EDITED BY JAN HANSEN, JOCHEN HUNG, JAROSLAV IRA, JUDIT KLEMENT, SYLVAIN LESAGE, JUAN LUIS SIMAL, AND ANDREW TOMPKINS

THE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

A Multi-Perspective History of Modern Europe, 1500-2000

THE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

The European Experience

A Multi-Perspective History of Modern Europe

*Edited by Jan Hansen, Jochen Hung, Jaroslav Ira,
Judit Klement, Sylvain Lesage, Juan Luis Simal
and Andrew Tompkins*

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Cover image: Wilhelm Gunkel, *Fly Angel Fly* (2019). Cover design by Katy Saunders

Contents

Introduction

Jan Hansen, Jochen Hung, Jaroslav Ira, Judit Klement,
Sylvain Lesage, Juan Luis Simal, and Andrew Tompkins

What is European history? A.J.P. Taylor once quipped that "European history is whatever the historian wants it to be." This is certainly an appropriate account in that Taylor refers to the constructive nature of historiography, emphasising that it is the historian who 'creates' his or her subject matter. However, Taylor's definition is also problematic because his choice to use the singular "historian" implies that writing history is a solitary endeavour, the imprinting of one mind onto the page. Nothing could be further from the development process of the present handbook of European history. It is a collaborative effort of nearly a hundred historians from seventeen European universities and research institutions, each individual with their own ideas about European history shaped by their personal backgrounds, national contexts and academic traditions. The resulting muddle is our answer to the question about the nature of European history: it is complicated, polyvocal (sometimes in harmony, often not), multi-layered and complex. The pedagogical term for this approach is 'multi-perspectivity', in which different perspectives are used to evaluate historical events and processes. In the words of a group of Dutch researchers led by Bjorn Wansink, in the context of history education the notion of multi-perspectivity refers to "the idea that history is interpretational and subjective, with multiple coexisting narratives about particular historical events." The core of what European history means to us is expressed in this quote.

The subject of European history has recently been the topic of a vigorous debate among historians. One group has argued that European history should be "about what could be called 'doing European History': empirical research that transcends the nation-state in various ways—e.g. projects which are conceived in a transnational, comparative, trans-local way and which at the same time are located in Europe in one way or another." We broadly align ourselves with this self-reflexive approach. We argue that the subject matter of a handbook on European history does not in itself constitute a contribution to European history. Whether a work makes a contribution to European history

depends not only on the topics and historical events it addresses, but above all on its questions, its perspectives, and the way it analyses and narrates. Despite all the differences in detail, European history as a perspective, approach or method is characterised by at least four features: first, it is driven by an effort to narrate historical processes from multiple or comparative perspectives, be they national or regional, global or local, macro or micro. Second, it emphasises processes of mutual interaction, exchange, and transnational contact (also with non-European or colonial spaces) without overlooking local specificities. Third, the European history approach emphasises the contingency of the historical process and avoids narratives of progress toward ever-increasing civility. The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine that started in 2022 is a painful reminder of how fragile peace in the twenty-first century still is. Fourth, it uses its insights into the past to reflect on the present. That does not mean that the historian should become a political advisor or even an apologist for the process of European unification, but that she can offer a reflected commentary on the historical roots of the present.

This handbook is not only rooted in conceptual reflections about the nature of European history. It also grew out of very practical considerations about how to teach European history in the twenty-first century: universities in Europe are internationalising rapidly, welcoming students from all over the world. This raises important questions about how and what to teach this increasingly diverse student body. What kind of European history is appropriate for, say, an Italian undergraduate student enrolled in a BA History programme delivered in English at a Dutch university, or for a Syrian national studying (likewise in English) at a Polish university? With the continuing process of internationalisation in higher education, Brexit and immigration restrictions all making studying at British universities for students from EU member states and non-EU students ever more difficult, this experience is becoming increasingly common.

Furthermore, European history is not only taught in Europe. What is the right kind of European history for, say, a student in Singapore taking a module on social movements in early modern Europe? If European history is whatever we want it to be, there is a clear mission to create appropriate material with which to teach this increasingly internationalised student population.

Universities in continental Europe have set up a great number of English-language programmes over the past decades, including in history. The need for more English-language programmes and modules has long been highlighted in national internationalisation strategies. For example, in 2012 the German Action Committee on Education (*Aktionsrat Bildung*) emphasised the central importance of the internationalisation of teaching at German universities, particularly of curricula: "if the attractiveness of German universities for

Erasmus students should be increased, the number of courses in English needs to be increased." But, as the Dutch Association of Universities (VSNU) remarked in 2018, internationalisation not only means English teaching material, but also "the integration of cross-border issues, intercultural skills and diverse cultural perspectives in the curriculum." Until now, English-language textbooks about European history were often written from the implicit or explicit national perspective of their anglophone (principally British or American) authors. A truly international curriculum, as the intended result of an internationalisation of history education at institutions of higher education, needs to reflect the complex and transnational nature of European history in both content and structure. The aim must be to balance linguistic internationalisation in the form of English instruction with a truly European approach to the content taught. We hope that this handbook will contribute to this undertaking.

Our author teams are sourced from seventeen universities in the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, and Spain. Our vision was that each chapter would be written by an international team of authors from at least three of these countries. We did not always succeed in fulfilling these aims. While the majority of the chapters were written, as planned, by groups of three or four authors based at different European universities, this proved impossible for some chapters, either because of a lack of expertise in our team (this was the case for early modern history) or because historical events affected our project of writing history: for the most part, this handbook was produced during a global pandemic, successive lockdowns and under the threat of serious illness, which took a toll on our authors, their families and the project itself. People fell ill or were required to care for sick relatives and could not contribute as they had intended. We had elaborate plans for international project meetings and writing retreats in which authors would dedicate themselves to writing multiperspective takes on European history. Instead, we discussed plans in lengthy online meetings, wrote and edited from our home offices, while nursing crying children, struggling with isolation and loneliness, or recovering from serious illness.

While this partly derailed our plans—as happens with even the best-laid ones—it did not undermine the purpose of this handbook. What we aimed to do was to provide examples of 'doing' European history, or case studies that can be used to teach students what a multiperspective approach to European history might look like.

This is why this handbook is not structured simply by important events in European history—from the French Revolution to the fall of the Berlin Wall—but by themes that cut across national boundaries and transcend clearly demarcated historical trajectories. Each chapter shows how the respective topic

played out differently in early modern, modern and contemporary history, in different European contexts. The chapters are broadly comparative, offering national case studies to highlight the variety of the European experience. The aim was not to offer another master narrative of European history. The aim was not to provide a comprehensive, exhaustive account of European events from all possible viewpoints, replacing a single national perspective with a collection of national perspectives. How many national perspectives would one need to create *the* European perspective, anyway? Five? Ten? Twenty-seven? Completeness, even if it were attainable, is not the answer. Paul Dukes, himself a renowned expert in European history, argued that "European history must be more than the sum total of its constituent parts." For us, European history is not a body of knowledge, but a method, an approach.

This means that readers will always find important omissions. Due to the nature of our team and the focus of this project, certain perspectives (e.g. Scandinavian, south-eastern European, Polish or non-European and colonial experiences) are sometimes underrepresented. We have tried to address these gaps by providing relevant secondary literature in the bibliography of each subchapter. We hope, however, that this handbook succeeds in demonstrating the heterogeneity and complexity of the many different development paths within (geographic) Europe, with attention to how these paths were linked to, and dependent on, non-European developments.

The chapters in this handbook are not intended to answer all of the questions that students might have about European history; on the contrary, they are meant as discussion starters, designed to complicate seemingly conclusive historical narratives and to generate class discussion. They should make students think and ask themselves which perspectives are missing from this collection of multiperspective histories, and which other approaches could be taken. The one, overarching lesson that all chapters intend to teach is that European history is always incomplete. This lesson is best expressed by this book's cover image: a classical sculpture, located in Carrara, Italy, missing its head. The statue's incompleteness not only reflects the double-sided nature of European history—civilisation and violence—but also it ambiguous, unfinished, and broken character. European history does not have a single vision or master narrative, but instead results from a complex interplay of forces that are best understood by drawing on multiple perspectives.

This handbook is one of the outputs of the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership 'Teaching European History in the 21st Century' (TEH21), financed by the European Commission and running from 2019–2022. We are grateful for the support of the Dutch National Agencies Erasmus+ during this time, particularly during the difficult first months when we had to adapt the project to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. Our project partner, the European

Association of History Educators (Euroclio), gave us important feedback on the structure of this teaching resource and did invaluable work in making the knowledge of this handbook available to a broad public beyond academia.

There are many individuals who have helped to make this project a success and to whom we are deeply indebted. The members of our advisory board—Joanna Wojdon (University of Wroclaw), Simina Badica (House of European History, Brussels), and Oscar van Nooijen (International Baccalaureate Organization, Den Haag)—provided us with invaluable feedback and advice throughout this time. Justine Faure and Isabelle Surun (Université de Lille), Heike Wieters and Paul Treffenfeldt (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), and Martial Staub (University of Sheffield) helped us get the project off the ground and to establish it at their institutions. The project would not have run nearly as smoothly without the tireless work of our project secretary, Miranda Renders (Utrecht University).

This handbook is intended for undergraduate students in an international classroom. Over the course of the project, we invited several groups of students from all involved institutions to read and discuss selected chapters with a critical eye, and whenever this representative audience had the feeling that the scope, content or structure of this handbook did not serve its purpose, we went back to the drawing board. We are grateful for their time, enthusiasm, and critical engagement with our project. Most of all, we are thankful for the hard work by our colleagues all over Europe, under often extreme conditions. Their successful collaboration over three years, reconciling often very different academic cultures, working habits, school holidays, and ideas about history-writing, is the foundation of this truly European endeavour.

Bibliography

Aktionsrat Bildung, *Internationalisierung der Hochschulen. Eine institutionelle Gesamtstrategie* (Münster: Waxmann, 2012).

Levsen, Sonja and Jörg Requate, 'Why Europe, Which Europe? Present Challenges and Future Avenues for Doing European History', https://europedebate.hypotheses.org/86.

Taylor, A.J.P., Paul Dukes, Immanuel Wallerstein, Douglas Johnson, Marc Raeff and Eva Haraszti, 'What is European History …?', in *What is History Today …?* ed. by Juliet Gardiner (London: Palgrave, 1988), pp. 143–154, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-19161-1_13.

Vereniging Hogescholen [Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences] and Vereniging van Universiteiten [Association of Universities in the Netherlands] (VSNU), *Internationalisation Agenda for Higher*

Education (14 May 2018), https://www.universiteitenvannederland.nl/files/documents/Internationalisation%20Agenda%20for%20Higher%20Education.pdf.

Wansink, Bjorn, Sanne Akkerman, Itzél Zuiker and Theo Wubbels, 'Where Does Teaching Multiperspectivity in History Education Begin and End? An Analysis of the Uses of Temporality', *Theory & Research in Social Education* 46:4 (2018), 495–527.

UNIT 1
IDENTITIES

Fig. 1: Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino, *The School of Athens* (1511), Public Domain, Wikimedia, Paul 012, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%22The_School_of_Athens%22_by_Raffaello_Sanzio_da_Urbino.jpg.

CHAPTER 1.1
IDEAS OF EUROPE

1.1.1 Ideas of Europe in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Péter Erdősi, Markéta Křížová, Dirk van Miert, and Roberto Quirós Rosado

Introduction

The concept of 'Europe', while firmly embedded in everyday images and language, has always been uncertain and imprecise. It has resisted clear-cut definitions, developing through time and acquiring specific meanings in given places and at certain historical moments. But it was during the early modern period that the idea of Europe became more solid and stable in the minds of those inhabiting the region. Acquiring a concrete definition, its inhabitants accepted it as 'real' and objectively existing, being mostly defined from within, rather than from without. Even though comparisons with 'others' are crucial for self-definition, equally important was the conscious and unconscious search for common traits by those who constructed the image—the concept of Europe.

The effort to grasp the supposedly shared essence of Europe was complicated by the fact that it was approached from several different angles. In the following text, three principal ways of conceptualising Europe are briefly outlined: first, Europe as a geographical, social, political, and economic reality; second, Europe as a cognitive order of political, religious, and cultural ideas; and third, Europe as a named entity transmitted and discussed through representation in text and image. To be sure, distinguishing between these different ways of conceptualising Europe does not imply that these aspects can be studied in isolation—they are all intrinsically entangled.

Europe as a Geographical, Social, Political and Economic Reality

As a *reality*, Europe can be seen, in the first place, as a geographical space, defined by material, physical features. But while the northern, western, and southern coastal borders could be drawn easily on a map, the problematic delineation of the eastern limits of Europe confirms the fact that geography alone is not sufficient. Europe was and is a layered complexity: a social reality (a demographic entity), a political entity (with a legislation and a military complex), and an economic trading zone. All of these aspects are determined to a large extent by geography.

However, geography—as well as shared culture and in many cases also political aspirations and/or self-identifications of their inhabitants—not only created the entity of Europe, but in the modern period also split it into sections, such as those labelled Western, Southern, Nordic, Eastern, Central, and even North-West or East-Central. Such designations act as serious categories of analysis in modern thought. A case in point is the shifting boundaries of East-Central Europe in the early modern period. According to the Hungarian historian Jenő Szűcs, the countries of the region had to face "'Eastern European' conditions but with defective 'Western-like' structures." East-Central European societies had adapted "structures of the Western type" in the Middle Ages, such as quasi-parliaments representing nobles, that allowed a sense of communal autonomy for social groups vis-à-vis the state.

While 'Central' and 'East-Central' Europe are relatively unproblematically inscribed into 'Europe' as a continent, the positions of Russia and the Ottoman Empire have long been contested—and still are today. For most of the early modern period, the Ottoman Empire covered South-East Europe, including Greece, which was increasingly regarded as the cradle of European culture. The powers in the West of Europe contested the Ottoman membership of Europe: despite their own mutual antagonisms, they felt forced to cooperate in containing an empire that they regarded as a mutual enemy. They were helped by Russia, which put itself firmly on the European map in the eighteenth century by fighting Swedish aspirations in the Great Northern War (1700–1721), and by attacking Ottoman strongholds at the same time, in alliance with the Habsburg Monarchy. Under the aegis of Tsar Peter I (1672–1725), Russia adopted 'Western' and 'Enlightenment' culture and constructed its own sixteenth- and seventeenth-century history as backward and pejoratively medieval. If we are to believe eighteenth-century Russian erudites themselves, the country only became part of Europe during Peter's reign. Ever since, European historians have bought into the idea that Russia 'entered' the stage of European history only at the end of the seventeenth century. Until that time, Russia was largely

known in Europe only through a small number of eyewitness accounts. When Ivan IV in 1558 looked to expand his empire westward, he met the combined resistance of Sweden, Denmark, Poland and Lithuania: 'Moscovia' was not culturally associated with Europe.

Heinrich Bünting, *Map of Europe shaped as a virgin* (1582), Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia. org/wiki/File:Europa_Prima_Pars_Terrae_in_Forma_Virginis.jpg.

Europe as a Cognitive Order

This leads to the second important way in which Europe was conceptualised—as a *cognitive order*. The emergence and the consolidation of the idea of Europe in the early modern period was predicated on the entanglement of shared notions, notions which suggested 'Europe' consisted of a particular political order (dominated by composite states), a particular religion (a Christian faith deemed 'catholic,' in the sense of 'universal') or a particular culture (built on a Roman heritage and a Christian tradition). Speaking about 'Europeans' implied that there were 'others' not just in a geographical sense, but in political, religious, and cultural terms. 'Uncultured' peoples like Moscovites, Scythians, Tartars, Cimmerians, Travellers or religious others such as Turks, Persians, Arabs, and—more problematically—Jews, while displaying some 'cultured' traits, were still perceived as not adequate to the notion of civilisation.

Later, this inadequacy also included the inhabitants of other continents, as observations of 'strange' customs and behaviours by people from overseas nations made Europeans more attentive to their own notions of normalcy.

The notion of mutual proximity and distinctiveness from the rest of the world, based primarily on the shared Christian religion and the notion of 'civilisation' as opposed to barbarism or paganism, had existed among the inhabitants of the 'Old Continent' since antiquity and the Middle Ages—and was borne out, above all, during the Crusades (1095–1492) and later through the pressure of the Ottoman expansion (1453–1566). But from the fifteenth century onwards, these sentiments significantly grew as a result of European expansion into other continents, leading to encounters with different 'races' and different social and cultural formations. In a defensive reaction to a sudden widening of horizons, an intensive process of self-fashioning took place that is not easy to tie to a particular time or place. This process of self-fashioning—of establishing the imagined community of 'Europe'—ran parallel to the formation of specific national identities over the same period. Even though the term 'Europe' was rarely used in sources before the eighteenth century, notions of superiority and distinctiveness had appeared, and were shared by the intellectual and social elites (more specifically, male elites) of various European countries.

As for the idea of a political order, the rise of the idea that the Habsburg Empire acted as a part which stands in for Europe as a whole is exemplified by 'Europa Eidyllion', a pastoral poem in Latin, written in 1558 by Johann Lauterbach (1531–1593), in which a personified Europa represents the Habsburg Universal Monarchy. Such dynastic monarchies as the Habsburg Empire referenced a supra-national political order. The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 was a crucial moment in which the powers of Europe were tied more closely into a transnational order in which the 'balance of power' was played out on a field conceived as 'Europe'. Crises in maintaining that balance, such as the Spanish (1701–1714), Polish (1733–1738), and Austrian Wars of Succession (1740–1748), and the Great Northern War (1700–1721) advanced the idea of Europe as a complex political system: a theatre of war constituting a political world in its own right.

When it comes to religion—even in such regions as the Holy Roman Empire, Poland, or Hungary that were notorious arenas of confessional struggle—the complexity of the European political world did not eliminate the prospect of a Christian Europe, a community of the chosen, transcending doctrinal division. In fact, the notion of Europe overlapped with the concepts of a *Respublica Christiana* or *Mundus Christianus*—the idea, originating in the work *The City of God* by Augustine of Hippo (354–430), a 'father of the church', that there is a spiritual Commonwealth of Christians. This Commonwealth of Christians was visualised as a unity of all true believers, subordinate to divine law, and superseding political divisions within the European community. The concept

of *Respublica Christiana* could also denote the idea of a political alliance of states with Christian rulers, headed by the Pope. However, the colonial and subsequent missionary expansion in the sixteenth century greatly enlarged the Christian community and put in doubt this specific way of defining Europe.

The dual inheritance of Europe itself—the Christian and the classical—encouraged a dual classification of mankind, whereby peoples were judged in accordance with their religious affiliation or with their degree of civilisation. The fundamental division along religious lines was between Christian and heathen. From the sixteenth century onwards, Christian scholars slowly started to regard Jews, certainly not heathens, as heirs to a civilised Rabbinic tradition, and from the seventeenth century onwards, these Christian scholars also turned to Arabic literature. Renaissance Europeans also appropriated from classical literature the distinction between Greeks and barbarians: the barbarian, while heathen, was also rough and uncivilised. As for the cultural order, then, it was since the sixteenth century that the 'Republic of Letters', the idea that there was a learned world shared between Europeans, replaced the idea of a unified *Respublica Christiana* as the realm of a shared civilisation. Recorded for the first time in 1417 in a letter of the Italian humanist Francesco Barbaro (1390–1454), the idea was taken up again in 1484 in a letter of the Frisian philosopher Rudolph Agricola (1443–1485). Further advanced by the Venetian printer Aldo Manuzio (1449–1515), it was championed by the Dutch scholar Erasmus (1466–1536), who was generally regarded as a 'princeps' (first citizen) of the Republic of Letters. When the Flemish philosopher Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) addressed the French religious leader and scholar Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540–1609) as "ocelle Europae" (darling of Europe) in a letter from 1575, or when an unknown correspondent called the Dutch humanist Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) "truly the eagle of our Europe" in 1617, it showed not only the geographic reach of the Republic of Letters but also that the category of 'Europe' covered the widest possible frame of reference for the intellectual universe these scholars inhabited. For the French writer Voltaire (1694–1778), writing in 1751, people from the Pope in Rome to the Tsar in Russia inhabited a commonwealth of learning that covered the nations of 'Europe', despite their continuous wars and religious differences:

> We have gradually seen established in Europe a Learned Republic, despite the wars and despite the religious differences. All the sciences and all the arts have thus helped each other. The *academies* have shaped this republic. Italy and Russia have been united through learning. The Englishman, the German and the Frenchman went to Leiden to study. The famous physician Herman Boerhaave gave advice to both the pope and the tsar.

Humanist communication, the attendance of universities in other countries, travel writing and the circulation of news about political and military events made 'Europe' as concrete for readers in Central Europe as the entanglement

of peripheral regions into the web of Western diplomacy did for political decision makers. In some of these peripheries, such as the Principality of Transylvania, the ruling elites had to balance their loyalties to the Ottoman Empire with European allegiances. While politically and financially dependent on the sultans, they tried to impress Western diplomats with the refined manners of their court, and to position themselves on the brighter side of the 'civilisation/barbarism' divide. Elite travellers from the West to the countries of Central Europe, and their counterparts from this region, observed only gradual differences between their own cultures and the ones they visited, rather than perceiving unfamiliar worlds altogether. Polish and Hungarian nobles, however, fashioned themselves as descendants of the Sarmatians and the Huns respectively. Fictive genealogies linking them with those bellicose ancient warriors from Asia were meant to highlight their own military virtues. At the same time, the cult of Roman antiquity, Latin (persisting as a language of education and governance in a multilingual context), and the influence of Neo-Latin literature sustained a formative intellectual pattern there, as elsewhere in Europe. The cities of Central Europe, most notably Vienna and Prague as the residences of the Habsburg imperial court, functioned as nodes promoting European intellectual, cultural, and artistic trends, from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment.

The idea of 'Europe' as a Latinised Christian culture that had transcended the Jewish religion and inscribed itself in a Greco-Roman tradition remained antagonistic toward Turkish and Arabic cultures and even toward a resilient Jewry in Europe—to say nothing of 'heathen' cultures outside Europe. Tied to this notion of Europe as a unique cultural entity is that of Europe as coloniser, forcing its political system, Christian religion, and intellectual culture on people 'outside' of Europe, in particular in the Americas, Africa, India and Indonesia. In this perspective, China occupied a special place. Many Europeans perceived it as a recognisable, self-contained culture with a long-standing and well-recorded intellectual tradition. For seventeenth-century thinkers, unconquered China became a supreme 'other', a mirror that showed self-reflections of what it meant to be a European. Questions about the extra-European origin of European peoples and languages—in particular from large but unknown regions such as Scythia or Grand Tartary, which was seen as the 'womb of nations'—came to occupy the minds of scholars such as the German polymath Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716).

Europe in Image and Text

Finally, the notion of Europe was *visualised* (or *textualised*) through various media, such as pictures, maps, and textual conceptualisations. In the second

half of the fifteenth century, the explosive spread of the printing press brought about a radical change in the cultural life of many Europeans. Printed books, musical scores, and cartographies became more widely accessible, facilitating an accelerated circulation of ideas and pictures that became entrenched in the consciousness of Europeans during the early modern period. Through the engravings of the German humanist Sebastian Münster (1488–1552) or the Italian scholar Cesare Ripa (1560–1622), for example, the continent was personified. In the guise of a woman bearing rich clothing, treasures, and *cornucopiae*, or as an anthropomorphic map, a common visual language for the idea of Europe was embraced by its own elites. To be sure, such images were not an entirely new construction. At the height of the Renaissance, different influences such as the organicist heritage of Aristotle, the physical authority of Galen, and the monetary propaganda of the Roman Emperor Hadrian had laid the foundations for the idea of the corporeality of the continent. A telling example is the Iberian impact of this 'mapped' Europe during its period of universal hegemony. There is no doubt that the illustration *Europa Regina* composed by Münster in 1544 or its derivative *Europae descriptio* (1587) by the Dutch engraver Matthias Quad (1557–1613) and the version included in the book *Itinerarium Sacrae Scripturae* (1587) by the German theologian Heinrich Bünting (1545–1606) were known in the court of Philip II of Habsburg (1527–1598). Michael von Aitzing's *De Europae Virginis descriptione* (1587) is based on an unknown Italian design from the 1540s that tried to conflate the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and King of Spain—the Habsburg ruler, Charles V—with Zeus as ruler of 'Europe', and that linked Charles' power with the thesis of the Holy Roman Empire as the Fifth Empire, the continuator of universal power of Assyria, Persia, Macedonia, and Rome.

In a world in which the new knowledge of the Atlantic, the Indian, and the Pacific Oceans was rapidly codified in increasingly precise maps, the Central European cosmographers delighted potential buyers of their printing plates with the representation of distant African, Asian or American lands in which Spanish, Portuguese, French, English, or Dutch explorers, conquerors, and traders had just arrived, but also with classical allegories in the shape of anthropomorphic maps. Until the great voyages of exploration, Europe saw itself as the centre of the world—or, in fact, *the* world—with Africa and Asia as appendices. Since the sixteenth century, however, it realised that it was a relatively small part of an immense wider world inhabited by a multitude of nations, languages, and religions.

Mixing the new geographical images and the fight for global hegemony, it was not until the period called *Pax Hispanica*, coinciding with the reign of Philip III of Habsburg (1578–1621), that the anthropomorphic idea of Europe—and the figuration of *Hispania* as its 'head'—became firmly established in the work

of Iberian cosmographers and historians. The consolidation of Spanish rule over the Western Mediterranean, the Americas, and the African and South-Indian coasts, and its influence over the Netherlands and Central Europe, allowed King Philip's vassals to reflect on the power of Europe and, within it, the universalist sovereignty of the Monarchy of Spain. For the Aragonese lawyer Joseph de Sessé, this continent, "although in quantity it is smaller than the other parts, exceeds all of them not only in the multitude of cities and places, but also in the multitude of people, industry, nobility, science, virtue, strength, fear and knowledge of God, which are over all the treasures of the world." According to de Sessé, the political dominance of the Europeans from the distant times of the Greeks and Romans until the Spanish conquered America was uncontested, and the power of his monarch's traditional enemies, such as the Ottoman Empire, was negligible. From this Eurocentric perspective, the continent was at the height of world power, with Spain in a leading role. Another contemporary Castilian author, Balthasar de Vitoria (1619), portrayed Europe as the best known of the four parts of the world. For this Augustinian friar, "Felix Europa", healthy and fertile, was the most powerful continent because of its monarchs and the influence of the Pope, dominating the whole world. Its creators were its inhabitants, its people, those "of better stature, of more advanced understanding, of more courageous men, of more effort and of more invincible spirit". Others, such as the Portuguese author António de Sousa de Macedo (1631), were keen to identify their homeland as the crown of that human Europe on whose head the Iberian Peninsula was situated. For Macedo, his kingdom of origin, supposedly situated by God in the Western lands of the continent, was "the honour of Spain and consequently of the whole world."

Conclusion

From the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards, then, the notion of 'Europe' as a political and economic reality became more pronounced. It acted as a geographical theatre of war. Already defined in political-religious terms as a *Respublica Christiana*, the confrontation with the New World helped to define it culturally as an entity of its own. Despite the intra-Christian wars, a tradition of learning, embodied by scholars and learned institutes, created an entangled network of learning which was called a Republic of Letters and grew more pronounced and reflective—of itself and of its 'others'—in the eighteenth century. Visually, the notion of Europe as a 'body' was shaped in a diversity of forms and orientations. These expressed different political viewpoints about the centres of power, but they agreed on the idea of a more or less self-contained entity called 'Europe'.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways did early modern encounters with non-European peoples (through trade, colonial expansion, etc.) change the concept of 'Europe'?

2. Does Russia belong to Europe? Why? Why not?

3. Religion played an important role in early modern ideas of 'Europe'. Is this still the case today? Why? Why not?

Suggested reading

McCormick, John, 'The Idea of Europe', in idem, *Europeanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 18–40.

Mikkeli, Heikki, *Europe as an Idea and an Identity* (Basingstoke and London: MacMillan Press and New York, NY: St Martin's Press, 1998).

Pagden, Anthony, ed., *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union* (Cambridge and Washington: Cambridge University Press and Woodrow Wilson Center, 2002).

Szűcs, Jenő, 'The Three Historical Regions of Europe: An Outline', *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29:2–4 (1983), 131–184.

Walser-Bürgler, Isabella, '*Europa Exultans:* The Personification of Europe as a Representation of the Habsburg Universal Monarchy in Johann Lauterbach's Pastoral Poem *Europa Eidyllion* (1558)', *Lias, Journal of Early Modern Intellectual Culture and its Sources* 45:1 (2018), 1–43.

1.1.2 Ideas of Europe in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Nere Basabe, Károly Halmos, Jacco Pekelder,

Heike Wieters, and Tonio Schwertner

Introduction

The nineteenth century, when nationalist movements rose up all over Europe, is often considered the era of the nation-state. That said, the ideal of European unity remained influential and widespread, although it shifted from the Enlightenment idea of cosmopolitanism to a conception rooted in national diversity, and from the idea of a European empire to that of a European federation. Moreover, Europe during this time became far more than a geographical term or a byword for Christianity—it became a political project. This process began after 1789 with the French Revolution and particularly the French general and dictator Napoleon (1769–1821), who later established a French Empire encompassing most of Europe, based on military conquest and a (supposedly superior) system of rational governance and common civil law. Anti-revolutionaries countered with their idea of Europe as the spiritual 'Empire of Christ', reflected in works such as *Christendom or Europe* (1799) by the German writer Novalis (1772–1801), or *On the Pope* (1819) by the Savoyard writer and diplomat Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821). The Holy Alliance, a coalition linking Austria, Prussia, and Russia founded after Napoleon's demise in 1814–1815, can be seen as a political translation of this traditionalist view. In opposition to these reactionary 'Eastern Powers', the idea of Europe as a 'brotherhood of nations' emerged, and new political groupings and movements such as liberals and socialists gathered around it. Thus, the nineteenth century turned into a struggle of these different ideological groups over the exact nature of Europe as a political project.

Inspired by romantic and historicist ideas that contested French revolutionary universalism, public interest in general history became

widespread after 1815, specifically in the writing of European histories that placed Europe's origins in the medieval Christian Church, the Roman Empire, Greek democracy, or the ancient German assemblies. These narratives were, of course, serving very different political purposes: while traditionalists like Joseph de Maistre defended medieval unity under the Roman Catholic Church as the core of European history, liberals like the French politician François Guizot (1787–1874) saw a plurality of values, religions and political regimes as the common heritage that supposedly powered the progress of the continent. Some of them even travelled to Greece—which they saw as the cradle of Europe's principal political idea, democracy—in order to fight for its independence as a 'brother nation'. Many liberal authors, such as Guizot or the Swiss-French activist Benjamin Constant (1767–1830), opposed the standardised Napoleonian Europe, arguing that 'European civilisation' was characterised by cultural and political plurality and peaceful commerce. According to them, it was precisely this plurality that let Europe prosper and would lead to a future of peace and freedom.

Patterns of Power in Europe

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, for most rulers, soldiers, and diplomats, the idea of Europe was mainly concerned with external peace and security. To uphold these, they imagined two antithetical solutions: that of a hegemonic, pan-European 'universal monarchy' or European Empire, and that of a 'balance of power' between various great powers within a stable European system of states. Universal monarchy had its roots in the empires of Rome and Charlemagne, and for nearly a thousand years the Holy Roman Empire (962–1806), that loose, multi-layered political structure at Europe's centre, remained its most important embodiment. The balance of power was a more recent idea that emerged after the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia that ended the Thirty Years' War (1618–48). The treaty had formally introduced to the realm of European politics a vision of Europe as a patchwork of 'sovereign' states—political entities, in other words, ruled by princes (or, in exceptional cases, republican governments) with mutually exclusive claims to authority over clearly demarcated territories. Although references to a European whole, often framed as 'Christianity', were still quite common, the 'state' had now become the central reference point of international politics. Particularly in the eighteenth century, it was thought to be the primary task of princes and foreign policy experts to ably manage the balance of power and uphold a multipolar 'states system' in order to prevent a return to 'universal monarchy', i.e. hegemony by any single one of them.

When, in 1804, Napoleon established a new French Empire to replace the almost extinct Holy Roman Empire and win hegemony over Europe,

the other European powers coalesced to restore the balance. But when they finally succeeded in 1814–1815, the victorious powers, Russia, Britain, Austria, and Prussia, did not simply restore the state-centred system of the pre-Napoleonic period. Instead, the Treaty of Vienna that cemented the peace with a re-established Kingdom of France produced a new vision of Europe, in which the traditional ideal of a balance of power was combined with a shared, five-power hegemony over the minor powers. They would act 'in concert', on the basis of a novel security culture in which international peace was tied to legitimist, monarchical orders within individual states (in breach of the Westphalian state sovereignty that precluded this kind of meddling with a country's domestic affairs). On this basis, the five now took collective responsibility over European stability and prosperity.

With greater emphasis on European cooperation came the increased exclusion of non-European, non-Christian powers. The Ottoman Empire was neither invited to the Congress of Vienna, nor was its territorial integrity respected afterwards, for example when European powers forced it to accept Greek independence in the 1820s. The powers also stopped recognising the Barbary Pirates on Africa's West-Mediterranean shore as sovereign states. Instead, Europeans waged war on what they now saw as illegitimate, extra-legal entities and began to subject them to colonial submission and exploitation.

Europe as a Shared 'Civilisation'

During a business trip through Italy in 1859, the Swiss businessman Henry Dunant (1828–1910) became a witness to the horrors of the Battle of Solferino in the Second Italian War of Independence. Dunant's experiences inspired him to write the book *A Memory of Solferino* (1862). In his pamphlet, which was published and circulated throughout Europe, Dunant called for the creation of a transnational voluntary organisation to aid those affected by war and conflict, based on Christian and humanitarian values. His efforts ultimately led to the foundation of the International Committee for Relief for the Wounded, later renamed the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Dunant, and subsequently the ICRC, envisioned Europe as the central stage for transnational cooperation, based on commonly shared values of humanity and civilisation. This vision was put to paper in 1864, when European states ratified the demands of the ICRC in the First Geneva Convention, which codified rules for the protection of the victims of armed conflicts.

However, many of the members of the ICRC were convinced of the superiority of European 'civilisation'. They used this narrative to excuse colonial violence as 'civilising' missions. Hence, the ICRC's vision of Europe in the nineteenth century was twofold: on the one hand, Europeans were believed to share the same values that made transnational cooperation possible

in the first place. On the other hand, the idea of alleged superiority was used to propagate these principles around the globe, including the justification of colonial force and even violence in those areas that did not yet adhere to perceived European standards.

This civilisational idea of Europe had a long tradition rooted in Christianity and was still very influential in the nineteenth century. In Hungary, for example, ideas of a Christian community or the 'Occident' were still the only ones that most people, beyond diplomats or intellectuals, had of Europe. There was, however, a new notion that arose during this time: the ideal of the West. To be sure, in Hungary at least, the West did not necessarily mean Europe. During the first half of the nineteenth century, it was fashionable among Hungarian elites to visit Britain or France, but by the turn of the twentieth century North America had already taken this place in the collective imagination.

Europe as a Community of Nation-States

Challenges to the Vienna Treaty came primarily from the related new ideologies of liberalism and nationalism, which produced alternative conceptions of European order based on nation-states. These ideas implied the destruction of the political solutions created by the Vienna Treaty, such as the introduction of Habsburg control to the Italian peninsula, the continued partition of Poland, or the German Confederation, a defensive alliance of thirty-nine princes and free cities meant to deter French revisionism and stabilise Central Europe.

In 1803, the Polish statesman Adam Czartoryski (1770–1861) formulated a memorandum for the young Tsar Alexander I (1777–1825) about a new direction for Russia's foreign policy, which included ideas for a new European order. Czartoryski's proposal was arguably the first plan for a rearrangement of Europe's political geography by creating states with more 'natural' borders and greater national homogeneity. This idea of a Europe of agglomerate nations was inspired by German Enlightenment thinkers such as Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). Czartoryski, however, only published his treatise in 1830, shortly before fleeing Russian Poland.

Starting from the 1830s, revolutionaries from all around the continent gathered in various transnational political networks. The 'Young Europe' association was formed by the Italian nationalist thinker, writer and organiser Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872) in 1834, while the 'League of Friends of Freedom and Peace', led by the French writer Victor Hugo (1802–1885), promoted the movement for a 'United States of Europe'. In London, 1850, exiled revolutionaries founded the 'Central Democratic European Committee'. All of these groups called for a brotherhood of nations.

Consequently, up until the series of revolutions that struck across Europe in 1848—often referred to as the 'Springtime of Nations'—the

German, Italian and Polish movements that the historian John Breuilly calls "unification nationalists" did not regard one another as rivals. Instead, they tried to cooperate against their most formidable enemies, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, which in 1815 had formed the Holy Alliance and promoted the harsh repression of revolutionary actions and ideas. In fact, the nationalists sometimes claimed to represent a "Holy Alliance of the Peoples" in opposition to the three conservative powers.

For many revolutionaries in 1848, nationalist aims and a Europeanist movement were not mutually exclusive. But there were clashes between German, mostly liberal, nationalists and Poles, for instance, as well as between Germans and Danish national-liberals. The failure of the revolutions of 1848, however, strengthened the argument of those wanting to impose nationalist goals over the idea of freedom and European unity. Still, Mazzini continued to speak of "Europe […] marching by the common consent of her populations towards a new era of union" and announced the approach of "one vast market". In 1862, the French economist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1806–1865) attributed the failure of the revolutionary movements to the fact that they had combined the principles of democracy and nationality. Instead, Proudhon articulated a new idea of European federalism, defined as a "federation of federations" of independent communes totally detached from any national principle. At the same time, many of the former revolutionary Europeanist movements adopted more conservative doctrines that advanced ideas of supranational regions, such as the German idea of *Mitteleuropa* (Central Europe), or Pan-Slavism and Pan-Latinism. The idea of a Pan-Europe, however, did not enjoy much support, despite the foundation of the monthly journal *United States of Europe* in 1869 by the League of Friends of Freedom and Peace.

An illegal activist for Italian unity in his twenties and later a propagandist of transnational nationalism, Napoleon III, Emperor of the French (1808–1873), committed his reign to the replacement of the Vienna states system with one based on nationalities. To achieve this, he waged war in the 1850s against Russia and Austria, and in the following decade he was mostly supportive of the Prussian bid for mastery in Germany. In the end, however, he still appreciated the idea of the concert; once it was adapted to the new age of nationalities it should resurge, albeit, of course, with France as Europe's prime arbiter.

In the end, it was Prussian minister president Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898) who profited most from Napoleon's ploy. He displayed a similarly opportunist approach to the Concert of Europe, first outmanoeuvring the other great powers to the best of his abilities during the three wars of German unification, and then at times reviving the concert on his own terms to protect a status quo that, after the establishment of the new Prussian-led *Kaiserreich* in 1871, had become very favourable to Germany. Thus, nineteenth-century

efforts to merge the concert idea with nationality-based politics finally came to an end with the arrival of a new age of global competition between industrial nation-states. Only after the First World War (1914–1918) would U.S. President Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924) again try to wed these unwieldy partners. It was not without significance that this outsider, upon his arrival in Europe in January 1919, began his peace-broking mission by paying tribute at the statue of Mazzini in his birthplace, Genoa.

Pacifist, Liberal, and Socialist Ideas of Europe

Above all, nineteenth-century Europe was marked by accelerated industrialisation, technological innovation and new ways of consuming and circulating goods across regions and borders. The breakthrough of capitalist modes of production and the era of mass consumption led to the formation of new societal organisations and the forging of new networks for transnational cooperation. Though different in their core objectives, many of these actors and networks agreed on implicit or explicit visions of humanitarianism and strove for a united Europe as the basis for lasting peace on the continent.

Focusing on unity and cooperation, the main goal was to achieve a 'perpetual peace'. Perpetual peace projects were known since the Middle Ages and widely spread during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While heterogeneous in their political and ideological outlook, many of these movements and groups shared the hope that a European federation would end military conflict and provide political stability for the continent. At the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the European powers tried to set up a new stable order in Europe. However, the congress brought neither lasting peace nor stable political regimes and, consequently, alternative ideas were discussed.

During the nineteenth century, this idea took the shape of a political union of European states. The first and perhaps best known of these projects was formulated in the manifesto *On the Reorganisation of European Society*, written in 1814 by the French philosopher Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), who tried without success to present it at the Congress of Vienna. In his manifesto, Saint-Simon for the first time formulated the idea of a "great European parliament" and described the unification of Europe as an incremental process: first France and England would form a union, then Germany would join once it had achieved its own unification. The conditions for membership were to be decided under a constitutional, parliamentary and liberal system.

In 1849, representatives from peaceful societies all over the world met in Paris for the third International Peace Congress. That year, Victor Hugo acted as president of the congress and shared his vision of a brotherly, united European federation. Hugo's term of a "United States of Europe" was later used by the French philosopher Charles Lemonnier (1806–1891), who

convened the Congress of Peace in Geneva in 1867 to find a solution to rising tensions between the second French Empire and the Kingdom of Prussia over the territory of Luxembourg. Lemonnier underscored in his appeal to the delegates at the congress that a united Europe had to be a free and democratic continent; in short, a Europe fundamentally different from the dynastic realities of the time. The Congress of Peace in Geneva did not only call for the United States of Europe as an abstract utopia, but also outlined the conviction of many participants that individual freedom and democracy were necessary preconditions for a stable, peaceful, and united Europe.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, industrial workers and subsequently the labour movement emerged as new political subjects. The European labour movement was initially a very heterogeneous grouping of different ideological and political streams. In 1848, attempting to unify these diverging currents, the German philosophers Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) published *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, which relied heavily on a negative vision of Europe. In its opening paragraph, the pamphlet depicted the "old" Europe as a religiously-based alliance sharing a common agenda to fight the imminent rise of communism. Conjuring up the existence of powerful anti-communist forces in Europe was an important strategy to lend credibility to their slogan: "working men of all countries, unite!" Individuals, unions, and political parties within the labour movement subsequently developed an array of positive visions for a united Europe. During the 1848 revolutions, Marx called for a democratic German federation as a necessary precondition for a federation of free European states. Just a few months later, Engels attacked liberal designs of European unity and eternal peace as mere dreams. He stressed that a real "European brotherhood" (*europäische Völkerverbrüderung*) must be rooted in "thorough revolutions and bloody fights". The International Workingmen's Association (also called First International), founded in London in 1864 with the aim of improving the international standing and networking of industrial workers, envisioned a united Europe too. At its 1867 Lausanne Congress, the First International underscored two connected core objectives: first, the transformation of the social and political bases of society and, second, the creation of a federation of free European states. These developments had further goals: first, the liberation of workers from having to sell their labour to those owning the means of production; second, an increased sense of solidarity and brotherhood among workers; and finally, the aim of augmenting peace and prosperity for workers and their families in Europe and around the world, by means of eradicating capitalist modes of production in favour of a socialist and eventually even communist society.

The disciples of Saint-Simon founded the utopian-socialist school of Saint-Simonianism and published many European union projects during the 1830s

based on the idea of 'universal association', the motto of their new religion that sought to attain solidarity far beyond European borders both in industrial, political and mystical terms. Examples are the journal *L'Européen* founded by the French politician Phillippe Buchez (1796–1865), in which he appealed for a "European federation" in 1831, or the idea of the "Mediterranean System", formulated by the French economist Michel Chevalier (1806–1879) in 1832, an economic and industrial project that would link West and East through the Mediterranean Sea. Other utopian socialists like the French writer Gustave d'Eichthal (1804–1886) and the French philosopher Victor Considerant (1808–1893) published their plans for a European federation in 1840. This coincided with the diplomatic Oriental Crisis, itself a consequence of the Egyptian-Ottoman war and the confrontational positions taken up by the powers in Europe, where once again France risked an armed conflict. All these authors claimed that after the Greek War of Independence of the 1820s had brought Greece back to the European community, a 'perpetual peace' could not be attained strictly within European borders. They broadened the mental map of Europe towards the East, even proposing Jerusalem, Istanbul, or Alexandria as capital cities for the future European federation, where the General Congress of Nations would sit. Meanwhile, the Spanish writer Juan Francisco Siñeriz (1778–1857) published the first European Constitution in Paris in 1839, an attempt to shape the juridical framework of a future European union. Despite their differences, which encompassed disagreements about European institutions and different ideas about the membership of Britain or Russia, all these projects shared the idea of a unity based on the independence of nations and the principles of democracy and representation, social cohesion and economic development.

Conclusion

In the aftermath of the French Revolution, different and often opposing ideas of Europe thrived on the continent. Older notions of European civilisation survived or were adapted to the new times. Meanwhile, contemporary developments such as industrialisation and the rise of nationalist movements, as well as political revolutions, had produced new ideas like a 'United States of Europe'. The development of the modern political spectrum of conservatism, liberalism and socialism over the course of the nineteenth century was closely related to these new notions of 'Europe', with each camp articulating their own vision. In the context of the rise of modern nationalist movements, pacifist ideas of 'perpetual peace' gained importance as a solution to the conflicts that the nationalist struggles generated.

Discussion questions

1. This chapter introduces many different ideas of Europe that developed during the nineteenth century. Can you point to any similarities they all share?

2. Describe the relationship between rising nationalism in Europe and the changing ideas of 'Europe' in the nineteenth century.

3. What role did religion play in modern ideas of 'Europe'?

Suggested reading

Barnett, Michael N., *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011).

Berend, Iván T., *History Derailed. Central and Eastern Europe in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520932098.

Breuilly, John, 'Nationalism and national unification in nineteenth-century Europe', in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, ed. by John Breuilly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 149–174.

Evans, Richard J., *The Pursuit of Power: Europe 1815–1914* (London: Penguin, 2016).

Gruner, Wolf D., *Die deutsche Frage in Europa, 1800–1990* (Munich and Zurich: Piper, 1993).

Mack Smith, Denis, *Mazzini* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994).

Vick, Brian E., *The Congress of Vienna: Power and Politics after Napoleon* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2014).

Zawadzki, W.H., *A Man of Honour: Adam Czartoryski as a Statesman of Russia and Poland 1795–1831* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

1.1.3 Ideas of Europe in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Justine Faure, Heike Wieters, Tonio Schwertner, and

Károly Halmos

Introduction

At the beginning of the twentieth century, European civilisation extended far beyond the geographical borders of the continent. Colonies and dominions throughout the world belonged to this cultural Europe. This reach of what was considered European culture provided a feeling of exceptionality to many inhabitants of European metropoles. At the same time, the power and reach of European culture had begun to be challenged. Nation-building at home, along with the increasing participation of people in politics on the national level, had also become important issues.

One of the pillars of this culture-based European identity was Western Christianity (WC). At the beginning of the First World War there were two empires on the territory of geographical Europe with predominantly Orthodox or Muslim populations: the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire, respectively. The Habsburg Empire was also home to a substantial minority of non-WC subjects. By the end of the war, all of these empires were gone and were replaced by newly established states. However, in this Europe of nations, the idea of supra-national organisation still thrived, and the twentieth century remains a crucial period for the idea of Europe. During that period, various structures were created which, over the years, have made it possible to transcend national sovereignty in many areas through the institutionalisation of the European idea. This progressive but incomplete integration during the twentieth century is characterised by three major features.

First of all, it took place within specific time frames, marked by periods of acceleration and stagnation. Secondly, integration has been driven by a wide variety of actors, from political, economic, and intellectual elites, to the crucial

influence of public opinion, emerging from the 1990s onwards. Finally, the idea of Europe has taken on various forms over the century and has represented issues that sometimes differ greatly from one country to another or from one stakeholder to another.

The First World War and the 1920s

The First World War was a seminal event for the development of the European idea in the twentieth century. After a fratricidal and deadly war between the European countries, hopes of overcoming nationalism and building a common identity grew amongst many Europeans. The post-war period was also marked by the international affirmation of the United States. On 8 January 1918, the president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, made a speech before Congress. In his famous fourteen points, Wilson stated his vision for a stable, international post-war system. The speech, which functioned as the American basis for the negotiation of the peace treaty in Versailles, proposed the principles of international cooperation, free trade, national self-determination, and collective security—i.e. an international order designed according to American interests.

Wilson's ideas were partly influenced by European scholars and politicians, such as the Czechoslovak statesman Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850–1937). Masaryk was one of the intellectuals associated with the British weekly magazine *New Europe*, which promoted the transformation of the continent into a federation of nations. Masaryk had close contacts in academic and political circles in the US, had met Wilson during the war and, according to the historian Larry Wolff, "shaped Wilson's mental map" of the post-war reorganisation of Europe.

However, the 1920s quickly revealed the problems of internationalism and of certain states' unwillingness to participate in such a system: first of all on the American side, when the Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles, but also in Europe. This prompted a discussion on new approaches for easing territorial tensions among European states, commitment to collective security, and—significantly—Germany's unwillingness to make vaguely defined reparation payments. The consolidation of the United States as a great economic and military power and the emergence of the Soviet Union also seemed to indicate a relative weakening of European powers.

In this context, the Austrian-Japanese activist Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894–1972) developed his proposal for the Pan-European Union, an idea of Europe also encouraged by the activities of the International Commission on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations. Coudenhove-Kalergi argued for a united Europe, underpinned by 'European patriotism', calling for the

unification of continental Europe against Britain and Soviet Russia. According to him, only a Pan-European Union could guarantee freedom, prosperity and—above all—independence from American and Soviet influence. Coudenhove-Kalergi not only disseminated his ideas widely through his newspaper *Paneuropa*, but also managed to secure the support of prominent figures of the political sphere in Europe—most notably Aristide Briand (1862–1932), the contemporary foreign minister of France.

Briand also played a major role in Franco-German reconciliation, which was often seen as an essential precondition for the construction of a peaceful Europe. He and his German counterpart Gustav Stresemann were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1926 for their efforts. In a resounding speech before the League of Nations on 5 September 1929, Briand imagined a "federal link" and a "link of solidarity" between European countries, a vision which took concrete form in September 1930, in a memorandum outlining the contours of a peaceful and united Europe.

The First World War also triggered awareness of the continent's waning diplomatic and economic force, especially in relation to the rising power of the United States. In this context, the industrial and business community endeavoured to bring the European economies closer together, guided by French writer Gaston Riou's (1883–1958) injunction to "Unite or die." For example, the International Steel Agreement and the Potash Cartel were created in 1926, under the leadership of the Luxembourg industrialist Emile Mayrisch.

Leaders of socialist movements also proposed a united Europe, but their designs differed in terms of the degree of political integration envisioned. The Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky (1879–1940)—disagreeing with Lenin (1870–1924)—published a socialist vision of the United States of Europe against the backdrop of a strengthened United States. In an article published in the newspaper *Pravda* on 30 June 1923, Trotsky argued for a proletarian European Union. In his view, capitalism had proven unable to solve the economic problems that had plagued the European continent since the end of the war. He stressed that, given the differing pace of proletarian revolutions in each country, "tight economic cooperation of the European people" in a united and socialist European federation was a necessary intermediate stage towards world revolution. Trotsky argued that a united Europe of workers and peasants would resolve the tensions between European states over natural resources and reparations. He proposed property and wealth taxes to refinance reparations that would be distributed from a common European reparations-budget. Customs barriers would be unnecessary in this centrally planned and unified European economy. According to Trotsky, only a socialist European Union could prevent the United States from eventually taking control of Europe.

The International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU), founded in 1919, proposed a less wide-reaching concept of a united Europe. They advocated a European customs union merely as an intermediate step towards a fundamental global economic policy. In 1925, the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) adopted a new programme, the so-called 'Heidelberg Programme', in which the SPD underscored its commitment to strive for a European economic entity by democratic means and emphasised that the abolition of trade barriers would be the first step towards the creation of the United States of Europe.

Many of the newly formed states in East and South-East Europe, such as Czechoslovakia and Romania, were composed of heterogeneous parts, and had to—quite literally—put themselves on the map. They engaged in nation-building activities and had to fight for their own survival in the new post-war order, seeking their own geopolitical patrons. While Coudenhove-Kalergi's Pan-European proposals had some resonance with Eastern European states, there was a more pressing issue for these nations, namely that of Central Europe. The question of how to manage the legacy of the Austro-Hungarian empire after its collapse engendered many plans, proposals, and visions for a new order in the region. For example, Masaryk's book *The New Europe*: *The Slav Standpoint* (*Nová Evropa: Stanovisko slovanské,* 1918) proposed an anti-German Central Europe based on Slavic nations: a united Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The German ideas of a *Mitteleuropa* (Middle Europe) or a *Zwischeneuropa* (In-between Europe) were also influential in this debate. The latter concept had a geopolitical connotation, since it envisaged a political conglomerate separating the West from *Hintereuropa* (End Europe, a term denoting Russia).

The concept of a *Mitteleuropa* had been articulated in 1915 by the German liberal politician Friedrich Naumann (1860–1919). His plan proposed voluntary economic cooperation and integration, as well as the substitution of sovereign nation states for national autonomies. Naumann's ideas caused intense debates in Hungary and other countries included in the plan. The central question was whether economic integration meant economic and political subordination to Germany. The economic background to Naumann's plan was the fact that Germany had overtaken the hereditary provinces of the Habsburg Monarchy as dominant investors in the region. As the states of the East and South-East of Europe were mostly agrarian, they had to decide if they could accept these very German proposals. There was a cleavage between agrarian and mercantile (viz. industrial) interests. Those representing the interests of large-scale farming were in favour of the Middle Europe Plan, while those representing the country's large-scale industry were against it.

The 1930s and the Second World War

The fragile blossoming of the European idea during the 1920s—founded on the pillars of a common culture, pacifism, and economic unification—was crushed first by the onset of the Great Depression in 1929 and the exacerbation of protectionism that had already been present in the previous decade, and then by the rise of nationalism and the strengthening of authoritarian, fascist, and Nazi regimes—a process that had begun in East-Central Europe as early as the 1920s.

Conservative designs of Europe in the 1920s and '30s often combined anti-American and anti-Bolshevik sentiments with an elitist and hierarchical social model. For example, the *Abendland* (Occident) movement, most influential in Germany but with ties to France, envisioned Europe as a Christian (Catholic) unity dominated by the German and French nations and with a social structure inspired by the Middle Ages. Such plans were revealing, in that they reflected primarily on the question of which role Germany might play in a unified Europe. The most violent of these designs was undoubtedly the Nazis' concept of *Lebensraum* (living space).

Drawing on racist, anti-Semitic, and social-Darwinist 'theories', Hitler outlined his concept of a Germanised Central Europe in his book *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle, 1925). The National Socialist focus on reconstructing the agriculturally rich parts of Central and Eastern Europe stemmed from their plans and fantasies of creating an autarkic European entity. The Nazis wanted to expel and exterminate the people they considered 'racially worthless' and to recolonise the areas they inhabited with Germans who would cultivate the territory.

With the exception of the *Lebensraum* concept, which the Nazi authorities began to enforce during the Second World War, National Socialist ideals of post-war Europe remained very vague. Senior officials merely stressed the necessity of the Third Reich's dominance in Europe, and of the reconstruction of the occupied European states according to the German model. Thus—with Hitler's attempt to reclaim the European idea by linking it to an anti-Semitic and anti-Bolshevik *Neuordnung* (Rearrangement, usually referred to as New Order)—the period after the 1920s was a very dark one for supporters of a united Europe.

While there were attempts by Britain and France to develop trade and to establish closer contact with the nations 'beyond Germany' (i.e., in East-Central Europe), these plans failed. For example, the so-called 'Tardieu Plan', proposed in 1932 by the French prime minister André Tardieu (1876–1945), set out ideas for a preferential tariff system in the region, but did not generate much enthusiasm in the relevant states. It ultimately came to nothing. In

a sense, the states in the *cordon sanitaire*—the row of small states along the western borders of the Soviet Union—were further away from France and Britain than their overseas colonies.

Whether as a democratic republic or an authoritarian dictatorship, Germany was the economic centre of gravity for the states of South-East Europe, even after it became clear that the Nazi New Order was a lethal vortex for them. The pro-German part of their public understood these Nazi plans as a 'New Europe'.

Post-1945

In the years immediately after the Second World War, all European nationstates were working to rebuild their economies, people's livelihoods, and institutions for social welfare. As for the states of the so-called *cordon sanitaire*—for the moment, a few of them disappeared from the European scene. Although the immediate reason for their disappearance was German aggression, after the Second World War these states could not ignore the fact that the alliances that had been offered to them by Western powers had not been serious propositions. This is important in order to understand the more-or-less publicly expressed post-war scepticism of the idea of a unified Europe within these states.

During the Cold War, Europe as an idea was primarily associated with the defence of democracy and liberty from the powers behind the 'Iron Curtain'. The United States took the lead in reorganising Europe—for example, through the conditions of mutual cooperation that were attached to American aid funds for the European Recovery Program (commonly referred to as the Marshall Plan). In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, the Soviet Union also had plans to extend its influence further into Europe, hoping that an impoverished Germany could be drawn into its sphere of influence. With the 1948 currency reform in the three western occupation zones of Germany which stabilised their economy, these Soviet hopes were dashed. However, the Soviet Union tightened its grip on the satellite states in East-Central Europe, imposing communist regimes on them. With this region behind the Iron Curtain, out of reach, 'Europe' was limited to the West, and the East was considered lost. This was felt very keenly by the Hungarians who received only humanitarian (but not political or military) help from NATO during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

In the West, although the issue of European identity was not yet at the forefront, the European idea blossomed once again in the post-1945 period— just as it had after the First World War, inspired by visions of a peaceful and prosperous continent. Various movements on the national (as well as the international) level advocated for the establishment of a united Europe,

to promote both peace and socioeconomic prosperity in an increasingly interconnected world. However, this multitude of European advocacy groups was very divided on how to approach a more united Europe. While federalist groups—most prominently the Union Européenne des Fédéralistes (UEF)—were strongly in favour of a European federal state (and a European constitution), other groups such as the 'Unionists' opted for more careful approaches to European integration, favouring a union of nation states over the creation of common European institutions and rules.

These post-war ideas of Europe were often promoted by prominent individuals and public figures, such as the Italian politician Altiero Spinelli (1907–1986), who supported the federalist cause, or the British politician Winston Churchill (1874–1965), who was leaning towards the Unionists. Post-war concepts of Europe were also embedded in existing international institutions and organisations. The unification of Europe was one element of a wider effort to establish a new, post-war order. Security issues, especially in the context of an intensifying Cold War, were also addressed within the context of NATO and the transatlantic community. Economic and social integration were central tasks of the Marshall Plan's institutions and international organisations such as the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC, later OECD), the International Labour Organization, and even the United Nations and its subsidiaries.

The post-war years thus featured a great variety of European ideas that circulated within countless organisations, parties, and civic movements aiming to create a stable, prosperous, and peaceful Europe in an increasingly global world. The establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951–1952 and the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957–1958—which created the initial, six-member European Community (EC)—was one venture among many aiming to implement these ideas in the context of new political and socioeconomic institutions and common sets of rules.

For those who lived in the eastern part of the continent, behind the Iron Curtain, the notion of 'Europe' arose in the concept of 'East-Central Europe'. The term first appeared in history texts, and referred to the row of states from Finland in the north to Greece in the south that had previously formed the *cordon sanitaire*. The notion of 'East-Central Europe', looking westward, expressed distance between the satellite states of that region and the Soviet Union. Hence, the term carried a certain political valence, and its usage showed that there were efforts to speak out from within the severely restricted public spheres of the Eastern Bloc.

