according to our guiding interests, connect them to our previous knowledge, and interpret and embed them in meaningful, mainly transculturally orientated concepts. To avoid random dealings with primary sources, and to observe a scientific standard, we follow traceable and intersubjective principles along the lines of the source analysis and interpretation of the historical-critical method. As mentioned above, transcultural history is primarily interested in transboundary topics in a global context. Questions focus on topics and historical circumstances where claims of heritage and identity are part of a controversial debate. Rarely are these conflicts explicitly called “transcultural,” and it is a challenge for a reasonable research design to analyse them without overstressing transcultural tensions.

Developing a workable hypothesis starts with a critical awareness of the researcher’s biased position. Most researchers, even those who write the history of a nation, may stress the universal applicability of academic methods. Those who are aware of ongoing postcolonial debates may define their position as Western or Asian.²⁵⁶ Others may want to analyse what a European point of view means. Aiming at a transcultural history, the typical scope of European history handbooks rarely provides the required information.²⁵⁷ A transcultural approach requires more of an insight into shifting borders than into the additive history of European nation states and cultural legacies.

The Europe of the eighteenth century, when Voltaire corresponded in French with the noble elite in St. Petersburg, clearly differs from Europe in the nineteenth century when European labelled values spread throughout the world by means of imperialism. In the twentieth century, the Europe of the European Union developed from economic and political treaties and offered a very different picture. A transcultural

²⁵⁵ See, for example, Mike Featherstone and Couze Venn, “Problematizing Global Knowledge and the New Encyclopaedia Project,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 23, no. 2&3 (2006): 5f. Richard Yeo, “Lost Encyclopaedias: Before and after the Enlightenment,” *Book History* 10 (2007).

²⁵⁶ For a survey see Peter Childs and R. J. Patrick Williams, *An Introduction to Post-Colonial Theory* (London: Prentice Hall and Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1997).

²⁵⁷ For the time period mentioned, see for example, Chris Cook and John Stevenson, *The Longman Handbook of Modern European History, 1763–1997* (London: Longman, 1998).

history of Europe, therefore, also questions geopolitical ordering principles. A spatial definition of Europe cannot provide a substantial answer to the question of trans-cultural history, whereas the issue of how and under which historical circumstances the idea of Europe developed and came under pressure is more fertile.

Once again, the Paris Peace Conference serves as a good example of what a transcultural approach can explain. Europe does not initially appear as an agency in Paris, where national delegations and groups aiming at national independence attended the conference. On the other hand, the Reparation Commission struggled with a key element of what had defined Europe for a very long time, i.e. the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. This complex medieval structure of governance, today used as a model of European integration,²⁵⁸ came under consideration in a rather unexpected way, namely, in the restitution of works of art. The sad fact that looting and booty are unavoidable side effects of war is not new. But in Paris in 1919 the meaning of authenticity and heritage in a global context had to be addressed. The treaties of Versailles and St. Germain mentioned works of art that had to be transferred from Germany and Austria to China, the Near East, Italy, Belgium, and France.²⁵⁹ All claims for these precious objects established argumentation that alleged both cultural authenticity and expression of cultural heritage. In the European case, the list of objects concerned was long and came with the idea that destroyed works of art should be replaced with objects of comparable value.²⁶⁰ For example: apart from works of art that were allegedly stolen by invading armies, restitution demanded that precious paintings from German collections be brought to Belgium as replacements of originals that the Germans had destroyed.²⁶¹ However, this is not the whole story. Collections of books—and everyday consumer goods, rather than precious museum pieces—also came to Belgium after the war. One can rarely imagine a higher degree of cultural entanglement than the flood of books of differing provenance, now available in Belgian libraries.

The creation of cosmopolitan libraries—the library committee also included a Japanese delegate—as a consequence of war, is just one form of transcultural entanglements. Moreover, the Belgian and Italian restitution claims not only demanded looted objects; they also demanded works of art created by respective nationals or those made on Belgian or Italian territory.

²⁵⁸ See Roland Axtmann, “State Formation and Supranationalism in Europe: The Case of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation,” in *Europe Without Borders: Territory, Citizenship, and Identity in a Transnational Age*, ed. Mabel Berezin and Martin Schain (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

²⁵⁹ See Article 247 of the Treaty of Versailles: The Avalon Project, “The Versailles Treaty June 28, 1919,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/partviii.asp>.

²⁶⁰ This idea focused on the destruction of the University Library of Louvain by German troops in 1914.

²⁶¹ For example the triptych of the *Adoration of the Mystic Lamb* painted by the van Eyk brothers, and the triptych of Dierick Bouts’ *Last Supper*, both mentioned in Article 247 of the Treaty of Versailles, see above footnote 259.

These claims concentrated on Vienna's most precious art works, among them the imperial regalia of the Christian emperors, as well as the treasure of the Golden Fleece.²⁶²

Both treasures included antique stones, Arabian textiles, and masterworks of Ottoman and Flemish artistry. Both combined precious objects of different origins and expressed a certain, perhaps even typical way of how regional differences were translated into an empire-like entity called Europe. Interestingly, the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation was considered to be an expression of Europeanness long after its formal dissolution in 1806. But in 1919 this common ground of European power came under pressure, when the Paris Peace Conference installed legal experts in the reparation commission. Their arguments struggled with the national claims and transboundary intentions pertaining to these objects. The fact that the treasure of the Golden Fleece left Belgium more than 300 years before the negotiations seemed less important than the legal impracticality of translating a transboundary institution into a part of national heritage:

“The Order of the Golden Fleece was in its origin a dynastic Order of Chivalry (...) not necessarily of one nationality, conceived as group round a Sovereign. It was not a ‘national’ Order in its origin, and it never evolved into a ‘national’ or political institution of the Low countries or of any other country. (...) Even if the word ‘national’ be used in the secondary sense in which it may be applied to an aristocratic Order attached to what has become in modern times (...) a national dynasty, the Golden Fleece cannot in the eighteenth century justly lay claim to this epithet of ‘national’ in relation to the Low Countries.”²⁶³

What do we learn from this example? Firstly, the attention on transboundary processes and the increased awareness of powerful, non-written sources allow for questions about European borders that differ from those featuring in national histories. We gain more precise information about long lasting cohesions beyond national entities and about how heritage outlasts structural change. Secondly, the transcultural approach is useful beyond being a tool for analysing the entanglement of cultures. In Paris in 1919, the reparation committee confirmed the existence of transcultural entities beyond all national claims. However, the argumentation followed a strictly legal point of view. As a consequence, the treasure of the Golden Fleece remained in Vienna, but the debate opened up an insight into the fading of a once powerful narrative—what Europe is—namely, the heritage of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. Following the main elements of transcultural history

²⁶² The imperial regalia used for the coronation of the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation expressed the medieval concept of reign. The precious and highly symbolic items were preserved in Vienna. The Golden Fleece, a medieval order of chivalry, was founded in 1430 by the Duke of Burgundy. The “treasure” consisting of the order’s precious religious insignia, also was (and is) preserved in Vienna.

²⁶³ The Internet Archive, “Allied Powers - Reparation Commission, Belgian claims to the Triptych of Saint Ildephonse and the Treasure of the Order of the Golden Fleece, October 25, 1925,” accessed March 12, 2011, http://www.archive.org/stream/belgianclaimstot00allirich/belgianclaimstot00allirich_djvu.txt. (See VI. - CONCLUSIONS.)

as explained above, the transformation of transboundary objects into national heritage demonstrates that transculturality does not merely cover a process of merging and cultural entanglements. Rather, it affords a new insight into how already established forms of transculturality broke apart due to national claims. In the case of the restitution policy, the European debate developed within a global context. Cases such as the Chinese claims for astronomical instruments, the debate about the skull of Sultan Mkwawa, and the whereabouts of an early Koran manuscript confirmed the impression that former Europe had dissolved in singular national claims.

History starts with questions; only by asking them can the past manifest in what historians call sources or primary sources. They shape the aims and objectives of historical research and explain which aspects of an impenetrable past can be turned into historical statements that are negotiable in an academic context. As we have seen, there is rarely a limit for such questions, at least not in terms of the topics concerned. However, the very notion of investigating the past implies a) the possibility of an answer and b) the availability of source material, which provides the empirical evidence for the historian's result. In a transcultural context, debates about source material include two specific problems: one concerns the materiality of sources and asks whether or not written sources are still the key element of modern historiography. The second is the possibility that the customary method of interpreting source material is fraught with the nineteenth century's methodological nationalism. Both aspects are part of an expanded imaginary where, at a first glance, a much simpler differentiation takes place, namely the difference between questions that are helpful and those that are unanswerable.

1. Answering questions

Keeping in mind the possibility of an answer, historians can exclude non-answerable questions based on their prior knowledge. It is senseless to query, for example, which species of potatoes medieval European societies preferred. The choice simply did not exist because potatoes only reached Europe in the sixteenth century. This is, however, a rather simple example of a problem which increases in complexity when concepts become involved. What is, for example, the meaning of "state" as written by a Chinese official during the Song dynasty compared to the European definition of the term presented in a dictionary of history edited in the West?²⁶⁴

Historical semantics can help to avoid asking the wrong questions. Established in the 1970s in Heidelberg, conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*) introduced historical semantics to the historians' toolbox.²⁶⁵ It is indeed impressive to see how the frameworks of ideas and expressions changed and how concepts gained

²⁶⁴ See, for example, projects A5 and A11: Asia and Europe in a Global Context, "Research Area A: Governance & Administration," accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/a-governance-administration.html>.

²⁶⁵ Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, and Reinhart Koselleck, eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, 8 vols. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972–1997).

new meanings at the watershed between *ancien régime* and modernity. However, although a conceptual approach is almost unavoidable for cross-cultural studies, the simple fact that linguistic translation reaches its limits when applied to concepts has complex consequences. Perhaps conceptual history is sensitive to the difficulties of replacing the idea of (at best) interacting cultural entities with the idea of transcultural entanglements. Is conceptual history therefore an inalienable part of a modern, non-Eurocentric global history and a tool to verify migrating ideas and successful transboundary concepts? The answer needs more studies that follow this line of questioning. However, first investigations give an interesting insight into the convergence of different meanings in one word, and in the understanding of concepts, which have the potential to be globally successful. This development has an important influence on transcultural research designs. It highlights the potential of *translingual* concepts and, furthermore, increases the meaning of social practices in historical research.²⁶⁶ After the “linguistic turn,” historians understood that language forms reality—though Andrew Sartori shows that in the translation of culture the choice of the respective word can explain culture as daily life—or as elitist understanding of civilisation.²⁶⁷ In both cases the social impact is crucial and the linguistic approach needs a stable background that reflects the social history of the respective topic. Therefore, the combination of language and social conditions of life supply the information needed in order to avoid wrong questions. A transcultural approach helps to be mindful of this gap. Whenever cultural flows are recognised as foreign, the debate on how to translate, adapt, reject, or transform such influences can provide valuable information in order to shape an interesting questionnaire.

2. Availability of source material

Source material provides the empirical evidence for the historian’s work and guarantees the verifiability of conclusions taken from the past. Its selection is therefore crucial in two respects: firstly, badly chosen sources cannot support even excellent questions. Secondly, source material has what Koselleck described as “veto power,”²⁶⁸ meaning that source material has a higher value than the research design. Whenever, after critical analysis, source material still indicates the contrary to the historian’s assumption, the research might simply be wrong. In regard to a transcultural history, the choice and interpretation of source material

²⁶⁶ Translingual studies play an increasing role in the East-West dialogue. They start by questioning a presumption that each dictionary has, namely the idea that languages have equivalent synonyms. See Introduction: Lydia H. Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity, China 1900–1937* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1995), 1–42.

²⁶⁷ Andrew Sartori, *Bengal in Global Concept History: Culturalism in the Age of Capital* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

²⁶⁸ Reinhart Koselleck, “Standortbindung und Zeitlichkeit: Ein Beitrag zur historiographischen Erschließung der geschichtlichen Welt,” in *Vergangene Zukunft: zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*, ed. Reinhart Koselleck, 3rd ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984), 206.

follows common rules. It is important to note that the Western-shaped discipline of history has influenced the definitions, accessibility, and storage of source material. For transcultural research it is therefore crucial to understand archiving procedures—which relics of the past have survived and why, what has disappeared, and for which of the many different possible reasons this loss came about. During the nineteenth century in particular, scientific preservation strategies served as justification for bringing relics with a foreign past to Europe and had long lasting consequences, as shown in the ongoing debates concerning the preservation of cultural heritage.

The daily practice of handling source material however, needs a theoretical understanding of objectivity and the value of the expected answers. What do we know after consulting the past? The historiography of historicism had a precise answer to this question, promising an insight into “how it really was,” and said that a better understanding of the past allows for a better planning of the future.²⁶⁹ Modern historiography knows that the past is unreachable, and although, after the “linguistic turn,” historiography is aware that the narrative plays a crucial role, one aspect is difficult to transfer to a transcultural approach: the historian’s position. The disclosure of the historian’s position was always an effort to approximate objectivity as closely as possible. Introducing a transcultural position must overcome methodological nationalism, but transcultural historiography has to not only avoid geopolitical preferences (Eurocentrism). It must also be aware of an uncritical enthusiasm from all that pretends to be “exotic.” Again, from the methodological point of view, a careful analysis of transboundary moments in their respective historical context needs to be declared and labelled as a key element of a constructivist approach. Compared to other historiographical approaches, transcultural history requires a theoretical debate that is accompanied by a well developed methodological aspect. The following chapter combines both the question of transcultural objectivity and its methodological consequences.

