

# Bulletin of the German Historical Institute

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## PREFACE

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the first *Bulletin* reporting on GHI activities since I assumed the Institute's directorship last October. I arrived from Braunschweig, where I had served as director of the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research and Professor of History since 2006. I have been delighted to return to Washington and to the GHI, where I was a Research Fellow from 2002 to 2006, and look forward to working together with old and new colleagues throughout North America.

As many of you will know, one of the great strengths of the German Historical Institute is the remarkable range of the research conducted at the Institute. This thematic breadth and openness fosters innovation as well as academic exchange and cooperation. The current projects of the GHI research fellows reflect the diversity and innovative potential of German and international historical research: ranging from a global history of the soy bean to a history of freemasons in the Atlantic World, from a history of risk and insurance in the early American Republic to a history of Jewish educational media, and from a history of German penal reform to an imperial history of the Boy Scouts of America. As director I will continue to cultivate this diversity of topics and approaches in order to attract the best junior scholars to the GHI and to make the Institute a place of vibrant intellectual exchange.

While thematic and conceptual diversity is essential for fostering creativity, each of the institutes in the Max Weber Foundation also needs to establish specific areas of research concentration and expertise. As the new director, I am introducing a set of research initiatives that offer not only the potential for innovation but also a maximum of opportunities for cooperating with colleagues in a wide variety of fields. I would like briefly to share two of these initiatives with you. The first is in the history of knowledge, a new approach that offers a great opportunity to pursue many topics and connect with many areas of historical scholarship. The history of knowledge is a dynamic field focusing on the actors, processes, and practices involved in the generation and circulation of knowledge, especially those extending beyond academic institutions. Since knowledge does not recognize borders, this initiative will also strengthen transnational perspectives. One special research focus will be on the intersection of knowledge

and migration, highlighting the role of adolescents as cultural translators in the shaping of “migrant knowledge.” You will read more about the research initiative in the history of knowledge and some of the individual projects associated with it in the next (Fall 2016) issue of the GHI *Bulletin*, which will have a thematic focus on the history of knowledge.

The second research initiative builds on and expands the GHI’s pioneering work in digital history. Most of you will be familiar with the GHI’s *German History in Documents and Images* (GHDI), an unparalleled online collection of primary source materials on German history in both German and English, which won the AHA’s James Harvey Robinson Prize. We have begun the process of revamping the GHDI project, drawing on leading experts in German history in order to review its content and conception — including the introduction of transnational perspectives on German history — and cooperating with digital history experts in order to make the project more responsive to its users. We are grateful for the tremendous interest in GHDI, especially in North America, and the support of our North American colleagues for the relaunch project. Beyond GHDI, our wider initiative in digital history seeks to connect European and North American developments in the field of digital history, defined broadly to include digital source collection and publication, digital forms of scholarly communication, and digital humanities tools for the analysis of historical sources. It is our goal to further transatlantic exchange on the challenges and opportunities of the digital turn in history through a variety of formats, including conferences, fellowships, and cooperative projects.

My term as GHI director began with a fall season of intellectually engaging events, the highlights of which we are sharing with you in this issue. The first feature article presents last fall’s Annual Lecture, delivered by Jerry Z. Muller (Catholic University of America) on the topic “Capitalism and the Jews Revisited.” In his lecture, Professor Muller brilliantly combines religious, intellectual, social, and economic history to explore the difficult, and potentially controversial, question of why Jews have been disproportionately successful in entrepreneurial and capitalist societies. In her incisive comment, Miriam Rürup (Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden, Hamburg) expands both the historical and historiographical context from “Jews and Capitalism” to the larger subject of “minorities and modernity.” The following feature article presents the Leibniz lecture delivered

by Leibniz Prize Winner Friedrich Lenger (University of Gießen) at the GHI on “Defining the Modern Metropolis.” In this article, Lenger, a former chair of the GHI’s Academic Advisory Board, uses his deep knowledge of the history of the city to analyze the connections between the famous “universal expositions” that punctuated the era from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century and the enduring transformations of the cities that hosted these expositions.

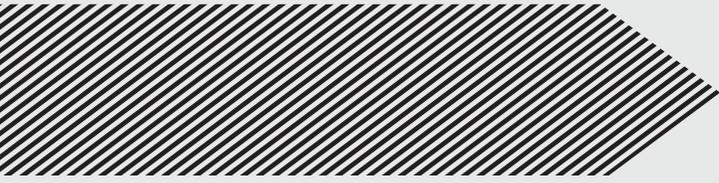
The next feature article presents the dissertation research of the latest winner of the Fritz Stern Dissertation Prize, awarded by the Friends of the GHI each November. In her article “The Prussians of the East: Samurai, Bushido, and Japanese Honor in the German Imagination, 1905-1945,” Sarah Panzer gives an overview of her study of German-Japanese transcultural engagement between the Russo-Japanese War and the end of the Second World War. Instead of reifying markers of difference, as in Orientalism or Exoticism, she argues, Germany’s engagement was framed around the reception and emulation of Japanese martial culture. In our final feature article, GHI Research Fellow Elisabeth Engel presents her research project on “Risk and Insurance during the Beginnings of American Independence, 1770-1840.” By analyzing the complex procedures by which insurers and insured systematized the world around them, she seeks to elucidate a new culture of “risk” that characterized and transformed the early American Republic.

As always, the conference reports reflect the diversity of the topics explored at our conferences and seminars, ranging from the history of fraternal networks in the Atlantic world since the late eighteenth century to post-WWII Allied war crimes trials to the economic history of “financialization” in the recent development of capitalism to the role of “heritage” in Jewish diaspora culture. The news section informs you about other Institute activities and publications and the upcoming events calendar gives you a preview of activities. Please also check our website <http://www.ghi-dc.org> as well as our Facebook page for up-to-date information on upcoming events, new publications, and calls for papers.

In closing, I would like to draw your attention to a series of new fellowships, including fellowships in the history of knowledge, digital history, the history of migration, the history of religion and religiosity, the history of family and kinship, and the history of race and ethnicity. I would also like to announce that, starting this year, the GHI will

be issuing an annual call for conference proposals, seeking not only proposals in the GHI's core areas of research but also proposals involving new topics of exploration and new approaches to historical research. For the current "Call for Proposals" (deadline: Aug. 1, 2016) and our fellowship program, please see our website. Finally, I would like to issue a special invitation to those of you working in the history of knowledge or in digital history to contact me if you have any ideas for possible cooperation.

Simone Lässig (Director)



# Features



## CAPITALISM AND THE JEWS REVISITED

29TH ANNUAL LECTURE OF THE GERMAN HISTORICAL INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON DC,  
NOVEMBER 12, 2015

### Jerry Z. Muller

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

“Capitalism and the Jews” is a subject that makes some people nervous.

But you can’t properly understand the modern history of the Jews without thinking about the links between Jews and capitalism. And there is a good deal that you can learn about the social, cultural, and political dynamics of capitalism by paying attention to the case of the Jews.

Yet for many decades after World War II, the subject of Jews and capitalism received less attention than its significance merits. That wasn’t always the case, and happily the situation has now changed for the better. At the beginning of the twentieth century, German Jewish social scientists such as Arthur Ruppin were much concerned with the subject.<sup>1</sup> Jewish scholars of eastern European origin, writing either in Yiddish or German, continued to engage with the subject in the interwar period.<sup>2</sup> The study of Jewish economic history (with an emphasis on statistical data) was continued after the Second World War by a small number of distinguished scholars who had begun their education in interwar eastern and central Europe, most notably the Nobel-prize winning economist Simon Kuznets,<sup>3</sup> Arcadius Kahan, who taught at the University of Chicago,<sup>4</sup> and to some degree by Salo Baron of Columbia University, who maintained an interest in economic history though it was not his focus. Yet it was characteristic of the marginal attention devoted to Jews and capitalism in the decades after WWII that the excellent article on “Economic History” in the *Encyclopedia Judaica* of 1972, written by Baron and Kahan, appeared only in the “Supplementary Entries,” as a sort of afterthought. For decades, the subject remained marginal to both the writing of Jewish history and to the larger history of capitalism.

The historiography of German Jewry was a partial exception to the relative neglect of the modern history of Jews and capitalism. A steady stream of articles and books on various facets of German Jewish economic history appeared, many under the auspices of the Leo Baeck

- 1 See, for example, Arthur Ruppin, *Die Juden der Gegenwart* (Berlin, 1904). On Ruppin, see Derek J. Penslar, *Zionism and Technocracy: The Engineering of Jewish Settlement in Palestine, 1870-1918* (Bloomington, 1991). In preparing this talk I have profited from reading in manuscript Jonathan Karp, “Jews in the Economic Trends in the Modern Period,” a chapter in a forthcoming volume of the *Cambridge History of Judaism*.
- 2 Derek J. Penslar, *Shylock’s Children: Economics and Jewish Identity in Modern Europe* (Berkeley, 2001), 160.
- 3 See the essays collected in Simon Kuznets, *Jewish Economies: Development and Migration in America and Beyond* (2 volumes), ed. Stephanie Lo and E. Glen Weyl (New Brunswick, NJ, 2012), and the useful introduction by Glen Weyl.
- 4 Arcadius Kahan, *Essays in Jewish Social and Economic History* ed. Roger Weiss (Chicago, 1986).

5 Fritz Stern, *Gold and Iron: Bismarck, Bleichröder and the Building of the German Empire* (New York, 1977); Werner L. Mosse, *Jews in the German Economy: The German-Jewish Economic Elite, 1820-1934* (Cambridge, 1987) and *The German-Jewish Economic Elite 1820-1935. A Socio-Cultural Profile* (Cambridge, 1989).

6 To take a few examples from the English language literature: Derek Penslar's book, *Shylock's Children: Economics and Jewish Identity in Modern Europe*, published in 2001, and Jonathan Karp's book, *The Politics of Jewish Commerce: Economic Thought and Emancipation in Europe, 1638-1848* (Cambridge, 2008) showed the centrality of economic issues to Jewish self-understandings and to wider debates about the acceptability of the Jews in modern European societies. A younger generation of historians has produced a stream of works on the involvement of Jews in industries as varied as tavern keeping in Poland (Glenn Dynner), and the liquor trade in the United States (Marni Davis), not to speak of ready-made clothing, banking, entertainment, and the salvage business. Excellent collections of recent work include Gideon Reuveni and Sarah Wobick-Segev, eds., *The Economy in Jewish History: New Perspectives on the Inter-relationship between Ethnicity and Economic Life* (New York, 2011); Rebecca Kobrin, ed., *Chosen Capital: The Jewish Encounter with American Capitalism* (New Brunswick, NJ, 2012) and Rebecca Kobrin and Adam Teller, eds., *Purchasing Power: The Economics of Jewish History* (Philadelphia, 2015). Historians of the Jews have also followed the global turn in historical studies, delving into the Jewish role in trans-continental and transoceanic commerce. Here the pioneer was the great historian, S. D. Goitein,

Institute. Fritz Stern's masterwork, *Gold and Iron*, published in 1977, explored the links and tensions between Junker power and Jewish finance in nineteenth-century Germany through the lens of the relationship between Bismarck and his banker, Bleichröder, while Werner Mosse's two volumes on the German Jewish economic elite provided a detailed account of the most successful Jewish entrepreneurs.<sup>5</sup>

Much has changed in the last decade and a half or so, as a slew of talented historians in North America, Europe, and Israel have turned to the history of Jews and capitalism.<sup>6</sup>

My focus today is not so much on the centrality of capitalism to Jewish history. It is on the significance of the modern history of the Jews in thinking broadly about the history of capitalism. This is hardly a new question: in one form or another it's been a topic of discussion for centuries. To be sure, that discussion has often been ideological and polemical rather than sober and scholarly. But the ideological element is itself an important part of the history of capitalism and the Jews.

I want to examine the issue from a conceptual altitude at which many historians are uncomfortable travelling. That is, I want to convey valid generalizations. Historians and other social scientists have become sensitive to the dangers of "essentializing." That sensitivity is useful when it reminds us of the error of treating group characterizations that are the *product* of history as if they were the *source* of historical development. But the fear of essentializing becomes counter-productive when it leads to the avoidance of all generalization, leaving only a collection of particular cases. There are, of course, exceptions to every rule. To every generalization some historian will say: but it

who was long fascinated by the role of medieval Jews in the trade between the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and India, a topic to which he returned at the end of his life, after completing his masterpiece, *A Mediterranean Society*. In the 1980s, Jonathan Israel explored the central place of the Jews and New Christians (former Jews and crypto-Jews) in trade across the early modern Atlantic: *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism* (London,

1985) and *Diasporas within a Diaspora: Jews, Crypto-Jews, and the World of Maritime Empires, 1540-1740* (Leiden, 2002). More recently Francesca Trivellato has reconstructed the trading networks of Jews from Livorno, Italy who traded across the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the Indian ocean in her book, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven, 2010). Other

historians have investigated the role of transoceanic networks in the modern international traffic in ostrich plumes (Sarah Stein), and in the clothing trade (Adam Mendelsohn). And most recently, Hasia Diner has published a fascinating study of one of the most important types in modern Jewish economic history, the Jewish peddler, in *Roads Taken: The Great Jewish Migrations to the New World and the Peddlers who Forged the Way* (New Haven, 2015).

was different in Pinsk, or Posen, or Peoria, or Petach Tikvah — and no doubt it was. Still, from time to time it is worthwhile to try to see the forest rather than the trees, not to speak of the weeds.

In some respects, the questions of capitalism and the Jews were derailed by a debate at the beginning of the twentieth century between Werner Sombart and Max Weber about the role of religion in the *origins* of capitalism.<sup>7</sup> The fundamental institutional structures of modern capitalism would probably have developed very similarly were there no Jews around — and in that sense, Sombart was wrong. But Sombart was right to call social scientific attention to the issue of capitalism and the Jews, even if his evidence was often haphazard, his knowledge of Judaism deficient, his biologicistic explanations crude, and even though his distaste for both capitalism and Jews colored his analysis.

The issue was handled in a more balanced way by their colleague Georg Simmel in his great work, *The Philosophy of Money*, published in 1900, which is to say six years before Weber published *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* and eleven years before Sombart published his controversial book on *Die Juden und das Wirtschaftsleben* (The Jews and Economic Life). At first glance, Simmel's book would seem to have little to say about the questions that would so exercise Max Weber and Werner Sombart, namely the origins of capitalism and accounting for the role of the Jews in it. But, writing before *The Protestant Ethic* or *The Jews and Economic Life*, Simmel offered his own anticipatory answers to these issues.

While *The Philosophy of Money* draws on a remarkable range of historical data, it provides no genetic account of the “origin” of modern capitalism. That seems to be because Simmel believes there is no historical “break” that marks the beginning of modern capitalism. Rather, modern capitalism is an intensification of processes of exchange that have been going on for a very long time. The greater intensity of monetary exchange itself brings about changes in mentality, and hence there is no need for the sort of cultural explanation offered by Weber and Sombart. As for the Jews, Simmel accounts for their disproportionate participation in early modern capitalism by reference to their social, religious and political position in medieval Europe. Unlike Weber, Simmel does not discount the significance of exchange in explaining the genesis

<sup>7</sup> See Jerry Z. Muller, “Kapitalismus, Rationalisierung und die Juden — Zu Simmel, Weber und Sombart,” in Nicholas Berg (ed.), *Kapitalismusdebatten um 1900 — Über antisemitisierende Semantiken des Jüdischen* (Leipzig, 2011), 23-48, as well as other essays in the same volume.

and nature of capitalism. And unlike Sombart, Simmel does not think that an explanation based on the content of Judaism or the racial characteristics of the Jews is necessary to account for their success. On the contrary, Simmel's emphasis is on the way the business orientation of the Jews can best be explained by their historical condition, a condition shared by other groups that we've come to call "mercantile minorities."<sup>8</sup>

8 Georg Simmel, *Philosophie des Geldes*, 291-91. On Simmel's analysis of the Jews and their relationship to the money economy see Amos Morris-Reich, "The Beautiful Jew is a Moneylender: Money and Individuality in Simmel's Rehabilitation of the 'Jew'" *Theory, Culture and Society* vol. 20, no. 4 (2003), 127-142; and Freddy Raphael, "Die Juden und das Geld nach Georg Simmel," in Otthein Rammstedt, ed., *Georg Simmels Philosophie des Geldes: Aufsätze und Materialien* (Frankfurt, 2003).

9 Arthur Ruppin, *Die Juden der Gegenwart* (Berlin, 1904).

10 "die Juden . . . in erheblich größerem Verhältnis als die europäischen Christen Leute hervorbringen, welche neben Energie und Wagemut auch geistige Beweglichkeit, insbesondere die Gabe schneller Auffassung und Kombination haben. Es gibt kein Wort, welches diese intellektuelle Fähigkeit zutreffend bezeichnet; auch der ihr noch am nächsten kommende Ausdruck 'Schlauheit' (oder die smartness der Nordamerikaner) ist ihr nicht ganz adäquat, und wir haben deshalb für sie . . . das Wort 'Intellektualismus' neu gewählt. Diese Gabe ist es, welche die Juden ebenso zu den besten Schachspielern wie zu tüchtigen wissenschaftlichen Arbeitern, technischen Erfindern und — zu hervorragenden Kaufleuten macht. Nur weil der kaufmännische Beruf infolge seiner größeren Bedeutung im wirtschaftlichen Leben am meisten in die Augen fällt, konnte sich der Schluss einbürgern, daß die Befähigung der Juden *nur* eine Befähigung zum Handeln sei." (Ruppin, *Die Juden der Gegenwart*, 176).

Simmel emphasizes the fact that cultural and religious outsiders are attracted to financial and exchange functions because money provides them with opportunities otherwise closed to them because they are excluded from the personal channels open to the dominant in-group. He puts Jews in the same category as Armenians in Turkey, Parsees in India, Huguenots in France, and Quakers in England, as examples of "the correlation between the central role of money interests and social deprivation." He also calls attention to the role of diasporas as leading to roles as traders and financiers, rather than involvement in primary production. Thus social exclusion and diasporic circumstances are the key factors in accounting for why Jews have tended to be drawn to the money aspects of the economy.

But for Simmel, this does not make them marginal to the process of capitalist development (as Weber would suggest) or central to the genesis of capitalism, as Sombart would argue. Rather it makes the Jews disproportionately successful at a phenomenon that is central to the modern world.

It is undeniably the case that in many times and places, Jews have played a disproportionate role in capitalist economic development and have been disproportionately successful in capitalist societies, not only in the realm of finance, but of commerce more generally, and also in the learned professions. All of that was clear to Arthur Ruppin, a German Jewish social scientist who in 1904 published his study *Die Juden der Gegenwart* [The Jews of Today].<sup>9</sup> Jews seemed to have a knack for commerce, Ruppin maintained, though they were not alone in this regard, nor were their talents confined to the realm of business.<sup>10</sup> He thought that Armenians, Greeks, and Indians of the mercantile castes were often superior to Jews in business acumen. Still, he judged that "The Jews have attained wealth and significance wherever they are not in competition [with these groups] and where the geographical, economic and political circumstances give free rein to their commercial

acuity.”<sup>11</sup> Such opportunities barely existed in eastern Europe and Russia, where most Jews lived in terrible poverty when Ruppin wrote in 1904, but they increasingly did in England, France, Italy, Germany, and the United States, where Jews (at least those who had lived in the United States for more than a generation) were becoming prosperous through entrepreneurial activity.

Jews have been disproportionately involved in the entrepreneurial functions of creating new products, finding new markets for existing products, and pioneering new modes of sales and distribution. Many modern capitalist institutions, while not entirely or even primarily created by Jews, have had a disproportionate number of Jews as entrepreneurial innovators. The rise of department stores, which was an important marketing breakthrough that changed the nature of the shopping experience, was in good part a creation of Jews in Germany, England, and the United States. So too was catalogue shopping (pioneered by Julius Rosenwald of Sears Roebuck). And above all we see Jews as innovators in the realm of information and entertainment: in the creation and expansion of newspapers, magazines, news services like Reuters and Bloomberg; new forms of theater (such as burlesque and vaudeville, nickelodeons and movie houses), professional sports, and of course, the film industry. In each case, these forms of information and entertainment were virgin ground — outside the existing economic establishment, and hence a more promising site for innovation. In recent years, the staff of the GHI has developed a very valuable biographical database of major American entrepreneurs of German immigrant origin. Of the 168 entrepreneurs in the database, 59 are of Jewish origin, that is to say about 35%. Even though this database is not a statistically representative sample, when you consider that of the German immigrants to the US, only about 3% were Jews, it strongly suggests that Jews were over-represented among the entrepreneurs. That’s no accident.

The question of *why* Jews have been disproportionately successful is a fascinating and important one. One answer is the anti-Semitic response: because they are more greedy, more underhanded, and more conspiratorial. But the weakness of that answer by no means negates the importance of the question.

The answers must come from some variation of what economists now call human capital theory — a new name for an old thing — that is, an exploration of the historical sources of distinct cultural propensities within some human group, and the transmission of those

11 “Überall da, wo ihnen nicht gerade Armenier, Griechen, Inder als überlegene Meister gegenübertraten und wo die geographischen, wirtschaftlichen und politischen Verhältnisse ihrem kaufmännischen Scharfsinn freien Spielraum boten, sind die Juden zu Wohlstand und Bedeutung gelangt.” (Ruppin, *Die Juden der Gegenwart*, 178).

propensities across time in familial and communal institutions. Another element of human capital is social capital, that is social networks that create niches for ethnic minorities, especially in areas of trade and finance that require trust not available through formal institutions. Thinking about the sources of Jewish economic success is therefore part of expanding the purview of economics, or more broadly of a social scientific understanding of the micro-social sources of capitalist economic growth. But issues related to Jews and capitalism go far beyond those of economics, however broadly construed. Capitalism is too wide-ranging a subject to be left to the economists, or even to the economic historians. It has social, cultural, intellectual, and political facets as well as economic and technological ones.

Jews and commerce have long been linked in the culture of the West. Jews seem to have migrated to medieval Europe from the Islamic world primarily as merchants. In the high Middle Ages, Jews in Europe were permitted by the church to engage in the stigmatized activity of lending money at interest precisely because they were regarded as outside the community of shared values. Ever since the Middle Ages, then, Jews were associated in the Christian West with the handling of money. It is no wonder, then, that with the growth of capitalism in early and late modern Europe, the intellectual evaluation of an economy in which money played a central role was often intertwined with attitudes toward Jewry.

For a variety of intellectuals in *modern* Europe, Jews served as a kind of metaphor-turned-flesh for capitalism.<sup>12</sup> Some intellectuals argued that only a society in which the reality of shared community was dead would encourage the self-interested economic activities of which money-lending was the paradigm. Many intellectuals regarded Jews as the agents of the creative destruction characteristic of capitalism. They differed in their evaluation of both capitalism and the Jews depending on how they valued the creativity unleashed by capitalism compared to its destruction of traditional forms of life and inherited privilege. So thinking about capitalism and thinking about the Jews often went hand in hand. Hovering above these evaluations was the specter of usury.

Usury was an important concept. It was significant because the condemnation of lending money at interest was based on the presumptive illegitimacy of all economic gain not derived from physical labor. That way of conceiving of economic activity led to a failure

12 The discussion which follows is adapted from chapter one of Jerry Z. Muller, *Capitalism and the Jews* (Princeton, 2010), "The Long Shadow of Usury: Capitalism and the Jews in Modern European Thought," where further references to the secondary literature can be found.

to recognize the role of knowledge and the evaluation of risk in economic life. It led to a pattern of thought quick to condemn first finance, and sometimes commerce more generally. Usury was a sort of anti-human capital theory. One of the great “discoveries” of economists in recent decades is that much of economic performance and economic growth can’t be explained by the traditional triad of land, labor, and capital (in the sense of money available for investment). Rather a good deal of it depends on what people carry around in their heads — it depends on the knowledge, skills, know-how, and orientations that they bring to economic activity.

How does all of this relate to usury? Most classical writers saw no economic justification for deriving income from the merchant’s role of buying and selling goods. Since the material wealth of humanity was assumed to be more or less fixed, the gain of some could only be conceived as a loss to others. Profits from trade were therefore regarded as morally suspect. But of all forms of commerce, none was so suspect and so reviled as finance, the making of money from money. Aristotle regarded the lending of money for the sake of earning interest as unnatural. “While expertise in exchange is justly blamed since it is not according to nature but involves taking from others,” wrote Aristotle, “usury is most reasonably hated because one’s possessions derive from money itself and not from that for which it was supplied. ... So of the sorts of business this is the most contrary to nature.”<sup>13</sup> With the recovery of Aristotle’s thought in the High Middle Ages, the condemnation of usury would come to occupy a central place in the economic writings of Christian theologians and canon lawyers.

This practice, which Aristotle had considered blameworthy, Christian theologians found sinful. Here they drew upon a verse from the twenty-third chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy that had prohibited Jews from lending with interest to one another, but allowed them to lend to non-Jews. “You may lend with interest to foreigners, but to your brother you may not lend with interest.”

By the twelfth century, Christian theologians had concluded that the term “brother” applied to all men, and that the lending of money at interest was always sinful. The problem is that this was the age that we now think of as the commercial revolution of the Middle Ages. And whenever you have commerce, you need credit. So there was tension between theological precepts and the demands of economic life. One method by which the Church resolved this dilemma,

<sup>13</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, ed. Carnes Lord (Chicago, 1984), book 1, chap.10.

beginning in the twelfth century, was to prevent the evil of Christian usury by allowing Jews to engage in that forbidden economic activity. For Jews were not subject to the prohibitions of canon law, and were condemned in any case because of their repudiation of Christ. Thus began an association of money-making with the Jews, an association that would further taint attitudes toward commerce among Christians. And it would continue to cast its shadow into the age of Enlightenment and beyond.

The notion that usury was immoral expressed in sophisticated terms a sentiment widespread among peasants and workers in most times and places, namely that only those whose labor produces sweat are engaged in “real work” — and that others essentially live off the work of those who sweat. Indeed it provides what one might call the “deep structure” of Marx’s thought. In Marx’s notebooks we find him quoting Luther’s tirades against moneylenders. And then Marx writes that Luther “has really caught the character of old-fashioned usury, and that of capital as a whole.”<sup>14</sup>

The argument of Marx’s masterwork, *Das Kapital*, rests on the labor theory of value. And the labor theory of value asserts that capital is fundamentally unproductive. Thus the chapter of *Das Kapital* entitled “The General Formula of Capital” has one main point: that capital is money which makes money, even if in capitalist society it does so through the intermediary stage of the merchant who buys and sells commodities, or the industrialist who buys and sells labor. Or in Marx’s resonant image, “The capitalist knows that all commodities — however shabby they may look or bad they may smell — are in faith and in fact money, internally circumcised Jews, and in addition magical means by which to make more money out of money.”<sup>15</sup> All the traditional prejudices against usury were now reformulated as a critique of the market in the age of industry. The book is replete with images of capitalism as parasitism. For Marx, as for Aristotle, and Luther, money — now rechristened “capital” — is fundamentally unproductive. Those who wield it do so at the expense of others. Indeed, the Marxist theory of “exploitation” acquires much of its resonance from its continuity with the notion that capitalists, like usurers, grow rich by not working, by unjustly living off the work of others.

Marx was by no means the first to connect the critique of capitalism with the traditional stigmatization of usury — nor was he the last. We find the same stigmatization of financial activity in the musings of the Nazi economic theorist Gottfried Feder, author of, among

14 Karl Marx, “Theorien über den Mehrwert,” in *Marx-Engels Werke* (Berlin, 1965), vol. 26, part 1, 525.

15 “Der Kapitalist weiß, daß alle Waaren, wie lumpig sie immer aussehn oder wie schlecht sie immer riechen mögen, im Glauben und in der Wahrheit Geld, innerlich verschnittne Juden sind, und zudem wunderthätige Mittel, um aus Geld mehr Geld zu machen.” *Kapital*, MEGA, vol. 2, part 6, II, 172, my translation.

other works, *A Manifesto on Breaking Monetary Interest Slavery*. The official platform of the Nazi party, of which Feder was the arbiter, called for “the breaking of interest slavery,” once again echoing the condemnation of usury.

Tracing the long shadow of usury casts an unexpected light on the history of thinking about capitalism, and about the Jews. And that shadow takes a variety of forms. For better and for worse, the image of the Jew and the evaluation of capitalism have been deeply intertwined, and the histories of anti-capitalism and anti-Semitism are closely connected. Not long ago, the *Economist* magazine reported on a recent study that showed that in the areas of Germany with the highest historical rates of anti-Semitism, people tend to be more suspicious of finance. As a result, they invest less in the stock market, and so their returns on their investments are lower.<sup>16</sup>

Though I don’t have time to explore the topic in depth today, I should note that all of this affected the ways in which Jews thought about *themselves*. Some thought that their link to commerce and finance was to be applauded (as liberal thinkers from Montesquieu through Friedrich Hayek argued), while other Jews regarded the connection between Jews and commerce as a source of shame and formulated plans to move Jews into other fields, such as crafts and agriculture.

Now let me descend from the level of ideas and ideology to the realm of behavior, political and economic.<sup>17</sup> Here one of the most significant trends is that Jews were particularly *good* at capitalism. As Ruppin noted in 1904, they tended to prosper wherever they attained the civic equality that allowed them to engage freely in market activity. And that, in turn, led to reactions both positive and negative. For Jewish economic success led to very different degrees of Jewish economic *salience*, depending on the economic capacities and commercial orientations of the larger society. And that in turn led to very different *reactions* to Jewish economic success.

Britain and the United States were already highly commercial societies in the nineteenth century, in which most capitalist development was carried out by non-Jews. These were also societies in which commerce tended to be taken for granted, and anti-capitalist sentiments were relatively weak. So in the United States and Britain, Jews could be economically successful without being particularly conspicuous, except in new industries into which Jews moved in search of opportunity, such as the movie business.

16 “Another cost of bigotry: New research finds a link between persecution of Jews and distrust of finance,” *The Economist*, October 18, 2014.

17 The section that follows is adapted from chapter two of *Capitalism and the Jews*, “The Jewish Response to Capitalism,” where further references can be found.

In eastern Europe, by contrast, capitalism was a newer phenomenon. The non-Jewish majority was typically composed of landowners and peasants, neither of them particularly adept at market activity. In these regions, Jews often *were* the commercial class, leading to a close identification of capitalism with the Jews. And since jobs in the government sector were usually closed to Jews, they turned to vocations in the competitive market, from commerce and finance to the classic professions of law, medicine and engineering. Germany fell in between the western European and eastern European pattern. There, Jews were by no means the dominant portion of the commercial classes; but their rapid rise was conspicuous.

The salience of Jews in the economic life of central and eastern Europe in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth is hard to overstate. Werner Mosse's study found that on the eve of the First World War, Jews comprised about a third of the German corporate elite, most of whom made their money in commerce or finance.<sup>18</sup> By the 1920s, 54% of owners of commercial establishments in Hungary were Jews, and Jews comprised 85% of the bank directors and owners of the country's financial institutions. Despite the obstacles placed in their path in imperial Russia, Jews played a disproportionate role in the organization and ownership of major Russian industries, including textiles, sugar refining, flour mills, saw mills, grain and timber, banking, transport, and mining. By 1916, according to a contemporary Russian economist, Jews constituted 35% of the Russian mercantile class. Jews also comprised much of the entrepreneurial class in interwar Poland.<sup>19</sup>

No group was more committed than the Jews to acquiring higher education and the professional occupations that higher education made possible. By the early twentieth century, especially in the capitals and larger cities of central and eastern Europe, such as Vienna, Warsaw, Prague or Budapest, Jews made up 5-10% of the population, but sometimes comprised a majority of the lawyers, engineers, pharmacists and architects.

If Jewish economic performance in central Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was striking, Jewish economic success in the United States would eventually become equally remarkable. Jews moved quickly out of manual labor, in which many first generation immigrants had been engaged, and into proprietorship, management, and professional and technical fields. By the mid-twentieth century, Jews were massively over-represented in the free

18 Werner Mosse, *Jews in the German Economy: The German-Jewish Economic Elite, 1820-1935* (Oxford, 1987), cited in W. D. Rubinstein, "Jews in the Economic Elites of Western Nations and Antisemitism," *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 10, nos. 1 and 2 (2000), 5-35, 9-10.

19 Rubinstein, "Jews in the Economic Elites of Western Nations and Antisemitism," 6, 9.

professions, such as law, medicine, and accounting, and at the beginning of the twenty-first century over half of Jewish men and women were in professional jobs, compared to only one-fifth of non-Jewish white men and women.<sup>20</sup> A detailed study from 2005 showed that Jewish household income in the United States is 70% greater than that of non-Jews, Jewish per capita income is 95% higher, and the net wealth of Jews is several times higher than the national average.<sup>21</sup>

There are a number of ways of accounting for this disproportional achievement. For one thing, Jews had more experience with commerce than most other groups, and that helps explain why they tended to be better at it. Jews have had a preference for market-oriented occupations going back to the Middle Ages. That was partly because Jews were *pushed* out of other economic activities — such as farming and artisanry, from which they were sometimes excluded by the Church and by the religious nature of artisanal guilds. But more important were the factors that *pulled* Jews toward commerce. One of these was the simple fact that Jews on average had much higher rates of literacy, which gave them a comparative advantage when it came to commerce.<sup>22</sup> The suspicion of merchants and commerce so prominent in Christian tradition was lacking among Jews. In the Middle Ages, some rabbinic authorities wanted to encourage Jewish men to devote as much time as possible to study. They therefore preferred commerce to crafts, on the grounds that it was less time-consuming. Compared to Christianity, Judaism *was* more favorably disposed toward commerce.