The end of the Cold War reinvigorated the European idea. For those to the East of the fallen Iron Curtain, Europe was identified again with 'the West', a concept originating in the idea of the Occident, but without its Christian

connotations. In 1983, during the final phase of the Communist Bloc, as its crisis became more and more evident, a new interpretation of the idea of Central Europe was proposed by the Czech writer Milan Kundera. In his article 'The Stolen West or the Tragedy of Central Europe', Kundera argued that Eastern Europe should return to where, according to him, it had always been—the 'West'. The Hungarian-born British historian László Péter has argued that this idea of Eastern Europe as an integral part of 'the West' may—at least partly—have been a misunderstanding. Research shows that the accelerating relative deterioration of everyday living conditions in the 1980s was a central driver for change in Eastern Europe. Joining the EC seemed to offer an alternative possibility, which made Europe and European integration of the East an attractive goal for many social groups and organisations demanding change (even if these groups neither shared, nor were actually offered, all of the ideals that Western Europe publicly attributed to its union—such as democracy, a common culture, economic unity and prosperity, solidarity, subsidiarity, freedom of movement and rule of law). Furthermore, Western European governments had a broad agenda that went beyond these concerns. While uniting the continent politically and creating a stronger economic union was a paramount goal, there were also geostrategic and security-oriented reasons for integration, such as limiting Russian influence.

Another important phenomenon of the post-Cold War period was the fact that the European idea, promoted since the beginning of the twentieth century primarily by the continent's elites, became an important issue for European public discourse, as shown by the debates on the Maastricht Treaty (1992–1993) and the treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (2004–2005). The European idea became an important subject of debate. This debate often centred on a particular institutionalisation of the European idea, which was often considered too bureaucratic and not democratic enough. Much progress had been made in the fields of the Europeanisation of education, free movement, and even social benefits—through, for example, the Erasmus scheme for student mobility, the Bologna Process, and the introduction of the European healthcare card. Still, the idea of Europe—or rather the EU—also became identified with overly bureaucratic institutions, weak democratic participation, and insufficient political representation for its citizens. Recurring crises, such as the global financial crisis of 2008, and—more importantly—the failure of the EU member states to adequately respond to them with one voice and in solidarity, have aggravated preexisting anti-European sentiments across diverse social strata and political parties in Europe. The current steep rise of anti-Europeanism is therefore one of the major challenges to the European idea at present.

Conclusion

Arguably, the idea of Europe was never tested as it was during the twentieth century, a time when the continent was devastated by unprecedented violence and bloodshed, driven by ideological divisions, and divided between two superpowers locked in a seemingly endless stand-off. At the same time, by the end of the century, the idea of a united, peaceful, and prosperous Europe had become an everyday experience for most people on the continent. These two extremes characterise the development of ideas of Europe in the twentieth century. Throughout the crises of the first half of the century, when the reality of a united Europe seemed further away than ever, the idea of Europe was proposed as the solution to the continent's upheavals, as a common goal in peace and prosperity.

After 1945, this vision of European unity was limited mostly to Western Europe and framed by the ideological struggle between East and West. When this vision was put into practice, under American guidance, it lost some of its allure through the evidently bureaucratic nature and undemocratic ethos of European institutions. However, when the Cold War ended, the reality and idea of Europe, embodied for many by the supranational institutions of the European Union, seemed stronger than ever, and the natural model for the whole continent. Since then, the lived idea of a united Europe has lost some of its sheen, weathering internal and external crises, and has had to face growing criticism by anti-European movements.

Discussion questions

1. This article introduces a range of different perspectives on the idea of Europe in the twentieth century, including from Eastern Europe, Nazi Germany, and the US. Which perspectives are missing?

2. In which ways do the European institutions in their current form (i.e., the institutions of the EU, the European Broadcasting Union, etc.) embody the visions of European unity described in this article, and how do they differ from them?

3. Is the concept of 'Mitteleuropa' still relevant today? Why? Or why not?

Suggested reading

Bruneteau, Bernard, *Histoire de l'idée européenne au premier XXe siècle à travers les textes* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2006).

Conze, Vanessa, *Das Europa der Deutschen: Ideen von Europa in Deutschland zwischen Reichstradition und Westorientierung, 1920–1970* (Berlin and Boston: Oldenbourg, 2005).

Du Réau, Élisabeth, *L'idée d'Europe au XXe siècle: des mythes aux réalités* (Brussels: Complexe, 2008).

Morgan, Glyn, *The Idea of a European Superstate: Public Justification and European Integration* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Patel, Kiran Klaus, *Project Europe: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

Péter, László, *Miért éppen az Elbánál hasadt szét Európa?* [Why was Europe split right along the Elbe?], in László Péter, *Az Elbától keletre: Tanulmányok a magyar és kelet-európai történelemből* [East of the Elbe: Studies on Hungarian and East European History] (Budapest: Osiris, 1998).

Soubigou, Alain, *Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk* (Paris: Fayard, 2002).

Tomka, Béla, *A Social History of Twentieth-Century Europe* (London: Routledge, 2013).

Van der Wee, Herman, *Prosperity and Upheaval: The World Economy, 1945–1980,* (Harmondsworth: Viking, 1986).

Wolff, Larry, *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining of Eastern Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2020).

CHAPTER 1.2
BORDERS

1.2.1 Borders in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Benjamin Conrad and Markéta Křížová

Introduction

When thinking about geographical borders of the early modern period, it is necessary to point out that twentieth- and twenty-first-century conceptualisations of borders are inadequate for that period of history. A combined customs, state and tax border requires a centralised form of government, but this was rare in the early modern period. Moreover, states need a certain degree of economic prosperity to finance border systems. This was equally difficult to attain under the circumstances of the early modern period.

In this chapter, the working definitions of the key terms are as follows: the *border* is a dividing line; the *frontier*, an outer line of expansion. The second term grows in importance when taking Europe's overseas expansion into account. However, there were also frontiers of expansion within medieval and early modern Europe, such as the Iberian Peninsula, Eastern Europe beyond Poland-Lithuania, and the Balkans. Also, the term 'mental map' is used throughout the text, as it was used by such historians as Larry Wolff, to denote the way physical space is imagined and represented within a given society as a tool for cultural orientation and self-identification of its members.

For any human community, physical borders such as natural features, as well as man-made marks or barriers and symbolic cultural markers, are important in establishing the difference between 'us' and 'them'—in other words, the outlining of the community of belonging. The question of frontiers is strongly connected to this question of identity. Establishment, acceptance, affirmation, and refusal of identity is necessarily based upon the notion of borders.

Barth (1969) brought the attention of social science to the constitution of ethnic groups and the nature of boundaries constructed between them.

According to Barth, the communities of early modern Europe shared basic needs not only to define themselves in opposition to others and to mark social and cultural boundaries, but also to protect and delineate the territories they were living in. But there were also specificities to this process: some of them, such as language, were present throughout the period under study, while others evolved through time, such as the religious composition of a population.

Varieties of Geographical and Political Borders, and Types of Travel

In the early modern period, political borders and the territorial state were often marked by blazes on trees, boulders, ditches, earth mounds or by signposts. There were no comprehensive systems of control posts or guard patrols. To protect their border regions against outside invasion, a number of early modern states established a system of smaller camps and larger castles. This was the case, for example, in the second-biggest state of this period, the Kingdom of Poland-Lithuania.

These political borders were very rarely linked to tax or customs borders. As in the Middle Ages, toll roads, mountain passes, and narrow points on rivers were used to collect tolls and customs. The control of these checkpoints was often exercised by vassals. In the Holy Roman Empire, the Electorate of Mainz was one such vassal that controlled the toll point on the Rhine river near the town of Bingen. In Central European regions, town walls also marked tax borders, a system that had likewise been adopted during the Middle Ages.

Named natural borders, however—physically incontestable as they might seem—often did not completely overlap with cultural borders. There are some exceptions, such as the Rhine River, which had had a double function as natural and cultural border since the fall of the Roman Empire. The mountain ranges of the Alps and Pyrenees also marked such a unified natural and cultural border. Finally, seas such as the Strait of Dover or the North and Baltic Seas marked combined natural and cultural borders separating Britain, Ireland, and Scandinavia from its Southern neighbours. But in general, neither rivers, nor coasts, nor mountains in themselves constituted inevitable cultural dividing lines between states.

Of course, geographical phenomena like mountains, rivers and lakes limited travel options for greater parts of early modern pre-industrial populations. But apart from physical barriers, travel was generally possible between countries in early modern times without controls. On the Italian Peninsula, consisting of some dozen states, and particularly in Central Europe, in the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, consisting of around 1,800 territories, local rulers were technically incapable of controlling their borders. In France, however, a

passport was required from the beginning of the early modern period in order to transport goods across the country. In the sixteenth century, France also introduced passports for individuals, which replaced the former *sauf-conduits* or *Schutzbriefe* that were originally necessary only during wartime. However, for many decades, the French example of control of travel did not inspire other rulers to follow.

The outer political borders and frontiers of early modern Europe were more difficult to define than the borders between European states. During the Middle Ages, the Mediterranean region had experienced an intrusion of 'Africa' into 'Europe' due to the Arab conquest of the Iberian Peninsula. There, the shift from the Middle Ages to the early modern period was marked by the new military dominance of Spain in the western Mediterranean after the Muslim states were crushed during re-Christianisation, the *reconquista*, in Southern Iberia. Spanish expansion to North Africa followed, but after its failure it was the Strait of Gibraltar that became a political frontier, and the outer limit of 'Europe'. The Muslim rulers at that point held only one coast: that of North Africa.

In the eastern Mediterranean, the Austrian-Ottoman frontier marked a confessional, military, political and cultural edge of 'Christian Europe' facing the non-European 'Ottoman Europe'. This long-lasting configuration of frontiers with regions dominated by non-Christian rulers meant that 'Europe' had a shifting eastern and south-eastern border. Despite being Christian, Orthodox Russia was—like the Ottoman Empire—mostly seen as a non-European power in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Only during the eighteenth century did this view of Russia begin to gradually change, as a result of an integration process of Russia into Europe.

It is worth noticing that the medieval idea of equating Europe with Christendom faded with the decline of medieval Christianisation campaigns and crusades during the Reformation of the sixteenth century. The early modern period also saw massive overseas exploration and colonisation—the worldwide expansion of the *communitas cristiana*.

Concerning Europe's internal political borders, Febvre (1973) tied them closely to the state. He has pointed out that in the Middle Ages the very concept of territorial sovereignty had not yet been elaborated. The kingdoms and duchies were not coherent territorial entities, 'bounded' in a linear and consistent manner. Frequently one territory had several sovereigns. Fiefs were detached from one crown and attached to another, together with all that went with them and belonged to them. This changed with the strengthening of the state in the early modern era.

Early modern boundaries were, for most of the continent, perceived and defined less by clear geographical lines than by powers of jurisdiction,

taxation rights and feudal obligations. Their permeability was the result of various factors, most importantly the lax enforcement of border controls. The lack of a fixed or agreed division between one territory and another was quite common, and even when they were fixed, the borders were frequently ignored by the people crossing them, often with the silent approval of the lords. This permeability allowed the—sometimes illegal—transfer of goods and people from one jurisdiction to another, and also between tax and price regimes. Despite this permeability, the differences between residing under one jurisdiction, as opposed to another, were nevertheless known to contemporaries, who often utilised these modalities to their own advantage. In this sense, many borders had a fixed character, respected by local inhabitants on both sides.

States could shift their boundaries in early modern times in various ways, among them war, inheritance, or exchange. However, local boundaries and lesser jurisdictions usually remained intact on such occasions. That means they were taken over by the new ruler, but their inner coherence and outer borders remained unchanged. Such was the case in France and in the Habsburg Empire. This dynamic manifested during the early modern era in a mosaic of various types of regions, subject to a supreme ruler but conserving the original inner political structures, including tax regimes and even systems of ecclesiastical governance. In this regard, we could think of Europe as a palimpsest of civil and ecclesiastical borders, with its lowest layers almost always long-standing and broadly accepted, even when fiercely disputed in detail. Thus, border disputes tended to assume a chronic character in early modern Europe.

Mental Borders and Frontier Regions

Cartography developed slowly over the course of the early modern period, and it was only by the eighteenth century that relatively precise maps could be produced. Also, cartography was not an autonomous intellectual discipline; rather, it reflected the power aspirations of its patrons, particularly the rulers that invested in it. Enlightenment thinkers, as well as enlightened rulers, sought ordered and rational investigations of nature, but also endeavoured to influence statecraft by employing surveyors and other experts to identify cartographic resources and establish an efficient basis for tax assessment.

In France, for example, the mapping of natural territory had a considerable influence on the mental mapping of desired borders, resulting in policies to gain control over 'natural' boundaries. The Pyrenees in the south formed one of these desired borders, as did the Rhine between Germany and France. At the Rhine, cartographers from both nations worked to combine natural and political boundaries by drawing state borders along the course provided by the river. However, studying the political maps of the eighteenth century can

often lead us to neglect the blurriness of the borders in practice. Maps imply homogeneity within a given area, as well as sharp distinctions between a given area and its neighbours—delineations that were socially constructed and did not necessarily exist in practice.

Changes in manners, forms of behaviour, religious beliefs and language also marked cultural borders for those travelling through Europe. Long-running differences in lifestyle and natural conditions were a complex background to the enduring existence of these cultural borders. For example, according to Burke (2008), between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries there was a 'cultural border' in France, which could be drawn as a diagonal line from St Malo in France to Geneva in Switzerland, dividing a north-eastern zone of higher literacy from a south-western zone where fewer people were able to read.

For a long time, historians have treated the borders of the early modern period simply as barriers. In recent decades, this perception has changed to acknowledge their role as meeting-places or zones of cultural interchange. Both conceptions have their uses: walls and barbed wire cannot keep out ideas, but cultural barriers do exist. There are at least some physical, political or cultural obstacles, including language and religion, which slow down cultural movements and transfer or divert them into different channels. However, both borders and frontiers are also frequently zones of interaction for different groups. This process sometimes produced border zones, areas of reciprocal ethnic and cultural interaction and transmission in which distinctively hybrid identities might evolve. This was the case in the Habsburg-Ottoman (i.e. Christian-Muslim) frontier of the early modern Balkans.

The Evolving Functions of Borders, after Mental Mapping: Developments in the Early Modern Period

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, confessional borders became more and more important because of the European Wars of Religion. This development reached its climax in 1648 with the signing of the Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). The political consequences—the emergence of the early modern state and the division of Europe along confessional lines—changed the nature of borders. In many instances, the monopoly of power in the hands of a single sovereign, including the right to mint coins, to make and enforce laws, and to raise taxes, replaced the dissipated power relations of the medieval feudal hierarchy. Holding rights of jurisdiction over a community of subjects separated areas under the sovereign rule from those where these rights did not apply. Besides other developments, the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries further increased the need for authoritative lines of demarcation.

Then, in the eighteenth century, the concept of sovereignty underwent major changes. A growing national consciousness on the part of state subjects was paralleled by the growing power and ambition of their rulers, who made use of professional armies and military equipment. These were all steps in the direction of the 'nation-state', a more coherent entity defined within clear political borders.

Enlightened absolutism was practiced by eighteenth-century sovereigns who aspired to supreme authority within their domains, while at the same time drawing inspiration from the intellectual premises of the Enlightenment for their rule. Absolute monarchs directed state-building measures towards the creation of a national community, breaking down privileges and vested interests in favour of notions of citizenship and patriotism, including previously maintained regional autonomies. France was Europe's pioneer state in combining mental maps and foreign policy, claiming natural borders such as the Pyrenees, the Rhine and the Alps as part of its own territory. Borders were again central to the process of defining a given nation *vis-à-vis* its neighbours, but now they were also a vehicle for the emergent patriotic sentiment. These new 'national' borders gradually superseded the confessional ones of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Thus, by the eighteenth century, several European states again consisted of territories with different religions and confessions. Confessionally homogenous territories were a phenomenon limited to the decades of religious wars in the preceding centuries.

French rulers of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were not only pioneers in combining mental maps with foreign policy. They were also at the forefront of establishing control over the movement of population. From the seventeenth century, the French king's subjects needed a passport to leave the country. In the eighteenth century, a passport was also required for foreigners travelling to France. Unsurprisingly, this passport and border system of the *ancien régime* was considered part of the tyranny of the French monarchy, and was abolished soon after 1789. However, following a very brief liberal period, the system was swiftly reintroduced in the following decade for security reasons, even though the 1791 constitution granted free permission to leave the country.

In other regions of Europe, governments attempted to consolidate state borders. For Habsburgian territories at the south-east edge of the continent, this meant abolishing the frontier zone with the Ottoman Empire. After signing the peace treaty of Carlowitz in 1699, the Austrian government sought to establish a clear line of demarcation to separate Austrian and Hungarian territories from Ottoman lands. These efforts were undertaken to avoid double taxation in border regions and to reduce border violations from the Ottoman side. While this process was quite successfully implemented by the Austrian authorities,

the clear marking of boundaries was not a model for other European states, as fortifications and stationed troops turned out to be very expensive.

The early modern period finally saw efforts to unify state, tax and customs borders. Alongside France, Austria and even Russia also established this form of border in the eighteenth century. This process of merging of different border types signified a huge step towards the unification of states, with long-lasting effects for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At the same time, with the imposition of these unified borders came the imposition of cultural borders, a process involving the standardisation of languages and homogenisation of cultures.

Conclusion

The meaning of borders underwent an important shift over the course of the early modern period, and particularly in the eighteenth century. Relatively fluid borders between political entities became more sharply defined over this period, in relation to the strengthening and centralisation of the state. The role of borders for the state was also transformed, especially with respect to tax and custom collection. Internal borders were dissolved or weakened as part of the same processes. At the same time, especially on the eastern and south-eastern frontier of Europe, frontiers remained shifting and permeable, serving as both physical and symbolic demarcations of the imagined community of Europe and the Western Christian world, and as a site of extensive cultural transfers and interchanges.

Discussion questions

1. What are the differences and similarities between natural and cultural borders, according to the text?

2. The text argues that borders were important for people's identity in early modern Europe. Can you describe how?

3. In early modern Europe, borders were much more porous than today. Why do you think that is?

Suggested reading

Augustyniak, Urszula, *History of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: State–Society–Culture* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 2015).

Barth, Fredrik, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Oslo: Waveland Press, 1969).

Burke, Peter, *What is Cultural History?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2008).

Duchhardt, Heinz, 'The Cartographic "Battle of the Rhine" in the Eighteenth Century', in *Bordering Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Maria Baramova, Grigor Boykov and Ivan Parvev (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015), pp. 3–13.

Esser, Raingard and Steven G. Ellis, eds, *Frontier and Border Regions in Early Modern Europe* (Hannover: Wehrhahn, 2013).

Evans, R. J. W., 'Essay and Reflection: Frontiers and National Identities in Central Europe', *The International History Review* 14:3 (1992), 480–502.

Febvre, Lucien, 'Frontière: the word and the concept', in *A New Kind of History*, ed. by Lucien Febvre (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), pp. 208–218.

Sahlins, Peter, 'Natural Frontiers Revisited: France's Boundaries since the Seventeenth Century', *The American Historical Review* 95:5 (1990), 1423–1451.

Wolff, Larry, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

1.2.2 Borders in Modern History (1800–1900)

Károly Halmos, Irina Marin, and Tomáš Masař

Introduction

Borders in the modern sense—conceived as a fusion of political, taxation and customs jurisdictions—only began developing during the nineteenth century, undergoing a process of clarification and narrowing down as part of state centralisation. At the start of the modern era, a variety of physical borders were still to be found across Europe: there were hedges and fences running along fallow land; there were ill-defined stretches of border that were no more than open fields. There were also broad borders that were, well into the nineteenth century in the case of Eastern Europe, practically no more than wood- or marshland. On the other hand, there were imperial borderlands, the great swathes of territory that bounded the European continental empires (the Habsburg, Tsarist, Ottoman and German Empires) and where they clashed with one another. These remained fluid zones, with ebbing and flowing lines of political domination, resulting in a huge build-up of tension and friction that spilled over into the twentieth century.

The wide, porous and fluid borders of the early modern period gradually transformed during the nineteenth century into more definitive frontier lines. The dynastic principle of domination was meanwhile replaced with a geopolitical one, in which territorial units became more important than dynastic connections. Loyalty to a state, to a defined land or territory, and eventually to the nation, now came before the allegiance to a monarch.

Geopolitical Transformation

In geopolitical terms, the map of Europe changed drastically at the turn of the nineteenth century. Following the French Revolution (1789–1799) and the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815), new states and new borders emerged and disappeared within the span of a few years, sometimes overnight.

The impact of the Napoleonic domination of Europe cannot be overstated. The French general Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821), rising to fame and power on the back of his exceptional military abilities and political shrewdness, changed and abolished borders like those of the Holy Roman Empire, which had until then encompassed a loose, multi-ethnic system of territories in central Europe. He also set in motion political and social developments across the continent that would lead European peoples to reconsider their identity, their interests and motivations, their rights and laws. In the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) primarily aimed to bring stability to the European state system and ultimately to settle the dispute on the continent's borders. But at the same time, new challenges to European politics and the potential for a new revision of borders were brought about by the emerging ideology of nationalism, which sought to make the state coterminous with the nation.

Fig. 1: Ragnhild Sellén, "A Finnish maiden stands on a rock and raises the blue cross flag", postcard published by Axel Eliassons Konstförlag (1905), Finnish Heritage Agency, CC BY 4.0, https://finna.fi/Record/museovirasto.53F7EC754023DD17ACEF348B0F5415D0.

A look at two maps of Europe from 1789 and 1914—the beginning and the end of the 'long' nineteenth century—shows that in this period the greatest geopolitical changes took place at the heart of the continent along an imaginary

line that crossed its centre, from Germany to Italy. The myriads of micro-borders that once criss-crossed this longitudinal swathe of the European continent disappeared during the nineteenth century after the initial impulse of the Napoleonic conquests. This formerly splintered territory was replaced by two sizeable territorial units, the German Empire and the Kingdom of Italy, as well as several small and medium-sized states: the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland. In the same period, by contrast, the western half of the continent remained reliably compact from a territorial point of view, with minor border changes. And in Eastern Europe, though they faced wars and revolutionary upheavals, the Habsburg and Tsarist Empires remained firmly in control of their territories and even increased their possessions marginally. This meant an increasing differentiation between east and west: in Western Europe, modern nation-states were emerging while more traditional empires survived in the east, a dynamic that produced its own territorial shifts. An example is the case of the Habsburg Empire around the turn of the nineteenth century. In 1795, during the French Revolutionary Wars, the Habsburgs lost their lowland provinces in north-western Europe to France, but simultaneously acquired the eastern territory of Galicia with the partition of Poland. Yet Galicia's borders were not as clearly defined as those of the Low Countries, and its linguistic and religious composition was also much more mixed than the Habsburg Empire's western hereditary provinces, including the lands of the Czech crown.

The exception to this rule of territorial preservation and consolidation is to be found in the Balkans on the European fringes of the Ottoman Empire, which by the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century had transformed into several small independent states.

Cultural Transformation

In the nineteenth century a wave of nationalism spread across Europe, creating political movements among many of the nations and ethnic groups of the continent, from Spain to Russia and from Norway to the Balkans. During the Napoleonic Wars, the fight against external aggression triggered uprisings in many countries based on the concept of the nation. This rallying point did not disappear after the end of the war. On the contrary, ideas of national unity and collective identity, such as people sharing the same language, culture, history, and territory—elements of what the scholar Benedict Anderson called an "imagined community"—started to play an increasingly important role.

Whether they were big or small, independent entities or subjects of empire, various European communities sought to define and assert their national identity. Apart from a shared language, history, culture or religion, a common territory or 'homeland' was one of the most important symbols

of the nation. The leaders of nationalist movements in Europe wanted to strengthen the abstract idea of a national community with the feeling of belonging to a territorial homeland, delimited by clear borders. For the elites of already established states such as France or Spain, of recently united states like Germany or Italy, and of nations without states like the Czechs, Finns or Slovenes, national identity became more important over the course of the nineteenth century, overshadowing previous regional or religious identities. Defining the national space became a pivotal part of constructing national identity. A process of 'spatial socialisation' occurred, by which citizens were encouraged to see themselves as part of a collective identity defined by national territory. In other words, the lines on the map delimiting their living space became one of the symbols of their collective national identity. Nationally minded elites looked upon these borders—frequently shown in maps, school textbooks and atlases—as the most important physical markers of national identity, as well as social, economic, and psychological symbols.

The hexagonal shape of France displayed in atlases and geography textbooks, for example, would become familiar to every French pupil during their school attendance—or at least that was the intention of the French authorities. Finnish borders were personified by the picture of the Maiden of Finland so much that the north-western part of the country was nicknamed "the arm", as it was easily recognisable as the right arm of the maiden. Similarly symbolic images were depicted on various maps across Europe with the aim of making the nation spatially visible through its boundaries.

These clear-cut borderlines also helped citizens to define who their compatriots were (those living within the borders) and who they were not (those living outside them). This dichotomy, which helped to divide communities into opposing categories, an *us* versus a *them*, was very much based on the existence of clear borders between states, regions, and other administrative units. Drawing a boundary between their own nation and those who lived outside the national territory helped state leaders to create a sense of common identity and cohesion among the inhabitants of the territory thus defined. Borders were almost always used by states and nations to symbolise territorial and national unity, irrespective of whether they were shaped according to natural barriers like rivers (e.g. Rhine, Danube), mountains (Alps, Pyrenees, Carpathians) and lakes (Bodensee, Ladoga), or whether they were constructed on the basis of older historical traditions and fault lines (such as the Czech lands or Finland).

However, such national territories were very rarely inhabited by uniformly integrated nations. Many ethnic, national, and religious minorities across Europe were scattered across several countries—including, for example, the German minorities of Central Europe. Such ethnic enclaves were very often

seen as subverting efforts to construct nationally homogenous states and, with the rise of nationalism, some became targets of forced assimilation (see for instance the Russification campaigns in the western parts of the Tsarist Empire, or the Norwegianisation of Sami and Kven peoples).

With the spread of nationalism and the increasingly popular notion that state borders should correspond with ethnic boundaries, the scene was also set for irredentism as a challenge to imperialism. The old European empires contained territories and populations that had previously formed parts of other polities, or that were claimed by newly formed states. Essentially, irredentism proposed an alternative redrawing of borders, based on historical and ethnic precedents.

Mental Maps

Maps could be easily drawn on paper and, to a small intellectual elite, national borders might have been evident and meaningful. But the maps within people's minds, the basic cultural coordinates by which they lived, changed much more slowly in this period, usually due to state intervention, disruption by war, and extended literacy and print culture. In Britain, for instance, the Napoleonic Wars and the consequent military mobilisation increased awareness among ordinary people of a grander scale of territory and identity, though without erasing the imaginary boundaries associated with regional belonging. By the 1860s, ordinary Frenchmen were still very much attached to their *pays*, or region of origin, and having to leave it in search of work amounted to an expatriation; crossing the regional border was like crossing into a foreign country. Similarly strong regionalisms also persisted after the unification of Italy. In the famous words of Italian statesman Massimo d'Azeglio (1798–1866), once Italy was made, the only thing remaining was to make the Italians: the boundaries of the new nation-state did not yet correspond to the mental borders within which people in the Italian Peninsula lived. Further east, when asked about their origin and identity, a nineteenth-century peasant in the Carpathian Mountains or in the Balkans was likely to answer by reference to their village or declaring their religion, both of which constituted the centre of gravity of their life. A Polish mayor would most likely identify with his native region and only find out from newspapers that he was, in fact, Polish.

A key element in the transformation of the continent during the nineteenth century was the industrial revolution, which went hand-in-hand with explosive population growth, particularly in Western Europe and later in the rest of the continent. The resulting overpopulation set in motion massive waves of emigration, especially to America, but also across Europe as whole. State frontiers may have become increasingly fixed and stable, but thanks to new infrastructure and new possibilities of travel, Europeans also became

increasingly mobile and able to escape the gravitational force of tightly demarcated states.

Such population movements were powered by people's mental maps, in which the centre of imagination often lay beyond native borders, in the nearest city, the capital, or remote destinations such as the Americas. The hopes and expectations that led people to follow the path of emigration could be seen as a consequence of the changing frontier between what the historian Fernand Braudel called the possible and the impossible. Thus, lower transportation costs made it economically possible for many people to cover distances that had previously been insurmountable. The same changes that made American grain competitive on European markets during the nineteenth century also made the emigration business flourish in the other direction. For many people in the Hungarian half of the Habsburg Empire, for instance, the gravitational centre was the 'West', variously conceived. Prominent focal points included the imperial capital of Vienna, Britain during the post-Napoleonic Era, and Paris at the time of the great revolutionary upheavals between 1789 and 1848 (and at the end of the century, as the city of grandeur and culture), not to mention the German universities which, in a long tradition, were destinations for study abroad among families of the Hungarian elite.

Another consequence of the industrial revolution was the increased economic and commercial interconnectedness of the continent. The first attempts at economic unification in Europe can be traced back to Napoleon's Continental System, which targeted Great Britain at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Even after the fall of the French Emperor, the idea of European economic unity was not completely abandoned. Since industrial and agricultural goods often had to be transported over long distances, the economic and custom borders between European states started to be seen as a hindrance to economic growth. New unions and confederations were created (for instance the German Customs Union in 1834) to ease economic and commercial exchanges within Europe, contesting the previous economic boundaries between European states.

Besides overpopulation, cataclysmic events such as the Irish Famine (1845–1852) also acted as motors of emigration. The famine was caused by a failure of diseased potato crops, leading to the deaths of around a million people and compelling well over a million more to take a harrowing journey across the ocean—driven by sheer desperation, rather than dreams of wonderland. In many cases these were people who had never left their villages before and who were now forced into making a transatlantic voyage in the worst of conditions. They were likely to face generational poverty and fall prey to illness, exploitation, discrimination and deceit. Across the European continent German colonists who sought a better life in the east had a saying that

encapsulated the fate of émigrés: the first generation faces death, the second generation faces hardship, and only the third generation enjoys the bread.

Borders remained porous and easy to cross for a long time, with passports being rather rare and not strictly necessary for international travel, until the time of the First World War. In the interwar period Austrian writer Stefan Zweig (1881–1942) nostalgically reminisced about his youthful travels to America and India before the Great War, when he was never asked for a passport, nor had he ever seen one. Moreover, passports did not constitute proof of national identity until well into the nineteenth century. For instance, British passports were written in French and granted to both British and foreign nationals until 1858.

However, as borders between states were being consolidated throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century, border checkpoints and controls became more frequent and commonplace. A hardening of border controls as well as a stronger conflation between passports and national identity started with the economic slump of the 1870s, when a number of European and non-European governments decided to introduce anti-immigration policies of border control. These were aimed at groups of people deemed undesirable— see, for example, the 1885 expulsion of Poles from imperial Germany or the 1905 Aliens Act in Britain against "destitute foreigners", who were mostly Jews from the pogrom-ridden Tsarist Empire. In the words of the writer Matt Carr, this spelt the beginning of a bordered world based on "paper walls".

Conclusion

Europe saw a massive redrawing of borders at the beginning of the nineteenth century in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars. It underwent a gradual process of state centralisation and a concomitant process of nation-definition and nation-building, all of which went hand-in-hand with a clearer demarcation of national and imperial borders and the slow but never-complete breakdown of internal, regional borders. Just as physical borders were tightening up and becoming less porous, social and economic pressures set in motion millions of people in search of a better life, making use of new transport and infrastructural possibilities to reach the destinations of their dreams. On the one hand, mental geographies of hope made the crossing of borders and population relocation possible on a mass scale. On the other hand, equally persistent mental maps tied other people steadfastly to their village, region, or religion, and for a long time remained in stark contrast to newly defined state borders. By the time that these mental maps had come to approximate actual state borders and state-directed national identities, the First World War had broken out and set Europe on yet another course of major territorial transformation.

Discussion questions

1. Over the course of the nineteenth century, European borders became 'harder' and less porous. What are the ways in which borders were tightened that are listed in the text?

2. Can you explain why this happened, based on the information provided?

3. What were the consequences of this process?

Suggested reading

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

Bayly, C. A., *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).

Carr, Matt, 'Beyond the Border', *History Today* 63:1 (2013), https://www.historytoday.com/archive/history-matters/beyond-border.

Colley, Linda, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

Glenny, Misha, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers, 1804–1999* (London: Penguin, 2001).

Hupchick, Dennis P., *The Balkans: From Constantinople to Communism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

Mazower, Mark, *The Balkans* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2000).

Ó Murchadha, Ciarán, *The Great Famine: Ireland's Agony 1845–52* (London: Continuum, 2011).

Paasi, Anssi, *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness: The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border* (New York: Wiley, 1996).

Rieber, Alfred J., *The Struggle for the Eurasian Borderlands: From the Rise of Early Modern Empires to the End of the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Strath, Bo, 'Insider and Outsiders: Borders in Nineteenth-Century Europe', in *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Europe, 1789–1914*, ed. by Stefan Berger (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 3–10.

Weber, Eugen Joseph, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1979).

1.2.3 Borders in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Lorena De Vita, Jaroslav Ira, Thomas Serrier, and Andrew Tompkins

Introduction

Political borders in twentieth-century Europe are usually thought of as lines on a map, separating one nation-state from another. In practice, however, there are many borderlands and border zones where belonging is ambiguous, arbitrary, or unstable. Throughout the twentieth century, European borders shifted repeatedly, and some have reemerged or continued to divide people long after being dismantled. What borders mean and how they are represented has also changed over time. This chapter examines how European borders changed over the course of the twentieth century, and analyses what they have meant at different times.

Border Shifts

There were three major waves of border changes in twentieth-century Europe, each tied to the settlement of war: from 1918–1919 at the end of the First World War, in 1945 at the end of the Second World War, and from 1989–1991 following the end of the Cold War.

The First World War led to the disintegration of land empires within Europe and the creation of new nation-states from their former domains. For populations that had long felt stifled under the rule of distant powers, the 1918 peace conference at Versailles presented an opportunity for 'national self-determination' that would bring similar people together within independent states. For others—especially minorities and the inhabitants of mixed regions like Silesia or cities like Danzig (now Gdańsk, Poland), Triest (now Trieste,

Italy), and Salonica (now Thessaloniki, Greece)—new borders could mean lost rights, dispossession, or forced migration. During the peace conference, the United States, United Kingdom, and France formally decided which states would exist where, but border changes were also shaped by local situations over which the 'big three' victors had no control. Poland, which had been partitioned out of existence in the eighteenth century, returned to the map of Europe as a multi-ethnic state that included Lithuanians, Belarussians, Ukrainians and Germans; the German Empire lost Alsace-Lorraine in the west and parts of Prussia in the east; several new states were consciously multinational, including the 'Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes' (later Yugoslavia) and Czechoslovakia. For better or for worse, the Second World War fundamentally redrew the map of Europe.

Conflicts over borders nevertheless continued between the two World Wars, especially between Germany and its neighbours. Hitler's annexation of Austria and of parts of Czechoslovakia in 1938 were but the prelude to a larger war in which both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union (USSR) engaged in large-scale social engineering projects that violently altered the ethnic composition of Europe, most importantly the systematic killing and displacement of Europe's Jewish population. By the time the war ended, millions of people had been murdered, deported, or displaced. After the Allies defeated the Axis Powers, they drafted a blueprint for the post-war settlement at the Potsdam Conference in 1945, which rearranged the continent's internal borders more durably. However, the Allies' unfinished plans quickly became a rigid reality, as conflict between the USSR and the USA led to the indefinite postponement of a final peace treaty. In occupied Germany, for instance, the Western and Soviet occupation zones became separate states that competed with one another for nearly forty years. The Berlin Wall, though not built until 1961, became the symbol of a hard border between East and West running across the European subcontinent.

Few European borders changed substantially during the Cold War era but, in 1989, the unexpected collapse of Soviet-style communism called into question both the placement and meaning of borders across Europe. While much of the post-war order remained intact after 1990, there were several momentous changes: East and West Germany united, the Czech Republic and Slovakia 'divorced', the USSR dissolved, and Yugoslavia disintegrated. Thereafter, large parts of Europe became more closely integrated within the structures of the European Union (EU) and the Schengen Agreement, both of which dramatically changed how European borders functioned.

Today's EU was originally founded in 1957 (as the 'European Communities', or EC) by six western member states, but it expanded in four key stages: the so-called 'northern enlargement' in 1973, through which Denmark, Ireland, and

the United Kingdom became EC members; the 'Mediterranean enlargements', which added Greece in 1981 and Portugal and Spain in 1986 (marking an important milestone in these countries' transition from dictatorship to democracy); the accession of Austria, Finland, and Sweden—all countries that had pursued a policy of neutrality during the Cold War—to the renamed and restructured European Union (created by the Maastricht Treaty) in 1993; and the long, complex 'eastern enlargement' that brought in ten new members in 2004 (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Malta and Cyprus), followed by three more in 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania) and 2013 (Croatia).

These changes have not only altered the location of the EU's external borders to the north, south, and east, but also affected how its internal borders work. A milestone in this regard was the signing, in 1985, of the Schengen Agreement, which aimed to abolish checks at shared borders and to create a single external border. The agreement's implementation was delayed repeatedly, not least because of Western European fears after 1989 that the EU's parallel eastern enlargement would lead to mass immigration. The Schengen Agreement entered into force between some countries in 1995, gradually expanding to encompass most (but not all) EU states and some non-EU members (Norway and Switzerland), today promising the free movement of some 400 million people within the Schengen Area. This represents a huge shift compared to the hard borders and divisions that characterised long stretches of European geopolitical history especially during—but also prior to—the Cold War.

The process of EU integration and the signing of the Schengen Agreement have undeniably reduced barriers to individual mobility and trade between European states, but the practice has not always lived up to the loftier promises and expectations of 'open borders'. EU states have repeatedly suspended Schengen and reintroduced temporary border controls. This has usually taken place briefly in advance of international summits or in response to terrorism, and sometimes for extended periods. In 2015, many European states closed their borders to refugees seeking asylum from civil wars in Northern Africa and the Middle East, and renewed these 'temporary' restrictions for years thereafter. Tellingly, in 2020, the first reaction to the Covid-19 pandemic in much of the EU was to close borders, effectively shutting down free movement in an attempt to curb the spread of the virus. And while many Europeans are by now accustomed to roaming freely throughout the continent, non-Europeans—including trading partners and the citizens of former colonies of past empires of European nations—have faced increasing restrictions on their mobility into and within Europe. European borders have become very open to some people and very closed to others, with checks exercised across wide zones rather than only at border crossings. To many observers, the Nobel Peace Prize

awarded to the EU in 2012 for its contribution "to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights" is a bitter counterpoint to the remilitarised and digitalised borders that surround what critics describe as 'Fortress Europe'.

The history of Europe's internal and external borders is therefore also the history of their simultaneously inclusive and exclusive impulses, which continue to evolve.

Changing Meanings of Borders

Borders are much more than just a line of division and administrative tool for controlling space and territory. Some scholars have drawn attention to the prominence, and even agency, of borders in structuring identities or inciting artistic representations. Others have looked at borders as contact zones and spheres of cultural exchange. Yet others have thematised everyday life along borders. The focus has shifted from borders to borderlands, as landscapes that in many respects were critical spaces of a social drama rather than peripheries. Scholars have also had to reflect on how the many different terms associated with borders (*frontière*, *border*, *confine*, *kraina*, *Grenze*) have circulated for centuries as nomadic concepts that also create unavoidable misunderstandings.

The Czech-German border illustrates some of these points. Since it is partly formed by mountain ranges, its location has been stable and enduring, but its roles have changed several times. Prior to 1938, it was the state border between Germany and Austria-Hungary (later Czechoslovakia). Often more significant, though, was the language border, or ethnic boundary, that went further inland and which helped to define the so-called border*land*, a vast peripheral area that was largely coterminous with German-speaking territories. Between 1938 and 1945, the ethnic boundary became the state border after the signing of the Munich Agreement, which was concluded by Nazi Germany, the United Kingdom, France and Italy and which permitted German annexation of the Sudetenland of western Czechoslovakia. From 1945 to 1948, the state border was restored, but the ethnic boundary was removed following the expulsion of the German population. As a result, the borderland acquired new meaning as a territory to be resettled and cultivated afresh. After 1948, that part of the state border which was shared with West Germany became part of the 'Iron Curtain', or 'stronghold of peace and socialism', respectively, that separated two competing blocs and their socioeconomic systems. The borderland in the narrow sense of a border zone turned into a heavily guarded, militarised area. After 1989, the opening of the Czech-German border proceeded in parallel with the general delegitimisation of internal borders in Europe, culminating in the Schengen regime. Perhaps more importantly though, the border finally

lost its long-cultivated meaning as an identity-reproducing frontier against the major national enemy.

In the Czech national imagination, the border has long carried a strong national meaning as the frontier dividing 'us' from the national enemy, augmented by a larger civilisational meaning of the frontier between Slavic and Germanic worlds. The no less fundamental boundary between the socialist and the capitalist system, concurrent with the 'Iron Curtain' and the line dividing 'aggressive' imperialists and the 'peace-seeking' socialist camp, enhanced the existing template with new meaning. No wonder, then, that the border was a strong theme of artistic representations, ranging from poetry to novels and short stories. Czechoslovak film production followed suit, with *Král* Šumavy (*King of the Bohemian Forest*, 1959), a film about border guards hunting a human trafficker, representing an apex of the genre. Dozens of films, ranging from simple propaganda to more critical dramas, employed themes from crime and espionage to stage psychological inquiries into the formative nature of the border for its guards, or for those who came to build a new society in the rough conditions of borderlands. Film experts and historians have decoded the borderland in fiction as a social laboratory in which new socialist characters were formed, a sort of eastern 'Wild West' in which the border played a role similar to that of the western frontier of American civilisation—and it was the border guards who played the heroes of this 'socialist Western' (or 'Eastern') genre.

The border played a role in narratives that (re)produced large-scale collective identities, as well as in propaganda that legitimised the new spatial and ideological order (with its radical closure of borders) after 1948. But the border also had an identity-forming role in its own right. In the first half of the twentieth century, the border region of Chodsko and the predominantly Czech towns in the south-west part of the borderland, such as Kdyně, used the region's strategic position as a bulwark against outsiders, not only to reaffirm their specific regional and local identities, but also to claim special assets, such as district status. In the new conditions of socialist Czechoslovakia, small towns also capitalised on their proximity to the dividing line between two divergent socioeconomic systems—albeit mostly symbolically, through self-promotion. For instance, a 1979 book celebrating the 700-year anniversary of Nové Hrady, a town located close to the Austrian border, claimed that its jubilee had "broader political implications", as it highlighted the importance of building and guarding socialism at the very frontiers of the Soviet bloc. At the same time, however, the radical change of population in much of the borderland led to a lack of local attachment to or sense of place in the region, a problem that continues to affect parts of it today.

In terms of everyday culture, a specific milieu of controlled territory evolved during the socialist era. The everyday coexistence of the local population with military border guards and police forces was accepted—and retrospectively remembered—with mixed feelings: a positive sense of security; a negative sense of omnipresent surveillance; the often-praised role of border guards in building social amenities and producing cultural activities in small border towns; the abandonment or planned dilapidation of settlements in the border zone.

At first sight, the post-1989 era appeared to overcome these dramatic divisions and fears. The work of Polish contemporary artist Zbigniew Libera illustrates this. He drew attention to this profound change with his work *Kolarze* (*Cyclists*, 2002), which shows its protagonists calmly removing a border post. He positioned the cyclists to mimic Wehrmacht soldiers from an infamous Nazi propaganda photograph taken in September 1939, during Germany's invasion of Poland—two radically different crossings of the same border. Characteristic of this fluid regime of territoriality, a number of local initiatives all over Central Europe promoted what the Polish historian Robert Traba has called the idea of "open regionalism", particularly with regard to the legacies of their national neighbours across the border. With the enlargement of the EU, the expansion of the Schengen Area, and the spread of low-cost travel, border crossings became a routine experience for most Europeans. In 2009, the Austrian artists Iris Andraschek and Hubert Lobnig conveyed this idea in an art installation along the Austro-Czech border. Amid images of the barbed wire that once stood there, their work displayed large metal letters posing the question: "where do the borders disappear to?"

Memory of Borders

Unlike Libera's cyclists, many Europeans in the twentieth century often paid a high price for passing, crossing, or knocking down borders. They were equally aware of the cost of the painful new allegiances involved in changes of territory. Several places, such as Berlin, Trieste, Strasbourg, Lviv/Lwów/Lemberg and Danzig/Gdańsk (the latter transfigured in the 1959 novel *Tin Drum* by German writer Günter Grass), symbolise the centrality of the border issue in European history.

Hence borders—especially those that cut and divide—have been evoked in dozens of twentieth-century cultural productions, lurking as they do in the recesses of family and collective memories. The novel *They Divided the Sky* (1963) by the German writer Christa Wolf illustrates this, as does the moving *Passages* (1994) by the Israeli artist Dani Karavan, a memorial site at Portbou in homage to the German intellectual Walter Benjamin (1892–1940), who tried to

escape the Nazis and committed suicide in this Spanish border town in 1940. The Berlin Wall, erected in 1961, was for a long time the symbol of inhumanity and oppression par excellence. Conversely, the fall of the wall amid euphoric scenes in November 1989 has allowed it to serve as an icon of 'passage' and a symbol of overcoming arbitrary borders.

Derelict borders such as these stand out in landscapes that have long been the scenes of clashes between neighbouring countries and systems. The Green Belt along the former German-German border and the Berlin Wall Trail for pedestrians and cyclists are two of the best-known examples. The Rhine River is another emblematic one: it has served as the site of European institutions in Strasbourg since the Second World War and, more recently, as the symbolic backdrop for a final tribute to a "great European", following the death of the former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl (1930–2017).

Considering that past borders have manifested in a variety of modes, the concept of 'phantom borders' is helpful. It describes former territorial demarcations that seem to re-emerge after periods of absence, or which continue to structure spaces even after territorial shifts have led to their removal. The abolished borders of continental empires—the Habsburg, Ottoman, and German Empires, but also the Soviet Empire and the border dividing Germany from 1949 to 1989—continue to have a long-lasting effect. This can be seen today in architecture, settlement patterns, industrial heritage, infrastructural legacies, maps and statistics, and other social practices. Telling examples can be found in the electoral maps of many countries in east-central Europe, and in this sense the case of Poland in the early twentieth century is anything but unique: regional differences in voting patterns between the eastern and western parts of the country recall the interwar state borders, sites of forced migration after the Second World War, and even older boundaries of partitioned Poland from 1795 to 1918.

Conclusion

Borders and boundaries remain, as French historian Daniel Nordman has written, a "paradox in space". The ambiguous *Borne-frontière* ('Boundary Marker') sculpture carved in 1945 by the French-Romanian artist Constantin Brâncuşi (1876–1957) also expresses this fundamental ambivalence, showing four surfaces featuring pairs of human profiles chiselled face-to-face in limestone, apparently exchanging a kiss: romantic encounter or frozen confrontation? Borders can be both a frontline and a place of encounter, a barrier and a pathway. Amid the territorial conflicts of the interwar period, the prominent French historian Lucien Febvre argued in his 1931 essay 'Le Rhin' ('The Rhine') that this famous border river represented both a *coupure*

(cut) and a *couture* (seam). European states have often called on this function (or illusory promise) of separation and protection, and they continue to do so when reestablishing their border systems—with Brexit, the so-called refugee crisis in 2015, and the Covid-19 lockdown as telling examples. As a result, borders have generated diametrically opposed responses, from demands for their abolition to drastic measures to reinforce them. In his plea *Pour l'Europe* ('For Europe', 1963), the French politician Robert Schuman (1886–1963), one of the architects of the European Communities, argued that one of the aims of European integration was finding a position between these two poles: "It is not a question of obliterating ethnic and political borders. They are a historical fact, and we do not presume to correct history […] What we want is to remove the rigidity from borders, what I would call their intransigent hostility."

Discussion questions

1. What were the key turning points in the history of borders and border shifts in Europe throughout the twentieth century, and why?

2. The meaning of borders has changed dramatically over the course of the twentieth century. Can you summarise the different meanings mentioned in the text?

3. Is there a difference between Western and Eastern Europe in the way people have made sense of borders?

4. What is the role of conflict and violence in the construction of borders in the twentieth century?

Suggested reading

Amilhat Szary, Anne-Laure, 'Walls and Border Art: The Politics of Art Display', *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 27:2 (2012), 213–228.

Ballinger, Pamela, *History in Exile: Memory and Identity at the Borders of the Balkans* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

Diener, Alexander C. and Joshua Hagen, *Borders: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Foucher, Michel, *Le retour des frontières* (Paris: CNRS, 2016).

Jeanpierre, Laurent, 'Frontières', in *Dictionnaire des concepts nomades en sciences humaines*, ed. by Olivier Christin (Paris: Métaillié, 2010), pp. 157–171.

Kopal, Petr et al., *Král Šumavy: komunistický thriller* (Prague: Academia, 2019).

Serrier, Thomas, 'The History of Europe is the History of its Borders', in *Europa. The European Way since Homer: History, Memory, Identity*, ed. by Etienne François and Thomas Serrier with Akiyoshi Nishiyama, Pierre Monnet, Olaf B. Rader, Valérie Rosoux, and Jakob Vogel (London: Bloomsbury, 2021).

Van Houtum, Henk, Olivier Kramsch and Wolfgang Zierhofer, eds, *B/ordering Space* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

Wiedemann, Andreas, *"Komm mit uns das Grenzland aufbauen!": Ansiedlung und neue Strukturen in den ehemaligen Sudetengebieten 1945–1952* (Essen: Klartext, 2007).

Wilson, Thomas M. and Hastings Donnan, eds, *Border Identities: Nation and State at International Frontiers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

CHAPTER 1.3
MIGRATION

1.3.1 Migration in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Lars Behrisch, Tobias P. Graf, Ildikó Horn, and Margarita Eva Rodríguez García

Introduction

Living in the twenty-first century, we often think that we inhabit an age of unprecedented mobility. As a result of the technical innovations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—such as railways, steam ships, the automobile, air travel, and communications technologies like the telephone, the telegraph, and the Internet—we have dramatically increased the speed of communication compared with that of the physical conveyance of written messages in earlier times. Mobility and migration, however, were already omnipresent in the early modern period, both within Europe itself and between Europe and other parts of the world, such as Asia and the Americas. In fact, the frequency of migration may have been even higher than in today's world of nation-states and potentially closed national borders, even if movement itself—on foot, on the backs of animals, or aboard sailing vessels—was much slower. Some historians have described a marked increase in geographic mobility on a global scale as one of the defining characteristics of a global early modernity.

One major reason for this high degree of mobility was the fact that, throughout the early modern period, Europe was a patchwork of relatively small territories and cities, many of which were *de facto* autonomous. This situation created not only opportunities and incentives for migration—as skilled labourers, for example, sought employment elsewhere—nascent states had only very limited abilities, resources, and information to restrict movement across the borders of their territories, even when they wanted to do so. Nevertheless, early modern governments had a significant impact on the movement of people. Cities—and capitals, in particular—attracted people who could meet the governments' demands for soldiers, administrators,

entrepreneurs, and other specialists. Especially following the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), moreover, rulers in Central Europe in particular attracted people of talent not only to repopulate their territories, but also to develop local economies and enhance cultural life, all vital sources of prestige and power. On the other hand, restrictive and repressive measures against religious minorities and beggars would cause them to seek refuge elsewhere and military conflict likewise displaced large numbers of people. Migration clearly was not always voluntary, but frequently the result of circumstance and even outright force. This chapter uses the specific lenses of religious migration, expulsion, warfare, and coerced migration to explore the range of contexts, directions, and occasions for early modern people moving within Europe and beyond.

Religious Migration and Diasporas in Early Modern Europe

Religious and confessional minorities were the most conspicuous migrants in early modern Europe, although they may not have supplied the largest overall number of migrants. As they migrated across the continent, many of them settled permanently in another place. If they shared that place's confession (or else converted to it), they usually assimilated quickly. This is true for most migrants adhering to one of the main (and in most states the official) confessions—Catholic and Lutheran (or Anglican)—who mostly found refuge in states or cities of the same confession. Where migrants did not share the host society's confession, however, they formed diasporas that would keep their cultural and linguistic identity over generations, too.

Religious migration took on many different forms during the early modern period, and it is hard to determine a beginning and end or to single out specific phases. Jews had started to flee from Spain since the forced conversions and massacres of the early fifteenth century. During the same period, Jewish communities in Italy and in the Holy Roman Empire, too, were maltreated and/or expelled. Many resettled in Poland and Lithuania—where they faced a similar fate in the seventeenth century, while being allowed back into England and France, from which they had been banned during the Middle Ages. Large numbers of Iberian Jews also found new homes in the Ottoman Empire, notably in Istanbul and in present-day Thessaloniki. The Protestant Reformation triggered the migration of Lutherans from Catholic territories and vice versa, as well as—from the middle of the century onwards—the migration of Calvinists from both. The Calvinists' greatest tribulations, however, occurred in the seventeenth century, when the Habsburgs re-Catholicised their Bohemian and Austrian lands in the wake of the Thirty Years' War, and the French king, Louis XIV (1638–1715), drove more than 100,000 'Huguenots' (Calvinists) out of France. At the same time, the Reformation had triggered a continuous splintering of Protestantism into ever smaller denominations—from Swiss,

German, and Dutch Anabaptists in the 1520s to the Quakers in the following century. Most of them survived in disguise, thousands of them perished, and tens of thousands fled abroad, where they were regularly tolerated as a foreign religious minority, i.e. a diaspora. The Principality of Transylvania, an Ottoman vassal but with complete internal freedom, deserves special attention: uniquely in Europe, four confessions (Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Unitarian) were officially accepted, while Orthodox Christians and Greek Catholics were allowed to practise their faith, as were Jews and other religious minorities, including radical Protestants such as Anabaptists and Sabbatarians who were expelled from almost everywhere else in Europe.

More generally, however, religious diasporas became an important phenomenon in early modern Europe—more so than in other historical periods or places. There were three reasons for this: first, the highly fragmented political and confessional landscape created spaces for persecuted minorities, often coupled with rulers' interests in profiting financially, economically, and politically from their admission (thus, for example, the brain drain occasioned by the Huguenot exodus benefited the host societies while weakening an otherwise dominant France). Second, there was a peculiar mixture in early modern Europe's treatment of religious dissidents: on the one hand, they were considered dangerous threats to a society's religious 'purity'—which led to regular persecutions and expulsions. On the other hand, religious dissidents were partially tolerated for economic and political reasons, allowing persecuted minorities to settle elsewhere. Third, late medieval spirituality and the intellectual quest for the 'true' interpretation of the Bible, fully unleashed by Luther's Reformation, engendered an unprecedented degree of religious pluralisation both within Christianity and Judaism, with each confessional variety claiming to offer the one and only way to salvation. In this way, religion in a very specific (sub-)denominational form was, and remained well into the eighteenth century, the mainstay of people's daily aspirations. As a consequence, a specific creed was also a sufficient motive to leave everything—sometimes even including one's family—behind and to risk one's life in a foreign and potentially hostile environment, where this creed would become even more important as the core of one's identity.

In addition to this common background, early modern religious diasporas shared a number of particular features. Their members often developed innovative economic skills and were commercially very successful; they displayed high levels of moral and work-related discipline, as well as high degrees of literacy and education (notably, including women); they were generally more egalitarian than the surrounding majority societies. Finally, undergirding their economic success, they maintained strong networks with diaspora groups of the same creed. All of these characteristics were present in (otherwise very diverse) Jewish communities, Calvinist and other 'radical'

Protestant diasporas, as well as in Orthodox 'Old Believer' communities in Russia. The fact that these features were shared by groups with completely different religious convictions and practices suggests that they did not flow from any specific theology as suggested, among others, by the German sociologist Max Weber (1864–1920) in his Protestant Ethic Thesis, according to which the uncertainty of salvation in Protestant dogma drove many communities to embrace values of hard work, asceticism, and profitability. Rather, these features often stemmed from their specific 'diasporic' situation: a precarious existence, that is, within a foreign and often hostile society, usually coupled with harsh financial conditions, forced diaspora communities to organise themselves efficiently, to fully exploit their members' potential, to develop new economic skills, and to maintain bonds with coreligionists farther afield.

The Iberian Peninsula: Crossroads of Religious Migrations and Expulsions

In Portugal, after the massive influx of Sephardic Jews from Spain and the forced conversion of all Portuguese Jews in 1497, these so-called 'New Christians' lived relatively quietly until 1536, when the Portuguese Inquisition was established. In the second half of the sixteenth century, many New Christians, who were accused of being crypto-Jewish (i.e. practising Judaism in secret while outwardly presenting themselves as Christians), fled to Spain. Their subsequent persecution, both in Spain and Portugal, created a major diaspora in Europe and the New World, generating among the converts a feeling of belonging to 'the nation' (meaning the Sephardic diaspora). Thus, from the beginning of the Atlantic expansion, New Christian families served to populate the overseas Iberian empires (as early as the end of the fifteenth century, Jewish children had been sent to populate the African island of São Tomé). They also underpinned the creation of Atlantic networks that allowed them to take advantage of commercial opportunities opened up by Iberian overseas expansion. Although New Christians and Jews were formally prohibited from emigrating to the Portuguese and Spanish Americas, the Crown implemented formulae which made it easier for them to emigrate or find other ways to escape these restrictions. Consequently, New Christians, a great majority of them of Portuguese origin, established themselves in the Caribbean, Mexico, Brazil, and Peru, where they played an important role in businesses such as sugar plantations, the slave trade or mining. In these places, some of them continued practicing Judaism, while others married into Catholic families.

Another important Iberian diaspora is that of the Moriscos. These descendants of the Muslim al-Andalus settlers were forced to convert to Christianity in 1492 as a result of the so-called *Reconquista*, the 'reconquest'

of the Iberian Peninsula by Christian kings. In terms of numbers and their significance, the expulsion of this group from the Iberian Peninsula and the resulting diaspora are of great importance. Very numerous in Valencia and Aragon, but also in Castile and Andalusia, the Moriscos were a highly heterogeneous group, whose relationship with the old Christians was complex and not easily reducible to a binary opposition. However, between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Moriscos suffered a double expulsion. After the so-called Rebellion of Granada (1569–1571), they were forced to leave the Kingdom of Granada to be exiled to the territories of western Andalusia and Castile. Then, due to fears that the Moriscos were conspiring with the Ottomans against the King of Spain and his Christian subjects, but mostly for political reasons, King Philip III (r. 1598–1621) ordered their definitive expulsion in 1609: about 300,000 Moriscos were forced to leave their lands and workshops. While those who wanted to take their children under the age of seven were forced to go to Christian countries, disembarking in Marseille and Livorno, the majority went to North Africa (Morocco, Algiers and Tunisia) where local rulers like Uthman Dey of Tunisia were eager for the trades, techniques, and knowledge which the Moriscos brought with them, and to the eastern Mediterranean, mainly to Istanbul. The transition was not always smooth, even for those who, as Muslims, shared the faith of their new host societies; but while many were subject to further exclusion, abuse, and assault, most were eventually absorbed into the local societies.