4.2 *Transcultural Objectivity*

4.2.1 *The Ambivalence of Objectivity*

Research traditions differ in their approaches in terms of how source material should be properly analysed. The German school of history connects historical methodology with the approach used for the analysis of source material (*historisch-kritische Methode*).²⁷⁰ A transcultural history includes sources of differing media

²⁶⁹ “What’s past is prologue” is an often used Shakespeare quotation. It is engraved, for example, on the building of the National Archives in Washington D.C.

²⁷⁰ Peter Borowsky, Barbara Vogel, and Heide Wunder, *Einführung in die Geschichtswissenschaft I: Grundprobleme, Arbeitsorganisation, Hilfsmittel* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1989), 157–60.

and thus questions the traditional understanding of the sources' value and character. Therefore, we decided to follow the highly detailed German methodology while suggesting an enlarged version, which includes pictures and sounds.

The following part examines the historiographical method of source assessment for approaching sources with a comprehensive and well-structured questionnaire. These so-called W-questions (who, where, what, when, why) address all primary sources. In a transcultural context, the questioning technique gains a dynamic quality and highlights blurred ramifications and networks that the source material might refer to. The following general introduction to source interpretation shows how this work can be done.

4.2.2 The Historical-Critical Method and Source Criticism

The naming of the concept *historisch-kritische Methode* (historical-critical method) goes back to German historiography in the nineteenth century.²⁷¹ This method applies to the interpretation of all primary sources of all epochs and all subject areas of history. As explained above, the definition of what a source is depends on the research design. The term “method” reminds us of the tool’s procedural nature, which provides a path to new findings. The term “critical” connects these findings to metacognition in a theoretical context. The following list enumerates the crucial points provided by source criticism.

1. Following the historical-critical method, the historian questions:
 - a) the basic authenticity of the source (e.g. the wording or the supposed time of origin)
 - b) the relationship of the source to the contemporary circumstances documented (accuracy and immediacy of the evidence; possible inconsistencies)
 - c) the author’s intellectual position (e.g. political or ideological perspective).
2. The historical-critical method differentiates types of sources (Source Groups).

When discussing the sources’ external form, historians normally distinguish between written and non-written sources or more generally describe the material from which the source is created.²⁷²

- a) In regard to the temporal proximity to the matter described the distinction between primary and secondary sources is crucial.

²⁷¹ See above, Theories and Concepts: [chapter 2](#): “Historiography”.

²⁷² The applicability of this typology to “non-material” sources, e.g. aural sources, will be discussed later.

- b) Following Ernst Bernheim's source typology, historians differentiate between tradition (*Tradition*) and relic (*Überrest*).²⁷³ The former includes anything that is intended to survive and be preserved for posterity through tradition; the latter describes artefacts that are not consciously intended for posterity, but have survived by chance as relics. This typology, however, is not always applicable.
- The historian distinguishes between normative and descriptive sources, i.e. material describing ideal or utopian imaginaries, norms and rules (e.g. codification of law), and material pointing to tensions between facticity and ideal.
 - The historian must also be aware of the sources' perspective. *Selbstzeugnisse* (self testimonials), e.g. autobiographies or diaries, raise other questions than *Fremdzeugnisse* (foreign testimonials).
 - Finally, questioning a source's purpose and contemporary accessibility offers a perspective on the intended public.
3. The historical-critical method investigates conservation and preservation, and evaluates contexts of time, space, and agencies (W-questions).

Although conservation and preservation are fields for specialists and experts trained in fields such as museology, they are significant to the historian for several reasons. Conservation and preservation are acts of power, and historians should always ask themselves what the reasons are for having access to source material.²⁷⁴ Specialists in contemporary history do not face the difficult situation where the loss of one manuscript endangers their whole research project. With the birth of the printing press, and later with the advent of film and sound recording tools, reproduction ensured the availability of sources. However, material only intended for temporary (daily) use (e.g. newspapers) are difficult to obtain if it is not stored in national libraries. Yet these libraries, most of which were founded in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, usually only collect what has been printed in the respective country. There is a dramatically different situation regards the material produced “on the move” and this is of particular importance to transcultural history. Exile press publications, for example, were scattered in single numbers all over the world before they became partly available in digitised form. This makes access to a corpus of material extremely

²⁷³ Ernst Bernheim, *Lehrbuch der historischen Methode und der Geschichtsphilosophie*, 6th ed. (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1908), 465–505.

²⁷⁴ The conflict about the Elgin Marbles might serve as an example, see John Henry Merryman, *Thinking about the Elgin Marbles: Critical Essays on Cultural Property, Art and Law* (Austin: Wolters Kluwer, 2009), 164f. Cf. Christopher Hitchens, *The Elgin Marbles: Should they be Returned to Greece?* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1987). ———, *The Parthenon Marbles: The Case for Reunification* (London: Verso, 2008). Ian Jenkins, *Die Parthenon-Skulpturen im Britischen Museum* (Mainz: Zabern, 2008).

difficult.²⁷⁵ All kinds of dynamics—from war to disaster, from migration to transfers of power—can impact on the preservation and accessibility of source material.

Debates on conservation and preservation include the following issues:

- a) Securing material by ensuring accessibility is an important factor in research. It requires basic linguistic skills to read old texts, palaeographic knowledge and knowledge of other scripts. Gaining access to sources can involve technical obstacles, especially in times of changing communication technologies. (Who, for example, still has the equipment that will enable them to listen to a shellac record or open a twenty year-old computer file?) Special technical knowledge can be useful in securing and reconstructing authenticity.
- b) The context of the source's origin (sometimes called "external criticism") can shed light on who produced, made use of, and stored the source material. By questioning the source's origin, the historian implements a relic from the past in a specific historical context, which need not be an integral part of the source material, but can function as the historian's intellectual "add-on," a hypothetical construct that requires a constant and careful examination. The verification of such assumptions follows the abovementioned W-questions.
 - In a chronological and event-oriented historiography, the first step is to investigate when the source material was created. Finding an adequate answer can, however, become highly difficult if non-linear or cyclical notions of time come into play.
 - Other problems can arise when the source's place of origin (where) underwent significant change. Shifting borders, for example, can introduce a new aspect to the presumed places of origin.
 - Besides the individual actors who create sources (a person, state, or community) a transcultural approach takes into account dynamic networks and border crossing relations as source-producing agencies.
- c) The process of linguistic and factual decoding (sometimes called "internal criticism") encompasses the "translation" of the material into a contemporary understanding of the material's message. Historiography is aware of changing concepts.²⁷⁶ However, the complexity required to answer the seemingly simple question of what this material conveys, increases substantially when transcultural aspects and dynamic networks are included.

²⁷⁵ Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, "Exilpresse digital: Deutsche Exilzeitschriften 1933–1945," accessed March 12, 2011, <http://deposit.d-nb.de/online/exil/exil.htm>.

²⁷⁶ For the transcultural impact of this aspect see Reinhart Koselleck, "Die Geschichte der Begriffe und Begriffe der Geschichte," in *Herausforderungen der Begriffsgeschichte*, ed. Carsten Dutt (Heidelberg: Winter, 2003). ———, "Hinweise auf die temporalen Strukturen begriffsgeschichtlichen Wandels," in *Begriffsgeschichte, Diskursgeschichte, Metapherngeschichte*, ed. Hans Erich Bödecker (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2002).

- d) Historiography provides a standard procedure of interpretation. Rarely used to its full extent, it is helpful for first drafts. Again, the procedure follows the above-mentioned W-questions. After clarifying a source's value and credibility, a summary of content (what?) adequately places the material within the research design. Modes of presentation (how?) explain language, sign systems, metaphors, and connections. Since motives and intentions are rarely mentioned explicitly, a paragraph should address this issue (why?). A discussion about the consequences and further uses of the source material enters at the metacognition and perception stage, and always includes the question of whether well-known and often quoted, or unknown, new material is mentioned. The last step in the process of interpretation discloses the value of the source material regarding the research design.

4.3 *An Example: Alfred H. Fried and William T. Stead. Concepts and Practices to Create an International Public Sphere*

*Das internationale Leben der Gegenwart*²⁷⁷ (contemporary international life) is the title of a small booklet published in 1908 by the Austrian pacifist Alfred Hermann Fried (1864–1921).²⁷⁸ Compared to Fried's numerous publications, e.g. the *Handbook of Pacifism* in two volumes or his well-known journal *Die Friedens-Warte*, the booklet seems of rather minor significance.²⁷⁹ However, it presents precious source material for a transcultural history for two reasons: Fried introduced a world shaped by border crossing networks without denying national competition. He thought of his booklet as a travel guide, and called it a "Bädeker für das internationale Land," (A Baedeker for international lands) named after the most common editor of travel books in German speaking countries, Karl Baedeker.

Interpreted from a constructivist perspective, Fried created a world of transparent borders, but combined the label of "internationalism" with the strongest elements of the contemporary master narrative of his time: nationalism and territorial expansion. In his booklet, international organisations and multilateral treaties shaped a mental map, where states were valued as having the power to set international agendas. Of course, this approach was highly manipulative and highlights the political use of transboundary networks. The aim to present a highly entangled

²⁷⁷ Fried, *Das internationale Leben der Gegenwart*.

²⁷⁸ The source material is available online: Asia and Europe in a Global Context, "Sources Transcultural History," accessed June 7, 2011, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/a-governance-administration/a3/sources-transcultural-history.html>.

²⁷⁹ Fried was an extremely prolific author, as a bibliography of his journal articles shows: Alfred Hermann Fried, *Verzeichnis von 1000 Zeitungsartikeln Alfred H. Fried's zur Friedensbewegung (bis März 1908), nach Materien geordnet, mit bibliographischen Nachweisen und zum Teil mit kurzen Inhaltsandeutungen versehen* (Berlin: Friedens-Warte, 1908). For Fried's biography see Petra Schönemann-Behrens, *'Organisiert die Welt': Leben und Werk des Friedensnobelpreisträgers Alfred Hermann Fried (1864–1921)*. (Diss. Universität Bremen, 2004).

Germany to a German speaking public is obvious and informed Fried's choice of presenting the manifestations of internationalism. Since this country had only a few international organisations located in Germany, Fried declared multilateral treaties as the most important element of governmental internationalism—an intelligent use of the idea that international relations were based on governmental networks called the "Concert of Europe." Fried published a list of those treaties regulating communication, traffic, and commerce and named the signatory states. The list differentiated between great powers and small states, between the West and the rest, and produced a Eurocentric view with Germany as a leading state in internationalism. Although Germany had only few seats of international organisations in the nineteenth century and missed one of the most important drives of internationalism, the World's Fair, Fried successfully presented a leading role for Germany. Competitive forms of visualisation shaped international mental maps in the late nineteenth century—the simultaneity of different lists and instruments of internationalism present the opportunity to analyse both the shifting concept of internationalism and their political use.²⁸⁰ Fried addressed a broader national German speaking public which was not limited to internationalists or experts. The booklet was published within the popular scientific series *Aus Natur und Geisteswelt* (from nature and the world of ideas), which presented knowledge ranging from *automobile* to *zoology*. At the turn of the century, Fried was a well-known author and held a strong position in the publication market. Like many of the European internationalists, he published his own journals.²⁸¹ Furthermore, he carefully cultivated platforms of international self-presentation: a busy founder of several pacifist organisations and a committed member of the Esperanto movement,²⁸² he closely cooperated with the abovementioned Bertha von Suttner, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1905. Six years later, the resolute pacifist Fried shared the Nobel Peace Prize with the famous expert of international law, Tobias Asser.

The Nobel prizes served as one of the most efficient forms of self-presentation for an international civil society. Donated regardless of national origin, though a powerful instrument of international lobbying, they crossed European borders before World War I. In 1913, the Nobel Prize in Literature was given to the Bengal author Rabindranath Tagore. With the Nobel Prize therefore, Fried had gained acknowledgment as a member of the most prestigious circle of internationalists.

²⁸⁰ For different, but almost simultaneously published lists see Office Central des Institutions Internationales and Institut International de la Paix, *Annuaire de la vie internationale* (Bruxelles, 1905ff). E. Baldwin Simeon, "The International Congresses and Conferences of the Last Century as Forces Working Toward the Solidarity of the World: Appendix," *The American Journal of International Law* 1, no. 3 (1907).

²⁸¹ Besides the famous *Friedens-Warte*, the spread of international organisations and conferences was made apparent by the *Annuaire de la vie internationale*.

²⁸² Alfred Hermann Fried, *Lehrbuch der Internationalen Hilfssprache "Esperanto": Mit Wörterbuch in Esperanto-Deutsch u. Deutsch-Esperanto*, Franckh's Sprachbücher, Nr. 1 (Stuttgart: Franckh'sches Verlagshaus, 1912).