But more important than the *content* of Judaism was the *contexts* in which Jews found themselves. Often enough, when we look at the history of the Jews from the late Middle Ages on, we find that those who were most eager to take up new economic opportunities did so not because they were following religious dictates, but because they were unconstrained by religious authority. It seems, for example, that Jews began to lend money at interest in medieval Europe before that practice was legitimated by rabbinic authorities — that is to say, Jewish law *followed* Jewish practice, rather than the other way around.<sup>23</sup> In the early modern Atlantic world, merchants of Spanish and Portuguese Jewish origin (some of whom had been forced to convert to Christianity) engaged in commerce in ways and in places that were not sanctioned by rabbinic authority, or followed economic opportunity regardless of rabbinic preferences.<sup>24</sup> Today, in both the United States and in Israel, the most Orthodox are the least likely

20 Barry R. Chiswick, “The Economic Progress of American Jewry: From Eighteenth-Century Merchants to Twenty-First-Century Professionals,” in Aaron Levine (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Judaism and Economics* (New York, 2010), 642-3.

21 Tom W. Smith, *Jewish Distinctiveness in America: A Statistical Portrait*, (New York, 2005), 6; also Barry Chiswick, op cit.)

22 A theme most fully developed in Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, *The Chosen Few: How Education Shaped Jewish History, 70-1492* (Princeton, 2012).

23 See on this Salo Baron, “Economic History,” *Encyclopedia Judaica*; Haym Soloveitchik, “The Jewish Attitude in the High and Late Middle Ages (1000-1500),” in Diego Quaglioni, Giacomo Todeschini and Gian Maria Varanini, eds., *Credito e Usura, fra Teologia, Diritto, e Amministrazione* (Rome, 2005), 115-127; and Michael Toch, *The Economic History of European Jews. Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2013).

24 Yosef Kaplan, “The Religious World of a Jewish International Merchant in the Age of Mercantilism: The Embarrassment of Riches of Abraham Israel Pereyra,” in *Religion and Economy: Connections and Interactions*, ed. Menachem Ben-Sasson (Jerusalem, 1995), 233-251 (Hebrew).

to attain economic and professional success — nor do they aspire to it. If the most religious are the least economically successful, it is difficult to point to the content of traditional Judaism as the major source of Jewish economic achievement.

Instead we must look to political, social, and economic history for the sources. In pre-modern European societies, Jews were outside the feudal order of serfs, landowning nobility, and merchants and artisans organized into exclusive guilds. The roles they assumed were largely those of middlemen between producers and consumers: a commercial ladder ranging from peddling and hawking (selling from a horse and cart), through pawnbroking and moneylending, through inter-regional and international trade. Worldly survival meant the ability to cultivate a rational economic ethos, based on maximizing profitability, assessing risk, exploring new markets, and minimizing consumption to maximize the accumulation of capital. These were the value orientations and character traits with which they entered the modern capitalist world.

Another part of their cultural ethos was what sociologist Victor Karady has dubbed “religious intellectualism.”<sup>25</sup> Theirs was a religion oriented to continuous contact with texts: a culture of handling books, reading them, and reflecting upon their messages. This was an essential element of Jewish religious culture, and one that distinguished them from most other mercantile minorities. No wonder then that when the learned professions were opened to them, Jews excelled in them. This heritage of religious intellectualism may help explain a widely noted phenomenon, namely the tendency of modern Jews to invest heavily in the education of their children. As labor economist Barry Chiswick has noted, some groups, including the Jews, may have a greater “taste” for education because their rates of economic return on schooling are greater, either because of the orientations conveyed in their homes or because of innate ability.<sup>26</sup>

All of this was a recipe for what economists now call “cultural capital.” Jews tended to possess the behavioral traits conducive to success in a capitalist society. They entered commercializing societies with a stock of “know-how” from their families and communities about how markets work, about calculating profit and loss, about assessing and taking risks. Most important, though hardest to specify, Jews demonstrated a propensity for discovering new wants and for bringing underused resources to the market. They tended to be on the lookout for new opportunities, reaching out to underserved markets

25 Victor Karady, *The Jews of Europe in the Modern Era* (Budapest, 2004).

26 Barry Chiswick, “Differences in Education and Earnings Across Racial and Ethnic Groups: Tastes, Discrimination, and Investments in Child Quality,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 103, no. 3 (Aug. 1988): 571-597.

(as peddlers for example), or creating new products, or new forms of marketing.

Social networks also played an important role. Jews were spread out across many countries, but to some extent they shared a common language and a sense of common fate. Under circumstances where there is a lack of reliable institutional redress of commercial disputes (and that is the case in most times and places before the twentieth century) people are more likely to engage in distant commerce with those who they think they can trust, and the shared religion of Judaism seemed like the most reliable indicator of trustworthiness. Of course trust is a relative thing, and it was sometimes betrayed (as Francesca Trivellato shows in her book). But it worked well enough, often enough, to be an important factor in allowing Jews to engage in trans-regional and international trade.

It is frequently noted that as a discriminated against minority, Jews often sought out economic “niches” in which they could find opportunity. There is a great deal of validity to that broad generalization. But as important are the qualities of “resourcefulness” that led Jews to *abandon* economic niches in a timely fashion. In a dynamic capitalist economy, long-term success is a function not only of getting into a potentially rising business at the right time, but also a readiness to get *out* of a declining business or sector before you go bankrupt. Economic failure often comes from sticking to a niche in which one once had a comparative advantage but no longer does. In the United States, for example, a substantial number of first generation immigrants from eastern Europe moved from the ranks of workers in the clothing trades to become entrepreneurs in the clothing trades. But as significant is the fact that many *left* clothing manufacturing shortly thereafter. By the second generation, at the latest, they had moved into other forms of retailing, and then into real estate and the professions.<sup>27</sup> In the long run, then, ongoing economic success depends on not having too strong a commitment to any particular business or profession.

To whatever we attribute the extent of Jewish economic success, by the late nineteenth century, the salient economic success of Jews in societies undergoing capitalist development created psychological and political effects, as Jews became an object of envy and resentment. Jewish awareness of the resentment aroused by disproportionate Jewish success led to a variety of strategies, of which the most important, perhaps, was Zionism.

27 Andrew Godley, “Cultural Determinants of Jewish Immigrant Entrepreneurship in the US and USA and British and American Culture,” in Mark Casson and Andrew Godley, eds., *Cultural Factors in Economic Growth* (Berlin, 2000), 125-141; 133. Ruppin was well aware of this phenomenon, Ruppin, 189-190.

As I have tried to argue, the relationship of the Jews to capitalism is highly important for understanding not only modern Jewish history, but many elements of the modern history of capitalism, and given that significance, the subject has received less attention than it merits. Let me say a bit about why that has been the case.

For Jews, Jewish economic success has long been a source of both pride and embarrassment. The fact that Jewish economic success led anti-Semites to condemn capitalism as a form of Jewish domination and exploitation, or attributed Jewish success to unsavory qualities of the Jews themselves, or simply the fact that success aroused envy led Jews to downplay the reality of Jewish economic achievement, especially in the decades after the Holocaust.

For economists and economic historians, the extent to which modern capitalism has been and continues to be shaped by older cultural predispositions is a source of puzzlement at best, and dismissal at worst. It simply doesn't fit into the categories in which those economic historians who have adopted the armature of econometrics are predisposed to think. In recent decades, economists have added the concept of "human capital" to their kitbag. But they prefer to think of it in terms of measurable criteria such as years of schooling. To the extent that human capital involves character traits and varieties of "know-how" that are not provided by formal education, it becomes methodologically elusive.

The subject is also neuralgic to a number of political camps. For nationalists, especially in eastern Europe, the fact that modern nationalism had fateful consequences for the Jews precisely because the Jews were so *good* at capitalism was itself a source of embarrassment. In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many nationalist movements sought to restrict Jewish citizenship and legal equality out of the perception (partly founded) that Jews excelled at capitalist activity compared to their non-Jewish countrymen. For many nationalists in countries from pre-revolutionary Russia to Poland, Hungary, and Germany, the "real" nation was defined in good part over-and-against the Jews. When economic life was conceived of as a zero-sum game, in which the gains of some could only come at the expense of others, the gains of the Jews were made responsible for the psychic or material pains of the "authentic" members of the nation. The extent to which the fellow-feeling between gentry, artisans, peasants, and industrial workers was forged in a shared and cultivated antipathy to the Jewish

“other” is a part of national history that nationalists would rather forget.

For Jews of the Marxist left, capitalism was by definition a system of exploitation and inequity. Who wanted to be associated with *that*? So for them Jewish economic success was a matter to be overlooked or explained away.

For liberals, the reality of differential group achievement under conditions of legal equality is something of a scandal, an affront to egalitarian assumptions. For it casts a shadow of doubt on the shibboleth of “equality of opportunity.” For if it turns out that the ability to take advantage of opportunity is deeply influenced by cultural traits with long historical roots, and transmitted in the private realm of the family and the cultural community, then inequality of outcome cannot be attributed merely to legal discrimination. Nor can it be eliminated by formal, public institutions, such as schools.

For all these reasons, the exploration of Jews and capitalism has tended to be left to apologists, ideologues, and anti-Semites. But it needn't be that way. As I have indicated, there are promising trends among historians, economists, and sociologists. I hope I've convinced you that the subject of capitalism and the Jews is one that ought to be of interest to a wide range of historians and social scientists. So, when it comes to thinking about capitalism and the Jews — don't be so nervous.

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## CAPITALISM AND THE JEWS REVISITED: A COMMENT

COMMENT ON THE 29TH ANNUAL LECTURE OF THE GERMAN HISTORICAL INSTITUTE,  
WASHINGTON DC, NOVEMBER 12, 2015

### Miriam Rürup

INSTITUT FÜR DIE GESCHICHTE DER DEUTSCHEN JUDEN, HAMBURG

Right at the beginning of his lecture, Jerry Muller points out that researching the history of the link between Jews and capitalism can enhance our understanding of two topics: the modern history of the Jews and the dynamics of capitalism in general. His main assumption is that Jews were disproportionately successful in capitalism. In both his lecture today and in his book<sup>1</sup>, he traces the historical reasons for the special connection between Jews and capitalism that brought about this phenomenon — and the *perceptions* of this phenomenon. He then argues that leaving aside anti-Semitic diatribes, neither scholarship nor public attention in general has focused enough on the striking fact of the successful Jews and their connection to capitalism.

The title of Jerry Muller’s lecture contains the word “revisited.” So what is it that we are “revisiting” here? Maybe the word “revisited” in this instance refers not only to Muller’s revisiting his own writings on the subject, *but* also to rethinking and revisiting a debate among nineteenth-century Jewish thinkers, which took place in a very specific historic setting. For Jerry Muller’s lecture refers back to Jewish thinkers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, such as Arthur Ruppin and others of eastern European origin, who already claimed a special connection between capitalism and the Jews — most of them *proudly so*. In telling us to not be “nervous” when thinking about this connection, Jerry Muller is, in a way, close to the spirit of Arthur Ruppin, who considered the successful Jewish role in the new capitalist societies with a great deal of pride.

What I will set out to do in my comment is to present two sets of questions and remarks. The first set consists of three general remarks on aspects that I found striking and intriguing while reading and listening to Jerry Muller’s lecture and which made me think about different aspects of my own work in Jewish history. The second set of remarks or reflections examines the uniqueness of the connection between Jews and capitalism. I want to try to challenge this idea of uniqueness and invite Jerry Muller to look at it even more broadly than he does.

1 Jerry Z. Muller, *Capitalism and the Jews* (Princeton, NJ 2010).

In his lecture, he gives us very comprehensive and useful insights into an important distinction: the *perception* of Jews as being linked to capitalism and the *empirical reality* of that perception. The role of Jews as money handlers that emerged in the Middle Ages was part of the empirical reality of the Jewish relationship with money. It then became a metaphor for the perception of Jews in general — often enough in anti-Jewish, and later in anti-Semitic terms.

### I. Zionism and the idea of manual labor

In Christian theology and, more generally, in Christian thinking from the Middle Ages on, handling money for profit — as moneylenders did — was an act that was condemned and prohibited for Christians. Although it was not an honorable activity for Jews either, money lending effectively became an activity that only Jews could engage in. The Christian rejection of handling money for profit went along with a deep *contempt* for profit gained from anything but physical labor. I would agree with this line of argument, advanced in Jerry Muller's analysis, up to a point. However, my first caveat is that, historically speaking, the contempt for non-physical labor became dissociated from the contempt for Jewish money-lending and eventually even from its anti-Jewish context and turned into an anti-capitalist position in its own right. To be sure, the idealization of manual labor also became a key element in anti-Semitic ideology and rhetoric. But Zionist thinkers, too, were convinced of the improving effects of physical and manual labor; in fact this position was very strong within Zionism from its beginnings. Looking back at its historical background, we can see that this idea also existed within non-Zionist Jewish society during the early phase of capitalism and the emancipation of the Jews, that is, at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

When Christian Wilhelm Dohm published his treatise “Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der deutschen Juden” (1781), he included prescriptions for the “improvement” of the social and economic profile of German Jews in order for them to become worthy citizens of the German nation. When Jewish thinkers took on the task of fully becoming part of German — secular and bourgeois — society, they also demanded this “improvement” of the Jews, this “self-emancipation,” as it was later called by Zionist thinker Leon Pinsker.<sup>2</sup>

While this certainly was a concept that originated with Christian thinkers, it was also adopted by Jewish modernizers themselves. Thus examining the discourse within the Jewish community and

2 For this important document, see the new commented edition: Christian Wilhelm Dohm, *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden. Kritische und kommentierte Studienausgabe*, ed. Wolf Christoph Seifert (Göttingen, 2015).

the specific historic context broadens the picture. Looking at this multilayered discourse taking place during the era of Jewish legal and social emancipation, we can see that the idea of a change, of “betterment,” particularly of alteration of the social and professional profile of the Jews, was an idea that emerged from discourse within the Jewish community. I agree that it reflects the Christian idea of a productive society built by productive citizens. If we look even more closely at the major Zionist thinkers who entered the stage far later, at the end of the nineteenth century, it becomes evident that the target audience of those calling for a “betterment” of the German Jews or the modern bourgeois Jews were not anti-Semites, but the orthodox, religious, and traditional Jews.

Once Zionism entered the picture, the idea of “productive” labor, meaning physical labor, became part of a Jewish body politics with regard to the Zionist citizen-to-be. The target group those Zionists addressed with their call for productive, physical labor was not so much non-Jewish society and even less the anti-Semites, but rather the religious Jews who stuck to their books and religious practice. In a quite condescending manner, they used to call them “ghetto-Jews” in contrast to the new “Halutz” (pioneer) who had yet to be trained.

The leaders of this movement honestly believed this was the way to educate the new citizens for their new, modern society. This idea resulted from the fact that Jews were now allowed to move into other professional fields that had simply not been accessible and open to them before the emancipation of the Jews. Thus, the emergence of a capitalist and modern society coincided with the emergence of new, Jewish ideas about how the Jewish citizen of Germany should be educated and what he should stand for. So perhaps we are not so much dealing with an anti-Semitic or Jewish marginalization discourse, but with a modern discourse.

## **II. Migration and cultural capital**

As Jerry Muller noted in his lecture, Jews in eastern Europe and Russia were generally living far below the poverty line when they started to migrate to the West. In countries further west such as England, France, Germany, and the United States, however, they increasingly became successful as entrepreneurs in their countries of migration. Scholarship on Jewish migration has often assumed that the reason for migration was to be found in the pogroms and other forms of anti-Semitic persecution. Although there is, of course, no way of denying

the impact of the pogroms on Jewish migration to the West, there also was another aspect: Often the reason to migrate to “the West” from eastern Europe was the prospect of leaving behind a life in poverty for a promise of good work and a well-to-do or at least economically stable life in the “New World.”<sup>3</sup> This promise and hope the Jewish migrants shared with the German peasant migrants of the mid-nineteenth century who left Germany for the United States not for political, but for economic reasons. So there is a shared background here as far as motives for migration are concerned.

Therefore, it may not come as much of a surprise that — prior to the mass exodus caused by Nazi persecution — many nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Jewish immigrants in the United States became successful entrepreneurs. If we were to look at the social profile of those Jews who immigrated, we would probably find that they were successful not so much because they were Jews, but because they were young, optimistic and ambitious, and striving to build new lives in a new country. On a side note, the gendered division of labor among Jews was different compared to other immigration groups.<sup>4</sup> For within Jewish orthodoxy it was much more common for women to work as entrepreneurs in small merchant enterprises. So in a way this family division of labor might have enhanced the success of German Jewish or eastern European Jewish entrepreneurs in the United States.

### III. The importance of literacy

As Jerry Muller points out in his lecture, literacy was a key factor in achieving economic success in both Germany and the United States. I agree that literacy and education are important in order to be successful in a capitalist society and perhaps in any modern society. And while I would concur that rates of literacy were higher among Jewish men and women, I would note that since literacy in itself increased one’s chances at success in capitalist societies, success through literacy was not necessarily a Jewish phenomenon. It would be vital to compare the Jewish case to other minority cases on this point. Jerry Muller quoted what Victor Karady<sup>5</sup> called the “religious intellectualism” of the Jews. While I would confirm that observation based on my knowledge of German-Jewish history, I wonder whether this really is a “Jewish” phenomenon or whether we should recognize it as a more universal pattern of social mobility for which the Jewish case stands as a striking example, but one that can also be transferred and compared to other minority cases.

3 Charlotte Erickson, “Jewish People in the Atlantic Migration, 1850-1914,” in Aubrey Newman and Stephen W. Massil, eds., *Patterns of Migration, 1850-1914* (London, 1996), 1-20; John Klier, “Emigration Mania in Late Imperial Russia: Legend and Reality,” *ibid.*, 21-30.

4 Paula Hyman, “Gender and the Immigrant Jewish Experience in the United States,” in Judith Baskin, ed., *Jewish Women in Historical Perspective* (Detroit, 1991), 222-239.

5 Victor Karady, *The Jews of Europe in the Modern Era: A Social-Historical Outline* (Budapest, 2004).

The emphasis on education — which is what literacy stands for here — was a means to climb the social ladder, and it worked surprisingly quickly for the Jewish minority, who seemed to have been waiting at the doors of Christian society for the opportunity to claim their share in the emerging bourgeois society. Once the doors to becoming fully accepted citizens and thus part of modern society were opened to the Jews, they did what they could in order to achieve the cultural and social capital that was necessary in order to climb the social ladder. Thus literacy, education, “Bildung” definitely were important. However, we still need to explain why Jews — despite having accumulated both social and cultural capital — were still refused access to socially and politically relevant circles and honorable institutions in many societies.

Examples for this social exclusion can be found among some of Hamburg’s wealthy and successful Jews with a lot of cultural and social capital. One such example was Salomon Heine,<sup>6</sup> the rich uncle who financially supported author Heinrich Heine throughout his lifetime, who invested incredible sums into building and rebuilding Hamburg after the great fire of 1842 and received a great deal of gratitude — and yet this gratitude never paid off in the sense that one would have expected in terms of “social and cultural capital.” A seat in the prestigious Hamburger Handelskammer [chamber of commerce], for instance, was denied him for no other reason than his being Jewish. Thus the notion of social and cultural capital does not explain why even those Jews who had achieved this “capital” did not necessarily gain the respect and honor they expected to receive. They were not socially respected, no matter how important and well-known their achievements were.

Let me now move beyond the immediate context of Jerry Muller’s lecture to discuss three sets of issues that relate to the special — in the sense of unique — link between Jews and capitalism.

#### IV. The Jewish experience of violence

One very specific link between Jews and capitalism is the experience of violence. If we look at capitalist systems and societies, we always encounter violence. I don’t just mean physical violence, but also structural violence. What I find striking is that if we look at modern Jewish history as Jerry Muller suggests, we see that Jews are not only perceived as invariably connected to questions of money and the economy, but that their role in the economy and in modern

6 Susanne Wiborg, *Salomon Heine: Hamburgs Rothschild, Heinrichs Onkel* (Hamburg, 1994).

business life are always the first to be attacked. Jerry Muller mentioned department stores, which became a target of anti-Semitic aggression, first expressed rhetorically, then also physically. In this instance, anti-modern resentment against advertising and big department stores combined with anti-Semitism in interwar Europe and the Weimar Republic.

Likewise, early Nazi legislation and anti-Semitic campaigns were specifically directed at the economic role of Jews: the boycott of Jewish shops and merchants and, even more drastically, the destruction of Jewish shops during the November Pogrom in 1938. The 1933 boycott of Jewish shops in Germany was one of the first public events aimed at showing the Jews that they would not have a future in Germany. Yet anti-Semitic aggression focusing on the role of Jews as economically successful people was not limited to the era of National Socialism.

Two postwar scandals in German-Jewish relations serve to illustrate this point: the Philipp Auerbach (1906-1952) case, and, more recently, the Werner Nachmann (1925-1988) case. Nachmann was director of the Central Council of the Jews in Germany, just as Auerbach was in the 1950s. Admittedly, both of them were involved in criminal actions, namely embezzlement and fraud involving restitution money.<sup>7</sup> While I do not wish to downplay their criminal acts, it is worth noting that the way the public reacted to these cases was again a violent one. Germany's Jewish community experienced not only a public outcry, but strikingly aggressive anti-Semitic rhetoric and agitation. Thus even in the postwar period anti-Semitism was — and, unfortunately, to this day, often is — linked to, to put it bluntly, “money and the Jews.”

## V. The specific Jewish experience with non-material aspects of trade

Perhaps one of the reasons why Jews were successful in capitalism was that they had a lot of experience with exchanging and trading non-material aspects of social life. I would argue that there is a specific Jewish experience regarding the non-material aspects of exchanging “goods” for “deeds.” For on the eve of modern societies becoming modern and capitalist, another big change occurred in Jewish life: the *Haskalah*, the Jewish movement of Enlightenment. With the *Haskalah* came the idea of legal and social emancipation of the Jews, as I mentioned above, as well as the principle of exchanging or trading the “good” (product) of assimilation and secularization for the benefit (profit) of full equality. Since the *Haskalah* and the idea of

7 Michael Brenner, *After the Holocaust: Rebuilding Jewish Lives in Postwar Germany* (Princeton, 1997), 135-138. See, more generally, Anthony D. Kauders, “Money Makes the Jew Go Round: Money and the Jewish Search for Flexibility,” in Gideon Reuveni and Sarah Wobick-Segev, eds., *The Economy in Jewish History: New Perspectives on the Interrelationship between Ethnicity and Economic Life* (Oxford 2010), 62-76.

legal emancipation, the fundamental belief was that, if you are willing to assimilate, you will gain full acceptance and full citizenship as a benefit. So this idea of trading non-material goods and gaining profit from them — which also constitutes the basic pattern of capitalism — might indeed have been a unique Jewish experience, which helped and enhanced Jewish success in capitalist and modern societies. The experience of trading such non-material “goods” was as characteristic of modern Jewish history as it was of capitalism. Perhaps this link can also help explain the successful way in which Jews dealt with capitalist structures.

## VI. The perception of Jews as an enigmatic and arcane group

The rise of capitalism also saw the spread of anti-Semitic claims of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy. Following on the heels of the advent of capitalism came the publication and wide distribution as a “best seller” of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (1903). These “protocols” fueled the idea of “the Jews” as a mysteriously powerful people, yet powerful in a way that could barely be proven, thus again “non-material.” What we see here is that Jews are viewed as a powerful people, wielding a power that cannot really be explained because it is perceived as an arcane power that can neither be named nor pointed out.

This non-materiality is something we come across over and over again in modern Jewish history: Jews as detached from territoriality (as *Luftmenschen*); Jews as successful businesspeople without doing “productive” work, i.e. physical, measurable work; Jews as being influential and powerful without having an actual territorial state of their own.

All this adds up to an image of Jews as an arcane people endowed with mysterious power that was attributed to its diasporic existence, or, to put it differently: Jews were seen (and saw themselves) as a universal people, just as capitalism was or turned out to be a universal phenomenon. Jews therefore seemed well prepared for prospering in capitalist structures, both from the Jewish and from the anti-Semitic perspective. Thus their diasporic existence could be seen as both a benefit and a disadvantage. Capitalism and diaspora both are universalist concepts, transcending national borders — and maybe that is why Jews were successful or relevant to both capitalism and communism (a subject on which Jerry Muller has written a very thoughtful essay in his book<sup>8</sup>), being a transgressive, diasporic

8 Jerry Z. Muller, “Radical Anticapitalism. The Jew as Communist,” in Muller, *Capitalism and the Jews* (Princeton, 2010), 133-188.

minority themselves. The idea that diasporic groups benefit from transgressing national camps because it makes them more prone to success in capitalist societies also invites us to look at other minority histories. By the same token, we should look not only at the idea of capitalism, but at the idea of modernity in general, which in turn might lead us to conclude that Jews did not act as Jews, but as a minority. And that they did not act in capitalist societies, but in modern societies. Hence, in a way, we might conclude that while Jerry Muller set out tonight to revisit the topic of “Jews and Capitalism,” he ended up speaking about “minorities and modernity” — a subject worth pursuing.

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## DEFINING THE MODERN METROPOLIS: UNIVERSAL EXPOSITIONS FROM THE MID-NINETEENTH TO THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY

LEIBNIZ LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE GERMAN HISTORICAL INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON DC,  
OCTOBER 3, 2015<sup>1</sup>

**Friedrich Lenger**

JUSTUS-LIEBIG UNIVERSITY GIESSEN

### I. Introduction

In this lecture, I wish to analyze the emergence of the standards defining a modern metropolis and the role that universal expositions — also referred to as world’s fairs — played in this process.<sup>2</sup> While a true metropolis plays a central role in setting these standards, it is sufficient for a world city — a quality ascribed to Imperial Berlin time and again — to live up to these. If we take Christopher Bayly’s definition of modernity as “an aspiration to be ‘up with the times,’” then the claim of world’s fairs to universality was more than just pretentious.<sup>3</sup> The standards set by the universal expositions, and discussed intensely in numerous congresses connected with them, were accepted far beyond Europe and the United States. Huge exhibitions in Constantinople and Cairo in the 1860s, to offer an early example, clearly copied the models of world’s fairs in London and Paris.<sup>4</sup> Still, for most of the second half of the nineteenth century these were largely European affairs before the United States began to play a dominant role towards the end of the century. Quite often centenaries of national significance prompted these huge exhibitions, as in the case of Philadelphia in 1876, Paris in 1889 or in Buenos Aires, where one hundred years of independence were celebrated in 1910.<sup>5</sup> Since the interwar years, universal expositions lost some of their earlier importance, and the discussion about the standards for a modern metropolis was taken over by ever more specialized congresses and expositions, a process that clearly had begun during the second half of the nineteenth century but now accelerated considerably.

Town planning in 1910 is a case in point. When the Universal City Planning Exhibition in Berlin opened its gates in May 1910, a number of its participants had just visited the Ninth International Housing Congress in Vienna. And similarly, in September and October of the same year, some participants of the International City Planning

1 Leibniz lecture held on October 3, 2015 at the German Historical Institute Washington by invitation of the German Research Foundation and the German Embassy. The lecture has been revised for publication, but the tone of a lecture has been largely retained; a few footnotes have been added.

2 See the excellent survey by Emily S. Rosenberg, “Transnationale Strömungen in einer Welt, die zusammenrückt,” in Rosenberg, ed., *1870-1945. Weltmärkte und Weltkriege, (=Geschichte der Welt*, ed. Akira Iriye/Jürgen Osterhammel, vol. 5) (Munich, 2012) 815-998, esp. 889-906; in what follows I draw heavily on Friedrich Lenger, *Metropolen der Moderne. Eine europäische Stadtgeschichte seit 1850* (Munich, 2013) (an English translation of the first part has appeared as id., *European Cities in the Modern Era, 1850-1914* (Leiden/Boston, 2012) and Lenger, “Metropolenkonkurrenz. Die Weltausstellungen in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts,” *Journal of Modern European History* XI (2013/3): 329-350.

3 Christopher Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World 1780-1914* (Oxford, 2004), 10.

4 See Rosenberg, *Transnationale Strömungen*, 893.

5 See e.g. Kerstin Lange, *Tango in Paris und Berlin. Eine transnationale Geschichte der Metropolenkultur um 1900* (Göttingen, 2015), 11.

exhibition in Düsseldorf moved on to a parallel event at the Royal Academy in London. In both cities, the original drawings by Jules Guérin for the 1909 Plan of Chicago by Daniel H. Burnham and Edward H. Bennett were the star attractions.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, the contributions to the competition for a Greater Berlin were displayed and discussed in Boston and other North American cities. What had been integrated into the world's fairs during the 1850s and 1860s, where model houses for the working classes had been displayed, for example, was now relegated to expert discussions in an intense transatlantic dialogue.

In what follows I would like to invite you on a brief journey to the sites of a few important universal expositions. Given the time constraints, this journey will at best be an appetizer leaving aside many fascinating expositions such as the two world's fairs organized in Barcelona in 1888 and 1929 which, in addition to the Olympic Games of 1992, transformed one of Europe's most attractive cities. Instead I will begin with the earliest expositions in London and Paris, whose crucial importance for defining a modern metropolis cannot be in doubt, before turning to two late-nineteenth-century exhibitions in the second part of this lecture. These still displayed the characteristics summarized by Georg Simmel in 1896, when his visit to the industrial exposition in Berlin prompted the following reflections: "It is a particular attraction of world's fairs that they form a momentary center of world civilization, assembling the products of the entire world in a confined space as if in a single picture."<sup>7</sup> This is no longer true today, and I would be surprised if a majority of you were aware that there is a world exposition in Milan going on while we are in this room. Rather than taking the story to the present, I will conclude with a look at developments following the last major Paris world exposition in 1937.

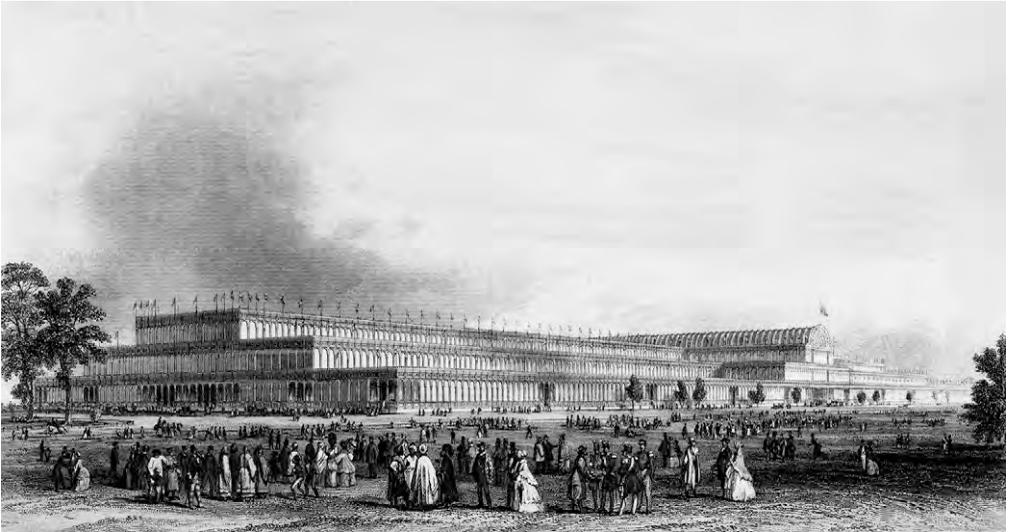
## **II. From London (1851) to Paris (1855/1867) with a brief stop in Vienna (1873)**

Marx and Engels had been less generous than Simmel when they commented on the plans for the Great Exhibition of Works of Industry of All Nations in London in 1851 — commonly accepted as the first world's fair. They interpreted it as "conclusive proof of the concentrated power with which great industry suppresses national boundaries everywhere." In their view, the presentation of industrial products equaled "a great exam" in which the countries of the world were to demonstrate "how they had used their time."<sup>8</sup> The productive forces as standards of universal development that Marx and Engels

6 See Christiane Crasemann Collins, *Werner Hegemann and the Search for Universal Urbanism* (New York, 2005), 45-56 and Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings. Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, MA, 1998), 160-208.

7 Quoted from the translation in Alexander C.T. Geppert, *Fleeting Cities. Imperial Expositions in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (Basingstoke, 2010), 327.

8 Friedrich Engels/Karl Marx, "Revue. Mai bis Oktober (1850)," in id., *Werke*, vol. 7, (Berlin, 1960), 421-463, 430f.; unless otherwise noted all translations are my own.



alluded to were clearly visible even if some ways of displaying things may irritate us today. In many ways, Joseph Paxton's enormous Crystal Palace itself was the most impressive and the most telling industrial object.

Made up of thousands of identical elements, the Palace made clear that it could not have been built without the most recent machine tools. Nor could it, without these tools, have been taken down after the closure of the exhibition and re-erected as a commercial amusement center in another part of the city. Georg Simmel may have had the Crystal Palace in mind when, in 1896, he characterized exhibition architecture as transitory, stressing, however: "Because this fact is unequivocally imprinted on it, the buildings do not at all seem unstable."<sup>9</sup> At the time, the dominant building materials — iron and glass — were associated primarily with the construction of railway stations — themselves symbols of the modern age.

The architecture of the Crystal Palace certainly contributed to the attraction of the London event, which counted more than six million visitors. Accessible for one shilling once a week, it drew a socially diverse crowd, which included the "respectable" working class. Travel agencies organized visits across the United Kingdom, so that it seems fair to talk about the beginnings of mass tourism. For most of these visitors, among whom the number of foreign visitors — estimated at around 40,000 — remained limited, it was probably their first visit to London. London was keen to improve its attractions by extending the

**Figure 1: London's Crystal Palace, the Great Industrial Exposition, 1851. Hand-colored engraving ©North Wind Picture Archives. Reproduced with permission.**

<sup>9</sup> Georg Simmel, "Berliner Gewerbe-Ausstellung (25.7.1896)," in id., *Miszellen, Glossen, Stellungnahmen, Umfrageantworten, Leserbriefe, Diskussionsbeiträgen 1889-1918*, (=Gesamtausgabe, vol. 17) (Frankfurt a.M., 2004), 33-38, 36.

opening hours of the British Museum and postponing the summer holiday closures of the National Gallery as well as more commercial enterprises like Madame Tussaud's, the zoo and the music halls. The contemporary debate reflected the rift between the serious, educational intentions of the organizers around Prince Albert and the visitors' demands for entertainment and consumption. In the short run, this conflict crystallized in the struggle over the future of the Crystal Palace. While Prince Albert succeeded in channeling the financial surplus of the exhibition into educational institutions on its former South Kensington site, commerce and amusement venues were moved to Sydenham, where the new name of the re-erected building — the People's Palace — emphasized that these were very popular demands.<sup>10</sup> The tension between education and entertainment was a recurring one at later universal fairs. Those who lamented the overarching role of commerce and entertainment were usually unaware, however, that addressing an undifferentiated mass of consumers helped to hide inequalities since these expositions sidelined working class interests, relegated women to separate pavilions, and treated non-white people as colonial subjects.