Migration and War: Christian Europe and the Ottoman Empire

As we have seen, migration in the early modern period often originated in the displacement of the adherents of particular creeds, as a result of the repressive and exclusionist religious policies of European rulers, as well as the efforts of majority communities to rid themselves of the presence of religious minorities in their midst. Another major cause for migration in the early modern period was military conflict. This is particularly true for multi-ethnic East-Central and South-Eastern Europe. In these regions, the expansion (and later withdrawal) of the Ottoman Empire led to large-scale processes of migration which were continuous from the sixteenth century to the mid-eighteenth century, even if they varied considerably in terms of intensity, direction, and type over the course of the period.

The Ottoman army's move westward on the European continent, where it had controlled territory since the fourteenth century, created large numbers of refugees. Moldavian Romanians and different Cossack and Tartar tribes displaced by Ottoman expansion settled in the eastern border regions of Poland, while the southern parts of Hungary had already become a new home for a

mainly Orthodox Serb population at the turn of the fifteenth century. This first wave of refugees was partly absorbed by the border defence establishments and partly by the lands of the nobles. In parallel, ethnic Turks migrated westward, especially into the Balkans, as colonists from Anatolia followed the Ottoman armies—sometimes voluntarily, sometimes as a result of forced resettlement programmes—with the aim of consolidating Ottoman rule over the recently conquered territories. As the expansion moved closer to central Europe, and especially after the occupation of Belgrade (1521) and Buda (1541), an ever-growing number of Balkan people also settled in the lands conquered from the Kingdom of Hungary. In fact, the people serving in Ottoman border fortresses were mostly Bosniaks, Serbs, and Albanians who had recently converted to Islam as well as Serbs, Vlachs, and Croats who remained Christians.

On the whole, the more affluent among the Hungarian, Croatian and German population of these regions left the territories conquered by the Ottomans. The burghers, who—for the most part—were ethnic Germans, were received by Vienna and the northern Hungarian royal free cities because of their previous trade relations. Some of the Croatians settled in eastern Austria, where they played an important part in the protection of its borders, while the others, along with the Hungarian nobility, moved to the northern part of Hungary, which came under Habsburg rule after the death of King Louis II (r. 1516–1526) in the Battle of Mohács (1526). The inhabitants of the market towns and villages, however, largely remained. While earlier generations of historians had assumed that they migrated on a large scale, it has been shown that they only left temporarily, fleeing into the surrounding woods and swamps to escape the devastation of war or tax collectors, later returning to their homes to continue farming or to market towns where safer and more favourable economic conditions could be negotiated with the Ottoman rulers.

The greatest migration flows in East-Central and South-Eastern Europe were caused by the great wars, such as the so-called Long War (1593–1606), and the conquest of Hungary by the Habsburgs at the end of the seventeenth century. In these instances, we cannot talk about refugee populations, but about population exchange—as the more or less complete depopulation of rich agricultural areas and river valleys was followed by immigration from poorer peripheral regions. As a result, Slovaks and Russians moved farther south and Croats, Serbs (who had already established major colonies north of Buda), and Romanians arrived in great numbers. At the same time, both central government and local landlords implemented settlement policies—culminating in the first half of the eighteenth century, when Emperor Charles VI, at enormous expense, brought nearly 400,000 settlers to Hungary, most of them from South Germany. As they were settled *en bloc* in largely depopulated areas, this migration caused significant ethnic changes.
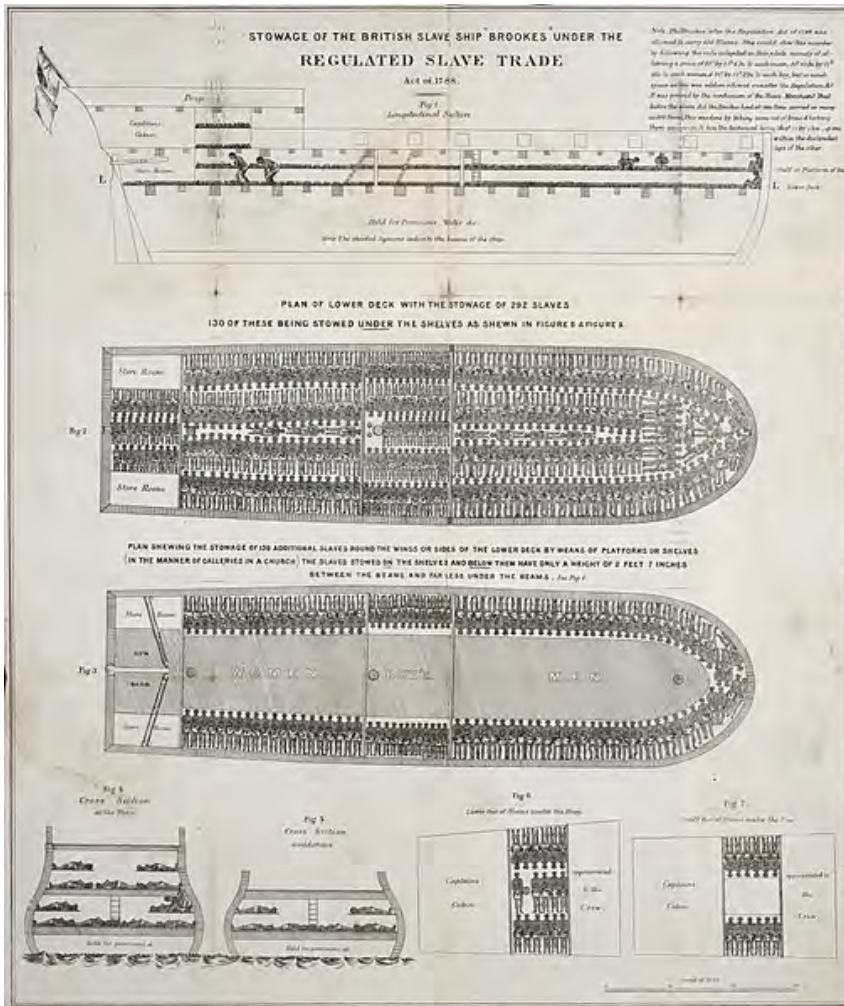
Fig. 1: Stowage of the British slave ship Brookes under the Regulated Slave Trade Act of 1788, Public Domain, Wikimedia, Ras67, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Slaveshipposter.jpg. Images like this one have become iconic representations of the inhumanity of the Atlantic slave trade.

The military conflicts with the Ottoman Empire, as well as with various North African rulers and the Crimean Tatars, also led to a steady stream of slaves from Europe to North Africa and the Middle East, and vice versa. This phenomenon, to be sure, was on a categorically different scale from the Atlantic slave trade (discussed below), both quantitatively and qualitatively. Although it is difficult to gauge the number of people affected, a recent estimate suggests that roughly 35,000 enslaved Europeans lived in North Africa at any one point in the seventeenth century. The number of Muslims held in captivity in Europe appear to have been significantly lower: since Ottoman forces tended to be more successful on the battlefield, they took more captives. The phenomenon is well-attested, not least in countless captivity narratives written by Italians, Spaniards, Dutch-, French-, and Englishmen who were taken captive by the

'Barbary' pirates operating out of ports such as Algiers, Salé (in modern-day Morocco), Tripoli, and Tunis, attacking ships and raiding coastal settlements. Taking slaves was part of their business, but the point of that business was largely to extort high ransoms in exchange for their safe return. At the same time, many slaves were also released into freedom following their religious conversion and integration into the host society. As a consequence, for many European slaves as well as many Muslim slaves in Europe, slavery was not permanent. In fact, well-known figures such as the Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes (1547–1616), the author of *Don Quixote*, spent time as slaves in Algiers and elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire. Ironically, so did John Newton (1725–1807), a British captain of a vessel engaged in the Atlantic slave trade, who later became a clergyman.

Coerced and Forced Migration: Europe's Global Footprint

If migration was not always voluntary, the nature and extent of force applied to different groups differed widely. Settlement programmes like those mentioned in the previous sections could offer incentives for those agreeing to move—alongside a wide variety of punishments for those who refused to comply—as with the expulsions of Jews and Moriscos from the Iberian Peninsula. Another type of coerced migration is the movement of those who exchanged their prison sentences in Europe for exile in overseas territories and—in so doing—played an important role in the formation of empires. For example, the Portuguese Empire in West Africa and the Indian Ocean (Estado da India) depended on prisoners who served as soldiers in its outposts. 'Gypsies' (Romani people) would also be transferred to the overseas territories. It is also worth mentioning the so-called *Órfãs d'El-Rei*—orphaned daughters and widows mostly of minor nobility who served the Portuguese Crown—especially in the case of the Estado da India. After spending some time in an orphanage in Lisbon, where the values and qualities considered appropriate for model females were instilled in them, they travelled to the overseas territories with a dowry that enabled them to marry there. This migration, while forced by circumstance, opened up interesting opportunities for these women and their families as a result of their marital unions. The so-called *filles du roy*, sent by Louis XIV to New France (Canada), played a similar role in helping to increase the number of inhabitants of European descent in the French American territories.

The migration of around one million indentured servants to the British colonies or to the Caribbean during the early modern period should also be considered here. Indentured servants were men or women who took out so-called 'indentures': loans to pay for the cost of their transportation overseas. In return, the labourers were obliged to work without salary for their employers for typically between four and seven years. Although they

were not slaves, their living conditions were often not that different. Many indentured servants decided to migrate to escape from poverty or to look for new opportunities, but a significant number of them were deceived about the conditions they were going to find, forced to migrate for religious reasons, or as a punishment for having participated in rebellions or civil wars, while some were even kidnapped. This brings this type of migration closer to others in which coercion played a major role.

Europe and its colonies in the New World also played a key role, of course, in what is not only a particularly gruesome example of forced migration, but most likely the numerically largest global migration in the early modern period: the deportation of approximately 8.6 million enslaved Africans to the Americas between 1500 and 1800 (a relatively small number of about 11,000 Africans were also taken to Europe itself). Conditions aboard the vessels which carried them were so disastrous that almost one and a half million people lost their lives before reaching the Western shores of the Atlantic (see Figure 1). After Europeans had brought new diseases that killed large parts of the indigenous populations of the Americas, they established vast sugar plantations (primarily in Brazil and the Caribbean) in which enslaved Africans were worked to exhaustion and, more often than not, death. Europeans bought and transported these forced labourers to supply plantations with manpower— and it was also Europeans who consumed the sugar produced by slave labour. While by far the largest numbers of enslaved Africans were transported on Portuguese and British-owned ships, the slave trade was such big business that it drew in players from all over the European continent—if not as active participants, then at least as investors. Moreover, since slaves were not simply robbed but often bought from African traders, the trans-Atlantic slave trade provided a stimulus for export-oriented manufacturing in Europe itself as well as the European colonies in Asia. Despite rising political agitation against the slave trade and the enslavement of Africans from the late eighteenth century onwards, the trade continued until the mid-nineteenth century.

Conclusion

For Europeans, migration was common in the early modern period, as they migrated within the continent and to other parts of the world. They did so for a wide array of reasons, but usually they migrated in order to improve their situation, seeking safety and economic opportunities. However, migration was not always voluntary. Repressive policies prompted religious minorities— members of various Christian groups, Jews, and Muslims—to settle elsewhere. Displacement caused by religious policies, as well as displacement caused by warfare, had wide-ranging implications for economic, cultural, and intellectual life in the migrants' new homes, as well as the places they left

behind. Migration was also stimulated by early modern authorities' deliberate settlement programmes, which they undertook in order to repopulate war-torn landscapes, increase their hold on newly conquered territories, or attract particular talent. Europe's contact with the wider world following the voyages of 'discovery' in the fifteenth century created new opportunities and destinations for migration, providing a way out for those who had few opportunities, or substituting exile in the colonies for punishment at home. The continued practice of slavery, finally, resulted in the large-scale deportation of people, especially from Africa, across the Atlantic to Europe's new American colonies. This latter movement was predicated on the migration of Europeans to the New World, a movement which had profound effects not only on the populations, economies, political conditions, and cultures of Europe itself, but also those of Africa and the Americas.

Discussion questions

1. This chapter shows that migration was a common experience in early modern Europe. Describe how this experience differed in different parts of Europe, e.g. Eastern Europe and the Iberian Peninsula.

2. What role did religion play in early modern migrations?

3. Think about similarities and differences with Europe today: how has this experience changed or remained the same?

4. How has migration shaped Europe's engagement with the rest of the world in the early modern period?

Suggested reading

Bade, Klaus J., Pieter C. Emmer, Leo Lucassen and Jochen Oltmer, eds, *The Encyclopedia of European Migration and Minorities: From the Seventeenth Century to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

García-Arenal, Mercedes and Gerard Wiegers, eds, *The Expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain: A Mediterranean Diaspora* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014).

Israel, Jonathan I., *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism (1550–1750)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

Klein, Herbert S., *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Terpstra, Nicholas, *Religious Refugees in the Early Modern World: An Alternative History of the Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

1.3.2 Migration and Diaspora in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Ido de Haan, Juan Luis Simal, and Erika Szívós

Introduction

In the nineteenth century, the manifestation of European influence and power and the worldwide presence of Europeans were expressed in dramatic histories of migration. From the end of the eighteenth century, Europeans were on the move on an increasing scale, and this movement had a profound impact on the European continent and the world at large.

This increase in the mobility of Europeans took place, first of all, within Europe itself. Older accounts of the nineteenth century focused on urbanisation, understood as a unidirectional movement from the countryside to the cities. In fact, internal European migration was a rather complicated, back-and-forth movement of people between town and countryside on the tide of a seasonal and conjunctural labour market and the pulse of international conquest and conflict. An increasing number of people, enabled by improved highways and waterways, and—especially—the fast expansion of the railway, were able not just to leave their home, but also to travel back to places which they had never completely left—places with which they had remained in touch anyway, due to the expansion of the telegraph and the spectacular growth of the press.

The same can be said for the upturn in migration beyond Europe: even at this greater distance, facilitated by the construction of large and fast steel steam ships, migration was only partly a definitive emigration. Just as Europeans moved around within Europe, their global trajectory of migration was often more circular than linear. Even if European migrants settled permanently elsewhere, they remained in close contact with their 'homeland' (a term that itself captures the nostalgic way that the territory of departure came to be viewed). Additionally, increasingly invasive imperial rule by the British, French, German, Dutch, and Belgians subjected people beyond Europe

to colonial rule, and implicated them in multi-ethnic empires, thus creating conditions for the migration of colonial subjects to the imperial centres in the century thereafter.

Ironically, these tides of global migration emerged alongside the growing influence of nationalism as an ideology, and of national states as the primary form of political organisation. As migrants transitioned from one country and culture to another, they increasingly identified themselves as members of diasporic communities, with strong ties to their nations of origin. At the same time, regional identities—for example of Galicians who moved to Madrid or Buenos Aires or of the many Frenchmen from the provinces moving to Paris—continued to play an important role in the broader context of developing nationalisms. As the national state created new constitutional frameworks that reinforced the position of national citizens, they also produced a new push-factor of forced migration in the form of mass expulsion of, or discrimination against, people who did not fit the specific characteristics of the nation as defined by the state.

Political Exiles, Deportees and Refugees

The increased mobility of Europeans was driven by various factors, of which economic needs and opportunities, infrastructural facilities, and legal constraints were among the most important. But just as important were political factors which forced people to migrate, such as political activism and violent conflict. Political exile was ubiquitous in nineteenth-century Europe. The phenomenon was, at the time, generally referred to as 'emigration' in most European languages—an etymological legacy of the French Revolution, when thousands of reactionary noblemen and clergymen known as émigrés (accompanied by their families and servants) left France to find refuge in neighbouring countries.

Typically, exile followed revolution and regime change. From 1789 onwards, supporters of the previous regime and unsuccessful challengers of the powers that be habitually went into exile. This continued until the Paris Commune and the socialist and anarchist upheavals at the end of the century. For instance, in 1821 many Italian liberals arrived in Spain and Portugal, where constitutional governments had been installed the previous year. However, the fall of both Iberian regimes in 1823 forced thousands of Spanish, Portuguese, and Italians to find shelter in other parts of Europe, especially England and France. Particularly significant was the Polish Great Emigration, which began after 1830 and grew further after the 1863 uprising against Russian domination. Also, the pan-European 1848 revolutions—and their suppression—sent thousands of Italians, Germans, Hungarians, Czechs

and Romanians into exile. Many of them, known as the Forty-Eighters, left Europe for the Americas.

Among these exiles were many prominent political and intellectual figures, like the Italian Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872), the Pole Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855), the German Heinrich Heine (1797–1856), the Frenchman Victor Hugo (1802–1885), the Russian anarchists Mikhail Bakunin (1814–1876) and Pyotr Kropotkin (1842–1921), or their socialist compatriot Aleksandr Herzen (1812–1870). Karl Marx (1818–1883), one of the foremost intellectuals of the century and a father of communism, lived and produced most of his works in exile in Belgium, France, and England. Some political leaders who lived part of their lives in exile, like the Italian Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882) or the Hungarian Louis Kossuth (1802–1894), became truly European celebrities. The circulation of exiles promoted the spread of political ideas and the configuration of an international political culture based on the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

However, it was not just liberals, republicans, or socialists who experienced exile. Counterrevolutionaries and royals also did; in fact, they were the first to be called émigrés, in response to the French Revolution, and while Napoleon's exile to Elba and Saint Helena was forced, the last French Bourbon king, Charles X (1757–1836), left the country of his own accord after the 1830 Revolution. Isabel II (1830–1904), Queen of Spain, settled in Paris for the rest of her life after she was dethroned by the 1868 Revolution. Carlos (1788–1855), her reactionary uncle and rival in the Carlist War of 1833–1840, died as an exile in Trieste, which was then part of the Habsburg Empire. Dom Miguel (1802–1866), the losing party in the Portuguese Civil War, was banned in 1834 together with all of his descendants and died in exile, as did the French Emperor Louis-Napoléon (1808–1873) after he was ousted in 1871. The German Emperor Wilhelm II (1859–1941) was perhaps the last example of the nineteenth-century monarchs who went into exile: after fleeing the country on 10 November 1918, he died in the Netherlands in 1941.

Moreover, not all people who had left their homeland as a result of political circumstances belonged to a hereditary or intellectual elite. The Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815) were fought by multinational armies who, after the decisive Battle of Waterloo on 18 June 1815, ended up far from their native lands. Thousands of anonymous men and women spent years in exile in precarious situations. Some resided in spaces purposely designed to receive them, including what today would be called refugee camps. The acceptance of large numbers of political refugees was sometimes inspired by tolerance of political pluralism, yet more often than not, their presence was a source of anxiety for indigenous political elites concerned with the import of violent political radicalism. Notably, the dispersion of the demobilised soldiers of

Napoleon's *Grande Armée* fuelled fears of an international revolution among the elites of the post-revolutionary era. Similar fears were triggered by the exiled revolutionaries of 1848 and 1871, and to an even greater extent by the Russian, Italian, French, and Spanish anarchists who—after a series of bomb attacks in the 1880s—targeted European heads of state during the 'decade of regicides' in the 1890s. Each of these groups of political exiles were suspected to belong to international revolutionary networks—and for good reason, as many of these exiles aimed for this sort of international network. For instance, Giuseppe Mazzini, founder of the nationalist movement 'Young Italy', inspired the establishment in 1834 of the international association 'Young Europe'. Another example is the 'Central European Democratic Committee', formed in London in 1850 to bring about revolutionary political change on a continental scale. Also in London, the International Workingmen's Association was established in 1864 as the first of several consecutive 'Internationals' which sought to unite all workers of the world. Their ultimate failure to do so is characteristic of most of these international networks of exiled radicals. Yet, ironically, their attempts did mobilise their opponents to create similar international networks with counterrevolutionary aims. Notably, the various national police forces developed an international network in their attempt to monitor and control the movement of people through systematic forms of registration and documentation like passports and visas.

Policing the mobility of Europeans was also a manifestation of the increased power of the state. This increased power of the state was another important factor which induced a growing number of people to leave their homelands. Western European religious and political dissidents were, or at least were made to feel, forced to leave their homelands: for instance, repression by the Dutch state following the Protestant Church Secession of 1834 compelled some 7,500 Dutch orthodox Protestants to leave for Iowa and Michigan. Both after the revolution of 1848 and the Paris Commune of 1871, and also as a regular punishment, several thousand French political opponents were deported to the colonies of New Caledonia and French Guyana, the Jewish officer Alfred Dreyfus (1859–1935) among them. Much larger numbers of refugees were fleeing war, ethnic cleansing, and genocide. For instance, between 1821 and 1828 Greek nationalists forced some 200,000 Turks to flee from Greece. After the Crimean War of 1853–1856, the Russian Emperor Alexander II (1818–1881) forced a similar number of Tatars to move, mainly to Anatolia, yet these numbers were dwarfed by the hundreds of thousands of Muslims expelled after the Russian 'pacification' of the Caucasus (1859–1864). In the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871), 80,000 Germans were expelled from France, while 130,000 French citizens felt forced to leave Alsace-Lorraine. From the end of the century through to the First World War, the fragmentation of

the Ottoman Empire and the continuous conflicts and wars that ensued in the Balkans and in Eastern Turkey led to the movement of an endless number of people—Armenians and Kurds, Bulgarians and Greeks—between contested territories. And between 1880 and 1914, long before the Holocaust, around 2.5 million Jews from Russia and Eastern Europe tried to escape persecution and murder, with many travelling across the Atlantic to the USA, while a small number went southwards, ending up in Palestine.

Internal European Mass Migration

While exile, deportation, and refuge involved specific groups targeted for political reasons, much larger groups were mobilised for social and economic reasons. Various groups engaged in seasonal mobility or some form of temporary migration: aristocratic families moved regularly between their landed estates and urban residences; artisans and journeymen looked for work in other regions—and even in other countries—for extended periods of time, often settling down in remote cities; girls and older, unmarried women moved away from their villages and towns to seek employment as domestic servants; adolescents and young adults, primarily the sons of the nobility, the intelligentsia, and children of urban patricians, strove for personal growth and intellectual qualifications by attending secondary schools and universities in other regions, or by touring around Europe to visit all the sites of Western civilisation. But the lower strata of society—especially the peasantry, which at that time constituted the decisive majority of societies—remained largely tied to their birthplaces or narrow regions. The only exceptional situation in which young adult males from rural areas experienced the outside world *en masse* was war: tens of thousands of men, for example, participated in the Napoleonic Wars as soldiers between 1800 and 1814, in search of money, adventure, or heroism.

Here also, political and legal conditions were important. Despite the growing impact of states on the movement of people, the nineteenth century could become the age of migration due to the rising political influence of the liberal notion of 'laissez-faire, laissez-passer', which resulted in a general relaxation of legal constraints on mobility. This did not happen everywhere at the same time: in the United Kingdom, the partial repeal in 1795 of the 1662 Act of Settlement and Removal marked the end of parish serfdom. However, the central and eastern parts of Europe were characterised at that time by relatively immobile societies. That was especially true of the rural population, given the fact that serfdom was not abolished in all of Prussia until 1807 or in the Habsburg Monarchy until 1848, and was not abandoned in the Russian Empire until 1861. In certain areas of the Russian Empire, like the Baltic

governorates or the Kingdom of Poland (the eastern half of Poland then under Russian rule) serfdom had ceased to exist earlier, and by mid-century, there were legal opportunities in all of the above-mentioned countries for serfs to buy the lands they cultivated. However, in practice very few people could take advantage of those opportunities to become independent farmers: most peasants remained subordinate, tied to the land owned by their landlords.

Migration did not and could not become a mass phenomenon as long as the necessary infrastructure remained severely underdeveloped or was missing altogether. In the German states (i.e. states that would after 1871 comprise Imperial Germany) and in the lands of the Habsburg Monarchy (e.g. Lower and Upper Austria, Bohemia, or Moravia), the road network was relatively well-developed and well-maintained, but in East-Central and Eastern Europe most roads and highways were not paved before 1850. The first railway lines appeared in the region in the late 1830s, but it took decades even in the more advanced areas for the railway network to develop into a dense web, and railway connections remained extremely scant in South-Eastern Europe until the last decades of the century.

While legal and infrastructural conditions enabled migration, the major motives for mass migration within Europe were economic push and pull factors: poverty, want, work, and pay. This implied that industrialisation, urbanisation, and migration were interconnected processes which mutually stimulated each other, yet never in a straightforward way: the availability of work was influenced by the shift from an agricultural to an industrial economy, forcing many people to move from the countryside to the city. But the development of industry was never strictly related to urbanisation, and industrialisation was unevenly spread across Europe. Emergent industrial centres in England and Northern Europe attracted many immigrants, but large-scale industries arrived only in the second half of the century in Central, Eastern, and most of Southern Europe. Perhaps not by coincidence, these latter areas were also sources of long-distance emigration to the Americas.

International and Global Migration

Throughout the entire nineteenth century, and long into the twentieth century, many more emigrants left Europe than immigrants from elsewhere who entered the continent. In this period, some 55 to 60 million people left Europe. In relative terms, Argentina became the country with the largest immigrant community: around 1914, fifty-eight percent of its eight million inhabitants were first- or second-generation immigrants, often from Spain and Italy. Other popular destinations were Brazil, Australia, and Canada. Yet in absolute numbers, about a third of all European emigrants left for the United States

of America. Emigrants to North America initially came predominantly from the British Isles (including Ireland), Scandinavia, and Germany. After 1870, emigrants from Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe began to join them, with numbers reaching mass proportions of one million a year in the first decade of the twentieth century. They left Europe on giant ocean liners through seaports, the most important of which were Hamburg on the North Sea and Trieste on the Adriatic. Those who left Europe for the United States arrived at New York first, and crossed the threshold of the 'New World' through the port on Ellis Island where they were registered by the US immigration authorities. By the eve of the First World War, East-Central, Eastern, and Southern European emigration had reached mass proportions.
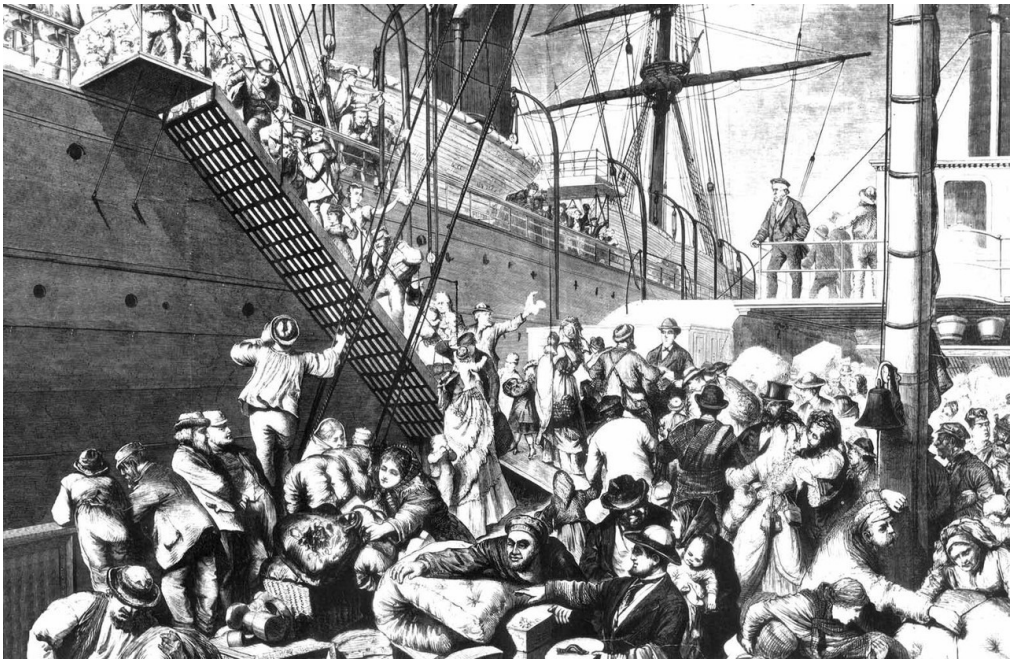
Fig. 1: 'From the old to the new world': German emigrants for New York embarking on a Hamburg steamer (1874), European Geosciences Union, https://www.egu.eu/medialibrary/image/2841/ illustration-depicting-germans-emigrating-to-america-in-the-19th-century/.

People who emigrated to the United States and to other target countries were mainly motivated by economic considerations: poverty, lack of professional opportunities, and infertile lands were the most common reasons why they made the strenuous journey. Mass emigration in particular from the poorest areas and provinces of Southern, Central, and Eastern Europe was a significant phenomenon. For example, out of the total number of three million emigrants from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, 1.7 million came from Hungary; many of them were natives of mountainous regions with meagre opportunities for

agricultural cultivation. Some emigrants, however, were not destitute at all, as emigration required investments. In several cases, people sold their houses or landed property in order to finance their trip and establish themselves in the Americas. These more enterprising types were seeking the opportunity to improve their status and accumulate savings overseas which could also be invested back home. Such intentions seem to be confirmed by noticeable rates of re-migration: some migrants in fact travelled back and forth between the United States and Eastern or Southern Europe two or three times.

Beyond such economic motives, decisions to emigrate—and more importantly, the choice of country and region to which to migrate—were made on the basis of a wide range of other parameters, which together shaped a global 'migration system'. One important factor was the deliberate policies of European states to facilitate migration via financial and practical support (for example), or through direct deportation. In most cases, these policies were the product of a desire to be relieved of the burden of poor, unproductive, or criminal(-ised) citizens. Another important factor influencing the destiny of migrants were the policies of the receiving country. For instance, migration to the USA only took off after an Indiana court in 1821 banned the 'redemption system', in which destitute migrants were forced into bondage after they had to borrow money to enter the country. Similarly, migration to Australia was stimulated by the London-based Australian Colonial Land and Emigration Commission.

Perhaps even more important for the decision of where to migrate were family ties and local communities. From connections to preceding pioneer migrants in communities such as these, aspiring emigrants received information about the requirements of travel, and practical support once they arrived at their destination. They received crucial information about prospects of work, again conditioned by contacts with earlier migrants in the same profession or trade. And as these interconnections created forms of 'chain migration'— of one group following another—migrants also remained connected to the national communities they had left behind, contributing to the emergence of nationally defined immigrant communities that only partially assimilated into a new national identity. Many of these migrant communities were also geographically clustered: the Irish in Boston, the 'German Belt' between Ohio, Nebraska, Wisconsin, and Missouri; the Dutch who established Holland in Michigan. This continued interaction between homeland and host country also allowed for the possibility of a future return to Europe. Numbers varied dramatically: no more than five percent of all Jewish immigrants to the USA returned to Europe, while eighty-nine percent of the Bulgarians and Serbians

returned before the First World War, and half of the Italians who moved to the USA between 1905 and 1915 moved back to Italy.

Despite the fact that migration between Europe and the Americas was the most substantial movement of people in the nineteenth century, it is important to note that other parts of the world were also part of this global migration system. For instance, between 1848 and 1882, some 300,000 Chinese labourers came to the USA, mainly to work in railway construction or gold mines—until the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 banned all Chinese migration (until 1943). Even more significant is slavery and the slave trade. Although the number of people enslaved and traded quickly declined in the first half of the century (and came to an end in the second half) its impact on the USA and other migrant societies remained crucial. Equally important is how the end of slavery resulted in intra-imperial migration of indentured labourers, who were needed to compensate for the loss of labour from enslaved Africans, and who were employed under conditions that differed only marginally from that of slavery. People were also on the move in the nineteenth century between non-European parts of colonial empires—between India, Kenya, and South Africa, between the Dutch Indies and Surinam. In this colonial framework, we also catch a glimpse of the history of the odd one out: France. While it was for most of the century the only European country with an immigration surplus—as a result of the large number of British, Belgian, German, Italian, Russian and notably Polish immigrants—some 700,000 French nationals moved to Algeria after it was occupied in 1830 and incorporated as a department of the French state in 1848.

Conclusion

From the point of international and especially overseas migration, the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries formed a continuum. The First World War, however, represented a serious break, and after 1914 mass migration from Europe was no longer possible in its previous forms. The reasons were three-fold: first, countries which formerly sent and received migration (e.g. Germany and the Habsburg Monarchy, and the United States, respectively) became enemies during the Great War; second, state borders and state formations changed beyond recognition in and after 1918; third, in the 1920s, strict immigration quotas were introduced in the United States by the Emergency Quota Act of 1921 and additional legislation, which meant that the citizens of former empires' successor states could no longer emigrate to the USA in the same numbers as before.

Discussion questions

1. This chapter shows that migration was a common experience in nineteenth-century Europe. Describe how this experience differed in different parts of Europe, e.g. Eastern Europe and Western Europe.

2. Think about similarities with and differences from Europe today: how has this experience changed or remained the same?

3. How has migration shaped Europe's engagement with the rest of the world in the nineteenth century?

Suggested reading

Bade, Klaus J., *Migration in European History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003).

Bade, Klaus J., Piet C. Emmer, Leo Lucassen, and Jochen Oltmer, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Migration and Minorities in Europe: From the 17th Century to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Bartram, David, Maritsa V. Poros and Pierre Monforte, *Key Concepts in Migration* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2014).

Blumi, Isa, *Ottoman Refugees, 1878–1939: Migration in a Post-Imperial World* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013).

Jianu, Angela, *A Circle of Friends: Romanian Revolutionaries and Political Exile, 1840–1859* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

Lucassen, Jan and Leo Lucassen, eds, *Globalising Migration History: The Eurasian Experience (16th–21st centuries)* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014).

Oltmer, Jochen, *Migration: Geschichte und Zukunft der Gegenwart* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2017).

Osterhammel, Jürgen, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

Page Moch, Leslie, *Moving Europeans: Migration in Western Europe Since 1650* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003).

Torpey, John, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State*, Second edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

1.3.3 Migration in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Ondřej Daniel, Ido de Haan, and Isabelle Surun

Introduction

While the nineteenth century can be seen as the age of voluntary migration, when millions of Europeans looking for work, livelihood, and freedom were on the move—from countryside to cities, from East to West, both within and beyond Europe—the twentieth century presents a much more complicated picture. Its complexity partly stems from the manifold experiences of a wide variety of people and groups, ranging from Russian emigrants in Europe after the Russian Revolution in 1917 to Czechoslovakian refugees after 1968; from Turkish labour migrants since the mid-1950s to affluent British migrants in the Costa del Sol in the late twentieth century.

One important factor that shaped these experiences was the state, which played a much more active role in controlling migration from 1900 onwards. Particularly during the first half of the twentieth century, large groups of people were pushed from one country to another by contradictory attempts by nation states to restrict migration and to enforce population transfer. Forced migration became one of the instruments of ethnic cleansing—next to forced assimilation and genocide. It contributed to 'the unmixing of peoples' which by mid-century had resulted in a Europe of ethnically homogenised nation states.

In the first part of the century, the flow of migration still largely moved away from Europe; in the second half, migrants started to move towards Europe, challenging the national orientation of the post-war welfare—and, to a lesser extent, also the communist—state. And while European migration before the nineteenth century already took place in a global context, a new surge of globalisation after 1970 inaugurated a global migration system. In this context, Europe was but one region among many between which people

moved, yet it also created the conditions in which the channelling of migration came to be seen as a collective European responsibility.

Migration in the Age of Territoriality: The First World War and the Interwar Period

The historian Charles Maier has identified the period between 1870 and 1950 as 'the age of territoriality'. In this period, European states defined their mutual relations increasingly in terms of competition, both on the continent and in imperial conquest beyond Europe. In this context, migration transformed from a nineteenth-century solution to the Malthusian fear of overpopulation into a threat to national strength, both because enterprising people left the territory of the state and because other people, considered dangerous or unfit, came in.

This Darwinian view of the relationship between states was one of the causes of the First World War, which in itself was an important impetus for the dislocation of people in Europe. The scale of this war—geographically, in terms of the total mobilisation of the population, and in the extent of bloodshed—brought about a massive movement of people who tried to flee from their homes. Around 500,000 people from Eastern Prussia and 800,000 from Galicia fled from the Russian Army, while the counteroffensive of the Central Powers caused many Russians to flee to the east, contributing to a total of seven million refugees in 1917.

The end of the First World War initiated yet another wave of forced migration. During the collapse of the Russian Empire, the Russian Revolution, and subsequent Civil War, some two million people tried to escape from violence, fleeing to the West: to Berlin, Paris, and also the United States. The defeat of the Central Powers resulted in the forced migration of some one million German nationals and Hungarians to Germany. This was not only a consequence of the war, but also of the following peace treaties which reinforced this process of ethnic sortition. The underlying principle of national self-determination informed the creation of new nation states, each of which claimed the right to define the parameters of national identity, and to insist on the removal of people who did not fit this definition. Often, this took the form of deliberate population exchanges.

These transfers were a prelude to the migration restrictions that states came to impose over the course of the 1920s. These restrictions were not only motivated by racist ideas of cultural homogeneity, but often supported by trade unions opposed to the import of cheap labour. Such ideas informed the United States Immigration Act of 1924, which imposed quotas that severely limited the immigration of Eastern and Southern Europeans, as well as Asians. But within Europe as well, states closed their borders to foreigners. In many

states, temporary wartime restrictions on migration became permanent barriers. In the United Kingdom, for example, the Aliens Restriction Act of 1914 was replaced in 1920 by the Aliens Order. The German Empire had already initiated its first restrictions on immigration before the war, with a requirement to carry passports and the compulsory return of seasonal migrant workers during the winter. These restrictions were made permanent in the Weimar Republic, which required that every alien crossing the borders of the Reich in either direction had to present a passport with a visa.

But even then, there were also reverse trends. After many young men had died in the war, a 'National Alliance for the Growth of the French Population' was established, which successfully campaigned for the reception of immigrants in France, including some 500,000 Poles, one million Italians, and 300,000 Belgians. The economic problems of the Weimar Republic caused a wave of emigration to the Netherlands of some 200,000 German female domestic workers and an even larger number of male factory workers and miners. This only ended after the economic crisis impacted France and the Netherlands in the early 1930s.

German-Jewish refugees were welcomed much less enthusiastically: they were even formally banned from entering the Netherlands after the number of refugees surged in the aftermath of the November Pogrom of 1938. At that point, France had also established restrictions on migration, as had all other countries. At the conference in Évian (France) of 6–15 July 1938, assembled by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to discuss the fate of German-Jewish refugees, none of the thirty-two countries present—except for the Dominican Republic—were prepared to accept Jewish refugees.

Migration in the Age of Territoriality: The Second World War

The turmoil in Europe created by the rise of Hitler and German expansionism brought about population movements which overwhelmed formal legal barriers. While the occupation of the Sudetenland in 1938 had already chased several hundred thousand inhabitants from their homes, the start of the war in September 1939 dislocated a huge number of people who were caught between the frontlines. Immediately after the German invasion, hundreds of thousands of civilians in Poland and the Baltics fled the region, while around 600,000 Polish prisoners of war (POWs) ended up in German and Soviet camps. After Poland was overrun and its inhabitants robbed of their statehood, some three million inhabitants—half of them Jewish—were forcibly expelled from the western parts of the country and sent to the newly-established General Government. Many were sent to concentration and labour camps, where most

perished. Elsewhere in Europe, people were also forced to leave their homes or flee from violence. In 1939, some 500,000 Spaniards fled to France after the collapse of the Spanish Republic (the 'Retirada'), while some 100,000 Greeks left Thrace and Macedonia after it was occupied by Bulgaria. Italian expansion forced Serbs, Hungarians, Croatians, and Slovenians—perhaps 500,000 people in total—out of parts of the South-East of Europe.

The number of people forced to leave their home increased exponentially after Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union. The German invasion of the Soviet Union constituted the start of the Holocaust, the destruction of the Jews of Europe, when the large-scale and lethal violence against Jews in occupied Poland transformed into a systematic attempt to remove and physically extinguish all Jews present in Nazi-occupied Europe. While Jews were deported, some 7.5 million people—German nationals and forced labourers, mainly from Poland and the Soviet Union, but also over two million from Western Europe—were brought into the pre-war realm of the German Empire. Moreover, the German Army interned some 5.7 million Soviet POWs, of whom about half were starved to death or shot.

At the same time, the Soviets held some three million German POWs, of whom some 380,000 died in custody. They were only a small portion of the people on Soviet territory who were subject to deportation or forced migration. This had started as early as the 1930s, with dekulakisation, which targeted some two million people between 1929 and 1932, the large-scale purges of the 1930s, and the Holodomor (or Great Famine) in Soviet Ukraine from 1932–1933, all of which devastated the lives of millions of people.

As was the case at the end of the First World War, the end of the Second World War saw another wave of forced migrations. While the Soviets had gladly expelled political enemies in 1917, they now insisted on the repatriation of all Russians in the West, not only to bring back Soviet citizens, but also to prevent the creation of foreign opposition to the Soviet regime, as had emerged after the First World War. The largest group consisted of Russian POWs in German custody. Before being allowed to resettle, they were all assessed for political reliability and productive capacity. As a result, some fifteen percent of four million were directly sent through to Soviet forced labour camps, creating fear and opposition of the last half a million Soviet POWs, who in 1946 resisted repatriation.

They supplemented a much larger group of around eleven million displaced persons (DPs), most of whom remained in Germany, now occupied by the Allied Forces. Apart from POWs, this group consisted of forced labourers, Jews, and political prisoners interned in concentration camps. Many of them returned home before the end of 1945, yet the 250,000 Jewish DPs from all over Europe who had survived the German camps had little to return to, as in

1946–1947 another wave of antisemitic violence against Jewish survivors swept over parts of Eastern Europe. Many of them emigrated to Western Europe, the United States, or Palestine.

And again, just as after the First World War, the peace settlements at the end of the Second World War forced yet another massive number of people to leave their homes. The Soviet military campaign had already motivated many Germans in Eastern Europe to flee to the East. Yet even more followed after the Potsdam Agreement of August 1945, which stated that "the transfer to Germany of German populations […] will have to be undertaken." This led to the expulsion of about 3.5 million German nationals ('Volksdeutsche') from Polish territory, 3.2 million people from Czechoslovakia, and about 225,000 people from Hungary. Despite the stipulation that this "should be effected in an orderly and humane manner," it is estimated that some two million died in the course of these deportations. The large majority of these 'Heimatvertriebenen' (people chased from their homeland) settled in the western occupation zones, bringing the total number of migrants in the newly established Federal Republic of Germany to some twelve million people.

The transnational nature of the problem of forced migration during the first half of the twentieth century led to the development of institutions dedicated to this cause, in the context of newly emerging forms of global governance. The first attempts at the international concertation of migration came in 1921, when the Norwegian explorer Fridtjof Nansen (1861–1930) was appointed High Commissioner on behalf of the League of Nations in connection with the problem of Russian refugees. This project became further entrenched in the 'Convention Relating to the International Status of Refugees' of 28 October 1933. Yet as the failure of the Évian conference in 1938 had demonstrated, there was no strong commitment to such collective responsibility. A more successful collaboration only emerged in response to the massive refugee crisis at the end of the Second World War, when the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was established in 1943. Despite its successful management of the repatriation of millions of displaced persons, it suffered from disagreements that worsened due to the emergent Cold War and fell apart in 1947. It was replaced by the International Refugee Organization, which in 1952 in turn made way for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Migration in East and West during the Cold War

From the 1950s onwards, migration patterns in Europe started to change. After more than half a century of often very violent and highly lethal population transfers, deportations, forced migrations, and the flight from violence of

tens of millions of people, the demography of Europe had been drastically reordered. As a result of this 'ethnic sortition', European states were now composed of much more homogeneous national groups, which at the same time consisted of many people who were very recent migrants. The Cold War and consequent division of Europe also led to a bifurcation in migration flows: in the east, countries were generally confronted with the emigration of political and ethnic minorities, further reinforcing the cultural uniformity of these countries, despite some immigration from developing countries (for example of Vietnamese students and workers into East Germany). Western Europe on the other hand became a region of immigration, which led to new forms of diversity.

In the context of the Cold War and the imposition of communist rule in Eastern Europe, many fled from oppression. Until the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, around 3.5 million people fled from East to West Germany. Also, tens of thousands of people fled from other communist countries annually, with surges after the uprisings in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968) and the imposition of martial law in Poland in 1981. After the partial liberalisation of emigration policies in the Soviet Union in the 1980s, more than half of the remaining 2.5 million Jews fled from the persistent antisemitic tendencies they had faced there. A final chapter of emigration from communist countries resulted from the war that ensued in 1991 after the break-up of Yugoslavia, after which some 400,000 people fled to the West, with half of them ending up in Germany.

The picture for Western Europe in the post-war period is very different. There, immigration set the tone, from Southern Europe and Northern Africa, but also from the former colonies, after the Second World War brought down the colonial empires of Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and finally also Portugal.

From 1948 onwards, Western Europe went through an extended period of unprecedented economic growth, which lasted until the mid-1970s. Rising investment, wages, and consumer demand contributed to acute shortages on the labour market, especially for low-skilled and lower-paid labour. This inspired national governments in close cooperation with employers' organisations to invite able-bodied people to come to work in the industrial centres of Europe. Initially, many came from the poorest regions of Italy, Spain, and Portugal to the urban centres in their own country. But soon this internal migration was overtaken by migration to France, Germany, and the Benelux countries. Between the 1950s and the 1970s, several million Italians, around one million Spaniards, and 1.5 million Portuguese—a fifth of the latter's total population—ended up in the factories and mines of the industrial

heartland, or as cleaners or domestic servants in the quickly expanding service economy of North-Western Europe. These mass migrations contributed to the depopulation of poorer regions in Southern Europe—a loss which was compensated by the very substantial remittances sent back home. These savings, as well as the temporary residence permits for these 'guest workers' underlined the expectation, both of the labour migrants and the host societies, that the former would return home to enjoy the fruits of their labour once the work was done.

But while their position in the host countries remained provisional—in terms of political and social rights, housing, social support, education, and cultural integration—the duration of their stays lengthened, because of the lack of prospects in their homelands, but also because the demand for labour only grew, leading to the attraction of workers from other countries, notably Morocco and Turkey. The governments, and sometimes also members of the indigenous population of their new homelands, were however ill-prepared, and sometimes outright hostile to the idea of integrating these newcomers on a more permanent basis. In this respect, the position of guest workers started to resemble that of the second type of immigrant in post-war Europe: those people within colonial empires.

(Post)Colonial Migration

Colonial rulers in the first half of the twentieth century had experimented with a variety of halfway modes of citizenship. The neo-colonial arrangements emerging during the course of decolonisation continued these ambivalent forms of colonial citizenship, as substantial numbers of formerly colonised people made their way to the imperial centres of power, via family ties, labour migration, or as refugees. They contributed to the creation of a multi-ethnic European society, which—due to their failure to acknowledge the violence involved in its ethnic homogeneity—many Europeans found hard to accept.

In the post-imperial societies of Great Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Portugal, immigration from former colonies became a major phenomenon in the last third of the twentieth century. It occurred at the same time as empires were breaking up, and contributed to a recomposition of societies in North-Western Europe. This type of migration is part of the long history of exchange between colony and metropole, which gives it a particular chronology and certain characteristics.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the presence of populations originating from the colonies was minimal in the imperial metropoles. Migration between metropoles and colonies had typically worked the other way

round: European empires encouraged the emigration of their citizens to settler colonies. From the 1920s onwards settlement colonialism even experienced a remarkable boom, after the United States had limited entry to its territory through quota laws, practically ending mass immigration from Europe. For example, the colonies, especially the dominions, became the most important destination for British emigration after the First World War. The state sought to control and intensify this process: the Overseas Settlement Committee (1920) encouraged the settlement of demobilised soldiers by financing their journey, and the Empire Settlement Act (1922) facilitated the departure from Britain of more than 400,000 people. Similarly, French emigration to Algeria and the Maghreb protectorates (Morocco and Tunisia) increased in the 1920s and 1930s. In the Italian Empire, mass emigration began in the mid-1930s with the settlement programme launched by Mussolini, to benefit the unemployed and landless peasants. Portugal belatedly launched a supervised emigration programme to its African colonies (Angola and Mozambique), which accounted for fifty percent of Portuguese emigration in the 1950s.

Over the course of the century, many of these European settlers were forced to return. Decolonisation after the Second World War led to the repatriation of millions of Europeans (British, French, Italian, Belgian, Portuguese, and Dutch). These returnees benefited from assisted return and reintegration programmes, which they often considered insufficient. The auxiliaries of the colonial armies, however, often received less support: for example, the Harkis (auxiliaries of the French army in Algeria) who managed to relocate to France at the end of the Algerian Independence War (1954–1962) were permanently housed in camps.

Labour migration to the colonial metropoles began with the First World War. For example, more than 225,000 workers were recruited in the French colonies to replace the mobilised workers in the factories. By 1931, there were about 100,000 Algerians in France, and although their movement was not regulated, the authorities sought to control them through health and social institutions. Algerian immigration increased sharply after 1945 and the Algerian War of Independence did not interrupt this movement, but led to its stabilisation: periods of residence became longer, and family immigration increased.

A similar pattern was present in the decolonisation of the Dutch Empire: some 300,000 migrants, predominantly Eurasians of mixed descent, came to the Netherlands between 1946 and 1964. Before and after Surinamese Independence in 1975, some 190,000 people—almost half of the population—arrived in the former 'motherland'. In this period another 100,000 people from the Dutch Antilles moved to the European part of the Dutch Kingdom.

While Great Britain put an end to the free movement of Indians in 1947, after Indian Independence, France on the contrary introduced agreements with its former colonies that became independent in the early 1960s, allowing entry into French territory without a visa or residence permit. This liberal migration policy was brutally curtailed with the 1973–1974 oil crisis. Restrictive measures were put in place in the early 1990s, transforming those nationals of territories which had formerly enjoyed a form of imperial citizenship into foreigners.

Conclusion

The end of the twentieth century, in stark contrast to its beginnings, has been characterised by free, peaceful, and voluntary movement. The end of the Cold War and the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989–1990 ushered in a period of seemingly frictionless mobility in the supranational framework of the European Union. The adoption of the Schengen Agreement (1985) and Convention (1990) opened up an area of free movement between EU member states, but also put in place 'compensatory measures' to secure external borders and prevent them from being crossed by nationals of non-member countries.

With the Eastern enlargement of 2004 and 2007, which brought the states of the former Eastern Bloc into the fold, Europeans were free to travel and work throughout their continent. Turkey had already been granted candidate status in 1999, promising to expand the area of free movement beyond the continent. The nation state, which had played such a pivotal role in the control of migration throughout the century, seemed to have been relegated to the sidelines of European history.

The beginning of the twenty-first century has clouded this optimistic image. Migration has once more become a contentious issue: the so-called 'refugee crisis' of 2015—the mass migration of people fleeing wars and unrest in the Middle East—arguably led to a rise in populism and polarisation in European politics. Frontex, the agency that has been operating the integrated management of Europe's borders since 2005, has been strengthened and expanded since 2016. It embodies a migration policy that turns the Schengen Area into what is sometimes called 'Fortress Europe': a tightly sealed, self-contained and exclusive space. Migration also played a central role in the 2016 referendum on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU, with the potential accession of Turkey treated as a particularly threatening prospect, despite the fact that accession negotiations have stalled for years. Yet, these contemporary concerns pale in comparison to the staggering numbers of people forced to migrate around, into and out of Europe over the course of the violent twentieth century.

Discussion questions

1. The twentieth century saw unprecedented movement of people in Europe. Describe how this experience differed in different parts of Europe, e.g. Eastern Europe and Western Europe.

2. How has migration shaped Europe's engagement with the rest of the world over the course of the twentieth century?

3. Migration is a contentious issue in Europe today. How does the current situation differ from the twentieth century? How has this experience changed or remained the same?

Suggested reading

Bade, Klaus J. et al., eds, *The Encyclopedia of Migration and Minorities in Europe: From the 17th Century to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Belich, James, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Bonifazi, Corrado and Marija Mamolo, 'Past and Current Trends of Balkan Migrations', *Espace populations sociétés* 3 (2004), 519–531, https://journals. openedition.org/eps/356?file=1.

Brubaker, Roger, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Cohen, Gerard Daniel, *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Constantine, Stephen, 'Migrants and Settlers', in *The Oxford History of the British Empire, vol. IV, The Twentieth Century*, ed. by Judith M. Brown and William Roger Louis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 163–187.

Costa-Lascoux, Jacqueline and Émile Temime, eds, *Les Algériens en France: Genèse et devenir d'une migration* (Paris: Publisud, 1985).

Daniel, Ondřej, 'Gastarbajteri: Rethinking Yugoslav Economic Migrations Toward European North-West, Transnationalism and Popular Culture', in *Imagining Frontiers, Contesting Identities*, ed. by Luďa Klusáková and Steven Ellis (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2007), pp. 277–302.

Fitzpatrick, Sheila, 'The Motherland Calls: "Soft" Repatriation of Soviet Citizens from Europe, 1945–1953', *The Journal of Modern History* 90 (2018), 323–350.

Gatrell, Peter, *The Unsettling of Europe: The Great Migration 1945 to the Present*

(London: Allen Lane, 2019).

Maier, Charles S., *Leviathan 2.0: Inventing Modern Statehood* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014).

Maier, Charles S., *Once Within Borders: Territories of Power, Wealth, and Belonging Since 1500* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016).

Sayad, Abdelmalek, *La Double Absence: Des illusions de l'émigré aux souffrances de l'immigré* (Paris: Seuil, 1999).

Singaravelou, Pierre, 'Des empires en mouvement? Impacts et limites des migrations coloniales', in *Les empires coloniaux, XIXe-XXe siècle*, ed. by Pierre Singaravélou, (Paris: Editions Points, 2013), pp. 125–167.

Stola, Dariusz, 'Forced Migrations in Central European History', *The International Migration Review* 26:2 (1992), 324–341.

Torpey, John C., *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship, and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

CHAPTER 1.4

EUROPE'S OTHER(ED)S: THE AMERICAS, AFRICA, ASIA, AND THE MIDDLE EAST

1.4.1 Europe's Other(ed)s: The Americas, Africa, Asia, and Middle East in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Saúl Martínez Bermejo, Ramachandra Byrappa, Tobias P. Graf, and Markéta Křížová

Introduction

In the Middle Ages, as the Roman Empire receded into the past, the Catholic Church took over as a major force for European integration. But by the end of this period, Europe's centre of commercial gravity was gradually shifting northwards from the Mediterranean system to the Hanseatic system—from a civilisational 'lake' around which peoples, ideas and products circulated, to the mercantile 'lake' of the Baltic Sea. In the fifteenth century, Ottoman expansion in the eastern Mediterranean further affected the commercial activity of Venice and Genoa, setting them on a path of terminal decline. This prompted a number of 'experiments' in Atlantic exploration, based on Genoese seafaring knowledge and led by the Portuguese. Atlantic navigation in the fifteenth century led to an intense pursuit of military conquest and conflict on the west coast of Africa, the Canary Islands, and the Azores. On the Atlantic frontier of both the Mediterranean and Hanseatic systems sat two seemingly peripheral territories: the Iberian Peninsula, which spearheaded European expansion in the sixteenth century, somewhat unexpectedly; and Britain, which had become the dominant maritime power by the late eighteenth century.

Between 1450 and 1800, direct knowledge about the multiple parts and peoples of the globe was continuously expanding through exploration, trade, and military confrontations. Merchants, missionaries, and mercenaries

brought home with them their early impressions of the wider world. Numerous contemporary chronicles, maps, atlases, and travel accounts were published throughout this period. These sources of new information were complemented by drawings, engravings, diaries, and letters. In this respect, the introduction of the printing press was of tremendous importance in accelerating the dissemination of knowledge about the world. However, interpreting the knowledge that early modern Europeans produced about the 'others'—the societies they encountered beyond the borders of the world previously known to them—is a particularly complicated task. While all these sources contributed to widening Europe's understanding of the world, they do not provide a straightforward reflection of the environment, physical appearance, economic activities, social structure, and religious practices of the peoples described. Historical documents are replete with information about the ways in which Europeans perceived what they encountered, but these ethnographical descriptions were, in various ways, structured and distorted according to existing mentalities and cultural frameworks.

Religious beliefs were key to defining the 'others'—usually identified as pagans or infidels—because these were the terms by which Europeans primarily expressed their identity. Geographical, political, and cultural frameworks were of secondary importance. In describing the 'other', Europeans often resorted to gradation to explain the diversity of populations and customs encountered. Thus, specific areas or human groups were considered more or less irreligious, and more or less barbarian, when compared with other parts of the world. A particularly influential hierarchy of non-Christian others was produced by the Spanish missionary José de Acosta (1540–1600), who divided non-European barbarians into three types. According to Acosta, the Chinese were similar to ancient Greeks and Romans in that they lived within clear political structures and possessed a written culture. The Incas (in Peru) and Aztecs (in Mexico) also had powerful monarchies but lacked a system of writing. Finally, a large third group contained all those who had 'no law' (a term that also included religion), and who lacked political structures and fixed settlements. Explicitly or implicitly, Europeans often produced this kind of gradation to order the others, and to justify plans for religious evangelisation and the destruction of local customs.

Perceptions are not merely accidental. They are important because of the role they play in helping to create elaborate systems of prejudice with real economic, political, and social consequences. The poor living conditions in Europe sometimes fostered paradisiac mirror images of extra-European lands, while the notion of 'discovery' enabled the introduction and manipulation of hierarchical structures by Europeans, for example to concoct claims of dominion over faraway lands and peoples.

European Models of 'Otherness'

Two forms of pre-existing knowledge were particularly important for Europeans trying to make sense of new environments beyond their own continent. Firstly, they often used the everyday experiences of their own customs, ways of speaking, social hierarchies, foods, animals, and so on, to compare themselves to others. The Spanish chronicler Fernando González de Oviedo (1478–1557), for instance, compared American avocados to European pears. Second, they relied on literary sources. The Bible provided what was regarded as the authoritative account of the creation of the world and the spread of human groups around the planet. Holy scripture provided a surprisingly flexible framework for integrating the various peoples and communities encountered by Europeans into pre-existing worldviews and assigning them a place in wider human history. Following the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans in 1453, for instance, the military success of their empire was increasingly interpreted in eschatological terms as divine punishment and a harbinger of the approaching apocalypse. In no small way, this interpretation contributed to the development of the theological positions associated with the Reformation and the resulting split of European Christianity.

In dealing with other parts of the world, Europeans also drew on classical sources describing geographical areas far away from the Mediterranean. The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle (385–323 BC) spoke about extreme climatic zones and a middle area where civilisation flourished; the Roman author Pliny (23/24–79) described fabulous races, including dog-headed humans; the ancient Greek historian Herodotus (484–425 BC) produced enduring depictions of external barbarians; and the Greek mathematician Ptolemy (100–170) modelled geographical concepts on the shape and size of the world. Many other formal and informal modes of knowledge undergirded the frameworks within which Europeans were able to see, compare and talk about the worlds of others. Fictional prose was sometimes used, too. The Spanish soldier Bernal Diaz del Castillo (1492–1584) referred to the imagined cities described in the well-known medieval chivalry novel *Amadís de Gaula* when he tried to communicate the awe he experienced in his first encounter with the city of Tenochtitlan, the capital of the Aztec Empire in today's Mexico City. As shown by these examples, new information was often arranged through comparisons and filtered through previous experiences in order to make sense of the world. But at the same time, this expanding body of factual knowledge, alongside first-hand experiences of new worlds and new peoples, altogether had a critical impact on established systems of European thought, engendering new intellectual classifications and new methods of observing and analysing natural phenomena.