Blending nationalism, pacifism and internationalism, Fried's biography and his interest in public relations characterise a certain type of internationalism in the pre-World War I situation. Close to Fried—and often quoted by him—comes the British journalist William T. Stead (1849–1912). Stead published the powerful *Review of Reviews*, a journal based in London, which soon obtained almost global coverage with the parallel publication of the *Review of Reviews for Australasia* in Melbourne, and the *American Review of Reviews* in New York. Although Fried missed Stead's financial scope of action, both men justified an internationalist approach with a strong nationalist background. While Fried stressed the idea of understanding internationalism as a modern form of patriotism, Stead believed in a "Greater Britain"²⁸³ and imperialism. Both invested in international platforms and international lobbying; both met during the Hague Peace Conferences in 1899 and 1907. Fried quoted Stead's activities in his *Friedens-Warte* and therefore bridged the gap between the English and German speaking internationalists. Stead's campaigns, such as the one against the Italian-Ottoman war in 1911, created the required attention to ensure constant discussion, which helped create an international public. Both Fried and Stead built and supported their citation cartels by crossing the lines between governmental, diplomatic, and civil spheres, between rulers and subjects. In creating such an international public, Fried compiled a *Who is Who of the Peace Movement*.²⁸⁴ In 1907, Stead took the Hague Peace Conference as an opportunity to publish his version with the illustrated *Le Parlement de l'humanité (La Conférence de la paix à La Haye 1907): Les délégués, biographies et photographies*.²⁸⁵ Delegates now appeared as a group, carefully presented in photographs and embedded in advertisements for those hotels, firms, and travel agencies for which a peace conference turned from a political into an economic event. Stead's photo album is one of the most impressive examples of how contemporary internationalists created a hybrid, but clearly visible community, even against the existing rules and orders of international meetings. The group presented in Stead's blazing red book crossed the fine, but politically important line introduced by the diplomatic protocol. Under the title of a "World's Parliament"—which is improper for a diplomatic conference—almost each delegate, regardless of his position, from fully accredited ambassador to expert without diplomatic rights, gained public recognition. Grouping internationalists clearly differed from the usual governmental behaviour, which presented diplomats as envoys of certain states.²⁸⁶ In 1907, at the same time that a widely covered diplomatic gathering

²⁸³ Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007)

²⁸⁴ "Who is who' of the Peace Movement," in *Handbuch der Friedensbewegung*, ed. Alfred Hermann Fried, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Reichenbach, 1911), 311–422.

²⁸⁵ William Thomas Stead, *Le Parlement de l'humanité (La Conférence de la paix à La Haye 1907): Les délégués, biographies et photographies* (Amsterdam: Maas et Van Suchtelen, 1907).

²⁸⁶ The names of accredited diplomats were normally published in the governmental periodicals known as *Staatskalender* (state calendars).

happened in The Hague, the way of presenting such an event got out of exclusive governmental control. People like Fried and Stead gave a different interpretation of transboundary gatherings and showed diplomats and experts to be part of an international civil society. From this new perspective, encounters between civil and governmental forms of internationalism became an almost uncontrollable form of transcultural entanglement.²⁸⁷ Therefore, transculturality can be observed in the border crossing between diplomatic and civil public spheres, which had been strictly separated until then. In addition, the building of an international civil society is hardly imaginable without the support of non-Western countries. At first sight a strange thesis, Fried's and Stead's contribution shows the asymmetry between European diplomats, who were difficult to access in their well-protected residencies, and the much more accessible envoys from non-Western countries. Representatives of states without established embassies in the Netherlands, and all the many experts that were far away from the centre of diplomatic power, had their rooms in the famous Hôtel des Indes, which Stead portrayed as an international meeting point. In his view, this hotel functioned as a non-official parliament building and was a hub for diplomats, researchers, and internationalists of all kinds.²⁸⁸ In Stead's description, which he wrote in French—the nineteenth century global diplomatic language—the profession of diplomats had changed substantially including biographical details and the way, in which representatives had begun to disregard dress codes. Stead published photographs of diplomats in formal dress, Japanese delegates in Western suits, Chinese representatives with a mix of Western and Asian clothing, and experts in their everyday clothes. Moreover, the pictures were part of their curriculum vitae. Stead, therefore, bestowed upon the former inaccessible diplomats a personality and sketched a transboundary global society, where the universities of Oxford and Heidelberg became more important than questions such as which nationals were in The Hague or to which country an internationalist belonged. In this social variety, where the softening of social differentiation in the West overlapped cultural entanglements, the lingering introduction of a non-official, non-governmental international public sphere became more successful than ever before. Both Fried and Stead made masterly use of this situation referencing each other.²⁸⁹ They stressed the unavoidable consequence of networking: networks are structurally endless and transboundary internationalism gains importance when not limited to the West.

²⁸⁷ Almost a hundred years later, environmental issues made comparable headway in the agenda of international politics. During the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, NGOs organised parallel sessions and visualised the power of an international and non-governmental civil society. Since then NGOs continue to challenge the UN system.

²⁸⁸ See the advertisement of the Hôtel des Indes in: Stead, *Le Parlement de l'humanité (La Conférence de la paix à La Haye 1907): Les délégués, biographies et photographies*, 228–30. The text particularly mentioned the global atmosphere, including the proprietors' willingness to hire a Turkish coffeemaker for the appropriate serving of coffee.

²⁸⁹ In Stead's red book, the "cercle international," which described the meetings of non-official pacifists during the Hague Peace Conference, had its own section. Of course, the presences of Fried, Stead, von Suttner, and other internationalists was specifically mentioned. *Ibid.*, 218.

Therefore, although the approach of pointing to the Japanese interest in Western organisations seems obvious, Western interest in Asian participation should also be mentioned. Fried noted the existence of Japanese correspondents. In the “long nineteenth century,” internationalist approaches usually preferred as many border crossings as possible—including the acceptance of non-Western participation and even crossing the gender line by allowing female participation in international gatherings. However, this approach did not exclude imperialist mental maps, racism, or asymmetrical power relations. The methodological assumption that texts and pictures construct a reality by setting priorities is especially important for transcultural approaches. Border crossing always describes an ambivalent and highly contested issue, and is always trapped between innovation and revolution. Fried and Stead’s envisioned global networks therefore need the inclusion of contemporary backlashes, and careful consideration of ambivalences, asymmetries, and missing parts, including interpretation. Denying that diplomats were an exclusive elite by introducing an international civil society, gained a visibility that was unconnected to international gatherings. While Fried and Stead used the label “pacifism” and “humanitarian parliament” for the invention of an international public sphere, diplomatic traditions strengthened their normative approach. In 1917, when the Russian Revolution broke with diplomatic rules and, as previously mentioned, Trotsky decided to publish the Tsar’s secret treaties, Sir Ernest Mason Satow published *A Guide to Diplomatic Practice*.²⁹⁰ The book fixed diplomatic rules by offering a history of differentiation and exclusion. Addressed to diplomats and a general public, this book avoided the terms internationalism, pacifism, and public. It developed a set of rules that prevented the entanglement of civil border crossing and diplomatic decision making. To make this field even more complex, Satow was a Japanophile, a multitalented and multilingual scientist, and in Stead’s list of humanitarian parliamentarians.²⁹¹ However, although the multitalented diplomat had a controversial career, he would never have regarded himself as an internationalist or member of an international civil society.²⁹²

In summary, the works of Fried and Stead show the need for a careful analysis of the way information crossed borders, and of those who tried to establish public spheres concerned with transboundary topics. In addition to competing agendas—the confrontation of an international public sphere and the secrecy of diplomacy—historical conditions changed. Stead died as a passenger on the Titanic in 1912.

²⁹⁰ Ernest Satow, *A Guide to Diplomatic Practice* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1917). The first edition of this book began a long and ongoing career—the last edition was published in 2009. Satow’s publications and diaries were published recently: Tooru Haga, ed. *Collected Works of Ernest Mason Satow*, Part I: 12 vols., Part II: 5 vols. (Bristol: Ganesha Publishing, 1998–2001).

²⁹¹ Stead, *Le Parlement de l’humanité (La Conférence de la paix à La Haye 1907): Les délégués, biographies et photographies*, 91f.

²⁹² Nigel Brailey, “Sir Ernest Satow, Japan and Asia: The Trials of a Diplomat in the Age of High Imperialism,” *Historical Journal* 35, no. 1 (1992).



Fig. 1 Anonymous, “Läute für den Frieden” (Ring the bell for peace), ca. 1907, Vienna. This lithographed postcard by the “Verlag der österreichischen Gesellschaft der Friedensfreunde” promotes the peace conference in The Hague 1907 and shows Tsar Nicholas II of Russia. Courtesy of Getty Images (Imagno/Austrian Archives)

Fried argued bitterly against the Versailles Treaty.²⁹³ For several internationalists, the Paris Peace Conference and the establishment of the League of Nations approximated their plans for an international civil society. However, World War I returned agency to governments and diplomats. In the logic of internationalism, non-Western participation was always presented as a valuable argument for transboundary activities. But again, critical research must investigate the function of this argument. In most cases, non-Western participation opened an opportunity

²⁹³ Alfred Hermann Fried, *Der Weltprotest gegen den Versailler Frieden* (Leipzig: Reinhold, 1920).

to Asian internationalists, which was not intended by the Western inventors of such international institutions.

4.4 *Visual Culture and Pictures as Source Material*

4.4.1 *Images and Visibility*

By utilising different media, the concept of transculturality overcomes the limitations of traditional written sources. The works of historians therefore need to undergo a methodological change, moving from analysing solely written material to incorporating multimediality and its implications to a discussion of the interrelations between form and content. Consequently, historians need to work more with pictorial sources. Yet these methodological implications are not limited to the addition of visual material; they also include oral sources (which can be transformed into written material).

Equating written sources with images does not necessitate a new methodological framework. Of course, more technical knowledge about artisanry and technology is needed. Indeed, an additional window to the past opens when a historian includes, for example, the paintings made for the main seat of the League of Nations in Geneva, or introduces a debate on the strange fact that weak parliamentarism contrasts with the pompous design of parliamentary buildings. However, a sea change happens when transcultural research focuses on visibility. The question is how far the assumption goes that visual material overcomes the limits of linguistic competences. From the methodological point of view, using a (written) catalogue of pictures approximates traditional historiography, while the idea of a transvisual approach is still in its infancy.²⁹⁴ But how do we know what the viewers see and what different perceptions might occur?²⁹⁵ What can we say about visual perception and whether visual entanglements developed in a way that is comparable to shifting concepts? How does which academic discipline choose samples, as visual culture forces open the category of “art” as an ordering principle? Being aware of the strong normative aspect of science, the question is what stays outside the reach of analytical tools that favour visibility. This is all the more important, because focusing on material culture seems the best way of finding evidence for transculturality.²⁹⁶ Granted, moving objects and their reinterpretation, adaptation,

²⁹⁴ For a transvisual approach see Asia and Europe in a Global Context, “Global Art History,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/cluster-professorships/global-art-history.html>.

²⁹⁵ One approach is to document the physical movement of the viewer’s eye. See: Juliane Betz et al., “Dem Auge auf der Spur: Eine historische und empirische Studie zur Blickbewegung beim Betrachten von Gemälden,” in: *IMAGE: Zeitschrift für interdisziplinäre Bildwissenschaft* 11 (2010) accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.bildwissenschaft.org/image/aktuelles?function=fnArticle&showArticle=159>.

²⁹⁶ Arthur Asa Berger, *What Objects Mean: An Introduction to Material Culture* (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2009).

and misappropriation can be seen in numerous cases from the repeatedly stolen quadriga on the top of Basilica San Marco in Venice, to Western museums, to the introduction of Pashmina shawls as a sign of luxury by the French court in the nineteenth century. By focusing on material culture, “transculturalisation” itself gains visibility, revealing that processes of adaptation, reinterpretation, and misappropriation occurred in complex contexts. They include looting, market values, and newly invented applications of these items, which can go so far as to turn objects that were supposed to remain out of view (e.g. graves or buried objects) into exhibition objects. In addition, making visibility a key analytical element might be useful for a debate on emancipation, for example, the growing, social visibility of women. However, there is a perhaps less obvious consequence. What is visible is easier to control and one can overlook disappearance and destruction. Debates on the destruction of the Parthenon temple in Athens may serve as an example: the Greek request for the restitution of the Parthenon marbles from the British Museum came in a political twilight when the focus moved from the shifting objects to those destroyed by the orthodox clergy during the Parthenon’s use as a church.

In summary, with regard to transculturality the so-called iconic or pictorial turn is not concerned whether or not history needs visual material. Instead it inquires how textual and visual narrativity interact, and how the respective discipline—be it history, art history, or media anthropology—discusses its divergences and ordering principles.

Taking the latter first, the problem of methodological Europeanisation appears, again, as a key element. As the global art historian Monica Juneja explains, art history shares the problem of methodological Europeanisation and the belief that art history can discover which kind of art has a somehow timeless and universal significance.²⁹⁷ Doing so, the art historians’ discourse follows a Western analytical system when presenting Asian art. For historians, the new and thrilling aspect relies on the understanding of pictures as information carriers with the difference that historians are not interested in their aesthetic value but more in the role of visuality in the creation of social coherence or differentiation. The specification of visual material as “art” is therefore less important than the analytical framing of visuality, generally done in the context of “visual culture.” This newly framed approach brings together different disciplines, among them art history and anthropology, but also media, cultural studies, and, of course, history. The aim is to analyse popular cultural objects and expressions of intangible heritage, such as rituals and festivities. Again, the problem is not missing the information of what people liked to see in the past, or how they managed daily life. Historians have already told us about such details as cat massacres in prerevolutionary France, or a sixteenth century

²⁹⁷ Juneja, “Das Visuelle in Sprache übersetzen? Der wissenschaftliche Diskurs und die Polyvalenz indischer Bilder.”

miller whose life was dominated by worms and cheese.²⁹⁸ However, until now, all these historical life experiences came from a historiography based chiefly on textual evidence. But there is an additional very important opportunity not only to include visuality and material culture as an equal form of source material, but also to question source material that is not related to language about its transcultural potential. For example, Europeans rarely understand any of the Indian languages, but Bollywood films found a visuality that inspired a Western public. In short, transcultural history has a strong interest in material and visual culture with the twofold objective a) to specify the potential of non-textual source material and b) to apply the findings in other than transcultural contexts, such as the debate on the visual potential of popular culture and elites.