One aspect that was not yet dominant in the London exhibition of 1851 was the conscious exposition of the modernity of the city itself. In this respect, the Parisian expositions of the 1850s and 1860s introduced a new quality because they coincided with — or rather were part of — the rebuilding of Paris under Napoléon III and Georges Haussmann.

Contemporaries did not fail to notice this connection: "Talking about the Paris world's fair," Franz Reuleaux noticed in 1867, "one has to consider the way in which Paris has displayed itself as well."<sup>11</sup> The connection between the exposition and the city's rebuilding can be traced on several levels. For one, there was a personal link since Haussmann was a member of the imperial commission in charge of the preparations for the 1867 exposition, and some of his close collaborators like Jean-Charles-Adolphe Alphand were responsible for the shaping of the grounds for the exhibition. Also, there was a spatial connection because the most prominent building of the 1855 Paris Exposition, the Palais de l'Industrie, had been built on the Champs-Élysées. And finally, the timing of many innovations was telling. Both the opening of the Parc des Buttes-Chaumont and of the reading room of the Bibliothèque Nationale were scheduled on the official inauguration day of the Exposition Universelle. The same timing was planned for the

10 The secondary literature is documented in Lenger, *Metro-polen*, 29-34.

11 Cited in Volker Barth, *Mensch versus Welt. Die Pariser Weltausstellung von 1867* (Darmstadt, 2007), 376.

opening of the new opera house, which was, however, not completed in time.

Similarly, tour boats on the Seine and new horse-drawn bus lines began operations, forming a central part of Haussmann's program to facilitate the circulation of people and commodities throughout the city. His boulevards



**Figure 2: Gustave Caillebotte, Paris Street; Rainy Day, 1877. Charles H. and Mary F. S. Worcester Collection, The Art Institute of Chicago.**

contributed to this agenda by forming new axes in hitherto densely built quarters and by clearly separating pedestrians from traffic on broad, newly paved avenues. Earlier in 1867, the central slaughterhouse in La Villette had been completed and later in the same year, Belgrand's system of water pipes started to provide Parisian households with fresh drinking water from the distant Champagne. As witnessed by the battle cry of early housing reform — more light, more air — contemporaries believed that diseases stemmed from miasma, dangerous evaporations best avoided by draining the urban environment. Accordingly, disposing of wastewater was even more important than bringing fresh water into the city. Paris, like London, had fallen victim to cholera epidemics repeatedly in the first half of the nineteenth century. Thus it should not surprise us that its modern sewer system was much admired by visitors. The Russian tsar, Alexander II, and the Prussian king, William I, were among those who participated in the popular underground boat tours on offer during the world's fair of 1867. This is understood more readily if one realizes that the Parisian sewers did not at first replace the cesspools, but transported only rain and household waste water. Another prominent feature of the improvement of urban hygiene and health pursued by Haussmann was the creation of parks. He himself called them “green lungs,” and one of them — the Bois de Vincennes — later became the site of the second modern Olympics in 1900.

Paris in 1867 offered much of what people came to expect of a modern metropolis in the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century. It was healthier than many other urban centers, considering that cholera-ridden cities like Marseille, Hamburg, Kiev or Naples still lacked efficient sewer systems in the 1880s, 1890s or, in the latter two cases, in the immediate prewar years. In addition, its distances could be traversed relatively quickly. In the late 1850s, more than 100 million rides per year on one of the city's horse drawn buses indicated that at least the better-off Parisians did so quite often. But the modern metropolis was not only healthy and fast-paced, it was also expected to be well planned. Again, competitors admitted that Paris set standards in that respect, too. Thus the British journal *The Builder* noticed a few months before the opening of the 1867 world's fair: "The British capital is far behind the French in general effect of architecture in streets and public places."<sup>12</sup>

If there was any city which could rival the French capital in this respect, it was Vienna. And it is revealing to ask why. The rebuilding of central Vienna could only take on the uniform character many contemporaries praised because Emperor Franz Joseph not only ordered the demolition of its walls and fortifications in late 1857, but also claimed them as his possessions.<sup>13</sup> Simplifying slightly, given the far-reaching property rights typical for nineteenth-century Europe, one might argue that large-scale urban planning could only be realized in a neoabsolutist system or through bonapartist rule, which conveyed extensive rights of expropriation. Therefore it should not surprise us that while Paris might have been surpassed by some German cities with regard to urban hygiene by 1914 and while American cities repeatedly outdid Paris when it came to the construction of urban parks, the French capital was still a marvel to those valuing a uniform urban landscape in the interwar years.<sup>14</sup> Incidentally, the debt Haussmann incurred for the rebuilding of Paris was not paid off until the interwar years.

Apart from a certain family resemblance with regard to urban planning, Vienna and Paris also shared being sites of universal expositions. The Vienna fair of 1873, however, was an ill-fated event because it coincided with both the economic depression of that year and a severe cholera epidemic. Thus, besides a deficit of many millions, the Prater was more or less the only thing that remained of the exhibition; it stands for popular amusement parks to this day.<sup>15</sup> A final look at the Paris world's fair of 1867 can show us what its eleven

12 Cited in: Tristram Hunt, *Building Jerusalem. The Rise and Fall of the Victorian City* (London, 2005), 311; the literature on Paris under Haussmann and the 1867 world's fair is documented in Lenger, *Metropolen*, 34-49.

13 See Thomas Hall, *Planning Europe's Capital Cities. Aspects of Nineteenth Century Urban Development* (London, 2009), ch. 10 and 11.

14 See Friedrich Lenger, "Großstädtische Eliten vor den Problemen der Urbanisierung. Skizze eines deutsch-amerikanischen Vergleichs," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft XXI* (1995): 313-337.

15 See Wolfgang Maderthaner, "Von der Zeit um 1860 bis 1945," in Peter Csendes and Ferdinand Opll (eds.), *Wien. Geschichte einer Stadt*, vol. 3, (Vienna, 2006), 175-544, esp. 201ff.

million visitors could expect in that regard. On the extensive grounds of the exhibition, covering 450,000 square meters, entertainments like balloon rides over the exhibition, ethnic cuisine offered by the various national pavilions or fair attractions like Chang the Chinese Giant competed with the educational intentions of Frederick Le Play, who was responsible for the main exhibition. Its organizing principle was an intriguing embodiment of the concept of universal competition, which Marx and Engels had identified as the essence of the Great Exhibition in London. Le Play wanted to have objects of a similar kind displayed in concentric rings in such a way that taking a right or left turn had the visitor remain among the products of one country while entering a new product line. Only partially realized, this principle resulted in a huge cake consisting of national slices, making it an easy task to determine “which place they take on the scale of civilization and general progress.”<sup>16</sup>

Le Play’s educational intentions may well have lost out to the entertainment and consumption needs of his visitors: “Every unsuccessful establishment has been turned into a restaurant,” one report noted as early as July 1867.<sup>17</sup> His intention to offer such a broad range of objects and services within the exhibition that there was no need for its visitors to ever leave it turned out to be illusionary, however. Instead, the city itself was again an attraction at least equal to the world’s fair it staged. Most visitors — like the 12,000 Englishmen for whom Thomas Cook had built a hotel in Paissy — stayed in places far away from the exhibition grounds and visited restaurants or theaters everywhere. Admission to the city’s museums was free, and the department stores that were such a prominent part of the modernization of the urban landscape vied for customers with credit slips. To many a visitor, the numerous aristocrats present were as attractive as the city or the exhibition itself. The fact that they were treated as modern celebrities is indicated by an anecdote reported by Siegfried Kracauer. Hortense Schneider, who sang the leading part in Jacques Offenbach’s “The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein,” was driven to the entrance of the world’s fair. Upon being told that only princes and princesses were allowed entry, she successfully insisted on being admitted by saying: “Make way! I am the Grand Duchess of Gerolstein!”<sup>18</sup>

### III. From Paris (1889) to Chicago (1893)

Later world’s fairs shared many basic characteristics with the early ones in London and Paris. Part of this continuity was the ambition to surpass all predecessors. Although the 27.5 million visitors of the

16 Cited in: Barth, *Mensch*, 165; *ibid.*, *passim*.

17 Cited *ibid.*, 346.

18 Siegfried Kracauer, *Jacques Offenbach und das Paris seiner Zeit*, (=Werke, vol. 8) (Frankfurt a.M., 2005), 278.

1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago fell short of the 32 million that had visited the Paris world's fair four years earlier, at an expanse of 686 acres the White City could at least claim to have been much larger.<sup>19</sup> To some contemporaries it seemed, however, as if the format had passed its zenith. Werner Sombart, who had been in Paris in 1889 as representative of the Bremen chamber of commerce and had been a member of the German delegation to the scholarly congress staged at the 1904 St. Louis world's fair, looked back in 1908 saying: "And it almost seemed as if in 1889 the exposition had in every way reached its end, as the symbol of modern culture — the Eiffel tower — had been erected, and with the jubilee exhibition a truly unsurpassed brilliant event had been realized."<sup>20</sup> While Sombart could hardly be expected to do justice to American exhibitions, his reference to the Eiffel Tower carried some weight.<sup>21</sup> After the construction of the Crystal Palace, no single structure served as an equally powerful symbol of the machine age.

While greeted as a triumph of engineering, the Eiffel tower proved to be politically divisive. In France, the Catholic press attacked it as the dreadful phallic skeleton of a new tower of Babel while collaborators of its architect did not shy away from contrasting it to the unspeakable sadness of Sacre-Coeur. Since Sacre-Coeur was the pious and conservative response to the revolutionary Commune, it was clear that the Eiffel tower was central to the debate on the legacy of the French Revolution.<sup>22</sup> The connection between the world's fair and the centenary of the revolution had also been the reason for Great Britain, Russia, and Germany to decline participation, as did Austria-Hungary and Italy, the latter two citing prohibitive costs.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, the exhibition turned out to be an undisputed success; at least in part because the exhibition enhanced what people had come to expect of world's fairs: a spacious, impressive Galeries des Machines and buildings that bore witness to the close cooperation of architects and engineers in the use of iron and glass.

What set the world's fair of 1889 apart from earlier ones was above all the space it devoted to the colonial exhibition. A colonial section had been included since 1855, but now it not only occupied a place of its own, but it was also linked to an exhibition on human habitation across all cultures and time periods housed along the Quai d'Orsay. While this exposition reserved the history of architecture for the "white race," the presentation of colonial peoples followed a similar logic. Beat Wyss is right in speaking of exhibitions "of

19 See Arnold Lewis, *An Early Encounter with Tomorrow. Europeans, Chicago's Loop, and the World's Columbian Exposition*, (Urbana, IL: 1997), 168 and Astrid Böger, *Envisioning the Nation. The Early American World's Fairs and the Formation of Culture*, (Frankfurt a.M., 2010), 117.

20 See Werner Sombart, "Die Ausstellung," *Der Morgen. Wochenschrift für deutsche Kultur IX* (February 28th, 1908): 249-256, 254.

21 See Friedrich Lenger, *Werner Sombart (1863-1941). Eine Biographie* (Munich, 1994) (3rd. ed., 2012), ch. 7.

22 See Lenger, *Metropolenkonkurrenz*, 342f. for secondary literature.

23 See Geppert, *Fleeting Cities*, 68.

the colonial powers contrasting the achievements of technological progress with colonized subjects displayed in customary lodgings mashing corn, carving wood, and dancing. The Eiffel tower,” he continues, “symbolized the superiority of Europe over the shabby negro huts of the Khanak and Senegalese.”<sup>24</sup>



Blatant racism was

not limited to the exhibition on human habitation, but extended to popular representations of indigenous people as well. Among these, the “Street of Cairo” first presented in Paris in 1878, which became a standard item of world’s fairs well into the twentieth century, was the most successful. On the one hand, it had pretensions to authenticity by employing 250 people mostly from Egypt, among them the especially popular donkey drivers. On the other hand, the placement of a Javanese village and the display of arts and crafts from Siam on the same street made it obvious that authenticity was not the main concern. A group of Egyptian scholars on their way to the Stockholm congress of orientologists of 1889 were highly irritated.<sup>25</sup>

Their irritation might have been even stronger had they known that the Egyptian government had given material and financial support to the enterprise. Four years later, a “Street of Cairo” was again displayed as part of the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago and comprised, among many other things, a Chinese and a Japanese tea house, an English pub, Scottish bagpipers and a Buffalo Bill show.<sup>26</sup> In Chicago, a Colored American Day meant to assuage well-founded concerns about the representation of Africans and African Americans instead provoked racist commentary,<sup>27</sup> racism being an especially explosive issue in Chicago.

**Figure 3: Woodlawn, White City at night.** © University of Chicago Photographic Archive, [apf 2-08489], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

24 Beat Wyss, *Bilder von der Globalisierung. Die Weltausstellung von Paris 1889*. (Berlin, 2010), 43 and 52; cf. *ibid.*, *passim*.

25 See Timothy Mitchell, “Die Welt als Ausstellung,” in Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria, eds. *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus. Postkoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt a.M., 2002), 148-176, 148f.

26 See Wyss, *Bilder*, 193.

27 See Böger, *Envisioning*, 139f.; see. *ibid.*, 109-172 for the following.

Two areas in particular captured the imagination of visitors to the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. One was architecture, the other electricity. Especially the architecture of the "White City," as the site selected by Frederick Law Olmsted situated in Jackson Park, seven miles south of downtown Chicago, came to be called remained controversial. On the one hand, its huge neo-classical buildings, uniformly painted white, created a visual splendor that impressed almost every visitor. On the other hand, Daniel Burnham's design disappointed the expectations of those who expected something more akin to the modernist, functionalist architecture typical of the Chicago Loop. Siegfried Giedion coined the term "mercantile capitalism," and Hermann Muthesius summarized the verdict of most European critics: "To the astonishment of the world, Chicago, from which contemporary events were expected, had nothing better to do than to hang the familiar, antique disguises over the iron skeletons of its exhibition halls. Perhaps the fairy picture which was created was bewitching, but for artistic progress this regressive performance scored no more than zero."<sup>28</sup>

Regressive or not, visitors were simply stunned, especially so if they experienced the exhibition at night. Electricity and architecture were thus integrated, and the hundreds of thousands of light bulbs were easily interpreted as revealing "new ideas and truths which should enlighten and bless the world."<sup>29</sup> "Though Chicago was not the first world's fair which had a separate building devoted to electricity," electricity dominated the exhibition in new ways.<sup>30</sup> In addition to the blinding splendor of the illumination and the giant Edison Tower, dynamos were everywhere. Electricity powered the giant Ferris wheel that lifted up to 2,000 riders 264 feet above the exhibition grounds as well as the moving sidewalk also shown in Paris seven years later. The centrality of electricity was apposite because it played a far more important role in Chicago than it did in any European city of the late nineteenth century. The use of the telephone was far more widespread here and the numerous elevators servicing office buildings impressed visitors of the Chicago world's fair immensely.<sup>31</sup>

Transport was key. Most visitors arrived by cable car, by Charles Yerkes' new fast flying 'El' train, or in one of the Illinois Central's open 'cattle cars,' which made the trip from the Loop to the fairgrounds in twelve minutes. But all the guidebooks agreed that the most delightful way to go was by lake steamer. The World's Fair Steamship Company ran a fleet of twenty-five steamers from its midtown dock,

28 Cited in: Lewis, *Early Encounter*, 190; see Böger, *Envisioning*, esp. 119.

29 Cited in: Böger, *Envisioning*, 130.

30 Böger, *Envisioning*, 128; see *ibid.*, *passim*.

31 See Lewis, *Early Encounter*, 92f. and 148.

and for a fifteen-cent fare, passengers were treated to band music and a “continuous panoramic picture (of) the best built and busiest city in the world” — as one advertisement had it.<sup>32</sup> Thus in Chicago, too, fair and city were linked more closely than the rather distant location of Jackson Park might have suggested. The trip required to get to the fairground provided the opportunity to showcase both the city at large and its modernized transportation system, from which the city benefitted for years to come and which displayed characteristics that still seemed futuristic in continental Europe at the dawn of World War I. In the end, the various European underground systems introduced or electrified since the 1890s proved better suited to metropolitan needs, however.

It is by no means clear that Chicago’s Columbian Exposition succeeded in making its Parisian predecessor look like “a mere village fair next to the colossal [Chicago] exhibition.”<sup>33</sup> What did become clear, however, is that Sombart’s doubts about the future of the universal exposition as a medium were not unfounded. Although the Paris world’s fair of 1900 registered a record high of 50 million visitors, it was generally considered lackluster.<sup>34</sup> No longer held together by a clear concept of modern development, the medium of the universal exposition disintegrated. In Chicago, scholarly congresses no longer were an integral part of the exposition, but were organized on a different site as a separate event instead. The practice of holding universal expositions in conjunction with the modern Olympics, first pioneered in Paris in 1900 and repeated more than once since then, did not rejuvenate the format of the world’s fair either. Moreover, the prominence of colonial subject matter at world’s fairs had much more resonance in the largest imperial countries than elsewhere, and even there the way the colonies were presented came increasingly under attack in the interwar years.<sup>35</sup>

#### IV. From Paris (1937) to Rome (1942/1960)

To be sure, none of this means that the debate about and the competition for modern standards had come to an end, nor that the modern metropolis and its infrastructure had lost its central place within it. The Moscow Metro opened in 1935 and, impressive in its monumentality to this day, would be a case in point. In fact, competing claims for modernity and superiority characterized the decades following World War I. The photographs of the German and Soviet pavilions at the Paris world exposition of 1937 document that the pavilions

32 Cited in Böger, *Envisio-ning*, 118; on Yerkes and his business practices see also Blair A. Rubble, *Second Metropolis. Pragmatic Pluralism in Gilded Age Chicago, Silver Age Moscow, and Meiji Osaka*, (Washington, DC, 2001), 145-155.

33 Cited in: Lewis, *Early Encounter*, 168.

34 See Geppert, *Fleeting Cities*, esp. 97.

35 See *ibid.*, 198ff.



were perceived as part of a competition between fascism, in either its Italian or German guise, on one side and Stalinist communism on the other. The not very different pavilions stood to the right and to the left of the Palais de Chailot, a monumental building in the neoclassical style housing the French exhibits, thus demonstrating that the liberal democracy hosting the 1937 world's fair would not yield to the competing dictatorships.<sup>36</sup> Among

**Figure 4: Alfredo Gauro Ambrosi, Benito Mussolini in front of a view of Rome, 1930. Oil on canvas. ©akg-images. Reproduced with permission.**

these dictatorships, Italian fascism served as a model of sorts for both Moscow and Berlin with respect to urbanism and architecture. Boris Mihailovich Iofan, who designed the unrealized Palace of the Soviets was one of the leading cultural ambassadors between Rome and Moscow; and the architects in Hitler's entourage closely studied both Mussolini's restructuring of Rome and the architecture of newly founded Italian towns.<sup>37</sup>

With regard to Rome, it was the creation of huge squares and the centralization of traffic that impressed Albert Speer and his colleagues, more than the new monumental buildings as such. In part, this may have been due to the fact that the buildings were quite often found on the periphery and that they occasionally had a far more modern appearance than anyone familiar with National Socialist architecture would expect. Mussolini's plans required the demolition of inner city quarters on a scale comparable to Haussmann's rebuilding of Paris. The most spectacular example certainly was the rapidly realized

36 See Lenger, *Metropolen*, 318f.

37 See Harald Bodenschatz, "Urbanism and Dictatorship: Expanding Spaces for Thought!," in id., Piero Sassi and Max Welch Guerra, eds., *Urbanism and Dictatorship. A European Perspective* (Basel, 2015), 15-26, 16f.

breakthrough of the Via Impero, which now connected the Piazza Venezia with the Colosseum.<sup>38</sup> Since Mussolini's headquarters were located on the Piazza Venezia, this breakthrough served two purposes at once. On the one hand, the new axis was constructed as the main transport route for the masses needed for the regime's propaganda events. On the other hand, and more symbolically, it was meant to connect fascist rule to the ancient Roman Empire. As Mussolini put it: "Rome is our point of origin and reference; it is our symbol, or, if you want to say so, our myth. We dream of a Roman Italy, that is, a wise and strong, disciplined and imperial Italy."<sup>39</sup> Mussolini's Rome was to impress with central axes and big squares, just as Germania, the planned capital of National Socialist Germany, was meant to be dominated by two monumental north-south and east-west axes.

In Rome, as in Berlin, the regime's self-representation was not limited to architecture and urban design. Rome competed successfully to stage yet another universal exposition. Since the late 1920s, the decision fell under the jurisdiction of an International Bureau, which late in 1936 — despite the recent cruel war against Ethiopia — awarded the 1941 world's fair to Italy. A short time later, the Bureau even agreed to its postponement, to 1942, so that the Esposizione Universale di Roma (EUR) could also function as the official celebration of twenty years of fascist rule. In a certain sense, the EUR was a defensive move prompted by the enormous success Hitler had enjoyed with the 1936 Olympics. As host of the 1934 world soccer championship, Fascist Italy had some experience in hosting international events in order to gain international respect, and it had been among the candidates for hosting the 1936 Olympic Games. Losing to Berlin was a blow to Mussolini, whose political style has been characterized as "political athleticism."<sup>40</sup> The Esposizione Universale di Roma planned for 1942 was supposed to make up for this defeat. Its site was not to be in the city center, however. Instead, the exhibition grounds were part of the plan to redirect Rome's development towards the sea. Due to the outbreak of World War II, construction soon came to a halt. Most buildings were completed after the war, however. Virgilio Testa replaced Mussolini's chief architect Marcello Piacentini as the leading figure, but Piacentini's ideas still guided the undertaking: "Just imagine," he had written early in 1937 to the organizer of the EUR, "you were standing in the middle of the Forum Romanum . . . and would see in the background the colosseum to the left and the capitol to the right — analogous classical vision . . . but modern, highly modern!"<sup>41</sup>

38 On Mussolini's Rome, see above all the relevant chapters in Franz J. Bauer, *Rom im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Konstruktion eines Mythos* (Regensburg, 2009), and Harald Bodenschatz, ed., *Städtebau für Mussolini. Auf der Suche nach der neuen Stadt im faschistischen Italien* (Berlin, 2011).

39 Cited in: Gustav Seibt, *Rom oder Tod. Der Kampf um die italienische Hauptstadt* (Berlin, 2001), 299.

40 John Hoberman cited in: Eva Gajek, *Imagepolitik im olympischen Wettstreit. Die Spiele von Rom 1960 und München 1972* (Göttingen, 2013), 70; see *ibid.*, *passim*.

41 Cited in: Bauer, *Rom*, 274; see also the resp. chapters in Bauer, *Rom*, and Bodenschatz, ed., *Städtebau*, Daniela Spiegel, "Urbanism in Fascist Italy: All Well and Good?," in Bodenschatz/Sassi/Welch Guerra, eds., *Urbanism*, 43-58.

In the 1950s, a sports palace was added to the EUR area and the whole ensemble served as the site for the 1960 Olympic Games. Two conclusions suggest themselves: In some ways, the Olympic Games have replaced the world's fairs as attractions of worldwide significance. But while the Olympics continue to be used as means of modernizing the infrastructure and enhancing the status of their host cities, they do not define the modern metropolis in the way the early world's fairs did. The second conclusion is equally obvious. Universal expositions and, later, Olympic Games have always been part of international politics, providing recognition for the host country. In 1960, this recognition took the form of readmitting Italy to the world of international sports on a site that its architect, Piacentini, had planned to use for a *Rassegna dell'Asse* — an exposition of the axis powers — after World War II had ruled out the possibility of a world's fair. Finally, it is well known that Japan and Germany hosted Olympic Games in 1964 and 1972 respectively, thus completing the readmittance of the former axis powers to more than just the world of sports.

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## THE PRUSSIANS OF THE EAST: SAMURAI, BUSHIDO, AND JAPANESE HONOR IN THE GERMAN IMAGINATION, 1905-1945

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During the spring of 1944, the *Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft*, an organization devoted to improving and expanding German-Japanese cultural and intellectual engagement, solicited the German public for their thoughts and impressions about Japan through an essay contest. Participants were asked to identify the political, economic, and cultural values and institutions that united Germany and Japan against the United States, and — by most accounts — the results were better than expected. Out of the total submitted essays, 420 were judged to have met the minimum requirements for the contest; these submissions originated from across Germany and its occupied territories and had been written by a fairly diverse demographic cross-section of the German nation. Professional men, students, soldiers, housewives, and even a few foreign nationals all participated in the exercise. The essays themselves range from short, crude polemics written on scrap paper to elegantly argued theses, carefully typed and edited; in effect, what these essays represent to the historian is a survey — perhaps not comprehensive but nevertheless still useful — of German public opinion towards the Japanese during the last years of the Second World War.

When reading through the surviving essays, one is most immediately struck by the degree of consensus among the essayists. None of the archived essays question the central premise of the contest — that there was indeed some essential common cause between Germany and Japan — and only a few locate the basis for this relationship exclusively within the wartime alliance. Rather, the overwhelming majority of the essayists presented this relationship as emanating from a deeply embedded, shared cultural identity as “heroic” or “martial” peoples, a shared identity that was understood to set them apart, not only from their American adversary, but indeed from much of the rest of the world. In excavating this shared identity, most of the essayists intended to convey that the Germans and Japanese shared a common set of principles and values — specifically framed as masculine and

martial — that not only distinguished them as particularly chivalrous warriors, but also united them as allies.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, it is also clear that the essayists were not simply regurgitating state-generated propaganda. Indeed, several of the essayists were noticeably ambivalent as to the ability of the state to fully communicate the true depth of the German-Japanese alliance. Anni Haderer, a war widow, wrote in the letter accompanying her submission that she had initially been hesitant to contribute, given her lack of formal training on the subject: “Yet the longer I thought about it — and I could not let it go — the more I came to the realization that the voices of ordinary people should make themselves heard here too, in order to show the leading figures of the allied nations [Germany and Japan] that their alliance, their common goals, and their common fight was supported by the will and the understanding of the *Volk*.”<sup>2</sup> Many of her fellow essayists clearly felt similarly; the amount of energy and effort put into the submissions suggests a sincerity of purpose that runs counter to the image of the German-Japanese alliance during the Second World War as “hollow,” as purely strategic and lacking in substance.<sup>3</sup> Instead, many of the essayists expressed the belief that there was a purpose to the German-Japanese alliance beyond the sphere of military coordination and mutual support, and that the basis for this alliance was not political, but rather cultural.

1 A more detailed analysis of this essay contest in the context of the German-Japanese relationship has been published as: “Prussians of the East: the 1944 *Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft*’s Essay Contest and the Transcultural Romantic,” in Qinna Shen and Martin Rosenstock, eds., *Beyond Alterity: German Encounters with Modern East Asia* (New York/Oxford, 2014), 52-72.

2 Bundesarchiv (hereafter: BArch), R 64IV/46, p. 132.

3 Johanna Meskill, *Hitler & Japan, The Hollow Alliance* (New York, 1966).

4 An exception is: Thomas Pekar, *Der Japan-Diskurs im westlichen Kulturkontext (1860-1920): Reiseberichte — Literatur — Kunst* (Munich, 2003).

Because the German-Japanese relationship was not premised on a formal imperial or colonial arrangement, its development over the course of the first half of the twentieth century was distinct from that of most other contemporaneous relationships between European and non-European states. This lack of a formal political or economic system of dependency has led historians to overlook the dynamism and diversity of German engagement with Japanese culture throughout this period, whether in the associational structure of organizations like the *Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft* (DJG) or in other socio-cultural milieux.<sup>4</sup> In my work I explore how this atypical relationship generated a form of cultural reception that was significantly different from most other contemporary examples of transcultural engagement. Unlike the discursive mode of Orientalism, for example, which centered on the identification and reification of alterity, the language and tropes deployed in Germany by both German and Japanese intellectuals, thinkers, and scholars explicitly sought to make Japanese history and culture more immediately recognizable and sympathetic to a German audience.

In focusing my research, I was particularly interested in why martial culture occupied such a central position within this rhetoric about German-Japanese cultural affinities. My dissertation, which engages with the reception and representation of Japanese martial culture in Germany between the Russo-Japanese War and the end of the Second World War, analyzes the evolution of a specific narrative about Japanese culture that was premised on the notion of German-Japanese mutual legibility and oriented around images and signifiers of the martial, the masculine, and the heroic.<sup>5</sup> This particular narrative of Japanese history and culture proved to be both incredibly durable — persisting over multiple regime changes in Germany — and successful in influencing German rhetoric about Japan because it seemed to offer a solution to the essential problem of modernity, specifically how to reconcile the opportunities afforded by modernity with its perceived cultural costs. For an evolving segment of German society, especially after the crisis of the First World War, the idea of Japan fostered by these narratives was attractive because it purported to offer the model of a sustainable synthesis between modernity and tradition, an alternative national modernity built on, and protected by, aristocratic ideals of martial virtue.

## I.

Although the German-Japanese relationship was not an imperial one, it was nevertheless the product of a world order centered on patterns of imperialist thought. The first part of this statement should not require much explanation; although Japan did sign an “unequal treaty” with Prussia in 1861, which remained in effect until 1899, German diplomatic and economic influence in Japan — whether formal or informal — was markedly less significant than that wielded by either Britain or the United States.<sup>6</sup> The statement’s second part, however, deserves a bit more attention, for it speaks more to global processes of exchange, reaction, and contestation than it does to formal structures of power. Indeed, the German-Japanese relationship may not have been based on imperial structures of control and violence, but many of the key concepts and ideological structures reaffirming it emerged out of the era of high imperialism during the late nineteenth century. Key among these was a hierarchical vision of civilization embedded within Western European concepts of progress and modernity.<sup>7</sup> Closely associated with this concept was the notion that international imperial competition was both necessary and useful and that, moreover, falling

5 It bears noting that this rhetoric was not the only way in which Germans engaged with Japan. For example, there was the ongoing German appreciation for Japanese innovation in the various fields of experimental science, particularly in medicine: Hoi-Eun Kim, *Doctors of Empire: Medical and Cultural Encounters between Imperial Germany and Meiji Japan* (Toronto, 2014).

6 Christian Spang and Rolf-Harald Wippich, “Introduction — from ‘German Measles’ to ‘Honorary Aryans’: an overview of Japanese-German Relations until 1945,” in Spang and Wippich, eds., *Japanese-German Relations, 1895-1945: War, Diplomacy and Public Opinion* (London/New York, 2006).

7 Sebastian Conrad, *Globalisation and the Nation in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge, 2010).

behind in this global scramble for resources, capital, and labor was itself confirmation of a people's or nation's "inferior status."<sup>8</sup> Intellectual and scientific legitimacy was conferred to this kind of thought by new disciplines like anthropology, ethnography, and racial science, although more popular manifestations of imperial ideology, such as Colonial Exhibitions or the *Völkerschauen*, were just as broadly implicated in disseminating the didactic lessons of imperialism.<sup>9</sup>

This ideological framework, which was premised on Western domination and on the tacit agreement that modernization was functionally equivalent to Westernization, began to experience substantive challenges around the turn of the twentieth century. Most notably, Japan's victory over Russia in 1905 introduced the possibility of non-Western political and cultural polities successfully challenging Western pretensions to innate superiority.<sup>10</sup> Further cracks in the global imperial edifice appeared after the First World War, which resulted in the increased circulation of ideological alternatives to the Enlightenment ideals of civilization, liberalism, and democracy. These alternative methods of ordering the world could be political — as with fascism and communism — or they could be geographic — as with the increased visibility of culturally defined pan-movements — but they all were fundamentally reactions against the imperialist model of globalization.<sup>11</sup> This hollowed-out world order — wherein the technological advances and social-intellectual networks allowing for greater levels of global exchange and connectedness remained intact, despite the destabilization of the political framework that had created them — allowed for the formation of a new kind of transcultural relationship between Germany and Japan, which was built on a shared ambivalence towards Western modernity.

The image of Japan that emerged from this rhetoric was distinctly coded as masculine, as aristocratic, and as socially and racially homogenous. To a certain extent, the three constituent elements of this identity-complex were interdependent, as embodied in the archetypal figure of the samurai, who was understood to represent an idealized hegemonic masculinity. Within this framework, the ideals of bushido, literally "the way of the warrior," the Japanese term for the ethos of the samurai, were transformed from an aristocratic worldview into a standard of comportment against which individuals could be judged within the modern world. This transition was important both in Japan, where bushido and its "invented traditions" were mobilized for the state, and in Germany, where the supposedly

8 Sebastian Conrad, *Globalisation and the Nation in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge, 2010).

9 H. Glenn Penny, *Objects of Culture: Ethnology and Ethnographic Museums in Imperial Germany* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2002); Andrew Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany* (Chicago, 2001).

10 Cemil Aydin, "A Global Anti-Western Moment? The Russo-Japanese War, Decolonization, and Asian Modernity," in Sebastian Conrad and Dominic Sachsenmaier, eds., *Competing Visions of World Order: Global Moments and Movements, 1880s-1930s* (London, 2007), 213-236.

11 Kris Manjappa, *Age of Entanglement: German and Indian Intellectuals across Empire* (Cambridge, MA, 2014).

seamless transformation of the samurai into the modern soldier was envied.<sup>12</sup> This gendering of Japanese culture as specifically hyper-masculine enabled the samurai to be positioned in parallel with similarly hegemonic figures of German masculinity: the Germanic warrior, the mythic hero, and the Prussian soldier.