Although multidirectional contacts proliferated between many different regions of the world during this period, it was the American continent that Europeans found particularly alien in relation to their existing frameworks. This feeling of surprise and astonishment, together with the intellectual impact produced by the materialisation—in European eyes—of an entirely new continent, populated by human beings previously unmentioned in classical and medieval sources, is not comparable to encounters with other parts of the globe. Since antiquity, Europeans had cultivated knowledge of Africa, extending far beyond the southern shores of the Mediterranean, even if it was incomplete and distorted. Interaction with different parts of Asia dated back millennia. The fifth, 'austral' continent was hypothesised and imagined well before Europeans had established regular contact with Oceania in the eighteenth century, meaning it did not provoke a shock comparable to the 'apparition' of America in the European imagination.

Complexities and Ambivalences

The title of this chapter refers to the process of constructing boundaries and defining the external. *The other*, therefore, is not a fixed category but rather a malleable and complex relationship which could be invoked in various ways at different times, and for different ends. Accordingly, the appreciation of 'others' in European sources was very unstable, undergoing marked shifts in accordance with the motives and interests of the authors in question, the areas they described, the scale of their descriptions (from very local to extremely general views), the media and channels of dissemination, and the contexts in which such descriptions were produced.

The Ottoman Empire, early modern Europe's nearest other and, with its extensive territories in South-Eastern and Central Europe, a major actor in the continent's history, is a case in point. From the fourteenth century to the mid-eighteenth, the Ottomans presented a formidable military challenge, conquering, among others, large parts of the Kingdom of Hungary. In contrast to the majority of its population, the empire's ruling elite was Muslim, meaning that Christian Europeans viewed them as both military and religious adversaries. At the same time, European travellers, diplomats, military thinkers, and even political theorists like the French Jean Bodin (1530–1596), frequently admired the social, political, and administrative organisation of the Ottoman Empire as well as its military discipline. Many European polities maintained peaceful relations with the Ottomans or even forged alliances with them. The kings of France famously did so in the sixteenth century in an attempt to curb the power of Europe's other powerful dynasty, the House of Habsburg. By the turn of the eighteenth century, the fear and awe that had dominated European

conceptions of the Ottoman Empire were increasingly replaced by mockery and contempt, especially as the balance of military success began to shift in favour of the Austrian Habsburgs, especially with the failed Ottoman siege of Vienna of 1683 and the Ottoman-Russian conflicts in the second half of the eighteenth century. For many Enlightenment thinkers, such as the French political philosopher Montesquieu (1689–1755), the Ottoman sultans became the embodiment of 'oriental despotism'. On the other hand, the eighteenth century also witnessed an explosion of Turcophilia in arts, music, theatre, and fashion. Therefore the only consistent feature of European attitudes towards the Ottomans was, arguably, their ambivalence.

In contrast, early modern Europeans produced particularly positive accounts of the Chinese civilisation, including its technical development (waterways, means of transport); technological innovations (print, paper, gunpowder); a developed urban culture; written culture and a strong literary tradition; social hierarchisation; luxury and refinement—all existing under a stable and highly centralised imperial structure. Chinese religious ideas were usually contested and criticised, however. This generally positive image disappeared rather quickly during the nineteenth century.

Europe's perception of Safavid Persia went through similar changes. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, while commercial contacts expanded, ruins of ancient and biblical origins located in Persia were described by European travellers and missionaries with some enthusiasm. Positive attitudes towards the Safavids were built to no small extent on common enmity with the Ottomans. These two Middle Eastern powers had been locked in an imperial rivalry since the emergence of the Safavid dynasty in the early sixteenth century. Much like the conflict between Europe and the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman-Safavid conflict had a strong religious dimension, as the Ottomans fashioned a distinctly Sunni Muslim identity for themselves, while the Safavids embraced Shi'ism. As recent research has shown, this religious rift within the Muslim community, which goes back to the first century of Islam and continues to influence modern geopolitics, was significantly amplified and institutionalised by the Ottoman-Safavid conflict. European observers were well aware of this distinction, if not necessarily its exact foundations. When the Safavid dynasty began to crumble in the eighteenth century, however, Europeans increasingly characterised it as decadent, linking their account to earlier descriptions of the ancient ruins that European travellers had encountered in Iran.

While wealth, splendour, and sophistication of court environments like those of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals won the praise and admiration of Europeans, positive attitudes towards the first indigenous populations encountered on the shores of the American continent focused instead on paradisiac images of beautiful and innocent humans; such instances are found

in the diaries of the Italian explorer Christopher Columbus (1451–1506), and the letter to Manuel I of Portugal sent by Pêro Vaz de Caminha (c. 1450–1500), notary of the expedition led to Brazil by the Portuguese commander Pedro Álvares Cabral (1467/1468–1520). The French philosopher and essayist Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592) famously described the indigenous people as virtuous and 'noble savages', comparing descriptions of ritual cannibalism in Brazil to the barbarous torture of religious opponents in sixteenth-century France. But depictions of indigenous people in the Americas were not always favourable. Descriptions of the elaborate Inca and Aztec civilisations and their court ceremonial blend an appreciation of certain aspects of those cultures with a more general sense of suspicion and harsh critiques of their religious rites. Missionaries hoping to bring Christianity to these newly 'discovered' peoples often commented negatively on what they considered to be their resilient paganism in the face of the 'true religion' as well as their 'inherent evilness' (which often encoded negative images of sexual practices). Descriptions of the natural environment—landscape, climate, and animals—either reinforced the paradisiac stereotypes or stressed the idea of wilderness in the Americas.

Power and 'Otherness'

European descriptions and ideas of non-European 'others' were the product of real-life interaction, conquest, colonisation, trade, exploitation, and military confrontation. But these perceptions and debates also determined how these human groups were treated and the kinds of relationships that Europeans established with them. In numerous areas of the world, Europeans were not able to disrupt completely the previous social and political structures, and acted for many decades as participants and go-betweens within existing economic and political systems, whose rules they themselves had not established. But in other parts of the world, particularly in the Americas and through the enslavement of African populations, disruption was substantial and lethal. The American population was decimated by Eurasian diseases such as smallpox, measles and many others. Partly to replace these population losses, around 8.6 million enslaved people from different parts of the African continent were forced to work on plantations in the Americas between 1500 and 1800.

There were intense theological, moral, and juridical debates about the status and nature of human beings throughout the early modern period. In the Spanish dominions, forceful denunciations of the ill-treatment of indigenous peoples in the Americas sometimes prompted new laws and measures aimed at regulating and controlling these abuses. The theologian and jurist Francisco de Vitoria (1483–1546) rebutted most of the legal arguments, as well as papal donations and imperial ideologies, which supported the Spanish claims

to dominion of the American lands. In 1550–1551, the Dominican friar and Bishop of Chiapas (Mexico), Bartolomé de las Casas (1484–1566), held a famous debate in Valladolid, Spain, with the rival theologian Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (1494–1573) about the nature of the 'Indians'. Sepúlveda notably pointed to Aristotelian writings to defend the idea of the natural servitude or slavery of Amerindians and to underline their inferiority. Las Casas argued for their human nature and highlighted their capacity for rational thought. While legal concepts and regulations governing the rights and treatment of Amerindians grew more sophisticated, abuses continued to take place throughout the period, along with continuously evolving forms of exploitation.

Slavery, known to Europe at least since antiquity and, to different degrees, present in many regions of the world, reached its frightful apex during the early modern era with the transatlantic trade of enslaved Africans. Reaching its highest intensity during the eighteenth century and continuing well into the nineteenth, the forced migration of Africans to the Americas and the Caribbean did not only change the demography of these regions, it also provided the backdrop for the systematic development of racism and discrimination on the basis of skin colour. It is here that modern categories of 'black' and 'white' had their origins. The initial decision to ship African labour to the Americas, however, had much less to do with perceived racial inferiority than the realisation that Africans were more resistant to New World diseases than Europeans, while also having immunity to Old World illnesses such as smallpox. Slave owners also considered Africans better suited to the labour regime of plantations, on the basis of agricultural practices that were prevalent in the latter's home communities.

Conclusion

In the early modern period, European awareness of other parts of the globe, their geography, inhabitants, flora, and fauna expanded massively. In trying to make sense of these 'discoveries', Europeans could draw on a significant body of knowledge about the world contained in the Bible as well as the writings of ancient philosophers such as Aristotle and Pliny. Thus, the militarily successful Ottoman 'Turks' could be equated to the Biblical Gog and Magog, who hailed the end of the world, while indigenous peoples of the Americas could be approached as representatives of the 'Golden Age' of which the Roman poets had dreamed. But attempts to understand new human communities using the frameworks provided by these texts enabled Europeans to assemble the 'other' into their pre-existing worldviews. They also provided Europeans with a means for structuring relations with these new places and peoples, including the need to justify the exercise of power over them.

However, relationships between Europeans and their 'others' were not static. Over time, conceptions shifted in accordance with new information and diverging interests. The changing attitudes of the Spanish writer Bartolomé de las Casas (1484–1566) towards the enslavement of indigenous people and Africans is a case in point: starting out as the owner of several Taíno slaves on the island of Hispaniola (present-day Haiti and Dominican Republic), he came to oppose the enslavement of indigenous people, advocating instead for the transportation of African slaves to address labour shortages; eventually he also rejected the enslavement of Africans as 'un-Christian'. Where Europeans faced politically and militarily stronger 'others' such as in South Asia and the Ottoman Empire, changing definitions of *otherness* played an important part in creating a mirror image of *Europeanness.* It is no coincidence that historians have traced the emergence of a European sense of identity—that is, a geographical identity as opposed to a religious one—back to the responses of European leaders such as Pope Pius II (r. 1458–1461) to Ottoman expansion in Asia Minor and south-eastern Europe. Concepts of otherness were often employed to create boundaries between groups, but there were many other interactions and exchanges—political, commercial, cultural, and sexual—that were just as common as relations of enmity and adversity. These, too, played an important part in how Europeans continually reconceptualised their 'others' in the early modern period.

Discussion questions

1. Are there any similarities or differences in how early modern Europeans imagined other parts of the world?

2. What role did religion play in these images?

3. Do these images still influence our view of the world? And if so, why?

Suggested reading

Bethencourt, Francisco, *Racisms: From the Crusades to the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

Elliott, J. H., *The Old World and the New, 1492–1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

Grafton, Anthony, April Shelford, and Nancy Siraisi, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1992).

Klein, Herbert S., *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Konrad, Felix, 'From the "Turkish Menace" to Exoticism and Orientalism: Islam as Antithesis of Europe (1453–1914)?', *European History Online* (Mainz: Institute of European History, 2011), http://www.ieg-ego.eu/konradf-2010-en.

Malcolm, Noel, *Useful Enemies: Islam and the Ottoman Empire in Western Political Thought, 1450–1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

Mason, Peter, 'Classical Ethnography and Its Influence on the European Perception of the Peoples of the New World', in *The Classical Tradition and the Americas*, ed. by Wolfgang Haase and Meyer Reinhold (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), pp. 135–172.

Tomlinson, Gary, 'Montaigne's Cannibals' Songs', *Repercussions* 7–8 (1999–2000), 210–235.

1.4.2 Europe's Other(ed)s: The Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Ramachandra Byrappa, Jaroslav Ira, Ozan Ozavci, and Martin Wagner

Introduction

The nineteenth century was the age of an unprecedented global transformation. In the period between 1800 and the 1910s, the world grew closer through advancements in transport and communications, while on the other hand, political and cultural differences became more visible. At the beginning of the century a small number of European empires controlled thirty-five percent of the world's landmass, but by the 1860s this number had risen to sixty percent, and in 1914 to an astonishing eighty-five percent. This was both the result and the cause of new spaces and frontiers opening between different modes of power: geopolitical, economic, military and technological. For example, while Asian societies had supplied over sixty percent of the world's gross domestic product in 1700, by 1913 this share amounted to only 24.5 percent, and it was Europeans who now claimed the commanding share of global GDP, at 68.3 percent. The rise of Europe as the world's dominant power profoundly shaped the way that Europeans understood the rest of the world and themselves. Yet at the same time, they had to contend with the rise of new, non-European players on the world stage, such as the United States and Japan, that were poised to make their mark on the following century.

The United States of America

Nineteenth-century views of America reflected profound changes on both sides of the Atlantic. The United States, an embodiment of political ideas from the European Enlightenment, ascended to economic power while also evolving into a new model of polity for mass society. It attracted immigrants from the Old World, as well as the attention of European observers who yearned to understand it. It was only in the twentieth century that the mania for all things American became commonplace, as Americanised popular culture poured into the Old Continent, accompanied by a growing political and military presence. But the nineteenth century remained an era of observations, comparisons, and reflections; many ideas and models, including artistic styles and university systems, still transferred from Europe to America, rather than the other way around.

European views of the US ranged from admiration to aversion. At the threshold of the long nineteenth century (1789–1914), many liberal or democratic-minded Europeans became fascinated by this new constitutional, democratic polity that had formed at the other side of the Atlantic—even if it was racially exclusive, particularly when compared to surviving absolutist regimes in much of Europe. A place of refuge for some, America was seen by many as a model of political organisation for the future. Others were amazed by the efficiency and immense productivity of the American economy, the rapid pace of growth in many American cities, or the relatively high standard of living that transcended rigid barriers of social class. There were however many European intellectuals who voiced an aversion to America's apparent shallowness, its lack of intellectual creativity and bourgeois mediocrity, often accompanied by a critique of consumerism and mass culture, as well as growing fears of Europe's own 'Americanisation'. Some observers went even further and condemned what they considered to be capitalism taken to the extreme; the 'rule of dollar', which was symbolised by events like the expulsion of Native Americans from their homelands driven by land speculation, or by production sites such as the notorious Chicago slaughterhouse, described by the Czech writer František Herites (1851–1929) as a "mixture of human brutality, human ingenuity, and human greed."

For good or bad, Europeans perceived differences between each side of the Atlantic, despite transnational connections, common traditions, and a constant transfer of ideas. One such example was the model of great exhibitions. Building upon European predecessors, the Chicago World Fair in 1893 was a showcase of American civilisation and an opportunity for many Europeans to visit the United States. Among them were dozens of Czech visitors who left their testimonies in travel accounts. In the eyes of these observers, the

sheer scale of the fair reflected the essence of America. This was enhanced by the urban setting of Chicago—perceived as the quintessential American city, while the gateway of New York still retained something of the Old World—with its immense and rapid growth, its towering skyscrapers, the rush of its commerce, and its ethnic heterogeneity. For many observers it was the epitome of American civilisation at large and, what is more, a city that was becoming a global centre in the modern world. Josef Štolba (1846–1930), the Czech playwright and traveller, characterised Chicago in 1887 as "the most prominent city of feverishly active America, a city that represents the New World in a most truthful way, providing on a small scale the accurate image of this whole new part of the world."

Rapidly growing cities that were often compared and contrasted to their European counterparts were likely to epitomise the new American civilisation in the eyes of Europeans. But so too did America's vanishing indigenous peoples and receding native wilderness, both of which were seen—and sometimes idealised, by authors like the German writer Karl May (1842–1912)—as original and authentic, but part of a disappearing America. And yet, some of the critics from the Old World saw in the expanding American civilisation a particularly European dimension. When the Czech poet Josef Václav Sládek (1845–1912), a visitor to America in the 1860s, wrote a poem called 'Na hrobech indiánských' ('On the Graves of Indians') along with a series of other reflections, he targeted his moral condemnation at Europeans, or the "White Man". The accompanying illustration by his Czech compatriot Mikoláš Aleš (1852–1913) of a Native American chieftain facing a majestic female figure representing European civilisation made it utterly clear that the aggressive expansion of American civilisation was but an offspring of European expansion and hegemony. For all its differences, America was often seen as the completion of the worst, or the best, of the European self.

This example reminds us of the necessity of taking a more nuanced and differentiated approach in studying perceptions of the 'other'. For the representatives of stateless nations, such as the Czechs during the nineteenth century, the melodramatic story of European civilisation advancing at the expense of 'less civilised' Native Americans might well have resonated with debates over stateless ethnic groups or new national communities, and whether they must inevitably succumb to established state societies. At the same time, the empathetic view of Native Americans was but a part of a broader European intellectual tradition, in which the perspectives of universal humanism were combined with a romanticised view of the 'noble savage', including other racialised stereotypes such as 'redskins'.

Britain, as its former colonial ruler, was arguably affected most deeply by the rise of the United States. With the end of the American Civil War in 1865 and the

completion of German unification in 1871, two modern powers appeared on the world stage that forced Britain to confront its weaknesses, both commercial and military. It desperately needed an ally and could not countenance an alliance between the two newcomers. So rather than foregrounding British supremacy, British elites started to advocate white supremacy, making space for others to join the club. For example, in his now infamous poem, 'The White Man's Burden', the author Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) pleaded for the US to become a co-imperialist. At the same time, for many poorer British people, the 'New World' represented an opportunity to resettle and start a new life.

Fig. 1: Henry Meyer, *China—The Cake of Kings* (1898), Cornell University Library, https://digital.library.cornell.edu/catalog/ss:3293809.

Asia

Asia is the only continent that is not separated from the European mainland by a sea. Both Europe and Asia, perceived as historically and culturally distinct entities, are situated on a common Eurasian landmass with no indisputable border. Thus the question of what Asia meant to Europe and vice versa was, and still is, a question of what exactly counts as part of Europe or Asia. The idea of a dividing line marked by the Ural Mountains stemmed from Russian Enlightenment thinkers of the early eighteenth century, who strove to prove

that the Russian Empire was European. Whether the Caucasus Mountains or the Kuma-Manych Depression (north of the Caucasus) mark the border—and correspondingly whether Mount Elbrus or Mont Blanc qualifies as the highest peak in Europe—remains disputed today.

European representations of Asia varied in scope, quality, and sense of temporality. Was the Russian Empire European, Asian, or both? Or was it neither—was it an entity *sui generis*? The relationship of both continents was thus conceptualised either as a strict dichotomy or as an open-ended opposition that allowed for spaces in between. As Europe's 'other', Asia was framed as a 'counterweight' and thus perceived either on equal terms or on normative grounds. On the other hand, Asia could stand in as a symbol of a bright utopia or a frightening dystopia. Such representations carried different assumptions of temporality, including schemes of linear progress and the possibility of different paths to modernity: was Asia preceding Europe, lagging behind, or developing at its own pace? European images of Asia were intertwined with Asian self-perceptions that were themselves derived from Asian depictions of Europe. European representations of Asia, conversely, carried implicit representations of Europe itself. In 1789, the German poet Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805), for instance, characterised Europe's position among the continents "as an adult […] surrounded by children of different ages."

The age of Enlightenment was accompanied by a preoccupation with Asia. Europe's 'armchair travellers' were inspired by China and its meritocratic social order, which stood in stark contrast to the unbeloved European aristocratic elite. In 1697, the German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz (1646–1716) praised China as the "Europe of the East", on the basis that both China and Europe were where "the highest culture and the highest technical civilisation of humankind are concentrated." However, in the early nineteenth century this positive image of Asia changed. In 1822, the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) judged that China possessed "no history", was untouched by "alien principle[s]," and that it had not been able to develop and was thus forced to remain "ancient". In contrast to European models of democracy and monarchy, "Asia as such [is] the breeding grounds of despotism," he wrote.

While Europe's economic and technical superiority was put on display in the industrial revolution, Europe's 'others' appeared to fall behind on the track to modernity—perceived as a linear process and equated with European progress. Whereas the Russian Empire after having defeated Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) was regarded as a European power among equals at the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815), the loss of the Crimean War (1853–1856) raised questions over its status. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Russia's military and economy were characterised as 'backward'; its

system of serfdom alien to Europe. Thus Russian decline mirrored Europe's perceived superiority. The 'Great Reforms' of the 1860s were an attempt by Tsar Alexander II (1818–1881) to modernise Russia in line with Europe's great powers, further endorsing European convictions regrding the linear progress of history. And among Russian intellectuals, discussions never faded on whether the country should Westernise or stick to its Slavic roots. At the end of the century, however, defeat to an Asian power in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) led many European observers to again question Russia's status as a European power. But at the same time, Western European scholars could also be found rediscovering a Russian tradition as progressive and 'European': steam bathing, a tradition that was seen, paradoxically, as backward and non-European in Russia itself.

As the European powers rose to become globally engaged colonial empires, images of China mirrored Europe's aggrandisement. Once the centre of civilisation, now a periphery of the global economy, China was forcefully opened up to the world. When the Daoguang Emperor (1782–1850) banned the import of opium from British India to China, British and later French gunboats—symbols of Europe's technological advancement—waged two Opium Wars (1839–1842 and 1856–1860). China's traditional political system and its weak military forces appeared to justify European interventions as means of modernisation. China was then divided into spheres of influence, as depicted by an illustration in the French newspaper *Le Petit Journal* published on 16 January 1898: a helpless Chinese bureaucrat is forced to watch from a position of inferiority as the European powers and Japan carve up his country. To overcome Western dominance, Chinese reformers pursued Westernisation to various degrees, whether full-fledged or with Chinese characteristics. China's resistance against all foreign presence in the country culminated in the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901), a militant uprising that triggered a wave of anti-Chinese sentiment back in Europe, including new metaphors describing the Chinese as evil, dangerous, or, in the words of Kaiser Wilhelm II (1859–1941), a "yellow peril".

The Middle East and Africa

The regions that came to be collectively known as the 'Middle East' at the start of the twentieth century, namely the Levant, Mesopotamia, the Arabian Peninsula, Persia, and Asia Minor, as well as the African continent, were sources of opportunities and threats in European eyes. After the loss of the Americas, as imperial competition for colonies shifted from the west to the east and south, the Middle East and Africa became critical strategic gateways

to Europe, but also provided valuable markets and resources that helped to sustain European economies and uphold a measure of political stability.

When Napoleon Bonaparte's men invaded Egypt in 1798–1801, the goal of French strategists was not only to cut the jugular vein of Britain's imperial relationship with India, but also to colonise Egypt as a substitute for possessions in the West Indies, in the meantime recovering Pondicherry and other French possessions on the Coromandel and Malabar coasts. However, the French *démarche* culminated with fiasco in 1801, as the Anglo-Ottoman forces drove the French armies out of the Levant.

After the Napoleonic Wars and the Congress of Vienna in 1815, a new inter-imperial order was established to suspend armed conflict, yet colonial expansion all over the world continued almost unabated. With the piracy of the Barbary Corsairs as a pretext, the French invaded Algiers in 1830 with the exact same purpose of establishing influence in North Africa to compete against Britain in the Mediterranean. This time the British were preoccupied with events at home, in Portugal, and in the Dutch Kingdom, enabling France to invade Algiers and begin its conquest of Algeria, which helped inaugurate an era of European expansionism in Africa. By the 1910s, with the exception of Liberia and Ethiopia, the entire African continent was under European colonial rule. Lands were confiscated, territories were re-drawn on the map, resources were exploited, and along the way, millions of lives perished. During the anti-colonial resistance in Algeria alone, one third of the entire Algerian population (around one million people) passed away due to incessant fighting, famine, and epidemic diseases.

Conscious that colonial competition could spark inter-imperial wars in Africa, especially after the unification of Germany and its entry into the colonial contest, the European powers peacefully shared the lands of Africa among their colonies at the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, which went down in history as the Scramble for Africa.

A scramble for the Middle East never took place in the same, explicit fashion, nor was it ever formally colonised. The territories of the Ottoman Empire and Persia were too big and too dangerous to swallow, and were never annexed in one attempt by any of the European powers. The Europeans saw an existential threat in the annexation of the strategically and economically prized morsels from the empires of the Sultan and the Shah; any move in this direction could upset the balance of power in Europe and engender a general war, bringing the continent back to the horrors of the Coalition Wars in 1793–1815. Dubbed the 'Eastern Question', this most complicated and dangerous issue of international relations of the time indeed prompted the first armed conflict between great powers since 1815, the Crimean War of 1853–1856. Britain and France fought

against Russia due to their differing perspectives on the future of the Ottoman Empire.

Even though the Middle East was never colonised, each of the major European empires still managed to establish dominance in certain parts of the region. They exerted control over the Ottoman and Persian economies by signing free trade agreements with the local authorities during politically turbulent times for these Middle Eastern empires. Local monopolies were abolished and customs tariffs for European exports and imports were lowered, much to the benefit of the western metropoles.

Despite all these stark differences between the Middle Eastern and African experiences of European imperialism, a particular form of discursive practice ran through the nineteenth century. European direct control or dominant influence in Africa and the Middle East was justified time and time again when European colonialism and hegemony in Africa and the Middle East cast it as a duty on the part of the civilised European nations: the duty of civilising the rest, educating them, and thus rendering them "happier, wiser, better," to cite the British Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston. Both the African and Middle Eastern peoples came to be seen through an imperial and imperialist hubris, which homogenised them into an un- or semi-civilised other prone to barbarism and violence.

Conclusion

China, the Ottoman Empire and Persia were thus opened up by Europeans to the circuits of global free trade, which continued over decades to impoverish local economies. Local resistance movements and anti-colonial rebellions such as the Boxer War came to be associated in Western parlance with eastern barbarity, Islamic fanaticism, or the 'yellow peril'. Yet rarely, if ever, were the economic and psychological undertones of violence, or the European triggers of rebellion and civil war, taken into account. Political instability in the rest of the world supplied the powers with enough pretext for further intervention, expansionism, or the establishment of direct control, as outlined in the introduction to this chapter. But these manoeuvres only hardened local sentiments and politics, resulting in ideological backlashes as anti-liberalism gained traction in the non-European world as an offshoot of the nineteenth-century experience. Only Japan and the United States made their way into the privileged rank of great powers with their own imperial expansionism in the name of civilisation at the end of the nineteenth century. It was at this point that the context for a new international order was set. But it would take two disastrous and unprecedented World Wars for this new order to finally take shape.

Discussion questions

1. Are there any similarities or differences in how Europeans imagined other parts of the world in the nineteenth century?

2. What role did imperialism play in these images?

3. Are these images still influencing our view of the world? How and why?

Suggested reading

Barclay, David E. and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt, eds, *Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America since 1776* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Billé, Franck, 'Introduction', in *Yellow Perils: China Narratives in the Contemporary World*, ed. by Franck Billé and Sören Urbansky (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018), pp. 1–34.

Hosking, Geoffrey A., *Russia and the Russians: A History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

Jedlicki, Jerzy, 'The Image of America in Poland, 1776–1945', *Reviews in American History* 14:4 (1986), 669–686.

Mühlhahn, Klaus, *Making China Modern: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019).

O'Brien, Peter, *European Perceptions of Islam and America from Saladin to George W. Bush: Europe's Fragile Ego Uncovered* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

Osterhammel, Jürgen, *Unfabling the East: The Enlightenment's Encounter with Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019).

Pollock, Ethan, *Without the Banya We Would Perish: A History of the Russian Bathhouse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

Winter, Tomáš, *Palmy na Vltavě: Primitivismus, mimoevropské kultury a české výtvarné umění 1850–1950* [Palms on Moldau: Primitivism, non-European Cultures and Czech Visual Arts 1850–1950] (Plzeň: Arbor Vitae, 2013).

1.4.3 Europe's Other(ed)s: The Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Gabriela de Lima Grecco, Ozan Ozavci, Balázs Sipos, and Martin Wagner

Introduction

The twentieth century saw both the heyday and decline of European dominance across the globe. At the beginning of the century, European empires (joined by the United States and Japan) controlled nearly eighty-five percent of the world's land mass, but after two devastating global wars in the space of a few decades, many of the societies that had been subjugated by these empires became independent. The rise of a bipolar world order after 1945 replaced many of the old colonial linkages, but justifications for decades of European expansionism did not entirely disappear during the course of the century. What endured was the idea of civilisation, the positivist and hierarchical system of international law, and various processes of 'othering' that had unfolded at least since the 1770s. European societies continued to cling to their own systems of truth and narrative, considering their supremacy almost natural and a product of innate qualities. To justify this narrative in the twentieth century Europeans created, as in previous centuries, long-lasting ideational structures in relation to other communities and polities of the world.

Africa

During the twentieth century, the relationship between the European 'self' and the African 'other' does not appear to have significantly changed from that

of previous centuries. In his *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, given between 1822 and 1830, the German philosopher Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) wrote that Africa "in itself holds no particular historical interest, except for the fact that men live there in barbarism and savagery, devoid of civilisation [...] it is a childlike country, enveloped in the darkness of night." This was a fairly representative view for the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, similar views are still present in the European imagination. For example, as recently as 5 July 1998, the Spanish newspaper *ABC* argued that "[African] decolonisation was premature, and the forms of nationalism created were something akin to placing a loaded bomb in the hands of a child. [...] Mentoring is required for these child-minded people and their leaders."

The dissolution of European empires over the course of the twentieth century evidently changed Europe's relationship towards the African continent. The process of political decolonisation represented a new stage in their relations, although there were still attempts by European colonisers to maintain control by modifying certain rules in the colonial system. The colonial powers, according to Frederick Cooper, also sought to domesticate the new social forces unleashed by decolonisation through more 'friendly' policies of development and stabilisation. Thus, these new political ties did not imply a profound change in the perception of Africa from the European perspective, as the examples below show.

There are at least three central imaginary constructions in relation to Africa that have persisted until today. The first is the 'Africa of Misery', focusing on extreme poverty and instability, as well as famine, sexual violence, and a lack of basic sanitation on the continent. This image goes beyond an economic perspective and enters the sphere of morality: Africans do not have 'things' (they are 'underdeveloped'), because they supposedly lack the capacity to manage their own wealth, whether as a result of geography, climate, or social and historical issues. As such, they are often visually represented as nude, suffering from the ravages of hunger, and inhabiting stark, inhospitable environments. This 'miserable' Africa is the chosen land of intervention—military interventions as well as charitable ones by non-governmental and humanitarian organisations. This imaginary underpinned European imperial and colonial ambitions for several centuries and persisted in the twentieth century. An example is the dictatorship of Antonio Salazar (1889–1970) in Portugal, which sought to reinforce, through military power, the role of Europe in the civilising process. Various history books, such as Carlos Selvagem's *Portugal Militar* (1926) or *História do Exército Português* (1945) by Luis Augusto Ferreira Martins, supported this idea by glorifying past military actions in the colonial wars. Another, contemporary, example of this image of African people as 'underdeveloped' is the Spanish chocolate brand *Conguitos*, which

features a naked, infantilised cartoon character with bulging eyes and lips (see Figure 1).

Fig. 1: A package of Conguitos, https://es-gl.openfoodfacts.org/images/products/841/055/600/7873/front_fr.13.full.jpg.

The character also reflects the second imaginary construct, which involves the infantilisation of African people. According to this image, the African continent represents the 'infancy' of humanity, while Europe in contrast has advanced to the 'adult' stage. The famous Belgian comic book series *The Adventures of Tintin*, created in the 1930s, includes a revealing example of this process of infantilising the African other. The second volume, *Tintin in the Congo* (1931), displays a paternalistic vision of Africa, particularly of the Congo, whose inhabitants are presented as primitive, barbaric and uncivilised. They are "grateful" for the presence of the colonisers, who appear to bring forth progress and development in their societies, for example through medicine or education. In one particularly controversial scene in the book, a Congolese woman who is grateful to the white protagonist Tintin for healing her husband, exalts him with the exclamation: "white man [is] very great!" While Europeans—always white men—are portrayed as heroes, non-white people are portrayed in a patently offensive and racist way: they are passive, submissive, and in need of care, akin to children.

The third imaginary construct is that of the 'exotic Africa', characterised by its natural parks, animals (typically lions, leopards, giraffes, elephants, and so on), as well as its 'exotic' culture and natural landscapes. According to this construct, Europe must assume responsibility for preserving Africa's natural environment, through the intervention of numerous NGOs, by conserving

natural resources and promoting 'true' development. In this sense, Africa has become an emblematic example of the contradictions that exist in Western discourses on environmental preservation, development and the defence of human rights. In reality, these imaginaries are ways of deconstructing the dignity of the other and, upon closer analysis, what becomes evident is that projects disguised as 'humanitarian' initiatives or other ethical justifications are in effect acts of violence towards the other.

The Middle East

Unlike Africa, there is much uncertainty today as to where one can geographically locate the Middle East and how we might think of the societies that inhabit it. What is widely accepted is that the term 'Middle East' was invented by Anglo-American strategists as a semantic and geographical category at the turn of the twentieth century, possibly in relation to the Boxer War (1899–1901) in China, which constituted the so-called Far Eastern Question for Western European actors. In other words, from its inception the term 'Middle East' described an entire region through geographical reference to Europe. It was defined through a Eurocentric perception of the globe. Politically, culturally and economically it also helped identify Europe through a process of 'othering'—categorising and hierarchising groups of people, often implicitly but sometimes disdainfully overtly—which superficially associated the West with progress, civilisation, and development, and the Middle East with the binary opposites of those categories.

The term 'Middle East' thus symbolised how a handful of leading-edge Western (European) empires had assumed managerial responsibilities to govern the world, redraw its maps and define the inhabitants of its diverse parts. At the same time, this region proved to be an indispensable source of the most important energy resource in the twentieth century: oil.

At the end of the First World War, the seven-hundred-year-old Ottoman Empire was partitioned by Western European empires in an attempt to secure their strategic and economic interests, since oil had proved to be a viral strategic weapon. The new states in the Levant and Mesopotamia founded out of the ashes of the sultan's empire were placed under the mandate of Britain and France, which also controlled the oil resources of the region.

The end of the Second World War and the ensuing decolonisation process coincided with the foundation of Israel and a period of rising Arab nationalism, *coups d'état*, alongside attempts at nationalising the oil industries. In the eventful and fateful history of this region, we can discern at least two turning points where European othering of the Middle East is concerned. The first of these was the Suez Crisis of 1956. The desire of Egyptian President

Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918–1970) to nationalise the Suez Canal went against treaties imposed in the nineteenth century by Britain and France. Nasser's plan was met with ridicule. He was portrayed as "couscous Mussolini" by the Western press. But he also sparked fears that his plan could jeopardise a most important route that brought Middle Eastern oil to the west. Ultimately, the crisis marked the end of Anglo-French dominance in the region, with Egypt managing to meet its ends with the support of the United States and the Soviet Union, which together emerged as the new dominant powers in the region.

A second event that merits attention here is the 1973 oil crisis, triggered when the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) halted oil exports to the United States and the Netherlands in an attempt to negate Western and European support to Israel during the Arab Israeli War of the same year. The resulting paralysis impacted gravely on the Western economies of the time. It demonstrated that Middle Eastern countries had become existential sources of political and economic vigour and stability in Europe, not to mention its post-war recovery. Establishing cordial relations with Middle Eastern leaders and helping them secure their dynastic regimes—even if they were militarist, ultra-religious or ultra-nationalist, totalitarian or authoritarian—became a prerequisite for maintaining immediate European interests.

The countries of the Middle East have indeed proven to be some of the most conflict-laden, undemocratic and politically turbulent neighbours of Europe ever since the term Middle East was coined at the turn of the century. But the Middle East was not simply Europe's other. All of its problems, past and present, have been by-products of the complex strategic and economic relations between Western European empires and the region's local inhabitants. Even to this day the issues of the Middle East are seen in European popular culture through a myopic lens, which obscures these entangled imperial histories and eclipses the fact that the tragedies of the region are also products of global connections.

Asia

European images of Asia have changed dramatically over time. In the nineteenth century representations of China, for example, shifted from a civilised 'Europe of the East' to an ancient country 'without history', or even to an evil 'yellow peril'. As Europe's 'other', Asia provided mirror images that helped foster a sense of European identity. The Asian present has appeared both as an envisioned European future and as a perceived European past; as a symbol of progressiveness or backwardness. Similarly, twentieth-century images of Asia were represented in temporal metaphors that posited Europe as Asia's

yardstick. These perceptions of Asia oscillated between anti-communist fears of an 'Oriental despotism', grand hopes of Westernisation and democratisation, and disillusionment with idiosyncratic paths to modernity.

After the First World War, when European ideas of political order, monarchic and liberal alike, were in a state of crisis, the Asian continent appeared to be a source of both inspiration and threat. The Paris Peace Conference (1919–1920) revealed that Asia was still perceived as part of the European sphere of influence. In an act of great power politics the Western nations decided to hand over Qingdao, then a Germany colony in China, to Japan instead of returning it to Chinese sovereignty. The May Fourth Movement (1919), a political protest movement that erupted in China in response to its treatment as a bargaining chip by foreign powers, paradoxically called for Westernisation as a means of modernisation. At the same time, some European writers regarded the First World War as having undermined the traditions of European intellectual thought, finding new inspiration in Chinese Daoism. Other European intellectuals, like the German sociologist Max Weber, conceived of Asia as Europe's religious and cultural 'other' in order to explain why modern capitalism had only emerged in Europe itself. The Russian Revolution (1917), on the other hand, became another seminal moment that had a severe impact on perceptions of Asia in Europe. Early nineteenth-century notions of an 'Oriental despotism' re-emerged after the Soviet Union had established a communist dictatorship throughout Eurasia, along with rising fears of westward Soviet expansion that could threaten the fragile political order of interwar Europe. Insulating Europe from revolution thus motivated an Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War (1917–1922).

After the Second World War, older assumptions about Europe's relationship with Asia were both strengthened and challenged by Cold War divisions in Europe, which split the continent into two opposing political systems. With a socialist bloc emerging on its eastern edge, the idea of 'Europe' as a liberal realm seemed to diminish, whereas communism was on the rise. In Western Europe (and the United States), an anti-communist 'red scare' was built on older narratives of the dangerous and evil east. In August 1949, a few months before China would also turn communist, the conservative Christian Democratic Union of West Germany portrayed a gloomy, Asian-looking Bolshevik seizing hold of Europe; an innocent Europe that was to be defended by conservative values (see Figure 2). Left-wing intellectuals in Cold War Western Europe, on the other hand, were inspired by communist China as an alternative to both Western capitalism and Soviet socialism, though they largely neglected to speak of the millions of Chinese who were victims of starvation. Paradoxically, Mao became a symbol of domestic protest among parts of European youth

rebelling against older generations that were perceived to run a repressive state.
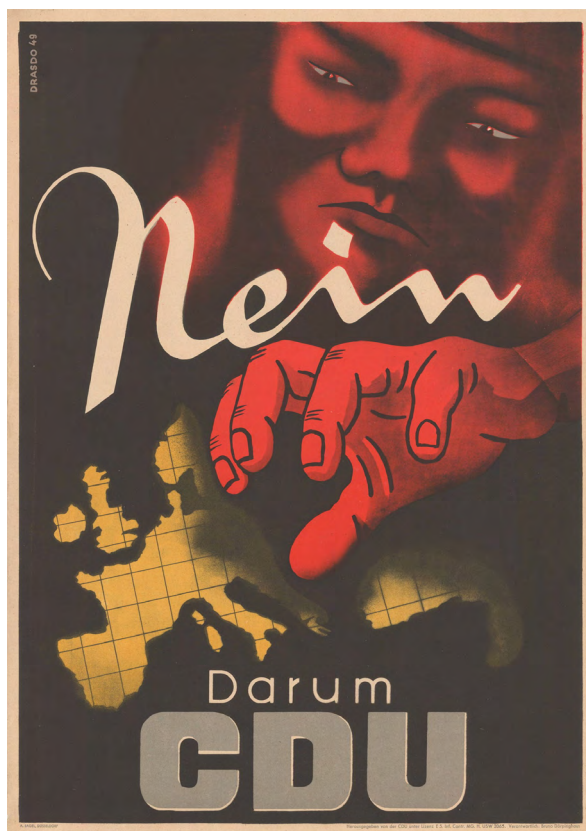
Fig. 2: 'Nein…Darum CDU' ['No… That's why CDU'], poster of the Christian Democratic Union of Germany for the West German federal election, August 1949, CC BY 3.0, DE: Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Abt. Staatsarchiv Freiburg, W 110/2 Nr. 0144: https://www.europeana.eu/de/item/00733/plink__f_5_171148.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War sparked grand hopes of Asia's democratisation, understood as Westernisation, among European intellectuals. These were proven to be ill-founded relatively quickly. In the case of China, the Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989 engendered disillusionment with Beijing's path to liberal modernity, which many European observers had envisioned as being free of repression. In response to new anti-Chinese sentiments in Europe, Chinese writers claimed that "China can say no" to the political, economic, and cultural hegemony of Western powers. The Russian Federation, on the contrary, initially turned into a democratic system after 1991, endorsing European self-perceptions of being on the right side of history. In 2005, President Putin even declared that "Russia was, is and will, of course, be a major European power." But after Russia annexed the Crimean Peninsula and waged a military conflict in eastern Ukraine in 2014,

both Russian and European politicians referred to the Russian Federation as a political entity outside Europe. Again, Russia became Europe's 'other', a foil that fostered a European self-affirmation of liberalism, democracy, and rule of law.

United States of America

When the American Army arrived in Europe in 1917 and played a decisive role in the outcome of the First World War in 1918, Europeans could see for themselves that the United States of America had become a world power. Simultaneously, American companies became vital participants in European economic life, while European cultural life was beginning to be reshaped by American feature films, as well as jazz music. Another channel of this transatlantic influence was formed by a multitude of American tourists that visited Europe in the 1920s, where they were received as rich people on a poor continent: in many European countries, young, American, female tourists were described as 'Miss Dollar'.

American economic and cultural influence sparked fears on both sides of the political spectrum over America's 'cultural imperialism' and its 'economic colonisation' of Europe. Both right-wing and left-wing observers thought that their homelands had lost part of their sovereignty due to the effects of American popular culture and consumerism. They felt that these phenomena had changed European attitudes to the extent that millions of Europeans had been 'Americanised'. For example, it was lamented in the conservative British newspaper *Daily Express* in 1927 that the consumption of Hollywood movies had turned millions of British people into "temporary American citizens". The criticism of specific attributes of American power, even when it used negative stereotypes, should not be confused with anti-Americanism, since many critics did not regard America as 'evil' or an 'enemy'. During the interwar period and the 1950s, conservative critics emphasised the supposed egoism and materialism of the Americans, in contrast to the cultural superiority of Europe—but they also accepted the democratic political regime and the economic system of the US. These critics were afraid of American gender relations, too, because the modern American woman was said to be hedonistic and powerful, and this type of woman might have been dangerous for traditional family values.

The anti-Americanism of the extreme right was rooted in chauvinistic nationalism and a phobia of the 'Americanisation' of Europe and the wider world. For example, the National Socialists in Germany asserted that the US was founded and governed by Jewish and African American people who were racially 'inferior'. This approach contrasted American modernism and internationalism with national traditions and the homely atmosphere of the

motherland. The anti-Americanism of the extreme left characterised the 'non-democratic' US as the leading state of capitalist exploitation, oppression, colonialism (see Figure …), and consumer culture, where everything was 'for sale' and culture was degraded to a common commodity. While this version of anti-Americanism already existed in the interwar period, it strengthened and spread through Europe after the Second World War. Jazz, for example, was banned in some socialist countries until the late 1950s and early 1960s because it was regarded as the music of the imperialist US. Later, however, jazz found clearer expression as the music of the oppressed African Americans.

Other Europeans, however, regarded the US as the model for modernisation in Europe. Their Americophilia had a one-sided focus: the US was characterised as a veritable paradise on earth with its high standards of living and 'unbounded possibilities'. From this perspective, jazz was a means of cultural democratisation: it bridged the gap between elite and popular culture, since it was popular dance music for all social classes and seen as a symbol of modernisation.

Although these different sentiments towards the US were mostly consistent during the twentieth century, their acceptance shifted over time, from country to country, and between age groups. For example, just after the Second World War, the scientific prestige of America increased immensely thanks to the financial possibilities offered by American research institutions and the great number of European scientists who had moved there. During the 1960s and 1970s the Vietnam War shaped European perceptions of the US more negatively, because the conflict appeared to evidence an American imperialism which was dangerous to Europe too. Later, in the early 1980s, only ten percent of Europeans identified as anti-American, while thirty percent were pro-American and the majority were neutral. But in the Netherlands, for example, young people showed much more positive attitudes toward the US than old people did. Italians trusted US foreign policy more than the French people, while anti-American rhetoric was popular enough for the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) to win two general elections in Greece in the 1980s.

Latin America

European scholars often approach the countries of Latin America as a relatively homogeneous bloc, assuming their national identities to be rooted in the shared colonial past and associated Spanish and Portuguese heritage. Simplistic references to 'Latin America' exclude strong legacies of Amerindian and African communities in the history and culture of these nations; such legacies include the name 'Abya Yala', the denomination of the American continent of the Kunas (Panama) prior to the European conquest and a term

currently adopted by many indigenous communities as a counter-hegemonic designation for the continent. Although the region's countries were for several centuries 'dependent' on foreign powers and organisations, it is clear that the twentieth century initiated a new stage in relations between Europe and Latin America, especially after the two World Wars.

During the first decades of the twentieth century, Latin American countries embarked on a profound reflection on their identities. Brazil, for example, did so through the modernist movement. One document that represents the thinking of this movement is the Anthropophagic Manifesto, published in 1928 by the Brazilian poet Oswald de Andrade (1890–1954). The manifesto claimed a form of avant-garde art that sought to "cannibalise the European spirit" (referring to anthropophagic rituals) and unite this legacy with that of indigenous and African communities, in order to establish a "true" national identity. This search for a new identity took place in the context of the declining European hegemony after the First World War. Some decades later, during the Second World War, Latin America achieved greater autonomy to make independent negotiations with world powers such as Germany, the United States, or Spain. The politics of Argentinian President Juan Domingo Perón (1895–1974), or the Brazilian leader Getúlio Vargas (1882–1954), are clear examples of a more autonomous diplomacy in this period. This development paved the way for a new period of relations between Europe and Latin America in which Europe came to see the Latin American nations as more 'equal' to itself.

However, certain former imperial metropoles attempted to revisit symbols of the colonial past in order to forge new relationships with their former colonies. For example, during the years of General Francisco Franco's regime, Spain considered 'Hispano-America' to be a part of its nationalist ideological project, as it sought to recover symbols of the past such as Catholicism, the Castilian language, imperialism, and the "historical unity of Spain and Latin America". The aim was to form a kind of spiritual community (the 'Hispanic race'), which was to include Latin American countries. Portugal, on the other hand, given its relatively weak economic and political position, for much of the twentieth century stood in the shadow of its former colony, the immense Brazil. Whereas stereotypes of Brazil may previously have revolved mainly around its image as the country of football, carnival, samba and exotic nature, by the end of the twentieth century it was one of the world's major economic powers, and in the first decade of the twenty-first century it joined the bloc of major emerging national economies known as BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

Thus, while Europe might view Latin America as a continent facing diverse challenges, such as economic and social inequality, violence in urban centres, corruption, and authoritarian governments, its nations have also come to be

viewed as promising—"the emerging Latin America". This is particularly evident in a number of developments in the twentieth century and at the beginning of the twenty-first: high rates of economic growth, foreign direct investment, a growing middle class, scientific development, and greater political relevance on the international scene.

Conclusion

The 'other' and othering have always been open-ended discursive practices, devoid of fixed content. They have been operationalised in the European imagination, while rarely corresponding to historical reality, in order to justify colonial or neo-colonial control. They have thus held different functions and connotations at different moments in time and with regard to different continents and regions, making it difficult to explain their workings precisely. However there is perhaps one exception: othering has clearly helped Europe style itself as the exceptional continent, distinguished from the rest. Despite the decline and collapse of European empires, this did not change fundamentally during the twentieth century. In political discourse, popular culture, and international relations, Europeans still often referred to stereotypes such as infantile Africans, despotic Orientals or even consumerist Americans to describe the world, defining themselves as superior in the process. Responding to the shifting global geopolitics of the twentieth century, old fears of invading barbarian hordes were updated as red scares or visions of 'Coca-Colonisation', but still they served the same purpose of characterising European civilisation as the model for the world.

Discussion questions

1. What are the differences and similarities between Europeans' images of other continents in the twentieth century?

2. These images changed over the course of the twentieth century. What, according to the text, were the reasons for this change?

3. Are these images still prevalent in the twenty-first century? How have they changed?

Suggested reading

Amorín, Alfonso Iglesias, 'Discurso y memoria de las guerras colonials africanas en las dictaduras de Franco y Salazar', *Ler História* 79 (2021), 191–213.

Bessis, Sophie, *Occidente y los otros: Historia de una supremacía* (Alianza, Madrid, 2002).

Bethell, Leslie, 'Brazil and Latin America', *Journal of Latin America Studies* 42 (2010), 457–485.

Cooper, Frederick, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Davison, Roderic H., 'Where is the Middle East?', *Foreign Affairs* 38:4 (1960), 665–675.

Grazia, Victoria de, 'Mass Culture and Sovereignty: The American Challenge to European Cinemas, 1920–1960', *The Journal of Modern History* 61:1 (1989), 53–87.

Koppes, Clayton R., 'Captain Mahan, General Gordon, and the Origins of the Term "Middle East"', *Middle Eastern Studies* 12:1 (1976), 95–98.

Mühlhahn, Klaus, *Making China Modern: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019).

Smith, Steven K. and Douglas A. Wertman, *US–West European Relations During the Reagan Years: The Perspective of West European Publics* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992).

UNIT 2
SOCIETIES

The extended Frey Family, Riga, Latvia, CC BY 4.0, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frey_Family_in_Latvia.jpg.

CHAPTER 2.1
DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

2.1.1 Demographic Change in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Sarah Carmichael and András Vadas

Introduction

Most scholars agree that the European region saw its population almost double between 1500 and 1750, followed by an even greater surge in population levels as Europe entered the era of the industrial revolution. This post-Black Death period was one of uneven improvements in welfare and the intensification of land use, which fed ever larger numbers of mouths. The wealth from European colonies also encouraged many to work longer hours, so that they could afford small luxuries. But at the end of this period—in the time of British economic theorist and cleric Thomas Robert Malthus (1766–1834)—worries about how resources would keep up with rising population levels became ever more prominent. Disease, malnutrition, and the interplay of the two could easily tip populations over into periods of high mortality. Yet many historians are critical of the assumption made by many present-day journalists that, because average life expectancy in the early modern period was around thirty to thirty-five years of age, no one lived to see old age. In fact, for individuals who made it through their first five years of life, the outlook was quite decent. In general, those who lived into their early twenties could expect to live to their sixties (approximately, with some variation depending on time and place). This chapter sketches early modern developments in fertility and mortality, framed around Malthus's model, to give the reader a general sense of demographic trends across Europe. First, however, it discusses sources and methodological problems in the study of these facets of early modern society.

Types of Sources and Methodological Problems

The early modern period is the earliest for which there is relatively precise data on demographic behaviour and population change for some parts of Europe.

Different political entities and self-governing bodies started to register their inhabitants for several reasons, the two most important being taxation and state control. The period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century also saw the written form take precedence over oral tradition throughout Europe. This led both individuals and administrative bodies to produce more detailed registers than ever before.

The act of registering people is not an early modern invention; some forms of census existed in Ancient Rome as well as in several medieval polities, cities, and ecclesiastical bodies. Conscription and taxation data have their methodological limitations, as these sources were not created to come to an estimate of the complete population or its demographic features. Nonetheless, some of the sources provide data that allow for estimates of population dynamics. The appearance of registers for tax (religious tithe and state tax), household and estate conscriptions, church registers, and canonical visitations appeared in different phases of the early modern period in different parts of Europe, but ultimately most polities created similar records. There is however an almost complete lack of overall population surveys—censuses—until the eighteenth century. It was only at the beginning of the eighteenth century that the first proper censuses were conducted in north-western Europe (Denmark, Iceland, Prussia, and Sweden are pioneers in this respect). In the latter half of the eighteenth century, many Western and Central European polities also began to recognise the importance of conducting surveys of their populations. As a result, by the turn of the nineteenth century there were complete censuses, or at least initiatives to carry them out, in the majority of Europe's polities.

For most of the early modern period, however, scholars rely on partial datasets that were put down in writing for purposes other than surveying complete populations. While some of them, like parish registers, provide data that allows a better understanding of demographic features than many early censuses, these early modern sources all survive in highly scattered forms, even in areas with the best source coverage, such as the Low Countries, England, France, or Italy. Even if parish registers have survived, it is challenging to reconstruct demographic processes or family structures from them. Other sources, such as tithe and other tax records, as well as estate conscriptions (such as land registers, manorial rolls, and *urbaria*—all forms of recording property ownership) also provide information that in many cases censuses do not. However, these sources present different methodological barriers from church registers. While some of them cover major areas, such as tithe records for particular regions of Europe, or state tax records kept by some polities, they do not concern wider populations, only individuals who had holdings and thus could potentially pay taxes. Women (except widows), elderly people who lived in someone else's household, servants, apprentices, and children

were all outside the scope of such surveys. Finally, as all of these records served tax purposes in one way or another, many people had no interest in being included in these lists. Those who tried to evade taxes therefore remain invisible until, or even after, the introduction of censuses. Therefore, whenever precise population estimates—of different polities, the death tolls of epidemics, famines, military conflicts, and so on—are presented in the context of early modern times, one must be very cautious with the figures.

That said, major advances in data collection have enabled the creation of databases in which individuals are trackable across time and space, allowing scholars to find the same person again in data from a later census. Another big impetus to the field has come through close collaboration with genealogists, using crowd-sourcing techniques and citizen science projects to record information about past populations.

Early Modern Demographic Regime: Was There a Malthusian Equilibrium in Europe?

The Malthusian model has been very influential in historical studies of population and resources. Malthus's model predicted regular crises, since food production increases at a linear rate whereas population tends to increase exponentially. There is some evidence suggesting that this may hold for the medieval period and for some regions of Europe up until 1800. Malthus was an English minister concerned with what he saw as a recurrent problem: that any increase in food production led to greater population growth, which would subsequently literally eat up any gains in living standards, thus trapping populations at low standards of living and on the edge of subsistence. His analysis identified a series of 'positive' (resulting in higher death rates) and 'preventive' (resulting in lowered birth rates) checks on population growth. These checks might temporarily disrupt the relationship between food production and population growth, but Malthus was generally pessimistic about the long-term potential of populations to overcome this supposedly natural tendency towards growth. The point at which the population outstrips the growth in food production, leading to scarcity, famine, and disease, is referred to as a 'Malthusian catastrophe'.

What we know of the early modern period is that some moments were more Malthusian than others. European populations do indeed seem to have grown faster than food production, and living standards were negatively affected. Owing to the demographic crisis caused by the fourteenth-century Black Death, labour was relatively scarce in the late Middle Ages and at the beginning of the early modern period. This scarcity drove up the wages of both men and women and meant that women tended to marry later and have

fewer children. However, with large-scale change in farming practices and other market developments, the demand for female labour subsided and so, from around 1600 to 1800, women married slightly younger, populations grew more rapidly, and living standards (as measured by real wages) declined.

Between 1000 and 1824, Spain, Britain, and Poland had steadily growing population levels over the early modern period, with substantial increases emerging in the eighteenth century. The population of Britain really took off in the eighteenth century, reflecting a significant increase in birth rates around this time. Poland also experienced a change in the rate of population growth and, across the board, this trend was one of acceleration. This was a time during which the continent stood at the cusp of significant demographic changes, and it is here that we start to see the first signs of the demographic transition to come.

In studies of the demographic transition, France is a famous outlier. There, birth rates and death rates fell in sync with each other, leading to a far smaller 'youth bulge' than one would normally expect to see. This pattern can already be clearly observed over the course of the eighteenth century when French birth rates decline precipitously while those in England and Wales rise. One argument that has been put forward for the very distinct French pattern of demographic development is an early process of secularisation, which lowered expectations around producing large families in service of faith. This brings us to the next section, where fertility is discussed in more detail.

Fertility

Fertility was high in the pre-modern context. In the absence of modern contraception, childbirth occurred frequently—and, in the absence of modern medicine, many women died giving birth. However, there are indications that early modern Europeans (especially those in the west of the continent) did not bear as many children as they could have. The fact that many women from north-western Europe only married at the age of twenty-five and above already limited fertility. The practice of extending the breastfeeding stage and a preference for greater spacing between children limited the number of children born in wedlock. Fertility stood between 4.5 to seven children per woman for much of the early modern period. Given high levels of infant mortality, this level of childbirth might well have left couples with only two to three adult children, a figure at or just above the replacement level for a population. However, certainly for the British case, the end of the early modern period is one of increasing fertility; for France, however, the opposite occurred, and women went from having approximately 4.5 children to having 3.5 children between 1650 and 1800. As discussed above, the French case was exceptional.

With regard to Britain, data from British parish registers indicates that over the early modern period the average gap between births dropped by eight percent from their highest level of 33.27 months over the period between 1640–1660 to 30.54 months between births by the end of the eighteenth century. This means that—on average—women had three fewer months between pregnancies which, over the course of a lifetime, could significantly increase total fertility. Looking beyond the British and French cases, detailed fertility data for other parts of Europe is hard to come by, and, in the context of high maternal mortality, many women did not reach the end of their child-bearing years.

Fig. 1: Jacob Ernst Marcus, 'Study sheet with three old men and a young woman' (1807), Public Domain (CC0 1.0), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, https://www.lookandlearn.com/history-images/YR0149274/Study-sheet-with-three-old-men-and-a-young-woman.

Mortality

Death rates in early modern Europe gradually declined across most of the continent from the high Middle Ages (ca. 1000) onward. However, there were numerous exceptional periods tied to weather events or environmental crises, epidemics, and military conflicts, all of which could result in privation, malnutrition, and famine. Extreme weather during the growing season or during the harvest, the passing of an army, or simply a lack of hands to carry out the necessary preparation of the soil, the sowing, or the harvesting, could cause crises of crop production which, in some cases, could endanger the very survival of a certain group. Crises connected to crop failures recurrently

happened in the medieval period and during the early modern age, often in a localised manner, with particular regions suffering from high mortality rates while others were spared, according to conditions. War in particular affected regions differently: the late medieval and early modern wars of the Ottomans in the Balkans and the Carpathian Basin, the Wars of Religion in France, and the Thirty Years' War in German-speaking areas took a tremendous toll in those parts of Europe involved in the conflict, but other areas did not experience these shocks to mortality. In most cases, economic crises only affected particular polities, and in many cases, these led to the rapid economic development of other, competing regions. While famines were recurrent in much of Europe up to the high Middle Ages, they became much more local phenomena by the late Middle Ages. However, they never fully went away, and continued to strike early modern Europe as a result of military campaigns, extreme weather, plant or animal diseases, or the confluence of multiple factors. Most of these famines were still limited to specific parts of Europe, such as the Russian famine of 1600–1603, the Irish Famine of 1740–1741 or the Great Czech Famine of 1770–1771. The kind of European-scale famines that had occurred in the later Middle Ages and the early modern times became less frequent. The Great Famine of 1315–1317 was probably the only late medieval example of such a famine occurring on a European scale. It was followed in early modern times by food crises and famines from 1590–1598 and from 1693–1697.

Epidemic diseases were also a significant cause of mortality. Smallpox, influenza, measles, syphilis, malaria, and so-called 'sweating sickness' were all present in certain phases of the early modern period, causing serious epidemics in some regions. However, none proved to be as lethal as the plague. The so-called second plague pandemic that began in the mid-fourteenth (or, according to other estimates, the mid-thirteenth) century, and recurred in some areas until as late as the early nineteenth century, was a major factor in mortality throughout early modern Europe. After the wave of Black Death of the 1340s and 1350s, the plague never again caused comparable demographic crises on a Europe-wide scale, but its recurrent spikes did cause regional and local demographic stress. While the plague was long believed to have been a primarily urban phenomenon or one which affected male and female populations differently (further aggravating its demographic impacts), such claims have recently been disproved. While there were obvious differences in the waves of plagues in different parts of Europe—Italy likely suffered more than areas north of the Alps or in Eastern Europe—both urban centres and rural areas, and both male as well as female populations were severely affected for decades.