4.4.2 The “Century of the Eye”

The analysis of non-textual sources is a rather technical issue, but the question is whether visual elements are suitable for periodisation. For an introduction on how to historicise visibility we suggest investigating discourses on visibility after World War I, a period described in contemporary publications as the “century of the eye.”²⁹⁹

In his 1935–36 essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*,³⁰⁰ the philosopher and cultural critic Walter Benjamin reflected on the sociocultural effects of this process. To art criticism with a historical dimension he assigned the important transfer task of making the aura of pictures, as well as art in general, comprehensible and communicable on a linguistic level. In view of new and efficient forms of reproduction and manufacture in the 1920s and 1930s, the question of how oral and visual representations interact, engaged art historians, artists, and philosophers. Apart from Walter Benjamin, the Belgian painter René Magritte worked with the contradiction of signs. In 1929 he created an oil painting of a pipe under which was written the sentence “Ceci n’est pas une pipe.”³⁰¹ Magritte, who significantly named the work *La trahison des images* (The Betrayal of Images), plays with the sign function of pictures. Viewers do not really see a pipe, which they can light and smoke, but merely the picture of a pipe. Thus the

²⁹⁸ Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984). Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

²⁹⁹ Otto Neurath combined his proclamation of the “century of the eye” with the conceptual approach of a new “International Picture Language.” See Otto Neurath, “Universal Jargon and Terminology,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 41 (1941): 127–148.

³⁰⁰ Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (London: Penguin, 2008).

³⁰¹ Los Angeles County Museum of Art, “René Magritte: La Trahison des Images (Ceci n’est pas une pipe),” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://collectionsonline.lacma.org/mwebcgi/mweb.exe?request=record;id=34438;type=101>.

pipe image is a *denotat* of a real pipe. When looking at this painting, the beholder will make various associations, which can of course be very subjective; some would, for example, connote the pipe with cosiness. Magritte's pipe on a simple, beige background may thus move the viewer to imagine a nice and warm sitting room in which a few bearded, elderly men sit together after a good meal, enjoying the comforting smell of pipe smoke whilst telling stories. It would be completely different, however, if one were to see that same pipe on a large poster outside a railway station with a line underneath it exclaiming "fumer met en danger votre santé" (smoking threatens your health), along with the logo of the World Health Organisation. This example also illustrates that in a semiotic analysis we have to see a picture's semantics in close relation to its syntactic and pragmatic aspects. The syntax deals with the style, form and structure of a picture, while pragmatics concerns itself with the picture's social functions. The scientific significance of the semiotic approach lies in the fact that people realised what sort of important historical information they could gain from pictures that formerly would have been discarded as uninteresting mass products or kitsch.

Around the same time that Magritte created his masterpiece, there were at least two additional developments that influenced the social meaning of visual culture on a global scale. On the one hand, propaganda became a noticeably more powerful and present force. It was used for commercial objectives in the form of advertisement, but also as a new and dangerous political force that was perfected as public diplomacy by almost every government. The growing importance of visual, non-textual elements became even more apparent in the second development—the spread of comics and the creation of pictograms. These were based on new or popularised technologies, such as photography and film, and arose in the form of traffic signs and operating manuals, both intended to be used regardless of their location.³⁰²

They show that pictorial and written sources have a completely different potential. However, in one manner they are the same; we should never deal with them superficially but should assess and interpret them systematically and critically. Just as with textual sources, when dealing with pictures it is important to be aware of the fact that every picture has its own time-bound and culture-bound language, which has to be learned in order for it to be understood. This involves a conscious distancing from today's intuitive understanding of images that we take for granted.

³⁰² For an example, see Nancy Snow, *Propaganda, Inc.: Selling America's Culture to the World*, 3rd ed. (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2010).

4.5 Example: Hendrik C. Andersen “The Creation of a World Centre of Communication”

Hendrik Christian Andersen, an architect and artist, sent plans of a global capital to several governments shortly before World War I.³⁰³ His idea combined nineteenth century internationalism with urban planning and European traditions of utopian thinking.³⁰⁴ In Andersen’s case, this blending of elements that are usually regarded as incompatible, challenges historical methodology. He presented his plans of a global city from a bird’s eye view, formally crossing the line between art and urban planning.³⁰⁵ Although using a modern form of presentation, Andersen preferred the traditional language of nineteenth century monumentalism and symbolism and was, in this regard, far removed from the modernist architecture of his time and architects such as Le Corbusier.³⁰⁶ Andersen was a member of the fluid society of internationalists, but at the same time sought a close relationship with executive power. He addressed his opulent and expensively printed plans to governments; their format prevented them from being distributed through international book market channels. Although not successful before World War I, the plans for a global centre eventually gained attractiveness and new political contexts. Though differing in their approaches, Andersen and Le Corbusier shared both the belief that regimes were now interested in their urban utopias and the conviction that a global

³⁰³ The following sources are partly available online. For a collection of links see: Asia and Europe in a Global Context, “Sources Transcultural History,” accessed June 7, 2011, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/a-governance-administration/a3/sources-transcultural-history.html>.

³⁰⁴ The scientific and public interest in Hendrik Christian Andersen is growing at present. In a mixture of *Jeunesse dorée* and internationalism Andersen met many cosmopolitans and internationalists. He grew up in the United States, lived several years in Paris, after which he settled down in Rome. His list of correspondents (preserved in the Library of Congress, “Hendrik Christian Andersen Papers,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://lccn.loc.gov/mm79010892>.) includes almost every internationalist of some importance between the late nineteenth century and 1940 in Europe, America, and Asia. Henry James, for example, corresponded frequently with Andersen, see: Rosella Mamoli Zorzi, ed. *Beloved Boy: Letters to Hendrik Christian Andersen, 1899–1915* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004). Andersen willed his house in Rome, including its contents, to the Italian state. In 1999 a museum displaying the works of Andersen opened: Museo Hendrik Christian Andersen, “Home,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.museoandersen.beniculturali.it/>.

³⁰⁵ Wolfgang Sonne, “‘The Entire City Shall Be Planned as a Work of Art’: Städtebau als Kunst im frühen modernen Urbanismus 1890–1920,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 66, no. 2 (2003).

³⁰⁶ Le Corbusier also planned world centres. He worked with Paul Otlet and presented plans for an international city within Geneva. Later he worked on plans for the French Vichy regime. See Paul Otlet, Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret, *Mundaneum: le centre mondial, scientifique, documentaire et éducatif, au service des associations internationales, qu’il est proposé d’établir à Genève pour compléter les institutions de la plus grande Société des Nations et commémorer en 1930 dix années d’efforts vers la paix et la collaboration* (Bruxelles: Union des associations internationales 1928).

style had developed that would be applicable everywhere in the world. While Andersen corresponded with Mussolini, Le Corbusier made plans for the city of Algiers for the Vichy regime in France. Indeed, contemporary architects saw a dynamic development in the self-presentation of totalitarian states. After all, the proclaimed *new man* needed adequate housing and new cities. Here, a transcultural approach carefully investigates what the political use of a border crossing spread of blended styles can be. Modernity and nineteenth century historicism merged after World War I. Originating in what is often called “the long nineteenth century,” Andersen’s plans influenced the shape of the EUR quarter in Rome in the twentieth century.³⁰⁷ The question is whether the idea of global centralisation, an idea precious to most internationalists,³⁰⁸ helped prepare the groundwork for totalitarian claims of power.³⁰⁹ When Hendrik C. Andersen’s extensive work *The Creation of a World Centre of Communication* was published in 1913, the idea of an ideally designed capital was hardly new. In European modern history, city planning during the Renaissance had influenced the shape of the ideal urban space. In the nineteenth century, demographic pressure, industry, hygiene, communication and transport technologies, such as railways, and the controlling of revolutionary citizens turned the medieval appearance of cities into the urban spaces we still see today.³¹⁰ At the beginning of the twentieth century, countries all around the globe tried to express ideas about society in an architectonic form through large-scale city planning activities. The diversity ranged from the representation of national sovereignty and superiority (Washington, 1902; Berlin, 1910; Canberra, 1912) to that of colonial dominance (New Delhi, 1913). Andersen’s plans can be placed in these traditions, but his aim was different: he wanted to create an ideal world city through the synthesis of various global urban elements. Members of all peoples were intended to live together peacefully, conducting research, and working towards world peace. For transcultural history, the forms of global and cosmopolitan utopias play an important role; they are no longer at the periphery but at the centre of interest. Pictorial sources are of particular importance because they can shed light on global standardisations and differences.

³⁰⁷ EUR (Esposizione Universale di Roma) is the name of quarters in Rome, designated for a World Fair planned in 1942. Although the World Fair did not take place, the buildings planned and partly erected provide a good example of how Italian fascism blended modern architecture and totalitarian megalomania. For the political implications of this process see Emilio Gentile, *Fascismo di pietra* (Roma: Laterza, 2007).

³⁰⁸ See, for example, William Thomas Stead, *The United States of Europe on the Eve of the Parliament of Peace* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1899). In this book, which was published as a public preparation of the first Hague Peace conference, Stead visited each capital of Europe that seemed able to act as the future centre of Europe.

³⁰⁹ For this approach see Armand Mattelart, *Histoire de l’utopie planétaire: de la cité prophétique à la société globale* (Paris: Éd. la Découverte, 1999).

³¹⁰ For this process see, for example, the reshaping of Paris in the epoch of Georges-Eugène Haussmann: Michel Carmona, *Haussmann: His Life and Times, and the Making of Modern Paris* (Chicago: I. R. Dee, 2002).

An overall view of Andersen's project, which was never built, shows various important aspects of international life in the early twentieth century, as well as contemporary cosmopolitan utopias. The city was supposed to comprise of three main areas, which were sports, research, and arts. The designated areas for sports reflect the increasing importance of the Olympic Games and the impact of the foundation of the International Olympic Committee in 1894. Starting with the first games in Athens in 1896, the modern Olympic sports movement represents a popular example of how closely internationalism and national competition coexisted. As a further development, the sports movement contributed to ideas about shaping the bodies of modern men and women. In Rome, the EUR complex had some close connections to this idea.³¹¹ In Andersen's plans, a *Natatorium* for aquatic sports is attached to the *Centre Olympique*, a great stadium for horse and cycle races and gymnastic exercises, which is flanked and surrounded by individual smaller stadiums for men and women respectively. More modern forms of sport were also taken into consideration. There are courts for ball sports, such as baseball or tennis, as well as skating lanes. Even a kindergarten is in the plan. The transition between sports and art is symbolised through a *Grand Canal*, presumably an allusion to Venice. The central *Temple des Arts* is surrounded by various artistic training and performance centres, such as an open-air theatre, an open-air school, conservatoires and art schools. The constitutive element of the whole design are the *Palais des Nations*, situated on the main west-east axis and links the sports and culture areas with the administrative quarter. Here we can see clear references to the idea of World's Fairs, as the main *palais* is surrounded by a number of smaller nation *palais*. However, they all look architecturally similar. On the same axis, there was also the giant *Tour du Progrès* at the centre of the administrative quarter. This tower, the monumental heart of Andersen's plan of a World Centre of Communication, was intended to fulfil several important functions. First of all, an underground level was supposed to provide access to the congress buildings and to be the central station of the city's very own metro system. The tower's function as a centre for the world press was supposed to become evident on the higher levels: starting on the ground level with modern printing machines up to levels with editorial offices and assembly rooms and, further towards the top, levels with offices and viewpoints. Altogether the *Tour du Progrès* was to comprise 60 levels and be, of course, taller than the Eiffel Tower. The height of the tower was supposed to underline the symbolic power Andersen intended: "Truth, Love and Justice should spread from the Tower we build, expanding their radiant light through all humanity, and a powerful voice should ring out with faith and assurance, freely distributing knowledge to gratify the great human desire for advancement."³¹²

³¹¹ Displayed on the EUR compound, with only few changes, the *Genius of Fascism* turned into a sportsman symbolising the Olympic idea after World War II.

³¹² Hendrik Christian Andersen and Ernest M. Hébrard, *Création d'un centre mondial de communication* (Paris: P. Renouard, 1913), 70.

The tower is a good example of the contemporary search for new global symbols. The building unites modern communication technology with lighthouses and columns of victory, as well as with symbols of enlightenment. In addition, Andersen tried to copy the Eiffel tower, a well known tourist attraction. His plans pay particular attention to the administrative part of the global city. In the administrative quarter of the World Centre of Communication we can clearly discern contemporary ideas about stately organisation and the hopes for new technologies and research. The *Tour du Progrès* is surrounded by four pavilions, which are dedicated to different sciences that are important for the states: *Agriculture et Industrie*, *Médecine et Chirurgie*, *Sciences Théoriques*, and finally *Sciences Sociologiques*. Furthermore, the plan allows for several clubs and reception halls: the *Palais des Religions* and its counterpart, the *Cour internationale de justice*, and the *Banque internationale*, as well as a library. The city centre in Andersen's plan is encircled by a ring with residential houses and parks. The outmost ring is designed for infrastructures for the latest transport technologies (airport and port), trade, commerce and industry, and a large fairground. Train and tram lines are the heart of inner-city transport. Communication within the city, as well as with the rest of the world, was supposed to be secured through telegraphic lines.