Within the context of German anxiety caused by evolving gender norms during the first half of the twentieth century, the samurai was legible as the literal guardian of proper relations between the genders against modern social phenomena like feminism and the so-called crisis of masculinity.<sup>13</sup> This also helps to explain the relative invisibility of non-hegemonic gender constructs in German depictions of Japanese martial culture; the dominant mode of gender relations was not the heterosexual couple, but rather the homosocial *Männerbund*.<sup>14</sup> Along with this selective erasure of women and marginal or “deviant” masculinities, narratives about Japanese martial culture within Germany also selectively obscured elements of Japanese history and society that contradicted claims as to the coherence of Japanese culture. Minority and marginalized ethnic and social groups effectively disappeared, political and cultural differences were minimized, and specific eras and events from Japanese history were privileged over others in order to construct a representation of Japanese history lacking substantive conflict and oriented disproportionately around the samurai. This depiction of Japanese history and culture may have been essentialized, but that was precisely what made it attractive in Germany; this romanticized depiction of Japanese society — ethnically, socially, and politically homogenous — seemed to confirm the suspicion that German weakness was the result of the presence of foreign peoples and cultural influences.

This identification of the samurai as the ultimate arbiters of Japanese culture was not simply an argument about Japan or Germany, however, but touched on a larger discussion concerning the fate of national culture in the modern era. A consistent thread throughout depictions of Japanese culture was the belief that national culture as a discrete entity was under attack, either by foreign elements active within the domestic arena or by an international hegemon. The samurai were therefore not just the aristocratic elites of Japan’s past; they were also the literal guardians of Japanese culture and values. By framing the samurai in this manner, the authors contributing to this rhetoric made their interests and priorities more broadly relevant to the ongoing debate in Germany about national culture and its relationship

12 For more on bushido in Japan, see Oleg Benesch, *Inventing the Way of the Samurai: Nationalism, Internationalism, and Bushidō in Modern Japan* (Oxford, 2014).

13 George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: the Creation of Modern Masculinity* (Oxford, 1996).

14 Anette Dietrich and Ljiljana Heise, eds., *Männlichkeitskonstruktionen im Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main, 2013).

to modernity. It was no coincidence that the German valorization of Japanese martial culture became so exclusively identified with right-wing and *völkisch* politics after the First World War; it was understood to offer a possible answer to the problem of modernity that proposed to minimize the culturally homogenizing effects of global modernity by reaffirming the value of national identity.

In defining Germany and Japan as “kindred” cultures, this rhetoric shifted the bulk of its comparative work from a one-to-one binary to a model that juxtaposed Germany and Japan together against a shifting series of cultural and political counterparts.<sup>15</sup> The most significant and lasting of these counterparts was the idea of an emergent international or global civilizational framework based on the virtues and ideals of a universal modernity. This *Weltkultur* was commonly associated with the Enlightenment and with the world system of liberalism, capitalism, and free-market trade.<sup>16</sup> By positioning both Germany and Japan as cultural antagonists to this system, the individuals espousing this rhetoric meant to critique this system as inadequately sensitive to the value of national cultural identity. In practical effect, this transcultural relationship meant to offer an alternative model of modernity that was not predicated on national deculturation.

This conceptual framing, which took as one of its basic assumptions the shared martial character of the Germans and the Japanese, rearranged the hierarchical timeline of imperialism — whereby peoples and cultures were temporalized according to their relative status as “civilized” — into a dialectical model. The key concept that emerged again and again was synthesis — between modernity and tradition, between *Kultur* and *Zivilisation* — with the subtext that a culture unable to reconcile the two opposing forces would inevitably be subsumed into one of the two existing poles of international modernity. Germany and Japan, by virtue of their intermediary geographic and cultural positions between East and West, were thus uniquely placed to observe and to judge. To put this in slightly different terms, the Anglo-American liberal world order was the West, the Russian-Chinese “Oriental” world was the East, and Germany and Japan were stuck — for better or worse — in the middle. This model of cultural hierarchy thus situated both Japan and Germany at the fulcrum between two opposing identities, possessing elements of both and yet exclusively associated with neither. It was the recognition of a shared German-Japanese *Sonderweg* (special path) that allowed for the argument that Japanese culture had something worthy to offer

15 In thinking through this relationship I was particularly inspired by: H. Glenn Penny, *Kindred by Choice: Germans and American Indians since 1800* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2013).

16 Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: a Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley, CA, 1961).

to Germany, and that specific elements of Japanese culture could be legible and sympathetic to nationally-minded Germans.<sup>17</sup> For many Germans, it was the samurai and bushido that seemed to provide the “key” to this transcultural legibility.

Ultimately, the persuasiveness of these arguments was dependent on the outcome of real-world events; although the German-Japanese relationship was not politically determined, it was nevertheless shaped by political outcomes. Chief among these were the three major wars that demarcate the significant periods of interaction: the Russo-Japanese War; the First World War; and the Second World War. Whereas the Russo-Japanese War provided the foundation for German interest in the “upstart” Japanese and their unprecedented ability to synthesize technological modernity with cultural authenticity, the aftermath of the First World War served to mobilize this interest along specific political and ideological trajectories. The Second World War formalized this relationship and elevated the visibility of Japanese martial culture within German media over the course of the war, to the extent that — after the German defeat at Stalingrad — the Japanese seemed better able to perform the National Socialist ethos of loyalty and self-sacrifice than were the Germans themselves.

## II.

It was the Russo-Japanese War of 1904/05 that, more than any other single event, enabled the development of this German romantic rhetoric about Japan. Before the Russo-Japanese War, the relationship between Germany and Japan was distinctly one-sided, with Japanese interest in German culture, technology, and social institutions far exceeding that expressed on the opposite side. The Japanese defeat of Russia, however, precipitated a reevaluation of Japan within Germany, especially with respect to Japan’s position as a politically and technologically sophisticated modern nation-state. Although the German state was, like all of the other Great Powers, ostensibly a neutral observer of the conflict, the German press was deeply invested in explaining the meaning and significance of events unfolding in Manchuria. The racist rhetoric of the “yellow peril” (*gelbe Gefahr*) may have maintained a certain visibility within the highest echelons of the German state, yet a competing narrative emerged among elements of the German educated middle class (*Bildungsbürgertum*) that was framed instead around the problem of whether Russia or Japan better fit the mold of a modern state: politically and industrially, but also culturally.<sup>18</sup>

17 It is not my intention to revisit the historiographic debate of the German — or, for that matter, the Japanese — political *Sonderweg*. At the same time, the German conviction in their own exceptionalism (*Sonderbewusstsein*) was integral to this way of engaging with Japan. See: Frank Usbeck, *Fellow Tribesmen: the Image of Native Americans, National Identity, and Nazi Ideology in Germany* (New York/Oxford, 2015).

18 As such, my work contests the assumed direct link between the Kaiser’s personal prejudices and German popular opinion, as put forth by: Iikura Akira, “The ‘Yellow Peril’ and its influence on Japanese-German relations,” in Christian Spang and Rolf-Harald Wippich, *Japanese-German Relations, 1895-1945: War, Diplomacy and Public Opinion* (London/New York, 2006): 80-97.

Diesmal stimmte es nicht,

(Zerföhrung von Wilhelm Schickel)



denn die Russen beteten als gute Christen und die Japaner schossen als gute Soldaten.

This interest tended, at least during the war itself, to be located primarily among the more liberal elements of the German press, yet even the ardently conservative *Neue Preussische Zeitung* was willing to concede some grudging respect for Japanese military success.<sup>19</sup>

In editorializing the Russo-Japanese War in these terms, the German press could not help but also problematize common assumptions about the innate superiority of the West, if only for

**Figure 1.** “Diesmal stimmte es nicht,” *Simplicissimus* no. 12 (June 20, 1905).

the simple reason that Russia quickly proved to be seriously outmatched strategically, technologically, and psychologically. It was in response to these clear structural disparities between Russia and Japan that a narrative emerged in the German press, which persisted throughout the war, that Japan owed its success over Russia to its more successful adoption of the material and intellectual trappings of Western modernity. Nowhere was this made more explicit than in a pair of cartoons printed by *Kladderadatsch* and *Simplicissimus* in August 1904 concerning the discovery, by Russian peasant conscripts, of proof that the Japanese were indeed “magic”: combs, soap, and toothbrushes.<sup>20</sup> In a similar — albeit considerably darker — vein *Simplicissimus* offered its assessment of the Battle of Tsushima through a comparison of the religious fervor of the Russian sailors against the military precision of the Japanese navy, concluding that the humiliating Russian defeat was: “Because the Russians pray like good Christians, and the Japanese shoot like good soldiers.” (see figure 1)<sup>21</sup> In its targeting of blind religious devotion this cartoon

19 “Der Krieg zwischen Rußland und Japan. Die Kriegslage in Ostasien,” in *Neue Preussische Zeitung* no. 77 (February 16, 1904), 2; “Der Krieg zwischen Rußland und Japan. Die Kriegslage in Ostasien,” in *Neue Preussische Zeitung* no. 79 (February 17, 1904), 2.

20 “Japanische Zauberei,” in *Kladderadatsch* no. 32 (August 7, 1904); “Vom Kriegsschauplatze,” in *Simplicissimus* no. 19 (August 2, 1904).

21 “Diesmal stimmt es nicht,” in *Simplicissimus* no. 12 (June 20, 1905).

effectively redirects European stereotypes about superstitious “natives” back against the Russians and instead identifies the Japanese as the “civilizing” presence in East Asia.

This narrative about Japanese superiority vis-à-vis Russia was not just a product of the German satirical press; a two-part article published by the *Berliner Tageblatt* after the Battle of Mukden similarly attributed Japan’s success to the “excellent training” and “iron discipline” of its soldiers, as opposed to the “wild battlefield fanaticism” of less-civilized races.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, however, the author speculated that the essential loyalty and dedication of the Japanese nation had helped to temper “the effeminizing effects of civilization.” Within the logic of a civilizational hierarchy, the Japanese were clearly the more effectively modern of the two combatant states, yet this latter statement also introduces the idea that the Japanese had managed to somehow surpass not just the Russians but also Europe itself, by virtue of some inherent quality which helped to shield them from the more decadent tendencies of Western civilization. This argument, which balanced the material benefits of Western modernity against its presumptive cultural costs, quickly established itself — at least within the German *Bildungsbürgertum* — as the fundamental “lesson” to be learned from the Russo-Japanese War.

With Japan’s victory over Russia — a victory tempered somewhat by the realities of international diplomacy — Japan’s position as a legitimate Great Power was secured. The question of how to interpret this state of affairs provoked growing efforts in Germany, as elsewhere, to better apprehend the Japanese and their culture. This new interest in Japan manifested itself in various forms, from the growth of transnational associational groups like the *Wa-Doku-Kai* — founded in 1890 by the Japanese philosopher Inoue Tetsujirō — and the publication of periodicals devoted to the popularization of Japanese contemporary culture like *Ost-Asien*, to the transplantation of elements of “traditional” Japanese culture to Germany like jiu-jitsu.<sup>23</sup> What united these disparate efforts was the conviction that Japan could serve as an instructive model for contemporary Germany, a belief that the Japanese living in Germany enthusiastically encouraged and attempted — with varying degrees of success — to direct. Yet whereas Japanese authors writing for a Western audience often limited themselves to asserting the basic moral legitimacy of Japanese culture vis-à-vis the West, German authors writing on Japan instead increasingly valorized Japanese culture for its ability to adapt the

22 “Der Zusammenbruch bei Mukden,” in *Berliner Tageblatt* no. 136 (March 15, 1905), 1-2; no. 140 (March 17, 1905).

23 Sarah Panzer, “When Jiu-Jitsu was German: Japanese Martial Arts in German Sport- and Körperkultur,” in Joanne Miyang Cho; Lee Roberts; Christian Spang, eds., *Transnational Encounters between Germany and Japan: Perceptions of Partnership in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London, 2015).

external signifiers of modernity without succumbing to its potentially deculturating influence.

It was because of this growing consensus regarding the significance of Japan for Germany that Karl Haushofer emerged as such a pivotal figure within the German-Japanese relationship. Haushofer had been posted to Japan during 1908-1910 as an official observer of Japanese military affairs for the Bavarian General Staff.<sup>24</sup> Impressed by what he had observed, he published his first major work on Japan, *Dai Nihon*, in 1913 in order to “direct the attention of Central Europe towards the reinvigoration and regeneration that Japan owes to the baptism of fire provided by its wars.”<sup>25</sup> The crux of Haushofer’s analysis was embedded in his conviction that contemporary *Weltkultur* — embodied in a cosmopolitan ethos of liberal capitalism and pacifism — was fundamentally destabilizing to authentic national culture. As he understood this trend towards increasing cultural homogenization framed through a discourse of modernization: “It [*Weltkultur*] fills the valleys and holes, but it also removes the peaks . . .”<sup>26</sup> Germany and Japan, by virtue of their parallel historical development and shared cultural values — by which Haushofer explicitly meant martial values — were thus inextricably bound together:

Through their kindred — and yet also divergent — development, which was described at the beginning of this book, Japan and Germany could lend each other complementary values that they could never get from anyone else . . . that would both make them richer and not make any other nation poorer, which they both need as counterbalance against a leveling current that may be rich in commodities but is poor in ideas.<sup>27</sup>

Haushofer thus presented his audience with the common *völkisch* narrative of an ongoing struggle between international *Zivilisation* and national *Kultur*, framed through a discussion of contemporary Japan. Although his analysis shared many of its central premises with the liberal press coverage of the Russo-Japanese War, Haushofer’s conclusions anticipated and enabled the increasing monopolization of this rhetoric by the political right following World War I.

### III.

The outbreak of the First World War disrupted the network of relations between Germany and Japan that had been established in

24 Christian Spang, *Karl Haushofer und Japan. Rezeption seiner geopolitischen Theorien in der deutschen und japanischen Politik* (Munich, 2013).

25 Karl Haushofer, *Dai-Nihon. Betrachtungen über Groß-Japans Wehrkraft, Weltstellung und Zukunft* (Berlin, 1913), 1.

26 *Ibid.*, 339.

27 *Ibid.*, 339.

the previous decade. Yet these were successfully reestablished and even strengthened relatively early in the interwar period. As the two nations renegotiated the terms of their relationship, both on the diplomatic level and within ostensibly non-political civil groups, one problem that became the topic of much discussion was the relative position of both Germany and Japan to China, and to mainland Asia more broadly. Even as the Weimar Republic officially pursued its program of advisors and training in China, in Berlin a faction coalesced around the idea that German interests in Asia were better served by an alliance with Japan.<sup>28</sup> This belief was based on the image of Japan as a stabilizing factor within Asia and as a counterweight to the growing strength of the Communist presence in Eurasia. The fundamental question within interwar Germany vis-à-vis East Asia thus became whether the interests of the German people were better served by an alliance with Republican China or with Imperial Japan.

It quickly became clear to German observers — as the political situation in Germany stabilized during the early 1920s — that the relative status of Germany and Japan in the international community of states had shifted in favor of Japan. This new state of affairs was openly acknowledged and bemoaned by advocates for German-Japanese diplomatic rapprochement. Karl Haushofer observed in his 1923 monograph, *Japan und die Japaner*:

We do not have so many friends in the world that we can continue to do without friendly relations with other nations on the basis of ignorance or misunderstanding, as we did in this case, when we could have discovered this priceless asset with a strong and an ambitious people, who engaged with us for years in a dignified manner and only sought revenge due to our lack of understanding and contempt.<sup>29</sup>

In placing the blame for the diplomatic falling-out between Japan and Germany squarely at the feet of the former German state, Haushofer formulated a claim that would become a common argument during the interwar period, namely, that Germany had taken the friendship and goodwill of Japan for granted in the years leading up to World War I and that Japan had only sided with the Allies after being shamed by the Germans; the implication being that the Germans and the Japanese were natural allies, even if the Germans had not realized this yet. For Haushofer, as for many other Germans sympathetic to Japan, the renewal of friendly relations between the two states was

28 There is a substantial literature on the German engagement with Republican China, mostly emphasizing the industrial and military dimensions of the relationship. See, for example: William C. Kirby, *Germany and Republican China* (Stanford, CA, 1984); Bernd Martin, ed., *Die deutsche Berater-schaft in China 1927-1938* (Düsseldorf, 1981); Bernd Martin, ed., *Deutsch-chinesische Beziehungen 1928-1937. "Gleiche" Partner unter "ungleichen" Bedingungen* (Berlin, 2003).

29 Karl Haushofer, *Japan und die Japaner, Eine Landeskunde*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Leipzig/Berlin, 1933), 2.

essential both to the continued viability of German interests in East Asia and to the maintenance of German international prestige.

The Japanese also quickly grasped the significance of this new state of affairs, and as the Japanese returned as a visible presence within Berlin during the early 1920s — both as scholars and as representatives of Japanese commercial and industrial interests — efforts to create a new institutional structure for intellectual, social, and cultural exchange were quickly complicated by internecine struggles over national political priorities. The *Japaninstitut* in Berlin, founded in 1926 by Friedrich Trautz, was meant to replace the prewar *Wa-Doku-Kai* as an associational space for the cultivation of social and intellectual engagement between Germany and Japan, but — in an ironic twist — spent the first several years of its existence regularly beset by internal conflict between its German and Japanese members.<sup>30</sup> The individual most responsible for this ongoing tension was Kanokogi Kazunobu, a visiting Professor of Philosophy who had arrived in Berlin in 1924. Kanokogi had a reputation as “an outspoken Japanese nationalist and the spiritual leader in the domain of identifying a purely Japanese *Weltanschauung*. Due to his radical and uncompromising position he was often hostile to liberal circles and was otherwise also found to be a difficult individual.”<sup>31</sup> Relations between Kanokogi and his German colleagues at the *Japaninstitut* eventually deteriorated to the point that Kanokogi withdrew from the *Japaninstitut* and formed his own rival organization, the *Deutsch-Japanische Arbeitsgemeinschaft* (DJAG).<sup>32</sup>

The formation of this new group, aside from reflecting the ongoing rivalry between Germans intent on reasserting their prior privileged position vis-à-vis Japan and an increasingly assertive Japanese community, also carried serious political implications, given Kanokogi’s public defense of a theory of totalitarianism (*zentaishugi*) and rumored relationship with members of extreme right-wing political groups, both in Germany and Japan.<sup>33</sup> Although not an explicitly political group itself, the DJAG — which reorganized itself in 1929 as the *Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft* (DJG) and remained the dominant associational influence in the German-Japanese relationship throughout the National Socialist era — did signal the increasing monopolization of pro-Japanese rhetoric within Germany by specific political elements: namely, extreme right-wing and *völkisch* parties.

This increasing visibility of Japan within German political rhetoric during the interwar era was signaled clearly through German public

30 Telegram. Inhalt: Denkschrift Dr. Gunderts über die deutsch-japanischen Institute. Tokyo, 26.6.34. Politisches Archiv, Auswärtiges Amt (hereafter: PA AA), R85971.

31 Walter Donat. Vorschlag für Professoren-Einladung durch die DJG., 25.4.41. PA AA R61305.

32 Letter to Gundert from Trautz, 3.10.28. PA AA R85970.

33 In 1930, Kanokogi founded the Patriotic Workers’ Party (*Aikoku Kinrôtô*), which was explicitly modeled after the NSDAP. He was also known to begin his lectures during the 1930s with a Hitler salute. He was arrested as a Class A war criminal, but spared prosecution in consideration of his terminal case of tuberculosis. Christopher Szpilman, “Kanokogi Kazunobu: ‘Imperial Asia,’ 1937,” in Sven Saaler and Christopher Szpilman, eds. *Pan-Asianism: a Documentary History, vol. 2: 1920-Present* (Lanham, MD et al., 2011), 149–153.

responses to the Manchurian Incident in 1931 and Japan's subsequent installation of the Manchukuo puppet-state. Japan's actions in China were roundly condemned internationally, which eventually resulted in Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933. In Germany, however, coverage of Japanese actions in Manchuria was somewhat more ambiguous. Rather than criticizing Japan for its obvious breach of Chinese national sovereignty, the general trend within the German press was instead to focus on the League of Nations' impotent efforts to rein in Japan. In an editorial choice that recalled earlier narratives about Japanese-German parallels, the German satirical press framed the controversy through comparisons to German grievances against the post-WWI international order, whether in regard to the refusal by the Allies to consider an Austrian *Anschluss* with Germany or in respect to the contested border with Poland.<sup>34</sup> In another image from *Kladderadatsch*, Japan was depicted as Goethe's anti-hero Götz von Berlichingen defying the demands of the League's gentlemen, with a caption sardonically observing that Japan would now demonstrate how much it had learned from its thorough study of German literature.<sup>35</sup> In all of these images, German readers were clearly meant to identify with the Japanese against the League of Nations. The Chinese themselves, in stark contrast to the policies of the Weimar Republic, received little sympathy as the object of Japanese aggression; rather, China was more commonly depicted as an acceptable site for Japanese empire, given its inability to successfully modernize.

Even without a definite shift in stated policy towards supporting the Japanese against the Chinese, Hitler's appointment as Chancellor in 1933 did have immediate and important consequences for the community of advocates for Japan in Germany. Indeed, it was during the first two years following Hitler's ascension to power that the racial status of the Japanese emerged as a potentially insurmountable barrier to friendly relations. This incipient crisis was not provoked by any specific action by the National Socialist state itself, but rather by concerns within the Japanese press that racially discriminatory legislation and rhetoric could be "misapplied" against the population of Japanese then resident in Germany. The visibility of the Japanese as a community within Germany, as well as the existence of a small yet socially and politically well-connected population of mixed-race individuals (*Mischlinge*), made it apparent to the leadership of the DJG that the racial status of the Japanese required clarification. The subsequent attempt to definitively "place" the Japanese within the Nazi racial hierarchy collapsed under the weight of a substantive debate

34 "Der ehrliche 'Friedenswächter,'" in *Kladderadatsch* no. 45 (November 8, 1931); "Und dieser Grenzstein soll rechtsgültig sein?," in *Kladderadatsch* no. 50 (December 11, 1932).

35 "Japan und der Völkerbund," in *Kladderadatsch* no. 48 (November 29, 1931). The reference was obviously to Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* (1773), and more specifically to the play's famous quote, wherein Götz replies to the demand that he surrender: ". . . er kann mich am Arsch lecken!"

between the racial ideologue Johann von Leers and Dr. Walther Gross from the Office of Racial Policy during 1934-35 regarding whether the Japanese could be granted the status of an Aryan or Nordic race; Leers claimed to have identified traces of Nordic culture in Japanese heraldry and funerary rites, and contended that, not only should the Japanese be understood as a “Nordic” people, they actually represented one of the few remnants of authentic Nordic culture.<sup>36</sup> Gross rejected Leers’ conclusions, on the basis that any official recognition of the Japanese as a Nordic people could destabilize official Nazi racial policy, but suggested instead that, given the small number of German-Japanese *Mischlinge*, it should not be unduly difficult to make special accommodation for them, judged on a case-by-case basis.<sup>37</sup> In effect, as the very model of an image-conscious bureaucrat, Gross’ official recommendation was to avoid the problem and hope that no one pressed the issue further.

For the duration of the Third Reich, the Japanese remained an unresolved problem in respect to racial policy, yet Leers, among other influential figures, continued to argue — in the absence of any official statement to the contrary — that the Japanese were a “kindred people,” as evidenced by cultural similarities.<sup>38</sup> The developing German-Japanese relationship may have raised uncomfortable questions in regards to Nazi racial science, yet it was still understood as important enough to warrant the protection of bureaucratic double-speak, hence Gross’ concern that the Japanese should be privately reassured that their racial status would be respected. Although this attempt at compromise functioned better in theory than in practice, it is nevertheless suggestive of the value assigned to the Japanese within certain circles of the National Socialist state.

As early as 1935, the publication of pro-Japanese literature increased dramatically in Germany, both in volume and in visibility. Although not yet allied formally with Japan — and indeed still engaged in substantive cooperative projects with Republican China — the National Socialist party signaled its sympathies through the promotion and patronage of authors espousing a particular reading of Japanese culture. In February 1935, the Nazi party newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter* published a special four-part article on General Nogi Maresuke, the “last samurai” and hero of Port Arthur during the Russo-Japanese War.<sup>39</sup> Nogi, whose suicide in 1912 following the death of the Meiji Emperor had received considerable interest in Germany, was presented in this article series as a cultural intermediary

36 Denkschrift der Deutsch-Japanischen Gesellschaft zur Frage der Anwendung der Rassen-Gesetzgebung auf die Abkömmlinge aus deutsch-japanischen Mischehen. Signed by Admiral Paul Behncke. 10.24.34. BArch R 64IV/31, pp. 26-37.

37 Walther Gross, Antwort auf die im Dezember erschiene Denkschrift der Deutsch-Japanischen Gesellschaft, 30.1.35. BArch R 64IV/31, pp. 16-20.

38 Johann von Leers, “Alt-Japan und die nordische Kultur,” in *Odal* 9 (1940), 129-138. Leers, “Japan und die früh-nordische Kultur,” in *Odal* 8, no. 9 (1939), 771-778.

39 Roland Strunk, “Nogi, der letzte Samurai. Der japanische Held von Port Arthur,” in *Völkischer Beobachter* [Hereafter VB] nos. 38-42 (February 7-11, 1935).

between tradition and modernity, which both echoed earlier arguments regarding the unique position of Japan and gestured towards the increasing importance of bushido as a central theme in German writings about Japanese culture during the second half of the 1930s.

Although the 1936 Olympics generated considerable press coverage in Germany about the Japanese team and its home nation, the single most important event of 1936 for propelling the German-Japanese relationship was the signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact on November 25<sup>th</sup>. This agreement expressly forbid either Germany or Japan from signing treaties with the Soviet Union and provided some assurance that either partner would aid the other in the event of an attack by the Soviets.<sup>40</sup> Although this agreement did not prevent Hitler from pursuing a separate arrangement with the Soviet Union just a few years later, it did signal a shift by the German state away from the Chinese and towards an official alliance with the Japanese. The symbolic importance of this agreement is perhaps best symbolized by a cartoon from *Kladderadatsch* published in December 1936 (see figure 2): The two sides of the frame flanked by figures of a Germanic knight and a samurai warrior, both with drawn swords, defending their “threshold” from the Komintern “worm.”<sup>41</sup> That the two figures were depicted equivalently, both in their stature and in their posture, reflects the terms of the German-Japanese cultural relationship as much as it does the contemporary political climate. The outbreak of war on the Asian mainland in 1937 may have noticeably increased the public visibility of this rhetoric, yet it did not fundamentally change its content or ideological basis, rooted in an idealization of Japanese culture framed through the National Socialist ethos.

#### IV.

By the beginning of December 1941, the German army occupied much of Western Europe and had successfully advanced as far as



**Figure 2.** “Ein gebieterisches Halt,” *Kladderadatsch* no. 50 (December 13, 1936) © Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg.

40 “Deutsch-japanisches Abkommen unterzeichnet,” in *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (hereafter DAZ) no. 553 (November 25, 1936); “Erklärung der Reichsregierung zum deutsch-japanischen Abkommen,” in DAZ no. 554 (November 26, 1936).

41 “Ein gebieterisches Halt,” in *Kladderadatsch* no. 50 (December 13, 1936).

Moscow in the East, although a Soviet counter-offensive beginning on December 5 quickly pushed German forces back from the city. The Japanese army had moved into the southern half of French Indochina in July, which precipitated the oil embargo that would ultimately compel Japan to take military action against the allied nations of the West. The attack finally began on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese Navy attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawai'i; in quick succession the Japanese then launched successful attacks on Hong Kong, Malaya, the Philippines, and Thailand. The astonishing rapidity with which the Japanese military forces inflicted devastating losses on the Western Allies was met with general acclaim across Germany. Although German coverage of the military conflict in East Asia had already increased dramatically since 1938, the events of December 1941 unleashed a wave of material within Germany that attempted to identify the roots of Japanese military success within its culture. During the war itself, the cultural images and associations deployed about Japan within Germany remained generally consistent with the earlier depictions. The most noticeable change, however, was the escalating availability of this material to the general public, both in terms of frequency and of sheer volume; the rate at which materials associated with this particular image of Japan steadily increased throughout the war, even to the extent that an inverse relationship can be identified between the actual status of the German military campaigns in Europe and publicly available, politically glamorized images of Japanese martial heroism.

From December 8 onward, the Japanese military was, quite literally, daily front-page news in Germany. Even in the first week of fighting, major dailies like the *Völkischer Beobachter* and the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, in addition to more "objective" reports detailing troop movements and the territory captured by the advancing Japanese military, published a series of laudatory articles about the heroics of Japan's soldiers.<sup>42</sup> In anticipation of future trends, several of these initial articles focused specifically on the nine Japanese pilots at Pearl Harbor who had consciously sacrificed themselves by dive-bombing their planes into American ships, or alternatively the so-called "human torpedoes."<sup>43</sup> Other articles highlighted the continuity of Japanese military glory from the Russo-Japanese War into the current conflict. In short, for about six months after Japan's official entry into World War II in December 1941, German newspaper readers were inundated with articles testifying to the martial prowess and heroism of the Japanese military. Although the quantity of

42 "Japans Volk kampffentschlossen," *DAZ* no. 586 (December 8, 1941), p. 2; "Die Helden von Hawaii," *DAZ* no. 592 (December 11, 1941), 2; Otto Mossdorf, "Soldatenvolk der Japaner," *DAZ* no. 597 (December 14, 1941), 1; "Der Kampfgeist der Japaner," *VB* no. 351 (December 17, 1941), 2.

43 Wilhelm Schulze, "Jibaku," *DAZ* no. 597 (December 14, 1941), 2; "Die Neun von Pearl Harbor," *VB* no. 68 (February 9, 1942), 2; "'Niku-Dan.' Menschliche Bomben," *DAZ* no. 99 (February 27, 1942), 2.

reporting on the progress of the war in Asia fluctuated throughout the duration of the war, these articles on the unique martial qualities of the Japanese assumed a constant and unavoidable presence in the German press.

Germany's magazines and journals also dramatically increased their coverage of Japan and Japanese culture following the dramatic events of December 1941. The first articles written directly in response to the expansion of World War II into the Pacific appeared in Germany's more explicitly military-oriented periodicals, although these were followed by a wave of articles and special issues in more general and popular magazines.<sup>44</sup> All of these articles were explicit in their focus. Every title included at least one of the common keywords: "chivalric," "soldiers," or "martial." Some of the authors had established ties to the community of German-Japanese experts, but most did not. The bulk of them are interesting, again, only in that they so closely echoed the established images and associations surrounding Japanese culture, and in the fact that these periodicals were, more or less, intended for a more general audience.

The surge of interest in Japanese culture that began in December 1941 also permeated into organs of the Nazi party including, most notoriously, Heinrich Himmler's *Schutzstaffel* (SS). During the last two weeks of December 1941 the *SS-Leithefte* — the organization's official magazine — produced three articles about the Japanese military spirit in quick succession. All three took their inspiration from the current fighting in the Pacific, each one highlighting an example of exceptional bravery or martial spirit of the Japanese servicemen. The first, "Abschied auf ewig . . .," gave an account of the Japanese pilots who, during the attack on Pearl Harbor, purposefully dove their planes into American ships as a means of inflicting greater damage.<sup>45</sup> The second, "Feldwebel Ischizuka im Dschungel," recounted the story of a downed Japanese pilot who spent seven days stranded alone in the jungles of Malaya during the Japanese invasion.<sup>46</sup> The third, "Koike und Ito siegten in Berlin — siegen vor Hongkong," introduced the story of the so-called "samurai swimmers" in the attack on Hong Kong, who were led by two members of Japan's 1936 Olympic squad.<sup>47</sup> Taken together, the three articles thus presented an overview of contemporary Japanese heroism in the air, on land, and at sea. In addition to their obvious jingoism, these articles were also quite sentimental in their attitudes towards wartime heroism, as reflected in the first article's conclusion that: "The men are no longer, just as the ships that they

44 For a few examples of this phenomenon: Jürgen von Grone, "Vom Geist des abendländischen und des japanischen Rittertums," in *Wir und die Welt* 4, no. 7 (1942), 252-254, 263-265; Miura Kazuichi, "Kokutai — der Urgrund der japanischen Waffenerfolge," in *Volk und Reich* 18, no. 3 (1942), 151-153; Okuno Kiyonobu, "Der japanische Soldat," in *Der Stürmer* 44, no. 10 (1942), 634-641; Heinrich Rogge, "Frieden durch Recht. Japanisches Rittertum," in *Geist der Zeit* 20 (1942), no. 1, pp. 51-55; no. 2, pp. 108-112; no. 4, pp. 221-224; no. 5, pp. 277-279; no. 7, pp. 388-392.

45 "Abschied auf ewig . . . Vom Todesmut der japanischen Soldaten," in *SS-Leithefte* 7, no. 9b (1941), 7-9.

46 "Feldwebel Ischizuka im Dschungel," in *SS-Leithefte* 7, no. 10a (1941), 8-10.

47 "Koike und Ito siegten in Berlin — siegen vor Hongkong," in *SS-Leithefte* 7, no. 10b (1941), 9-10.

struck are no longer. Japan has proven to the world that its mothers are capable of giving their people men and heroes.”<sup>48</sup>

In interrogating the reception of Japanese martial culture by the SS, the central text is undoubtedly Heinz Corazza’s *Die Samurai: Ritter des Reiches in Ehre und Treue*. The work, a concise pamphlet detailing the history of the samurai and bushido, first appeared in the SS periodical *Das Schwarze Korps*. Subsequently published for the general public in 1942, it received the special distinction of having its introduction written by Heinrich Himmler, who recommended the text specifically to all SS officers for its edificatory content. In a passage that recalled both Oswald Spengler’s *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* and Karl Haushofer, Himmler stressed the utility of observing the trajectories of other peoples’ development, because “The laws by which all *Völker* become great apply just as much as the laws by which all *Völker* decay.”<sup>49</sup> For Himmler, the example of the samurai in Japan was especially instructive:

This short history of the samurai means to recall to our thoughts something long-forgotten: the reality that, until recently, this *Volk* in the Far East had the same principles of honor that our fathers had in a former, prematurely destroyed past; and moreover the knowledge that it is usually minorities of the highest caliber that bestow a *Volk* with eternal life here on earth.<sup>50</sup>

Himmler thus bridged the conception of honor articulated within bushido with his own idealized vision of medieval Germanic honor; he also, in the second half of this statement, linked the samurai to the SS as the bearers of their respective nation’s honor and virtue. This connection between the SS and the samurai, made explicit in Himmler’s introduction, constituted an important thematic element throughout Corazza’s work.