It is important to note that mortality in general in this period hit children and women hardest. Women died in childbirth or from postpartum bleeding or infections and young children were susceptible to infectious disease.

Conclusion

At the very end of the early modern period, some European countries began to experience demographic transitions. This was a phenomenon whereby a drop in death rates was not immediately followed by a drop in birth rates, leading to a period of rapid population growth followed by a stabilisation at low levels of both birth and death rates. However, the position from which countries started on this process and the speed with which the phenomenon developed varied from region to region. Fertility and mortality were intrinsically tied to developments in standards of living, and many periods of early modern European history are characterised by Malthusian limitations. However, Europeans were also proactive in limiting fertility and started to live longer as incremental advances were made in the science of illness. Moreover, wider societal developments had significant influence on demography with secularisation, colonisation, and proto-industrialisation changing the ways in which populations responded to different situations. This meant that across the continent experiences differed, with some countries experiencing the start of a so-called 'youth bulge' from the later seventeenth century onwards, whereas others maintained stable populations with high birth and death rates.

Discussion questions

1. Describe the differences in demographic change between European countries in the early modern period.

2. What is the 'Malthusian model' and why was it so influential? Is this still a good way to think about demographic change?

3. Can we learn anything for today from early modern demographic developments?

Suggested reading

Alfani, Guido and Cormac Ó Gráda, eds, *Famine in European History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

Pingle, Mark, 'Introducing Dynamic Analysis Using Malthus's Principle of Population', *Journal of Economic Education* 34 (2003), 3–20, https://doi.org/10.1080/00220480309595196.

Wrigley, E. A. et al., *English Population History from Family Reconstitution 1580–1837* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Wrigley, E. A. and R. S. Schofield, *The Population History of England, 1541–1871: A Reconstruction* (London: Edward Arnold, 1981).

Wrigley, E. A., 'Explaining the Rise in Marital Fertility in England in the "Long" Eighteenth Century', *The Economic History Review* 51:3 (1998), 435–464.

2.1.2 Demographic Change in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Károly Halmos, Gábor Koloh, Rick J. Mourits, and

Jakub Rákosník

Introduction

The population changes of the nineteenth century have been studied exhaustively by historians and demographers alike. States started to govern populations in a biopolitical sense, meaning that they took responsibility for the wellbeing of their subjects, for which they began gathering statistics on a large and increasingly comprehensive scale. Statistical sources also recorded the large and rapid demographic changes to which Europe was subjected over the course of the nineteenth century. The European population grew rapidly as lives lengthened, birth rates decreased, and labour markets changed dramatically. In general, these trends were very similar across Europe, however, the timing and underlying reasons for these demographic changes differed between countries.

In the section on new sources, we outline the historical background against which historical population data was gathered and warn against the uncritical study of sources. In the section on demographic transition, we explore why scholars use this term to describe rapid population growth and the underlying dynamics of demographic change. After that, in the section on industrialisation and demographic change, we show how transforming labour markets initially had a negative effect on daily living conditions, but were also a driving force behind improvements in the quality of life at the end of the nineteenth century.

New Sources

The nineteenth century saw a surge in the amount of information available on population dynamics. Many countries in Europe started to register their

inhabitants, so that they could keep track of their citizens. These developments started at rather different times, however, and the quality of the data produced also varied. The censuses, civil registries, and population registers (see Table 1 for a description) that were introduced in the nineteenth century were a vast improvement on earlier administration by churches and cities. Information was now more standardised, subject to controls, and better stored. To this day these systems are still being used to monitor who lives in a country, and have only grown more sophisticated, so that states can register their taxpayers, property owners, students, patients, drivers, welfare recipients, and so on.

European administrative systems were made with specific goals in mind. Before the nineteenth century, the registration of people was often a task performed by churches. Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries this task was taken up by the centralising state (be it a nation-state or an empire) that wished to register its citizens. The first state-run administrative system in Europe started in 1792 when the civil registry—records of birth, marriages, and deaths—was implemented in France for military conscription and taxation. Other countries followed suit and implemented their own registration systems, of which the census was by far the most common. Over time, the ability of states to register and measure their citizens' lives grew, resulting in more specialised registers. Besides basic demographic information on the population, militia registers, occupational censuses, housing surveys, nationwide taxation tables, and cause-of-death registrations became available on a nation-wide scale.

State-run registrations were by no means a European invention. Long before nation-states started to form in Europe, there were already established states with civil administrations in China, Japan, and Korea. What made the registration systems in nineteenth-century Europe different was that all inhabitants of a country were registered; not just heads of households or the affluent. One of the main drivers behind the registration of *all* citizens was the strive to improve societies and make them quantifiable. This was not only a moral pursuit, but also an effort to build strong nations by making the most of society in military and economic terms. The trend fully blossomed in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the rise of statistics coincided with the concerns of medical professionals and social scholars. Hygienic movements tried to improve living conditions, while economists and other social scholars were very concerned with the state of the population. During this time, the civil administration was increasingly used to address economic and public health issues, rather than military purposes.

The new records were used and accepted by the population, since civil registration gave them rights, formalised family relations, and regulated

inheritance claims. But administrative records were not neutral instruments, as they were also used for nation-building and enforcing social structures. Registration indicated that the state recognised the existence of individuals and wanted to improve or regulate their daily lives, yet these documents were shaped by a very specific group of men in terms of affluence and social standing, meaning that recognition followed normative patterns that were dominant at the time. For example, forms of human bondage or slavery in the colonies excluded certain groups of people from registration, enabling structural dehumanisation. There was generally little interest in indexing female occupations after marriage, since married women were not supposed to work in the public sphere, nor was there much attention to the agrarian division of labour from administrations that were mainly interested in processes of industrialisation. From our contemporary perspective we see this lack of registration as a form of marginalisation, since (aspects of) lives remained structurally unknown and out of view. In order to make accurate (re) constructions of the past, it is therefore imperative to understand the historical perspectives and concomitant biases that are ingrained in each form of civil registration.

Table 1: Overview of the major demographic sources.

Main data sources	Type of information	Description
Conscription records & prison records	Height	Contain height measurements and other socio-economic characteristics of military recruits or inmates.
Census records	Snapshots of the population	Census records provide a periodical snapshot of households and the persons that live in them at the moment of enquiry by the state. Information on household members is often provided by the head of the household.
Conscriptio animarum	Snapshots of population of a church	Periodical snapshots of religious communities provided by the Roman Catholic Church, roughly equivalent to the census. Other denominations used different names for it.
Civil certificates	Continuous registration of births, marriages, and deaths	Civil certificates provide continuous registration of births, marriages, and deaths by the state. However, people themselves are not followed over time and matching strategies are necessary to connect them manually or digitally.

Parish registers	Continuous registration of births, marriages, and deaths	Parish registers provide continuous registration of births, marriages, and deaths by the church or religious denomination. They are very similar to civil certificates, but are generally less standardised and often already existed before 1800.
Population registers	Continuous registration of households	Persons are followed over the course of their life by the state with continuously updated information and references of moves from one place to another. Persons are followed from birth to death, so that life courses can easily be reconstructed.
Tax registers	Income and/or wealth	Year-by-year conscription of taxpayers (who can be heads of families or households); the measure of their estates and duties. Informative on economic status of the local population.
Early sociological research	Inequality and/or social stratification	Empirically-focused research on particular social problems, such as conditions of industrial workers or poverty.

Demographic Transition

In 1798, the British reverend and demographer Robert Thomas Malthus (1766–1834) published the first edition of his essay on population. Malthus believed that population growth was close to stationary, as limited food supplies kept populations in check. This mechanism has become known as the Malthusian trap. Ironically, Malthus's essay signalled the end of an old demographic regime: when Malthus published the different versions of 'An Essay on the Principle of Population', the relationship between population growth and food scarcity had started to vanish. This process began with the so-called agricultural and commercial revolution of earlier times, but gained speed over the course of the nineteenth century with the massive and ongoing use of fossil fuels leading to increasing returns on human labour.

The world population doubled in size over the course of the nineteenth century. The estimated world population reached the first billion around 1800 and more than one fifth of that figure lived in Europe. Around a century later, immediately after the First World War, the estimated world population was approaching the second billion, with Europe accounting for a quarter of that number. The speed and sheer size of the growth was unprecedented: the previous doubling of the world population had taken roughly three centuries.

These numbers are even more impressive if we consider that people living at the end of the nineteenth century were physically better off than their predecessors a hundred years before. Europe had broken free of the Malthusian trap.

Not only did populations grow, but human life courses also started to change. Some demographers use the term 'demographic transition' to designate this change. The key to this mechanism would be the transition from a population regime with high fertility and high mortality to a population regime with low fertility and low mortality.

In its most stringent form, the demographic transition model divides the mechanism into four phases:

- The first phase is a steady state where birth and mortality rates are high. This phase has been described in the chapter on demographic change in the early modern period.

- In the second phase the mortality rate diminishes while the birth rate remains high, resulting in a growing gap between mortality and fertility rates.

- During the third phase the gap between mortality and birth rates decreases—after an initial lag, the birth rate starts diminishing too.

- The fourth phase is when both rates get relatively close to each other again and enter a new, steady state of low birth and mortality rates. This is not necessarily the end of demographic change, as will be discussed in the chapter on demographic change in the twentieth century.

The demographic transition model was expected to provide a comprehensive explanation of the changes that took place in Europe in the nineteenth century and also occurred elsewhere in the twentieth century. However, in the last few decades, the determinism of the theory has been heavily criticised by social historians, historical anthropologists, and demographers alike, because the timing, duration, order, and underlying reasons for the different phases of the demographic transition differed between countries. Moreover, the model is very descriptive and does not explain when or why people decided to have fewer children. It might very well be possible that there was not a single demographic transition that spread through Europe, but a myriad of demographic transitions with slightly different causes. Therefore, the demographic transition model can at best be seen as a descriptive mechanism, merely stating that at aggregate levels there is an association between decreases in mortality and fertility.

Fig. 1: Thomas Annan, *The Slums of Glasgow* (1868–1877), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, https://www. rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-F-F80005.

Decreasing Mortality and Fertility Rates

Death was a much more common occurrence in everyday life for those born in 1800. Mortality was especially high for newborns. Infectious diseases and dietary infections due to contaminated food and water often proved fatal for the youngest in society. Children who survived the first year of life were still not out of harm's way, as infection with diphtheria, measles, and smallpox in the first years of life could be fatal. Infectious diseases also caused high mortality levels among adults. Malnutrition and a lack of knowledge about (preventive) medicine made people susceptible to infection with cholera, diarrhoeal diseases, and tuberculosis. These infectious diseases could be lethal for any weakened adult and added to the wear and tear on the human body.

Yet, over the course of the nineteenth century, the impact of epidemics diminished. With the improvement of hygiene, living conditions, preventive medicine, and public health, infectious diseases began to lose ground at the end of the nineteenth century. The developing understanding of the role of hygiene had an especially significant impact on the trends of infant and child mortality. The timing and pace of this decline in mortality varied by country. In Sweden for example, mortality decreased throughout the nineteenth century, whereas in Switzerland or the Netherlands it took until the second half of the century before mortality rates began to drop.

Decreasing mortality was most noticeable for the youngest in society, and it was the decline in infant and child mortality that generated significant population growth, even in countries where both mortality and fertility

declined relatively rapidly. Those who had already survived into adulthood now also had better life prospects. Meanwhile, the economic boom in the second half of the century created a favourable opportunity for agricultural areas in Eastern Europe. Increases in production also brought positive changes in the distribution of food, as steam hauling revolutionised transportation. An improvement in living conditions was brought about by a more balanced diet and increasing knowledge of preventive medicine. However, these improvements in living standards were fragile and progressed in leaps and bounds, amid setbacks related to agricultural crises and outbreaks of infectious disease.

The trend in fertility is more complex than the trend in mortality. Demographic transition theory does not consider regional variations. However, throughout the nineteenth century, the total fertility rate (the average number of children born to women aged between fifteen and forty-nine) varied significantly between different parts of the continent. Central European values, for example, remained below Eastern European values throughout the century, but were higher than those of Western Europe. The decline in fertility in Western European states began as early as the 1870s and 1880s, while in Central Europe the same trend started around 1900. Yet, territorial differences cannot simply be explained by the west-east slope of economic and cultural processes.

On both sides of the divide, we can see much more differentiated processes. The fertility transition started first in anti-traditionalist, revolutionary countries, and was thereafter widely adopted across Europe, reaching traditionalist, religious countries last. In Hungary, for example, the decline in fertility started almost at the same time as in Western Europe—even before the decrease in mortality in Hungary. It was somewhat later than France and the US, the pioneers in the fertility transition, but much earlier than religiously conservative countries like the Netherlands, where fertility decreased rather slowly and remained relatively high well into the twentieth century. The varied timing of fertility decline across Europe is at odds with demographic transition theory, demonstrating that the mechanisms underlying demographic modernisation differed across the continent.

The issue becomes even more complicated when we look at differences within countries. Research has shown conscious and significant birth control in some regions since the end of the eighteenth century. If we stay with the Hungarian example, the one-child system of the Ormánság in South Transdanubia is clearly such a phenomenon. Social stratification and rural-urban differences were probably a more important indicator for the fall of birth rates than the country of origin. In urban contexts, the upper and middle

classes usually limited their number of offspring earlier than labouring classes. In the countryside, farmers, farm labourers, and peasants generally continued to have large families and only started decreasing their family size during the twentieth century. In other words, the demographic transition might describe an association between decreasing mortality and fertility, but hides much variation between countries, regions, and individuals.

Industrialisation and Demographic Change

The growth of the population was in its early phase correlated with increasing poverty and pauperism that determined the physical conditions of the people. According to estimations based on military conscriptions, there was a decrease in the average height of recruits during the first half of the nineteenth century, a phenomenon carried by the wave of the Industrial Revolution and which went hand in hand with accelerating population growth. Somehow, matters had to get worse before living conditions for the population started improving. At the time, this was considered to be the heavy price of the Industrial Revolution, which the German philosopher and activist Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) famously described in 1845, writing that "[t]he condition of the working-class [...] is the highest and most unconcealed pinnacle of the social misery existing in our day."

The Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century had a similarly stimulative impact on population growth in Europe, as did proto-industrialisation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Wage work provided resources for an increasing number of households and drew ever-increasing scores of people to the city. Urbanisation meant the relocation of large numbers of people to hygienically unsatisfactory conditions. Cities suffered from overcrowding and pollution, had limited water supplies, and were ideal vectors for infectious diseases. These poor living circumstances negatively affected the health of city-dwellers. Inhabitants of cities were shorter than their counterparts from rural regions or previous generations. This situation has been best documented for England. For example, Engels noted that "diseases of the spine amongst people employed in factories presented themselves very frequently," to the extent that he had "seldom traversed Manchester without meeting three or four [people] suffering from [...] distortions of the spinal columns and legs." Statistics paint a similar picture: London craftsmen had shrunk from an average height of 170 cm in 1750 to 163 cm in 1840. Similarly, the infant mortality rate rose during the first half of the nineteenth century in British industrial cities, despite its slow decline during the second half of the eighteenth century. This confirms the claims of older historiography that the standards of living stagnated in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In the long run, however, the growth of per capita income during the nineteenth century undoubtedly had a positive effect on the wellbeing of the population. In one century, the mean income almost tripled. Higher personal income improved the quality of life, as it made better housing, nutrition, and hygiene affordable. The wheels of the demographic transition were set in motion, as households were enabled to reach a desirable standard of living, improving their own survival chances and those of their offspring. Simultaneously, the income of governments and public authorities grew, allowing administrations to provide much-needed improvements in public hygiene by investing in sewerage and water pipes. Industrialisation had introduced new social and health problems, but it also presented the economic means to solve them.

However, the demographic transition cannot be explained by the growth of bustling, industrial cities alone. Slower, longer, less visible, and equally important was the revolution in agriculture that started in the eighteenth century. Rapidly growing populations were fed by agricultural innovations, as crop rotation replaced the medieval open-field and three-field systems, new plants such as potatoes and corn were produced, modern machines like seed drills and threshing machines were invented, and artificial fertilisers made more land fertile. Simultaneously, steamships and railways introduced a transport revolution which enabled Europeans to cheaply import food from overseas, especially in the last three decades of the nineteenth century. Finally, there were also rapid medical innovations in the second half of the nineteenth century, such as the discovery of bacteria and parasites, and the development of preventive healthcare. Combined with economic growth, these factors allowed for rapid demographic change in the nineteenth century.

Conclusion

The nineteenth century can be characterised as a century of revolutionary demographic change. States started to actively manage their populations, mortality and fertility decreased, and living standards started to improve. The changing role of states, the demographic transition, and improving quality of life were surprisingly similar across Europe. But this transformative process was still ongoing and, despite similar trends between countries, there were many local differences. It took until the twentieth century before mortality and fertility rates reached similar levels again.

Even though twenty to fourty percent of all children died before their fifth birthday at the beginning of the nineteenth century, most intellectuals were afraid of population growth as something that could only lead to hunger

and famine. The Industrial Revolution was at an early phase when, in 1798, Malthus wrote:

> A man who is born into a world already possessed, if he cannot get subsistence from his parents on whom he has a just demand, and if the society do not want his labour, has no claim of right to the smallest portion of food, and, in fact, has no business to be where he is. At nature's mighty feast there is no vacant cover for him.

These are cruel words, but the world at the time was even more cruel. More people started to survive, but they were starving, lacking resources, and pauperised. Few were born well-off and few could easily find their place in the world of the early industrial revolution.

Nevertheless, the world had changed significantly by the dawn of the twentieth century. Demographically, Europe was a forerunner, and its nineteenth century saw an "escape from hunger and premature death," in the words of Nobel Prize laureate Robert Fogel (1926–2013). Increasingly, people started surviving beyond childhood and the oldest in society grew older as well. As a result, populations grew rapidly, even though fertility also started to decrease. As it became evident that populations had escaped from this Malthusian trap, European states started to value population growth: sizable, healthy populations meant a stronger military and economic presence. The stage was set for a new era, even though the demographic developments were not immediately noticeable for everyone in society.

Discussion questions

1. What is the 'Malthusian trap'?
2. What were the main reasons for the population growth in nineteenth-century Europe?
3. How did governments and experts respond to population growth?
4. Why was the industrial revolution a mixed blessing?
5. Do you think that 'demographic transition' is a useful term to describe demographic trends in nineteenth-century Europe?

Suggested reading

Breckenridge, Keith and Simon Szreter, *Registration and Recognition: Documenting the Person in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Caldwell, John C., *Demographic Transition Theory* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006).

Dribe, Martin, Michel Oris and Lucia Pozzi, 'Socioeconomic Status and

Fertility before, During, and After the Demographic Transition: An Introduction', *Demographic Research* 31:7 (2014), 161–182.

Floud, Roderick, Robert W. Fogel, Bernard Harris and Sok Chul Hong, *The Changing Body: Health, Nutrition, and Human Development in the Western World Since 1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511975912.

Livi-Bacci, Massimo, *La popolazione nella storia* d´Europa (Roma: Laterza, 1998).

Schofield, Roger S., David S. Reher and Alain Bideau, eds, *The* Decline *of Mortality in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

Szołtysek, Mikołaj, Bartosz Ogórek and Siegfried Gruber, 'Global and Local Correlations of Hajnal's Household Formation Markers in Historical Europe: A Cautionary Tale', *Population Studies*, 75:1 (2021), 67–89, https://doi.org/10.1080/00324728.2020.1832252.

2.1.3 Demographic Change in Europe in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Gábor Koloh, Jakub Rákosník, and Thomas Schad

Introduction

The demographic development of Europe in the twentieth century can be grasped by two indicators: firstly, the rate of natural demographic increase and decrease (birth and death rates), which was also shaped by external factors such as wars, plagues, and forced migrations; secondly, in order to explain the more intrinsic dynamics of demographic change in Europe, all the other factors of the changing Human Development Index (HDI) must be taken into account—such as health, knowledge, education, and economic wealth.

The demographic history of Europe in the twentieth century can be broken down into four periods, according to three historical breaks.

The first phase (pre-1914) was characterised by a gradual decline in birth rates that had started to rise, in the vast majority of European countries, during the last three decades of the nineteenth century. In less industrialised countries, natality had recently peaked during the 1880s and 1890s (Serbia, Romania), or at the beginning of the twentieth century (Bulgaria). The decline in the birth rate then culminated during the First World War.

The interwar period induced the second phase: after a short wave of post-war compensatory births (births postponed due to war), the decades of the 1920s and especially the 1930s were considered by many contemporaries to be an age of population depression.

The third phase began with the post-1945 baby boom, which was particularly pronounced in most Western European countries (although delayed in West Germany), while behind the emerging 'Iron Curtain', it was more moderate. The considerably long period of economic growth after the Second World War and the benefits of the post-war welfare state provided better living conditions for families with children. This also meant that people married earlier.

The fourth period, the so-called 'second demographic transition', started in the mid-1960s in the West. Individualist attitudes, career demands, and changes in social attitudes (including the relaxation of traditional gender roles), combined with the availability of effective contraceptives, led to very low fertility. The lands behind the 'Iron Curtain' were affected by this process later, but the transformation of the 1990s had significant impacts on Central and Eastern European societies in terms of fertility, and this process continues to be very dynamic.

First Break: The Impact of the First World War

While the first, pre-1914 phase can be considered as part of the 'long' nineteenth century, with respect to the European demographic trends that were described in the previous chapter, events after 1914 set new conditions. In total, the First World War took an estimated seventeen million lives from all over the world. Additionally, it is estimated that the three waves of the Spanish Influenza pandemic killed more than fifty million people between 1918 and 1920, when the world population was estimated to be around 1.9 billion. Population losses were concentrated in the countries involved in the war: in Germany or Hungary, for example, four times as many people died as a result of the war than did from influenza; in Britain it was three times as many; in Italy two times as many. But in other parts of the world, the opposite situation prevailed.

During the war, there was also a sharp decline in birth rates due to family disintegration and war-induced misery. For instance, in the territory of present-day Austria, the number of newborns fell from 250,000 in 1914 to 140,000 in 1918. Moreover, the rate of stillbirths increased slightly during the war, as well as the number of children born out of wedlock (in today's Czech Republic this accounted for 0.5 percent of all births in 1915, rising to 13.5 percent by 1918). Germany offers another insightful example. A glance at the country's birth rate reveals a significant decrease: while in 1900, the birth rate was still 35.8 per 1000 inhabitants, it dropped to 27.0 in 1914, when the war started. The war period itself saw further decreases in the birth rate, which dropped as low as 14.3 by the end of the war in 1918.

Although the interwar period saw a general decline of emigration from Europe, immediately after the war, population movements were considerable. In the Carpathian Basin, where the population had previously been in decline, emigration to the American continent continued, primarily to Canada after the introduction of the quota system in the US. But for the masses of people becoming minorities in newly-formed states (predominantly Hungarians), seeking refuge in Hungary became the most favourable option for getting by. In the second half of the interwar period, increasingly extremist right-wing

demographic policies, inspired by racist conceptions spreading from Germany especially, put an increasing migratory pressure on the Jewish population of the region. Drawing from the same ideological mainstream of that time, many political elites of the European interwar period started to adopt more ambitious demographic policies. This resulted in the formulation of both various population growth theories, and intrusive, pro-natalist policies with an increasingly militaristic character—primarily but not exclusively in the countries that lost the First World War. Yet still, there was a constant decline in natality.

The Great Depression of the 1930s only intensified an atmosphere of concern over the demographic development of Europe: in 1913, for example, the number of newborns per 1,000 inhabitants was 19.0 in France, 28.2 in Netherlands, 27.2 in Finland, and 27.6 in Germany; by 1935 this had declined to 15.3 in France, 20.2 in the Netherlands, and 19.6 in Finland. That same year in Germany, aggressive, pro-natalist policies increased the birth rate slightly to 18.9, encouraged by the Nazis, who were in their second year of power. In 1939, the first year of the Second World War, the birth rate rose to 20.4, a number that would never be reached again in Germany.

Fig. 1: Propaganda poster of the British Eugenics Society (1930s). CC BY-NC, Wellcome Collection, https://wellcomecollection.org/works/vzzcqeyx/items.

Population policies became the subject of passionate discussions. At one end of the debate stood the populationists, who were seeking to promote the growth of the birth rate. At the other end were the so-called Neo-Malthusians, who promoted low fertility through contraception in order to improve the living standards of the lower classes. Not only the quantity, but also the quality of the population became an important issue of the time. Eugenics belonged to scientific discourse. Numerous supporters of eugenicist selection could be found among the socialists and liberals as well as among the nationalists. These tendencies culminated in the 1930s in the German National Socialist practice of forced sterilisation. This idea came from the USA, and we can also find it in other European countries of that time, such as Sweden (1934) or Norway (1934).

Second Break: The Second World War and the Post-war Baby Boom

The Second World War is estimated to have cost sixty-five million people's lives (worldwide), with the highest number of losses in a single state being the Soviet Union's estimated twenty-seven million victims. As for Germany, the figures of losses vary between 6.5 and seven million people, whereas Poland lost six million, and Yugoslavia 1.7 million lives. These total figures form a larger picture by including all groups of victims. But the demographic landscape across Europe also changed from an ethnic viewpoint: for example, European Jews were almost entirely extinguished or expelled by the Nazis and their collaborationists.

In the years directly following the war, forced migration continued, as the example of Germany shows: between 1945 and 1950, around 6 million people, mostly ethnic Germans, were forced to migrate from other countries in Central and Eastern Europe to post-war Germany, now divided between East and West. There was moreover a significant migration movement from East to West in Germany: an estimated four million people migrated between 1946 and 1961, until the Berlin Wall and the closure of the inter-German border halted large scale migrations, without entirely ending them. Despite population growth throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the rapidly growing German economy needed more manpower. Consequently, West Germany signed a series of bilateral contracts with countries such as Greece, Turkey, or Yugoslavia. This led to an influx of workers (and later their relatives), known as 'guest workers' (*Gastarbeiter*). Low wages and a lack of currency convertibility did not make the region behind the Iron Curtain an attractive migration destination. Yet labour migration was not completely new, as proven by the example of East Germany, where 'contract workers' (*Vertragsarbeiter*)

migrated from Mozambique, Poland, Hungary, Vietnam, Angola, Cuba, and other mostly socialist countries.

In those European countries that remained colonial powers by the end of the Second World War, the impact of decolonisation on demographic change cannot be underestimated: following Algeria's independence from French colonisation, more than 800,000 so-called *Pieds-Noirs* (settlers of French and European origin) relocated to mainland France and other French territories, accompanied by numerous local collaborationists. On the other hand, France saw significant numbers of immigrants from all its former colonies, who left their homelands for economic or political reasons. In the UK, citizens of the Commonwealth—a political association of fifty-four countries (as of 2022), most of which formerly belonged to the British Empire—had privileged immigration rights as British Subjects until 1962. The process of decolonisation had an equally important impact on smaller colonial powers, such as Portugal or Netherlands, where the influx of these newcomers increased the population by five to ten percent. By 1970, Western Europe in particular had definitively transformed from an emigrant continent into an immigrant one.

The word 'boomer' or 'baby-boomer' is derived from developments after the Second World War, when birth rates rose and the economy flourished. The 'baby boom' that arose in the United States or in Canada was milder in Europe, however. Pro-natalist policies and the related ban on abortions, or efforts to reduce them, were soon replaced in Central and Eastern Europe by the complete liberalisation of abortion at the turn of the 1950s and into the 1960s. The only exception was Romania, where the abortion ban introduced in the mid-1960s led to a very short-term increase in fertility. As a result of the social and economic policies of the 1950s and 1960s, forced collectivisation and rapid secularisation took place in all Soviet satellite states (though at very different paces), impacting both the livelihoods and value systems of families. The employment rate of women increased faster than it did in the West. This process not only brought about a tension between childbearing and work, but the intensifying spatial mobility also resulted in a shift away from the immediate family, which meant the loss of help from parents and relatives, in addition to low wages and limited nursery spaces.

Despite some demographic policy measures based on incentives, it was the reduction in mortality rates that became crucial in the population growth of Europe until the mid-twentieth century, driven primarily by the decline in infant mortality. There were important regional differences, and a deterioration of indicators can be traced from the West to the East of Europe. For example, while the average infant mortality in interwar Sweden was fifty-four per 1,000 newborns, the number was 142 in Poland. The post-war period saw a gradual decrease of these indicators, while regional differences persisted. At

the beginning of the 1970s, this rate had fallen to eleven in the case of Sweden and to thirty in Poland.

An important indicator of the quality of life is life expectancy, which rose throughout the twentieth century across Europe, albeit unevenly. The average rise in life expectancy was between two and three months per year, due to medical improvements as well as rising living standards. Growth trends were visible in Western as well as in Eastern parts of Europe during the 1950s and 1960s. Divergence was evident only in the 1970s and 1980s, when Eastern Bloc life expectancies grew significantly more slowly, stagnated, or even declined, as in the case of the Soviet Union.

The historian Edward Shorter classified the decade of the 1960s as the period of the (second) sexual revolution. Its typical features were a higher degree of sexual permissiveness, women's sexual autonomy, and the decriminalisation of homosexuality. One very important factor with respect to liberation of sexual relations was increased access to contraception throughout the 1960s. When Czechoslovak demographers researched this issue in 1956, they recognised that more than two-thirds of people used a form of *coitus interruptus* as a method of contraception. Condoms were acceptable only for one fifth of them. In the second half of the 1960s, hormonal contraception became more readily available, at least in the West. The lack of foreign trade and other economic barriers in the countries of the East meant that access to the pill was scarce. The scarcity of effective and comfortable contraception consequently led to higher levels of abortions.

Third Break: 1970s, Start of the Second Demographic Transition

The number of people living in Europe grew without respect to declining fertility. Today, the population is twenty-five percent larger than in 1960. However, this has been the case mainly due to Europe's positive migration balance. The decline in fertility observed from the mid-1960s has been described by some demographic analyses as the process of the 'second demographic transition'. Its guiding features include sustained sub-replacement fertility, population ageing, and the plurality of family arrangements other than marriage.

The shift to more individualistic attitudes can also be considered a basis for declining fertility. Marriage, in the meantime, had changed in nature, along with the spread of extramarital births and domestic partnerships. Delayed entry into parenthood has become a typical feature. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, first-time mothers were more than five years older than

in 1970. In Western countries, the onset of this transition was longer and more gradual. For the countries behind the Iron Curtain, the process was delayed, but then became much more dynamic during the 1990s. Contrary to the Western experience, the 1970s and 1980s were the years of rising fertility in the East, though increases were very moderate. While the West started to be confronted with the crisis of the welfare state during the economic 'stagflation' of the 1970s, communist regimes promoted a sort of family welfare that enabled citizens to marry at a quite young age. The example of Czechoslovakia is instructive in this respect. The country's very generous pronatalist policy pushed birth rates back up above the replacement rate (2.1 children per woman) in the 1970s. However, this lasted only for a rather short period of time. In 1970, the fertility rate was only at the level of 1.92 children per woman. Four years later, it was at 2.44. After that, however, the sources of growth—massive investments in housing and various forms of child allowance, as well as numerous cohorts of mothers born during the post-war baby boom—were depleted, and fertility fell below the replacement rate from 1980 onwards.

The turn of the 1980s and 1990s profoundly changed the circumstances of everyday life in the East. The three pillars of the social welfare system of Central and Eastern Europe, which guaranteed employment, social protection and stable price levels, ceased to exist. The shock caused by this change triggered a transformational crisis after 1990. Fertility continued to fall. On the other hand, the improvement in mortality rates changed rapidly in Slovenia, Poland and the Czech Republic and somewhat more slowly in Hungary and the Soviet successor states. Health improvements can only be considered stratum-specific due to the affordability of modern treatments, diagnostics, medication, and so on.

At the same time, migratory pressures had increased: the previous restrictions had been lifted, and an east-west migration began towards the states of Europe with a better standard of living. The wave of political refugees that had accompanied the twentieth century was also transformed in several stages during the final decades of the century: 1980s refugees arriving from communist states were replaced in the 1990s by those arriving from the disintegrating Yugoslavia, then, at the turn of the millennium, by those coming from crisis zones outside of Europe.

Conclusion

The delayed start of the first demographic transition outside of Europe (see previous chapter) and its earlier completion in Europe than anywhere else—in the form of low death rates as well as low birth rates—caused a dynamic decline in the European share of the total human population. In 1900, one

quarter of the world population lived in Europe. By 2000, it was less than one eighth.

Population growth outside of Europe, especially in the 1960s, provoked dark predictions of imminent overpopulation. The then-natural increase of population, such as in central America (3.2 per cent) or northern and central Africa as well as south-eastern Asia (2.7 per cent) seemed to pose a threat in terms of resource consumption. Europe at the peak of the demographic transition never grew faster than 1.5 per cent per year, even while its leading countries colonised other continents. The question remains as to how long the demographic transition in the countries of the 'Global South' will last. The natural increase of populations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America was lower in the 1990s than thirty years earlier. Recent UN estimates anticipate the stabilisation of the world population at around ten billion during the second half of the twenty-first century.

The decline of the birth rate in Europe has been slower in the twenty-first century in comparison to its steep decline during the last three decades of the previous century. The total fertility rate according to Eurostat is also slightly higher today than at the end of the twentieth century (1.43 live births per woman in 2001, and 1.53 in 2019). Although the outlook is less pessimistic now than in the 1990s, the population decrease of Europe caused by the second demographic transition is unlikely to be overcome in the following decades. Immigration became the most important source of European population growth long before the last decades of the twentieth century.

However, the very different patterns of present-day emigration from, and immigration to, European countries also reflect the deep impact of the history of the East-West rift caused by the Cold War. A paradigmatic example for these oftentimes divergent developments inside Europe can even be found inside the formerly divided state of Germany: while the western regions and its capital city Berlin attract immigrants from all over the world, the eastern German town of Eisenhüttenstadt, just eighty kilometres from Berlin at the Polish border, is a centre of emigration and depopulation: its population has halved from a peak of 53,048 in 1988 to only 23,878 in 2019, and parts of the city that once supported this larger population are scheduled to be dismantled.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways was twentieth-century demographic development different in Eastern and Western Europe?

2. In which ways did immigration shape European society in the twentieth century?

3. Does Europe need immigration? Why or why not?

Suggested reading

Caldwell, John C., *Demographic Transition Theory* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006).

Coale, Ansley J., 'The Decline of Fertility in Europe from the French Revolution to World War II', in Behrman, S. J. et al., eds, *Fertility and Family Planning: A World View* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1970), pp. 3–24.

Derosas, Renzo and Frans van Poppel, eds, *Religion and the Decline of Fertility in the Western World* (Dordrecht, Springer, 2006).

Livi Bacci, Massimo, *The Population of Europe: A History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

Macura, Miloš, *Population in Europe, 1920–1970* (London: Fontana, 1974).

Quine, Maria Sophia, *Population Politics in Twentieth-Century Europe: Fascist Dictatorships and Liberal Democracies* (London: Routledge, 1996).

Reher, David S. and Alberto Sanz-Gimeno, 'Rethinking Historical Reproductive Change: Insights From Longitudinal Data For a Spanish Town', *Population and Development Review* 33:4 (2007), 703–727.

Rothenbacher, Franz, *The European Population Since 1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

CHAPTER 2.2

INTERETHNIC RELATIONS

2.2.1 Interethnic Relations in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Benjamin Conrad, Tobias P. Graf, and Arndt Wille

Introduction

Contrary to nationalist narratives which generally postulated ethnic homogeneity within the boundaries of given nation-states, early modern Europe was ethnically diverse. This is most obvious in the case of territorially extensive polities such as the Habsburg and Ottoman realms, which are commonly referred to as 'multi-ethnic empires'. However, significant ethnic diversity existed even in much smaller spaces. This makes twentieth- and twenty-first century conceptualisations of nationality as inadequate for understanding early modern ethnic relations as the concept of borders (see Chapter 1.2). When people in this period spoke about Germans, for instance, they meant not just the inhabitants of what we might think of today as the 'German-speaking lands' (Germany, Austria, and parts of Switzerland), but also populations living in Poland-Lithuania, Silesia, Bohemia, Croatia, Transylvania, and the Baltic. These demographics were not necessarily the result of recent migrations, but had existed for a significant period of time. While a combination of language and descent were important for contemporary understandings of ethnic belonging, other elements such as religion played an equally important role.

In a first step, this chapter discusses early modern conceptions of ethnic difference before investigating ethnic coexistence and conflict in Europe through the example of Poland-Lithuania. It then turns to a discussion of the status and treatment of Jews and the Romani people (often referred to as 'gypsies') at the hands of majority populations. The final section explores the place of European indigenous peoples such as the Sámi of Scandinavia.

Ethnicity in Early Modern History

From today's point of view, ethnicity appears to be a ubiquitous category in early modern texts of all genres. Contemporaries clearly distinguished between Germans, Italians, French, Poles, Turks, and so on, and there was considerable fascination with the different languages, customs (including dietary habits), 'national character' (reputations for ingenuity, servility, or violence, for example), and styles of dress associated with different 'peoples'. These interests are amply attested to by ethnographic descriptions included in geographical texts, travel accounts, and missionary reports, as well as numerous manuscripts and printed costume books. Characteristically, such works mixed first-hand observations to varying degrees with information extracted from authoritative ancient and biblical texts. Nevertheless, for most of the early modern period, there was no general theory or widely accepted concept of ethnicity in the modern sense, even as contemporaries freely used ethnonyms and grouped individuals into peoples and nations. These concepts frequently remained ambiguous, combining and conflating ethnic, geographic, linguistic, and religious identifications, while also sometimes providing shorthands for describing juridical subjecthood to a given ruler, such as the King of Spain. Ostensibly ethnic terms such as 'Turk' at once designated a Muslim and a subject of the Ottoman Sultan. The phrase 'to turn Turk' found in numerous European languages denoted religious conversion to Islam. Perhaps unsurprisingly, ethnonyms frequently served the purpose of constructing the otherness of different communities, especially to exclude perceived aliens such as Jews and Roma (see below).

The term *nation*, although used relatively frequently in early modern sources, did not imply the same degree of ethnic, linguistic, and political homogeneity associated with it from the late eighteenth century onwards (see Chapter 1.2). In administrative terms, a nation was usually a loose grouping of people of similar geographic, linguistic, and religious background. Although the Ottoman Empire, for instance, recognised a French 'merchant nation' under the commercial privileges (Ottoman Turkish: ʿ*ahdname-i hümayun*) granted to the French king, these rules also governed English merchants until 1580 and thus did not necessarily coincide with political affiliations. As practical arrangements, such privileges regulated the assessment and collection of customs duties and taxes, as well as the resolution of conflict among merchants.

The shift towards a more systematic distinction of ethnic groups occurred only in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the formulation of theories of race. Such attempts to establish a 'scientific' categorisation of human beings, which built on Carl Linnaeus's (1707–1778) system of taxonomy, were stimulated by European interactions with the inhabitants of other parts of the

world (see Chapter 1.4.1). In the process, the term *race*—which had previously, and rather vaguely, signified descent from a noble family, or could be used more generally as a synonym for *people* (especially in English)—acquired its modern meaning of membership in a biologically defined ethnic group, which nevertheless remained culturally and socially constructed. In spite of the scientific ideals of objective classification, proponents of race theory like Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) enshrined ideas of alterity, which could be used to provide justification for colonial rule and slavery. Such theories also encompassed minorities in Europe like the Scandinavian Sámi, whom Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon (1707–1788) judged to have "few virtues, and all the vices of ignorance". Although very influential, such theories provide no insight into the practical organisation of interethnic relations in Europe.

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as an Example of an Early Modern Multiethnic Polity

While there is much that is unique about the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the cohabitation of multiple ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups observed here, as well as the institutions and policies adopted in relation to ethnic diversity, in many respects resemble those found in other early modern empires like Russia, Habsburg-ruled Southeast Europe, and the Ottoman Empire. After the Union of Poland and Lithuania in 1569, the Commonwealth was one of the six largest European polities. Although formally an elective monarchy, contemporaries already referred to Poland-Lithuania as the 'Republic of Poland' (*Rzeczpospolita*) because of the great political influence of the wealthiest part of the nobility, the Magnates. The Union brought together a staggering variety of beliefs and languages. Roman and Greek Catholics formed the dominant religious groups but there were also large numbers of Jews, Greek Catholics, and Protestants in the country. Polish and Ruthenian (a relative of today's Ukrainian and Belarusian languages) were the most important Slavonic languages spoken in the Commonwealth besides Lithuanian. In addition, the population included a considerable number of German and Yiddish speakers.

At the beginning of the early modern period, the population of Poland was estimated to consist of around seventy percent Poles, fifteen percent Ruthenians, and at least ten percent Germans, with the rest comprised of Armenians, Jews, Karaites, Romani, Tatars, Vlachs and others. After the Union with Lithuania, Poles still formed about fifty percent of the overall population, whereas forty percent were Lithuanians and Ruthenians, with the remaining ten percent made up of Germans, Jews, non-Lithuanian Balts, and other ethnicities.

It is worth noting that these groups were differentiated not only by their languages and religions, but also by their professions and their geographic distribution. The diversity of the Polish-Lithuanian population was further increased by the immigration of groups of Dutch, Italians, and Scots, some of which enjoyed limited forms of communal autonomy. In fact, the only group never granted such a status were the Roma, whom the Poles regarded as economically, socially, and politically unimportant. The greatest measure of autonomy was accorded to the Jewish community, which had the right to administer its members across Poland-Lithuania independent of their specific places of residence. Similar arrangements, allowing even for a measure of state-enforceable jurisdiction in internal matters, existed for Christian and Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire, as well as for expatriates such as merchants officially recognised by the Ottoman sultans. This model was at times applied to settler communities within Europe, such as the Huguenot immigrants to various German states (see Chapter 1.3.1).

Such multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and multi-religious societies were not free from conflict. Throughout the early modern period, Poland-Lithuania witnessed several riots over ethnic and communal differences and, occasionally, minorities were expelled. This happened, for example, to the Protestant Socinian Society, also called the Polish Brethren, during the Polish-Swedish War (1655–1660). The Socinians afterwards took refuge in the Netherlands, the non-Polish part of Prussia, and Transylvania, which provided a safe haven for a number of radical Protestant groups from all over Europe (see Chapter 1.3.1).

The relative political weakness of Poland-Lithuania's royal government and the limited power of its king in this period is comparable perhaps only to the situation in the Holy Roman Empire. This potentially gave individual groups greater bargaining power here than elsewhere in Europe, but the overall pattern of organisation and cohabitation was by no means unique.

Outsiders Within: Jews and Roma

'Stateless' and scattered across numerous countries, Jews and Roma were often referred to as strangers within, troublemakers, or enemies by the dominant societies of early modern Europe. However, a clear ethnic, social, or religious classification was considered difficult: Jews, who formed the largest minority in early modern Europe, were understood as both an ethnic *and* a religious community. Their position was fraught with a great deal of ambivalence. While Christian majority societies sometimes regarded them as witnesses of faith who were worthy of protection, Jews were also aggressively stigmatised as blasphemers and diabolical evildoers, or even held responsible for the death of Christ. And although customs, rites, laws, and languages (including

Yiddish, Judaeo-Italian, Judaeo-Spanish, and Hebrew) ensured a distinct Jewish identity, strict segregation was a concern for Christians (and to some extent, for Jews themselves).

Segregationist measures came to an unprecedented climax with the expulsion of the Sephardic Jews from Spain in 1492: after the conquest of Granada (then the last remaining Islamic kingdom in the Iberian Peninsula), the Spanish monarchs sought to homogenise their ethnically and religiously highly diverse subject populations. Sephardic Jews faced the choice of either baptism or execution if they refused to leave Spain. A similar measure in 1609 targeted Spanish Muslims (called Moriscos) and their descendants, feared to be an Ottoman 'fifth column' (see Chapter 1.3.1). Both policies triggered massive migratory movements. While most Moriscos went to North Africa, the Jews scattered more widely, moving to Portugal (where they were in turn evicted in 1496/1497), the Ottoman Empire, North Africa, Italy, and some cities in northern Europe. Even those Iberian Jews who opted for conversion so that they were allowed to stay (the so-called *conversos*) were suspected of 'crypto-Judaism' by the Spanish Inquisition. Furthermore, the proto-racist concept of *limpieza de sangre* ('purity of blood') functioned to preserve clear socio-symbolic boundaries between Old and New Christians.

While the expulsion of 1492 was unprecedented in its scale, European Jews had been subjected to regular expulsions across the continent since the Middle Ages. Such measures were later frequently replaced by resettlement policies, enacted by European rulers seeking economic and fiscal benefits from the skills, commerce, and financial networks of Jewish people.

Where the presence of Jews was tolerated, ecclesiastical and secular authorities made frequent attempts from the Middle Ages onwards to visually distinguish Jews from Christians, through distinctive clothing and markings such as the yellow badge. Separate streets and city quarters—notably the Venetian Ghetto established in 1516 and the segregation measures implemented in the Papal States by Pope Paul IV (1476–1559) in 1555—created largely separate spheres of life. Legislation aimed at Jews was passed to regulate everyday interactions with Christians, for example by prohibiting unregulated interreligious disputations and sexual contact. Jews were excluded from membership in the guilds and numerous other fields of employment such as agriculture. Nevertheless, these laws and ordinances also protected Jewish life, in combination with the existing grants of safety of body and property as well as limited rights of communal self-administration. As peddlers, pawnbrokers, cattle dealers, merchants, luxury traders, glaziers, goldsmiths, lenders, and doctors—or as court Jews, Hebrew teachers, and also as friends and lovers—Jews were an essential part of Christian societies in spite of their segregation. The true emancipation of Jews, however, did not occur until the end of the

early modern period, during the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, or, in some areas, even later.

Like the Jews, the Roma, who had come to Western Europe at the beginning of the fifteenth century, soon faced considerable mistrust. As pilgrims equipped with papal, imperial, and local safe-conducts, groups of Roma were initially welcomed in most parts of Europe. Yet by the turn of the sixteenth century elites began questioning the narrative of the penitential pilgrims. The Roma were described as 'strange' in terms of skin colour, language, and their high mobility (although the latter was often the result of necessity rather than choice). Contradictory ethnic labels such as 'Egyptians', 'Gypsies' and 'Tatars'—the Romani word Roma does not appear in early modern sources—as well as frequent (but incorrect) abuse of the Roma as 'heathens' all point to the difficulties contemporaries found in placing the 'new' minority into any clear category. Over the course of the early modern period, some commentators came to doubt that they were a people in their own right, claiming, among other things, that Romani identity had simply been assumed by vagabonds, thieves, and robbers.

By the sixteenth century, Roma communities increasingly fell victim to marginalisation and discrimination. Stigmatising accusations of laziness, dishonesty, theft, robbery, fraud, espionage, magical practices, and bargaining with the devil made their situation much more difficult. In addition, numerous European territories tried to expel the Roma under the regulations of 'poor laws', which were aimed especially at itinerant groups. Despite these hardships, Roma worked as blacksmiths, basket makers, horse traders, construction and farm workers, traders, healers, entertainers, miners, soldiers, and even in law enforcement. They were often highly specialised workers and thus played a complex role in most early modern European societies, meaning that their history cannot be reduced to persecution.

The status and fate of the Roma as a group—or, more precisely, as a wide range of communities—also varied over time and space. While those living in Hungary were at times more firmly integrated into feudal structures and faced less marginalisation, Roma communities were enslaved for several centuries in the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. After a period of extensive persecution during the eighteenth century, a few countries launched new disciplinary policies to aggressively integrate and assimilate the Roma. In addition to older Spanish settlement initiatives, the 'enlightened' rulers of the Habsburg Empire, Maria Theresa (1717–1780) and Joseph II (1741–1790), enforced a rigid settlement policy (particularly in Burgenland in present-day eastern Austria) which also aimed at undermining Romani collective identity.

Unlike in the case of the Jews, the situation of the Roma witnessed few substantial improvements even as the early modern period came to a close.

Europe's Indigenous Peoples

Ambivalence also characterised the dealings of majority populations with ethnic groups today recognised as indigenous peoples within Europe, such as the Tatars in Poland-Lithuania, the Sorbs in Poland and Germany, or the Sámi in northern Scandinavia. Among these groups, the Sámi deserve particular attention because they formed one of the last remaining European groups of pre-Christian faith. The largely (but not exclusively) nomadic, reindeer-herding Sámi inhabited territories divided between Russia, Denmark-Norway, and Sweden. Especially as suppliers of expensive furs, many Sámi groups were closely integrated into commercial networks in all three polities. Although Christian missions to the Sámi had already been undertaken in the Middle Ages, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw a renewal of state-backed Christianisation efforts by Swedish and Norwegian Protestants as well as Russian Orthodox monks. Intended to stamp out pagan beliefs, missionaries undertook considerable efforts to seek out and destroy traditional religious sites while establishing new churches in Sámi settlements.

Even in the eighteenth century, the Sámi (who were called Laplanders at the time) had a reputation for witchcraft and magic which seems to have been connected to traditional shamanic practices interpreted by the Christian clergy and rulers as devil worship. Although King Christian IV of Denmark and Norway (1577–1648) issued a decree calling for the vigorous persecution of Sámi witchcraft in 1609, the number of Sámi accused of this crime was relatively low, suggesting that, despite their reputation, the Sámi were not particularly vulnerable to allegations of witchcraft.

Both witchcraft persecutions and renewed missionary efforts need to be seen in the context of attempts by Swedish and Danish-Norwegian monarchs to increase control over the Sámi through taxation and trade. Especially in the eighteenth century, the Scandinavian crowns promoted the influx of Finnish and Swedish settlers, with the aim of developing their northern territories agriculturally, while an increasing number of Sámi abandoned their nomadic lifestyle to take up farming and animal husbandry. The same period, however, also witnessed an expansion of Sámi reindeer herding, which continued to require a nomadic lifestyle.

Politically, the Sámi nomads played a key role in the attempts of Denmark-Norway and Sweden to delineate their common borders, since claims to territorial control were linked to usage of the land by the subjects of the respective

monarchs. The so-called Lapp Codicil, an addendum to the Strömstad Treaty (concluded in 1751), protected the nomadic lifestyle of Sámi reindeer herders by recognising their right to cross this border in order to access pastures and other key resources, even in times of war. At the same time, however, the requirement that herders fixed their juridical subjecthood, along with the subsequent hardening of the borders between Norway, Sweden, and Russia, increased the pressure on them to assimilate to the majority populations and submit to the authority of the respective states.

Conclusion

People living in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries were aware of the ethnic diversity of Europe, even if what we today refer to as ethnic categories were more fluid at that time. Ethnicity, 'peoplehood', and 'nation' did not have the same political significance ascribed to them by nineteenth- and twentieth-century nationalism, and different ethnic groups (defined by geographic origins, language, cultural practices, and religion) coexisted in all European polities. Of course, such coexistence was not necessarily always peaceful, and there were significant power asymmetries between different groups. Especially marginalised minorities such as Jews and the Romani people were generally disadvantaged and abused. On the other hand, their identities as distinct groups—imposed from the outside by European majority populations as much as they were constructed from the inside by members of such communities—did at times afford them a degree of protection and autonomy, especially when early modern authorities considered it expedient. This model of relative communal autonomy with direct relations to the ruler was characteristic not only of Poland-Lithuania but also most other multi-ethnic polities. To some extent, this principle also extended to Europe's indigenous peoples such as the Sámi. However, the right of self-administration also existed in tension with rulers' attempts to increase their control over their subjects, mobilise their resources, and homogenise their beliefs. In this sense, therefore, interethnic relations in early modern Europe were precarious, unstable, and subject to change over time. They remained volatile after 1800 when nationalist and racist ideologies took early modern scientific theories of race to the extreme, in order to justify exploitation, colonisation, violence, and even extermination in Europe and overseas. Long before that, Europe's deepening entanglements with lands and peoples beyond its shores had already given rise to a growing presence of people from distant countries—the result of conquest, enslavement, and religious missions. In the sixteenth century, for instance, Sevilla was home to a sizeable community of people of

African descent. Thus Europe's ethnic diversity further increased in the early modern period.

Discussion questions

1. How does the early modern concept of nation differ from our present-day understanding of the term?

2. How did early modern governments deal with ethnic diversity in Europe in the early modern period?

3. How did the status and experiences of different 'ethnic groups' in Europe vary in the early modern period?

4. How can we account for the hostility shown towards minority populations?

Suggested reading

Augustyniak, Urszula, *History of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: State— Society—Culture*, trans. by Grażyna Waluga and Dorota Sobstel (Frankfurt: Lang, 2015).

Dursteler, Eric R., *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

Green Mercado, Mayte, 'Ethnic Groups in Renaissance Spain', in *A Companion to the Spanish Renaissance*, ed. by Hilaire Kallendorf (Leiden: Brill, 2018), pp. 121–140.

Hansen, Lars Ivar, and Bjørnar Olsen, *Hunters in Transition: An Outline of Early Sámi History* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

Nirenberg, David, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York: Norton and Company, 2013).

Rubiés, Joan-Pau, 'Were Early Modern Europeans Racist?', in *Ideas of 'Race' in the History of the Humanities*, ed. by Amos Morris-Reich and Dirk Rupnow (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 33–87.

Shahar, Shulamith, 'Religious Minorities, Vagabonds and Gypsies in Early Modern Europe', in *The Roma - A Minority in Europe: Historical and Social Perspectives*, ed. by Roni Stauber and Raphael Vago (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2007), pp. 1–18.

2.2.2 Interethnic Relations in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Jaroslav Ira, Erika Szívós, and Irina Marin

Introduction

Ethnicity or ethnic group, as with similar collective nouns, is a commonly used but fuzzy concept. Most dictionary definitions stress that ethnicity presupposes a group of people that share a number of communal identity features, the most frequently invoked being language, culture, traditions, rituals, sometimes religion, and a sense of common descent. While to this day theorists of ethnicity debate its nature and its composition, in nineteenth-century Europe the concept itself did not exist, and only came into usage in the twentieth century. The concepts that circulated at the time varied greatly across time and geographical space. Depending on author and historical context, the demographic map of Europe was inhabited by peoples, nations, nationalities, or races. These concepts were sometimes used interchangeably; in other contexts, they designated very specific historical realities. In some cases, they were mere ethnographic terms; in others, they acquired political meaning.

Ethnic groups had, of course, existed before the nineteenth century and were mentioned by travellers, chroniclers, historians and governmental officials. What the nineteenth century introduced was a sharpening (and sometimes artificial creation) of lines of demarcation between various ethnic groups across Europe, and their reconceptualisation as 'nations', which came to be regarded as the legitimate basis for states. The emergent disciplines of folklore collection, ethnography, philology, and statistics processed group differences and came up with distinct categories of peoples. Thus, they also served as instruments of codification, regularisation and unification.

A look at a demographic map of nineteenth-century Europe shows that in terms of ethnicities or ethnic groups Western Europe was seemingly more compact while the greatest amount of ethnic fragmentation was to be found in

Central and Eastern Europe. Such an impression is not completely erroneous, as indeed Central and Eastern Europe marked a region of the continent where several empires met and chafed at the edges. Imperial borderlands are usually much more ethnically complex. However, what a demographic map hides is the complex reality of ethnicity throughout west and east. Well into the nineteenth century, groups that might otherwise be represented as compact (the Germans, the French, the Italians) did not in practice represent one single ethnicity but rather myriads of regional dialects, local cultures, and worldviews, sometimes mutually unintelligible and foreign to one another.

This subchapter is going to investigate European patterns of interethnic experiences and state policies. The first section will concentrate on the ways ethnic groups were viewed in the emerging modern nation-states of nineteenth-century Europe, focusing on the links between state-building and homogenisation efforts as well as on the relationship between majority and minority groups. The second section will explore multi-ethnicity and multi-national empires in Central and Eastern Europe, concentrating on the Habsburg Monarchy as a paradigmatic example. The Jewish case will be presented in a separate section as a special category of minority experiences.

The Emergence of Modern Nation-states and the Changing Position of Ethnic Minorities in the Nation-state Paradigm

By the end of the early modern period, the common use of one dominant language had become the norm in several European monarchies. Although not all nineteenth-century states strove to achieve language homogenisation, most of them worked toward the marginalisation of minority languages in one way or another and strove to curtail the autonomy of historic minorities. In France, a country which served as a model for many emerging nation-states of nineteenth-century Europe, the centralisation of state power had progressed hand-in-hand with policies of language homogenisation since the early modern period. The 1539 Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts declared that French should be used exclusively in state administration and legal documents, as the only official language of the country. The French Revolution continued this tendency: linguistic diversity was interpreted as a risk to national unity, so the official use of regional languages (such as Occitan in the south, Celtic-influenced Breton in the north, and Basque near the French-Spanish border) was suppressed together with the local autonomies and ancient legal privileges of historic regions, which were all integrated into the uniform system of *départements.* With the emergence of nationalism and the ideal of the nation-state in nineteenth-century Europe, efforts in favour of cultural homogenisation became pronounced in several other European states as well. Education was

seen as a particularly effective tool for transforming domestic populations into modern nations. The task of schools was, among other things, to raise good citizens and instil patriotic feelings in children. Therefore, educational systems were centralised in the course of the nineteenth century and 'state languages' assumed an increasingly dominant role in schools at the expense of minority languages. In 1880, for example, a nationally uniform school system was introduced in France, which left little or no room for regional languages.

However, even in countries with one dominant official language, a diversity of dialects prevailed, local languages survived, and significant ethnic minorities or nationalities continued to exist. The United Kingdom, officially the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland from 1801, is a case in point; despite the common language, it has never become a nation-state per se. In nineteenth-century Britain, the Irish, Welsh, Scots and smaller ethnic groups lived alongside the English and maintained their separate identities. These 'nations' were all peoples of Celtic origin, descendants of the population that had lived on the British Isles since before the Anglo-Saxon conquest.

Several members of those communities continued to use their own languages, although their struggles to ensure the survival of their native tongues were fought with varying degrees of success. In Ireland, Wales and Scotland, for example, the native Gaelic languages had long lost their primacy by the nineteenth century, and either bilingualism or the exclusive use of the English language had become the dominant pattern.

In nineteenth-century Spain, centralising tendencies followed the French model in many respects. The historic rights of significant minorities like the Basques were gradually suspended throughout the late eighteenth century and the nineteenth, and Spanish was declared to be the main language of the state. Nonetheless, regional cultural identities such as that of the Basques, Catalans and Gallegos proved to be strong enough to withstand the Spanish monarchy's centralising ambitions, and their languages survived, transforming into modern languages during the nineteenth century.

In countries that achieved unification in the second half of the nineteenth century, like Italy in 1861 or Germany in 1871, common language and common cultural heritage were regarded as the chief unifying factors. However, strong dialectal differences and regional identities survived in these countries, thanks to centuries of territorial and political separation. It was to some extent a matter of decision which dialect should become the basis of standard German and standard Italian (and thus the language of state administration, the judiciary, middle and higher education, literature, and the press), and dialects continued to be spoken locally at work, in public, in informal social situations, and in families. On the other hand, both modern Italy and Germany were conceived as nation-states, and, at least in Germany, there was perceptible pressure on minorities—such as the Poles in the eastern provinces—to assimilate.