It was not only in the design of the city that Andersen tried to develop an ideal international construct but also in the promotion of his idea, for which he used the typical distribution channels of internationalism in the early twentieth century. He was in close contact with the Union of International Associations, whose leaders Paul Otlet and Henri La Fontaine were enthusiastic about his plans. Andersen preferred a form of international propaganda, which legally shielded his plans. Around his copyright protected designs he founded an international organisation named World Conscience. An International Society for the Creation of a World-Centre.³¹³ Besides the networking on an institutional level, Andersen also sought contact with official politics and diplomacy. He tried to send copies of his publication about the *World Centre of Communication* not only to the organisations known to him, but also to the governments of all countries. When the League of Nations was founded, Andersen hoped that his project could serve as its headquarters. He therefore published a volume called *World Conscience*, which was explicitly targeted at this aim and comprised statements about his plans from all over the world. When this option turned out not to have the success he had hoped for, Andersen offered his drafts to Benito Mussolini for the planned World's Fair in 1942. At the Italian coast near Ostia a new city was planned. However, this fell through too when with the so-called project E42 another draft was accepted instead, the design of which ironically bears a great resemblance to Andersen's.

³¹³ See *World-Conscience: An International Society for the Creation of a World-Centre to House International Interests and Unite Peoples and Nations for the Attainment of Peace and Progress upon Broader Humanitarian Lines*, (Rome: Communications Office Hendrik C. Andersen, 1913). The office and address bring us back to Andersen. Therefore, there is some reasonable doubt about whether the organisation was more than an institution driven by Andersen.



Fig. 2 Hendrik C. Andersen (1872–1940) and Ernest M. Hébrard (1875–1933), *An International World Centre*, lithograph, Rome, 1913

How close Andersen was to the major innovations of his time becomes evident not only in the planning of an airport but even more so in the important role his concept ascribed to the Olympic thought. In 1913, when Andersen’s plans were first published, the International Olympic Committee had not yet held more than five Olympic Games. By comparison, international industrial fairs, for example in the form of World’s Fairs, had already become a well-established part of international life. Andersen’s ideas about the relation of city and natural environment also indicate his modernisation-orientated ambitions. For instance, the city was supposed to be surrounded by a wide green belt containing four hospitals, several parks, a garden city, and a tidal power plant.

Hendrik C. Andersen was not solely responsible for the project. For the publication of his volume he found supporters in the Italian law philosopher “Umano,” which was the pen name of the international lawyer Gaetano Meale, the economist Jeremiah W. Jenks, and the historian Gabriel Leroux, who wrote a contribution about “The Great Monumental Conceptions of the Past.”³¹⁴ Most important in the context of the graphic presentation of Andersen’s plan was the collaboration with the French architect Ernest Hébrard. The analysis of his work opens up perspectives on important actors in the context of transcultural visibility and the transfer of material culture through certain professions, in this case architects. While Andersen devoted himself to the World Centre project after World War I, Hébrard’s went to Thessaloniki in 1917, where he became chairman of the International Committee for the New Plan of Thessaloniki and worked on the rebuilding of the city, which had been destroyed in

³¹⁴ Wolfgang Sonne, “From Outer Space—Architekturtheorie außerhalb der Disziplin, Teil 2: Die Geburt der Städtebaugeschichte aus dem Geist der Multidisziplinarität,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.tu-cottbus.de/theoriederarchitektur/Wolke/deu/Themen/052/Sonne/sonne.htm>.

a blaze. The aim was not to reconstruct the old cityscape but to create a modern one. In doing so, Hébrard mainly drew on Thessaloniki's byzantine traditions. From 1923 onwards he had worked as a city planner for the French government in Indochina, mainly Hanoi, where he had tried to combine elements of local traditions and French influences. Amongst his most important works in Hanoi are the Indochina University (now called Hanoi University), the Bureau des Finances (now the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and the Musée de École française d'Extrême-Orient (now the History Museum).³¹⁵

4.6 Recorded Sounds as Primary Sources

The inclusion of non-textual source material is an important methodological element of transcultural history. Pictures, films, and other forms of visual media allow for the transcendence of borders created by nationality and language.

After World War I film became an instrument of governmental propaganda, and was part of totalitarian states' arsenal of manipulative tools.³¹⁶ Moreover, films have formed an important aspect of economic history³¹⁷ and the history of technologies;³¹⁸ they have expressed national and cultural identities,³¹⁹ transformed

³¹⁵ Digital Imaging Project of Mary Ann Sullyvan—Bluffton University, "Images of History Museum, Hanoi, Vietnam," accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.bluffton.edu/~sullivanm/vietnam/hanoi/historymuseum/historymuseum.html>. See William Stewart Logan, *Hanoi: Biography of a City* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000).

³¹⁶ Jennifer Fay, *Theaters of Occupation: Hollywood and the Reeducation of Postwar Germany* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008). Jo Fox, *Film Propaganda in Britain and Nazi Germany: World War II Cinema* (Oxford: Berg, 2007). Hilmar Hoffmann, *The Triumph of Propaganda: Film and National Socialism, 1933–1945* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1996). Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Film Propaganda: Myth or Reality?* (London: Cassell, 1999).

³¹⁷ Eric Dubet, *Economie du cinéma européen: de l'interventionnisme à l'action entrepreneuriale* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000). Ben Goldsmith and Tom O'Regan, *The Film Studio: Film Production in the Global Economy* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005). Andrew Higson and Richard Maltby, "Film Europe" and "Film America": *Cinema, Commerce and Cultural Exchange, 1920–1939* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1999).

³¹⁸ John Fullerton and Astrid Söderbergh Widding, eds., *Moving Images: From Edison to the Webcam* (London: John Libbey & Co., 2000). Frances Guerin, *A Culture of Light: Cinema and Technology in 1920s Germany* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005). Charles O'Brien, *Cinema's Conversion to Sound: Technology and Film Style in France and the United States* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

³¹⁹ Darrell William Davis, *Picturing Japaneseness: Monumental Style, National Identity, Japanese Film* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). Heide Fehrenbach, *Cinema in Democratizing Germany: Reconstructing National Identity after Hitler* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995). Malte Hagener, *Moving forward, Looking back: the European Avant-garde and the Invention of Film Culture, 1919–1939* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007). Marsha Kinder, *Blood Cinema: The Reconstruction of National Identity in Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

entertainment,³²⁰ and generated new professions ranging from film-editors to cameramen.³²¹

In the post cold war debate, modern global art history and media anthropology provide new tools for the analysis of images and films. Today, the history of films is an established subdiscipline of modern history,

Since all these aspects are discussed in valuable research literature, we decided to introduce an aspect which, in terms of historical literature, has been rather underestimated: the history of sounds.

How historically important is music, the chugging of the railway, the bourgeois amateur playing the piano, or the daily noises in the streets of Paris and Rome? To the nineteenth century bourgeoisie playing and listening to music demonstrated a good education and the affiliation to an educated class. At almost the same time, modern nationalism became distinctly audible through the use of unifying anthems. Therefore sounds matter, but their interpretation requires adapted methodological tools.

The acknowledgement of the historical potential of sound is a relatively new development with only minimal research literature available on the subject.³²² Though conventional tools of source analysis (the abovementioned W-questions) also apply to sounds, additional tools are needed to specify the nature and context of sound recordings. A draft of guidelines follows, though it is not exhaustive.

What is the difference between sounds and other sources? First of all, sound sources are available because they have been recorded, transmitted, and stored. Early recordings in the nineteenth century were made on cylinders and discs produced from a range of new and sensitive materials which, though they allowed the early recordings to be made, suffered in quality during subsequent playbacks. Therefore, only a few recordings from that time survived. As recording became more popular, technology developed and improved, thus making commercial recording significantly better. Regarding radio, though it underwent a veritable boom from the beginning of the 1920s, few of its acoustic sources survive. Due to

³²⁰ Joseph Garnarcz, "Jahrmarkt kino: eine europäische Institution," in *Kultur des Vergnügens: Kirmes und Freizeitparks, Schausteller und Fahrgeschäfte - Facetten nicht-alltäglicher Orte*, ed. Sacha Szabo (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2009). Martin Loiperdinger, *Travelling Cinema in Europe: Sources and Perspectives* (Frankfurt am Main and Basel: Stroemfeld, 2008).

³²¹ Thomas Elsaesser and Adam Barker, *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative* (London: British Film Institute Publishing, 1990). Irene Stratenwerth, *Pioniere in Celluloid: Juden in der frühen Filmwelt*, Begleitband zur gleichnamigen Ausstellung im Centrum Judaicum Berlin vom 2. Februar 2004 bis Mai 2004 (Berlin: Henschel, 2004).

³²² See Mark Michael Smith, *Hearing History: A Reader* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2004). Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003). Veit Erlmann, *Hearing Cultures: Essays on Sound, Listening, and Modernity* (New York: Berg, 2004). Don Ihde, *Listening and Voice: Phenomenologies of Sound* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2007). Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century* (London: Fourth Estate, 2008). Kay Kaufman Shelemay, *Soundscapes: Exploring Music in a Changing World* (New York: Norton, 2006). Smith, *Hearing History: A Reader*.

the expense of recording the almost exclusively live shows were rarely preserved. Frequently, only the radio and broadcasting magazines have survived to give the most significant clues about the content of the programmes. Nevertheless, there are sporadic recordings of speeches, special events, and radio plays to be found in the archives of broadcasting corporations and radio stations.³²³

The interpretation of sounds has a technical component, which is closely related to the context of the source's origin and the manner of its recording. At a basic level, we can distinguish between lingual and musical sound sources.

4.6.1 Lingual Sound Sources

As explained above, there are four categories of source material available:

1. (Original) recordings of an event

These recordings document an event, which did not take place for the purpose of it being recorded. In fact, the sound sources complement other sources (text, picture, film) as, for example, live recordings of speeches or other public events. Before World War II, recordings were the exception, and of course, the source material that is still available cannot display a full and accurate picture of reality — even though the listener hears the same event that the historical audience did. In addition, the event's audience differs from the recording's audience, which is always anonymous. A live recording is therefore a different model of communication than a speech in front of a known or identifiable audience.

In terms of a critical interpretation, the following questions help us to understand the historical potential of sound recordings: we have to learn about the aim of the recording. In addition, we need to know which part of the respective event was recorded and which was omitted.

Relevant questions are: Are there any other recordings of the same event for comparison? Who were the addressees and what was the possible identity of the anonymous audience? How does the recording reflect the advantages and disadvantages of a sound recording? How was the lack of a visual dimension compensated for, if at all, during the recording?

2. Sources originating from intentionally recorded events

Characteristic sources in this category are interviews or studio discussions. Usually no other sources of the same event are available. The people involved are prepared for the situation and present themselves in this medium.

Relevant questions are: Is the recording part of a longer programme? Are there any particular nuances during the course of the conversation?

³²³ For a history of sound recording see: Nicholas Cook, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Amanda Bayley, ed. *Recorded Music Performance, Culture and Technology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

3. Hybrid forms of originally and intentionally recorded events

The majority of acoustic sources are hybrid forms of the two categories mentioned above. News programmes, reports, features, podcasts, and similar formats consist of material recorded in a studio and sound bites that are often produced outside a studio.

With the development of recording solutions after World War II, the importance of aural sources increased. In contrast to written and pictorial sources, recordings produce the illusion of participating in live events and can therefore, like films, be sometimes misunderstood as being close to reality. Orson Welles' 1938 radio drama *The War of the Worlds* uses this imagination and ignited panic. Welles adapted the fictive novel by H.G. Wells for the radio in a typical broadcasting style combining the voice of a presenter with simulated news breaks, live reports, and music. Because Welles managed to simulate the news media so effectively, listeners really believed that extraterrestrials were invading Earth.

Relevant questions are: Which unique forms of information are delivered by sound recordings? What is the meaning of sound bites or outdoor broadcast? Do they serve to create an alleged authenticity, therefore adding to the credibility of the full recording? Do they blur fiction and reality?

4. Staged sources

This category includes audio plays, audio books, and other works recorded explicitly for an artistic purpose (e.g. radio operas). The recording relies on a manuscript that can be taken and reproduced in new and different ways. The staging of these productions emphasises artistic and aesthetic aspects.

Relevant questions are: Is the same content presented in other forms elsewhere? What are the differences in the staging? How can this audio production be classified in the context of contemporary art? How are, for example, naturalistic sounds or different recording techniques used to create a realistic background?

4.6.2 Musical Sources

Recordings of music share some of the categories mentioned above. Music can also represent a staging or live recording that has been designed explicitly for the medium of sound recording. Contrary to spoken language, music has an exclusively performative character, where sound, staging, and orchestration play a very important role. The recording of music changed consumer behaviour fundamentally. The possibility of repeating music detached it from the social event of a concert and became an individual practice of consumerism. Development of sound reproduction technologies support change in social behaviour, as mentioned in numerous debates about the digital distribution of music on the internet.

There are many different ways to categorise music; distinctions are made between serious and popular music, instrumental and vocal music, notated music and that which has been passed on by traditions. If one looks at common music

dictionaries it becomes apparent that there are a great many differences in the explanations of what music can be.³²⁴

However, there is no need to understand music exclusively as sound; it is also language. Almost all societies have music, and special knowledge developed for reading and/or understanding it. Initially, a social classification of the audience and its sociocultural background help us to understand who prefers classical music, pop music, or world music. Another way of beginning the inquiry is to question the role of music. Is it intended to be a concert performance, such as a symphony or live concert of a band, a production of musical theatre, such as opera and musical, or is it functional, such as a march or hymn?