This valorization of Japan as a nation of warriors was so pervasive by August 1942 that the Security Division of the SS finally broached the question of whether this propaganda was not, in fact, too effective: “The former view, that the German soldier is the best in the world, has been confused by descriptions of the Japanese swimmers who removed mines laid outside Hong Kong, or of the Japanese pilots who, with their disdain for death, swooped down upon enemy ships with their bombs. This has resulted in something a bit like an

48 “Abschied auf ewig . . . Vom Todesmut der japanischen Soldaten,” 9.

49 Heinrich Himmler, “Vorwort,” in Heinz Corazza, *Die Samurai. Ritter des Reiches in Ehre und Treue* (Berlin, 1942), 3.

50 *Ibid.*, 3.

inferiority complex. The Japanese look like a kind of “Super-Teuton” [*Germane im Quadrat*].<sup>51</sup> This statement speaks to the complicated position of the Japanese within the propaganda of National Socialist Germany. On the one hand, these images of Japanese heroism and self-sacrificial loyalty affirmed the patterns of behavior and thought commonly valorized within Nazi propaganda. At the same time, however, the fact that it was the Japanese — not their German counterparts — that were performing these feats of valor necessarily forced the comparison that the author found so potentially demoralizing.

A subtle shift in how the Japanese were represented within Germany did occur, however, after the defeat at Stalingrad in early 1943 and the German state’s efforts to mobilize the German people for “total war.” Although the Third Reich and its ancillary organizations — among which the DJG must be counted, owing to the group’s active involvement in generating propaganda about Japan — had already established its Japanese ally as a brother-in-arms to the German soldier, comparable to him in bravery, moral rectitude, and spiritual purity, the representation of the Japanese in Germany evolved after Stalingrad, to reflect the growing crisis of morale in Germany. The presumed willingness of the average Japanese conscript to die for his nation was gradually transformed into a didactic tool by the German press to impress upon the Germans the worthiness and beauty of such a sacrifice. The problem of death, and especially suicide, came to occupy a central role within the public rhetoric surrounding Japan, with the added subtext that the German public should be ashamed for their own lack of willpower.

Although the quantity of monographs and articles published in Germany about Japan declined precipitously during the last two years of the war, this trend was more likely due to the changing exigencies of the German publishing industry than to a fundamental shift in the German-Japanese relationship. Indeed, the continued popularity of topics related to Japan was clearly reflected in the astonishing commercial success of Albrecht von Urach’s *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft*, a genuine bestseller of the latter war years with multiple printings and over 700,000 copies sold.<sup>52</sup> In this work, Urach argued that the “secret” to Japanese strength lay in their relative isolation geographically, which allowed them to “only adopt what they need from foreigners, and to regulate what they choose to adopt.”<sup>53</sup> As a result of this unique ability to control the process of cultural transfer,

51 Herbert Worm, “Japanologie im Nationalsozialismus. Ein Zwischenbericht,” in Gerhard Krebs and Bernd Martin, eds., *Formierung und Fall der Achse Berlin-Tōkyō* (Munich, 1994), 184.

52 Albrecht Fürst von Urach, *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft* (Berlin, 1942).

53 Urach, *Geheimnis*, 13.



**Figure 3. Cover of: Albrecht von Urach, *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft*. (Berlin, 1942).**

the Japanese had achieved — according to Urach — an exceptionally coherent cultural core identity centered on martial virtue. More specifically, he identified the samurai as the purest expression of the Japanese ethos and as the guiding principle of Japanese history, knitting together the aristocratic ideals of the samurai and the simple loyalty of the people. This identification of a direct line of transmission between “traditional” Japanese martial virtues and contemporary Japan was echoed in the cover art for the work (see figure 3), which depicted two symbolic figures: a modern Japanese infantryman and an idealized samurai warrior. By placing the samurai behind and slightly above the modern soldier, Urach — and/or his editor — clearly intended to evoke the idea that these values were not simply the inheritance of contemporary Japan, but were rather a vital and intrinsic part of modern Japanese culture.

As hope for victory faded, this emphasis on martial values increasingly centered on the image of a beautiful death for the nation, embodied first in news reports from the Pacific Theater that “no Japanese allowed himself to be captured,” and that: “The defenders stood resolutely [*totentschlossen*] at their posts and did not retreat even a single foot’s-breadth . . . Only the dead withdrew from the fight.”<sup>54</sup> Later, this same image of a sacrificial death was expanded to include the figure of the *kamikaze* pilot, who represented the final synthesis of the German romantic image of Japanese heroism and the National Socialist state’s apocalyptic vision of the *Endkampf*. The first mention of the *kamikaze* by name in the German press appeared in an article from November 1, 1944 in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, wherein it was reported that the *kamikaze* had successfully sunk eight American ships and damaged an additional nineteen.<sup>55</sup> A short article from November 4 introduced the program and its pilots, suggesting that this new tactic fully mobilized the Japanese soldiers’ “willingness to die,” and identified the *kamikaze* as an embodiment of Japan’s martial ethos, now arrayed against the soulless technology of the United States. From this point, the *kamikaze* and their exploits were

54 “Kein Japaner gab sich gefangen,” in *VB* no. 357 (December 23, 1943), 1.

55 “Neue japanische Erfolge bei den Philippinen,” in *VB* no. 299 (November 1, 1944), 1.

standard front-page news in the German press, even to the extent that one of the very last articles published about Japan during the National Socialist era — which appeared April 6, 1945 in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* — discussed the *kamikaze* as the literal embodiment of Japanese honor.<sup>56</sup>

## V.

In his monograph on postwar German and Japanese historiography, *The Quest for the Lost Nation*, Sebastian Conrad describes the postwar “temporalization of space” that stripped “East” and “West” of their geographical connotations and “instead used spatial references as abstract markers of progress and backwardness.”<sup>57</sup> In his analysis, this process realigned (West) Germany and Japan with the Western Allies and effectively sealed off both nations’ access to the East, not just physically, through the creation of new geopolitical borders and barriers, but also imaginatively, through a revitalization of the cultural binary of Occident and Orient. Although framed as a comparative study of postwar German and Japanese historiography, his analysis on this point carries broader implications for the German-Japanese transnational relationship during the first half of the twentieth century. Specifically, the notion that postwar Germany and Japan had to be Westernized — in addition to being de-Nazified, demilitarized, and democratized — is a point that deserves more reflection.

Within the German-Japanese relationship, the “West” was invariably viewed with ambivalence. On the one hand, no modern nation-state could survive without the technological and industrial benefits that the West had to offer, yet these material goods often were understood to come with a cultural cost. In an era of Western geopolitical hegemony, anxiety about deculturation and the spread of an international monoculture fed directly into resistance against the West. The forms that this resistance assumed within the colonial context have been well documented, but what about the nations that were “neither here nor there”? For Germany and Japan, the articulation of national identity during the early twentieth century was premised on this idea of geographical and cultural liminality. The dual impulses in Germany towards East and West — as captured in the concept of *Mittleuropa* — translated politically into a kind of spatial schizophrenia. Similarly, Japan’s modernization project during the Meiji era placed it in a somewhat unique position during the early twentieth century as an “Eastern”

56 “Kamikaze — Geist der Japaner,” in *DAZ* no. 82 (April 6, 1945), 1.

57 Sebastian Conrad, *The Quest for the Lost Nation: Writing History in Germany and Japan in the American Century* (Berkeley, CA, 2010), 175.

nation that had successfully remodeled itself after the West. In effect, Germany and Japan had to be Westernized after 1945 precisely because neither state was fully or exclusively of the “West” geopolitically or culturally.

It was this shared exceptionality that Germany found appealing in Japan, and which was articulated through the language of a shared destiny. The success with which Japan had synthesized West and East — a point of pride for Japanese nationalists — was understood by German advocates for Japan as confirmation that it was possible to be simultaneously national and modern, and instrumentalized as a template for a new conceptualization of the relationship between geography, culture, and modernity. This romantic reading of Japanese culture in Germany was therefore not anti-modern or a form of “reactionary modernism”; rather, it was an attempt to reconcile the binary of East and West in the modern era through the language and imagery of heroism. The Anglo-American nations of the West were mobilized as the antagonists in this relationship because they represented a universalizing model of modernity that allowed little room for national or cultural particularity. The German representation of Japanese martial culture therefore should be understood as an attempt to destabilize an imperial narrative about the inevitability of the West.

This critique, premised on the shared position of Germany and Japan as the fulcrum between East and West, used the figure of the hero in order to construct an alternative narrative about modernity, one in which cultural values could co-exist with technology. Over the course of the era between the Russo-Japanese War and the Second World War, multiple variants of this argument were explicated, contested, and debated, but the basic assumption of a common identity, fate, or destiny shared by Germany and Japan remained a consistent thread. One reason for this was the sheer tenacity of a community of advocates for Japan within Germany. Another was the specifically romantic register of the relationship, which allowed for a greater sense of common interest across national borders. This type of imagery depicted the Japanese in a manner that was generally flattering and amenable to their own preferred narratives of self-representation — even if it did subordinate Japan’s real advancements as a technological and scientific innovator to the iron law of culture — but it also tapped into specific German narratives about themselves and their national mission, both within Europe and globally. The denouement of 1945

delegitimized these narratives, both in Germany and in Japan, and forced both nations to negotiate a new identity within the global community.

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## **“A WILD, UNGOVERNABLE THING”: RISK AND INSURANCE DURING THE BEGINNINGS OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, 1770-1840**

**Elisabeth Engel**

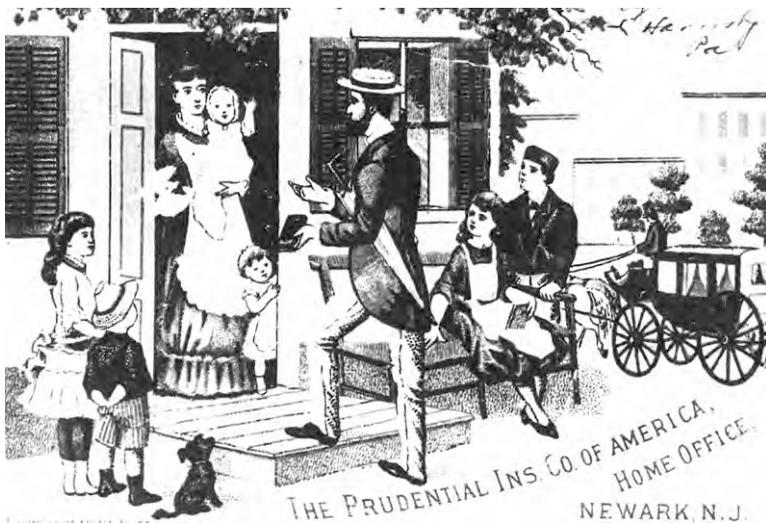
GERMAN HISTORICAL INSTITUTE

In this article, I propose an examination of early American society from the perspective of insurers. My goal is to show that the period in which the former North American colonies consolidated their independence was marked by a vibrant culture of “risk.” Starting in the late eighteenth century, insurers made “risk” known in visual and statistical representations, inscribed it into places, bodies, and possessions, sought to manage it through rules and regulations for safety enhancement, and disseminated the concept of “risk” from the urban centers of the East coast inland. By 1840, when insurance companies existed in almost every state of the union, “risk” had become a cultural innovation that characterized the nation’s daily business.<sup>1</sup> As advertisements from that period intimate, insurance unfolded its power by suggesting that “risks” were uncertain and invisible, yet likely to come knocking on our doors at any time (Figure 1).

The curiosity that informs and defines the outlines of my research concerns what we may call the “insecure beginnings of American independence.” By insecure beginnings I mean a new market for security, which emerged as the British Empire retreated and which provided insurance with its footing. The insights that emerge from a study of insurance as a lens into this market transcend economic history. As I hope to show, insurers were crucial agents in the process of increasing the public awareness of “risk” and can serve as unique windows into the usually hidden worlds of fear and anxiety in which various segments of early American society resided.

In what follows, I will sketch out the core trajectories of this project. I will first give an overview of the development of insurance in the period in question and situate my project in the historiography that informs my analysis. I will then shift my focus to methodological questions pertaining to the conceptual and archival levels. To illustrate how insurance can be conceptualized beyond economic history, I will discuss insurance archives along four analytical dimensions that serve to capture both the construction of risk and its social implications. Taken together, these steps foreground the role fears and

1 Robert E. Wright and Christopher Kingston, “Corporate Insurers in Antebellum America,” *Business History Review* 86 (2012): 447-476, 463. See also Jonathan Levy, *Freaks of Fortune: The Emerging World of Capitalism and Risk in America* (Cambridge, 2012).



**Figure 1: Early advertisement of the Prudential Insurance Company of America, n.d.**

insecurities played in shaping American society on its way to independence.

## I. The Beginnings of Insurance in North America

The beginnings of the history of insurance in the North American colonies can be dated to 1752. That year, Benjamin Franklin founded

the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire. The company's creation grew out of Franklin's long engagement with fire as a force of nature. After experimenting with fire-fighting, chimney sweeping, and safer cooking and heating devices in Philadelphia, Franklin acknowledged that fire could not yet be brought under human control. "Boiling oil," he stated in one of his Dogood letters in the *Philadelphia Gazette*, remained "a wild, ungovernable thing." By means of the Contributionship he articulated his vision of coping with such uncontrollable forces. If fire was ungovernable, he wanted at least to prevent the losses that it was likely to cause.<sup>2</sup>

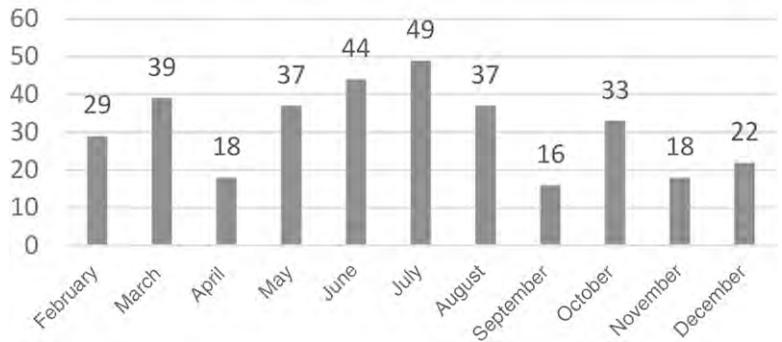
Franklin formed the Contributionship as a mutual company, that is, a company that was owned and operated by all of its policyholders. This business model was inspired by friendly societies, which, as Franklin put it, represented an idea "whereby one man might help another, without any disservice to himself."<sup>3</sup> Members of the Contributionship accordingly contributed equal shares to a fund from which individual losses by fire were indemnified. Aiming to provide a worthwhile civic service, the functioning of the principle of the many balancing the losses of the few necessitated selection. To protect its funds, the Contributionship surveyed the houses of potential members regarding their safety features, such as their construction, materials, and accessibility for firemen. A survey of Franklin's private home of 1766, for instance, noted that it was located

2 John Bainbridge, *Biography of an Idea: The Story of Mutual Fire and Casualty Insurance* (Garden City, NY, 1952), 31-47, quote on page 39.

3 Quoted *ibid.*, 33.

on the south side of High Street, had three stories with brick floors that were connected by “ramped and bracketed” stairs, as well as a “way out on the roof,” a “rich chimney,” and an “all new kitchen in the cellar.” Based on these findings, the agent determined that the building was eligible for protection and that its loss by fire would be indemnified with 500 pounds (about \$90,000 today).<sup>4</sup>

Figure 2: Successful applications with the Baltimore Insurance Company per month in 1796



Source for data: “Applications,” Causten Pickett Papers, box 20, Library of Congress.

Although Philadelphia inhabitants were familiar neither with disastrous fires nor with the concept of fire insurance, they readily accepted the Contributionship’s scheme of loss prevention. Within the first fourteen years of operation, insurance agents surveyed more than half of the city’s three thousand buildings, which suggests a remarkable anxiety about fires. If we broaden our view beyond Philadelphia, then the largest city in North America, to other urban centers in the former thirteen colonies, we find comparable examples. In its founding year, the Baltimore Insurance Company, for instance, which focused mainly on ships and cargo, issued an average of 28 policies per month (figure 2). To use the words of a contemporary, it was here that things like “Beef Flour Pork Salmon Soap Eastern and Glassware Hums Mackrel (sic) and Nankeens” found protection from “Seas Winds Waves Reefs Sand and Currents” and compensation for the “Losses Costs Damages Hints Detriments Delays Injuries and Inconveniences” they may have suffered.<sup>5</sup>

To situate the Contributionship and the Baltimore Insurance Company in the biggest possible picture, we must consider them as two of more than three hundred insurance companies founded on American soil in the years between 1752 and 1840. To name but a few, among them were the Baltimore Equitable Society (1794), the Insurance Company of New York (1796), the Charleston

4 Survey of Franklin’s Dwelling, August 5, 1766. Repr. in *The Philadelphia Contributionship For the Insurance of Houses From Loss by Fire, Franklin and Fires* (Philadelphia, 1906), 15.

5 Report by J. H. Horsely, n.d., Causten Pickett Papers, box 19, folder “Baltimore Insurance Company 1799,” Library of Congress, Washington DC.

Insurance Company (1797), and the Newport Rhode Island Insurance Company (1799). Although not all of them survived, the number does underscore that attempts to grapple with “ungovernable things,” sometimes specified as fire, marine or life insurance, were made with increasing regularity in various corners of the country. Thus the industry’s early development seems to have grown out of an accumulation of bottom-up initiatives by and for people who shared a specific concern in a specific locality, with a strong concentration in urban spaces on the East coast, namely Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York, and Boston.<sup>6</sup>

While the social and cultural horizons of insurance on the North American continent certainly began to broaden dramatically in the late eighteenth century, they must also be considered as grounded in much older developments in Europe. Historians widely agree that insurance was an arcane business transacted mainly by overseas merchants. With predecessors in the Roman Empire and ancient Greece as well as medieval guilds and fraternities, the first “modern” insurance contract was signed in Florence in the fourteenth century. This Florentine contract is considered modern because it involved a third party who agreed to compensate a merchant’s potential loss of goods at sea in exchange for payment.<sup>7</sup>

A key element in the commercial revolution of the Middle Ages, this form of insurance contract made its way into transatlantic trade. Until the seventeenth century, the range of insured contingencies remained primarily defined by the tight commercial orbit of marine risks, prefiguring life insurance to the extent that African slaves, hazardous accidents and ransoms were occasionally covered.<sup>8</sup> Fire insurance, on the contrary, developed rather abruptly in response to major urban conflagrations and built upon concepts of mutual aid societies, starting with the Great Fire of London in 1666.<sup>9</sup> Due to this early focus on long-distance trade in maritime space, European and especially British insurance practices had long involved merchants in colonial North America, a group that searched for alternatives as the American Revolution moved forward.<sup>10</sup>

## II. Insurance and Risk in the Historiography

Insurance and risk each have their own rich literature, which, apart from a few notable exceptions, often do not take part in the same

6 In order to identify companies of which there is a record, I have merged existing lists and complemented them by a systematic keyword search on archive grid. The lists are drawn from Hannah Farber, “American Insurance Companies 1795-1815,” in *Underwritten States: Marine Insurance and the Making of Bodies Politic in America, 1622-1815* (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California 2014), 261-64; and Dalit Baranoff, “Fire Insurance Before 1810,” <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/fire-insurance-in-the-united-states/>, accessed November 9, 2015.

7 See Frederick Rockwell Sanborn, *Origins of the Early English Maritime and Commercial Law* (New York, 1930), 234.

8 Geoffrey W. Clark, *Betting on Lives: The Culture of Life Insurance in England, 1695-1775* (Manchester, 1999), 13-14. On the problem of slave insurance specifically, see Geoffrey Clark, “The Slave’s Appeal: Insurance and the Rise of Commercial Property,” in *The Appeal of Insurance*, ed. Geoffrey Clark, et al., 52-74 (Toronto, 2010).

9 For a comprehensive history of fire insurance, see Cornel Zwielerlein, *Der gezähmte Prometheus: Feuer und Sicherheit zwischen Früher Neuzeit und Moderne* (Göttingen, 2011).

10 Christopher Kingston, “Marine Insurance in Britain and America, 1720-1844: A Comparative Institutional Analysis,” *Journal of Economic History* 67, no. 2 (2007): 379-409; A. G. Crothers, “Commercial Risk and Capital Formation in Early America: Virginia Merchants and the Rise of American Marine Insurance, 1750-1815,” *Business History Review* 78 (2004): 607-633.

conversation.<sup>11</sup> Insurance, sometimes referred to as the “invisible element” of commerce, has primarily attracted the interest of business historians, who trace the careers of individual companies from an entrepreneurial perspective.<sup>12</sup> These works are joined by the studies of economic and legal historians, who consider the development of the industry in light of the major economic changes of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the rise of business corporations, the ebb and flow of government regulation, and the entrepreneurial response to industrialization and urbanization.<sup>13</sup> A self-proclaimed weakness of this scholarship lies in its lack of coverage for the pre-1840 period. As Michel Pritchett contends, this lacuna is due to “tentative and incomplete” data as well as to the assumption that insurance played a negligible role in promoting the kinds of savings and investments that drove the early development of the U.S. financial system.<sup>14</sup>

New impulses for the study of early insurance recently came from historians who aim to combine economic analysis with the insights of cultural history. Broadly speaking, this “new history of capitalism” returns attention to the rich people — merchants, bankers, bosses, and brokers — who by means of their wealth shaped “social habits, cultural logics and conditions of system-building.”<sup>15</sup> Early marine insurers, especially, have entered this picture. Due to their prominent role in facilitating long-distance trade in the Atlantic world, they serve to address one of the field’s key debates: the American transition to capitalism.<sup>16</sup> In this vein, Jonathan Levy describes colonial merchants who engaged in marine insurance in the Atlantic world as “the first men to commodify perils into financial ‘risks’” in North America.<sup>17</sup>

For cultural historians, this scholarship still draws a one-dimensional picture. As Sharon A. Murphy has observed in her ground-breaking work on antebellum American life insurance, many of the existing studies pursue a “simplistic” approach that ignores the complex dynamism apparent in the statistical and anecdotal evidence from the earlier periods, especially regarding the middle-class fears and

11 These exceptions focus on American life insurance in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Sharon A. Murphy, *Investing in Life: Insurance in Antebellum*

*America* (Baltimore, 2010) and Daniel B. Bouk, *How Our Days Became Numbered: Risk and the Rise of the Statistical Individual* (Chicago, 2015).

12 One of many examples is Marquis James, *Biography of a Business, 1792-1942: Insurance Company of North America* (Indianapolis, 1942).

13 Morton Keller, *The Life Insurance Enterprise, 1885-1910: A Study in the Limits of Corporate Power* (Cambridge, MA, 1963); Morton J. Horwitz, *The Transformation of American Law, 1870-1960: The Crisis of Legal Orthodoxy* (New York, 1992); John F. Witt, *The Accidental Republic: Crippled Workingmen, Destitute Widows, and the Remaking of American Law* (Cambridge, MA, 2004).

14 Bruce M. Pritchett, *Financing Growth: A Financial History of American Life Insurance Through 1900* (Philadelphia, 1985), 5.

15 Michael Zakim and Gary J. Kornblith, eds., *Capitalism Takes Command: The Social Transformation of the 19th Century* (Chicago, 2011), 13. Recent works on the new history of capitalism include Bruce H. Mann, *Republic of Debtors: Bankruptcy in the Age of American Independence* (Cambridge, MA, 2002); Scott A. Sandage, *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America* (Cambridge, 2005); Jane Kamensky, *The Exchange Artist: A Tale of High-flying Speculation and America’s First Banking Collapse* (New York, 2008); Stephen Mihm, *A Nation of Counterfeiters: Capitalists, Con Men, and the Making of the United States* (Princeton, 2008) and Jessica M. Lepler, *The Many Panics of 1837: People, Politics, and the Creation of a Transatlantic Crisis* (New York, 2013).

16 Mary E. Ruwell, *Eighteenth-century Capitalism: The Formation of American Marine Insurance Companies* (New York, 1993).

17 Levy, *Freaks of Fortune*, 21.

hopes that insurers addressed.<sup>18</sup> Murphy's criticism pushes the study of insurance into a new direction. She prompts us to consider that the insurance business, whether economically significant or not, shaped subjectivities and social conventions in a newly emerging social segment that we might call "vulnerable people." In her article on merchants in eighteenth-century Philadelphia, Toby Ditz has proposed a similar perspective. The merchant circles which bought marine insurance, she argues, were not inhabited by masculine risk-takers, but marked by an abundant experimentation with gender images relating to fears of failure. These fears reveal the difficulties that arose in defining a reputable self in contexts of market relations.<sup>19</sup>

If the historiography on insurance is marked by a preoccupation with capitalism, the historiography on risk may be characterized as focusing on modernity. A very simple, yet representative notion has it that risk is the "revolutionary idea that defines the boundary between modern times and the past."<sup>20</sup> In line with Western Enlightenment, this scholarship views the emergence of notions of risk as a shift in human thought from experiencing dangers as "given" towards aspirations to take control of the future.<sup>21</sup>

Starting from this basic chronology, scholars have explored two major trajectories. One concerns the changing nature of the hazards to which humans were exposed due to processes of modernization, industrialization, urbanization, mechanization, etc. Perhaps the most popular example of this interpretive camp is Ulrich Beck's concept of the "risk society," which he uses to distinguish nineteenth-century industrial societies from more recently emerging, "modern" societies in which the accumulation of wealth is inevitably tied to the production of risks that affect society as a whole, such as environmental pollution and social inequality.<sup>22</sup> In a related, yet inverted perspective, a rapidly growing strand of scholarship explores how natural and industrial disasters drove modernization in the United States.<sup>23</sup>

The second trajectory clusters around variations in American risk perceptions. This strand takes the difference between "risk taking" and "risk management" as its main orientation. Studies on "risk taking" are concerned with notions of adventure, gambling, and speculation, and have garnered attention for the Early Republic as the period in which a "nation at risk was being transformed into a nation of risk-takers."<sup>24</sup> Research on "risk management," on the contrary, tends to focus on efforts to avoid unwanted outcomes. This strand of research emphasizes the changing and increasingly diverse resources

18 Murphy, *Investing in Life*, 7.

19 Toby L. Ditz, "Shipwrecked; or, Masculinity Imperiled: Mercantile Representations of Failure and the Gendered Self in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *Journal of American History* 81 (1994): 51-53.

20 Peter L. Bernstein, *Against the Gods: The Remarkable Story of Risk* (New York, 1996), 1.

21 Anthony Giddens, "Risk and Responsibility," *Modern Law Review* 62 (1999): 1-10, 3.

22 Ulrich Beck, *Risikogesellschaft: Auf dem Weg in eine andere Moderne* (Frankfurt am Main, 1986).

23 See, for instance, Uwe Lübken, *Die Natur der Gefahr: Überschwemmungen am Ohio River im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 2014); Kevin Rozario, *The Culture of Calamity: Disaster and the Making of Modern America* (Chicago, 2007) and Mark Tebeau, *Eating Smoke: Fire in Urban America, 1800-1950* (Baltimore, 2003).

24 Cathy D. Matson, "The Ambiguities of Risk in the Early Republic," *Business History Review* 78 (2004): 595-606.

Americans had at their disposal to understand and manage public hazards, for instance by means of vernacular knowledge, statistics and probabilities, expert cultures, communication technologies, safety provisions and state interventions.<sup>25</sup>

To summarize, the literature on risk delivers useful categories for both the periodization and categorization of risks. The term “risk” itself, however, tends to be attributed to investigated scenarios rather than being a result of analyses. This imbalance invites us to bring the historiography on risk into closer conversation with the “tentative and incomplete” history of insurance during the beginnings of American independence.

### III. Conceptualizing Insurance and Risk

Corresponding to the gaps in the respective historiographies on insurance and risk, I would like to offer some thoughts on how the nexus of insurance and risk can be conceptualized. The chief trajectory of this consideration is to argue that risk can be analyzed as a product of the insurance industry. This hypothesis may seem flawed at first sight, as neither risk nor insurance are material entities that drop from the assembly line. It is precisely because they are immaterial, however, that addressing their history in terms of production processes helps to clarify their connection and to place this connection in the historically specific contexts in which they became meaningful to various strata of early American society. Simply put, conceptualizing risk as a product requires us to ask how and by whom it was made, as well as how and by whom it was consumed.

An obvious starting point is to explore a time-specific meaning of insurance. According to a definition provided by the first American edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* of 1798, insurance was “in law and commerce, a contract whereby one party [the insurer] engages to pay the losses which the other [the insured] may sustain, for a stipulated premium or consideration.”<sup>26</sup> The definition helps us to get at the essence of what insurance produced: a piece of paper that was legally binding and that commanded two transactions at different points in time. One transaction was hypothetical. It was made by the insurer after the insured experienced the loss he anticipated. The second transaction was a payment that was made by the insured in any event. With this “consideration” or “premium” the insured paid for the prospect that possible losses would be compensated.

25 Arwen P. Mohun, *Risk: Negotiating Safety in American Society* (Baltimore, 2013), 3-4.

26 Thomas Dodson, ed. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Philadelphia, 1798), 268.

In this exchange of money, risk was not explicitly mentioned. It loomed in the phrase “the losses which the other *may* sustain,” meaning that there was a possibility of loss which motivated the insured to make a contract. The insured probably thought of a commonsensical definition of risk, such as “a hazard, a chance, danger,” as *The New and Complete Dictionary of the English Language* of 1775 defined the term.<sup>27</sup>

For the insurer, who agreed to take on somebody else’s risk, the concept had more complex implications. As a placeholder term that encompassed all scenarios in which loss might occur, insurers used risk to designate a series of mathematical calculations, in which the likelihood of the event, its financial implications, and finally the appropriate premium were determined. In insurance records, the term risk occurs accordingly in three contexts. One is the so-called “schedules of risk,” in which insurers systematically noted the incidents they consented to cover and from which insights into probabilities could be drawn. The second one is that of correspondence, in which they negotiated the payable sum in the event of loss with individuals. And the third context are policies and advertisements, in which insurers presented forms and tables that derived from already classified hazards as well as the rates and premiums for which those “risks will be taken.”<sup>28</sup> By drawing on these procedures, insurers transformed risks into commodities. They defined which incidents counted as “risks” and the cost of their prevention, so that risk became a tradeable product that was exchanged for money, whether or not the incident in question materialized.

In addition to tracking production procedures, conceptualizing risk as a commodity helps us reveal why people started to pay for such an invisible product. An economist might point out that the fact that insurers were able to exchange the risks they defined for money indicates that this product not only had a commercial value, but also a use value on the consumers’ end. This perspective can be complemented with anthropological considerations. As Arjun Appadurai concedes, commodities, whether material or immaterial, do not actually have any innate value, deriving, for instance, from the costs of their production. Instead, the price people are willing to pay for a product depends on how it is culturally marked and socially understood in a specific social context.<sup>29</sup>

The anthropological assumption that a commodity does not exist outside of human judgment is especially helpful for understanding

27 John Ash, *The New and Complete Dictionary of the English Language* (London, 1775), not paginated.

28 A discussion of the primary source material follows in the next section of this article.

29 Arjun Appadurai, “Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value,” in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge, NY, 1986), 3-63, passim.

the comparatively late, yet sudden rise of risk and insurance in early North America. Insurance applications from this time reveal that people started to imbue these products with meaning. A typical letter read, for instance, that the applicant was “anxious to do this as a matter of common prudence” and “believing that the freedom from anxiety . . . will be a full equivalence for the expense.”<sup>30</sup> This document shows that applicants projected fears and anxieties as well as cultural values like wisdom, responsibility, and autonomy onto their insurance policies, and that it was those values, rather than the reimbursements they could expect, that made the policies worthwhile. Studying the transactions, production procedures, and cultural values that clustered around the intellectual games of risk and insurance thus promises to provide powerful indications of how these invisible commodities were brought to life by both producers and consumers. Together these groups shaped a new market for security that was geared towards vulnerable subjects instead of risk-takers and that triggered cultural and social configurations that surround us to the present day.

#### IV. Insurance Archives: Four Analytical Dimensions

As my conceptual considerations have suggested, insurance was an equivocal product that can be studied based on a diverse body of primary sources. Insurance archives encompass the founding documents of companies, the “books” of insurance agents, their correspondence, and their public self-representation, usually consisting of corporate histories and marketing materials. Because these types of materials belong to a variety of genres, they open up several paths to transcend the strictly economic history of individual companies. They shed light on the people who became risk producers as well as on the methods of record keeping they developed; and they point to the concerns of customers and the place risk and insurance claimed through them in the public imagination — in short, the rich “social life” of risk and insurance.<sup>31</sup>

In addition, studying insurance archives involves analyzing insurance archiving, a practice that was at the core of the business. Some of the companies under consideration, such as the Philadelphia Contributionship, still exist and still consult their archives from centuries ago to tailor their products. An insurance company, one could say, was only as good as its archive, and the bigger, older, and the more closely reviewed such archives were, the better the business functioned.<sup>32</sup>

30 Henry Coleman to Nathaniel Bowditch, October 6, 1826. Massachusetts Hospital and Life Insurance Records, LB-1, box 5a, folder 1825 (2), Baker Library, Harvard.

31 I have borrowed the phrase from Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things*.

32 The Philadelphia Contributionship provides access to its archives online: <http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/contributionship/index.cfm>, accessed January 18, 2015.