In binational states or dynastically connected countries with two large nations, ethnic relations and issues of national identity were complicated in a different way. In the nineteenth century, countries and regions continued to change hands in Europe as the result of wars and subsequent treaties by which rising powers satisfied their expansionist ambitions. For example, Denmark and Norway formed a dual monarchy together from 1537 to 1814, which also contained Iceland, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands with their native populations and languages. But then Norway was ceded to Sweden in the Treaty of Kiel in 1814. As Norwegians refused to accept this solution and declared their independence, a personal union (i.e., two countries joined by the person of the monarch) with Sweden was created as a compromise, lasting until 1905. In a country like Denmark-Norway, linguistic differences among the major ethnic communities were not exceedingly sharp, as the languages remained fairly close to each other until the end of the early modern period and even beyond. At the same time, Danish clearly dominated in official usage until 1814. So the nineteenth-century Norwegian cultural renaissance—very similar in nature to kindred revivalist movements in early nineteenth-century East Central Europe and other peripheral areas of the continent—did not merely strive to make the Norwegian language more distinct from the other Scandinavian languages by purification (for example, the replacement of 'foreign' loan words by indigenous ones) and spelling reforms, but was also faced with the task of having to create a modern literary language.

In other cases, new, ethnically compound countries were created from territories which had previously been ruled by other monarchies. Following a revolution in 1830, Belgium, formerly part of the Protestant-dominated United Kingdom of the Netherlands, was created in 1830 as an independent, bilingual country, comprised of Dutch-speaking Flemish and French-speaking Walloon inhabitants.

Multi-ethnic Empires

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, large parts of Central and Eastern Europe formed portions of multinational and multi-ethnic empires, namely the Habsburg Monarchy and the Russian Empire. A third imperial power, the Ottoman Empire, ruled the peoples of the Balkans, and although it was increasingly forced to give up control over territories during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it controlled a substantial part of south-eastern Europe for much of the period discussed in this chapter. As mentioned above, the German Empire also included significant non-German populations as the result of Prussia's territorial acquisitions in earlier centuries.

Unlike states in Western Europe, empires in the eastern part of the continent remained ethnically diverse until the end of the nineteenth century and even beyond. Many historical reasons stood behind that. Firstly, the empires of nineteenth-century Central and Eastern Europe had been formed over the centuries of ethnically and culturally diverse lands, which often adhered to their own political traditions and institutions and were linked together by ruling dynasties. Secondly, the policies of assimilation by the state elites appeared relatively late, in the late eighteenth century in Austria and even later in Russia. Thirdly, in some places such as the Ottoman Empire or the Baltic region in Russia, language diversity also served as a social barrier imposed by the ruling classes on the masses. Less advanced economies and relatively underdeveloped systems of communication and transport also hindered stronger assimilation. The ethnic map was therefore particularly diverse. More importantly, the power relations between states and ethnic groups (as well as among ethnic groups) varied widely and tended to change over time.

An Example of a Multi-ethnic Empire: Ethnic Relations in the Habsburg Monarchy

Until the emergence of national movements in the first half of the nineteenth century, the multi-ethnic character of the Habsburg Empire did not cause serious difficulties for Habsburg governments, nor did it lead to conflicts among diverse ethnic groups. Emperor Joseph II (r. 1780–1790) promoted the German language as a lingua franca in the Habsburg Empire, regarding it as a tool of efficient centralisation, provoking a resistance that can be interpreted as a sign of rising national consciousness in various parts of the empire. Apart from that, however, the Habsburg governance of diverse areas rested on a degree of respect for local languages, religions, cultural and political traditions.

Early nineteenth-century movements of 'national awakening', as they were called in Central and Eastern Europe, were primarily cultural movements, but they gradually acquired stronger political overtones. The ideology of modern nationalism was intertwined with liberal ideas; the peoples of the Habsburg Monarchy were no longer content with the political system of the centralised empire and its absolutist government and demanded greater individual rights and freedoms, as well as collective rights and autonomies. Linguistic and cultural communities increasingly defined themselves as nations. Emerging national movements within the Habsburg Empire often had conflicting goals and interests and could be consciously pitted against each other by Austrian governments—as the revolutionary events of 1848–1849 amply demonstrated.

In 1867, the Austro-Hungarian Compromise created the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (the official name of the Habsburg Empire between 1867 and 1918)

and established parliamentarism in both halves. In the Austrian half of the Monarchy (Cisleithania), the constitution of 1867 secured rather generous 'national' rights for the corresponding ethnic groups. In addition, voting rights in Austria were gradually extended by electoral reforms in the late nineteenth century, while universal manhood suffrage (the right of all adult male citizens to vote) was introduced in 1907. As a result, the demands of nationalities were increasingly articulated in the Imperial Parliament, causing severe tensions. In the constitutionally autonomous Hungarian Kingdom (Transleithania), voting rights remained limited to a narrow circle of around six percent of the adult population, and ethnic minorities were severely underrepresented in Parliament. Although the rights of nationalities were stated in an important law of 1868, state policies in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Hungary were a de facto curtailment of minorities' cultural and linguistic rights, and especially from the mid-1890s these policies strove to forcefully assimilate non-Hungarians. All this together led to an increasingly strained relationship between the Hungarian state and members of national and ethnic minorities. The 'nationality problem' thus plagued domestic politics in both halves of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and contributed substantially to its dissolution in 1918.

Still, the constellations were diverse. In Bohemia, the rise of the Czech nation, markedly visible already during the revolution of 1848, led to intense struggle with an outnumbered yet economically strong German minority, which benefited from Germanophone networks and the German character of the Austrian state. In the province of Galicia, both Ruthenians and Poles were given broad space for their respective national activities. But it was the Poles, better-positioned in society, who assumed political control of the province.

The sense of belonging to a distinct ethnic community was arguably stronger in cases like those of the Czechs and the Poles, who could rely upon a long literary tradition in their own printed language and a legacy of statehood. The latter was still very much alive in the Polish case, while the ethnic identity of other peoples, such as Ukrainians or Slovaks, was weaker at the threshold of the 'age of nations'. But even among these groups, ethnic identity was not simply out there, waiting to be taken to the fore by nationalists. Rather, national movements helped define and reinforce ethnic identities in the first place, building upon existing cultural markers such as language or religion. Ethnic identity was often unclear for many people, not to mention irrelevant to their everyday lives. Many people spoke two or more languages and switched depending on the situation, while identifying themselves primarily by profession, social status, place of living, or confession rather than ethnicity or nationality. Polish peasants, for instance, for a long time had little interest in the efforts of the Polish nobility and gentry to restore the Polish state, as

class antagonisms rather than shared ethnicity defined their relations with one another well into the late nineteenth century.

As the century progressed, people were increasingly forced to belong to neatly divided ethnic groups. In the Habsburg Monarchy, modern censuses were introduced in 1869 and became powerful tools in this regard. The 'language of daily use' (*Umgangsprache*, used as a technical term in Austrian statistics) became an indicator of one's ethnic belonging. Census data, in fact, often concealed bilingualism or the use of multiple languages, and were unable to reflect hybrid identities, shifting allegiances, and the complex situation of people with mixed ancestry. From the perspective of nationalist agitators, however, individuals characterised by national indifference or 'ambiguous' identities were seen with growing disdain. On a different level, ethnic features were appropriated in newly invented national traditions and symbols (such as national costumes) or studied, classified and displayed in the newly founded ethnographic museums and exhibitions.
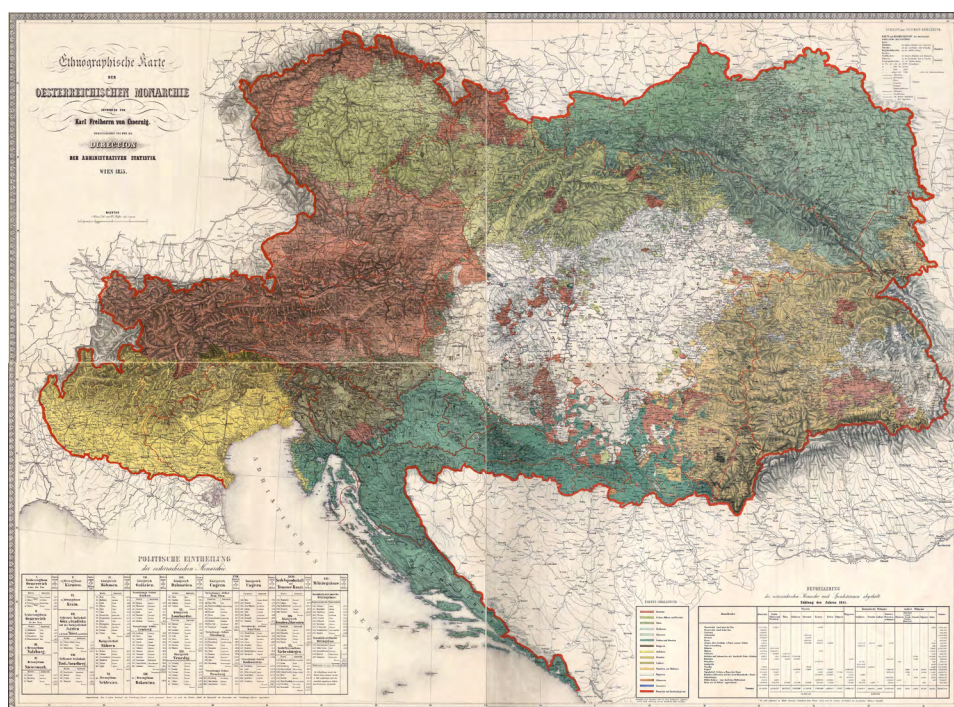

Fig. 1: Karl Freiherr von Czoernig, Ethnographic map of the Habsburg Monarchy (1855), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ethnographic_map_of_austrian_monarchy_czoernig_1855.jpg.

Apart from political and intellectual struggles in state-wide arenas, interethnic relations played out in local spatial frameworks. In multi-ethnic regions, but sometimes in more homogeneous ones too, larger towns and cities were often multi-ethnic and multi-confessional. Lviv/Lwów/Lemberg, the capital of

Galicia, for example, was comprised of Ruthenians, Poles, Jews, and Austrian Germans, while Timişoara/Temesvár/Temeswar/Temišvar had Romanian, Hungarian, ethnic German, Serbian, Slovak, Jewish, and Ruthenian inhabitants in the late nineteenth century. Ethnically mixed cities were the rule rather than the exception in several parts of the region. Ethnic maps of the period can therefore only provide an approximate image of regional and subregional colourfulness and do not sufficiently reflect the actual complexity of local conditions. In addition to the local ethnicities, cities in the Austrian half of the empire would also include German-speaking officials of the imperial administration.

Mass migration often thoroughly altered the ethnic composition of nineteenth-century cities while transforming their social structure. Some of the major regional capitals, such as Prague or Lemberg (in Polish Lwów, present-day Lviv, Ukraine), became centres of competing national movements laying claims to public space. Efforts by Czech elites to seize and symbolically recast Prague as a Czech city, and of Polish elites to sustain Lemberg's image as a Polish city, were contradicted by "the politics of ethnic survival" (as described by historian Gary Cohen), practised by the vital minority of Germans in Prague, and by the growing presence of Ukrainian claims in the capital of Austrian Galicia. At the street level, territories and places were symbolically appropriated, such as the 'Czech' or 'German' promenades that stretched westwards and eastwards from Prague's Wenceslas Square.

It would be misleading, however, to imagine *fin-de-siècle* cities as divided or even segregated. Interactions among members of different ethnic groups often took place on a daily basis, in spaces of leisure, work, and consumption—despite nationalist agitation encouraging people to follow precisely the opposite strategy. Members of ethnic communities were urged to shop with 'their' retailers and to avoid mixed marriages. However, many individuals, such as some of the leftist or Jewish intellectuals, deliberately crossed these ethnic boundaries.

Jews in Nation-states and Empires: Ethnicity or Denominational Minority?

When it comes to interethnic relations, the position of the Jewish population deserves special attention. Even though, statistically speaking, they were regarded as a religious group and not an ethnicity in most European countries by the late nineteenth century (with the exception of the Russian Empire), they were perceived as an ethnoreligious group by many contemporaries as well as by several members of Jewish communities themselves—especially the Orthodox. Assimilated Jews, on the other hand, tended to identify themselves

in the second half of the nineteenth century primarily as members of one of the European nations or of linguistic-cultural communities such as English, French, Germans, Hungarians, and so on, depending on location and first language. The legal emancipation of Jews, which occurred at different times in different countries (1789 in France, 1812 in Prussia, 1867 in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, 1917 in Russia), theoretically created the possibility of full social integration for Jews. However, the success of the integration process depended significantly on the social, cultural and political environments of individual countries. Whereas the social integration of Jews reached generally high levels in Western and North-western Europe, antagonisms were much more likely to prevail in east-central and Eastern Europe, where the proportion of Jews was significantly higher than in the western half of the continent. Not all segments of non-Jewish society accepted Jews in their ranks, and antisemites often called into question their Jewish compatriots' national loyalties as well as their sincere identification with their homelands. Modern antisemitism, often and increasingly combined with racial theories by the turn of the twentieth century, had complex ideological, social and cultural roots, which cannot be analysed here in detail. But the persistence of antisemitism in modern European societies had grave consequences later on in the interwar period, when authoritarian or totalitarian regimes emerged across much of Europe.

In Russia, Jewish emancipation did not occur until 1917. Until the early twentieth century, Jewish citizens were confined by law to the Pale of Settlement, a large territory in the western part of the Russian Empire where they were mandated to reside, and which they could leave only on certain conditions. In other European areas, east-central Europe included, residential restrictions affecting Jews had been abolished by the 1850s at the latest. They had to endure various forms of popular as well as state-sponsored antisemitism, including periodic pogroms, which were among the main reasons for large-scale Jewish emigration from Russia after 1881.

Conclusion

The ethnic map of Europe at the turn of the nineteenth century was diverse and characterised by time-honoured patterns of coexistence. With the emergence of modern forms of nationalism, however, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural states as well as their resident ethnic groups were faced with new challenges. Efforts to transform countries into modern states often led to assimilationist policies and the attempted marginalisation of ethnic minorities. In absolutist regimes, 'national' demands for greater representation erupted in revolutions; by mid-century, national and ethnic tensions assumed different forms in constitutional

monarchies. In bi- or multi-national states, competing nationalisms caused severe political tensions in the late nineteenth century and undermined political stability (even where minority rights were guaranteed by law).

One would assume that competing nationalisms provoked increasingly bitter conflict within local and urban communities in the second half of the nineteenth century too, but that would be a misunderstanding of the complexity of local conditions. Nationalist agendas were articulated in the public space, in the press, in associations, and in parliament, but at the same time, long-standing practices of interethnic communication and coexistence continued to characterise everyday life on the local level.

In the age of mass migration, the proximity of old and new ethnic groups, the appearance of culturally different 'newcomers', and particularly the rapid change which altered the former ethnic and linguistic composition of towns and cities, all together created the potential for conflicts within urban societies. However, larger cities also functioned as crucibles where the linguistic and cultural assimilation of minority groups proved much faster than in ethnically homogeneous, isolated regions.

Discussion questions

1. What were the most important changes in interethnic relations in nineteenth-century Europe and what were the reasons for these changes?

2. Which role did language play in interethnic relations in nineteenth-century Europe?

3. In which ways do these changes still shape Europe today?

Suggested reading

Berger, Stefan, ed., *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Europe, 1789–1914* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2006).

Burke, Peter, 'Nationalisms and Vernaculars, 1500–1800', in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalisms*, ed. by John Breuilly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 21–35.

Cohen, Gary B., *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861–1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

Gyáni, Gábor, György Kövér and Tibor Valuch, *Social History of Hungary from the Reform Era to the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

Judson, Pieter M., *The Habsburg Empire: A History* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2016).

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

Kontler, László, *A History of Hungary* (Budapest: Atlantisz, 2008).

Mironov, Boris and Ben Eklof, *The Social History of Imperial Russia, 1700–1917* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000).

Salmi, Hannu, *Nineteenth-Century Europe: A Cultural History* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2008).

Zahra, Tara, 'Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis', *Slavic Review* 69:1 (2010), 93–119.

2.2.3 Interethnic Relations in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Jaroslav Ira, Thomas Schad, and Erika Szívós

Introduction

Interethnic relations and the complex relationships among states, nations, and minority populations underwent several changes in twentieth-century Europe. The First World War brought about the dissolution of empires on the continent, the rearrangement of European borders and the emergence of entirely new states, especially in the continent's eastern half. These geopolitical changes often thoroughly redefined the populations of European states as well as the possibilities for minorities within them. Dictatorships and authoritarian regimes in the interwar period fostered racialised thinking and the persecution of ethnic and other minorities, culminating in genocide and ethnic cleansing during and after the Second World War on a scale that would have been unimaginable a century earlier. Even in the second half of the twentieth century, discriminatory practices towards minorities continued and nationalist or separatist movements re-emerged, leading to periodic outbursts of violent interethnic conflicts. The remainder of this chapter will examine the ambiguity of the term 'ethnicity' and the changing relationships between majority and minority populations in Europe, with a particular focus on the more complex situation in multi-ethnic regions of Central, Eastern, and south-eastern Europe.

Ethnicity, Nationality, and Markers of Identity

Ethnicity and ethnic groups are often equated or confused with nationality, national minorities, or even nations. While these categories do overlap, they are not necessarily identical. To take but one example, the Socialist Federative

Republic of Yugoslavia (1945–1992) drew a distinction between nation (*narod, nacija*) and nationality (*narodnost*), with the former term applying only to Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Muslims, Montenegrins, and Macedonians, all of whom spoke Slavic languages and were considered the 'constitutive people' of the multiethnic state. However, residents of the same state who identified as Hungarian, Albanian, Romani, Jewish, Czech, German, Romanian, Bulgarian, Slovak, Turk, Rusyn, Italian, Vlach, or otherwise, were considered to belong to a nationality (*narodnost*) instead, implying that their 'true' homeland lay beyond the borders of *Jugoslavija* (literally "the land of South Slavs").

Across Europe in the twentieth century (as in earlier periods), a commonly accepted, uniform definition of ethnicity never emerged; most often, the term was related to markers of difference such as religion, language, origin, culture, or some combination of these attributes. Religion, for instance, is still a decisive feature of identity in Northern Ireland: according to the 2011 census, the majority of Roman Catholics (57.2 percent) identified as Irish, while most Protestants (81.6 percent) declared themselves British. In the Balkans, religious affiliation is often the most prominent marker before language, as the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina shows, where Bosniaks—known until 1993 as Muslims (*Muslimani*)—are traditionally Sunni Muslims, whereas Serbs are Orthodox Christians, and Croats are Roman Catholics. However, the situation is radically different in nearby Albania, where Muslim, Orthodox, Catholic, Bektashi, and atheist Albanian speakers identify as Albanians, regardless of their respective religious traditions.

Language is the decisive identity marker for Germany's Slavic-speaking Sorbs as well as for Frisians, who speak a Germanic dialect. In Spain and France, the Basque minority speaks a language unrelated to that of the dominant, surrounding communities. In Belgium, the two major population groups speak either French or Flemish, but neither is usually referred to as an 'ethnic group'—instead, they are mostly referred to as Walloons and Flemings, or collectively as Belgians. This example from the European Union's institutional centre draws attention to the widespread Eurocentric habit of applying the label of 'ethnicity' overwhelmingly to marginalised and minority groups—particularly outside of Europe and in supposedly peripheral regions such as the Balkans—but not to larger groups and majority populations in (Western) Europe.

In other cases, like the Swedish, Norwegian, and Sámi peoples of Scandinavia, ethnicity is not only marked by linguistic difference, but also by reference to different origins and origin myths. Cultural difference might be associated with religious difference, as in the case of Bulgaria's Muslim Turkish minority. However, for the Sarakatsani people of Greece, North Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Albania, cultural difference is associated with a

nomadic lifestyle. Nomadism became highly exceptional towards the end of the twentieth century in Europe, although it remains a stereotype associated with Europe's largest ethnic minority, the Romani people. However, they use different names (such as Roma and Sinti, Ashkali, Lovari, Kale, Calé, and many others), they speak their own (Romani) and/or other languages, and they follow various religious traditions. The Romani people are present in every European country, from Finland in the north to Andalusia in the south. Throughout the twentieth century, they were stigmatised in various ways, from the names given to them by outsiders to open forms of racism and persecution, which peaked during the Second World War. Estimations by Romani organisations of their total population size in Europe vary between ten and fourteen million. Spain has the largest Roma population in Western Europe (725,000–750,000), whereas other significant centres are in the Balkans.

Ethnic Relations in Europe ca. 1918–1945

As these examples show, it is extremely difficult to grasp Europe and its interethnic relations across the twentieth century from only one perspective. It is nevertheless possible to draw a distinction between developments in the western, south-western, and northern parts of the continent on the one hand, and the central, eastern, and south-eastern parts on the other. In Western Europe, a consolidation of nation-state structures accompanied by ethnic homogenisation took place earlier than elsewhere (though often later than commonly assumed). In Central and Eastern Europe, stretching from present-day Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Austria, and Hungary eastwards to the western Balkans, ethnic diversity within the spaces of former multi-ethnic empires persisted much longer. Whether it was the Austro-Hungarian, the Ottoman, or the Russian Empire, all of these pre-national political structures were intrinsically multi-ethnic.

The difference between mostly mono-ethnic nation-states and multi-ethnic empires also helps to explain why inter-ethnic violence and tensions often arose in areas which became nation-states comparatively late: the logic of nationalism stresses the alignment of territory, population, and political power (sovereignty) within one 'nation'. According to this logic, ethnic difference can easily turn into violent conflict over resources, especially when new borders are drawn, new state bureaucracies emerge, or when citizenship is redefined along linguistic, religious, or other 'ethnic' criteria. Nationalist regimes homogenised populations through policies of 'social engineering' that reshaped their demographic or ethnic composition, such as through ethnic cleansing, forced resettlement, assimilation, or genocide.

While ethnic diversity in Eastern and Central European states was commonplace before 1918, the 'Versailles System' established after the First World War created radically new conditions. The dissolution of the multi-ethnic empires (Austria-Hungary, Russia, Wilhelmine Germany, the Ottoman Empire) was followed by the emergence of successor states whose legitimacy derived from the principle of national self-determination. But the new states were far from ethnically homogeneous units and many ethnic groups found themselves dispersed outside of 'their' nation-states.

Incongruencies between cultural and political borders fostered major tensions both within and beyond individual nations during the interwar period. Domestically, relationships were often strained between national minorities and the majority populations (the so-called 'titular nations') that became hegemons of their respective states. At the same time, national groups became bones of contention between the states in which they formed a minority (such as Germans in Czechoslovakia or Hungarians in Romania) and the states where they were dominant (Germany, Hungary).

Legal measures were created to secure the rights of national minorities, such as those enshrined in the Minority Treaties that newly established states were obliged to sign in order to join the League of Nations. The League served as arbitrator in cases of alleged mistreatment of minorities, but cases could only be put forward by the recognised nation-states that were members of the organisation. In practice, many new states imposed the cultural dominance of the largest ethnic group and treated minorities that did not assimilate as unreliable or disloyal.

Some states, such as Poland, adopted harsh policies toward minorities, enacting measures of cultural Polonisation while excluding minorities from state structures. This especially applied to Ukrainians, Belarussians, Jews, and Germans, who together formed roughly one third of the population. Czechoslovakia adopted a more liberal attitude towards its German, Hungarian, Ruthenian, and Polish minorities, but still regarded these groups' demands for greater cultural or territorial autonomy with suspicion. The peculiar and instrumental construction of a 'Czechoslovak' nation itself concealed the unequal relationship between Czechs on the one hand and Slovaks on the other, with the latter remaining underrepresented in state administration and public institutions.

Mid-century Transformations

The Second World War and its aftermath brought about a profound transformation of Central and Eastern Europe's ethnic conditions. The war itself triggered the flight and emigration of hundreds of thousands of people

from territories invaded or annexed by Nazi Germany and its allies. The largest proportion of the refugees were Jewish by religion or by descent, but non-Jewish citizens also had reason to fear persecution on ethnic or political grounds, and thus fled in large numbers from countries like occupied Poland in 1939. As the war continued and the Nazis pursued a policy of extermination towards Jews, millions of people in Central and Eastern Europe were murdered. Jewish emigration from the region during and after the war thoroughly changed its composition and culture, as characteristic groups and urban subcultures disappeared and the complex ties between Jews and Gentiles were broken.

Similar movements of mass flight and forced migration unfolded in the other direction as well. In 1939, following the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact signed by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union annexed eastern Poland, and in 1940 forced the Baltic states to join the USSR. The Nazis themselves forced Baltic Germans, who had inhabited the region since the Middle Ages, to resettle within the Third Reich. As the Soviet front approached, the ethnic German population of East Prussia (today the Kaliningrad exclave of Russia) was evacuated *en masse*, never to return to their former homeland. At the end of the Second World War, the Allies instituted wartime agreements that led to substantial border changes in Central and Eastern Europe, which were often accompanied by 'population exchanges'—mass expulsions that forced several million people to relocate. To take Poland as an example: Germans were expelled from the western territories incorporated into post-war Poland, while Polish citizens were forced to move out of the areas ceded to the Soviet Union. Simultaneously, a similar number of ethnic Belarussians and Ukrainians had to leave Poland and move to the neighbouring Belarussian and Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republics, areas which by then had become permanent parts of the Soviet Union.

Almost everywhere in Eastern and Central Europe, the guiding principle behind expulsions and population exchanges was the drive of post-war governments to transform their countries into ethnically homogeneous states, an idea that was initially supported by all Allied powers as well. However, given the ethnic, linguistic and denominational diversity of Central and Eastern Europe and the ethnic complexity of many of its sub-regions, homogeneity in most cases could only be achieved—if at all—by coercion. For example, under a so-called population exchange treaty in 1946, ethnic Hungarians from Czechoslovakia and ethnic Slovaks from Hungary could 'swap' their domiciles; however, the figures on the two sides did not match (approximately 120,000 resettled Hungarians vs some 73,000 resettling Slovaks).

Expulsions and forced resettlement, designed partly to solve the 'nationality problem' and partly to administer collective punishment, disrupted age-old patterns of coexistence. By placing people into rigid ethnic or national

categories, expulsions often targeted those who had compound identities and those with multiple ties to their country and its communities.

Minority Issues and Policies During and After the Cold War

Although states in post-war Central and Eastern Europe perceptibly worked towards the greatest possible degree of homogeneity, several countries retained a multi-ethnic character and/or ethnic minorities after 1945. Policies regarding minorities varied from state to state and from period from period. After the communist takeover, the Marxist doctrine of 'proletarian internationalism' to some extent relegated minority issues into the background, but ethnic realities still had to be addressed. The USSR was itself a multi-ethnic state in which contradictory policies coexisted. While Russification and the suppression of local nationalisms was a marked tendency during the entire history of the Soviet Union, so too was a whole range of working solutions developed with regard to the languages of member republics and the historic and cultural heritage of non-Russian nationalities. The countries of the Socialist Bloc were required to adopt the principles of proletarian internationalism, but at the same time they could look to the Soviet Union for practical examples of how to handle nationalities within a multi-ethnic communist state. In some east-central European communist countries, such as Hungary and Yugoslavia, the equality of all nationalities was stated in the constitution; in others (Czechoslovakia for instance), the rights of nationalities were regulated by various laws.

However, state socialism did little to cultivate the allegiances of minorities. Communist governments required citizens to identify primarily with the party and the state, usually regarding all other loyalties and identities with suspicion. Where national minorities were permitted their own institutions (such as schools, cultural associations, organisations, events, newspapers, or regular radio and television programmes), these were closely monitored and kept under strict state control. The case of the Roma in Czechoslovakia is illustrative of the contradictory approach toward minority groups under socialism. On the one hand, the state pursued assimilation strategies premised on the idea that the Roma did not constitute a distinct nationality, but rather represented a kind of 'deviant' lifestyle or a social problem for the state. Measures deployed against the Roma included not only continuous sedentarisation and resettlement (from the countryside of eastern Slovakia to cities in the border regions of Bohemia), but also much more aggressive policies such as the sterilisation of Roma women or segregation of Roma children into 'special schools'. On the other hand, the proclamations of equality and extensive social rights that legitimised the socialist regime also created a space for advocating

for the rights of Roma, their inclusion in society, and their recognition as a nationality.

As far as Western Europe was concerned, intercultural issues underwent significant changes after the Second World War as, for the first time in modern history, Europe became a continent of mass inward migration (see the chapters on 'Demographic Change' and 'Migration' in the twentieth century). In the wake of decolonisation, an ever-larger number of non-Europeans arrived from former colonies to countries like Britain, France, and the Netherlands. In the economic boom that began in the 1950s, large numbers of so-called 'guest workers'—initially from Italy, Spain, and Portugal, then increasingly from Turkey and Yugoslavia—were recruited for employment in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. By the 1990s, immigration had greatly diversified in terms of the motivations of migrants and their countries of origin. With the emergence of the European Community, later the European Union, intra-European migration began to increase as well. These new patterns of migration raised new kinds of concerns. Cultural differences, manifest in residential spatial patterns such as segregation, and new issues of cultural integration began to define discourses on interethnic relations.

The collapse of state socialist regimes in 1989–1990 put the question of minorities on a new footing. Democratically elected parliaments and post-1990 governments sought to create legal frameworks in which minority rights were respected and observed. In many cases, these new laws were shaped by the European Union, which expanded to include the Visegrád countries (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary), the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), as well as Slovenia in 2004, followed by Romania and Croatia three years later. Minorities in these countries thus obtained greater legal protections. However, populist and right-wing nationalist parties claiming to represent the entire 'nation' (meaning, in fact, the majority ethnic population) also pursued aggressive policies against minorities in this period. In some countries, unbridled nationalism led to increasing tensions and discrimination in everyday life.

In the aftermath of the Cold War, Europe was also reminded of the dangers of violent interethnic conflict. The breakup of Yugoslavia in 1991 and the subsequent wars in Croatia (1991–1995), Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992–1995), and Kosovo (1998–1999) represented the first large-scale interethnic wars on European soil since the Second World War. With the fall of the Muslim enclave of Srebrenica (Bosnia) on 11 July 1995, the war even led to the first post-1945 genocide in Europe, against the Bosniak people. These conflicts shared many similarities with those earlier in the century, when the disintegration of multi-ethnic states had led to struggles between competing ethnic groups for sovereignty over 'their' territory.

Conclusion

After the First World War and the dissolution of former empires, national ideals informed the self-identification of new states, and continued to define the strategies of governing elites throughout the century. This development encouraged restrictive or assimilative policies towards national or ethnic minorities, fuelling unresolved tensions and in some cases leading to separatist movements. The period between the early 1930s and the late 1940s irreversibly changed the ethnic maps of entire regions. Millions were killed or forced to resettle as a result of the Second World War. War, genocide, and mass expulsions broke up centuries-old patterns of ethnic coexistence in the victims' places of origin, while the arrival of forced migrants often led to new tensions with the local populace in their places of arrival. After 1945, Europe became a region of mass immigration due to post-colonial global migration patterns and the globalisation of the labour market. Until 1989, Eastern Bloc countries—being closed societies under the control of the Soviet Union—stood largely outside the circuits of global migration. However, after the collapse of state socialist systems, they too became countries of arrival for international migrants within an expanding European Union.

The 'national turn' that had taken place in the late nineteenth century thus manifested itself in all countries of Europe throughout the twentieth century, deeply affecting the relationship of majority nations with the minorities living among them, as well as the relationships between different minority groups. The ethnically and culturally homogeneous nation-state became the norm and the ideal, even if that ideal was far removed from the existing realities of most European countries, and particularly far from the conditions of large, multi-ethnic states in early twentieth-century Europe. This was particularly true in Central, Eastern and south-eastern Europe, regions whose twentieth-century history exemplifies key problems of interethnic relations. Indeed, the habit of speaking about 'ethnic groups' is far more prevalent in relation to Eastern and south-eastern Europe than it is to Western Europe, though there exist important tensions in minority-majority relations in the latter as well. Conflicts over ethnic difference are thus not a specific feature of the east and southeast, but a reflection of the longevity of nationalist thought and its assumption of ethnic homogeneity. Given the bloodshed and body count of nationalist projects, one must use 'national' and 'ethnic' categories with care and critical reflection.

The most troublesome impact of the 'national turn' has been on minorities who have never had their own nation-state within Europe, such as Jews, the Roma, and nomads. The Jewish response to the experience of being a 'stateless' people was often a strong identification with, and an effort to integrate into, the state in which they lived. However, with right-wing political groups and

exponents of racial ideologies repeatedly calling such efforts at integration into question, another Jewish response was the rise of political Zionism, an early twentieth-century modern nationalist movement that sought to (re) create a Jewish homeland outside Europe and encourage the emigration of European Jewry into that new state. The societal integration of the Roma, the Sinti and of various nomadic groups was similarly controversial and remained incompletely addressed in many European countries, even in the late twentieth century.

Discussion questions

1. Discuss the role of the nation state in interethnic relations in twentieth-century Europe.

2. What was the role of the Cold War in interethnic relations in Europe?

3. The twentieth century was full of interethnic tensions. Do you think the EU has solved these problems? Why or why not?

Suggested reading

Bookman, Milica Zarkovic, *The Demographic Struggle for Power: The Political Economy of Demographic Engineering in the Modern World* (London: Routledge, 2013).

Chu, Winson, *The German Minority in Interwar Poland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Donert, Celia, *The Rights of the Roma: The Struggle for Citizenship in Postwar Czechoslovakia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

Eiler, Ferenc, Dagmar Hájková et al., *Czech and Hungarian Minority Policy in Central Europe, 1918–1938* (Prague: MÚA AV ČR, 2009).

Ther, Philipp, *The Dark Side of Nation-States: Ethnic Cleansing in Modern Europe* (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2014).

Zimmer, Oliver, *Nationalism in Europe, 1890–1940* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

CHAPTER 2.3

HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY

2.3.1 Household and Family in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Sarah Carmichael and Xenia von Tippelskirch

Introduction

Since Aristotle, there has been a thread of thought which maintains that the way parents and children, as well as husbands and wives, relate to each other forms a subconscious model for political systems, serving as the template for how the individual relates to authority. Whether one subscribes to this view or not, everyday life and the organisation of society at the family and household levels are clearly fundamental to how European societies have functioned over time. Yet such topics were for a long time neglected by historians, who focused narrowly on economic and political developments or who relegated them to the field of women's history, which they treated as separate and non-essential. When it comes to our historical understanding of family and household, a lot of what people presume is true of the past is based either on the behaviour of elites, on portrayals in literature, or on ideologically framed, older research. For instance, the idea persists that historically, girls across Europe married universally and usually in their teens, or that large family groups were the norm for all societies. Many of these assumptions, however, do not stand up to scrutiny.

Examining the setup of care duties often associated with female roles in society (childbearing and -rearing, housekeeping etc.) can help us understand developments in a given period, not just for women themselves but for societies as a whole. In this sub-chapter we sketch the most important characteristics of family and household in early modern Europe, drawing out temporal and geographical distinctions where necessary. The origin of these regional differences is debated, with some historians arguing that differences in legal systems, inheritance regimes, or agrarian practices (such as the presence or absence of certain types of plough technology) are at the bottom of these

differences. It is in any case important to differentiate between rural and urban settings and between the conditions of high nobility and peasants. Furthermore, the distinction between family and household also differs between contexts. Sometimes all individuals living together in domestic groups will be related by blood but in other situations there may be many additions to the basic domestic unit in the form of lodgers, servants, apprentices, and so on. Historians have tended to find it easier to research domestic residential groups (i.e., households) than kinship networks.

The structure of this chapter follows that of the life course, running from birth (including infanticide), children and childhood, marriage, households and servants, to old age and death (including inheritance regimes). Finally, we will focus on how early modern houses were furnished and on the role of property during one's lifetime and after one's death.

Childbirth and Childhood

Childbirth and childhood were highly risky periods for those born in the early modern period. But during this period important changes also took place in how both were dealt with and both topics have stimulated wide-ranging research on various subjects associated with infancy. The focus on birth has allowed social historians (especially since the 1970s) to reconstruct the particular position that women occupied in early modern families, to question the role of legitimacy and how transmission of heritage was managed. Investigations of the history of childbirth have also given us insight into the anatomical and medical knowledge of the period. In this context, religious dimensions proved to be very important: the questions of when a foetus was actually alive and the fate of children who died unbaptised occupied contemporaries intensely. Early modern mortality rates for mothers and newborns were extremely high, with roughly twenty-seven precent of infants not living to see their first birthday (and about half didn't make it to adulthood), and four to five births out of every thousand leading to the death of the mother. (Taking into account that mothers in this period were likely to have multiple children, the risk for any given mother was therefore much higher.) Thus, births were accompanied by religious and magical rituals by which contemporaries hoped to achieve a fortuitous birth. Once the child was born, efforts were made to baptise it as quickly as possible in order to integrate it into the community of believers.

Throughout the early modern period children were born at home with the help of midwives, who mostly passed on their knowledge orally. We know of the practices that characterised midwifery thanks to the regulations of territorial authorities, but also through some medical literature—Eucharius Rösslin's *Der Rosengarten* (*The Rose Garden*), an illustrated text from 1513 that

circulated widely throughout the sixteenth century in Latin, English, French, and Italian translations. From the seventeenth century onwards, we also have treatises written by midwives. The French royal midwife Louise Bourgeois (1563–1636) was the first woman to publish about her art; the handbook of the court midwife Justine Siegemund (1636–1705) from Lower Silesia enjoyed particular success. In her richly illustrated book, which she compiled on the basis of her readings and her own practical experience, she primarily addressed other midwives she wanted to teach. Siegemund shows how assistance could be given during birth. Another famous treatise by the Parisian midwife Angélique Marguerite Le Boursier du Coudray (first published in 1759) even had coloured plates in its second edition (1777). The rarity of such colour illustrations proves that it was a very popular text, for which such expensive additions were seen as worthwhile. These works reveal how midwives dealt with difficult births, but also which instruments and manual techniques they used, how they performed emergency baptisms and, more generally, the ways in which the unborn were imagined.

At the end of the eighteenth century, responsibilities shifted: midwives were no longer chosen by childbearing women as before, but instead had to pass examinations organised by (male) physicians. The first lying-in hospitals were established during the eighteenth century. If one compares the situation in Europe, then clear differences become visible. For example, the university-affiliated lying-in hospital (Accouchierhaus) established in Göttingen in 1751 served primarily to train male obstetricians. Lying-in hospitals in Catholic countries existed in part to offer unmarried women the possibility to preserve their honour. In Milan (since 1780) and Paris (Office des Accouchées of the Hôtel-Dieu, founded in 1378 but with vastly greater influence in the latter half of the eighteenth century), they were directly connected to foundling homes. In England, however, hospitals such as the Lying-in Hospital for Married Women (established in London in 1749) accepted only poor married women and existed thanks to philanthropic organisations. Throughout Europe, at the beginning of this process of medicalisation, the risk of infection (childbed fever) in these clinics was extremely high, so that better-off women preferred to give birth at home until the nineteenth century. In some regions, newborns were systematically given to wet nurses. In Tuscany, sometimes fathers-to-be were involved in discussions about the choice of wet nurse, demonstrating that the task of caring for newborns was not an exclusively female one.

With the increasing regulation and institutionalisation of marriages in the course of the Reformation and Catholic reform, pregnancy outside marriage became a real problem. Until well into the sixteenth century, a marriage vow and consummation of the marriage had been sufficient to declare a marriage legally valid. However, in subsequent decades ecclesiastical authorities

increasingly required marriages to take place before a priest and in the presence of witnesses. At the same time, they stigmatised extramarital sexual intercourse. Unmarried women who were pregnant affirmed their good faith and honourable status in church courts, hoping to obtain marriage and recognition for their children. They were not always successful. Sometimes the social pressure was so great that they saw no other way out than to get rid of the unwanted newborn.

Unlike in many other parts of the world, not much evidence has been found for sex-selective infanticide or child abandonment in early modern Europe. The Constitutio Criminalis Carolina (1532) defined infanticide as a crime, ordered torture for questioning suspects, and threatened the death penalty. Those who had deprived still unbaptised children of the possibility of salvation were to be punished severely. Thus, in the area of the Holy Roman Empire, the rules for dealing with child murderers were clearly defined. Research has found different patterns in dealing with suspected child murderers. Proceedings were not always initiated at all, as the evidence was often difficult to produce. There also seem to have been marked differences between urban and rural and Catholic and Protestant areas. At the end of the eighteenth century, there was an increasing number of voices arguing for awareness of the impact of social pressures on single women from the lower classes and thus for a reduction of the penalty.

Childhood was a concept of growing importance in early modern Europe, though historians differ in how they assess it. Some have argued that modern childhood emerged in the transition from the Middle Ages to the early modern period or that the sentiment of motherly love was 'invented' in the seventeenth century, while others point to later changes during the Victorian era. No matter what position one takes, it is clear that something indeed changed in the understanding of childhood over the course of the early modern period. Children started to gain a status of their own, no longer seen merely as tiny adults but increasingly as innocents in need of protection from the adult world (particularly from the world of work). Education thus took on increasing importance. Early childhood education was a family affair in this period, especially for girls from the lower classes, who were educated within the framework of their families. But this period also saw a steady increase in schooling, often provided by the church. Many middle-class boys and even some girls were sent to school around age six, certainly in Britain but also in other parts of Europe. Apprentices and periods of servitude long remained a normal part of childhood, with the guild system creating opportunities for parents to outsource the housing and education of their children to a skilled master. Communal institutions also emphasised the importance of charity and education for abandoned children, trying to keep boys out of gangs and girls

out of prostitution. Orphanages were introduced in various regions partly in order to reduce infanticide—the baby hatches or foundling wheels found in many churches during the medieval and early modern periods bear testimony to that.

The Adult World and the Household

In early modern Europe, key stages of adult life were defined by marriage, work, old age, and death, each of which had an impact on the organisation of the household as an institution. Much of the historical work on marriage in early modern Europe revolves around proving or disproving the claims of John Hajnal. Hajnal was a mathematician who, in 1965, identified a geographic line running through Europe from Trieste to St Petersburg which seemed to separate Europe into two marriage systems: one in the east, where marriage was universal, where women married young to partners substantially older than themselves, and another system in the west, in which at least ten precent of people remained unmarried, while women married around the age of twenty-three to men who were, on average, two and a half years older. This contrast between the two halves of Europe has been much critiqued, but a picture has emerged which confirms that, at least for England and the Netherlands, marriage ages were (and remain) high for both men and women. However, the debate around this topic has demonstrated that rather than a strict line of division across the continent, it might be more accurate to talk of a gradient, with Central Europe representing an intermediate case where marriage ages were lower than in the west but higher than in the east. We therefore see, roughly speaking, marriage ages of twenty-four and above (often substantially so) for both men and women in north-western Europe, between twenty and twenty-four for women in Central and Southern Europe, and under twenty for women in many parts of Eastern Europe, though the male age at marriage is often substantially higher in these regions.

In a period where contraception methods were unreliable and sex outside of marriage was frowned upon (though pre-marital sex did occur, and frequently), marriage ages had a direct effect on the number of children women bear. Relatively close ages of spouses have been linked to a more consensual, equitable type of relationship. Studies of present-day couples show that in regions where the age gap between husband and wife is large, with husbands much older than their brides, this leads to more exposure to domestic violence, less investment in children's (particularly girls') schooling and less say in important decisions such as the distribution of expenditure on health care.

One factor which may explain higher marriage ages in north-western Europe is the fact that couples, upon getting married, were expected to establish their

own households. This meant that time was needed to train, work and save enough to do so. While households in Eastern Europe consisted largely of family members related by blood, west of the so-called 'Hajnal line', live-in servants and lodgers frequently extended the otherwise 'nuclear family' (i.e. a married couple and their children). These servants were often (although not always) young employees working for wages. This system led to a life-cycle in which a period of service was the norm in north-west Europe, as opposed to the situation in Eastern Europe. At almost all levels of society, families in north-west Europe sent their adolescent children out of their households to work as servants or apprentices, to board near a teacher or school, or to perform service for royalty. This mobility was notable to visitors from further afield. Life-cycle service died out with the shift from pre-industrial to industrialised production techniques, which was detrimental to the position of women, as they no longer had access to labour markets in which to gain skills and earn wages.

In addition to pointing out the significance of marriage patterns, research has been conducted on the legal and confessional dimensions of marriage. Very often, religious conversion was a precondition to marriage. The existence of denominationally mixed marriages demonstrates how fluid confessional identities could be in the early modern context. Dowries had to be negotiated in each case, but economic considerations were not the only connection between spouses. In cases of domestic violence or other marital conflict, divorce was only possible in Protestant countries. In Catholic areas, it was sometimes possible to obtain a dispensation on proof of an unconsummated marriage or to demand separation from table and bed before a church court. The petitions and testimonies required in the context of investigations and court trials provide insights into what early modern people had to say about their everyday married life. What often emerges is that those living in the early modern period had a lot more "agency" than we might sometimes assume, and that particularly women petitioned courts to uphold promises of marriage where they had not been fulfilled and they were left literally holding the baby.

An important feature of how the life-cycles of households were arranged is what happened after death. Although life expectancy at birth for the early modern period sat at around thirty to thirty-five years of age, most individuals who survived infancy could expect to live much longer—perhaps to around the age of sixty. This also meant that some degree of old age care provision was often necessary. In the Netherlands, early forms of retirement homes emerged where elderly couples could pay in advance for care. In many other parts of Europe, care by family members remained the norm. These patterns of what different generations do for each other and how they live together have long historical roots, with ramifications right through to the present day. In Spain and Italy, for example, even the state provision of old age care today is heavily

influenced by the idea that it is your children who care for you once you are no longer able to do so. Households in north-western Europe were frequently extended by live-in servants, or lodgers who provided commercialised care or the money with which to buy care.

Households of course exist not only as a set of relationships but also as tangible, material spaces. Historians like Raffaella Sarti have demonstrated the significance of objects in the context of early modern households. Young couples needed to procure the material conditions of living together, with basic necessities including a bed and a fireplace. The early modern period also witnessed a growing demand for luxury goods such as the wave of goods that became available through colonial trading networks, with spices and textiles from Asia arriving in the European market. This contributed to the so-called "industrious revolution", a shift in which households devoted more time to employment and less to leisure in order to afford luxuries. Tied in with this, the putting-out system—subcontracting manufacturing tasks to remote workers—meant that manufacturers across Western Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries could tap into a large labour supply available in rural households. The ability to produce goods for manufacturers at home while combining this with agrarian work meant that rural households could increase monetary incomes. As a result, early modern urban households became further embedded in a monetary system and the market, both in terms of production and consumption.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that household and family arrangements across Europe differed greatly across the continent, including distinct east/west variants associated with marriage patterns. These differences are debated but also had a significant impact on how societies operated. It is often argued that those from regions where networks were based on extended family ties put trust in the extended family over market-based relationships, whereas in a nuclear family setting individuals perhaps engaged more actively with the marketplace and put more trust in anonymous transactions, thereby fostering the rise of individualism and capitalism. Households and families are therefore key to our understanding of many other important historical processes. They also help to explain the emergence or persistence of disparities across the continent. Smaller nuclear households in north-west Europe provided less of a safety net to fall back on when times were hard. These 'weaker' family ties can also be linked to the development of forms of collective action (i.e. where people work together to improve their lot and to achieve a common goal)

such as guilds, commons, and other collaborative forms that were based on common interests rather than family ties.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways was childhood in early modern Europe different and how was it similar to today?

2. How did family and marriage differ across Europe?

3. In which ways did religion shape family relations in early modern Europe?

4. What was the role of sexual relations in early modern families, and in which ways is this different to today?

Suggested reading

Filippini, Nadia Maria, *Pregnancy, Delivery, Childbirth: A Gender and Cultural History from Antiquity to the Test Tube in Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2020), https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429265457.

Hamling, Tara and Catherine Richardson, *A Day at Home in Early Modern England: Material Culture and Domestic Life, 1500–1700* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017).

Montenach, Anne, *Espaces et pratiques du commerce alimentaire à Lyon au XVIIe siècle: L'économie du quotidien* (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 2009).

Sarti, Raffaella, *Europe at Home: Family and Material Culture, 1500–1800* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002).

Szołtysek, Mikołaj, Bartosz Ogórek and Siegfried Gruber, 'Global and Local Correlations of Hajnal's Household Formation Markers in Historical Europe: A Cautionary Tale', *Population Studies* 75:1 (2020), 67–89.

van Zanden, Jan Luiten, Tine de Moor and Sarah Carmichael, *Capital Women: The European Marriage Pattern, Female Empowerment and Economic Development in Western Europe 1300–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

2.3.2 Household and Family in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Sarah Carmichael, Darina Martykánová, Mónika Mátay, and Julia Moses

Introduction

Improvements in agriculture and the industrial revolution had a profound effect on European societies, not just economically but also in the way that households and families were organised, largely through its impact on the way that people earned their incomes. The timing of the increase in agricultural productivity and the industrial revolution differed across the continent. Its impact was shaped by the pre-existing forms of household and family organisation and by the political context. However, the establishment of a system whereby income for a large part of the population was earned by working in mining, industrial establishments and services had a number of significant consequences for the family and household. First, it meant that household work in cottage industries began to decline, as work was increasingly undertaken outside the home. Second, and relatedly, larger family and kinship networks were no longer regarded as necessary for contributing to household industries, and individuals began to seek work elsewhere, including far from home. Finally, the shift to industrial work meant that labour increasingly came to be seen as something performed by male family 'breadwinners', even if the important contributions of women and child workers continued.

These developments, of course, varied dramatically across Europe and even within individual countries. For this reason, among others, historians and social scientists have debated whether there has been a single model of the 'European family'. Some have debated over divisions between north-western Europe and the rest of the continent. Others have pointed out specifically Eastern European or Southern European family models in which agriculture and intergenerational families played a greater role into the early twentieth

century—though even in these regions, nuclear families (based on a mother, father and their children) were the most common pattern in cities. The idea of a European family model has also been questioned by scholars who have argued that households based on the nuclear family were not necessarily the norm in the past, despite popular memory. Indeed, a number of scholars have highlighted the role of single mothers and patchwork families during this period, not least because of spousal abandonment and widowhood in an era of high mortality and difficult divorce laws.

Nonetheless, despite these variations within the history of the family and household, there were several common trends during this period, including the predominance of patriarchy—the rule of the father, which determined the legal status of women and children as well as how households were generally governed. Moreover, in this era of mass migration and imperial expansion, frequent encounters with 'others' of various kinds helped to solidify certain ideas about what families and households should look like in particular countries or societies.

This chapter draws attention to several facets of these issues, including the vast socioeconomic and legal changes affecting marriage and the family, as well as cultural redefinitions of the family and the often moralising discourses surrounding sexuality, which likewise shaped the household and the family in modern Europe.

Fig. 1: A Swedish family with their five children in 1898, Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Swedish_family_1898.jpg.

Changing Economic and Legal Frameworks

The industrial revolution, which took hold at different times in different countries, had profound effects on how households functioned. Both the guild system and the 'putting-out' system were replaced almost wholesale by factory production. The rise of factory production and wage labour meant that, where previously households had operated as units of production, goods were now increasingly manufactured outside the home. This meant that remuneration for paid labour became increasingly important as households became ever less self-sufficient. At the same time, an ideal model of family organisation emerged among upper-middle-class families whereby men should earn the sole income to support the household, with women focused on creating a domestic sphere. This so-called male breadwinner model persists to the present day, but its origins are to be found in the time of industrialisation, when wages that had previously been paid to a household were increasingly paid to individuals. However, this was only ever an ideal. In reality, particularly in poorer households, women and children did a lot of work both in and outside the home. And of course, a male breadwinner household could only exist if the male of the household was alive and present. For many households, death and disappearance, travel for work or conscription to fight in wars led to men's absence, leaving women and children to make do as best they could. In many European countries, such as Spain, Portugal or France, the concept of the man as an exclusive breadwinner did not become hegemonic in the nineteenth century, and men welcomed their wives and single daughters bringing complementary income home—so long as men remained by law the supreme authority (*chef de famille*, *cabeza de familia*) in the household.

Parallel to the advance of industrialisation across much of Western Europe, there emerged another significant development: the rise of the modern state. In the late eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century, states around Europe began to develop modern bureaucracies, new tax systems and comprehensive legal codes which enabled them to know more about the families that lived within them. These developments also enabled states to shape families in new ways, largely as a result of the shift in power over daily affairs from religious institutions to governmental ones.

This transformation could be seen, first of all, in the domain of family law, which became a distinct area of jurisprudence from the eighteenth century and began to outline how to deal with areas such as marriage, inheritance, adoption, and divorce. The emergence of new civil codes in the wake of the French Revolution and various subsequent revolutions over the nineteenth century also brought about clear rules on matters pertaining to the household and family. For example, the Prussian Civil Code of 1794 declared the purpose

of marriage as mutual support, both financial and procreative. Just a few years later, in 1804, the French Civil Code, which had been introduced in the Napoleonic backlash against the French Revolution, marked a return to more conservative rules on marriage and the family after various revolutionary-era experiments that had included rights to civil marriage and divorce, as well as women's rights within marriage.

These legal developments were a watershed in the relationship of the family (and household more generally) with the states in which they resided. To be sure, the family had previously been subject to some governmental regulations and was certainly subjected to church rules on a wide variety of matters, from incest to marriage and its collapse. Throughout much of European history, marriage had been seen as a sacrament, a sacred ritual within Christianity that bestowed divine grace. As such, various church edicts in the medieval and early modern period allowed people to marry as long as they chose to do so freely, and as long as they married in front of witnesses who could testify to the new union. The marriage contract was effectively between the couple and God, not between the families of the marrying couple or as an act before the state. The advent of new Protestant traditions in the early modern period meant that, at least for Protestants, marriage was no longer seen as a sacrament, but it was still upheld as something special and worthy of protection.

New legislation that took off with the French Revolution was therefore a radical change, as were the reforms instituted by various civil codes afterwards. One of the most significant changes was the introduction of compulsory civil marriage, which meant that individuals needed to marry through the state—at state registry offices or with judges—rather than through the church, even if they chose to marry in the church afterwards. In countries that adopted laws on civil marriage, the only marriages that were valid were those registered with the state. The civil marriage movement took off across much of Europe over the course of the long nineteenth century, for example, in France (1792), Prussia (1794) and as an option in England in 1836, and its roots could also be seen in earlier attempts to separate matters of church and state, such as Austria's 1783 Marriage Patent.

Alongside marriage, divorce and marital separation shifted to the centre of debates about changing policies on the family in nineteenth-century Europe. Under Catholicism, separation 'from bed and board' was allowed in cases of marital breakdown, but not divorce. Protestants allowed divorce, but rules varied widely, with some more restrictive than others. Against this backdrop, different states gradually introduced laws on divorce and these varied, for example, with allowances only in case of spousal abuse, abandonment or adultery. Rules on divorce also varied within countries, depending on how unified their legal systems were. For example, in Germany, divorce was easier to obtain within predominantly Protestant Prussia than within predominantly

Catholic Bavaria. In Austria and in the Ottoman Empire, the laws on divorce and separation were determined by one's religion. In any case, even where divorce laws existed, as in Britain after a key reform in 1857 (the Matrimonial Causes Act), it remained expensive and legally difficult to end a marriage, meaning that marriages that did break down often did so under the radar.

Although marriage and divorce, as well as other aspects of family law, came increasingly within the remit of the state over the course of the nineteenth century, the impact of the law within the household was limited. Ideas about the rule of the husband and father, and of parents more generally, meant that the law often turned a blind eye to abuse, whether physical, emotional or financial. For example, the English social reformer Caroline Norton's husband took custody of her three children and barred her from seeing them after she left him in 1836. It was his legal right to retain custody, though she campaigned and eventually succeeded in the enactment of the Infant Custody Bill in 1839, which allowed mothers to keep their children. Divorces like Norton's moreover reveal the double standard applied to husbands and wives: whereas the laws of many European countries allowed husbands to divorce on grounds of adultery alone, women were usually required to prove not only adultery but some other forms of abuse as well such as living bigamously or committing incest.

Fig. 2: Emma Fergusson, Watercolour sketch of Caroline Norton (1860), CC 4.0, Public Domain, Wikimedia, Stephencdickson, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Watercolour_sketch_of_Caroline_Norton_by_Emma_Fergusson_1860,_National_Portrait_Gallery_of_Scotland.jpg.

Uneven power relations in the household also meant that financial decisions, the holding of marital property, and decisions about children were usually in the hands of husbands and fathers. The concerted efforts of various individuals like Norton, the Swedish reformer Ellen Key and the German reformer Helene Stocker, as well as women's rights groups like the Belgian League for the Rights of Women (1893) and the German League for the Protection of Mothers (1904), meant that many of these practices of patriarchy came into question or were reformed. In the name of 'maternalism'—defined by historian Ann Taylor Allen as "the exaltation of motherhood as the woman citizen's most important right and duty"—married women rallied together to call for rights to manage their own finances, to choose whether or not to work, and to have a say, for example, in the education of their children.

Emotional, Cultural and Moral Dynamics

Changing patterns of family relations affected the expectations that people had of different family members. While the presence of servants continued to be the norm in well-off European families throughout the nineteenth century (with demand in the cities met by massive female migration from rural areas), the definition of family began to narrow in scope, to the ties of blood and affection; service, meanwhile, was redefined with an increasing stress on economic, contractual aspects, particularly in the case of male servants. European societies came to perceive a manifest emotional preference for one of the children (mostly, but not always, the oldest son) as unjust and undesirable, while the stress on gender differences among children did not diminish, but rather grew due to a growing emphasis on formal education for boys. More intense care became expected from mothers, who were now supposed to oversee their children's care, upbringing and education. Previously, these tasks had often been performed by nannies, older siblings, or elderly female relatives, while the poorer mothers worked and the wealthier ones socialised. Indeed in many countries, from Spain and Austria-Hungary to the Ottoman Empire, supporters of women's education stressed the requirements of motherhood to defend their stance. Childrearing, however, was not their only argument: the ideal of companionship in marriage was another key point.

Even in the countries where polygamy existed, the ideal of marriage came to revolve around the notion of a couple that married for love and a woman who submitted—of her own free will and not because of the law—to her husband's authority and guidance. Novels, poems, operas and plays helped spread this idea and render it desirable to people in Europe and far beyond. Young men became critics of sexual segregation and forced or arranged marriages, and defended the education of women not only from a political,

philosophical, or patriotic stance, but also because they learnt to expect and long for a companion in their wife. While this new ideal of marriage insisted on emotional and intellectual intimacy and joint activities, it continued to be a hierarchical one, with the husband in charge of supervising and guiding the wife. The gendered division of tasks between the couple often increased, as productive and political activities moved from households to public spaces.

Political discourses heavily shaped attitudes to the family as well: particularly in the regions where stateless nationalist movements, like the Basque or the Czech ones, emerged, the home was not to be an apolitical haven, but a place of patriotic education and sociability. Moreover, pro-natalist discourses and policies strove to actively shape family size and lifestyles as well as opinions and legislation on the suitable age for marriage, the upbringing of the children and parenting. Not only public institutions intervened in this debate, but also legal and medical professionals, charities, social movements (such as feminism), and political movements and parties.

Historical research, especially the critical views of twentieth-century theorists like Michel Foucault and Judith Butler, has challenged previous assumptions about nineteenth-century sexual behaviour, such as the notion that the Victorians were extremely prudish and repressed their sexual desires. Foucault refused the so-called 'repressive hypothesis' that the nineteenth-century was asexual and that sex was not even mentioned in public. In fact, he suggested that just the opposite was the case: sexual behaviour was widely discussed in legal, medical, and religious texts.