As a language with certain rules, musical interpretations are open to comparison. The ways of playing or listening to it can differ depending on period and location. Available source material includes the involved performativity and the social value of concerts, but also written sources, sheets of notes, printed or not. Basic knowledge, at least in music theories and history, is needed to understand music as a language. However, in a transcultural context it is highly important to question the categories of Western musicology. Seemingly universal concepts, such as the idea of an “absolute music”, an expression coined by Richard Wagner and performed by artists such as Johannes Brahms, present an understanding of music that is far removed from extra-musical influences. They follow a Western understanding of music, which favour the European concept of art.³²⁵ To solve this problem we recommend combining methods of musicology with methods developed in the context of ethnomusicology and anthropology.³²⁶

4.7 Example (Lingual Sound Source): “SOS SOS rao rao Foyn”. Listening to Transculturality in an Early German Radio Play

On 25 May, 1928, the airship “Italia” crashed near the North Pole and only part of the crew reached an ice floe.³²⁷ After several unsuccessful rescue attempts, a Soviet

³²⁴ A very good introduction to the subject is the article “Music” in the New Grove Dictionary: Bruno Nettl, “Music,” in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musician*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001; 2nd ed.), Vol. 17, 425–37.

³²⁵ J. Peter Burkholder, “Museum Pieces: The Historicist Mainstream in Music of the Last Hundred Years,” *The Journal of Musicology* 2, no. 2 (1983).

³²⁶ To get started on basic methodological discussions in musicology in a more global context see, for example: Bruno Nettl and Philip V. Bohlman, eds., *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music: Essays on the History of Ethnomusicology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). David Beard and Kenneth Gloag, *Musicology: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2005). Ruth Katz, *A Language of Its Own: Sense and Meaning in the Making of Western Art Music* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009).

³²⁷ The following sources are partly available online. For a collection of links see: Asia and Europe in a Global Context, “Sources Transcultural History,” accessed June 7, 2011, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/a-governance-administration/a3/sources-transcultural-history.html>.

ice-breaker managed to save the crew. The story had contemporary newspaper coverage and the public eagerly followed the competitive rescue activities: who would be first to save the fascist crew? Furthermore, whose technology (planes, ships, and radio waves) would avert tragedy and who would emerge as the heroes? The story had all the necessary ingredients to be turned into the technologically innovative form of a radio play. This pioneering work was produced in 1928. But before analysing the play, some background information is needed.

The “Italia” left Spitsbergen for the first aerial crossing of the Arctic on May 23, 1928. After a smooth take off, the airship, designed and flown by the Italian general Umberto Nobile, reached the designated location for landing at the North Pole, but the weather changed. Instead of landing the airship, the crew dropped an Italian flag and a Christian cross at the point where navigation instruments had located the North Pole. On the way back the severe weather continued. What happened under these difficult weather conditions became the main topic of different investigations and autobiographical publications.³²⁸ All these sources confirm that the airship’s gondola touched the ground and disconnected from the main body of the envelope. Some of the crew and the equipment fell onto the ice and the remainder of the now too light airship disappeared up into the sky, never to be seen again. The survivors built a makeshift camp from the remaining equipment and had enough technical tools to assemble a transmitting station with a still-working radio unit. From there they regularly transmitted emergency calls. An amateur radio operator in Siberia received their signals and forwarded the information. Contact with the ice floe was established shortly thereafter. The events in the Arctic rapidly became the number one topic in newspapers and radio broadcasts over the following days. Well observed by the media, an international rescue mission began with Roald Amundsen as its most prominent member. Amundsen, a worldwide celebrity, went missing for good during his attempt to find the casualties. The Soviet Union eventually sent out two ice-breakers. The first ship “Malygin” failed to reach the ice floe, but the other, the old ice-breaker “Krassin”, succeeded in rescuing the remaining survivors on 12 July, 1928.³²⁹

³²⁸ For further reading see: Wilbur Cross, *Disaster at the Pole: The Tragedy of the Airship Italia and the 1928 Nobile Expedition to the North Pole* (New York: Lyons Press, 2000). Stanley Hochman, *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama: An International Reference Work*, 5 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984). Pier Horensma, *The Soviet Arctic* (London: Routledge, 1991). John McCannon, *Red Arctic: Polar Exploration and the Myth of the North in the Soviet Union, 1932–1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). William Mills, *Exploring Polar Frontiers: A Historical Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2003). Irene Peroni, “Into Thin Air: Umberto Nobile, Fascist Explorer,” *History Today* 59, no. 6 (2009). Further watching: Ennio De Concini et al., *The Red Tent* (Hollywood: Paramount, 1969). For the soundtrack see Ennio Morricone, *The Red Tent Theme* (JokerRecordings, 2008), accessed March 12, 2011, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICKOcFDIXcU&feature=youtube_gdata

³²⁹ Books by those at the scene include: Umberto Nobile, *Im Luftschiff zum Nordpol: Die Fahrten der “Italia”*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1929). Umberto Nobile et al., *Die Vorbereitungen und die wissenschaftlichen Ergebnisse der Polarexpedition der “Italia”* (Gotha: J. Perthes, 1929). Umberto Nobile, *The Reminiscences of Umberto Nobile*, Columbia

The misfortune of the “Italia” and the surrounding coverage represented nothing less than an international mass media event. Newspapers and, most notably, radio stations provided extensive coverage, and were supported by the fact that, before the accident, films about the airship had featured in weekly newsreels. Nobile had sent telegrams about the course of the flight every day, and after the crossing of the North Pole, he wired his greetings to his family, the Italian king, Mussolini, and the Pope. The expedition was therefore a well-known event, and the public became more than curious when suddenly no news or emergency calls came from the “Italia.”

Numerous books, novels, and movies made the crash one of the most famous disasters. All these publications contributed to the public’s interest in polar expeditions of the time. Moreover, the crash challenged the technical achievements of the twentieth century: airships, aeroplanes, mighty ice-breakers, and invisible radio waves, which could cover hitherto unimagined distances. From political and ideological perspectives too the misadventure presented the most telling contemporary tensions imaginable: a Soviet ice-breaker coming to the rescue of an expedition under fascist leadership. Thus, the idea of new media, namely radio, covering the well-known story of the “Italia,” can be seen as a market orientated and well-reflected decision. Our chosen sample source, Friedrich Wolf’s radio play *SOS SOS rao rao Foyn. Krassin rettet Italia* broadcast in 1928,³³⁰ is the oldest surviving radio play in Germany and a convincing example for a transcultural methodological approach.³³¹

The radio play is based on spoken language, an aspect absent from textual and image sources. Many sources on the disaster thematise technology, progress, and solidarity, but virtually no other types of source reveal the substantial problem of how an international and mobile civil society communicates. The dramatic events in the Arctic had to address the lingual aspect and problem of how multilingual settings can be translated for German listeners. In which language did the crew members of the “Italia” talk to each other, considering they did not all have the same mother tongue? How did they communicate with the crew of the ice-breaker? Did the Italian

University Oral History Collection, Part 4, No. 154 (New York: New York Times Oral History Program, 1960). “Review: The Italia Disaster,” *Geographical Journal* 76, no. 3 (1930). Franz Behounek, *Sieben Wochen auf der Eisscholle: der Untergang der Nobile-Expedition* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1929). Rudolf L. Samojlovic, *Der Weg nach dem Pol* (Bielefeld: Velhagen & Klasing, 1931).

³³⁰ See below, p. 107.

³³¹ Helmut Kreuzer, “Erfindung und Wirklichkeit, Individualität und Kollektiv: Streifflichter auf deutsche Hörspiele um 1930,” accessed March 12, 2011, http://mediaculture-online.de/fileadmin/bibliothek/kreuzer_hoerspiel1930/kreuzer_hoerspiel1930.html. Angela Frattarola, “The Modernist ‘Microphone Play’: Listening in the Dark to the BBC,” *Modern Drama* 52, no. 4 (2009). Daniel Gilfillan, *Pieces of Sound: German Experimental Radio* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009). Peter Jelavich, *Berlin Alexanderplatz: Radio, Film, and the Death of Weimar Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006). Nancy P. Nenno, “Projections on Blank Space: Landscape, Nationality, and Identity in Thomas Mann’s *Der Zauberberg*,” *The German Quarterly* 69, no. 3 (1996). Valmar Kurol and Montreal Antarctic Society, “Antarctica Experienced through Music: Capsule Comments on some Currently Available CDs about Antarctica,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.antarctic-circle.org/valmar.htm>.

radio operator send the Morse code in Italian or in an international standardised form? How could the Russian amateur radio operator understand the message?

The radio play provides two solutions. It presents the “SOS” as an internationally standardised signal, and the Morse alphabet as a way to cross lingual (and ideological) borders.³³² Furthermore, there is another element that crosses borders in this play, namely the geographic coordinate system. Subdividing the world by degrees of longitude and latitude, the 1884 International Meridian Conference held in Washington D.C. had established the information that was now needed to identify the changing location of the ice floe.

The characteristics of radio allow us to delve deeper, because the new medium became part of how the story was told. A transcultural approach draws attention to how the play incorporates the new technology; whether the author decided to downplay the role of national newspapers and instead targets an international audience (e.g. by playing the socialist *Internationale*), or whether he intended to use this new, powerful, border crossing instrument for spreading national propaganda internationally.

Wolf’s radio play confronted lingual nationalism with the transboundary language of music. Playing popular tunes in the background, the radio play developed temporal and spatial categories beyond the reach of written and/or visual sources. Having these methodological opportunities in mind, an interpretation of the “Italia” accident based on the radio play overcomes the patterns of national histories. Such an approach gives an insight into the tensions between different transboundary agencies. Analysing the background music, not national anthems, but well-known socialist (*Warschawjanka*) and fascist hymns (*Giovenezza*), defines and claims the scope of action.³³³

Questioning the political and ideological background, the play presents a new form of immaterial spatiality created by the sounds and associations that certain tunes evoke in the addressed public. The next step should question the differences between the radio play and other source material available, for example newspapers or books. Who are the individuals living in the transboundary spaces that the music implied? Following this thought, one turns from the analytical macro level to the micro level, i.e. the actors, which allows for the appreciation of new perspectives. If one looks at the play’s description of the crews of the airship, the “Malygin,” and the successful “Krassin,” one can detect surprising similarities.

The “Italia” accident gave a public platform to Arctic experts who had an institutional background as members of international organisations, some of which were newly founded after World War I. One of the most important

³³² The mentioning of an Asian perspective suggests looking beyond the narrative of mutual understanding. The question is whether or not the Morse alphabet presented an interface to non-European languages.

³³³ Friedrich Wolf and Alfred Braun, “SOS ... Rao rao ... Foyr “Krassin” rettet “Italia”,” (Germany 1929). The songs mentioned here run from 23:25 min to 26:10 min (*Warschawjanka*) and from 58:15 min to 58:30 min (*Giovenezza*).

organisations, the Aeroarctic, the International Society for the Exploration of the Arctic Regions by Means of Aircraft, was founded in 1924 and presided over by the polar explorer Fridtjof Nansen. Its first conference had been held in Berlin in 1926. At the exact time that the "Italia" crashed, Aeroarctic held a meeting in Leningrad. Although we cannot be certain whether the "Italia" contributed, the swift increase in membership within few years of up to 400 members from 22 countries is interesting and opens an additional perspective of analysis. Besides Aeroarctic, numerous organisations interested in meteorology³³⁴ and hydrography³³⁵ used the "Italia" accident to gain publicity. Among them was an especially dense network of researchers and organisations, the so-called Polar Year.

Since the First International Polar Year took place in 1882,³³⁶ the deserted, icy, inhumane no man's land had become a location of dense entanglements. At the time of the "Italia" crash, experts had started to plan the second Polar Year for 1931/32. For the organisers involved, financing problems increased the need to go public. For polar scientists, the "Italia" crash was therefore extremely rewarding and indeed overrode ideological concerns: Rudolf L. Samojlovic (1881–1939), the Soviet scientist, who led the "Krassin" rescue team, took advantage of his celebrity status in Western media and published his view of the "Italia" accident in 1930.³³⁷ The book became a bestseller, and Samojlovic made an extensive lecture tour throughout Europe. He was even invited to the US. Other experts had similar interests in maintaining a vivid memory of the "Italia" crash—Aeroarctic organised a flight in 1932 for the discovery of the "Italia's" missing wreckage. Even Umberto Nobile, the pilot of the unfortunate "Italia", later worked for Aeroarctic.

With the presentation of the interaction between economic situation, international organisations, ideological backgrounds, and the radio play, the potential of the new media for this specific topic has hardly been exhausted. Particularly Nobile's role as fascist hero, defeated adventurer, and later communist has not even been mentioned. However, the short investigation of the radio play alludes to the added intellectual value of a transcultural concept. Specifying entanglements at the edge of methodological entities is particularly interesting and offers a new and different insight into

³³⁴ International Meteorological Organisation (IMO) 1873–1950, see: <http://www.lonsea.de/organisation/index/971>, succeeded by the World Meteorological Organization, see: http://www.wmo.int/pages/index_en.html

³³⁵ International Hydrographic Organisation, founded 1921, see: <http://www.lonsea.de/organisation/index/150>

³³⁶ The launch of a Polar Year coordinated international expeditions in a certain time frame. The tradition of declaring Polar Years for the purpose of international research continues to this day. From 2007 to 2009, the fourth Polar Year occurred. See: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, "The First International Polar Year 1881–1884," accessed March 12, 2011, <http://www.arctic.noaa.gov/aro/ipy-1/History.htm>. For information on the history of Polar Years see: World Meteorological Organization, "International Polar Year 2007–2008," accessed March 12, 2011, http://www.wmo.int/pages/ipy/index_en.html.