In the broadest sense, such archiving belonged to what Michael Zakim recently termed “the world the clerk made.” This was the world of bookkeeping, a constellation of stock and partnership books, day-books, journals, sales books, invoice books, bill books, cash books, ledgers, etc., which functioned like “closely-calibrated gears” in moving operations forward, while displaying “the mazes of a complicated business with a beautiful regularity.”<sup>33</sup> Alongside those accounts, insurers kept their idiosyncratic books, such as schedules of risk, deaths lists, or forms of “drawing & description” that were “neither perfectly accurate nor elegant” but merely giving “a Substantial . . . Idea of the Risque.”<sup>34</sup> Insurance archiving was thus in many ways connected to an ongoing expansion and synthesis of books over long periods of time to identify patterns and regularities that eased the construction of tradable risks, including the development of tools to describe them (such as mathematical formulas, graphs, maps, and charts).

In order to address my guiding question of how risk was constructed and disseminated in early American society, I suggest combining the available materials of various companies into one source base and to analyze it through the filter of four categories: institutions, technologies, forms, and representations. This distinction is, of course, an artificial one, as these categories were inextricably linked and mutually transformed each other. It serves, however, to foreground aspects that pertain to the rubric of the “social life” of insurance and to de-emphasize the histories of individual companies. To flesh out these analytical categories, I will now discuss examples from the primary source material for each of them.

### **1. Institutions**

Insurance institutions are perhaps the most obvious and least difficult aspect to study. In most cases, the definition of their internal organization and public functions can be drawn from their acts of incorporation. Acts of incorporation were bestowed by a sovereign, or, in the United States after the Revolution, state legislatures to acknowledge that a collective of people pooled its capital and efforts under one name and was recognized as a corporate body before the law.<sup>35</sup>

To give a typical example, we may examine the act of incorporation of the Massachusetts Mutual Fire Insurance Company, bestowed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1798. According to the charter,

33 Michael Zakim, “Accounting for Capitalism: The World The Clerk Made,” paper presented at the History of Capitalism Seminar of the history department, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, December 2, 2015, 3-4.

34 James, *Biography of a Business*, 107.

35 Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*. 25th anniversary ed. (New York, 2007), 82 and 6.

the company encompassed seventeen people, who were specified by their names and as “being owners of Buildings within the Commonwealth.” The act determined that the group was allowed to choose one president, one treasurer and fifteen directors, ten of which had to be residents of Boston. In addition, the act ordered that the company was not allowed to issue any policies until its associates had gathered a subscribed capital of two million dollars (about \$ 39,700,000 today). Once the sum was raised, the company was authorized to insure “for the term of seven years any Mansion or Building in the Commonwealth against damage . . . by Fire originating in any cause except that of design in the insured.” Between the incorporation and the actual operation of the company thus lay several years, during which the directors had to interest other wealthy locals to help start the company. To this end, the act required them to convene public meetings in pubs or taverns and to make announcements in the local newspapers.<sup>36</sup>

Analyzing such founding documents promises at least two kinds of insights. On the one hand, they can add up to a “big picture” that shows how insurance institutions spread in time and across space as well as the risks — fire, marine, life, and others — they addressed. On the other hand, acts of incorporation help identify the social backgrounds and local contexts from which insurance initiatives were proposed. Among the founders of the Massachusetts Mutual Fire Insurance, for instance, were people as different as Moses Michael Hays (1739-1805), a Jewish American banker and freemason, and Paul Revere (174-1818), an American silversmith and revolutionary. The diversity of religious, philanthropic, and political affiliations that came together in early insurance corporations complicates the view prevailing in current scholarship that insurance in North America was driven by merchant interests and dangers of the seas alone.

The case of life insurance, in particular, underscores a diversity in origins. In its earliest form, life insurance occurred in church-run institutions like the Corporation for the Relief of Presbyterian Ministers founded in Philadelphia in 1722, or as a “byproduct” of the movement to set up medical facilities, as was the case with the Massachusetts Hospital and Life Insurance Company chartered in 1818.<sup>37</sup> Either way, the procedures by which local initiatives to create an insurance were turned into institutions involved fulfilling legal requirements, public fund-raising, as well as locally well-known representatives who promoted the cause, so that a mere “foundation” attracted a

36 An Act to Incorporate the Massachusetts Mutual Fire Insurance Company, 1798. Records of the Massachusetts Mutual Fire Insurance Company, vol. 1, Baker Library, Boston.

37 Gerald T. White, *A History of the Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance Company* (Cambridge, MA, 1955), 9.

lot of public attention for the ideas of risk and insurance before the institution itself began operation.

## **2. Technologies**

Understood as a technology, insurance was a way of breaking down, rearranging, and ordering certain elements of reality regarding their potential risks. In early North America, these technologies consisted of an intricate mixture of local investigations and attempts to draw statistical probabilities from them by blending American findings with existing international data collections. The most common technologies locally applied were surveys (used by fire and marine insurers) and medical examinations (used by life insurers). Together, they shaped the application procedures, the basis on which premiums were calculated, and the criteria upon which insurers decided who was included or rejected from the security communities they built. The main complication that early North American insurers were confronted with was that there was little demographic information available on which assessments of risk could be based.

One of many possible examples that exemplify the problem is a table “showing the expectation of life in several places,” compiled by the Pennsylvania Company for Insurances on Lives and Granting Annuities for its first brochure of 1814. The table was designed to show “the average time to which persons of the several ages expressed, have an equal chance of living.” Not having its own numbers available, the Pennsylvania Company resorted to nine different authorities that provided data on four international populations, namely in “North Hampton in England,” “Breslaw in Silesia,” “Philadelphia by the Episcopal Church,” “Philadelphia by the Board of Health,” “London according to Simpson,” and “London according to Price.” According to the table, a person aged thirty, for instance, had the highest life expectancy (28.27 years) in North Hampton, and the lowest one (21.48 years) in Philadelphia, based on the estimation of the local Board of Health.<sup>38</sup> That the table contained two averages for Philadelphia, one calculated by the Episcopal Church and one by the local Board of Health, as well as two averages from London, which were provided by renowned actuaries, indicates that scientific professionalization was still in its infancy in North America. Nonetheless, companies used these “walking aids” to calculate the premiums Americans had to pay to insure their life.

38 “An Address from the President of the Pennsylvania Company for Insurances on Lives and Granting Annuities” (Philadelphia, 1814). Repr. *History of Actuarial Science*, vol. 10, ed. Steven Haberman and Trevor A. Sibbett, 221-55 (London, 1995), 250 and 242-44.

While we can only guess what customers felt when they found out what their average life expectancy was, the calculating agents were more explicit. Their reflections upon insurance technologies speak of the moral complications that were involved with pricing human life. Elizur Wright, one of the first American actuaries, for instance, wrote, “It is very true that man cannot be measured by money, yet the benefit of wealth cannot be denied. It is a sublime thing, this accumulation of capital, by which human power is so multiplied, matter brought under the dominion of mind, and mind emancipated from the serfdom of physical necessities.”<sup>39</sup> The insights that can be gained from the technology dimension pertain to the know-how that went into the production of the commodity “risk” from two ends: the insurer’s knowledge of risk calculation and the knowledge the insured needed to be able to choose and benefit from their policies.

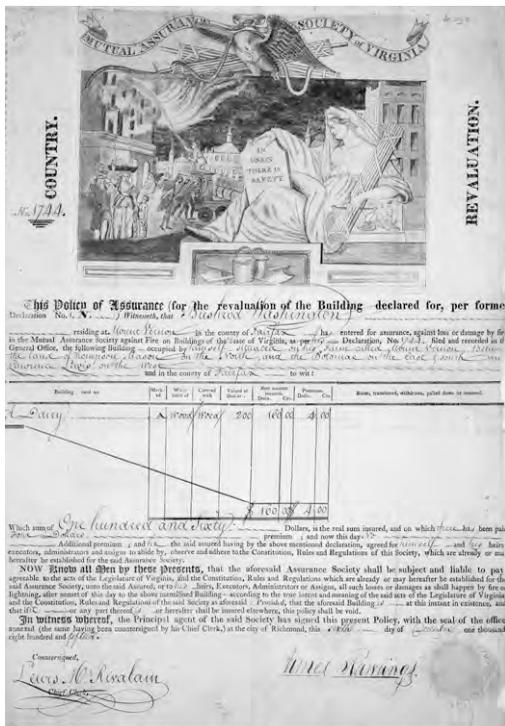
### 3. Forms

Although insurance drew on somewhat formalized institutions and technologies of abstraction, the specific forms that insurance policies took varied regarding its objects and from case to case. As the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* of 1798 indicated in its entry on “insurance,” there were four “most common sorts,” namely insurance against the dangers of the sea, insurance against fire, insurance of debts, and insurance of lives.<sup>40</sup> The relative dominance of these four forms are a clue to the things, environments, and activities that were encoded as “risky” and that hence composed the early American market for security. Within these four fields, however, insurance varied considerably depending on categories such as an applicant’s sex, age, occupation, health, or location.

One way to explore the ways in which insurers transformed commonplace surroundings into a gloomy world of risk is to examine their policies. Figure 3 presents, for instance, a fire insurance policy issued by the Mutual Assurance Company of Virginia for Bushrod Washington, a nephew of the first American President, George Washington. The policy protected a building that was “used as a Dairy” against “all losses and damages by fire or lightning” and, by doing so, it determined who or what could put it at risk. The policy noted that the building was “occupied by himself [Bushrod Washington]” and located “on his farm called Mount Vernon.” Further criteria of assessment were neighbors and natural environs, described as “the land of Thompson Mason on the North and the Potomac on the East

<sup>39</sup> Elizur Wright papers, box 26, Library of Congress, Washington DC.

<sup>40</sup> Dodson, *Encyclopaedia*, 268.



**Figure 3: Insurance Policy Issued on Mount Vernon, 1815, Digital collections, Library of Congress.**

and South and Lawrence Lewis on the West in the County of Fairfax.” A key consideration in estimating the premium was the construction of the building itself. According to the agent, it consisted of “walls built of wood” and was “covered with wood” — information that suggests that Mutual Assurance Company of Virginia essentially used the construction materials to calculate risks and prices. In Washington’s case, the value of the building was estimated to be 200 dollars (about \$3,180 today). In exchange for a premium of four dollars (\$63.50), he bought the security that, if his dairy burnt down, he would be paid 160 dollars (about \$2,540 today). A systematic analysis of issued insurance policies thus will provide a great deal of information on how and where the vulnerable people lived.

#### 4. Representation

Finally, an important component of the insurance business was to prompt people like Washington to think of themselves as being at risk. To cater to what François Ewald calls people’s “insurantal imaginary,” insurers had to make risk comprehensible and visible.<sup>41</sup> The sources I categorize as revealing the construction of this “imaginary” concern their strategies of public, textual, and visual representation. Some of them have already been mentioned. Companies organized fund-raising meetings, published their proposals of risks and premiums in newspapers, composed mortality tables for marketing brochures, and drew maps that gave “a Substantial . . . Idea of the Risque.”<sup>42</sup> Another strategy was to mark protected property with so-called fire marks that showed the company’s logo, so that a quotidian walk through the streets became a journey through spaces distinguished by safety versus spaces that lacked protection. A sense of danger and protection was fueled by the visualizations policies contained. The predominant imagery was ambiguous, picturing burning urban environments and people who attempted to escape, while at the same time showing firemen who started to extinguish the fire and a female figure that — apparently unaffected by the devastation — held up a shield that said “Protection” or “In Union there is Safety” (figure 3).

41 François Ewald, “Insurance and Risk,” in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmental Nationality. With Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter M. Miller, 197-210 (London, 1991), 198.

42 James, *Biography of a Business*, 107.

With no such imagery at its disposal, life insurance advertising tended to write up imaginary conversations between an insurance agent and a “stranger.” These hypothetical conversations evolved around the questions that a person might have about the company, indicating that common knowledge about the concept of life insurance could not be presupposed. A Questions & Answers advertisement by the National Life Insurance, for instance, insinuated the following thoughts for customers to make them feel vulnerable: “I have been thinking about insuring my life, and I want to do it. I have a wife and a little boy, who should I die now, will be left entirely dependent upon the cold world and I want to provide for them, when I can, and also for myself when I’m an old man and can’t work anymore.”<sup>43</sup> By pointing to family responsibilities, aging, and unemployment, the company prompted people to reconceive inevitable aspects of their life as both risky and mitigatable.

Whether using visual or textual representations of risk, this source material suggests that insurers found various ways to reach out to vulnerable subjects. A close reading of this dimension in insurance archives promises insights into insurers’ preferred target groups (property owners, fathers, wage laborers) as well as into the biases relating to race, sex, fitness, etc. that images of risk, safety, and protection conveyed.

These explorations of institutions, technologies, forms, and representations merely offer fragments of a history of the insecure beginnings of American independence that is the subject of my research. Based on an analysis of the complex procedures by which insurers and insured systematized the world around them, I aim to advance the argument that a new notion of risk marched in step with the American move towards independence. This notion of risk was distinguished by the idea that freedom from fear and anxiety was a matter of paying the right premium. By means of drawing a preliminary conclusion, tracing insurance risks may show us how developing a novel type of price scheme for security transformed American society.

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43 Questions and Answers About the New National Life Insurance Co. [n.d.]. Digital Collections, Library of Congress, Washington DC.





# Conference Reports



## **FINANCIALIZATION: A NEW CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF CAPITALISM?**

Conference at the GHI Washington. Co-sponsored by the Volkswagen Foundation. Conveners: Hartmut Berghoff (GHI), Kenneth Lipartito (Florida International University), Moritz Schularick (University of Bonn), Laura Rischbieter (Humboldt University, Berlin). Participants: Guillaume Bazot (Paris School of Economics), Gavin Benke (Southern Methodist University), Samuel Beroud (University of Geneva), Ian Clark (University of Leicester), Alexander Engel (University of Göttingen), Eric Hilt (Wellesley College), Erik Erlandson (University of Virginia), Kieran Heinemann (Emmanuel College), Louis Hyman (Cornell University), Samuel Knafo (University of Sussex), Katharina Knoll (University of Bonn), Daniel Mertens (University of Frankfurt), Benjamin Schwantes (GHI), Laure Quennouëlle-Corre (Centre de recherches historiques, EHESS), Ariell Reshef (University of Virginia, CNRS and Paris School of Economics), Kaspar Zimmermann (University of Bonn).

The term “financialization” is understood by most authors to refer to the shift from industrial to finance capitalism that has taken place since 1970 and has had profound social and political repercussions. Even though the same word “financialization” appears across various disciplines today, it can cover very different empirical phenomena, depending on the author. Therefore, the conveners of this conference added a question mark to the workshop title and raised the question of whether the concept of financialization might be a suitable analytical category for the history of capitalism since the 1970s.

To stimulate further debate, Laura Rischbieter offered a rough sketch of the problems and gaps in current research in her preliminary lecture, “Old Wine in New Bottles? Capitalism and Financialization.” Theoreticians and empiricists have usually focused on different aspects in analyzing the development of capitalism. But in all these analyses, capital and its accumulation have always played a decisive role. Therefore, in investigating the overall developmental patterns of the process, the mere existence of the finance market is not enough to characterize financialization. Consequently, Rischbieter argued, it might still make sense to continue using the term “capitalism” as an analytical reference, so that we can clearly distinguish how much the financialization of recent decades truly differs from previous developments. On the other hand, she noted, future research might

also discover enough indications that financialization is actually in a class of its own, and that it forms an analytical tool in its own right.

The first panel, entitled “Making Sense of Financialization,” analyzed the *longue durée* of changing social patterns regarding the growing reliance of social actors on financial strategies. In his presentation, “Reconceptualizing the Social Lineages of Financialization,” Samuel Knafo argued that the process under investigation was the product of defensive reactions to the newfound power that came with securitization and must be analyzed as an outcome of power struggles rather than economic opportunity. As securitization is widely recognized as an important component of financialization, Knafo placed it at the center of his account and showed that securitization led to a growing dominance of these institutions over financial markets and to new forms of power. Ian Clark’s paper “The Challenge of In-Country Developments? When Varieties of Capitalism Meets Financialization: Theoretical and Empirical Evidence from the UK” continued seamlessly from Knafo’s analyses. Based on empirical material on the existence of hyperactivity in the top twenty listed American and British firms, Clark discussed the contagion effects within and beyond the financial sector, whereby non-financial firms, that is, producers of goods or suppliers of services, may be as financialized as the financial sector. Contagion effects are evident in the impact of ownership intermediaries on disseminating and imposing “hyperactivity” and other forms of rent-seeking behavior on firms, instead of a preference for productive investment.

In contrast, the second panel focused on macroeconomic frameworks to shed light on the “The Financial Sector in Long Time Perspective.” Ariell Reshef’s presentation “Dimensions of the Long Run Evolution of the Financial Sector” scrutinized common predictions seen in recent research. On the basis of long-term data concerning the financial sector in a select group of industrial economies, Reshef argued that the size of finance has indeed increased, but that no relationship can be found between the size of the financial sector and growth in the period from 1870 to 2008. Most of the increase in real GDP per capita after 1870 occurred while the financial sector was smaller than its size in 1980. Another popular prediction was examined by Guillaume Bazot in the second paper, “Counting the Cost of Finance.” Bazot looked at financial intermediation efficiency over the past sixty years in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and Europe in general. In contrast to general assumptions, his analysis showed

that the increasing size of the financial industry has coincided with increasing financial costs. Putting the two papers together, one must conclude that a growing financial sector cannot be correlated with growth but instead with increasing costs.

If it is not efficiency or growth that can be correlated to financialization in the long run, might it be innovation instead? The role of innovation as a catalyst for the process of financialization was the question examined by the three presentations of the third panel, “Financial Innovation.” The importance of innovations in overcoming financial crisis was highlighted by Eric Hilt’s paper “Financial Innovation, Crisis, and Reform: Lessons from the Panic of 1907.” He showed that shadow banking is not at all a new phenomenon, and that ties between shadow banks and the traditional banking system mattered; but it was the growing size of the shadow banking sector which coincided with systemic risk, and it was a number of regulatory changes that helped to overcome the Panic of 1907. Meanwhile, in his presentation on “Financial Futures and the Firm: The Marketization of Risk, the Shareholder Value Concept, and the Emergence of Corporate Financial Risk Management,” Alexander Engel argued that the development of financial derivatives played a key role in the process of financialization because derivatives are extremely efficient and powerful tools for firms and investors to modify their exposure to different market risks. In contrast, Gavin Benke’s talk on “Wall Street’s Pernicious Braid: Mutually Reinforcing Strands of Financialization at Enron” focused on how the shareholder revolution of the 1980s provided the context for Enron’s development, and how regulatory changes that created a spot market for natural gas led the company to adopt business practices that were first pioneered in the financial services sector. Both developments fostered a dynamic that ultimately bred instability at the firm.

The fourth panel, entitled “Financialization outside Finance: The Impact on Industry,” focused on the entanglement of business enterprise activities and financial sector strategies, concentrating on companies and the ways that their strategies fueled financial market developments and vice versa. In his presentation “Varieties of Financialization? Evidence from German Industry in the 1990s,” Hartmut Berghoff examined the differences and similarities between the United States and Germany in terms of the rise of finance and its main consequences, especially for industry. Using the example of Siemens, Berghoff showed that there are no nationally distinct

variations of financialization; instead, it was the divergence in legal, political, and cultural frameworks that explained the differences in degree and timing as certain firms began to follow primarily financial parameters. Eric Erlandson offered another revealing case study showing the impact of legal and cultural frameworks on the realignment of companies in the last quarter of the twentieth century. In his talk on “Cracks in the Glass-Steagall Wall: Chevron Deference and the Administrative Origins of the Financial Supermarket, 1977-1988,” Erlandson used the example of Chevron U.S.A, Inc. to elucidate the behind-the-scenes role of legal and administrative processes that long preceded major statutory reform. The panel’s last paper, “General Electric: How Industrial Became Financial (and Back Again?),” presented by Louis Hyman, looked at the internal histories of industrial corporations that transitioned from an industrial focus to a financial one. Hyman highlighted the crucial role of consumer credit as part of the financialization of the firm, so that consumer investment eventually crowded out other forms of business investment such as R&D or production, as seen at General Electric.

The fifth panel, “Policy Regimes and Institutional Change,” turned to the vital role of national and international policies in the regulation and functioning of the process under question. In his paper on “The Geopolitics of Financialization: The Group of Five and Its Reaction to the 1970s Economic Crisis,” Samuel Beroud highlighted the contribution of multilateral and international organizations to the rise of financialization in the 1970s. Using the G5 as an example, Beroud argued that Western political leaders and policymakers enabled the rise of financialization out of the belief that private market mechanisms could prevent a financial crisis like the Great Depression from happening in the future. The topic of international governance was revisited in the second talk, “Politicians, Financial Elites and the French Big Bang in the 1980s: A Great Leap Towards Competition and the Market?,” in which Laure Quennouëlle-Corre argued that it was not the lobbying of public and/or private financiers that played the most important role in France, but rather international pressure, which ultimately resulted in the deregulation of France’s finance sector but not of (for example) its labor market. Whether this development can be seen as a model specifically of capitalism or of financialization is a question to be answered by future research.

The sixth and final panel, “Financialization Meets Main Street,” turned to the impact of finance on everyday life, focusing on private

households as investors and debtors. Kieran Heinemann placed the case of Margaret Thatcher's "popular capitalism" — the widely publicized flotation of state assets in the 1980s — within a wider historical context by asking how ordinary people engaged in the stock market in modern Britain. In his presentation entitled "Small Investors and Popular Stock Market Engagement in Margaret Thatcher's 'People's Capitalism'" he analyzed the discursive struggles over interpretations of the private investor, as seen in investor guides, popular stock-exchange literature and "money pages" in the popular press, and showed the stark contrast between Thatcher's ideal of capitalism based on "Victorian values" of thrift, sound money, and hard work, and a self-referential financial capitalism based on credit. The second paper, "Why is There No Household Debt in Germany . . . or is There?," delivered by Daniel Mertens, turned to a different example of private investment, the unprecedented rise in household indebtedness over the past decades. By the end of the 1990s, the debt-to-GDP ratio of German households had grown to levels as high as those seen in the United States and the United Kingdom, but has decreased since then. Mertens argued that, on the one hand, institutional changes and liberalization trends contributed greatly to the expansion of financial practices in ever more areas of everyday life, while on the other hand, the persistence of the institutional arrangements of an export-led growth model acted as powerful constraints on the financialization of households.

By combining various areas of research on different empirical phenomena and thus facilitating the analysis of financialization as a historical process, the conference revealed the complexity of the process. While there was general agreement that we have seen a structural shift from a Fordist production regime to global finance capitalism, the precise dynamics of this change are yet to be fully researched. The lively and fruitful discussions clearly indicated that further research needs to look at the individual actions of clearly identified actors, be they companies, governments or lobby groups, as well as the macro-economic structures that shaped their decisions, in order to analyze them and relate them to one another. The question mark appended to the workshop title thus proved to be inspiring for further research. It can certainly be said that the second half of the twentieth century saw striking new developments in terms of economic activities, structures of wealth creation, patterns of accumulation, and ultimately of social relationships, due to the new global dominance of one key sector: the finance market. At the same time, it still makes sense to

continue using the term “capitalism” as an analytical reference point: on the one hand, there were differing responses to the question of whether financialization is just a structural transformation of modern capitalism or a truly new regime of accumulation; on the other hand, the participants agreed that the question itself proved to be a useful stimulus to expanding our understanding of the past as well as the lineages underlying today’s social and economic conditions.

Hartmut Berghoff (GHI / University of Göttingen) and Laura Rischbieter (Humboldt University Berlin)

## **FOURTH JUNIOR SCHOLARS CONFERENCE IN GERMAN-JEWISH HISTORY: "HERITAGE" IN THE STUDY OF JEWISH AND OTHER (DIASPORA) CULTURES – THE SEARCH FOR ROOTS AS A RECURRING THEME OF NINETEENTH- AND TWENTIETH-CENTURY HISTORY**

Conference at the Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden in Hamburg, co-sponsored by the German Historical Institute Washington, the Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden, Hamburg, the Wissenschaftliche Arbeitsgemeinschaft des Leo Baeck Instituts, the Robert A. and Sandra S. Borns Jewish Studies Program, Indiana University, and the Alvin H. Rosenfeld Chair in Jewish Studies at Indiana University, Bloomington. Conveners: Miriam Rürup (Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden, Hamburg), Anne Schenderlein (GHI), Mirjam Zadoff (Indiana University). Participants: Andreas Brämer (Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden, Hamburg), Julia Carls (University of Erfurt), Tzafir Fainholtz (Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya), Gaëlle Fisher (University College, London), Sheer Ganor (University of California, Berkeley), Markus Krahl (University of Potsdam), Julia Lange (University of Hamburg), Anna Menny (Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden, Hamburg), Martina Niedhammer (Collegium Carolinum, München), Anya Quilitzsch (University of Indiana, Bloomington), Yehuda Sharim (Rice University, Houston), Björn Siegel (Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden, Hamburg), Kim Wünschmann (Martin Buber Society of Fellows, Hebrew University of Jerusalem).

Focusing on the themes of heritage and diaspora, this conference explored the role and value of heritage to communities, in particular those affected by migration, persecution, and forced exile. Conference participants questioned when and why heritage is important to a community and examined the role that diaspora, migration, persecution, and forced exile played in a community's focus on heritage. Participants also considered the effect of Zionism and the creation of the state of Israel on Jewish identity and the construction and interpretation of heritage. Even though the organizers had encouraged participation from historians working on other ethnic, religious, and cultural groups, all the papers presented had Jewish heritage as a central theme, but some also discussed crossovers and links with other cultural groups. In her welcoming remarks, Miriam Rürup, director of the Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden in Hamburg, pointed out that the Institute's history itself is

connected to discussions of Jewish heritage and the legitimacy of Jewish life in the diaspora after 1948, particularly Jewish life in postwar Germany. When Israeli institutions announced their claim on all Jewish heritage, including remnants of Jewish community archives, a dispute erupted over the rich collection of archival materials that documented 400 years of German-Jewish history in Hamburg. Eventually, an agreement was reached, and in the process the Hamburg Institute was established.

The first panel, chaired by Mirjam Zadoff, dealt with identity and heritage construction in the diaspora, in both intellectual discourse and social practice. In the first paper, Julia Carls discussed concepts of diaspora and heritage amongst Orthodox German Jews in the early twentieth century. The term “diaspora” held different meanings for Orthodox and Reform Jews: traditionally it referred to living in exile — which would end with a return to Zion (the land of Israel) only when the Messiah returned as the leader of the Jewish people. However, Reform Judaism challenged this central concept. Using pamphlets and illustrations of the period, Carls showed that the term *galut* (diaspora) gradually took on a more positive meaning and became aligned with the idea of inherited tradition. The debate within Orthodoxy at the turn of the century aimed at finding terms to speak about “diaspora” without its negative connotations. Modern Orthodoxy thus came up with a differentiation between *galut* as the negative situation that needed to be overcome and “diaspora” as an acceptable term to describe the situation of European Jewry that was not place-bound but rather connected to the past through a common heritage. This discourse was also a consequence of the emerging intellectual contacts between Eastern and Western Jews. The second paper, delivered by Markus Krah, examined the reappearance of the *Ostjude* (East European Jew) as a model of authenticity in North America in the second half of the twentieth century. He argued that Jewish intellectuals such as Norman Mailer, influenced by the writings of Martin Buber, tried to re-appropriate the idea of the Hasidic Jew as part of their own identity. Mailer noted that upon reading Buber’s *Tales of the Hasidim*, he felt “the intoxication of a historic past,” which caused him to embrace being Jewish for the first time. It was especially Jewish intellectuals who were not part of an organized Jewish community who found Hasidism particularly appealing. Markus argued that this fascination with Hasidism was partly a reaction to the Holocaust and the loss of European Jewish life and to Israel’s denial of members of the American and European

Jewish diaspora as being “real Jews.” Here, evoking an East European “heritage” served the present need of the felt loss of community. In the panel’s third paper, Martina Niedhammer focused on the way proponents of Occitan (Provençal vernacular) and Yiddish used references to a culturally idealized past in order to support their linguistic and political goals. She noted comparisons between the cultural aims of a local Provençal museum in the 1920s and those of the Vilna YIVO Institute founded in Berlin in 1925. Both dealt with the preservation of local traditions and customs and the use of heritage in order to foster an awakening of linguistic, cultural and sometimes national consciousness.

The second panel, chaired by Andreas Brämer, examined contested heritage and representation in Israel/Palestine. Tzafir Fainholtz’s paper focused on the “Israel in Palestine” pavilion at the Paris International Exhibition of 1937. The pavilion was a hybrid of European modernist and Palestinian Arab architecture and symbolized the complex question of Jewish national identity in inter-war Palestine. Prior to the formation of the Jewish state, the *Yishuv* was trying to promote itself by participation in international exhibitions, and photographs within the 1937 pavilion depicting Jews working the land also served as a vehicle for Zionist propaganda. In contrast to the tendency of most scholars who link architecture in the *Yishuv* to European modernism, and to Bauhaus in particular, Fainholtz discussed the views of German-Jewish architects Julius Posener and Harry Rosenthal, who both escaped to Palestine in the 1930s and espoused the idea of a “Jewish” architecture which should reference vernacular architectural styles. In the panel’s second paper, Yehuda Sharim discussed the present-day position in Israel of “Oriental-Mizrahi Jews.” Looking at representations of Mizrahi Jews in Israeli popular culture, Sharim explored the larger story of Oriental heritage and the particular role of memory and emotion in it. Sharim argued that popular representations of Mizrahim as they occur, for instance, in Reality-TV formats, replicate difference and affirm the existence of “Mizrahi borders,” demarcating Mizrahi Jews as an “other” in a dominant Ashkenazi culture.

The third panel, chaired by Björn Siegel, focused on post-war Eastern Europe. Gaëlle Fisher discussed Bukovina’s contested heritage after the Second World War. Bukovina was the easternmost province of the Austrian part of the Habsburg Empire until 1918 when it was annexed by Romania; the north of the region later became part of

the Soviet Union as a result of the Second World War. Fisher's paper focused on ethnic Germans and Jews — just two of the minorities in this ethnically diverse region — for whom life in the Bukovina came to a violent end during the war. Jews fled Nazi persecution or were deported and murdered, whereas ethnic Germans became subject to Nazi resettlement programs or forced migration at the end of the war. In the aftermath, the Bukovina came to represent a lost homeland for many of these Germans and Jews, which they commemorated in homeland societies in West Germany and Israel. Fisher showed that, while these societies did not associate with each other, their memory work was initially remarkably similar in that it depicted the Bukovina as an idealized *Heimat* (home), rather than the place of a violent past. She argued that this only changed after 1989, when Jews began traveling to the Bukovina, and stories of the destruction of Jewish communities came to dominate the wider discourse on the region. Many ethnic Germans, meanwhile, felt left out as a result of these depictions of the Bukovina as a predominantly Jewish space. Fisher's paper illustrated the importance of a physical place as a point of reference for identifying oneself. Here, the loss of the physical home prompted the construction of a heritage discourse that became an important means of creating belonging in the new country. As the actual space had ceased to exist, different, sometimes clashing, versions of mythical locations were created. Thus, in the postwar era, Bukovina has become a site of memory, nostalgia and imagination rather than a precise geographical location. Anya Quilitzsch's paper focused on oral history interviews with Jewish Holocaust survivors who returned to live in Soviet Transcarpathia (contemporary southwestern Ukraine) after World War Two. The interviews examine the transmission and continued practice of Jewish tradition such as the baking of matzah, keeping of kashrut, and the celebration of Passover and Purim. With these interviews, Quilitzsch demonstrated that traditional Jewish life did continue in postwar Eastern Europe, offering a corrective to the predominant view that the Holocaust and the exodus of surviving Jews from the region in the late 1940s had ended it. She argued that the second postwar generation had in fact very similar experiences as prewar generations and showed how Jews in Transcarpathia had developed a distinct Soviet and Jewish identity, one expression of which was to speak Russian in public and Yiddish at home. In contrast to Bukovinian Jews and Germans then, who celebrate their heritage generally through images and stories, here, heritage is largely practiced in everyday life.

The final panel, chaired by Anna Menny, dealt with “Politics of Memory, Politics of History.” Sheer Ganor examined how the process of seeking reparation for persecution and losses — *Wiedergutmachung* (restitution or compensation) — enabled victims of Nazism to narrate their histories and begin a dialogue with the Federal Republic of Germany. Reparation procedures sometimes enabled claimants to reconnect with long-lost relatives, leading to both shared as well as contested memory. Claimants were able to form networks that strengthened their arguments for reparation and challenged attempts at counter-claims. In this way, Ganor argued, *Wiedergutmachung* and the bureaucracy surrounding it provided a cohesive framework through which a German Jewish community could resurface. Kim Wünschmann’s paper examined post-war research into the history of West German towns, carried out by both Jewish and non-Jewish lay historians outside the academic establishment (*Heimatsforschung*). The term *Heimat* denotes the special relationship between a human being and a certain spatial unit, but can also denote an attempt to recreate a lost world. Wünschmann analyzed this concept through examples of post-war research in the rural regions of the state of Hesse. She focused particularly on the work of the Jewish re-migrant Paul Arnsberg, who in the late 1950s returned to the place where his ancestors were born to write a book that challenged more prevalent accounts denying the area’s Jewish history. The final paper of the conference was presented by Julia Lange and explored the relationship between the politics of memory of German-American organizations and the post-war American Holocaust discourse. She argued that in the first decades after the war, German-American organizations such as the Steuben Society of America avoided references to the Holocaust, ignoring, for example, specific events such as the Eichmann trial. A turning point in German-American identity politics was, according to Lange, the airing of the television series “Holocaust” in 1978, which brought the topic to the attention of millions of Americans. Fearing an anti-German backlash, German-American societies then began acting in the defensive, in the course relativizing or even denying the Holocaust. It is only more recently and, as Lange argued, as a consequence of the Americanization of the Holocaust, that German-American organizations were able to redefine their collective identity in more positive and inclusive terms: in 2010, for example, the Steuben Parade included a banner featuring German-Jewish American Pride.