Behind the proliferation of discourse on issues related to sex and sexual attitudes, one can identify new social developments all over Europe. One of the most important factors in social change was the immense growth of the urban population. The resulting social mixing meant not only a statistical increase in population size, but also the emergence of new relations, novel urban social figures, and identities. As cultural historian Judith Walkowitz explored in her treatise on the narratives of sexual danger in Victorian London, the big city—the metropolis—was constructed in contemporary literary texts as a "seductive labyrinth", a powerful and dark monster. Contemporaries referred to the metropolis as a modern Babylon, where many lives were broken and where young men and women were trapped.

Although we have no idea of the exact numbers, prostitution—or, as it was labelled by contemporaries, the 'Great Social Evil'—grew radically within European urban environments. In the nineteenth century prostitution in its various forms was considered one of the major social problems. Politicians, doctors, journalists, and other intellectuals were preoccupied with the figure of the prostitute, her role in the spread of the dangerous venereal disease syphilis, and the moral threat that prostitutes supposedly embodied for

European societies. The prostitute, the 'fallen woman', undermined the moral well-being of the middle class and the 'nation'. She thus represented the opposite of the contemporary female ideal of the 'innocent virgin' and of values such as chastity and grace.

In the nineteenth century, the word 'prostitution' referred not only to women who sold their bodies for sexual services (as the term is used today) but was also used to describe women who lived with men outside of marriage, or who gave birth to 'illegitimate' children. Moreover, only men were considered to experience sexual pleasure, while women who maintained a relationship for their own delight and happiness earned a bad reputation for themselves. Various forms of prostitution existed, including serving in brothels, streetwalking, or being a 'kept woman'. Authorities constantly monitored prostitutes and prosecuted illegal forms of prostitution. As the case of prostitution shows, differences between urban and rural areas as well as between social classes were decisive for how differences of gender played out in the sexual culture of the nineteenth century.

Conclusion

The nineteenth century stands out as a period of major transformations in family dynamics. First and foremost, households ceased to be the main centres of production. A symbolic separation between public and private spaces took place, situating household and family firmly in the latter, while political and productive activities shifted to outside of the household. At the same time, family became a truly public issue, as revolutionaries, social reformers, and moralists from across the political spectrum argued that the state of the family was intrinsically linked to the state of the nation. Furthermore, the rise of the individual as a cornerstone of modern subjectivity led to a redefinition of the ideal family. According to most nineteenth-century Europeans, the authority of the father and the husband was to be preserved and exercised—but it should be based on love and persuasion, not on violence or the threat of it. In any case, adult sons were to be respected as fully autonomous individuals who could decide freely on their marriage and profession. The notion of marriage, in particular, shifted towards a union of feelings, in which the wife submitted to the husband's leadership and loving guidance—though the law took care to reaffirm male authority within the couple. Nonetheless, the nineteenth century also witnessed more dramatic ruptures within the hierarchical family and the development of ideas about equalitarian marriage, free love, and alternative spaces for child-rearing. At the same time, public authorities and civil society intervened ever more frequently into family life, with justifications ranging

from the well-being of helpless children to the social responsibility of fathers and mothers.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways did family life differ between rural and urban communities in nineteenth-century Europe?

2. "People nowadays are much more liberated regarding sexual relations than people in the past." Based on this text, do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

3. How has the status of mothers changed since the nineteenth century?

Suggested reading

Allen, Ann Taylor, *Feminism and Motherhood in Western Europe, 1890–1970: The Maternal Dilemma* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2005).

Davidoff, Leonore, et al., *The Family Story: Blood, Contract and Intimacy, 1830– 1960* (London: Longman, 1999).

Humphries, Jane, *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Kertzer, David I. and Marzio Barbagli, *Family Life in the Long Nineteenth Century, 1789–1913* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002).

Mason, Michael, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Maynes, Mary Jo and Ann Beth Waltner, *The Family: A World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Perrot, Michel, ed., *A History of Private Life, IV: From the Fires of Revolution to the Great War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

Walkowitz, Judith R., *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

2.3.3 Household and Family in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Sarah Carmichael, Julia Moses, Ángela Pérez del Puerto, and Florence Tamagne

Introduction

The last century and a quarter have seen sweeping changes in how people organise their household and family life. From the emergence of private day care facilities to the establishment of general pension schemes, from rising divorce rates to far higher life expectancies (meaning that couples who stay together can expect to spend many more years in each other's company), households and families are very different now compared to those of our great-grandparents. Many of the services previously provided within a household (most significantly childcare) have been outsourced to organisations outside of the household, changing the roles of parents and relatives in the raising of future generations. Significant differences exist in how these changes have taken place across Europe.

Another major change in households is that couples now live together for long periods without marrying, or never marry but have children and live together without the formal status of marriage. Many more households than ever before consist of single individuals who live alone for much or all of their life-course or who create blended households unrelated to formal family ties. Divorce and remarriage have also meant that many children grow up with siblings originally born in other families and to whom they may not be biologically related. Although such blended families existed in the past, generally due to the death of one parent, they are now far more frequent and may mean that children are part of two households. The ramifications of these changes are far-ranging for adults too, and often gendered in their outcome.

Multiple studies show that divorce is often detrimental to a woman's economic position, but that men are in many cases actually financially better off after a divorce. Parts of this chapter therefore focus on the female position in this story, as it is often women who are most affected by changes to household and family, having long been officially and unofficially the centre of these two societal units (especially during the nineteenth century). However, it is also important to note that with the growing visibility of LGBTQ+ individuals, gender roles tied to a male/female binary are in flux and contemporary households may well be centred on different roles and definitions. The changes to household and family thus took place in many dimensions. In this chapter we discuss shifts in the division between public and private realms, in marriage and family law, and in relation to sexuality.

Fig. 1: P. B. Abery, Portrait of a Welsh family (1930s), CC 1.0, Wikimedia, National Library of Wales, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Family_portrait_(4601533194).jpg.

Public versus Private

The twentieth century saw a clear redefinition of the boundaries between what was public and what was private, and women opened many doors which had previously been closed. On their non-linear journeys between public and

private, some women left their homes for public professions from which they had previously been barred, others remained or returned to the private sphere but questioned the impositions within it, and others experienced the difficulty of reconciling both options. Women had long been involved with the labour market (especially during the Industrial Revolution) but this period saw further, massive increases in the degree to which women worked for wages.

The new century saw the continuation of the struggle for suffrage, a mobilisation that brought together women from different backgrounds to fight for their citizenship. The 'woman question' became a topic that dominated public debates and exposed for many housewives the social and legal bases of discrimination against their gender. Very different kinds of feminism represented women in the home and in the factory, but the movement suffered significant setbacks with the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. During the war, female participation was key to the defence of the nation, whether it meant safeguarding the family structure at home or working in factories to replace men who now fought at the front. Women and their labour were required in the arms sector, in agriculture, in banks, and so on. In addition, many participated in the war as nurses, even at the frontlines of battle. As a result, the work of women, inside and outside the home, was essential for the war effort. At the same time this called into question arguments that had been used in the past to justify their social and legal discrimination.

Female participation in the war effort, following years of struggle for suffrage, precipitated women's securing of the right to vote in many countries in the 1920s, though this proceeded in parallel with the reinstatement of earlier discourses of female domesticity. Once their patriotic work was accomplished, women were effectively told to return home to make way for men returning from the front. However, many women used their experiences to question this and to challenge the biological determinism that had until then justified their limited access to certain jobs or social functions. The rise of fascism, though, led to the strong imposition of a patriarchal model in which women were above all mothers and wives. With no time to heal the wounds of the First World War, another conflict broke out in 1939, and women were again incorporated into the tasks that men at the front left vacant. They also re-experienced, like a *déjà vu*, the contradiction of public policies when, as war came to a close in 1945, governments once again asked them to return to the home as their supposedly 'natural' place. The post-war home was a mechanised one, presenting the modern housewife as a fulfilled woman surrounded by washing machines and stoves. However, many women had embarked on a one-way journey out of the domestic sphere, pursuing higher education and positions of ever greater specialisation. This situation strengthened the second feminist wave in the 1960s, which emphasised cultural challenges and the weight of gender

constructions. This gave all women the opportunity to question their own assumptions about their supposedly 'natural' limitations.

This path led to an unrelenting rise in the access of women to the world of non-domestic work, but at the same time it revealed certain challenges that remained unresolved even at the end of the century. In particular, the 'double burden' of balancing professional and personal life has made it hard to reconcile a maternal desire with work aspirations. Thus there continues to be a very clear dividing line between those who opt for the domestic sphere and those who choose the public sphere.

Marriage and Family Law

The twentieth century witnessed competing movements of liberalisation and reaction in terms of marriage and family law that roughly mirrored the waves of revolution, war and the growth of new ideologies across the continent. Prior to the First World War, a number of countries experienced a push to democratise divorce and improve the rights of women within and beyond marriage, and the results of these movements continued into the interwar era. For example, in Britain, women were unable to hold property in their own names upon marriage until 1870, and it took several reforms, up until 1926, for married women to have the same rights to own and dispose of property as men. Similarly, divorce was uncommon and expensive prior to the First World War. It took a number of legal reforms to make it more accessible, including laws in 1923 and 1937 that first allowed women to end their marriages if their husbands committed adultery and also enabled partners to split on grounds including cruelty, desertion, and insanity.

Both World Wars, alongside the prolonged period of economic decline between them, generated reactions against the growing role of women outside the home, and more generally against the supposed breakdown of what many perceived as the traditional family. This movement cut across the political spectrum and across the continent, from liberal Britain to fascist Italy and Germany as well as the Soviet Union. One impetus for the movement to uphold this ideal of the family was the fact that so many marriages had broken down during the war through abandonment, separation, or death on the battlefield. For example, in Germany, the marriage rate almost halved between 1913 and 1916. In the interwar period, a number of different measures around Europe encouraged families to have more children, and women to stay at home. These included 'marriage bars' that prevented married women from taking up certain jobs (such as working for the post office), and family allowances or even prizes to encourage women to have more children. Fascist Italy famously introduced a 'bachelor tax' to encourage men to settle down and start families.

Even in the Soviet Union, which had initially sought equality for women and innovation in the sphere of the family, later constitutional changes meant that women were encouraged to prioritise their roles as wives and mothers.

Some of the movements to preserve the family during this period did not, however, aim to preserve the old order but rather to forge a new, supposedly 'purer' order. For example, National Socialist Germany banned intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews in 1935. Germany was not unique in adopting racial and eugenic family policies. Sweden, too, for example, introduced laws that banned 'undesirable' individuals, such as the disabled, from marrying and having children, while Switzerland separated parents and children within the partly nomadic Yenish population between 1926 and 1973, in an attempt to force this minority group to assimilate.

Progressive campaigns related to marriage and family law nonetheless continued in parallel with movements that sought to preserve what was seen as the traditional family. This could be seen, for example, in the international arena, where a woman's right to retain her own citizenship upon marriage was fought out in the interwar period. Eventually, countries like Britain, France and Germany changed the law so that women could maintain this essential aspect of autonomy in cases of intermarriage. International bodies and conventions in the interwar and post-1945 period, such as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (1979), continued to call for greater rights for women to choose whether and whom to marry, and also for rights within marriage, such as the right to retain a professional life and to be educated. They also outlined universal rights for children, regardless of their family of origin, as in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In fact, the period after 1945 continued to be characterised by the tension between conservatism around the family and calls for loosening restrictions—on women as well as on different sexual practices. This could be seen, for example, in the movement for no-fault divorce that took off across Europe (from the late 1960s), as well as ongoing changes to women's rights to property and inheritance (as was the case in France into the 1980s), and women's equal rights within marriage (introduced in West Germany, for example, as late as 1977). It could also be seen in the outlawing of marital rape across much of Europe in the last quarter of the twentieth century (as was the case in Italy in 1976 and in England and Wales only in 1991).

Some of the most significant shifts in family law came in the 1990s and 2000s, with legislation creating civil partnerships and same-sex marriage. Europe has since continued to witness significant legal changes, including the expansion of adoption and pension rights for civil partners and same-sex couples, new rights for cohabitees, and recognition of transgender individuals. Indeed, the many shifts in marriage and family law described above were part of a broader

story, in which questions of sexuality (including sexual rights, women's rights and the treatment of children) were intimately intertwined, as we shall see in the following section.

Sexuality in Europe in the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries

For much of the twentieth century (and especially its first half), sexuality was still understood as the privilege of married couples that were procreative, heterosexual, and monogamous. Nevertheless, by the 1960s, a kind of sexual liberation (sometimes described in terms of a 'sexual revolution', although it was the result of a long-term shift) had taken hold within a context of growing secularisation and the affirmation of feminist and LGBTQ+ rights.

At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, anarchist and socialist thinkers (from Charles Fourier in France to Alexandra Kollontaï in Russia) had already begun to question the traditional family and advocating gender equality, free union and sometimes sexual freedom. In the 1920s, psychoanalysts such as Sigmund Freud and Wilhelm Reich denounced sexual repression as a source of neuroses, while the World League for Sexual Reform (1928–1932) and others promoted birth control, the prevention of prostitution, and the decriminalisation of homosexuality. Although some countries, such as France, had already decriminalised sodomy as early as 1791, others created new penalties for sexual relations between men (though rarely for those between women), as in Britain's Criminal Law Amendment Act (1885) and Germany's Paragraph 175 (1871). From 1897 onwards, homosexual movements, such as the Scientific Humanitarian Committee from Magnus Hirschfeld in Germany, fought for their rights.

Hitler's rise to power put an end to this first wave of emancipation. Although the Nazi regime encouraged sexual relationships outside marriage (as long as they contributed to the pro-birth policy), it forbade interracial relationships and sent men accused of homosexuality ('Pink Triangles') to concentration camps. In 1934, Stalin's Soviet Union re-criminalised both homosexuality and abortion, which had been legalised in 1917 and 1920 respectively.

After the Second World War, many European countries—whether they were governed by Christian democrats or by communists—sought to restore supposedly 'traditional' gender and sexual norms. It was not until the 1960s that this model began to be challenged openly, by both the scientific field of sexology (the publication of the Kinsey Reports on human sexual behaviour, 1948–1953) and the movements associated with 1968 (including so-called 'counterculture'). Over time, sex education became mandatory in schools (as in Sweden in 1955), censorship generally lost ground (leading to a rise

in pornography), and sexuality came to be seen as a fundamentally political question.

Birth control and abortion were among the main demands of second-wave feminist movements, which had been notably influenced by Simone de Beauvoir's essay *The Second Sex* (1949). Even though birth control in the form of 'the pill' (first trialled in 1956) gradually liberated women from the fear of unwanted pregnancies, abortion rights were often only granted after years of struggle in different countries across Europe (as early as 1967 in Britain and as late as 2018 in Ireland). Poland, which had authorised abortion in 1956 (following the example of the USSR), has since drastically limited its use, introducing stringent legislation since 2016 to essentially outlaw it in nearly all cases. Since the 1990s, Assisted Reproductive Technology that was developed to tackle infertility has become a subject of public debate, especially when same-sex couples are concerned.

In fact, achieving visibility and the recognition of rights for LGBTQ+ persons has been one of the biggest challenges for European societies of the last fifty years. Following the United States, European countries saw the rise of revolutionary movements for gay and lesbian liberation in the 1970s, which began coming out of the closet, advocating gay pride, and demanding LGBT rights. In Western Europe, states began decriminalising same-sex relations between consenting adults at the end of the 1960s (Britain in 1967 and West Germany in 1969 for instance), although laws on age of consent continued to penalise homosexual relations more than heterosexual relations for much longer (until 1982 in France and until 1994 in united Germany). In Central and Eastern Europe it was generally only in the 1990s that homosexuality was decriminalised, often under the pressure from the European Union. Strong opposition remains in countries such as Poland where, although homosexuality has not been a crime since 1932, local governments have since 2019 started declaring themselves as "LGBT-free zones". When the LGBT community was struck by AIDS, new demands emerged in favour of recognising same-sex relationships through civil unions (the first of which were established in Denmark in 1989) and, later, same-sex marriage (starting with the Netherlands in 2001). The World Health Organization ceased to regard homosexuality as a mental disease in 1990, and did the same for trans identity in 2019. Even though some European countries today acknowledge non-binary gender identities, facilitate the changing of one's legal gender, and support transgender rights, transgender people still suffer numerous legal and social discriminations, and often see their identity negated or questioned, even in LGB and feminist circles.

The outcomes of the sexual revolution remain controversial. In the 1970s, some feminists worried that sexual freedom would only prove profitable for men. The quest for sexual gratification generated new fears related to sexual

performance (or at least new markets, as demonstrated by the authorisation of Viagra in 1998). Although many countries strengthened their laws regarding sexual assault, sexual and gender-based violence is still a massive issue (as shown by the #MeToo movement). Prostitution remains a divisive topic, with countries such as the Netherlands, Switzerland, or Germany regulating red-light districts (while at the same time condemning sex trafficking), and others like Sweden making it illegal to buy sex (1999). Child sexual abuse, for a long time a taboo subject, has been a topic of concern following several high-profile media cases, some of them directly involving the Catholic Church.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that understandings of household and family remained in flux in the contemporary period. Large changes were—and still are—underway, with wide-ranging implications for society as a whole, as households and families have become ever more fluid. While we know that many families in earlier periods also did not conform to the two-parent norm, personal choice is now a much greater factor than in previous centuries (when death and abandonment were the main drivers of diversions from the nuclear family). Households and family influence how the rest of society is organised, but they have also been reshaped by changes in the wider world. The emancipation of women, the growing recognition of sexual rights/freedoms, and the burgeoning recognition of the LGBTQ+ community in the twentieth century had profound impacts on how households and families were defined and how they continue to operate.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways were changes to perceptions of sexuality and to the role of the family linked in twentieth-century Europe?

2. In which ways did the developments described in this text change the lives of women?

3. The twentieth century saw major changes in the way people organise their household and family life. How do you think the family of the future will look? Which aspects of the twentieth-century family will remain and which will change? Why?

Suggested reading

Aldrich, Robert, ed., *Gay Life and Culture: A World History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2006).

Davidoff, Leonor, et al., *The Family Story: Blood, Contract and Intimacy, 1830–1960* (London: Longman, 1999).

Herzog, Dagmar, *Sexuality in Europe: A Twentieth Century History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Kertzer, David I. and Marzio Barbagli, *Family Life in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).

Maynes, Mary Jo and Ann Beth Waltner, *The Family: A World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Steinberg, Sylvie, ed., *Une histoire des sexualités* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2018).

Therborn, Göran, *Between Sex and Power: Family in the World, 1900–2000* (London: Routledge, 2004).

CHAPTER 2.4
INEQUALITIES

2.4.1 Inequalities in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Devin Vartija and Saúl Martínez Bermejo

Introduction

Inequality can refer to very different areas of human life and experience, but at present it is most common to conceive of inequality as an economic indicator. Inequality usually refers to economic differences—in wealth, income, or in access to goods and services. This section aims instead to illustrate social and political inequality in early modern Europe. It analyses differences in social conditions and practices, along with inequalities of access to the political arena or to participation in government (local or general). The focus is first placed on a general description of the structural inequalities in early modern Europe and on the development of ideas of political equality up to the French Revolution. Second, the family is presented as a model of systemic inequality, and gender inequality is addressed. Lastly, Racial inequalities are discussed, though it is maintained throughout that different sources of inequality intersected and interacted in the early modern age.

Structural Inequalities in Early Modern Europe

Inequality is a more complex idea than it may seem at first sight, because it necessarily implies the concept of equality. However, a sense that all the individuals who compose a given society are or should be considered equal developed very slowly up to 1800. It may now seem obvious or natural to conceive of the world as made of individuals that, at least in theory, are equal according to central criteria such as rights, liberties, or personal choice. But the idea of equality among human beings is a sophisticated one. It did not develop overnight in Europe, nor did its arrival erase previous social practices completely.

During the Middle Ages and up to at least 1300, individuals were conceived as insufficient, incomplete or imperfect, and intermediate communities were instead seen as essential to protect and fulfil those individuals. Pre-modern Europe was, according to historian Paolo Grossi, a "society made of societies". Around 1500, European societies were still notably fragmented. The world was to a large extent composed of families and guilds, while religious confessional identities also played a key role. Individuals belonged to different estates and corporations, and it was belonging to those groups which granted privileges and created obligations. Inequality between the privileged and the non-privileged was not only acknowledged but an integral part of the system. The social order was consistently conceived as hierarchical and vertical—rulers placed above the ruled—while images of horizontality or equality were uncommon. Inequality therefore lay at the very core of the political and social order of *ancien régime* Europe.

Several elements contributed to dissolving and changing some of the fundamentals of what historians have designated as a 'society of orders' or of 'estates'. First, shifts in the anthropological conception of the individual stressed the centrality of human agency. Examples of this are a renewed attention to civic participation, and attention to the differences between human groups around the world since at least 1400. Second, during the seventeenth century, natural law theories (known also by the Latin term *iusnaturalismus*) developed. These theories conceived the origins of society by imagining an initial moment in which individuals acted or lived alone. This speculative moment, sometimes called a 'state of nature', was crucial to considering individuals as equals, bearers of rights, and the main agents of history—who, after the original moment, transferred their rights and power to a sovereign. Third, violent political conflicts also contributed to discussions of the established order and its very foundations. A case in point is seventeenth-century England, where political and military unrest and a strong parliament led to parallel developments in the ideas of political participation, alongside the protection of a space of liberty inherent to the subjects. Finally, the eighteenth century saw rapid increases in literacy rates in western European urban centres (with changing social conditions, increased urbanisation and the growth of manufacturing prominent among them), leading many to question the traditional basis of hierarchy. This phenomenon was captured in growing discussions about the legitimacy of inequality. The end of the eighteenth century was marked by revolutions whose aims included a complete alteration of previous notions of inequality and the development of procedures to cope with inequality.

It was precisely a controversy over how to cope with inequality that helped precipitate the French Revolution of 1789. The near-bankruptcy of the

French Crown led to Louis XVI's decision to convene the Estates-General, a representative body of the three estates of the kingdom that had last met in 1614, to acquire its approval for new taxes. The judges of France's most important court of law, the Parlement de Paris, and many members of the First Estate (the clergy) and the Second Estate (the nobility) insisted that voting should occur by estate and not by head. This would give an obvious advantage to the clergy and the nobility, even though the First and Second Estates together consisted of just over one percent of the total French population.

In *What is the Third Estate?*, a popular and fiery pamphlet published in January 1789, the non-noble clergyman Emmanuel Sieyès argued forcefully against voting by estate in the upcoming Estates-General. More importantly, he attacked the special privileges that members of the First and Second Estates enjoyed. Public office and many of the top positions in French society were open only to those of the first two estates and Sieyès was particularly enraged by the limitations placed on a person's career based purely on accidents of birth. He argued that members of the Third Estate performed all of the useful work in society but were not recognised for it: "Whatever your services, whatever your talents, you will only go so far; you will go no further. It would not do for you to be honoured." The fundamental social, political, and legal inequalities that were so deeply engrained in early modern society came to be seen as suspect by Sieyès and many others. Ultimately, when the Estates-General met in May and June 1789 and Louis XVI insisted on voting by estate and not by head, the Third Estate and a number of defectors from the First and Second refused to comply, forming what they called the 'National Assembly'. This helped transform the ongoing constitutional crisis into a revolution.

The assertion in the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, drafted at the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789—that "men are born and remain free and equal in rights"—is breath-taking in its simplicity and scope. While the revolutionaries had something much less universal in mind than what this statement seems to imply, the fundamental change in worldview reflected and reinforced in this declaration continues to capture our attention and imagination. It was a world-historical turning point because, for the first time, equality became a grounding principle in a European state constitution and thus obtained fundamental political standing. Until the French Revolution, statements of equality mainly pertained to souls before God, not to human beings in the face of political authority. How this *volte-face* could have happened has occupied historians for generations, as they have sought to explain the power that equality acquired by the end of the eighteenth century in various long- and short-term developments in the shifting social, intellectual, cultural, and political fabric of early modern Europe.

The search for equality was revolutionary. However, it was also marked by very significant attempts to limit the scope of just how such equality would be applied. Notably, white men with some level of property settled in a town or city were the main beneficiaries, in theory and in practice, of ideas of equality. For the 'popular classes'—workers without recognised property, women, and all others—an unequal social system, whose basic traits had emerged and been consolidated in the Middle Ages, endured well into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in many regions of Europe.

Gender Inequality and the Family

A useful example for understanding how deeply inequality was entrenched in the system is the family. Many books in many different languages were written on the administration of households and the different roles that men and women held within them. In fact, before the rise of capitalism and of strong commercial and mercantile societies, the term 'economy' referred to the rules of the household. From around 1500 to 1800 this literature and other sources depicted the family as a group of unequal individuals, within which the father held a particular type of authority over his wife, servants, and descendants. This paternal authority was hierarchical and had nothing to do with the limited, horizontal political and social relationships that could operate in the governance of cities, guilds, and parliaments. The family was a sphere that other powers were not allowed to enter. Although wives were relatively better positioned than servants and the offspring of the familial unit, the enduring effects of paternal authority underpinned many elements of the marginalisation and inequality of women.

The family was often used as a model or a metaphor to refer to the whole political structure of early modern societies. Major political thinkers, such as the French theorist of sovereignty Jean Bodin or the English theorists Robert Filmer and John Locke, reflected on the similitudes between families (organised hierarchically and inherently unequal) and different aspects of political order. Kings and rulers were often considered to extend a paternal care to their subjects, although the extent and obligations of this patriarchal authority were debated and coexisted with systems of restricted political representation (parliaments and other political bodies). Conversely, well-ordered families, with a balanced distribution of male public roles and feminine administrative activities and caring duties, were considered to be the basis of a stable social order. Religious reformers, including Puritans and more radical sects, also considered families and paternal control key to maintaining the religious foundations of such order.

Class (or status), gender, and race inequalities overlapped and intersected within this essentially unequal system. Gender inequality can be documented for the whole register of human activities, from prehistoric times to the present. Many different past European cultures had constructed gender relations hierarchically, considering the male element not only stronger, but more strongly associated with public activities and culture, while depicting the feminine element as private and linked to the realm of the natural. But even while the early modern era inherited some structural elements of gender inequality from preceding periods, the general trend in Europe between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries in fact shows some deterioration in the public involvement of women. Women continued to have virtually no access to public office, to representative bodies, or to municipal government. Moreover, some medieval examples of all-female guilds tended to disappear, as did the formal participation of women in guilds and their governing bodies. Changes in the production system during the early modern age did not benefit women either. New capitalist forms of production, including manufactures inside households, relied notably on the work of women or children, but neither received a separate income or recognition for such work. Women had more difficulties when it came to travelling, starting a business, or working for wages, and were therefore more likely to work under the authority of a household (either as wives or domestic servants). The scarce visibility of women's work was aggravated by the demands of caring and domestic occupations such as housekeeping.

Researchers such as Maria Ågren have shown that in several areas of Europe, married couples were better off in all types of business. Others have emphasised the particular position of widows, a peculiar status that offered access to otherwise restricted spheres of action, such as shopkeeping or guilds, and which placed women at the head of family units. As already mentioned, in early modern Europe inequalities in social provenance and class overlapped with gender and racial inequalities. Therefore, queens and other powerful (noble)women were often better positioned to assert their power, administer their properties and conduct politics. Despite some difficulties, aristocratic women were involved in informal power, networks of diplomacy and gift exchange, family alliances and strategies, or they influenced politics from the inside of powerful convents, for instance. However, non-aristocratic women also developed strategies of agency within the cracks of the system, negotiating their access to motherhood, re-marrying, contributing to business (from shops to artisan production), participating in colonial exploits, and producing cultural works from painting to literature.

Racial and Entangled Inequalities

Along with gender and sex, race has become one of the central categories for understanding and critiquing inequality throughout history and in the contemporary world. Importantly, it was in early modern Europe that the concept of race first gained traction, but it meant something different from how we understand the concept today. 'Race' has obscure origins, appearing in many European vernaculars by at least the fifteenth century, where it originally referred to the lineage of prized animals such as dogs and birds of prey, and soon thereafter to noble families. Race, understood to mean major groupings within the human species based on shared physical characteristics or ancestry (or both), was a seventeenth-century innovation, while the older meaning maintained dominance until at least the end of the eighteenth century. Although the nobility of the Second Estate did not consider itself distinct in physiognomy from others as the modern concept of race would imply, they did generally consider themselves 'naturally born leaders' and biologically superior. As the seventeenth-century French writer Nicolas Faret (1600–1646) stated:

> Those who are well born ordinarily have good inclinations, which others only rarely have, and it seems that they come naturally to those of good birth, whereas it is only by accident that they are found in others. For in the blood flow the seeds of good and evil, which sprout in time to produce all the good and bad qualities that cause us to be loved or hated by everyone.

It is important to note that this ideal of the nobility as a closed social caste never wholly conformed with reality, because warfare, high mortality rates, and political instability made a self-reproducing and sealed-off Second Estate impossible to maintain. Ranging from as much as ten percent of the population in Eastern Europe to as little as one percent in Western Europe across the early modern period, nobles embodied and relied upon forms of inequality that evolved significantly from 1500 to 1800. They began as a wealthy, land-owning and warrior class that received special privileges such as tax exemptions. But the traditional shape of noble power was threatened by the centralisation of increasingly powerful states, the advent of capitalism, and the emergence of a humanist culture that valued civility. Some nobles were unable to adapt to this new social and political world and lost much of their wealth and power, but leading historians have shown that a great many noble families were able to accommodate themselves to the novel situation, using their wealth in obtaining a classical education and buying the venal offices that were necessary to maintain political power in a world of centralising states.

The rise of 'modern' racist or racialist views of inequality, especially white supremacy, developed slowly and in complicated ways across the

early modern period as European interaction with the non-European world intensified. During the first period of European expansion in the early modern period, known as the Columbian Exchange, Europeans did not generally use physical features to classify humanity, and thus 'whiteness', 'blackness', and so on did not yet exist as identity markers or sociological categories. Rather, language and especially religion were the most important basis for the creation of classificatory systems. Climatic theory—the idea that geography and environmental factors, broadly construed, impact physical and psychological character on the individual and the collective level—also played a role in classificatory schemes both within and beyond Europe. Such a perspective could work against the creation of fixed racial categories, as the idea that Europeans began to look and behave like the indigenous population was a very common trope from the beginning of the Columbian Exchange that lasted throughout the eighteenth century. For example, Jean-Baptiste Demanet was not unusual in reporting in his *Nouvelle Histoire de l'Afrique française* (*New History of French Africa*, 1767) that there was a colony of Portuguese settlers in west Africa who had become black over a few generations without any mixing with the indigenous population.

Religion could be involved in the creation of racialised systems, however. In what is arguably the first example of thinking in terms of heritable, and therefore 'racial,' inequalities in the post-classical world, the doctrine of *limpieza de sangre* ("purity of blood") developed on the Iberian Peninsula in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as a background to various discriminatory laws enacted against Jews, even against the many thousands of Jews who had converted to Christianity, known as 'New Christians'. The hallmark of racist thinking—that a given ethnic group is inherently and inescapably inferior or suspect in some way—marked this new form of discrimination and formed part of the background to the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492.

But paradoxical as it may seem, a racist ideology of inequality did not lie behind the European imperial projects of the early modern period because these were premised on the idea that all peoples are part of a single human species with a shared ancestry who must be exposed to the teachings of Jesus Christ, and that all non-Europeans can—and should—live like Christian Europeans. Europeans required Native American knowledge to survive in the New World and learned about the many differences among Native American peoples in terms of customs, language, and history, factors that militated against the construction of an all-encompassing 'Native American race'. And although the transatlantic slave trade and the strong racial element of New World slavery would seem to lend themselves to the creation of race as a fundamental category of inegalitarian thought, Europeans had to respect local African political authority and the myriad differences among sub-Saharan

African peoples that prevented the easy creation of a uniform 'black race'. However, with the growth of slave societies throughout the New World in the seventeenth century and especially the eighteenth century, new racist views began to develop in which blackness was identified with servility and baseness. It was the Atlantic Revolutions, during which equality acquired foundational status in the constitutions of states such as the United States, France, and Haiti, that proved the catalyst for the development of biological and often fanatical theories of fundamental inequalities, especially concerning race and sex. The incorporation of equality into state constitutions was a world-historical turning point because no other foundational document for a political community had ever promised universal equality. From that moment on, inequality required debate and explicit justification.

Fig. 1: Nicolas de Largillière, "Portrait of a Woman, Possibly Madame Claude Lambert de Thorigny (Marie Marguerite Bontemps, 1668–1701), and an Enslaved Servant MET DP312828" (1696), Wikimedia Commons (from the Metropolitan Museum of Art), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Portrait_of_a_Woman,_Possibly_Madame_Claude_Lambert_de_Thorigny_(Marie_Marguerite_Bontemps,_1668%E2%80%931701),_and_an_Enslaved_Servant_MET_DP312828.jpg.

Conclusion

Looking at inequalities across the early modern period, a number of prominent developments can be discerned. Profound social changes associated with the rise of capitalism threw the inequality of social status that lay at the centre of *ancien régime* society into doubt. As we now know, capitalism is compatible with profound income inequalities but its rise across the early modern period added a novel level of abstraction to social relations, disrupting the inequality of rank that is central to all hierarchical societies. Early modern European expansion made possible both the invention of white supremacy by the eighteenth century but also the vindication of universal human rights independent of culture, sex, or race. While we live in a world of profound inequalities, especially income inequality, the basis of that inequality is fundamentally different from the early modern world, bound up as it is with ideas of social utility and merit rather than the privileges of noble birth. Studying equalities and inequalities in the early modern period remains valuable because this was a period during which deeply entrenched inequalities came to be questioned. Understanding why this was so can help us to better grapple with the social and political tensions that follow from the profound and rising inequality of our own time.

Discussion questions

1. Describe the role of the family in the development of inequalities in early modern Europe.
2. Which role did events outside of Europe play in the development of inequalities in early modern Europe?
3. Do early modern inequalities still persist in Europe today? Why or why not?

Suggested reading

Alfani, Guido and Wouter Ryckbosch, 'Growing Apart in Early Modern Europe? A Comparison of Inequality Trends in Italy and the Low Countries, 1500–1800', *Explorations in Economic History* 62 (2016), 143–153, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eeh.2016.07.003.

Brunner, Otto, *Land and Lordship: Structures of Governance in Medieval Austria*, trans. by Howard Kaminsky and James Van Horn Melton (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992).

Calic, Marie-Janine, *The Great Cauldron: A History of Southeastern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019).

Costa, Pietro, *Cittadinanza* (Rome: Laterza, 2005).

Enflo, Kerstin and Anna Missiaia, 'Between Malthus and the Industrial Take-Off: Regional Inequality in Sweden, 1571–1850', *The Economic History Review* 73:2 (2020), 431–454.

Fioravanti, Maurizio, ed., *Lo Stato moderno in Europa: Istituzioni e diritto*. (Rome: Laterza, 2014).

Frigo, Daniela, *Il Padre di Famiglia* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1985).

Grossi, Paolo, *A History of European Law* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

Motley, Mark, *Becoming a French Aristocrat: The Education of the Court Nobility, 1580–1715* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

Schiavone, Aldo, *The Pursuit of Equality in the West* (New Haven, CT: Harvard University Press, 2022).

Sewell, William H., *Capitalism and the Emergence of Civic Equality in Eighteenth-Century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021).

Sieyès, Emmanuel, *Sieyès: Political Writings*, ed. and trans. by Michael Sonenscher (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2003).

Stuurman, Siep, *The Invention of Humanity: Equality and Cultural Difference in World History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017).

Wiesner-Hanks, Merry E., *Gender in History: Global Perspectives* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

2.4.2 Inequalities in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Esme Cleall and Juan Pan-Montojo

Introduction

At the dawn of the modern period, European society continued to be structured by sharp inequalities, some of them inherited from earlier periods and some of them new. Many different hierarchies, including those of class, gender, 'race', and disability intersected and overlapped, creating complex patterns of privilege and disadvantage throughout the nineteenth century and across Europe. These forms of inequality were in some cases connected and interlocking. As well as that, they changed over time. Here we tackle four main axes of inequality: (1) class and economic inequality, (2) gender and sexual inequality, (3) forms of inequality supposedly justified by ideas about race, religion, and ethnicity, and (4) those that were orientated around ideas about disability. However, whilst our structure is organised around these four areas of concern, they neither cover all the forms of inequality present in nineteenth-century Europe, nor should they be taken as discrete categories. Issues of inequality in this period were, as today, profoundly relational.

Class and Economic Forms of Inequality

Thanks to the collection and analysis of data by economist Thomas Piketty and his team of collaborators, we know that at the end of the eighteenth century, economic inequality was very high in Europe. The nineteenth century saw liberal revolutions and diverse reforms that brought about the end of legal privileges in some European societies, the end of serfdom where it existed in Central and Eastern Europe between 1848 and 1865, and that gradually opened social elites up to new groups almost everywhere. Yet inequality

did not diminish. By the end of the long nineteenth century, both property and income were at least as unequally distributed as they had been at its beginning—and very often even more so. Moreover, European economic growth was based on the transfer of income from the wider world, as a return of financial, commercial, and industrial investments. European inequality was fed by flows from formal and informal colonies and by asymmetric exchanges that by 1914 covered almost all the regions in the world.

As our references to revolutions, reforms, and growth imply, the persistence of inequality did not mean the reproduction of ancient social hierarchies. The various legal devices that sustained the property of aristocrats and members of the clergy were gradually abolished or reshaped and, almost everywhere, rich merchants, bankers, industrialists, and other affluent proprietors joined the ranks of the social elite. The social prestige of aristocratic titles and the political entitlements connected to them did not disappear. Many noble families kept their estates and some accumulated new wealth thanks to their urban property, to mining projects, or to the business opportunities presented by their gainful social and political connections. However, new families benefitting from social dynamism and economic changes also took part in enjoying the privileges of aristocrats, sometimes marrying into old, established families.

At the bottom of society, new forms of destitution were born from the weakening of communitarian resources and links, the differentiation of peasant groups, and the growing deficits of nutrition and sanitation in many urban areas throughout Europe. There has been a long debate among historians on the living standards during industrialisation, with no clear and general results. However, we know that during most of the nineteenth century some indicators point towards a lower quality of life in urban areas, the so-called urban penalty. Growing public concern over the 'social question' was multiplied by a burgeoning literature that portrayed the 'dangerous classes' as a fuel of crime, sex work, and forced or free emigration overseas. This became a common element all over Europe, including countries where industrialisation had not taken place. We cannot tell what happened with much of the rural population: even where they had more access to property, as in many countries, it seems that their average consumption increased only very slowly and underwent setbacks. Villages tended to become more unequal micro-societies, since the privatisation or nationalisation of common goods, as well as the commodification of natural resources and human labour, widened the distance between the elites and the lower groups in rural communities. Where serfdom had been the generalised condition of peasants, emancipation offered some of them the possibility to accumulate certain wealth and other forms of capital and to distinguish themselves from their peers. At the

same time, the middle classes—integrated by shopkeepers, professionals, civil servants, military, artists, and other new categories—increased their demographic weight and social influence in most countries, although their size and material conditions varied greatly from place to place.

All in all, social mobility was greater in the early stages of industrialisation and after major socio-political changes. In the last decades of the century and during the Belle Époque, class barriers might have become more rigid, a fact that would partly account—together with the expansion of suffrage—for the relative success of working-class and agrarian movements in a highly unequal world.

Gender and Sexuality

Liberalism was deeply rooted in gender differentiation. Prevailing views of gendered roles spread through Christian churches and Muslim and Jewish communities were gradually replaced in the nineteenth century by new secular discourses that combined images inherited from religion with new 'scientific' approaches to the nature of women and, therefore, of masculinity. Civil and commercial codes, statutes, and jurisprudence translated these changes into new norms, defining roles and appropriate and inappropriate behaviours in a sharper manner than in early modern Europe.

In most European societies, the image of separate spheres became very powerful, especially among the middle classes and, through them, in public opinion. However, what this separation actually meant for the daily life of men and women varied greatly from country to country, from class to class, and from one religious group to another. Despite those differences, women were second-class citizens on every level. They had less access (if any) to formal education, they earned less when they worked for a wage, and they were subordinated to men in workshops and farms. Women could not dispose of family goods without paternal or marital permission and often were discriminated by inheritance laws or customs, while their sexual behaviour was subject to a more rigid discipline. Social habits reinforced by norms turned women into permanent minors, ostensibly protected by—and of course subordinated to—their male relatives.

It is true that scientific discourses, liberalism, and (even more so) democratic and socialist projects held a progressive and emancipatory narrative of society that opened the path to new views on the relationship between genders, and eventually to new social practices. The growth of cultural and educational markets created some spaces for women writers, dramatic actresses, or singers. State-building and nation-building processes allocated cultural and

political tasks to women as mothers of future citizens, which demanded their civic formation, whilst concerns about the 'social question' increased the value of motherhood and supported those who demanded some kind of education for women. However, the existence or creation of these windows of opportunity for women, especially for middle-class ones, sometimes triggered social attitudes and legal norms that veered towards closing or limiting the disruption of socially accepted gender roles.

Religion, 'Race', Ethnicity

The nineteenth century was a period in which 'race' was profoundly influential in shaping questions of identity and structuring inequality. Overseas, race was used to justify the gaping inequalities of empire, patterns of exploitation that included the transatlantic slave trade, and the reappropriation of land across the globe. Back in the European metropoles, the language of racial difference was also used to articulate other forms of inequality such as that based on class or ethnicity. The language of racial difference was used to frame perceptions of working-class irreligion. Missionary organisations, important vectors of information about the overseas empire, also performed extensive work amongst those they called the 'heathen at home'.

Ideas about ethnicity were intimately bound up with questions of religion. Even though almost all European states kept an established church or a state religion, different legal reforms gradually introduced religious tolerance and some even accepted equality before the law of all citizens whatever their religious adscription. Belonging to religious minorities entailed social discrimination and often legal barriers that banned access to certain positions in the military, in politics, and in the professional world. Protestantism became a key part of what it meant to be British, for example, despite substantive Catholic populations, particularly in Ireland, and minority Jewish populations. Irish Catholics were seen as so very different from English Protestants as to constitute an entirely separate 'race' or 'ethnicity' from Anglo-Saxon. Over the course of the century, with the development of Fenianism and Irish nationalism, these tensions, whilst taking on new inferences, continued to remain important and, amongst other things, shaped attitudes to migrants from Ireland who migrated elsewhere in the United Kingdom, particularly to large cities.

State-building nearly always implied the choice of a language as the state language, and as such its becoming the language for the school system, the language of courts, the language of the military forces, the language of political institutions, and so on. Those who did not master the state language faced

a strong barrier in their relationship with civil servants and a real obstacle to climbing the social ladder. In Britain, for example, English, which already held legal and political dominance, increasingly displaced the indigenous languages of Irish Gaelic, Scots Gaelic, and Welsh, which were discriminated against in the legal system and outright banned in many schools. In some cases, children were punished for using mother tongues other than English, and there were a great many cultural disadvantages to not being able to speak English. Very often, when a linguistic group had a cultural elite of its own, its members organised a defence of the collective culture that could lead to the creation of regionalist or nationalist movements, as happened in the Austrian Empire, the Russian Empire, Belgium, and Spain.

Jewish migration across Europe increased over the course of the nineteenth century in part due to pogroms and other antisemitic violence in Russia. Within this timeframe, antisemitism became increasingly laden with ideas about 'racial' as well as religious difference, as demonstrated by antisemitic cartoons and caricatures which increasingly depicted Jewish people as being ethnically different. Whilst some historians have focused on the specific roots of antisemitism in Germany due to the later rise of Nazism, antisemitism was widespread in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe. In France, where a strong tradition of anti-Jewish and eventually antisemitic literature developed following the different measures that emancipated Jews, the Dreyfus Affair (1894–1906) revealed deep schisms in society over questions about Jewishness and belonging to the nation. In Britain, Jewish migrants, who largely moved to major cities, particularly London, were used as cheap labour. New Jewish migrants, mainly of Ashkenazi origin, who started arriving from 1880 onwards, tended to remain distinct from the established British Jewish community, with the former occupying a more impoverished and less enfranchised position. Here we can strongly see the relationship between class, religion and ethnicity, as the hostility towards Jewish migrants in part arose from their impoverished position and in part contributed to it.

All over Europe, Romani people faced discrimination in social and legal terms. Industriousness, honest ways of earning a living, and other new socio-political understandings of what was 'proper' and 'improper' effectively criminalised their activities. The nomadic way of life of many Roma and Sinti people excluded them from political rights at all levels, even after the introduction of universal male suffrage, because those rights were associated with permanent residence. Racist discourses cast them as members of the European underworld or, alternatively, as primitive people. Liberalism therefore did not bring about the emancipation of the dispersed Roma and Sinti groups.

Fig. 1: Johan Braakensiek, "Zola en de zaak-Dreyfus", Rijksmuseum.nl, 1898, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.771622. This drawing shows how Zola literally pulls the personification of truth or veritas out of a well, while the personification of humanity or humanitas crowns him for his deed. The French officers are unable to look at the truth, in this case the deep-rooted antisemitism in society. The text is a quote from an open letter, sent by Zola to the President of France. It reads as follows: 'The deed I am fulfilling is nothing but a revolutionary means to hasten the breakthrough of truth and justice.'

Inequalities of Disability and Health

Although not part of the commonly repeated trinity of class, gender, and race—typically seen as the dominant categories for analysing inequality—disability and health were also important lines along which privilege and discrimination were drawn. Like the other categories of difference discussed in this chapter, disability and health were also intersectional. Rapid industrialisation throughout the century created disability on a large scale due to the unsafe working conditions found in factories, mills, and mines. In some workplaces, the sound of the industrial machinery was so loud as to be literally deafening, and workers developed lip-reading and basic signs to communicate with other workers. The cramped living conditions that followed intense patterns of urbanisation also generated disability by facilitating the spread of disease and other life-changing conditions. However, disability was of course not limited to one particular class. Whilst the relationship between poverty and

disability was strong, congenital and acquired disability were both found across boundaries of class and economic wellbeing. Disability thus constitutes an axis of inequality in its own right.

This period saw the growth of what we might tentatively call 'special' education. In late eighteenth-century Paris, the Abbé Charles-Michel de L'Epée, watching deaf Parisians conversing with each other in the street using sign language, was inspired to develop a form of deaf education that used a manual sign language. A few years later, in Scotland, Thomas Braidwood founded the first school for the deaf in the British Isles. After a rather hesitant start, by the mid-nineteenth century deaf people, previously seen as 'uneducable', were increasingly being taught in schools and institutions using a diversity of methods including both 'manual' systems (which used sign language) and 'oral' systems (which focussed on lip-reading). Teachers of these methods across Europe became increasingly antagonistic towards each other and in 1880, an international conference was held in Milan. The conference aimed to advocate oralism as a 'superior' method of deaf education, a controversial move that has since been accredited by many deaf historians not only as a demonstration of the low regard in which sign languages were held, but also as a direct contribution to the alienation of and discrimination against the deaf community. Blind education also developed in this period across Europe, with Louis Braille's new system of writing in France, completed in 1829, being a particularly important development internationally.

Alongside educational institutions for disabled people, the nineteenth century also saw the increased institutionalisation of disabled people for other reasons. In Britain, the workhouses, introduced in 1834 ostensibly to deal with poverty, housed vast numbers of disabled people in terrible conditions. Specialist institutions and asylums for disabled people also grew, sometimes under the pretext of providing specialist care. They also performed a function in allowing non-disabled family members to remove stigmatised disabled relatives from the household. Psychiatric illnesses and mental distress were also addressed for the first time in a systematic manner in the nineteenth century, through the creation of so-called 'insane asylums', institutions that aimed to achieve, at best, the 'recovery' of people with mental illness, or at least their 'containment'. The quality of life in these institutions varied enormously and was also shaped by class and economic wellbeing. Some were highly abusive institutions whilst others provided a more well-intentioned, if in many ways deficient, standard of living. Gender, too, heavily inflected the experience of life in institutions of all sorts, with female inmates often enlisted to help with the domestic running of the institution, whilst male inmates were instructed in other forms of early occupational therapy, such as woodwork.

Despite widespread patterns of discrimination and prejudice, the nineteenth century also saw the emergence of what we might today describe as 'self-advocacy' groups for disabled people across Europe. These included blind organisations such as the British and Foreign Blind Association for Improving the Embossed Literature of the Blind and Promoting the Employment of the Blind, which was founded in Britain by Thomas Armitage (who was partially sighted) in 1869. Deaf clubs, churches, newspapers, and organisations were prolific in the second half of the nineteenth century. There was a considerable degree of internationalism in these organisations and the famous banquets which were held each year in Paris were important occasions in the development of an international deaf community.

Conclusion

The long nineteenth century was a period of increasing inequality in Europe, but simultaneously a time of a diffusion of new discourses that called for the general emancipation of human beings and the progressive attenuation of suffering through the combined action of social solidarity, state institutions, and the advancement of science. Income differences were widened by the creation of national and imperial markets, the gradual increase in the number of wageworkers, and the destruction of resources and regulations that had previously protected the poor sectors of the population. Whereas the legitimising ideas of the diverse *ancien régime* monarchies had justified inequality, liberalism did not: it promised a utopia of an open society where the destiny of each man would be determined by his work and his values. Precisely for this reason, the growing socioeconomic distances—between peasants and manual workers on the one hand, and the middle classes, the new industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, and the aristocracy on the other—generated all kinds of demands, organisations, and collective actions. Those discourses inspired social movements, which then reshaped their language and created new concepts and new practices. The contrast of liberal utopias with the actual outcomes of reforms and revolutions and the traits of new capitalist societies inspired not only those who joined democratic and socialist movements. Women, whose role had been reimagined by liberal societies through the metaphor of the 'separate spheres' that gave men the 'burden' of ordering the public space, could also claim rights on the basis of liberal programmes—and on the basis of anti-liberal ones. Quite a few women and some men did so, which at the end of the century was starting to set a new political agenda: feminism. The revolutionary triplet of equality, liberty, and brotherhood was also used to denounce the differences founded on ethnic prejudices and on disability and illness. Ethnic inequality was legally suppressed in most countries, although it

was not socially or politically dismantled. Its defence came under the banner of 'scientific' racism, which reframed old forms of discrimination so that they could still be applied to Jews, Sinti and Roma, and to other minorities, as well as to non-European peoples. As for the disabled and the ill, civil charities and public institutions tended to replace the pre-existing communitarian and religious ones, whilst new medical and philanthropic techniques were developed to alleviate suffering (and, sometimes, hide it from the public eyes).

Discussion questions

1. What was the 'social question' and why was it so important in nineteenth-century Europe?

2. What was the role of religion in inequalities in nineteenth-century Europe?

3. Can you identify any inequalities in current European society? How are they related to developments in nineteenth-century Europe?

Suggested reading

Bengtsson, Erik, Anna Missiaia, Mats Olsson and Patrick Svensson, 'Wealth Inequality in Sweden, 1750–1900', *The Economic History Review* 71:3 (2018), 772–794.

Blum, Jerome, *The End of the Old Order in Rural Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

Blumi, Isa, R*einstating the Ottomans: Alternative Balkan Modernities* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

Ericsson, Tom, Jørgen Fink and Jan Eivind Myhre, eds, *The Scandinavian Middle Classes, 1840–1940* (Oslo: Unipub, 2004).

Fraisse, Geneviève and Michelle Perrot, eds, *Histoire des femmes en Occident, vol. IV: Le XIXe siècle* (Paris, Pion, 1991).

Göçek, Fatma, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire: Ottoman Westernization and Social Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

Hall, Catherine and Leonore Davidoff, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class* (London: Routledge, 1987).

Köksal, Duygu and Anastasia Falierou, eds, *A Social History of Late Ottoman Women: New Perspectives* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

Mckenzie, Kirsten, *A Cultural History of Western Empires, in the Age of Empire* (London: Bloomsbury, 2001).

Osterud, Grey, 'The historical roots of differing rural gender orders in Norway and Sweden', *Scandinavian Journal of History* 39:5 (2014), 664–688.

Piketty, Thomas, *A Brief History of Equality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2022).

Stiker, Henri-Jacques, *The History of Disability* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

2.4.3 Inequalities in Contemporary History (c. 1900–2000)

Eszter Bartha, Sarah Carmichael, Julie V. Gottlieb, and

Juan Pan-Montojo

Introduction

Inequality is a multi-dimensional concept, and this applies to early-modern, modern and contemporary history. This subchapter focuses on dimensions related to income and wealth, gender, ethnicity and racial inequality, and disability, all of which saw distinct patterns of development over the course of the twentieth century. Issues of inequality defined political change and conflict in the twentieth century, including the priorities placed on addressing inequalities exacerbated by urbanisation and industrialisation, and the many grassroots campaigns and new systems of rule dedicated to redressing stark inequalities—real and perceived. From the First World War to the crises of the interwar period, the Second World War, and then the Cold War, competing interpretations of economic, social, racial, and gender inequalities polarised Europe and account for the major shifts in boundaries and borders, state ideologies and governments, and alliances and rivalries.

Income and Wealth Inequality

Income inequality in the twentieth century followed two broad trends: globally, income inequality between countries decreased but, within countries, inequality often increased. Looking at the case of Europe in the contemporary period, the trend toward declining inequality that persisted until around the 1970s was followed by an increase which is still ongoing. In terms of the divide within Europe, the rise of communism in Eastern Europe resulted in a sharp fall in income inequality in those countries, followed by a sharp rise after

the dissolution of the USSR. Generally speaking, Europe is characterised by lower income inequality than the United States, but recent decades have seen income inequality in many European countries start to edge upwards again. With the publication of the French economist Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* in 2013, the topic of income versus wealth hit centre-stage for policymakers across Europe. What Piketty observes for France, which can also be demonstrated for other Western European countries, is that wealth inequality historically far outstrips inequality from labour, by about seven times. This pattern can be disrupted and in the twentieth century was dramatically altered thanks to the First and Second World Wars, which destroyed much of the capital from which wealth derives. This was followed by a period of extraordinary economic growth and high taxation, which kept inequality in check. However, since the 1980s wealth versus income inequality has been growing again and, although it has not reached the seven-to-one level seen prior to the World Wars, it seems set to continue growing in the absence of a concerted attempt to tax wealth rather than income.

Interesting contrasts emerge when you compare wealth inequality to income inequality. The Netherlands, for instance, has relatively low levels of income inequality but extraordinarily high levels of wealth inequality, with the wealthiest one percent of the population owning one third of private assets.

One classic way to grasp and explain wealth inequalities in the world is rooted in the Marxist tradition, whose central concept is class. According to the Marxist analysis, social classes are formed in relation to the possession of the means of production, whose forms change historically and geographically. In the feudal era, this was land, and the main contrast lay between landowners (landlords) and landless peasants. In the era of capitalism, the main means of production were factories, and the two main classes were capitalists and workers. While the German scholar Karl Marx (1818–1883) recognised the economic and social development and human energies that capitalism unleashed, he also thought that the relationship between these two classes was antagonistic, and that capitalism greatly increased income inequalities in the countries where this system developed (first and foremost in England). He and the German scholar and businessman Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) summarised their thoughts in *The Communist Manifesto*, published in 1848, in which they called for a revolution led by the working class, with the aim to abolish capitalism and the private ownership of the means of production in order to liberate workers from the exploitation of the capitalist class.

This idea was first realised in Soviet Russia, where the October Revolution in 1917 sought to establish a new economic and social system, which was later called state socialism or communism. War communism was abandoned

by Lenin in 1921, and the NEP (New Economic Policy) followed, which established a mixed economy (factories could be privately owned and land was in the hands of the peasantry). Stalin broke with this policy in 1929. Under his leadership, privately owned factories and land were transformed into state property. While income inequalities radically decreased in the Soviet Union, the omnipotence of state ownership created new inequalities between 'ordinary' people and the party cadres (*nomenklatura*), who controlled the means of production and the distribution of wealth in the whole of society.

The failure of the socialist experiments and workers' revolts that took place after 1918 in countries such as Germany, Italy, and Hungary led to the consolidation of the capitalist order, which still preserved some of its former feudal characteristics in Southern and Eastern Europe. Redistribution of land—where it happened—was often at the expense of ethnic minorities. This, however, could not satisfy the demands of the peasantry. Instead of democratic rule, authoritarian regimes were formed in countries such as Poland, Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia. In Italy, Mussolini's fascist movement grasped political power and crushed the labour movement. Intensifying class conflicts and the survival of a semi-feudal society led to civil war in Spain, which ended with the defeat of the left-wing forces.

Class inequalities were overall greater in less-developed countries than in Western Europe. In addition, in many Eastern and Southern European countries, a feudal caste system further increased social distance between the poor peasantry and the landed classes.

The end of the Second World War brought about a division between the capitalist west and the socialist east. While there was a civil war between the political right and left in Greece, this ended with the defeat of the latter. The landed classes in the socialist east were deprived of their estates, and the churches also lost much of their property. The aim of the communist regimes that were established through Soviet support in Eastern Europe was to create a classless society, where all political power belonged to the working class.

After the collapse of the communist regimes, new class inequalities were formed in Eastern Europe and the distribution of wealth became much more unequal than before. Private property now played a much greater role in creating social differences—this was a new phenomenon for many people who were accustomed to a more equal society. Public goods such as free education and healthcare were also seen as important achievements of socialism. This is why communist 'nostalgia' should not be dismissed as a false consciousness; many people sincerely regretted the loss of the socialist communities and the former networks, where the market was much less important in creating inequalities than in the new, capitalist societies.

Fig. 1: The Suffrage Atelier, "Pro-Female Suffrage propaganda poster" (ca. 1912), CC 4.0, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Poster_sul_suffragio_femminile.jpg.

Gender Inequalities

The dramatic shifts and development of the status, representation, and experience of women over the course of the twentieth century does, on the surface, suggest steady progress. Just think how dramatically differently women dressed, behaved, worked and spent their leisure time in 1900 than in 2000. But the attainment of political rights and citizenship, the entry of large numbers of women into the workforce, and the legal and attitudinal shifts about sex and sexuality, all mask the cyclical nature of women's emancipation and the peaks and troughs of the feminist movement. Women in the twentieth century began to organise internationally and transnationally in their shared struggles for political, social and economic equality, but the strength of feminism varied widely over time and space. There were important differences in the scope and size of European feminist movements between north and south, between democracies and dictatorships—or, during the Cold War, between communist and capitalist or mixed-economy welfare states.

The first European country to give women the vote was Finland (in 1906), followed by Denmark (1908). The First World War would prove to be a catalyst for the extension of citizenship rights to women in many countries. This was both the result of effective and inspiring suffrage campaigns (the militant suffragettes in Britain became international icons), and due to women's sacrifices and war service on the home front.

Women were granted the vote in Russia in 1917, and in Britain, Germany, and Austria in 1918. The framing of suffrage as a reward for women's exercise of patriotic duty helps us make sense of why even some conservative governments supported women's suffrage legislation. In 1928, when British women were granted the vote on the same terms as men (the legislation dubbed the 'Flapper's Vote'), the Conservative Party was in power. Women in Spain had to wait until 1931 for the vote, those in France until 1944, and elsewhere even longer (1945 in Italy; 1952 in Greece; 1971 in Switzerland; and, finally, 1976 in Portugal).