³³⁷ Samojlovic, *Der Weg nach dem Pol*.

the interests of the time. Until now studies were for the most part limited to explorers, their organisations, and newspaper articles. However, an institutional history of polar organisations is limited to their members and publications, and media coverage says more about the journal than about the public interest in the “Italia” accident. The radio play oversteps some of these limitations and creates a “virtual room” where the combination of actors creates a new form of a multilayered public sphere that is inaccessible to any historical approach focusing on limiting entities rather than on investigating the consequences of transboundary entanglements.

Keeping in mind a transcultural approach, W-questions in the case of radio plays are still useful from a methodological point of view, but need some adaptations. In terms of the “who” question: keeping in mind the specific “virtual room” that the radio play created, Wolf produced more than just texts. He is an innovator, who crossed the borders of different media and his biography provides a new insight into the opportunities and risks that the 1930s provided for global subjects and transboundary lives.³³⁸

Friedrich Wolf (1888–1953) started his professional life as a ship’s doctor on the transatlantic routes in 1914 and then became an army doctor during World War I. After 1918 he was politically active and joined the workers’ and soldiers’ councils. He also crossed the line of scientific based medicine by working as a homeopath, and fought, with many other socialist physicians, against the prohibition of abortion. Simultaneously, he founded a leftist agitprop theatre group, wrote novels and plays for the stage and radio. In 1933, Wolf emigrated to the Soviet Union. In 1938 he wanted to support The International Brigades fighting in Spain, but on his way he was arrested and imprisoned in France. After his release, he returned to Russia and then in 1945 to Eastern Germany, where he took part in establishing the GDR and the country’s public-owned television studio, *Deutsche Fernseh AG* (German TV Corporation). From 1949 to 1951 he was the GDR’s first ambassador to Poland.

What can be read as a typical leftist’s biography becomes more the transboundary life of what can be described as a “global subject,” always coming in contact with but never really embracing professional and spatial ordering principles and entities. From this point of view, the author and the main figures in his play about the “Italia” have more in common than expected. Even Umberto Nobile, expelled from his position as a fascist general after the crash, shared some of Wolf’s border crossing experiences: he emigrated to the Soviet Union in order to work on the development of new airships. He even worked as a lecturer for Aeroarctic and went to the United States in 1939. Between 1942 and 1943 he

³³⁸ Donna K. Heizer, *Jewish-German Identity in the Orientalist Literature of Else Lasker-Schüler, Friedrich Wolf, and Franz Werfel* (Columbia: Camden House, 1996). Henning Müller, *Friedrich Wolf 1888–1953: deutscher Jude, Schriftsteller, Sozialist* (Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2009). Robert Charles Reimer, “The Tragedy of the Revolutionary: A Study of the Drama-of-revolution of Ernst Toller, Friedrich Wolf, and Bertolt Brecht, 1918–1933.” (PhD University of Kansas, 1971). Michael David Richardson, *Revolutionary Theater and the Classical Heritage: Inheritance and Appropriation from Weimar to the GDR* (Oxford: P. Lang, 2007).



Fig. 3 General Umberto Nobile's ill-fated airship Italia, moored at Svalbard before an attempt to reach the North Pole. *Moored Italia*, 1928. Photograph courtesy of Getty Images (Topical Press Agency, Collection: Hulton Archive)

lived in Spain and returned to Italy in 1943.³³⁹ These examples of common experiences may present the difficult and sometimes uneasy aspect of gaining results from transboundary involvements, because the world, which is organised and separated into ideological, social, conceptual, professional, spatial, and temporal entities, suddenly reveals itself to be in a state of complex, dynamic, shifting, and dangerous entanglements.

4.8 Example (Musical Sound Source): Listening to Music in the Theatre. The Kawakami Group at the 1900 Paris World's Fair

Among many attractions at the World's Fair in Paris in 1900, the global public was eager to see a very special and indeed transcultural performance at the *Théâtre Loie Fuller*, which had become famous for its combination of eroticism,

³³⁹ Ovidio Ferrante, *Umberto Nobile*, 2 vols., *Monografie aeronautiche italiane* (Roma: C. Tatangelo, 1985).

modern dance, and technical effects:³⁴⁰ Loie Fuller,³⁴¹ an American modern dancer and celebrated as “fleur de feu, reine du prisme” (flower of fire, queen of the prism),³⁴² hired a Japanese troupe, the Kawakami, who became a main attraction of Fuller’s newly opened theatre. The Japanese theatre group gave a guest performance on the European mainland for the first time.³⁴³ The undisputed star was Sada Yacco, the wife of the group’s leader Kawakami Otojiro after whom the group was named. Amongst their fans were the famous French artist Auguste Rodin and the composer Claude Debussy, who is thought to have taken inspiration from the group’s performance for his composition *Jardins sous la pluie*. Artists, such as the young Pablo Picasso and Rupert Bunny, made sketches of Sada Yacco.

The presentation of extra-European cultures had characterised World’s Fairs since their beginnings in the mid-nineteenth century. But in this case, the Kawakami group made just a whistle stop on a world tour, and continued to present Japanese culture in an adapted, global form.³⁴⁴ The tour had started in 1899 when the Kawakami sailed to the United States. American newspapers interpreted the tour as official Japanese propaganda and published only a few, lukewarm reviews. In short, there is an obvious imbalance between American³⁴⁵ and European perception.³⁴⁶ A trans-cultural approach aims to overcome the simple, accepted notion that exoticism was part of World’s Fairs and instead examines the problems and difficulties that the Kawakamis encountered during their world tour.

Prepared by Fuller’s modern, colourful, and effective dance, the Western public searched for a visual equivalent but struggled with the presentation of classical, language-orientated Kabuki theatre that was understood by only a small portion of

³⁴⁰ The following sources are partly available online. For a collection of links see: Asia and Europe in a Global Context, “Sources Transcultural History,” accessed June 7, 2011, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/a-governance-administration/a3/sources-transcultural-history.html>.

³⁴¹ The American Loie Fuller was one of the first modern dancers and a highly professional businesswoman with patented technical effects in her show.

³⁴² See Judith Gautier, *Les musiques bizarres à l’exposition de 1900* (Paris: Librairie Ollendorff, 1900).

³⁴³ Shelley C. Berg, “Sada Yacco in London and Paris, 1900: le rêve réalisé,” *Dance Chronicle* 18, no. 3 (1995).

³⁴⁴ The pieces presented in Paris, e.g. *The Geisha and the Samurai*, originally a classical drama presented over two days, became a 30 minute performance. As Gautier wrote, the short version’s content was not even accessible to those who were fluent in Japanese. Gautier, *Les musiques bizarres à l’exposition de 1900*, 1.

³⁴⁵ Searching the database “Historical Newspapers” yields about 100 hits, most of them announcements of performances. However, there are increasing numbers of reports during the Paris World’s Fair. See ProQuest, “Historical Newspapers,” accessed July 29, 2011, <http://www.proquest.com/en-US/catalogs/databases/detail/pq-hist-news.shtml> (access to databases is restricted).

³⁴⁶ Numerous descriptions of the World’s Fair count the performances of the Kawakamis among the most important attractions. There was also a slim volume dealing exclusively with Japanese music and the dances of Sada Yacco: Gautier, *Les musiques bizarres à l’exposition de 1900*.

the audience. The Japanese actors, on the other hand, faced the problem of adapting Kabuki traditions for a public not even aware of the existence of Kabuki. This setting of mutual misunderstandings and partly false expectations provides historical indicators of ongoing translation processes, prejudices, and the preparation of a globally acceptable form, which focuses on visuality. However, the global adaptation did not eradicate spatial differences. The Japanese theatre had more success in London than in the United States, and became famous in Paris. In the French capital “Japonisme” corresponded almost perfectly with the dominant style of symbolism and growing importance of dance and music. To follow on with an example that specifies elements of the bizarre and unconventional, take for instance the Western audience’s fascination with Sada Yacco. When she presented herself as a Geisha of the first rank, the Western public mistakenly expected pornography, and thus searched for (and certainly found) sexual connotations. From a Japanese point of view too Sada Yacco had crossed borders even by going on stage—but these borders were located on different mental maps. In a transcultural context, the question of (mis)perception can be understood in a much broader sense. How does perception differ in Asia and Europe? Does it make a difference whether Asian culture is imported to Europe and advertised as “exotic” or whether European theatre plays are adapted for the Asian region and seen as reforming theatre? What parallels can be observed in other areas of art and culture? To which extent do border crossers such as Kawakami and Sada Yacco influence the image of the respective culture in a global context, or, for example, prepare the Japanese public for Debussy, Mozart, and Beethoven?

Of course, transculturality oversteps the analysis of what people said, what newspapers wrote, which images were presented, and which official catalogues were chosen. Again, the use of transculturality as a methodological approach results in a more convincing epistemology. A critical reading of Western descriptions of Sada Yacco’s dance in Paris explains the West’s fascination from a different perspective. Instead of formally analysing the choreography, such a study investigates how the moving silk kimono highlighted the innovation of electric light. At this World’s Fair, electricity had a highly symbolic value for the Western world as an expression of modernism. This explains why the Western audience was so taken by the electrical light reflected in the Japanese garments, rather than the garments themselves, which were hitherto used only in traditional theatre performances. A transcultural study that claims to show how a pre-industrial *Kabuki* play reflected Western modernity needs, however, to investigate also the Japanese part in this transcultural situation. The Kawakami made their way to Europe because in Japan too West-Eastern cultural entanglements had begun to transform local habits. Modern theatre in Japan now used Western authors, such as William Shakespeare, to charge old theatre traditions with a nationalist meaning.³⁴⁷ Moreover, the

³⁴⁷ Tetsuo Kishi and Graham Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan* (London and New York: Continuum, 2005). Siyuan Liu, “Adaptation as Appropriation: Staging Western Drama in the First Western-Style Theatres in Japan and China,” *Theatre Journal* 59, no. 3 (2007).

Kawakami utilised their performances in the West to address issues back home in Japan. By thematising, for example, the Sino-Japanese War, they brought contemporary political debates into theatre performances.³⁴⁸

From a methodological point of view, transcultural entanglements introduce some difficulties. Merging has a strong performative aspect and raises the issue of preservation. Apart from photographs, which cannot capture movement, motion pictures and sound come closest to conveying the visuality and audibility of the moving silk that contemporary viewers mentioned. The films that were made at the time only survived in fragments and are mostly inaccessible today. In contrast, rediscovered sound documents are now available on CD, although in poor quality.³⁴⁹ These recordings display probably the first Japanese music heard in Europe. As musical performance played an important role in the Japanese theatre of the time, the recordings display a combination of spoken texts, songs and instrumental pieces. This combination fit perfectly into the not yet fully established technology of recording, probably better than European theatre performances did. Why the Kawakami attracted the application of Western communication technologies needs further research, all the more because not one but two recordings are available: the first recording, made during the World's Fair by The Gramophone Company, an English record company,³⁵⁰ was later used commercially. The second recording was made in 1901, when the Japanese troupe performed in Berlin and visited the Berliner Phonogramm Archiv. This newly founded archive specialised in ethno-musical recordings and over the course of the twentieth century became one of the most important record archives in Europe.³⁵¹

The Kawakami group provides an interesting example of transfers in both directions: Kawakami brought Japanese theatre to Europe and took European theatre back with him to Japan. But there is another, perhaps only ephemeral third level. The new form of mediality fascinated the contemporary audience more than the exotic character of the performance: silk in the light of electrical lamps, sounds recorded for commercial and scientific purposes, all in the spatial context of a World's Fair, which realised utopian dreams for a manageable period of time. Following this thought, a comparison with contemporary recordings of music both from Asia and Europe offers clues as to the forms of staging used in the Kamakura production. Contemporary record catalogues, which have so far been

³⁴⁸ Benito Ortolani, *The Japanese Theatre: From Shamanistic Ritual to Contemporary Pluralism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

³⁴⁹ J. Scott Miller, "Dispossessed Melodies. Recordings of the Kawakami Theater Troupe," *Monumenta Nipponica* 53, no. 2 (1998): 227.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Otto Abraham and Erich Moritz von Hornbostel, "Studien über das Tonsystem und die Musik der Japaner," *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 4, no. 2 (1903).



Fig. 4 Sada Yacco and the Kawakami group inspired Western artists with their theatre performance at the World's Fair. Picasso, Pablo, La Danseuse Sada Yacco, © Succession Picasso / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2011. Pastel, 35,5 × 25 cm, 1900

neglected by historical research but are increasingly becoming available online, may afford additional perspectives.³⁵²

Going a step further, the new, globalised, ephemeral space created by music and preserved in recordings offered alternative ways of life. In Japan, women had for a long time been forbidden to perform as actresses at theatres, and even with the abolishment of this restriction, actresses had a low social standing. Gaining the profile of the female main character, Sada Yacco escaped these gender limitations with obviously long-lasting consequences: after her husband's death and the end of the Kawakami group, she became an employer as the owner of a silk factory. Therefore, rather than comparing differences, transcultural entanglement offers evidence for a scope of actions which overstep rules under certain conditions.