In the closing session, participants shared their observations on the presentations and reflected on some of the central questions of the

workshop regarding the role and value of heritage to communities. The papers showed that individuals and groups evoked the concept of heritage frequently when they felt their viability or stability threatened. Emphasizing a common heritage served as one way to create internal unity and cohesion as well as to demarcate a group as distinct to the outside. It became evident that the question of who has the power and authority to define which elements of heritage are “worth” preserving and to decide who can legitimately claim a heritage is closely intertwined with heritage itself. In this way, heritage generates conflict, and several papers gave examples of attempts at selective heritage constructions and the policing of heritage. A central issue in the discussion evolved around the importance of place — real or imagined — as a reference point for the construction of heritage. One participant noted that it is less the place itself that is significant in heritage creation but rather the experience and emotion that people connect with a place. The connection between heritage and notions of tradition, memory, and emotion is an aspect that warrants further study, particularly from a more theoretical perspective. The presentations and subsequent lively discussions not only demonstrated the importance of heritage within different Jewish communities but also how fruitful studying heritage can be for understanding community and identity construction more generally.

Adrienne Wallman (University of Lancaster) and Anne Schenderlein (GHI)

## **BOSCH FOUNDATION ARCHIVAL SUMMER SCHOOL FOR YOUNG HISTORIANS 2015: AMERICAN HISTORY IN TRANSATLANTIC PERSPECTIVE**

Archival Summer School in Chicago, Madison, Boston, and Washington DC, September 7-18, 2015. Co-organized by the German Historical Institute Washington, the University of Chicago's Department of History, and the Newberry Library, Chicago. Made possible with the financial support of the Robert Bosch Stiftung. Convener: Mischa Honeck (GHI Washington). Participants: Wendell Adjetey (Yale University), Florian Braun (European University Viadrina), Stefanie Büttner (University of Erfurt), Tunde Cserpes (University of Illinois, Chicago), Annette Karpp (Free University Berlin), Nadja Klopprogge (Free University Berlin), Marvin Menniken (Free University Berlin), Simon Ottersbach (University of Giessen), Florian Wöltering (Technical University Aachen).

The Bosch Foundation Archival Summer School for Young Historians convened for the third and final time in September 2015. Once again, the tour spanned four cities (Chicago, Madison, Boston, and Washington DC), and the nine participants from Germany and the United States were introduced to the holdings and policies of a broad spectrum of American archives and research libraries. The goal of the seminar was to prepare doctoral students from both countries working in diverse fields of American history for their prospective research trips; to teach them how to contact archives, use finding aids, and identify important reference tools; and to help them gain a greater appreciation of the various kinds of archives and special collections located in the United States.

The Bosch Foundation Archival Summer School 2015 began with a historic walking tour of downtown Chicago on Labor Day, September 7. The following day was spent at the University of Chicago, where the participants convened for the traditional thesis workshop. The seminar participants, grouped into five transatlantic tandems consisting each of one German and one American student, commented on the work of their respective partners, exposed their projects to academic scrutiny, and received valuable feedback from their peers. On Wednesday, September 8, the Seminar met with Bradford Hunt, the new Vice President of the William M. Scholl Center of American History and Culture at the Newberry Library, for a day-long introduction to the Newberry's collections as well as

for a general overview of American archival policies and practices. Among the topics discussed were the purchase of rare books, how to browse manuscript collections, the relevance of maps for historical research, and the opportunities and pitfalls of digital research. On Thursday morning, before the group departed for Madison, Wisconsin, the Bosch Archival Summer School 2015 visited the Cook County Court Archives. Archivist Phil Costello pulled a selection of spectacular items from the Court's archival collections to demonstrate the breadth of legal sources that can be used to do all kinds of history.

On September 11, our first destination in Madison was the Wisconsin State Historical Society. Chief archivist Michael Edmonds welcomed the Summer School's participants and spoke about the institution's history and holdings within the broader context of American state historical societies and impressed the students with the Wisconsin State Historical Society's dedication to accessibility and public education. After that, time was set aside for individual research before the group reassembled at the local University of Wisconsin history department for a roundtable talk with UW faculty members Adam Nelson, Al McCoy, and John Hall on the place of empire in U.S. history. The participants weighed in on the question to what extent imperial, transnational, and global perspectives mattered to the writing of American history, making all kinds of connections to their own work.

On Saturday evening, September 12, the group arrived in Boston, the third stop on our itinerary. On the following morning, participants got a chance to witness public history in action with a guided tour of the Freedom Trail. The rest of the day was free for recreation and individual explorations. On Monday, September 14, the Summer School resumed at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library at Columbia Point. Enjoying a two-and-a-half hour tour of the museum and library archives under the supervision of Stephen Plotkin, the group benefited from staff presentations on audiovisuals, declassification, and the library's manuscript collections and oral history program. The day continued with a visit to Harvard University in the afternoon. Our first stop was Schlesinger Library, one of the leading U.S. research facilities for women's history. Head librarian Ellen Shea showed and explained letters, pamphlets, books, and visual material related to topics ranging from domesticity and black women to the women's suffrage movement. Then the group moved on to the

Widener and Houghton libraries, where Peter Accardo walked the group through the library's precious Early Americana collections and gave valuable advice on how to use them for various research agendas. The time in Boston concluded the following day with a visit to the Massachusetts Historical Society. Public Relations Director Kathleen Barker and other staff members acquainted the students with the wealth of the Society's holdings, which touch upon almost every issue pertaining to the history of the state from colonial times to present-day America.

Arriving in Washington, DC in the late afternoon of Tuesday, September 15, the Summer School resumed the following day at the Library of Congress. A guided tour of the Jefferson Library was followed by a presentation from archivist Lewis Wyman, who spoke to the participants about the breadth of manuscript collections available through the Library of Congress Manuscript Division. The group then put in a stop at the Prints and Photographs Division, where Sara Duke and her coworkers showcased illustration samples related to the participants' individual projects, underscoring the significance of visual material for historical research. Next, Special Projects Coordinator Emily Swafford hosted a brown-bag lunch for the group at the Washington headquarters of the American Historical Association (AHA). She drew the students into a vibrant debate over the ethical stakes involved in the study and teaching of history, touching on issues of plagiarism, civility, access to sources, trust, and truth-claims. Following this fruitful discussion, the group visited the Smithsonian's National Museum for American History. Craig Orr, one of the museum's veteran curators, spent time with the students to talk about ways in which everyday objects from the realms of technology to fashion can enrich historical research.

On Thursday, September 17, the group met Ida Jones, curator at the Howard University's Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, who introduced the participants to the Center's remarkable array of collections on African American history and culture. In the afternoon, the Summer School put in a final stop at the Center for Legislative Archives at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA D). Historian Richard McCulley welcomed the group and introduced them to the structure of the National Archives and ways to access source material pertaining to the different branches of government. Time was set aside on Friday for individual research until the group met in the afternoon for a wrap-up discussion at the German

Historical Institute. The farewell dinner that evening concluded a successful Summer School. All participants were grateful for the useful information, contacts, and prospects for future collaboration the program had opened up for them.

Mischa Honeck (GHI)

## **CONTESTED VISIONS OF JUSTICE: THE ALLIED WAR CRIMES TRIALS IN GLOBAL CONTEXT, 1943-1958**

Conference at Boston College Ireland's Conference Centre in Dublin, September 25-27, 2015. Co-sponsored by the German Historical Institute Washington, Boston College, the European Research Council, the "Asia and Europe in a Global Context" Research Cluster at Heidelberg University, and International Research and Documentation Centre for War Crimes Trials (ICWC) at the University of Marburg. Conveners: Franziska Seraphim (Boston College), Kerstin von Lingen (University of Heidelberg), Wolfgang Form (ICWC Marburg), and Barak Kushner (University of Cambridge). Participants: Elizabeth Borgwardt (Washington University, St. Louis), Robert Cribb (Australian National University), Franziska Exeler (Free University Berlin), Hayashi Hirofumi (Kanto Gakuin University), Andreas Hilger (University of Hamburg), Cheah Wui Ling (National University of Singapore), Narelle Morris (Curtin University), Hitoshi Nagai (Hiroshima City University), Devin Pendas (Boston College), Tanja Penter (University of Heidelberg), William Schabas (Middlesex University), Annette Weinke (University of Jena), Sandra Wilson (Murdoch University), Matthias Zachmann (University of Edinburgh).

Over the course of three days, historians, political scientists and legal scholars examined the transnational connections between the political, administrative, legal, and social mechanisms of Allied transitional justice and their role in reshaping the postwar world after 1945. The conference began with a panel on "International Collaboration in Administering War Crime Trials," chaired by Franziska Seraphim, which focused on the political will to pool legal expertise in order to conduct trials of Axis war criminals. This led to international collaboration in the area of war crimes investigations and prosecutions. The session subsequently highlighted the outcome of the program's administration in the different theaters of war. The panel started with Narelle Morris, who examined the Australian national representation at the United Nations War Crime Commission (UNWCC) and showed how the intentions of the UNWCC were hampered by cooperation problems between individual member nations and the UNWCC, often to the exasperation of national representatives who were trying their hardest to make the UNWCC work. Robert Cribb addressed the implications of politics for the war crimes trial program within Mountbatten's South East Asia Command (SEAC). He showed that whereas the trial process in South East Asia began with

a determination on the part of the former wartime Allies to prosecute comprehensively, the scale of the task and the political realities in the region soon overwhelmed the magnitude of that ambition. This stemmed in no small part from the fact that the prosecuting powers — the old European colonial powers in the region — were only temporary holders of sovereign power, challenged by local claims for independence. Hayashi Hirofumi provided an in-depth overview of the organizational structures under the US War and Navy Departments, respectively, to clarify both the command and liaison structures of war crimes trials of Japanese in the Pacific region. Taking the prosecution of wartime crimes in Western Europe as a case-study, Devin Pendas argued that the prosecution of axis criminality after World War II was initially part of a broader push for international legalism, but quickly became a set of disconnected regional and national projects. The main reasons for this were Cold War national security concerns as well as the resistance of post-occupation states, especially in Eastern Europe, to an emerging “international” legal system. Tanja Pentec outlined how the prosecution of German war criminals and Soviet collaborators in the USSR was used to support both domestic and foreign political interests. She pointed out that the Soviet war crimes trials strengthened the Stalinist regime’s efforts to appear as a state that followed international standards of law and justice, thus consolidating the government’s legitimation towards the Soviet population, and its intended role in the international post-war order.

After a lively debate on the importance of the reconstitution and legitimation of sovereignty, international legalism, military power structures, and domestic competition for Allied transitional justice, the first day concluded with a key-note lecture delivered by William Schabas and titled “London 1941-1944: Conceiving the Permanent International Criminal Court.”

The second panel, chaired by Barak Kushner, examined “Competing Notions of Criminality in Comparison.” The panel’s first paper, by Wolfgang Form, explored different notions of state crimes and explained how Allied views on Axis state crimes found their way into the indictments of the International Military Tribunal (IMT) in Nuremberg and the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE) in Tokyo. In his response, Matthias Zachmann examined the responses to the judgments given by the IMT and the IMTFE in Germany and Japan and argued that an orientalist image of Japanese society might explain the difference in the indictments of these

tribunals. Franziska Exeler showed how in the case of Soviet justice “the global” and “the national” intersected, and how the development of international criminal law was pushed forward by a state whose own domestic legal system remained illiberal. She brought into the discussion photographs of local trials and analyzed their (propaganda) value. In her response, Tanja Penter raised the question of intra-Soviet interactions, namely to what extent the local trials of war criminals and collaborators in the Soviet Union were independent of or influenced each other.

During the discussion that followed, Cheah Wui Ling commented on the differing definitions of war crimes used by the Allied nations, the importance of nationality in prosecuting war criminals, and the question of differing audiences on local, national, and international levels. Devin Pendas commented on methodological issues, arguing that Allied war crimes trials should be examined from the perspective of jurisprudence and politics at different levels: comparative, transnational, and international. Following up on Form’s presentation, he raised the thorny issue of how to prosecute state crimes, that is, when the state, the source of legality, articulates norms that are criminal.

The third panel, “Cold Wars and Civil Wars as Contexts for Defining Justice,” chaired by Kerstin von Lingen, explored the ways in which Cold War political competition influenced the conduct of war crimes trials in Germany and China as well as the legal and political postures of the United States and Soviet Union as emerging superpowers. Annette Weinke showed how the trials of Nazi war criminals were used by both West and East Germany for the specific political ends of claiming sovereignty by delegitimizing the other regime at the height of the Cold War. This culminated in the late 1950s when the GDR used its self-declared “guardianship” of Nuremberg to foster anti-fascist alliances among communist countries, while the FRG instituted the Central Investigation Committee of Nazi criminality in Ludwigsburg. Barak Kushner highlighted key moments in the evolution of Chinese judicial proceedings against Japanese war criminals in Nationalist and Communist China and explained how both regimes attempted to shape their respective historical narratives. He addressed how the program of the Tokyo Trial influenced the ways in which China conceived of justice and consequently its own trials, and why China’s role in international tribunals has recently come to the forefront after a long period of dormancy. Elizabeth Borgwardt examined the generally favorable assessment of the Nuremberg

IMT in stark contrast to the highly critical, if not outright dismissive reception of the Tokyo IMTFE as different expressions of attempted projections of U.S. authority and legitimacy in the immediate post-war world. Andreas Hilger clarified the Soviet Union's political and ideological reasons for prosecuting German civilians and German prisoners of war differently under changing political conditions, as part and parcel of the general use of judicial means to support Soviet domestic and foreign policy.

During the discussion the participants reflected on FRG and GDR opinions of the Soviet trials, the issue of *demonstrative* vs. *show* trials and the false duality created between politics and justice in the relationship between the IMT and IMTFE. Participants argued that when one moves from procedural law to substantive law, justice is always political; the question is therefore about how much consensus exists about any given case. The Allies demonstrated a higher level of consensus on trials against Nazi leaders than those against Japanese Class A war criminals. The procedural concerns expressed at the IMTFE were only a pretext to cover the fundamental disagreements that existed between the different national legal teams on the nature and the character of criminality on the Japanese side.

The fourth and final panel, chaired by Wolfgang Form, was dedicated to "Post-Trial Negotiations for Clemency and Release." This roundtable discussion opened with Sandra Wilson's comprehensive overview of clemency for war criminals in the post-trial phase of the program. Wilson argued that this was the most dynamic and unpredictable period as well as the most political part of the whole war crimes trial process. Different opinions on key points such as detention locations or granting clemency fostered resistance by the German and Japanese governments and also led to disagreements among the prosecuting powers. According to Wilson, changing views on war crimes and war criminals and the perception of different interests were nowhere more evident than in the post-sentencing phase of the trials. Yet, this history has attracted much less attention in the scholarly literature than the prosecutions themselves. Hitoshi Nagai linked the Japanese war criminals' release in the Philippines with a set of mostly economic considerations. Focusing on the executive clemency for Japanese prisoners implemented by President Elpidio Quirino in 1953, Nagai reconstructed the context in which the release of war criminals furthered Philippine interests, not least of which was the negotiation of reparations payments by Japan. National security concerns, the

importance of Japan as a trading partner, the forthcoming Philippine presidential elections, and Quirino's own political philosophy were important factors that impacted both the reparations and the war criminals issues. Kerstin von Lingen discussed the politics of postwar release by placing the clemency campaign of German field marshal Albert Kesselring's trial in the context of the German rearmament debate. This example showed that the quest for clemency was often linked to political campaigns; a wave of supporters in Germany, the UK, and the U.S. in the early 1950s saw Kesselring's case as paradigmatic when calling for an end to the Allied war crimes trials program in light of political benefits for the new German state with regard to sovereignty and rearmament. Franziska Seraphim made a case for the importance of the Allied Powers' penal practices, that is, their treatment of accused and convicted war criminals through incarceration in occupied Japan and Germany. As military occupations gave way to Cold War alliances, the administration of punishment gave Japanese and Germans a way of mitigating Allied punitive policies while attending to the need for social integration, rehabilitation, and political self-legitimation. The punishment of Japanese and German war criminals showed many parallels and similarities, from American penal policies to German and Japanese strategies of resistance.

The conference concluded with a discussion on the comparative potential of the Allied war crimes trial program. Participants emphasized the importance of a quantitative in addition to a qualitative approach to post-WWII justice, especially since even basic statistics on the numbers of and reasons for convictions in Europe (in contrast to Asia) have not been comprehensively collected, making cross-regional comparisons difficult. While a good number of individual case studies especially on the European side are available, sorting out the range of different actors and agencies in order to detect both connections and disconnects in the global conduct of war crimes trials requires academic collaboration. The Allied war crimes program represents a rich historical moment precisely because it encompasses both the last stage of the war and the beginning of the postwar period. The participants agreed that post-WWII justice should be seen as a multi-dimensional phenomenon within an overarching global context, constrained by strong local dimensions.

Lisette Schouten (University of Heidelberg) and Valentyna Polunina (University of Heidelberg)



## MEDIEVAL HISTORY SEMINAR 2015

Joint seminar of the German Historical Institutes in London and Washington, held at the GHI Washington, October 15-17, 2015. Organized by Cornelia Linde (GHI London) and Jan C. Jansen (GHI Washington). Conveners: Stuart Airlie (University of Glasgow), Paul Freedman (Yale University), Bernhard Jussen (University of Frankfurt), Ruth Mazo Karras (University of Minnesota, Minneapolis), Frank Rexroth (University of Göttingen), Miri Rubin (Queen Mary University of London). Participants: Natalie Anderson (University of Leeds), Lucy Barnhouse (Fordham University), Stephan Bruhn (University of Kiel), Marcel Bubert (University of Göttingen), John Burden (Yale University), Anne Diekjobst (University of Konstanz), Richard Engl (University of Mainz), Brigit Ferguson (UC Santa Barbara), Christian Hoffarth (University of Duisburg-Essen), Theresa Jäckh (University of Heidelberg), Johanna Jebe (University of Tübingen), Stefan de Jong (Cambridge University), Hailey LaVoy (University of Notre Dame), Kevin Lord (Yale University), Jason Ralph (Northwestern University), Agnieszka Rec (Yale University), Joachim Rother (University of Bamberg), Benjamin Savill (Oxford University), Michael Schonhardt (University of Freiburg), Philipp Winterhager (Humboldt University of Berlin).

Following the format of previous years, the ninth biennial Medieval History Seminar, held at the German Historical Institute in Washington, allowed current and recently completed doctoral students to come together to discuss their research. The twenty participants in attendance came from ten German universities, three British universities, and five American universities. Over the course of the seminar, during nine sessions, two or three papers at a time were discussed in-depth. Each paper was subject to a brief, prepared commentary by two or three fellow participants, before the conversation was then opened up to the entire group, allowing for a rich and interesting dialogue and a drawing-out of common themes and relationships.

The first session of the seminar dealt with the theme of cities' relationships with their minority communities. In her paper, Theresa Jäckh examined the lives of the Muslim minority in Norman Palermo. Jäckh illustrated the marginalization of Muslims at the time, based on topographical shifts. Muslims' spatial, temporal, and personal connections to the city allowed them occasionally to participate in the government, but also at times to be excluded from the city and

the community. Jason Ralph looked at the relationship of the city of Freiburg with its university. This exploration of “town-gown” relations used a series of lawsuits to reveal tensions between the university stakeholders and the local community. Ralph demonstrated how the lines between the ecclesiastical and civil sphere, and between local and territorial administration, were being redrawn in the decades before the Protestant Reformation.

In the second session, Benjamin Savill took a comparative look at *Papsturkunden* in tenth-century Anglo-Saxon England and continental Europe. Using these sources as a form of documentation common to both sides of the English Channel, Savill claimed, allows scholars to put tenth-century English political and religious developments in context. He argued that Ottonian “imperial” attitudes to papal authority would have been more familiar in contemporary England than developments on the Continent and may, at some level, have been imitated; particularly in the case of Archbishop Oswald of York’s journey to Rome. Michael Schonhardt also dealt with the transmission of texts in his paper, which scrutinized the transfer and function of cosmological texts in twelfth-century Regensburg. This study was based on surviving manuscripts and catalogues from the monasteries of Saint Emmeram and Prüfening. Schonhardt used these texts to demonstrate a fragmentation of cosmological knowledge during this time which, in his view, ought not to be regarded as a unit but must be differentiated with a view to its various functions and roles.

That evening, Bernhard Jussen gave a fascinating public lecture titled “Toward an Iconology of Medieval Studies: Approaches to Visual Narratives in Modern Scholarship,” in which he highlighted the significant role images play in how the Middle Ages are viewed and studied. Starting from a case study of images of Charlemagne in French and German history textbooks since the nineteenth century, Jussen explored how images representing the medieval world vary widely across time periods and geographic regions and reminded his audience of the important lesson that such imagery can often represent just as much about the time and place in which it is used as it can of the era it is meant to be depicting.

The second day of the seminar began with a discussion of papers by Lucy Barnhouse and Anne Diekjobst. Barnhouse made a case for the importance of hospitals’ legal status as religious institutions through a study of lepers who were hospital residents in late medieval Mainz. She argued that, collectively, as hospital residents, the

lepers of Mainz acted to ensure the continuity of their legal privileges and of their relationships with those outside the hospital. This case study offered a glimpse into these institutions' late medieval development. Diekjobst examined legal communications as well, this time in the context of late medieval nunneries in the Bodensee area. This paper used a systematic, theoretical approach grounded in the social context of the time while also dealing with the concept of the "addressability" of people contributing to the social differentiation of the late Middle Ages.

The fourth session focused on a pair of unique religious texts. Christian Hoffarth looked at the writings of Franciscan theologian Peter Olivi, specifically, his exegesis of the Acts of the Apostles. This text, according to Hoffarth, brought the lifestyle of the Minorite Order into harmony with early Christian society in relation to the concept of property ownership. John Burden, on the other hand, examined ecclesiastical justice in early twelfth-century Bavaria through the *Collectio Augustana*, a local canon law collection compiled in Augsburg between 1108 and 1123. In doing so, he shed light on the practice of episcopal justice and the relationship between medieval canon law and penance, concluding that it is difficult to separate public and private penance, as well as penance and canon law, in the *Augustana*.

In the fifth session, images of Christ associated with the Knights Templar were at the center of Joachim Rother's paper. The dominant representation of Christ favored by the Templars, Rother argued, was one marked by suffering and death, based on the Templars' constructed identity as armed and war-waging monks. This, according to Rother, connected them to the early Christian concept of martyrdom. Kevin Lord, in his paper, re-examined King Ludwig IV's fourteenth-century "Nürnberg Appellation." Rather than viewing this document as purely a piece of propaganda or, alternatively, an earnest Romano-Canonical appeal to the Apostolic See, Lord's paper proposed a third alternative: that the Appellation was a legal text, but one that drew both from Romano-Canonical law as well as imperial legal traditions.

The three papers of the sixth session explored the place of outsiders in certain medieval societies. Philipp Winterhager explored the place of Greek monks in Rome in the early Middle Ages. By looking at three hagiographic texts from Greek-speaking monasteries, ranging from the seventh to the ninth centuries, Winterhager showed the ways in which the Greek immigrants integrated themselves into

Roman society. Brigit Ferguson's paper examined the interaction of religious, gendered, and emotional identities in the late thirteenth-century sculpture, the Stoning of St. Stephen. Ferguson argued that the relief's designers condemned the secular, sexual masculinity of the Jewish men attacking Stephen, while also emphasizing that the martyr's spiritual and emotional strength overcame his attackers, despite his greater physical vulnerability. Finally, Richard Engl analyzed cooperation and conflict between Christians and Muslims in southern Italy in the thirteenth century. In Engl's view, relations between these two large medieval religious factions were less influenced by religious differences than by political and social interests within their communities.

The third day commenced with a look at some previously understudied written sources. Hailey LaVoy's paper provided a survey of the letters of early medieval noblewomen as evidence of their administrative responsibilities. It highlighted in particular women's use of letters as tools for managing these various concerns while also considering whether the ongoing question of early medieval women's empowerment versus oppression is a useful dichotomy for evaluating women's roles and experiences in the early medieval economy. Stephan Bruhn, for his part, brought to light the discursive formation process behind the monastic reform movement in late Anglo-Saxon England. Using two hagiographic works by Byrhtferth of Ramsey, Bruhn showed that the ideological construction of the movement demonstrated not only monastic values but those applicable to the laity as well.

The theme of education was at the center of the eighth session. This session began with a discussion of Stefan de Jong's paper, which illuminated the role of Adelman of Liège in the eleventh-century Eucharistic controversy using the theme of scholarly genealogy. De Jong studied the endangerment of Adelman's reputation, and the value of his education, through outside threats to the legacy of Adelman's past teacher. Marcel Bubert focused in his paper on the University of Paris in the thirteenth century, looking at the construction of a "philosophical identity" within that space. Bubert claimed that a tension between a university philosophy and social usefulness was, in fact, culturally productive, as it provoked useful philosophical concepts outside the university which were demarcated from that institution.

In the final session, Agnieszka Rec explored a collection of recipes from Central European alchemists of the fifteenth and sixteenth

centuries. Rec showed that, from their manuscripts, a network of alchemists far wider, both socially and geographically, than previously understood emerges, which demonstrates the necessity and benefit of incorporating understudied regions in scholarship on intellectual exchange in late medieval and early modern Europe. Johanna Jebe, in her paper, studied the example of the St. Gall manuscripts of the Rule of St. Benedict and the discussion of godly monasticism in the ninth century. Looking at the work of a Carolingian scriptorium, and determining patterns of interpretation, along with internal and external factors, Jebe's work pushed for a more nuanced understanding of processes of Carolingian orders. Finally, Natalie Anderson examined the role of the German *Turnierbuch* in helping to build a greater understanding of the tournament during the reign of Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I. Through these unique literary works, Anderson stated that more may be learned about the practical realities of the tournaments and their significance to the late medieval Empire.

The seminar concluded with a final discussion, during which the participants also had a chance to ask questions of the faculty conveners. Conversation focused on how early-career researchers might articulate their work to each other and to the wider world, as well as what the best directions to move in modern research might be. The impossibility of knowing what the next "research bandwagon" might be was freely admitted by the conveners, who recommended resisting the temptation to narrow one's knowledge too much. Applied research, or "getting one's hands dirty," was emphasized as a necessity, however, along with the importance of inter-connected relevance, or making one's research applicable to many different areas, in order to make an impact. Most significantly, perhaps, the participants were advised to be proud of what they do and to remember the importance of lifelong learning. The value of collaboration among the academic community was put forward as another key element of success, and, of course, never being afraid to question.

Natalie Anderson (University of Leeds)



## **ATLANTIC BROTHERHOODS: FRATERNALISM IN TRANSCONTINENTAL PERSPECTIVE, 1770-1930**

Workshop at the GHI Washington, December 4-5, 2015. Conveners: Jessica Harland-Jacobs (University of Florida) and Jan C. Jansen (GHI Washington). Participants: Joachim Berger (Institut für Europäische Geschichte, Mainz), John Garrigus (University of Texas, Arlington), Peter P. Hinks (New Haven), Bonnie Huskins (St. Thomas University, Fredericton), Elizabeth Mancke (University of New Brunswick, Fredericton), S. Brent Morris (Supreme Council, 33°, Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, SJ), Andreas Önnersfors (University of Gothenburg), Cecile Révauger (Université de Bordeaux III — Montaigne), Hans Schwartz (Clark University), María Eugenia Vázquez-Semadeni (UC Los Angeles).

The workshop explored the intersecting histories of the Atlantic world and fraternalism. Its main purpose was to examine the role that large-scale fraternal networks and other forms of cross-border sociability played in connecting — and disconnecting — the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Atlantic. What was the place of fraternalism within or across different Atlantic empires? How did it relate to Atlantic migration and mobility, both in its voluntary and involuntary (e.g. slavery) forms? How did it intersect with other Atlantic networks, such as networks of merchants, slave traders, and diasporas? What role did it play for the African American diaspora and their transatlantic connections?

The first panel (“Spaces”) examined several geographic scales of fraternal expansion and interaction. In her paper “The Masonic Triangle in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean, 1810-1820,” María Eugenia Vázquez-Semadeni looked at how masonic affiliations intersected with professional and commercial networks across the Gulf of Mexico in the early nineteenth century, a period of profound political and economic transformation in this region. Based on a prosopographic study of lodges in Louisiana, New Mexico, and Cuba, Vázquez-Semadeni emphasized the high proportion of groups engaged in trade and movements between these places: ship owners, sailors, merchants, and military men, including a high proportion of migrants, such as French refugees from Saint-Domingue (later Haiti). In this specific context lodge membership fulfilled a great variety of functions, ranging from a source of trust between

strangers and a means to reduce the uncertainties of maritime connections to an infrastructure for cross-border contacts and social aspirations. Joachim Berger's paper "The Great Divide: Transatlantic (br)othering and masonic internationalism, c. 1870-1930" analyzed the broader transatlantic dimensions of international relations between (territorially, in general nationally defined) masonic bodies. Various conflicts and struggles over masonic and "profane" topics — such as rituals, organization, jurisdictions, religion, and race — complicated these transatlantic interactions. Taking the example of lodges in New York City, however, Berger also demonstrated how masonic internationalists sought to circumvent certain sensitive issues (such as the non-religious orientation of French lodges) in order to close the ranks within transatlantic freemasonry, particularly during the First World War. In his comment, S. Brent Morris pointed to several new research questions that arise out of Vázquez-Semadeni's analysis, such as the question whether freemasonry affected clandestine trade. With regard to Berger's paper, he emphasized the importance of conflicts around territorial jurisdictions and the US obsession with ritualistic uniformity.

The second panel ("Race") focused on how fraternalism intersected with race relations, slavery, and anti-slavery movements. Cécile Révauger's paper "Freemasonry, slavery, and abolition: A transcontinental perspective" provided an overview of the complex interrelations between the slave trade, abolitionism, and freemasonry in the Atlantic context. While slavery was not a major concern for the founders of English freemasonry, it became a central and contentious issue with the expansion into the colonial Atlantic world and the considerable role the brotherhood started to play in slave-holder societies in the West Indies and the United States. Even if it claimed to be open to all men, race was in practice a fundamental criterion for the admission into masonic lodges into colonial lodges. Looking at individual members and lodge practices in the United States and the British and French Caribbean, Révauger stressed the varying and changing positions towards racial exclusion and slavery. In his paper "The African Lodge, the Columbian, and the Republic of Masonry: Print Culture in the Creation of the African Masonic Diaspora," Hans Schwartz revisited the first decades of the first African American lodge under the leadership of Prince Hall in late eighteenth-century Boston. Based on a close reading of articles in one Boston newspaper, Schwartz showed how African American freemasons made use of print culture to establish transatlantic connections and to propagate

a new African-centered reading of masonic traditions. Commenting on the panel, Peter P. Hinks pointed out that there was no intrinsic relationship between an individual's stance towards slavery and the masonic affiliation. Instead, he posed the question whether a close relationship between anti-slavery and freemasonry emerged with the founding of Boston's African Lodge.

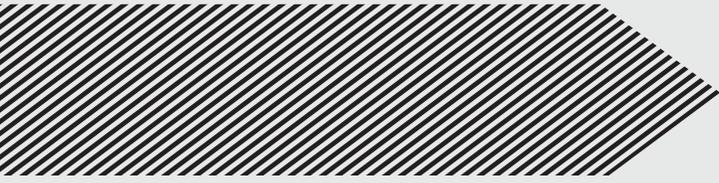
The third panel ("Revolutions") further delved into the interactions between fraternalism and the sphere of politics during the Age of Revolutions. In his paper "A Secret Brotherhood? The Question of Black Freemasonry before and after the Haitian Revolution," John Garrigus provided a systematic discussion of the idea that masonic lodges constituted an important factor in the revolutionary events in France's most important Caribbean colony, Saint-Domingue (later Haiti), at the turn of the eighteenth century. While prerevolutionary Saint-Domingue constituted one of the most "masonized" societies of its time, there is only scarce evidence for the alleged masonic affiliation of Haitian leader Toussaint Louverture. Symbolic markers of signatures, often labelled as "masonic" and considered a proof for Louverture's masonic identity, Garrigus argued, were rather an ambiguous symbolic assertion of social and cultural respectability used by an aspiring class of free men of color. Bonnie Huskins turned to the role masonic connections played among those who had opposed the American Revolution. Her paper "Liberty and Authority: Loyalist Freemasons in Shelburne, Nova Scotia and Saint John, New Brunswick in the Aftermath of the American Revolution" compared lodges in late eighteenth-century British North America as places for loyalist sociability. Retracing the various conflicts that accompanied their foundation and insertion into Canadian masonic hierarchies, she found proof of the fundamental tension between liberty and authority that marked loyalist exiles. Elizabeth Mancke's comment pointed at major geopolitical shifts at the time of freemasonry's emergence and expansion in the Atlantic world. The masonic brotherhood, Mancke argued, played a role in mediating periods of dislocation by providing a certain form of social structure in the absence of one.

The fourth panel ("Diasporas") focused on the role fraternal organizations played in the social life of diaspora groups. Jan C. Jansen's paper "Becoming Imperial Citizens: Freemasonry and Jewry in the British Caribbean (18th-19th century)" sought to shed new light on the fact that Jews constituted one of the major distinct groups within masonic lodges in North America and the West Indies. Based on empirical

evidence from primarily Jewish lodges in Jamaica, Jansen argued that freemasonry functioned as locus of a “transitory sociability” (Eric Saunier) in a period of fundamental transformation for the Sephardic diaspora in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British Caribbean. With the gradual weakening and dissolution of trans-imperial diasporic ties, they turned toward an institution that promised to support their becoming “citizens” of the Empire, while at the same time allowing them to retain and refashion certain networks beyond the British imperial realm. In his paper “Freedom in Fraternity? The German Lodge Pythagoras No. 1/86 in New York/Brooklyn and Its Transatlantic Connections in the Antebellum United States,” Andreas Önnersfors used a masonic lodge of German immigrants as an entry point into the role of freemasonry in one of the major American immigration hubs, mid-nineteenth century New York City. While tracing the lodge’s development and self-fashioning vis-à-vis US freemasonry, he argued that the democratic and universalist pathos of German “Forty-Eighters” collided with local masonic realities, territorial jurisdictions, and the crucial issue of race and the admission of free people of color. Jessica Harland-Jacobs’ comment stressed the need for studies of fraternalism that focus on local contexts, while not losing sight of the various transregional, imperial, and global entanglements. She also pointed to the common phenomenon of (ethnically, religiously, and socially) exclusive lodges and to the gradual waning of fraternal cosmopolitanism in the course of the nineteenth century.

The conference concluded with a roundtable that pulled together the major methodological and conceptual threads of the four panels. A focus on fraternalism sheds new light on Atlantic history and the way people coped with the challenges of modernity. The central position of freemasonry, that is, one specific fraternal organization, in scholarship was also reflected in the papers presented at the workshop. Several ways of explaining this preponderance were discussed: the fact that freemasonry stands in between eighteenth-century clubs and the later friendly societies; its extremely flexible and elastic organization; and its potential to function as a kind of meta-network, a network of networks.

Jan C. Jansen (GHI)



# **GHI News**



## 2015 HELMUT SCHMIDT PRIZE IN GERMAN-AMERICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

On December 10, 2015, the Helmut Schmidt Prize in German-American Economic History was awarded to Carl-Ludwig Holtfrerich, Professor Emeritus at the John F. Kennedy Institute of the Freie Universität Berlin. The Schmidt prize pays tribute to the late German chancellor for his part in transforming the framework of transatlantic economic cooperation. The prize, which has been awarded every other year, has been generously sponsored by the ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin and Gerd Bucerius since 2007.

Professor Holtfrerich was honored for his groundbreaking research in the field of transatlantic economic history, in particular for his historiographical interventions on the topics of hyperinflation in post-World War I Germany and the history of public debt. After introductory remarks by Simone Lässig (GHI) and Nina Smidt (American Friends of Bucerius), Volker Berghahn (Columbia University) delivered the laudation. Upon accepting the prize, Carl-Ludwig Holtfrerich delivered a lecture titled “Austerity: Views of Chancellor Brüning’s and President Hoover’s Fiscal Policies from across the Atlantic, 1930-32,” which has been published on the GHI website.

An excerpt of the laudation follows here: “We are honoring not only an eminent and internationally known economic historian, but also someone who has fostered trans-Atlantic relations for many years. . . . [A] rigorous economic historian who assesses the major problems of the time of industrial production, levels of prices and wages, the effects on living standards and civilian health, income distribution, taxation, money supply, capital movements, and — not to be forgotten — the payment of reparations. . . . No less important, the author is not just concerned with domestic developments, but time and again makes very illuminating comparisons with developments in Britain, France, and the United States. . . . Raising the question whether historical scholarship is influenced by present-day concerns is merely meant to highlight Professor Holtfrerich’s achievements as a researcher.

He has made an array of most impressive contributions to our historical understanding of the German economy and international finance. Indeed, he is an outstanding representative of a profession whose work chancellor Helmut Schmidt had in mind when he suggested the establishment of a prize to honor prominent practitioners of economic history and trans-Atlantic relations.”

## 2015 FRITZ STERN DISSERTATION PRIZE

The 2015 Fritz Stern Dissertation Prize was awarded to Sarah Panzer (College of William and Mary). The award ceremony took place at the 24th Annual Symposium of the Friends of the German Historical Institute on November 13, 2015. The selection committee was composed of: Timothy Brown (chair, Northeastern University), James Melton (Emory University), and Lora Wildenthal (Rice University). The prize winner has contributed an article presenting her dissertation research to this issue of the *Bulletin* (see “Features”).

The committee’s prize citation for Sarah Panzer’s dissertation, “The Prussians of the East: Samurai, Bushido, and Japanese Honor in the German Imagination, 1905-1945” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2015), read: “Sarah Panzer’s dissertation . . . opens a fascinating new window on German-Japanese relations from the late-Wilhelmine period to the end of the Second World War. The study treats a key topic in 19th and 20th century history: visions of how to modernize while retaining tradition. The theme is of enduring importance, but is particularly pertinent for our understanding of fascisms. Panzer examines with detailed documentation the many contexts in which Germans expressed interest and admiration for Japanese, and Japanese expressed the same for Germans, as two cultures and economies that grappled with the problem of modernization and tradition. Examining how Japanese culture — specifically the warrior culture of Bushido and the associated martial and spiritual traditions of Jiu-jitsu and Zen Buddhism — were received and recontextualized in the Weimar Republic, Panzer locates the basis of the eventual alliance between German and Japanese fascisms in a mutual commitment to a particular version of warrior virtue. In the process of transculturation, Japanese traditions were imputed with meanings that resonated with key preoccupations of the German Right. Zen Buddhism, for example, was stripped of its universalist implications, reinterpreted as a philosophy of death appropriate to warriorly cults of heroic defeat and suicide. Panzer’s examination of this process of transculturation challenges facile notions of Orientalism. Far from seeing Japanese culture as an alien “other,” she shows how Germans not only stressed its kinship with their own culture but even saw it as a model to be emulated. In the decades that followed the First World War, Germans would above all highlight cultural affinities rooted in common ideals of masculine heroism and a shared warrior ideal. Panzer’s archival work and her grasp of detail and nuance are truly impressive. The writing is engaging, the analysis lucid. “The Prussians of the East” makes a significant contribution to the scholarship that will interest not only historians of modern Germany, but of fascism, imperialism, and transcultural exchange. It is an outstanding accomplishment.”

## NEW STAFF PUBLICATIONS

### Monographs and Edited Volumes

Hartmut Berghoff and Cornelia Rauh. *The Respectable Career of Fritz K. The Making and Remaking of a Provincial Nazi Leader, 1885-1980*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2015.

Julianne Czierkpa, Kathrin Oerters, and Nora Thorade. *Regions, Industries and Heritage: Perspectives on Economy, Society and Culture in Modern Western Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015.

Elisabeth Engel. *Encountering Empire: African American Missionaries in Colonial Africa, 1900-1939*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2015.

Mark Keck-Szajbel and Dariusz Stola, eds. "Mobility in the Communist Bloc." Special issue *East European Politics and Society* 29.1 (2015).

Simone Lässig, Peter Haslinger, and Jürgen Schupp. *Forschungsinfrastrukturen im Wissenschaftssystem: Qualität — Nachhaltigkeit — Reputation*. Berlin: Leibniz Gemeinschaft, 2015.

Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson. *Malcolm X: A Biography*. Munich: Beck Verlag, 2015.

### Journal Articles and Book Chapters

Hartmut Berghoff. "Business History." In *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, ed. James D. Wright, 21-26. 2nd ed. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2015.

Julianne Czierkpa. "Space and Industry in the Economic Region Black Country." In *Regions, Industries and Heritage. Perspectives on Economy, Society and Culture in Modern Western Europe*, ed. Julianne Czierkpa, Kathrin Oerters, and Nora Thorade, 40-51. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015.

Julianne Czierkpa, Kathrin Oerters, and Nora Thorade. "Regions, Industries and Heritage. Perspectives on Economy, Society and Culture in Modern Western Europe." In *Regions, Industries and Heritage. Perspectives on Economy, Society and Culture in Modern Western Europe*, ed. Julianne Czierkpa, Kathrin Oerters, and Nora Thorade, 1-8. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015.

Matthew Hiebert, W.R. Bowen, and R.G. Siemens. "Implementing a Social Knowledge Creation Environment." *Scholarly and Research Communication* 6.3 (2015).

Matthew Hiebert, Daniel Powell, R.G. Siemens, W.R. Bowen, and L. Seatter. "Transformation Through Integration: The Renaissance Knowledge

Network (ReKN) and a Next Wave of Scholarly Publication.” *Scholarly and Research Communication* 6.2 (2015).

Mischa Honeck. “Men of Principle: Gender and the German-American War for the Union.” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 5.1 (2015): 38-67.

Mischa Honeck. “Americanization.” In *America in the World, 1776 to the Present: A Supplement to the Dictionary of American History*, ed. Edward J. Blum, 51-56. Vol. 1. Farmington Hills, MI: Charles Scribner & Sons, 2016.

Gisela Hürlimann. “Schweizerische Steuerwelt(en) — Die Bundessteuerepolitik im Kontext von Föderalismus, Gerechtigkeits- und Verteilungsfragen.” *Archiv für Schweizerisches Abgaberecht (ASA)* 84:1-2 (2015/2016): 29-48.

Gisela Hürlimann. “Editorial: Einige grundsätzliche Überlegungen zum (Um)Verteilen / Quelques réflexions de fond sur la (re)distribution.” *Umverteilen / redistribuer*, *traverse- Zeitschrift für Geschichte — Revue d’histoire* 1 (2015): 15-34.

Jan Jansen. “Un monument pour le ‘Royaume arabe’? Politiques symboliques et enjeux de pouvoir à Alger, dans les années 1860” *Cultures d’empires? Echanges et affrontements culturels en situations coloniales*, ed. by Romain Bertrand, Hélène Blais, and Emmanuelle Sibeud, 271-292. Paris: Karthala, 2015.

Jan Jansen. “Kommentar: Die postkoloniale Konfrontation in Frankreich.” In *Erinnerungskulturen post-imperialen Nationen*, ed. Dietmar Rothermund, 145-150. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2015.

David Jünger. “An Bord des Lebens. Die Schiffspassage deutscher Juden nach Palästina 1933 bis 1938 als Übergangserfahrung zwischen Raum und Zeit.” Special Issue “Die Schiffsreise als Übergangserfahrung in Migrationsprozessen / The Sea Voyage as a transitory experience in migration processes,” ed. Joachim Schlör. *Mobile Culture Studies. The Journal* 1.1 (2015): 147-163.

David Jünger. “‘Bilanz der deutschen Judenheit.’ Nekrolog auf das deutsche Judentum an der ‘Zeitenwende’ 1929/1942.” In *Was war deutsches Judentum? 1870-1933*, ed. Christina von Braun, 134-146. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.

David Jünger. “‘Wo aber Nationen nicht begreifen können, da hassen sie.’ Isaac Breuer, die deutsche Orthodoxie und der Judenhass zwischen den Weltkriegen.” In *Beschreibungsversuche der Judenfeindschaft: Zur Geschichte der Antisemitismusforschung vor 1944*, ed. Hans-Joachim Hahn and Olaf Kistenmacher, 234-260. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.

Mark Keck-Szajbel. "A Cultural Shift in the 1970s: 'Texas' Jeans, Taboos and Transnational Tourism." *East European Politics and Society* 29.1 (2015): 212-225.

Simone Lässig. "Digital Humanities: We Need to Talk." *International Journal for the Historiography of Education* 1 (2015): 72-80.

Simone Lässig. "Zeitgeschichte als nationales Projekt? Geschichtsschulbücher der Bundesrepublik in wissenshistorischer Perspektive." *Deutsche Zeitgeschichte — Transnational*, ed. Alexander Gallus, Axel Schildt, and Detlef Siegfried, 273-300. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2015.

Anindita Nag. "Photography as Ethics: Images, Spectatorship and the Optics of Humanitarian Suffering." *Journal of History, Jadavpur University* 30 (2014-2015): 168-172.

Ines Prodöhl. "The Tale behind the Bean: The Modern History of an Ancient Crop." *China Policy Institute Blog, University of Nottingham*. May 14, 2015. <http://blogs.nottingham.ac.uk/chinapolicyinstitute/2015/05/14/the-tale-behind-the-bean-the-modern-history-of-an-ancient-crop/>

Uwe Spiekermann. "Family Ties in Immigrant Business: Joseph Schlitz, the Uihlein Brothers, and the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company." *Yearbook of the Society for German-American Studies* 48 (2015): 59-112.

Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson and Stefan Karkowsky. "Lincoln und das Ende der Sklaverei — Das Medium Spielfilm in der Diskussion." In *Geschichte und Geschehen — Einführung, Oberstufe*, ed. Christine Dzubieli, i.a., 240-241. Stuttgart: Klett, 2015.

Richard F. Wetzell. "Franz von Liszt und die internationale Strafrechtsreformbewegung." In *Die Schule Franz von Liszts: Spezialpräventive Kriminalpolitik und die Entstehung des modernen Strafrechts*, ed. Arnd Koch and Martin Löhnig, 207-227. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015.

## STAFF CHANGES

**Stefan Böhm** joined the GHI as Administrative Director in June 2015. He previously served as Administrative Director at the GHI Warsaw and has held positions in the Federal Defense Administration in Germany, France, and Belgium.

**Andreas Fischer**, who joined the GHI in 2011 as Administrative Director, left the institute in June 2015 in order to take up a position at the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI) in Rome.

**Matthew Hiebert** joined the GHI as Research Fellow in Digital History in October 2015. He is a cultural and literary historian of the twentieth century with expertise in digital methods. His research focuses on transcultural intellectual history, knowledge representation and creation, politics and literature, and the intersections between computation and humanities-based inquiry. Hiebert received his PhD in November 2013 from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, and worked as an Assistant Professor and postdoctoral fellow at the University of Victoria. He taught in the digital humanities and his research has involved project, tool, and infrastructure design.

**Insa Kummer** joined the GHI as project editor in March 2016. She was a project associate for *German History in Documents and Images* (GHDI) from 2007 until 2012 and also works as a freelance translator.

**Alexa Lässig** joined the GHI in December 2015 as Social Media Coordinator.

**Melanie Smaney** joined the GHI in January 2016 as Administrative Assistant.

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## GHI FELLOWSHIPS AND INTERNSHIPS

### Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships

The GHI awards short-term fellowships to European and North American doctoral students as well as postdoctoral scholars to pursue research projects that draw upon primary sources located in the United States. We are particularly interested in research projects that fit into the following fields: German and European history, the history of German-American relations, and the role of Germany and the USA in international relations. These fellowships are also available to European doctoral students and postdoctoral scholars in the field of American history. The proposed research projects should make use of historical methods and engage with the relevant historiography. The fellowships are usually granted for periods of one to five months.

The GHI also offers a number of other long-term doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships with more specific profiles to strengthen key research interests at the institute, including: the history of knowledge, the history of race and ethnicity, the history of religion and religiosity, the history of family and kinship, the history of migration, and North American history. In addition to these opportunities, several new fellowship programs have been introduced: the Binational Tandem Research Program for “The History of Knowledge” and “Global and Trans-regional History,” and the Gerda Henkel Postdoctoral Fellowship for Digital History.

For further information about these programs and current application deadlines, please check our website at [www.ghi-dc.org/fellowships](http://www.ghi-dc.org/fellowships).

### **GHI Internships**

The GHI Internship Program gives German and American students of history, political science, and library studies an opportunity to gain experience at a scholarly research institute. Interns assist individual research projects, work for the library, take part in the preparation and hosting of conferences, and help with our publications. They receive a small stipend. The program is very flexible in the sense that the GHI tries to accommodate the interns’ interests, abilities, and goals. A two-month minimum stay is required; a three-month stay is preferred. There is a rolling review of applications. For further information, please check our web site at [www.ghi-dc.org/internships](http://www.ghi-dc.org/internships).

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## **RECIPIENTS OF GHI FELLOWSHIPS**

### **Fellowship in the History of Family and Kinship**

**Jürgen Dinkel**, Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen

*Erben und Vererben in der Moderne*

### **Fellowship in the History of Knowledge**

**Sabina Brevaglieri**, Universität Mainz

*Between Atlantic and Pacific Worlds: Missionary Return-Travels and the Making of Global Roman Catholicism (1580-1680)*

**Maria Müller**, Universität Augsburg

*Wahrnehmungs- und Deutungsmuster zwischen “Wahn” und “Wirklichkeit”:  
Teufel, Gott und Magnetismus in der Psychiatrie des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts  
(1849-1939)*

### **Fellowship in the History of Migration**

**John Eicher**, University of Iowa

*Now too much for Us: German and Mennonite Transnationalism, 1874-1944*

**Isabel Richter**, Ruhr-Universität Bochum

*The "Discovery" of India in the Long 1960s: A Study of Transnational Youth Cultures in Western Europe, the United States, and India*

### **Fellowship in North American History**

**Samantha Bryant**, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

*"Black Monster Stalks the City": The Thomas Wansley Case and the Racialized Politics of Sexuality from Civil Rights to Black Power, 1960-1975*

**Susan Eckelmann**, University of Tennessee Chattanooga

*Freedom's Little Lights: The World of Children and Teenagers in the U.S. and Abroad during the Civil Rights Era*

**Juliane Hornung**, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

*Margaret und Lawrence Thaw: Vom Honeymoon zur Expedition — ein High Society-Paar auf Reisen*

### **Fellowship in the History of Race & Ethnicity**

**Nadja Klopprogge**, Freie Universität Berlin

*Love, Sex, and Civil Rights: Intimate Encounters between African-American GIs and German Women*

**Christopher Ewing**, CUNY Graduate Center

*The Development of Race and Gay Rights in the Federal Republic of Germany between 1949 and the Present*

**Zef Segal**, Ben Gurion University

*Making Skin Color a Spatial Matter: The Role of Cartographers in the Invention of Racial Color Schemes*

### **Fellowship in the History of Religion and Religiosity**

**Stefanie Coché**, Universität zu Köln

*Religion und Moderne: Religiöse Führungspersönlichkeiten in den USA im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*

## **Volkswagen Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Humanities at Georgetown University and the GHI**

**Bernhard Dietz, Universität Mainz**

*New Elites? Managers in the USA and West Germany 1970-1990*

### **Doctoral Fellows**

**Brian Alberts, Purdue University**

*Beer to Stay: Brewed Culture, Ethnicity, and the Market Revolution, 1840-1873*

**Cedric Bierganns, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität Bonn**

*Die U.S. Information Agency und die Implementierung des NATO-Doppelbeschlusses, 1981-1987: Auswärtige Kultur- und Informationspolitik anhand der bundesdeutschen Amerikahäuser*

**Timo Bonengel, Universität Erfurt**

*'A disease that steals potential'? Drogenkonsum in den USA der 1970er und 1980er Jahre*

**Florian Braun, Europa Universität Viadrina Frankfurt**

*Wissenstransfer ins Exil: Das Netzwerk emigrierter Schüler und Assistenten des Neurologen Viktor von Weizsäcker*

**Manuel Franz, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg**

*Preparedness, Paranoia, Patriotism: U.S. Preparedness Societies and the Quest for Americanism 1914-1929*

**Andreas Fuchs, Georg-Eckert-Institut, Braunschweig**

*Reform im Spiegel der Musik: Die Rolle des Gesangs im Wandlungsprozess jüdischer Lebenswelten*

**Viola Huang, Teachers College, Columbia University**

*Transformative Black Education in Harlem, 1960-1980*

**Annette Karpp, Freie Universität Berlin**

*Punk and/or Human Rights? From Anti-establishment Ideology to an Agenda of Political Participation in London's and New York City's Punk Scenes, 1970s-2000s*

**Oliver Schmerbauch, Universität Erfurt**

*Media of Expansion: Wissensproduktion und Konnektivität zwischen den USA und dem Pazifik, 1870-1939*

**Alexander Schwanebeck, Universität zu Köln**

*Die Musealisierung der Grenze: Die Darstellung und Repräsentation postkolonialer Minoritäten in US-Grenzräumen, 1945-1990*

## Postdoctoral Fellows

**Daniel Brewing**, Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule Aachen  
*“The Good Soldier”*: Bilder vom “guten Soldaten” im politischen,  
wissenschaftlichen und öffentlichen Diskurs der USA im 19./20.  
Jahrhundert

**Stefan Huebner**, Bundeswehr-Universität München  
*The Seven Seas of Oil: Offshore Oil Drilling, Afro-Eurasia, and the Transfor-  
mation of the Ocean*

**Christa Wirth**, Universität Zürich  
*Understanding the Philippines: Chicago, Manila, and the Creation of Post-  
colonial Knowledge, 1952-1977*

**Andreas Wolfsteiner**, Stiftung Universität Hildesheim  
*Sichtbarkeitsmaschinen: Zum Umgang mit Szenarien als deutsch-  
amerikanische Beziehung*

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## GHI RESEARCH AND DOCTORAL SEMINARS, FALL 2015

- July 8**                    **Astrid Kirchhof (Georgetown University/GHI)**  
*Fighting for Recognition of Sovereignty: the GDR's Nature  
Conservation Policy in an International Arena*
- September 2**        **Anna Karla (University of Cologne)**  
*Reconstruction Policies in Europe after World War I*
- September 17**     **Daniela Hettstedt (University of Basel)**  
*Lighthouse, Abattoir, Disease Control. Shared Colonialism  
and International Administration in Tangier (Morocco),  
1840-1956*
- Jean-Michel Turcotte (Université Laval)**  
*How to Treat Hitler's Soldiers? German Prisoners of War  
in Canada, the United States and Great-Britain during  
the Second World War*
- September 23**     **Hanno Scheerer (University of Mainz)**  
*“Land is the Basis of All That We Have”: Single Tax and  
Land Reform Movements, 1880-1939*
- October 22**        **Karin Trieloff (Humboldt-Universität  
zu Berlin)**  
*Gerichtsprozesse im besetzten Rheinland, 1918-1930*

- Rudolf Himpsl (University of Munich)**  
*Außenhandel und Außenwirtschaftspolitik in Bayern, 1957-1982*
- November 5** **Stefan Laffin (University of Bielefeld)**  
*Eine (an)gespannte Beziehung? — Die US-amerikanische Besetzung Italiens 1943-1945*
- Suzanne Swartz (Stony Brook University)**  
*Hidden Encounters: Interactions among Jewish and Polish Children during the Nazi and Soviet Occupations, 1939-1945*
- Maximilian Strnad (University of Munich/USHMM)**  
*The Last German Jews — Mixed Marriages in the Final Stage of the Holocaust 1944/45*
- November 18** **David Jünger (Zentrum für Jüdische Studien Berlin-Brandenburg/GHI)**  
*Legacies of the Holocaust. Joachim Prinz, American Jewry, and the Civil Rights Movement*
- December 2** **Noaquia Callahan (University of Iowa/GHI)**  
*Carrying Her Burden in the Heat of the Day: Mary Church Terrell, Black Women's Internationalism, and Germany's 'schwarze Schmach' Campaign, 1918-1922*
- Jessica Levy (Johns Hopkins University/GHI)**  
*From Black Power to Black Empowerment: Transnational Capital and Racial Integration in the United States and South Africa, 1969-2010.*

## GHI LECTURE SERIES, SPRING 2016

### MEASURING RISK AND HUMAN NEEDS: NEW PERSPECTIVES FROM THE HISTORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Organized by Simone Lässig, Christine von Oertzen, and Anna Echterhölter

Hardly a day passes without the print and broadcast media presenting agonizing images of people in crisis situations. But where the general public sees danger and suffering, the government officials and aid workers responsible for responding to emergencies see numbers. Their knowledge of risk and need is largely shaped by statistics, algorithms, and databases. These forms of quantification are by no means neutral, however. What governments or international agencies decide to measure and the standards of measurement they adopt are decisive in determining who receives help and how much.

The German Historical Institute's Spring 2016 Lecture Series will explore the measurement of human needs from a historical perspective. The four speakers, each taking a different case study, will trace how quantification became a fundamental instrument in responding to famine, war, risk, poverty, and migration. They will consider the different approaches employed to quantify risks to both individuals and communities, and they will highlight the effects and consequences that the growing reliance on quantification has produced in contending with the unpredictable.

*The lecture series was organized in cooperation with the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science.*

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|-----------------|--|
| <b>March 10</b> | <b>Pure Numbers — Dirty Habits: Defining the Standard of Living in the Early German Hygienic Movement</b><br>Bernhard Kleeberg (University of Basel)               |
| <b>March 31</b> | <b>Handling Big Numbers: The Logistics of Granaries and Famine Relief</b><br>Monika Dommann (University of Zürich)   |
| <b>April 21</b> | <b>Science, Risk, and the Making of Statistical Individuals: How Corporations Numbered Americans' Days and Valued Their Lives</b><br>Dan Bouk (Colgate University) |
| <b>May 5</b>    | <b>Measuring Human Needs: Statistics, Humanitarianism, and the Politics of Famine in Modern India</b><br>Anindita Nag (GHI)  |

## GHI CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2016

For a regularly updated calendar of events, please check our web site at [www.ghi-dc.org](http://www.ghi-dc.org)

- February 26-27** **The Western Art World between 1930 and 1950: Methodological Approaches Aiming at Transdisciplinary Research**  
Workshop at the GHI  
Convener: Jeroen Euwe (GHI)
- February 4-6** **Die Welt der Kinder: Weltwissen und Weltdeutung in Schul- und Kinderbüchern des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts**  
Conference at the University of Zurich  
Convener: Simone Lässig (GHI)
- March 17** **The Refugee Crisis: Historical Perspectives from Europe and North America, 1945-2000**  
Symposium at the GHI  
Conveners: German Historical Institute, Washington DC, German Embassy, Washington DC, KNOMAD/The World Bank
- March 17** **Learning from the Past? The Refugee Crisis in Historical Perspective**  
Panel Discussion at the GHI
- April 1** **The Historian in Times of Globalization: Social Mimicry, Intellectual Potential, and Political Risks**  
Lecture at the GHI  
Speaker: Lutz Raphael (University of Trier)
- April 1-2** **The Historian and the World — the Worlds of History: Positions, Politics, and Purposes in the 21st Century**  
Symposium at the GHI  
Conveners: Mischa Honeck (GHI) and Jan C. Jansen (GHI)
- April 13-15** **Navigating Diversity: Narratives, Practices and Politics in German-Speaking Europe**  
Conference in Montreal, Quebec (Canada)  
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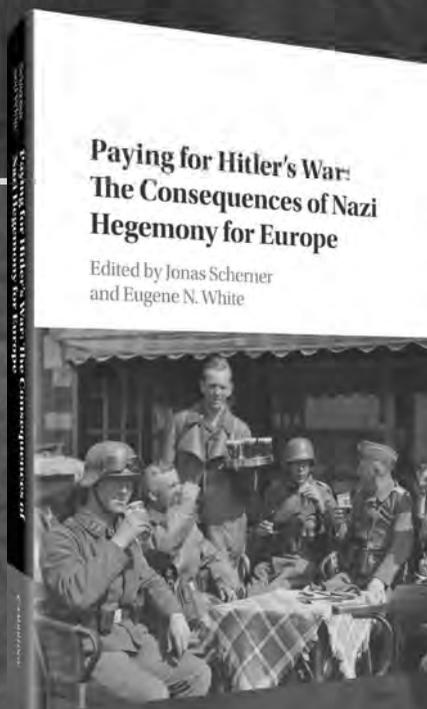
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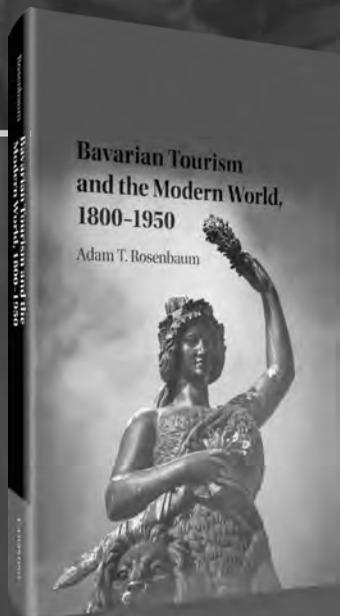
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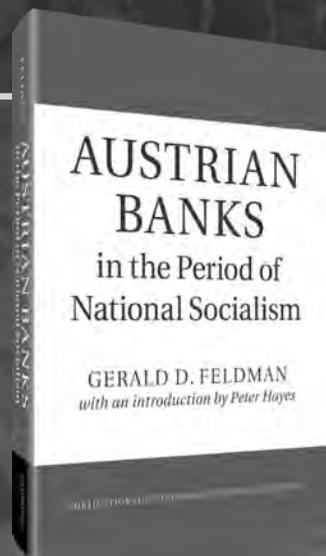
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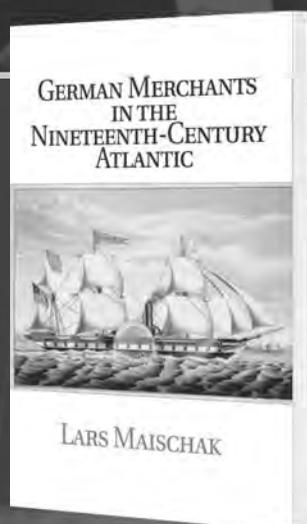
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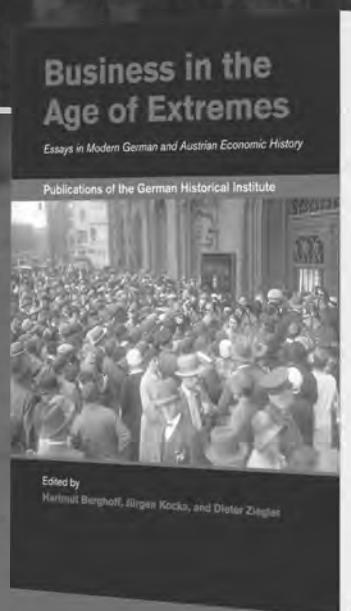
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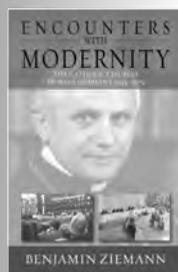
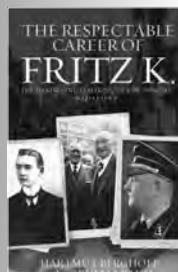
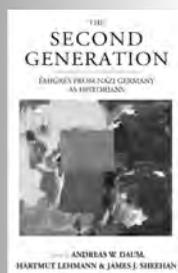
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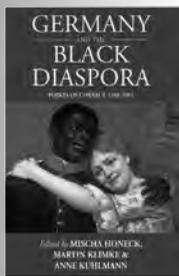
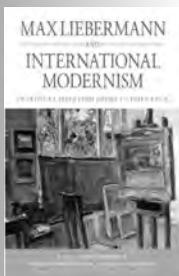
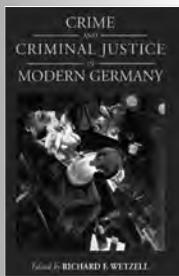
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In *Encountering Empire*, Elisabeth Engel traces how black American missionaries – men and women grappling with their African heritage – established connections in Africa during the heyday of European colonialism. Reconstructing the black American ‘colonial encounter’, Engel analyzes the images, transatlantic relationships, and possibilities of representation African American missionaries developed for themselves while negotiating colonial regimes. Illuminating a neglected chapter of Atlantic history, Engel demonstrates that African Americans used imperial structures for their own self-determination. *Encountering Empire* thus challenges the notion that pan-Africanism was the only viable strategy for black emancipation.



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Vorstellungen von „guter Staatsbürgerschaft“ dominierten in den USA der Zwischenkriegszeit, die von einer restriktiven Migrationsgesetzgebung geprägt war. Die Einwanderungsdebatten waren mit strikten Amerikanisierungsforderungen verknüpft. Am Beispiel von Mitgliedern der Gymnastikorganisation *Sokol* sowie Sportler/innen des *Jewish People's Institute (JPI)* in Chicago wird gezeigt, wie tschechische und jüdische Migrant/innen und ihre Nachkommen Sport als Strategie der Legitimierung und im Kampf um Anerkennung nutzen. Ihre Handlungsoptionen standen dabei im Spannungsfeld von Adaption, Ablehnung und Umdeutung dominanter US-Staatsbürgerschaftskonzepte und beinhalteten die Integration kultureller Selbstbilder.

Ab der Wende zum 18. Jahrhundert engagierten sich protestantische Landeskirchen vermehrt im atlantischen Raum und veränderten so die nordatlantische Welt des Protestantismus grundlegend. Abseits der Pfade nationalhistorischer Interpretationen behandelt Alexander Pyrges diesen über kirchliche und herrschaftliche Grenzen hinweg wirkmächtigen Prozess.

Im Zentrum steht das Kolonialprojekt Ebenezer: Im Jahr 1734 gegründet wurde die Gemeinde Ebenezer in der britischen Kolonie Georgia jahrzehntelang durch anglikanische und lutherisch-pietistische Kirchenreformer in England und im Alten Reich gefördert. Die Studie gibt Aufschluss über die religiöse Verdichtung der nordatlantischen Welt im 18. Jahrhundert.



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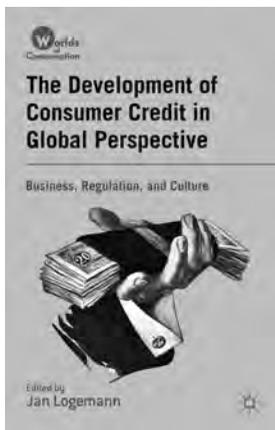
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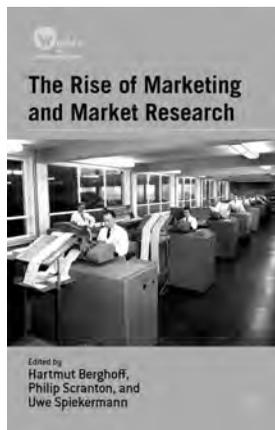
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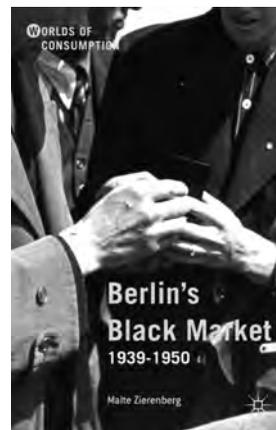
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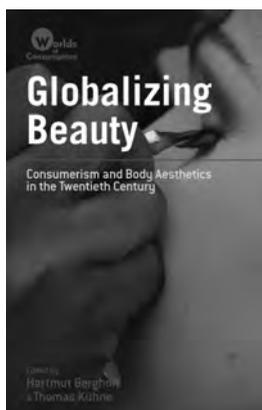


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