5 Future Prospects—How to Find Sources Documenting a “Web,” “Flows,” and Other Relational Approaches

In 1939, Walter Benjamin worked on a draft about the philosophy of history and dedicated the historical approach to the commemoration of nameless people, *dem Gedächtnis der Namenlosen*.³⁵³ In the debates of the 1930s, an approach focusing on undocumented lives clearly relied on the conceptual framework of Marxist historiography. However, the bitter irony was that Benjamin himself fell into a namelessness far removed from what labour historians and Marxist historical materialism wanted remembered. The Jewish philosopher fled Paris shortly after the German occupation and arrived in Portbou, where he died from an overdose of morphine in still obscure circumstances in September 1940. With a misspelled name, his corpse was buried in the Catholic cemetery by the railway station, where the border crossing character of this little town on the French-Spanish border gains its most explicit visibility: here, the track gauge of the railway needed (and still needs) to be adapted to the Iberian railway system. In the light of Benjamin's death, the spatial characteristics of this Mediterranean town serves as a persuading metaphor for a crucial problem regarding the proper documentation of transcultural entanglements: from a spatial approach, the frontier town offers the opportunity to cross borders by providing a variety of structural devices—an impressive rail freight transfer facility and a passenger station with immigration and customs buildings. At the same time, all these devices, which seem to support and invite

³⁵² See for example the website of the British Library, “Early Record Catalogues: Archival Sound Recordings,” accessed March 12, 2011, <http://sounds.bl.uk/Browse.aspx?collection=Early-record-catalogues>.

³⁵³ Walter Benjamin, “Notizen zu den Thesen Über den Begriff der Geschichte,” in *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1974), Vol. I.3, 1241.

the crossing of borders, substantially slow down the transfer: changing track gauges stops the flow of traffic despite the improvements produced by faster, longer, and more efficient trains. The immigration service increased, but only by extending into the waiting room. There are reasonable allusions to the fact that Benjamin could no longer bear waiting in this no man's land. He probably preferred to die instead of being thrown into new, unexpected, and unwanted circumstances, and thus missed the arrival of his visa papers, which would have transformed him from a displaced person into a migrant with a US work permit. The only witness to Benjamin's death was his travel companion, Henny Gurland. She successfully escaped to the United States and only years later disclosed that Benjamin had addressed a suicide note to her and Theodor W. Adorno, which she had to destroy for security reasons.³⁵⁴

After reading this book's chapter on methods, readers will know that Benjamin's story, as told above, amounts to little more than speculation. Historiography is not able to provide the source material needed for documenting the transformatory power of a frontier town. The suicide note, which does not exist, would be needed to substantiate the tale. Our claim that changing relations and shifting networks played a crucial role in Benjamin's demise faces the problem of presenting empirical evidence. How do we connect Benjamin's life with the history of a place—Portbou—as well as with the history of railway technologies? How can we demonstrate more than the simultaneity of parallel historical developments that are driven by intrinsic factors?

Transculturality is an approach that illuminates what perhaps lies across parallel developments. However, to document this part, we have to think about relations. Cultures as “relational webs” challenge the potential of historiography.³⁵⁵ At the end of our discussion, it is therefore necessary to balance the methodological basics with the theoretical assumptions by going into the issue of empirical evidence—for historians, source material. We have to ask again in a critical way whether transculturality introduces a substantial sea change or whether we have to limit our expectations. A sea change must yield more and precise information as a result of re-reading well-known sources from a new perspective. Until now, the sources presented in this book are composed of documents that are underestimated in their value as sounding boards of a transcultural past. However, the discovery of these documents in visual, written, or aural forms do not automatically rely on using a revolutionary new questionnaire. Sada Yacco may be far removed from the diplomatic or labour historian's attention, but both would find historical evidence of her life without a specific and new understanding of transculturality. Therefore, the question remains as to what else historiography can do other than freeze transcultural entanglements in the imaginary of holding areas and transit zones,

³⁵⁴ Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing. Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 8.print 1999), 333.

³⁵⁵ Afef Benessaïeh, “Multiculturalism, Interculturality, Transculturality,” in *Amériques transculturelles - Transcultural Americas*, ed. Afef Benessaïeh (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2009).

and follow migrants or cosmopolitans. Carefully investigating what modern historiography qualifies as source material might help us find out whether or not a transcultural approach is more than just another postmodern stereotype.

Transculturality, which we will resist referring to as a new “turn,” allows us to search for source material in three directions according to the development of scholarly debate. As Afef Benessaïeh explains, transculturality appears a) as an umbrella term to specify what is similar in different (national) cultures b) as a denomination of identity-building attributes, which can travel in time and space, and c) as a specific form that adapts global influences.³⁵⁶ For methodological reasons, the most interesting aspect is that transculturality establishes an interest in “relational webs.”³⁵⁷ At first glance, relations explain why and how individuals form a society, at least for well defined spaces and (national) territories. This is nothing new and has been at the core of social history, well established since Benjamin’s time. However, when social relations and territorial bindings come apart under the influence of globalisation, sociology faces some phenomena that are incompatible with social theory, including the “rise of new forms of citizenship and non-state membership.”³⁵⁸ Of course, under the premise of constant movement, it is difficult to decide what, then, constitutes a society. One suggestion is to introduce the relational understanding that “society is conceptualised as a network, though not a network of objects or of individuals, but as a network of relations.”³⁵⁹ After mentioning the difficulties in introducing networks as analytical tools into historiography,³⁶⁰ we try again to translate this assumption from a methodological perspective. The obvious conclusion is to abstain from explaining social relations with functions performed in a specific territorial context. However, gaining distance from a spatial explanation does not mean that the new approach dismisses territorial bindings, an approach, which would let collapse our narrative about Benjamin’s last days almost completely. Appadurai made a helpful suggestion by introducing a difference between the mode of movements and the question of “movability.” This difference brings Benjamin’s case to the fore again, pointing to tensions between opportunities to move or stay put. Appadurai stresses the “relationship between the form of circulation and the circulation of forms.”³⁶¹ Indeed, interesting new results can be obtained by separating the different kinds of flowing, transgressing media, and the information they transport in different ways, by carefully asking to what extent historical contexts influenced the different velocity of

³⁵⁶ Ibid., 11.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Pierpaolo Donati, *Relational Sociology: A New Paradigm for the Social Sciences* (London: Routledge, 2011), 219.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 226.

³⁶⁰ See Castells and Cardoso, eds., *The Network Society: From Knowledge to Policy*.

³⁶¹ Arjun Appadurai, “How Histories Make Geographies: Circulation and Context in a Global Perspective,” *Transcultural Studies* 1(2010): 7.

circulation.³⁶² Still, with the reservation that the relationships described above only exist in theory, this approach can offer a way of finding empirical evidence, to which traditional historiography had no access until now.

As always in historiography, a relational approach requires a testing field, such as the abovementioned international organisations. As we know, this example encompasses a variety of crucial problems: institutions and persons involved are transcultural by definition; their documentation, however, presents a major problem, because established forms of spatial storage give only a fragmented insight into their historical development. The same is true for the not yet investigated question of which places international offices chose and to what extent an extraterritorial influence shaped the local surroundings.

There is one available example database, LONSEA (League of Nations Search Engine), which tries to connect all factors involved in the presence of international organisations in a relational form.³⁶³ LONSEA started from the obvious fact that there are expanding actors in international politics, from the no less obvious burst of transboundary activities that occur under the umbrella terms of globalisation and glocalisation. The League of Nations and its secretariat in Geneva functioned as follows: the rather small international administration was surrounded by a variety of different international associations, persons, and movements from all over the globe, including a substantial Asian participation. For political reasons, and because the secretariat had no funds available for propaganda, the League of Nations was eager to prove its global presence and therefore collected these activities in its regularly edited *Handbooks of International Organisations*. These handbooks serve as the backbone of the database, together with the personnel files of the League of Nations' secretariat. The information available covers different forms of circulations, e.g. the membership of persons, institutions, and states, but also topics of transgressive power, for example, the search for an international language, or physico-chemical standards, or persons. Both the personnel files and the information from the handbook help to understand who, when, why, and with what consequences global networks gained profiles as institutions, functioned as personal relations, and disappeared or prevailed in times of political tensions and economic crises. The database shows the local bindings of the institutions and persons concerned, but also the combination across searchable entities. Therefore, relations gain a spatial visibility—whoever connects whatever entities will immediately see whether dense relations cumulate in an identity building cloud, or end in isolation. Finding sources in this field depends on the extent to which relations develop and when, how, and in which fields relations overlapped within the formation of a dense cluster. Building this relation is therefore just a first, but

³⁶² Roland Wenzlhuemer, "Globalization, Communication and the Concept of Space in Global History," in *Historical Social Research, Special Issue: Global Communication: Telecommunication and Global Flows of Information in the Late 19th and Early 20th Century* 35, no. 1 (2010).

³⁶³ LONSEA - League of Nations Search Engine, "Searching the Globe through the Lenses of the League of Nations" (cf. part 1, reference 189).

important step in the introduction of a statistical tool. In using force-based algorithms, the density of relations translates into a spatial model. The nodes appear as a physical entity, or to put it simply: dense connectivity is located in the centre; less connected persons, institutions, places, topics, or connections across the enumerated entities, are at the periphery. Since the tool shows the connected entities' "friends of friends," it is possible to measure the distance between them within a determined time frame. By using relations between entities, which cannot be related to each other using existing historical methods, we gain new insights. To put it more precisely: we gain a thesis that needs testing in the usual way in which historical research is conducted. However, the thesis itself is based on measuring relations and helps to understand transcultural entanglements in a far more precise way.

Searching the database for the most connected person during the lifetime of the League of Nations can provide a first insight into the expected results. Interestingly, the person who was better connected than the General Secretary of the League, or the president of the International Chamber of Commerce, or whoever historians expected to have global influence, turned out to be Arthur Sweetser. He was connected to 2812 organisations and people, creating 17152 reference points. A significantly less connected person was A. Lanborelle, vice-president of the International Federation of Moto-Cycling Clubs. He shows only 68 connections, and would have needed 46860 reference points to reach the same community that Sweetser did. Arthur Sweetser (1888–1968) was a journalist and League of Nations' staff member whose dense and global relations almost completely escaped historians' attention. There is an interesting antinomy between the availability of material and the historical disinterest that turned Sweetser into an almost nameless person, although he published on aviation, was active in different international organisations, participated in important conferences, taught at the Geneva Institute, and cultivated close connections to globally active endowments. Furthermore, his personal papers, held by the Library of Congress, encompass more than 90 containers. Sweetser's life, therefore, can be documented with an enormous amount of source material, even without the many references in additional personal collections.³⁶⁴ The problem is that this material remains inaccessible to historians due to the unspecific, multilayered topics and institutions involved. Indeed, only a relational approach helps to understand the peculiarities upon which Sweetser's life was built. Only the idea of networks of relations explains where Sweetser's biography was located, namely on the safe side of those manifold spaces which turned fatal in Benjamin's case.

Along with postmodern literature, transcultural history may be approached by consulting the ancient historian Polybios. He wrote in several, wide ranging volumes about Rome's rise to world power. But as Denis Feeney vividly explained

³⁶⁴ The manuscript reading room of the Library of Congress offers no less than 7 collections where Sweetser is mentioned. See Library of Congress, "Online Catalog," accessed March 13, 2011, <http://catalog.loc.gov/>. Quick Search "Arthur Sweetser", hits 10–16 and 18.

in a review, Polybios had to cope with the challenging problem of finding a global narrative for readers without access to easily attainable maps and chronologies.³⁶⁵ Although modern historiography addresses readers that have access to an overwhelmingly dense network of information, it faces a similar problem: finding a new narrative beyond or against established expectations might be as difficult as exploring unknown spaces. Although a part of global history, a transcultural approach provides analytical tools that aim less at the exploration of the globe, than at highlighting the many borders, limits, and fine fissures that a global narrative has to consider.

Although just a starting point, this book takes the question seriously of how the historians' work should be done. The narrative chosen emphasises a specific time period—the 1920s and 1930s—and includes methodologies, provides source material, and explains why borders are necessary for the understanding of how dense connectivity and entanglements developed. Knowing that historiography is exposed to constant change and that it explains present inventions of tradition rather than the past, Caroline Bynum made an important point. She suggests “an enthusiastic acceptance (instead of a grim fear) that each of us writes from a partial perspective” as a way to gain more time to establish arguments more carefully.³⁶⁶ A lot of additional work is needed to elaborate the many borders, the coherence, and connectivity between parts of the globe, such as Asia and Europe. Furthermore, multilayered structures transform into a narrative only in a complex way, and coherence encounters the problem that crossing borders is a rather dangerous experience. But this is obviously one of the key challenges that the twenty-first century will have to face, hopefully in a peaceful way.

³⁶⁵ Denis Feeney, “Obedience to Rome,” *The Times Library Supplement*, October 1, 2010, 22.

³⁶⁶ Bynum, “Perspectives, Connections and Objects: What’s Happening in History Now?,” 86.

Part III: Sources

The following sources are partly available online. For a collection of links see: Asia and Europe in a Global Context, “Sources Transcultural History,” accessed June 7, 2011, <http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/research/a-governance-administration/a3/sources-transcultural-history.html>.

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