With the overthrow of democracies by dictatorships during the interwar years, however, the rights of citizenship could just as easily be withdrawn, showing the cyclical pattern of women's emancipation. For example, in the Weimar Republic there were high turnouts of women voters at elections, and, by 1932, 112 women had been elected to the Reichstag. Under the Nazi regime women were divested of these rights and representation. The Nazis had only contempt for feminism, depriving women of their rights and rewarding them instead for their prolific motherhood.

The communist regimes boasted of achieving gender equality—and it was indeed true that millions of women entered the labour market because extensive industrialisation demanded a larger workforce. While state propaganda promoted gender equality in every field (an example being the field of education), policy towards women often encountered resistance based on traditional gender and family ideologies inherited from the semi-feudal past, in which women were prevented from being placed on an equal footing with men. Nurseries, kindergartens, and evening schools, however, did indeed help socialise housework and childcare, and they were available to almost everybody in the 1970s and 1980s.

The wave model for the feminist movement applies to many Western European countries. The first wave crested from the turn of the century to the First World War, when women agitated to have the grossest sexual inequalities addressed: voting rights, property rights, and access to education and to the professions. In a period of relative decline of feminism, advances were nonetheless made at the national and international level, and women made their voices heard at the League of Nations between the wars, and at the United Nations after the Second World War.

The second wave of feminism, the women's liberation movement, came in the late 1960s and through the 1970s, emerging from—and often in reaction to—the sexism still embedded in radical and student politics and civil rights campaigns. In turn, campaigns for gay liberation, calling for decriminalisation and the end of the stigmatisation of homosexuality, were part of this moment of permissiveness and progressive ideas represented by a generation of baby

boomers. Lesbians, who often felt marginalised in gay liberation groups, mounted their own campaigns. If the first wave was preoccupied with securing the vote and women's constitutional rights, the second wave recognised that 'the personal is political', leading women to seek radical and innovative ways to challenge patriarchal hegemony in the state, the workplace, in their personal relationships, and in the family. The attainment of sexual equality in politics could, however, be paradoxical. When Margaret Thatcher became British Prime Minster in 1979, the first elected female leader in Europe, she did so without any feminist conviction and her government did little to advance women's rights.

Third wave feminism started in the early 1990s and built on the foundations laid in the second wave, but brought to the forefront intersectionality, transfeminism, and postmodern feminism. Rising out of punk subculture (known as 'riot grrl'), this wave was largely driven by women of colour based in the United States who wanted to correct second wave feminism's focus on the experiences of white, middle-class women. Confusion as to what exactly third wave feminism is characterises the wave itself. In terms of inequality, it is important to point out though that this wave is very much focused on how different types of inequality intersect to create different problems for different groups of people.

Finally, since the early 2000s, fourth wave feminism has been characterised as combining issues of justice with increasing spirituality. In the context of contemporary feminism, the Everyday Sexism project (https://everydaysexism.com/) of Laura Bates as well as the more recent #MeToo movements are obvious examples, with a distinct focus on Western societies. These social media generated campaigns and flashpoints for discussion around the treatment of women globally have also resulted in a lot of pushback from the so-called 'manosphere' or 'Men's rights' activists, some of whom openly argue for a return to a so-called 'natural order' where women are subservient to men. A deep misunderstanding of history frequently permeates these debates, with the cliché image of women as they may have been in Victorian England held up as an ideal: homemaker, child-bearer, wife. Women have long occupied a far more active place outside the home, and it is debatable to what extent this image was even true for the Victorian era.

Racial and Ableist Inequalities

Income, wealth, and gender were not the only types of inequalities among Europeans in the twentieth century. Ethnic differences played a key role in the nation-states that came out of the First World War, after the break-up and territorial losses of the Russian and Ottoman Empires and Austria-Hungary.

Minorities were seen as potential traitors to the new national communities; majoritarian public opinion saw them as obstacles to the nation-building process or as politically inclined to challenge the new territorial status-quo. There were big differences in the social and cultural conditions of these minorities and in the way they were dealt with by legislation and by social norms, but discrimination existed everywhere. During and after the Second World War, millions of people were subject to ethnic cleansing (a 'solution' already put in place by Turkey, which expelled thousands of Greek Orthodox families from Anatolia, and by Greece, which exchanged them for its Muslim subjects in 1923), a highly traumatic experience that contributed to a homogenisation of the post-war nation-states.

Among the minorities that suffered systematic discrimination in the interwar period were the Jews. The Nazi regime first segregated them, then ghettoised their communities, and finally launched their extermination in all areas it controlled. The genocide of Jews, which had a precedent in the massacres of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War, was often welcomed by sectors of the population that had been won over by antisemitism in countries across Europe and, for this reason, found the support and the collaboration of many local groups. The death of around two thirds of European Jews was followed by a large emigration to the state of Israel, established in 1948. Open discrimination of Jewish citizens tended to disappear in post-war Europe, although antisemitism did not, and it was even translated, sometimes and in certain countries, into measures that implied a discriminatory treatment of those considered to be Jews.

The Roma and Sinti were also isolated by the Nazis and then subjected to measures aiming at their extermination, in what is nowadays called the Porajmos. For centuries, the Roma and Sinti had been a subaltern ethnic group in Europe, often subject to prosecutions and penal sanctions, and their position in most European countries did not improve after the war, to the point that their suffering under Nazism was not even made visible. They continued to live at the margins of society. Fordist capitalism and communism gradually closed many spaces in which the Roma had previously lived and operated, whilst a varying combination of social policies and repression tried to force them to abandon their ways of life.

A new dimension of inequality took off in Europe during the 1950s and 1960s. The demand for labour in the fastest-growing economies of northwestern Europe fostered a south-north migration that took millions of Portuguese, Spaniards, Italians, Yugoslavians, Greeks, and Turks to the more industrialised countries. North African and Caribbean groups were also recruited to work in France and Britain, while the arrival of people from other continents was initiated by decolonisation, especially when the process ended

in civil wars. Immigrants performed the lowest-paid jobs and very often did not have easy access to citizenship, a condition that was coupled with social prejudices against poor foreigners. However, collective discrimination was (and remains) more active when immigrants do not come from Christian countries, and when they have external traits (colour of skin, type of hair) that can be used as the basis of their racialisation. For this reason, the last wave of immigration that started in the 1990s, with many immigrants coming from the old European colonial empires, has fostered a widespread rise in xenophobic attitudes, reflected in the rise of ultra-right political parties.

Ethnic and racial groups have not been the only ones to be treated unequally by European societies. The position of chronically ill or disabled persons was subject to contradictory trends in the twentieth century. From the First World War and especially after the Second World War, families and religious or lay charities were partially supplanted by public centres and pensions. This led to the homogenisation of treatments and long-term improvements in medical and psychiatric care. However, until the 1970s and 1980s, this often resulted in new bio-political measures that implied total or partial confinement, and even the application of eugenic policies. Even though Nazi policies discredited eugenics, some countries like Norway and Sweden maintained the norms of the interwar period to legalise eugenic sterilisation. It was only in the 1980s that a new social sensitivity towards people with disabilities started to emerge, eugenic policies disappeared, integration became the general social aim, and confinement started to be seen as an extreme solution. The results of the new views on disabilities were curtailed, though, by the stagnation or deconstruction of welfare institutions and policies that have characterised the evolution of most European countries since the 1980s.

Conclusion

In conclusion, inequality as a concept and as lived experience has shifted considerably in the course of the twentieth century. It has been a century of rapid technological change, dramatic patterns of migration, chronic political crisis, death and destruction on a mass scale, but also a period of remarkable social mobility. Many of the most obvious inequalities in terms of class, race, and gender were addressed, even if the full realisation of equality remains elusive. What has remained consistent has been the focus of the left (from communism to social democracy) on inequalities. In contrast, the right (from fascism to conservatism) has advocated the idea of a meritocracy, or embraced traditional hierarchies.

Discussion questions

1. How did the development of gender equality differ in Western and Eastern Europe? Why?

2. What was the role of political conflict and wars in the development of inequalities in twentieth-century Europe?

3. Do you think the inequalities of the twentieth century still exist today? Why or why not? Are there new inequalities in the twenty-first century?

Suggested reading

Bourdieu, Pierre, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (New York: Sage, 1977).

Branca, Patricia, *Women in Europe since 1750* (London: Routledge, 1978).

Konrad, George and Ivan Szelenyi, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power* (Brighton, Harvester Press, 1979).

Milanovic, Branco, *The Haves and the Have-Nots: A Brief and Idiosyncratic History of Global Inequality* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

Milanovic, Branco, *Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

Piketty, Thomas. *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

Timm, Annette F. and Joshua A. Sanborn, *Gender, Sex and the Shaping of Modern Europe: A History from the French Revolution to the Present Day* (New York: Berg, 2016).

van Bavel, Bas, *The Invisible Hand?: How Market Economies Have Emerged and Declined Since AD 500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

World Inequality Database, https://wid.world/.

UNIT 3

POWER AND CITIZENSHIP

Henri Félix Emmanuel Philippoteaux, *Lamartine in front of the Town Hall of Paris rejects the red flag on 25 February 1848* (1901), Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Philippoteaux_-_Lamartine_in_front_of_the_Town_Hall_of_Paris_rejects_the_red_flag.jpg.

CHAPTER 3.1

STATE-BUILDING AND NATIONALISM

3.1.1 State-building and Nationalism in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Stefan B. Kirmse, Maarten Prak, and

Roberto Quirós Rosado

Introduction

This chapter discusses states and nations, and we must be alert from the start that in historical texts these terms still very much carry the imprint of their origins in the nineteenth century. Similar terms were used during the early modern period, but they carried different meanings, sometimes in subtle ways, sometimes radically differently. Borders between countries were blurred where today we find clear demarcations. We still have European countries cobbled together from distinct units—think of the United Kingdom—but these are coherent states compared to many of their early modern predecessors. Few early modern states had proper governments as we know them today. Patriotism may have been in evidence, though nationalism was not. And all of this—borders, institutions, and identities—was contested.

The political history of the European states as we know them today is, almost by definition, told by the victors, that is, those states that emerged out of this cauldron of early modern political history. It is therefore important to ask whose history we are telling, and how we know what we think we know. A wide range of sources is available for many parts of central and western Europe, including official certificates, records, and charters. Such sources are much rarer in the east; the history of early modern Russia, for example, is more based on the study of chronicles. Chronicles were diverse and could be centralised or local, secular or ecclesiastical; but above all, they were stories told from the perspective of those who had commissioned them. Thus, the rise of the principality of Moscow under Ivan III (ruled 1462–1505) is usually described as the 'gathering of Russian lands' in the literature; it is studied in terms of centralisation and unification, and not told from the perspective of the princely and republican states and confederations that it absorbed.

Institutions and the Law

In most of Europe, rulers, and in some cases their local and regional appointees, also made laws and administered justice. In other words, there was no clear distinction between executives, legislatures, and judiciaries. That said, early modern states engaged in the centralisation, standardisation, and professionalisation of administrative practice from the mid-sixteenth century onwards. Early forms of central authorities and state departments count among them, as do regional and local administrative offices, each with a wide range of military, administrative, legal, and economic responsibilities. They included both the secular and religious spheres. It was at this time, for example, that representatives of the territorially dispersed Russian Orthodox Church agreed on a unified church calendar and saints, and thus helped to accelerate the integration of the early modern state.

While royal councils had existed before as advisory boards for European rulers, from the sixteenth century their work became more systematic, differentiated, and professionalised, developing into early forms of ministries during the early modern period. In many countries, the logic behind the differentiation and division of labour was both functional and territorial. In Spain, which soon developed one of the most elaborate conciliar systems, separate councils not only emerged for matters of state, finance, and war, among others, but also for the government of Castile, Aragon, Italy, Flanders, Portugal, and the Western Indies. In England, special councils for regions considered unruly, such as Wales and 'the North', were formed while an array of councils and courts divided matters of government and finance among them. These councils also had judicial functions in both Spain and England, while in France such functions were reserved for the most important one, the *Grand Conseil*. In Muscovy, Tsar Ivan IV established central authorities in Moscow in the 1550s. Over the next decades, the number of these *prikazy* would rise from four to seventy, and they would regularly send instructions to provincial governors. As in Spain and England, some of these central authorities were responsible for territories—for example, the newly acquired lands of Kazan—while others were specialised in fields of governance. There were conflicts of jurisdiction that followed, partly because the process of expansion and differentiation was never systematic.

The growth of state institutions also involved their gradual spread into the provinces. Though it remained haphazard and erratic in some parts of Europe until the nineteenth century, state penetration into the countryside did make headway in other parts during the early modern period. Provincial heads were increasingly supplied not only with troops, but also with administrative staff and offices. Crucially, they came to receive regular salaries from the state. Particularly where the distances between the provinces and the capital were

vast, provincial offices often combined administrative and judicial functions. To make matters more complicated, not only the state but also the church maintained local representation, resulting in many questions being negotiated by at least four key actors, namely ecclesiastical and secular authorities at the local and central levels. Recent research into early modern governance has also shown that much of this negotiation and everyday interaction on the ground was marked less by repression and resistance than it was by pragmatic accommodation.

'The law' was a crucial part of early modern state-building, though it could mean several different things at the same time. It included the decrees imposed by rulers, legislatures (where they existed), or councils in towns and cities. To make justice more reliable and responsive to local demands, some European states, including Poland-Lithuania (1588) and Russia (1649), proceeded to collect, codify, and thus also clarify these partly contradictory laws. Denmark and Norway (1683 and 1687) were the first north-western European states to follow this example. Yet, while these early legal codes were extensive, they were very different from modern iterations: they were volumes of long, only partially systematic lists that lacked any sense of legal abstraction. Women and different categories of unfree people—including serfs and slaves, which still existed in many European societies—had very limited rights. The same went for the native populations of the growing imperial and colonial possessions held by European states. In addition, 'the law' could also mean the growing body of legal decisions within common law systems such as the one found in England. Or, it could mean the statutes of Roman and Canon law that, from the Renaissance onward, came to be studied and integrated into local legal understandings and practice in most of western and southern Europe, although not so much in northern and eastern Europe.

Finance and Personnel

The 'business' of the state expanded dramatically in early modern Europe. This business was warfare, and its expansion was directly related to the military revolution of the early-modern period. From around 1500, the number of troops increased rapidly, and those troops were taken gradually into permanent pay. Something similar happened from the mid-seventeenth century with Europe's naval forces. Thus emerged the so-called fiscal-military state. Medieval states had been financed primarily from the royal domains, supplemented with incidental contributions from the public negotiated in parliamentary sessions, but as time went on, taxation became as permanent as the troops they were paying for. In the process, states developed new forms of taxation and new ways of collecting taxes, but also started borrowing large sums on the domestic and international capital markets to cover their increased

spending. In Holland, the most heavily taxed region in Europe at the time, taxation claimed five to seven percent of a worker's wage or a guild master's income in the late sixteenth century, and over twice as much by the end of the seventeenth century. Over the same period, Holland's debts had increased from below ten million guilders to over 200 million. They would double again during the eighteenth century.

Organising and coordinating this expanding state demanded more personnel, almost always male. Traditionally, most of the state's business had been done by men who were not employed by the state itself, an arrangement that continued even while the number of state employees was rising. This applied everywhere, and on all levels of society. Military officers were recruiting and paying their own soldiers, which meant that provisioning the army was a private business. Locally, offices like poor relief, policing, or the fire service were part-time and went unpaid. It is therefore impossible to compare present-day numbers of civil servants with those of the early modern era. Still, we do know that in the early sixteenth century the French state had 7,000–8,000 royal officers alongside their administrative staff, or around one for every 2,000 inhabitants. By the end of the seventeenth century there were 60,000 officers and another 20,000 collecting taxes, which again was technically a private business in much of France. Together, they numbered one for every 200 inhabitants, a very steep increase that cannot be explained by changing definitions alone.

Officeholders and staff were also better trained. This period saw the rise of academics and other professionals in the service of the state. In multinational Spain, the new court councils and *juntas* (temporary or specialised committees), along with their respective secretariats, were made up of a large group of lawyers, aristocrats, and military personnel. Among the thirty-two members who joined the Amsterdam city council between 1600 and 1619, six held an academic degree, mostly in law; by 1700 it was exceptional for a councillor not to have one. With the professionalisation of bureaucracies came written job descriptions and printed forms to collect standardised information about population sizes, poor relief and, inevitably, taxes. The situation was rather different in Russia, however, where the lack of universities (the first one opened in 1755) and other training institutions meant that the expanding class of bureaucrats would learn on the job. Professional training emerged there only in the mid-eighteenth century and remained rudimentary until the 1830s.

This professionalisation should not be confused with the 'rise of the bourgeoisie'. It is true that, increasingly, the nobility was unable to occupy all positions of influence, not least because their numbers fell short. But we can't be as sure as previous generations of historians that this was part of a deliberate process to sideline the nobles. In many monarchies, successful administrators

were ennobled as a reward for their services and in some territories the offices were offered for sale with a noble title attached to them.

Representation and Citizenship

Modern democracy, which entitles the majority of adult citizens the right to vote in national elections, only emerged in Europe during the nineteenth century. It would however be wrong to think of early modern citizens as mere 'subjects', mercilessly at the whims of princes and their aristocracies. It is true that several European countries limited the scope of parliamentary representation, most famously in France, where from 1614 the States-General was no longer summoned, until that fateful summer of 1789. Parliaments like the States-General were usually meetings of representatives from corporate bodies, such as the church, the nobility, and towns and cities. England was one of the very few countries to have proper parliamentary elections, where an estimated 5–10 percent of the adult male population was entitled to vote. There, the number of urban representatives increased steadily after the Reformation, through the incorporation of an increasing number of urban settlements. By the time of the Glorious Revolution (1689) more than half of parliamentary seats were in fact controlled by urban citizens, even if their occupants were usually gentry or noblemen. In the Iberian and Italian kingdoms of the Spanish monarchy, the three social strata (nobility, clergy, cities) were represented in distinct parliaments (*Cortes*, *Corts*, *Parlamenti*); there was no central parliament. At the centre of power in Castile, progressively aristocratised, urban elites would become the exclusive voice of the kingdom after 1538, when Charles V stopped inviting the high aristocrats (*Grandes* and *Títulos de Castilla*) and the Catholic hierarchy to the meetings of the Castilian Cortes—not long after Castilian cities had risen up against the emperor during the war of the *Comuneros* (1520–1522).

As in Spain, the participation of early modern European citizens was much more extensive in regional assemblies and local institutions. And this made sense, because most public services were delivered regionally and locally, rather than nationally. Very few early modern states offered more than token contributions in the realms of education, health care and social support, or even infrastructure, justice and economic policy. Overwhelmingly, these lay within the remit of regional and local authorities, a fact overlooked by much of the historical literature.

Urban privileges sometimes included the right to be consulted about important decisions for those with formal citizenship. Perhaps half of all heads of households across Europe held this status, but with substantial geographical variations. In many German towns, guilds were formally

represented on the council. Guild members, who were citizens by definition, elected the Court of Aldermen that ruled the City of London. Petitioning was another generally accepted way to alert authorities to not only private, but also collective concerns. In seventeenth-century Amsterdam, much local legislation was copied verbatim from guild petitions. The early stages of the Civil War in England were accompanied by mass petitions in London, some collecting as many as 15,000 signatures. In many Italian cities, neighbourhood organisations provided social cohesion, and thus political influence, to the civic community. Civic militias, another common feature of urban life of the period, provided additional muscle to the community of citizens. During the Reformation, the Dutch Revolt and the English Civil War, these organisations helped 'revolutionary regimes' to power. Such institutions are not so well-documented in the countryside, but villages too seem to have had significant scope to regulate their own affairs, and this involved the participation of substantial numbers of villagers participating in their own governance. Women did participate in some of these local corporate institutions, but only to a limited extent; their participation in the political realm would remain very circumscribed until well into the twentieth century (though some European monarchies allowed women to succeed to the throne, under certain conditions), and even in the twenty-first century, many European countries are yet to have their first female prime minister or head of state.

Fig. 1: Reginald Lane Poole, "Europe in 1740", from *Historical atlas of modern Europe* (1903), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Historical_atlas_of_modern_ Europe_1903_(135895389).jpg.

Nations without Nationalism?

In an early modern world characterised by some as one of 'nations without nationalism', the case of the Spanish monarchy deserves particular attention. It was the result of a late-medieval dynastic union and other aggregations—some peaceful, some violent—during the second half of the sixteenth century; a composite of heterogeneous territories in Europe (the Iberian Peninsula, the largest islands of the central and western Mediterranean, Lombardy and Naples in Italy, the Franche-Comté of Burgundy and the Southern Netherlands), Africa, America, and even far-east Asia. Various forms of identity articulation within the Spanish monarchy converged to what some defined as a 'New Rome'. Despite the use of various languages, currencies, and legal systems, territories possessed by the King of Spain converged around shared political, religious, and cultural identity markers. An example of this was the conception of the nation as a sum of people beyond merely ethnic or linguistic components. Thus, the use of the Spanish nation to identify the natives of ancient Roman Hispania could be articulated side-by-side with ideas of other nations which, since the Middle Ages, had spread over the Iberian Peninsula and its adjacent islands: Castilian, Aragonese, Catalan, Portuguese, Valencian, or Galician, for example. These nations were territorially based but socially or culturally ambiguous. They themselves were the sum of certain homelands or republics, urban or rural, linked to each other on the basis of the right or privilege that they would receive from their sovereigns.

In the Russian Empire, by contrast, it makes little sense to talk of nations and nationalism before 1800. When the rulers of early modern Russia, expansionist as they were, spoke of the *narod* (people), they usually meant everyone inhabiting their lands. Loyalty to the tsar was the common ground, rather than religious, linguistic, or ethnic traits. Russian imperial rule came with plenty of hierarchies and discriminations based on socio-economic status, religion, and gender—while ethnicity and 'nationality' were rarely even recorded before the late nineteenth century. Early modern Russian leaders would frame the Russian Orthodox Church as the only legitimate successor to the Byzantine Church and hail Moscow as the 'Third Rome', reflecting a broader penchant for aggressive Christian rhetoric. And yet, this rhetoric neither precluded pragmatic accommodation on the ground, nor did it mean that the tsars wanted their subjects to be more Russian. As Moscow and later St Petersburg appropriated ever more neighbouring territories, the diversity of the population grew, which turned the selective promotion of difference into a pillar of imperial policy.

Still, proto-nationalisms were in evidence around Europe during the early modern period. There was an acknowledgement of cultural differences

attached to the various dress codes, languages, and cultural characteristics of different 'nations'. In the newly founded Dutch Republic, literary authors, but also the official committee providing a new translation of the Bible, made conscious efforts to develop a Dutch language, distinct from the Low-German that had so far dominated in the region. Likewise, after the United Kingdom was formed in the 1707 Union, the Church of England, the monarchy, and the army were instrumentalised in the creation of a British national identity.

Conclusion

The history of states during the early modern period was shaped by two major developments. In the first place, states became more powerful. Their institutions expanded, they had more money to spend and more personnel (mainly soldiers) in 1800 than they did in 1500. Secondly, the number of independent states declined as smaller units were absorbed by their neighbours or decided to collaborate in voluntary unions. Exact numbers depend on the definition of what a state was, but the trend was unmistakable. In the process, states became more concerned about their *identity*, which they framed around the concept of nationhood. These developments reached their apogee in the nineteenth century but were already underway during the centuries discussed in this chapter. These processes took different shapes in different regions of Europe, however, and their pace could be equally diverse. There was no single European path to state and nationhood.

Discussion questions

1. Describe how the idea of the 'nation' developed in early modern Europe. What were the most important factors that drove this development?

2. How did this development differ between Eastern and Western Europe, and why?

3. How do state-building efforts differ in the early modern and modern periods?

4. How does the way early modern Europeans thought about the nation differ from today?

Suggested reading

Colley, Linda, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992).

Kollmann, Nancy, *The Russian Empire, 1450–1801* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

Prak, Maarten, *Citizens without Nations: Urban Citizenship in Europe and the World before 1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

Reinhard, Wolfgang, ed., *Power Elites and State Building* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996)

Torres Sans, Xavier, *Naciones sin nacionalismo: Cataluña en la Monarquía Hispánica (siglos XVI–XVII)* (Valencia: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2008).

Yun Casalilla, Bartolomé, and Patrick O'Brien, eds, *The Rise of Fiscal States: A Global History, 1500–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

3.1.2 State-building and Nationalism in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Jacco Pekelder, Juan Luis Simal, Daniel Benedikt Stienen, and Imre Tarafás

Introduction

The nineteenth century saw the consecration of the nation-state as a model for political and territorial organisation in Europe. It emerged out of long-term, structural developments, commonly known as nation and state-building processes. But what came first in historical terms: the nation or the state? Were state structures built around already-existing nations? Or, to the contrary, are national identities the products of action taken by state institutions in order to win the loyalty of the citizens that inhabit a given territory? This is a difficult question to which scholars have given different answers.

A New Model for Political Organisation in Europe: The Nation-state

The period of transition known as the Age of Revolution (ca. 1789–1848) is a crucial moment both for the history of the nation and that of the state. For some historians, such as Eric Hobsbawm or Ernest Gellner, modern states and nations emerged as new entities during liberal revolutions, and in connection with the parallel rise of modern capitalism. From this point of view, declarations of national sovereignty became a common feature of European liberal revolutions after 1789: from the moment that the French National Assembly was formed and declared itself competent to provide the monarchy with a new constitution, as the true representative of the national interest. Thus, national sovereignty became the main source of political legitimation for state institutions in the liberal age. Article Three of the 1812 Spanish Constitution

established that "sovereignty resides essentially in the nation, and therefore the right to establish its fundamental laws belongs exclusively to it."

Accordingly, those scholars who understand the nation in its modern sense as a product of this Age of Revolution stress its artificial nature: nations were constructed by state and capitalist institutions to provide common elements with which citizens could identify and operate, such as a common past (the national history taught in public schools and displayed in national museums) or a national market supervised by the state. Notably, Benedict Anderson described the modern nation as an "imagined community", imagined both as sovereign and limited (because no nation identifies itself with humanity). In such communities, horizontal personal ties among its members became central. One of the goals of the liberal revolutions was to construct a community of equals in order to eradicate the legal privileges and inequalities that had characterised the *ancien régime*. Equality before the law would allow citizens to identify with their compatriots, equals in rights and duties, thus strengthening national commitment.

From this perspective, nations were built through political and cultural actions, by which states sought to turn the inhabitants of their territory into participants of a political community. Nationhood would provide this community with a cultural identity through the establishment of national myths, traditions, and shared symbols (usually those of the dominant ethnic group in the territory).

Nations, therefore, were not predetermined when the nineteenth century began. Rather, they were rooted in the convictions of the individuals that formed them and the result of theoretical elaborations of political and cultural agents, self-proclaimed nationalists or patriots. Initially, nationalist activists cooperated in transnational networks, vowing allegiance to the mutual cause of building a continent or world of nation-states. Italian intellectuals cherished the idea of a 'shared fate' between Italy and Germany and used it to win over the hearts and minds of German nationalists. In central Europe, contrary to the image of hermetically-sealed national cultures, important intellectuals from different national groups often maintained tight connections with figures from 'rival' nations. They were educated at western European universities which ensured the transfer of western European ideas.

Such a social constructivist view should not, however, imply that *any* national project was viable in the nineteenth century. Some scholars argue that for a nation to be feasible, it must spring from existing political structures that are attached to the common experiences of its citizens, or from the existence of ethnic groups, defined by Anthony Smith as human groups linked to a mythic-symbolic system that typically preserves the idea of a common origin. Even if ethnic groups were not natural units, they were able to maintain themselves

through time using the intergenerational transmission mechanisms of these mythic-symbolic systems, such as certain customs, folklore stories or songs.

In any case, the nineteenth century witnessed intense processes of nation- and state-building all around Europe, propelled by political, cultural, and economic developments. This included the crystallisation into liberal states of old (or restored) monarchies such as the United Kingdom, France, or Spain, each one affected in different ways by revolutionary events. These were nations characterised by internal ethnic diversity that found ways to homogenise around a language identified with the state (English, French, and Castilian). This cultural diversity was the basis for the development of non-state regionalisms and nationalisms by the end of the century, like those of Wales, Scotland, the Basque Country, or Catalonia.

Other states appeared as the consequence of complex processes of unification between areas that were previously defined along cultural, linguistic, or commercial lines. Most spectacular was the appearance of unified states in Germany and Italy after intense warfare between 1859 and 1871. Next to that, several brand new states appeared, usually after episodes of revolutionary or bellicose secessionism. Finland became an autonomous region of the Russian Empire during the Napoleonic Wars, obtaining full independence after the Bolshevik October Revolution of 1917. In 1814, the separate kingdoms of Sweden and Norway were unified under a personal union (that is, they shared the same monarch) that remained until 1905. Norway was thus separated from the Danish crown which, in 1864, also lost the ethnically mixed Danish-German duchies of Schleswig and Holstein in a war with Prussia and the Habsburg Empire. In 1830–31, Belgium was carved out of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, a union that had recently been created by the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) to thwart French expansionism. Both Denmark and the Netherlands, after their territorial losses, reconstituted their diminished states around more ethnically defined national identities to stress the cultural distinction from Germany, their powerful and newly unified neighbour.

The Balkans was a European region with a particularly intense propensity for state innovation, following a process of national mobilisation based on ethnic differentiation. This was directly connected to the long-running crisis of the Ottoman Empire and the regional aspirations of the great powers, especially Russia, Austria-Hungary, and later Germany. Greece was the first to obtain its independence after a long war (1821–1830). Serbians, Romanians, and Montenegrins obtained autonomy within the Ottoman Empire following incessant rebellions, but international recognition of an independent Serbia, Romania and Montenegro only arrived at the Congress of Berlin (1878). Bulgaria became a *de facto* independent principality within the Ottoman Empire and obtained the status of kingdom in 1908. National rivalries and

the existence of disputed, 'unredeemed' territories and populations led to the Balkan Wars (1912–1913), usually considered the prelude to the First World War. Several national movements in Central and Eastern Europe were only realised as sovereign states like Czechoslovakia, Poland, or Yugoslavia after the defeat of the multiethnic Austro-Hungarian, German and Russian empires following the First World War.

Fig. 1: Europe 1815 after the Congress of Vienna, Wikimedia, Alexander Altenhof, CC 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Europe_1815_map_en.png.

Institutions and Symbols

When we think about politics in this period, it is natural to think of the rise of nationalism. In nineteenth-century Europe, as mentioned above, state-building and the emergence of modern nations were closely interrelated processes. National movements sought to capture state power to create nation-states. As an ideology, nationalism was a foundational and far-reaching concept with which political institutions, social structures, cultural norms, and even economic processes could be rearranged. Thus, the development of modern nation-states was connected to the ambitious and wide-ranging elaboration of a series of institutions. These institutions were an expansion of state power, aimed at forming an efficient, modern, and bureaucratic administration that would be capable of acting on behalf of the homogenic collective of the nation-state. It was crucial that these institutions appeared as a concrete reality in the

minds of citizens and foreigners. To this end, institutions integrated the state's population and territory, and were capable of demarcating and stabilising spatial and mental borders *vis-à-vis* adjacent states.

One of these institutions was the written constitution. In the nineteenth century, constitutions reshaped the legal framework and placed limits on state power throughout Europe. They were based on principles like national or popular sovereignty, a liberal vision of civil and political rights, and the separation of powers (executive, judicial and legislative). Legislative power lay in elected assemblies, which now represented national sovereignty and were no longer separated into estates, as in medieval or early modern times. Thus, the ideal of the nation as a community of equals promised political participation for all citizens. In practice this meant a suffrage that, as the century progressed, expanded to include more parts of the national population.

Constitutions guaranteed the fundamental rights of every citizen and regulated the basic rules of political and social life within a state by abolishing privileges based on birth and securing equality before the law and the right to property. Constitutional movements emerged all over the continent. In May 1791, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was the first state in Europe to adopt a constitution, four months before revolutionary France did the same. In the course of the nineteenth century, almost all European states followed their lead. By the eve of the First World War, only the autocratic Tsardom of Russia and the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg-Schwerin (a small territory within the German Empire) had not adopted a modern constitution.

We should not underestimate the institution of the monarchy. Fundamentally contested by the idea of popular sovereignty and the principle of equality, the monarchy was forced to produce proof of its superiority over competing forms of government. The survival of the monarchy depended on the efficiency and performance of its leaders. France, for instance, changed from monarchy to republic and vice versa several times. Overall, many monarchs had to abdicate from the throne as a result of revolts or revolutions.

Still, with the exclusion of France, European monarchies and their dynasties were anchors of stability in a century of dynamic change. In unification processes like those of Italy and Germany, monarchs took the lead: Piedmont's Vittorio Emanuele II and Prussia's Wilhelm I claimed to be acting as leaders of the newly unified nation. Dynasties that tied themselves to the new ideas of the nation, such as the royal houses of Great Britain, Denmark, and the Netherlands, also succeeded in acquiring a popular basis that enlarged their stature and informal power. Many more of the new nation-states that appeared in Europe during the long nineteenth century chose the monarchy as the form of government: Belgium in 1830 (Leopold I), Greece in 1832 (Otto I), Romania in 1859/66 (Alexandru Ioan Cuza, Carol I), and Norway in 1905 (Haakon VII).

Claiming to stand above party politics, the monarchs appeared as integrative factors of the states, even in the multinational Habsburg Empire with its fragile balance of different national movements.

Besides these public-facing political institutions there were other, less conspicuous forms, which more subtly fostered the economic, social, or cultural cohesion of a nation. Compulsory military service attempted to enhance the state's military power and generate political participation among conscripted soldiers, who were taught to sacrifice their lives in the defence of the beloved nation. Magnificent new buildings were erected in European capitals, representing the glory and modernity of the nation or, by using neo-Romanesque or neo-Gothic stylistic elements, its historical tradition. Buildings like the Palace of Westminster in London, the Stortingsbygningen in Oslo, or the Országház in Budapest accommodated political institutions such as ministries and the parliaments. States also erected majestic buildings for economic institutions like central banks. National theatres and opera houses as well as national museums, national libraries, and national archives, preserved and propagated the cultural heritage of the nation.

National literatures were also developed, including widely known novelists and poets like Adam Mickiewicz in Poland, Victor Hugo in France, or Friedrich Schiller in Germany, who increased awareness of distinct languages. Historians spread in their scholarship the myth of the nation as a *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* (community of fate), by writing histories in a specific national manner: typically, they would narrate the history of the nation as alternating periods of prosperity and struggle, while portraying the lives of peoples whose origins were rooted in medieval or even ancient times. In the economic sphere, standardised weights and measures, as well as a common national currencies, let different regions grow together. For instance, the 1834 German Customs Union played an important role in the economic unification of the German principalities. As the economist Friedrich List put it, the aim was "to bind the Germans economically into a nation."

Moreover, a multitude of symbols helped bind a nation together. Many, like coloured maps that established clear-cut boundaries, illustrated the sovereignty of the European nation-states and underlined the exclusionary character of national belonging. Flags, ribbons, and brooches with the national colours were used in everyday life to show—literally—one's true colours. Anthems were composed to strengthen national sentiments and celebrate the fateful struggle for independence and the glory of the nation. They were played on festive days like the ruler's birthday or important historical anniversaries. Monuments, paintings, and caricatures were decorated with iconic allegories as personifications of the nation, which could either be female (Marianne,

Britannia, Mother Russia, Mor Danmark, the Dutch Maiden), male (John Bull, the German Michel), or even animal (the English lion or the Russian bear).

The Nation in Everyday Life: National Identities and Indifference

Although it is important to familiarise oneself with intellectual discourses on the nation, since they carried the central ideas of the period, one must not confuse them with people's everyday experience. National identity is not experienced in the same way by an intellectual living in a capital city as it is, on the other extreme, by an illiterate peasant.

Certainly, everyday activities might help to form the nation as a collective identity, as argued by Anderson: even reading the newspaper supported the imagination of the nation as a community and tightened social relations. However, in peoples' everyday activity the national idea was far from omnipresent. For instance, in Habsburg Central Europe, local experiences of nationalism were far from homogenous and national consciousness was not capable of determining all aspects of life, as the works of Pieter M. Judson have shown. This was especially striking in the case of the so-called 'language frontiers', where national conflicts were supposedly ubiquitous. Instead, people's self-identification did not necessary revolve around the idea of the nation, and often they did not define themselves with this category. Neither did they have difficulties adapting themselves to their multilingual surroundings; they saw an opportunity in this condition, rather than an anomaly. For example, to guarantee more possibilities for their children, families often sent them on holiday to a neighbouring family who spoke other languages of the region. Such practices were denounced by national activists, who advocated a view according to which the world was made up of separate nations, each representing distinct cultures and mutually exclusive by nature. In this sense, one ought to speak more of nationalist conflicts rather than conflicts between nationalities. In the Habsburg Empire, in the face of the central imperial administration, national activists were increasingly successful in their claims and the administration progressively adopted basic elements of their worldview. Thus, the criteria of national belonging made its way into several administrative processes. As a result, people were under obligation to declare, for example, if they were Czech or German even though they might not have originally defined themselves with these categories.

However, national activists started to portray their regions as an agglomeration of several, mutually exclusive and closed cultures. For them, the frontiers of these cultures were places of conflict, of defining oneself by the differentiation from the other at the opposite side of the frontier. Although

this was one function of borders, it was certainly not the only one. As Moritz Csáky pointed out, frontiers also served as places of connection, transition, and mutual influence. This becomes clear, for instance, by looking to Central Europe's musical and gastronomic styles, or by cross-border shared religious practices such as the use of Dutch throughout the nineteenth century by some Calvinist churches in north-western Germany. In fact, many nineteenth-century Europeans lived displaying dual patriotisms without contradiction, like most Catalans in Spain or Scots in Britain, who understood their multiple national allegiances not in exclusionary ways, but in aggregate terms.

Conclusion

The nation-state was one of the most significant phenomena of nineteenth-century Europe, with immense political, social, economic, and cultural impact. It changed the map of Europe, strengthened the connections of regions, citizens and often monarchs to the central state, and impressed the significance of its borders to other nation-states. However, its apparent omnipresence in the discourse of the period should not be overemphasised, as individual and regional identities continued to be crossed by a multiplicity of allegiances and interests of a different nature and clear-cut ethnic differentiations did not always take precedence over everyday practices. In any case, national tensions not only persisted in Europe, but would intensify in the course of the twentieth century.

Discussion questions

1. How did the development of the nation state and nationalism in the nineteenth century differ across Europe?

2. What was the role of culture in the development of nationalism?

3. How does the way Europeans thought about the nation in the nineteenth century differ from today?

Suggested reading

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

Breuilly, John, *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).

Csáky, Moritz, *Das Gedächtnis Zentraleuropas* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2019).

Deutsch, Karl W., *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969).

Fradera, Josep M., *Cultura nacional en una societat dividida. Patriotisme i cultura a Catalunya, 1838-1868* (Barcelona: Curial, 1992).

Gellner, Ernest, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).

Hobsbawm, Eric, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Hroch, Miroslav, *European Nations: Explaining Their Formation* (London: Verso, 2015).

Judson, Pieter M., *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

Smith, Anthony D., ed., *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Leiden: Brill, 1992).

Zahra, Tara, 'Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis', *Slavic Review* 69:1 (2010), 93–119.

3.1.3 State-building and Nationalism in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Laura Almagor, Jan Koura, Krisztina Kurdi, and

Juan Pan-Montojo

Introduction

Over the course of the twentieth century, the definition and the relevance of the nation-state—and related topics, such as citizenship and diaspora—changed dramatically in Europe. However, while the devastation of the First World War and the Second World War as well as the tensions of the Cold War and European integration did much to challenge the autonomy of the nation-state, it remained the norm in international politics. At the same time, the development of the welfare state after 1945 introduced new ideas of citizenship.
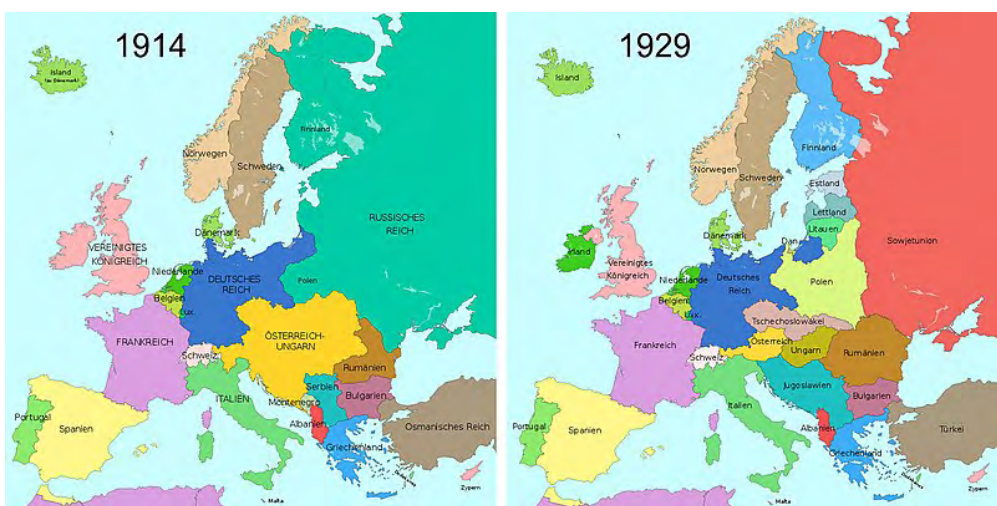
Fig. 1: Beat Ruest, Europe before and after the First World War, CC BY-SA 4.0, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Europa_1914_1929_quer.jpg.

These parallel maps reveal the transformation of European empires before and after the First World War. Most prominent changes include the dissolution of Austria-Hungary into the nation-states of Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, the conglomeration of Serbia, Montenegro and other lands of the former Austria-Hungary into the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and the creation of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland out of territories previously controlled by the Russian empire.

The Nation-State, Minorities, Diaspora

In many ways the nation-state was an invention of the long nineteenth century. The various national movements of that period rapidly turned this novel idea into mainstream political reality. As a result, by the start of the twentieth century, the notion that every nation—every 'people'—was entitled to its own politically autonomous geographical territory had become the main driving force of politics. Nationalists, who argued that their nations had experienced long-running minority status in various imperial settings, reinforced their demands for their own nation-states. While neither nations nor states were new, the *nation-state* was an innovation on the model of the multinational kingdoms and empires that had dominated the map of Europe for centuries. In order to understand how this political make-up shifted in the twentieth century, it is important to consider the nation-state as a third entity, formed from the 'state' (a political unit) and 'nation' (a social group that understands itself as an actual or potential sovereign community). Except for ethnically diverse states without aspirations for mono-ethnicity, such as France, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Belgium, many of the newer European nation-states in the twentieth century had one crucial defining feature: they strove to be *ethnically homogeneous*. In theoretical terms, every nation-state was to be inhabited by the members of only one ethnic nation.

Realities were different. As the century commenced, much of Europe still consisted of empires. The Habsburg Empire, the German Empire, and the Russian Empire controlled much of the continent. On the edge of Europe, the crumbling Ottoman Empire still exerted influence, especially in the Balkans. Ireland was part of Great Britain. All in all, therefore, most political units in Europe were multi-ethnic in 1900. Nevertheless, these multinational empires were under constant pressure until they finally collapsed in the wake of the First World War. For many, 1918 marked a moment of much-needed change, a 'clean state' on which Europe could be remade to fit ethno-political desires. American President Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924) popularised the ideal of "national self-determination" amongst various ethnic groups that now saw an opportunity to demand statehood.

The break-up of empires, however, did not automatically reveal geographical units that could be directly shaped into states. Many regions were ethnically mixed, and this created tensions between different nationalist groups vying for political control of the same territories. Nevertheless, following the disintegration of the Russian Empire, several new states emerged in Central and Eastern Europe: Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Poland. A short-lived Ukrainian state also existed during the Russian Revolution. The end of the Habsburg Monarchy paved the way to full sovereignty for Czechoslovakia and Hungary, with Austria becoming an independent republic. Serbia unified with Montenegro and obtained the former Austrian and Hungarian territories of Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, together forming the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In overseeing the drawing of these new borders, geo-strategic and political considerations often turned out to be more important than the ideal of an ethnically homogeneous nation-state. After all, Germany had to be curtailed and the Bolshevik threat contained, or so the Allied powers believed. As a result, when the dust settled on the new constellation of Europe, 32 million people found themselves as ethnic minorities in nation-states, as opposed to the 50 million who had lived as minorities in imperial settings before 1914. Amounting to one third of the population of Central and Eastern Europe, these groups now tended to have fewer rights than before.

In this context it is pertinent to draw a clear distinction between ethnic minorities and the closely related, yet essentially different concept of *diaspora*. Both minorities and diaspora communities are considered part of the 'nation'. The difference between them is the way in which each group found themselves outside the 'motherland'. Diasporas are formed following dispersed migration from a real or imagined 'mother country', due to historical cataclysms such as war, famine, persecution, or basic economic necessity. Ethnic minorities mostly gain their status as a result of border alterations. Jews, Armenians, Greeks, Italians, and Irish are considered examples of 'classic' diaspora peoples. Romani, Sinti and other traveller communities could also be counted in this category, even though they do not have the same attachment to an ancestral homeland.

As for ethnic minorities in the new nation-states of the early twentieth century, the relations between these communities were aggravated by one of the intellectual innovations of the modern period: racial science. Partially developed in the context of European colonialism in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the 'scientification' of racism provided existing racial prejudices with a veneer of legitimacy. As a result, racism came to co-define intra-European dynamics as well. Defining who was to be counted as a member of an ethnic community had been challenging, as neither nation nor race were grounded in fact. Perceived differences between peoples, which now seemed to be 'proven'

by science, defined who was termed an insider and who was an outsider to the 'national body'. In practice, this meant the exclusion of various minorities from newly established societies. This was most notably the case for Jews, who had long been residents of various parts of Europe, in some cases (Poland) for over a millennium.

President Wilson and his followers did not overlook the implications of the gospel of national self-determination for those ethnic minorities that were not able to secure their own states. To protect these minorities, the Paris Peace Treaties of 1919/1920 included several international agreements on minority rights, and the newly established supranational League of Nations devoted much of its efforts to minority rights protection. After all, the four largest newly established nation-states—Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia—remained heavily mixed societies. Germans represented one of the largest European ethnic minorities. By 1935, ten million ethnic Germans lived across Eastern Europe. Smaller groups resided in Italy, Estonia, and Latvia. Formerly Hungarian Transylvania, now part of Romania, contained three million ethnic Hungarians and a significant number of Serbs. Millions of Jews and Romani and Sinti people formed communities in practically every country in Eastern Europe.

The Second World War meant the definitive end of both the League of Nations and of minority rights. The latter were reconceptualised as *human* rights, which would come to define the geopolitical agenda for the decades to come. Strikingly, this agenda was shaped by the Western liberal democracies as well as by the USSR. This achievement demonstrated that two different political projects were capable of building common institutions and discourses, when it was deemed mutually beneficial. This common effort culminated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. Despite the momentous significance of the declaration, which ushered in an unprecedented acknowledgement of the rights of individuals, the shift from minority rights to the human rights regime also meant the end of protection for groups that defined themselves beyond the strict confines of the nation-state.

The nation-state itself lost none of its significance after 1945. On the contrary, it remained the norm in international politics, which now also included the decolonising world. The 1948 Declaration implied the existence of nation-states as the pre-condition for the fulfilment of the rights it enumerated. In doing so, with the consent of the big powers, the declaration was contributing to the destruction of colonial empires, accelerated in the 1950s by the growing mobilisation of colonial subjects. At the same time, multi-ethnicity, partially reframed as "multiculturalism" in recent decades, also remained a practical reality across Europe. Even in countries where official nationalist policies had aimed at reshaping cultural realities to obtain a homogeneous people, they

did not prevail: Finland retained its Swedish minority, Italy still contains Alto Adige/Südtirol, Belgium consists of two or even three dominant linguistic parts, Switzerland is multi-ethnic and so was Yugoslavia until its dissolution in the early 1990s. Spain has Catalan, Galician and Basque linguistic minorities that support, on different levels, their own national projects.

Ethnic cleansing and coerced demographic alterations before and after 1945 increased cultural and ethnic uniformity in Eastern European countries: the abundant Jewish populations of countries such as Poland, Hungary, Greece and the Baltic states were nearly exterminated during the Holocaust. Roma and Sinti were also targeted by Nazi Germany. After the war, huge demographic groups were expelled from their homelands and relocated elsewhere: Germans were expelled from almost all Eastern countries (Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Baltic states, Romania), Poles were forced to leave the Polish territories ceded to Belarus and Ukraine and were resettled in Pomerania and Silesia. A few years later, many Slavs (Bulgarians, Macedonians) were expelled from Greece during the Greek Civil War.

However, all these massive demographic changes did not lead to perfectly homogeneous communities: for example, there are still Hungarian minorities in Serbia, Slovakia, and Romania, Roma and Sinti live in the whole region, and Turks in Bulgaria. Moreover, in countries such as France, Germany, and the Netherlands (which also have their own historical minorities), the combined effects of decolonisation and the need for guest workers from Turkey and the Maghreb countries led to the influx of various new minorities since the 1960s. African, Latin American and Asian immigration has grown in nearly all European countries since 2000. This tension between the homogeneous underpinnings of nations, as primordialist nationalists and many citizens who share their views understand them, and the realities of multi-ethnic and multicultural societies, is hence highly relevant in most European societies today.

The autonomy of the nation-state has also been challenged by European integration. After the Second World War, the United States of America demanded coordination between Western European states in order to distribute Marshall Plan aid and to strengthen defence mechanisms in view of the Cold War. Another World War had to be avoided at all costs. The creation of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957 was only partly the result of these American pressures—it was also underpinned by a long tradition of pan-European projects and utopias. The EEC was also intended to overcome the practical limitations of nationally focussed social and economic regulation, which had proven challenging for Western European governments during the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1990s, after the fall of the Iron Curtain, liberal democracy and Western market capitalism were adopted by the former communist states

in their transformation from socialist dictatorship and central economic planning. In the process, these countries also became part of the European integration project. This Europe-wide experiment in regional integration has changed the nature of the nation-state and of state collaboration, creating a type of supra-state—the European Union—consisting of twenty-seven separate states. However, this transformation should not be exaggerated: nation-states have prevailed as basic political units in Europe despite the efforts to limit individual state sovereignty in favour of the supranational institutions of the European Union.

State-building in Europe during the Cold War

How did these various developments surrounding the relatively new concept of the nation-state pan out in the realities of state-building across Europe? Changes in the international system after the Second World War altered the dynamics of the state-building process. The war resulted in the transformation of the world order, in which two superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union—came to dominate. Both offered entirely different ideological-political and economic models for the European states recovering from the world conflict, resulting in divergent developmental trajectories in the two spheres of influence.

The liberation of East-Central Europe by the Soviet Red Army led to the expansion of the Soviet-style socialist model, by which post-war Eastern Europe was transformed into "people's democracies". This terminology suggests a form of democratic parliamentarism, but these 'democracies' were in fact dominated by one-party rule, legitimised by Marxist-Leninist ideology. The Soviets imposed the adoption of a political and economic system based on nationalisation, the elimination of private property, collectivisation, censorship, repression, the persecution of political opponents, and restrictions on movement. At the same time, the Soviet model also offered social security, free health care and education, or full employment, which was an attractive alternative to liberal market capitalism. Social equality and the construction of a collective identity weakened the concept of the nation-state in favour of socialist internationalism, emphasising racial equality, the concept of 'brotherhood' and, after de-Stalinisation in the 1950s and 1960s, also 'peaceful coexistence' between world nations.

However, despite Soviet domination in East-Central Europe, several states tried to find their own paths to socialism and to renew their national sovereignty. An alternative view to adopting the Soviet modernisation model emerged shortly after 1945 in Yugoslavia, which did not join the Eastern Bloc, and later in Albania, which withdrew from it in 1968. Attempts to reform the

state socialist regimes in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968) were violently suppressed by the Soviet Army, but a degree of autonomy in foreign policy was allowed in Romania, and in Poland for agricultural matters. Despite attempts at supranational economic and military integration under Soviet supremacy in the form of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the Warsaw Pact, the Soviets were ultimately forced to tolerate the existence of *de facto* nation-states amongst their satellites.

Unlike in the east, the post-war reconstruction of Europe's west, south, and north was characterised by continuity rather than by revolutionary change. In these states, including defeated Germany and Italy, liberation from fascism restored a model of democracy based on tradition, continuity, and modernity. Under the control of the United States, this model of liberal democracy and market capitalism was consolidated, and nation-states re-emerged with only minor changes, despite the establishment of an American informal "empire by invitation". The exceptions to this rule were countries where authoritarian regimes had been built and consolidated in the 1930s, such as Portugal and Spain, or where the threat of a communist victory was used to justify the restriction of democracy and even the imposition of a dictatorship, as had happened in Greece. As for the rest of Western Europe, one of the major changes in response to the challenge of post-war reconstruction was the strengthening of state power, often through the nationalisation of strategic economic sectors such as energy, transport, and public health.

Citizenship

With the consolidation of the nation-state and attendant state-building practices in both Eastern and Western Europe, the question of who exactly was entitled to citizen status within these political units became prevalent. Citizenship is a key concept in modern Western political thought and became one of its most conspicuous elements in this period. The success of the nation-state formula implied that the nation, as a community based on certain levels of formal equality among its members, was now the cornerstone of political organisation. However, the actual meaning of citizenship is plural. In the liberal tradition, citizenship denotes a set of rights and duties that link individuals to political power. By contrast, communitarianism considers citizenship only a result of individual identification with the values of a specific community. Thirdly, republicans find the true basis of a working citizenship in civic practises that are rooted in common moral ground. These three conceptions of citizenship are not fully separate; they intersect with each other and often become entangled in public debates on the nature of the 'good' or 'full' citizen.

Democratisation, and the value it put on citizenship rights, was not an immediate consequence of the new conditions brought about by the end of the First World War. These developments were challenged by the consolidation of the USSR, but also by the rise of fascism, which radicalised nationalism whilst denying most rights to citizens and excluding different minorities from the nation. Matters changed after the Second World War. In 1950, T.H. Marshall published *Citizenship and Social Class*, a book that was to give shape to a new history of citizenship based on the acquisition of successive generations of rights. According to Marshall, pressure from below forced states to grant civil rights, then political rights and, finally, social and economic rights to growing portions of the population, developing a more ample and full citizenship under the *welfare state*, a new device of social integration. This type of state, reaching its most advanced form in the United Kingdom and Sweden, introduced as a general principle that the state should finance a growing bundle of social services (health, education, social insurances) in order to protect all citizens and promote basic equality among them. The welfare state's progressive narrative was not limited to the West—communist regimes interpreted it in the light of Marxist-Leninist ideology and the subordination of individual rights to collective endeavours. On the other end of the political spectrum, neo-colonialist and developmentalist discourses posited that economic and cultural modernisation, which could impose restrictions on all kinds of rights, was a precondition for democratisation.

The new social movements of the 1960s questioned the inclusiveness of existing citizenship structures. The American civil rights movement condemned the fact that black Americans were excluded from full citizenship status and these debates made their way to Europe as well. Feminists criticised the gender-neutral presentation of citizenship, when in reality the full privilege of this status was only granted to men. Gay and lesbian movements rejected their own legal and social exclusion. Left-wing militants from Berkeley to Paris and Berlin argued that formal rights served to obscure the real authoritarian dynamics that dominated life in businesses, universities, and public offices, as well as the relationship between the West and the Third World. Simultaneously, dissidents in the Eastern Bloc attempted, with scarce results in the short term, to put human rights on the public agenda of communist societies. A contradictory trend emerged as a result of all these forces. On the one hand, rights and political recognition were extended to various groups in various societies. On the other hand, these developments provoked a neo-conservative reaction that rejected the very notion of socio-economic rights, criticising the welfare state for supposedly transforming citizens into overly dependent subjects. At the same time, processes of globalisation have eroded

the assumption that rights cannot be separated from state power. The political influence held by various diaspora communities around the world adds to this decline in the central status of the nation-state.

Conclusion

Over the last two centuries, European societies have been organised and shaped by national ideas. During the twentieth century, the concept of the nation-state, nationalism, and minorities associated with this idea underwent significant changes. The disappearance of nationalism and the nation-state had been predicted in the 1990s, but it is now certain that this will not happen, and we can observe opposite trends. Today, we are seeing a radical revision of neoliberal doctrines about the state, which could foreshadow a new kind of state-building. In the age of globalisation, the nation-state is an alternative for many to experience their own national or ethnic identity.

During the twentieth century, we have witnessed the development of a system of human rights, with the result that fewer and fewer rights are linked exclusively to citizenship. Many former nation-states have become multicultural states. The concept of citizenship has changed greatly, mainly due to the challenges of globalisation, technological development and migration, so in the future, belonging to a political nation should not be linked to citizenship.

European states have pursued ethnic and paternalistic policies throughout their twentieth-century history. Some varieties of ethnonationalism are still present in European political life, becoming a tool of manipulating political elites in several countries. Another phenomenon is that certain peoples are stepping out of the nation-state framework to try to define their national identity in the name of a reborn European regionalism.

In the postmodern age, nationalism intensified in many societies in Central and Eastern Europe, while Western and Northern Europe sought to integrate the non-European immigrant masses and eliminate political extremism.

Discussion questions

1. What was the impact of the First World War on the role of the nation-state in Europe?

2. Did European integration undermine or strengthen the role of the nation-state in the twentieth century?

3. Why was the development of the welfare state so significant for the idea of citizenship?

Suggested reading

Blair, Alasdair, *The European Union since 1945* (Harlow: Longman, 2010).

Bornschier, Volker, ed., *State-building in Europe: The Revitalization of Western European Integration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Flora, Peter, ed., *State Formation, Nation-Building and Mass Politics in Europe: The Theory of Stein Rokkan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Fulbrook, Mary, *Europe since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Glatz, Ferenc, *Minorities in East-Central Europe: Historical Analysis and a Policy Proposal* (Budapest: Europa Institut, 1993).

Jarausch, Konrad H, *Out of Ashes: A New History of Europe in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

Judt, Tony, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (London: Penguin, 2005).

Motta, Giuseppe, *Less than Nation: Central-Eastern European Minorities after WWI* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013).

CHAPTER 3.2

EMPIRE AND COLONIALISM

3.2.1 Empire and Colonialism in Early Modern History (1500–1800)

Stefan B. Kirmse and Margarita Eva Rodríguez García
(with Remco Raben)

Introduction

This chapter discusses the meaning of empire and examines the shifting forms of European imperialism and colonialism. Empire as a form of rule had established itself long before 1500. The ancient Greeks and Romans had left legacies that Byzantium and Charlemagne's Holy Roman Empire were keen to build on and develop. Religious orders such as the Teutonic Knights and commercial configurations such as the Hanseatic League also colonised distant shores.

This chapter aims to explore what changed after 1500. What was different about early modern European empires? However, while tracking their peculiarities, the chapter will also show the diversity of empire, its appeal and abhorrence. To do justice to local complexities, the chapter examines three exemplary clusters: the Russian Empire, the Iberian empires, and north-western Europe.

Commonalities and Differences

The 'imperial turn' in history has not only led to greater sensitivity to the lasting importance of empire, but also to a focus beyond conquest, governance, and economic dependence; namely, it has contributed to a broader examination of social and cultural dynamics on the ground.

Still, it remains difficult to generalise about empire. Imperial trajectories were always unique. Often, various forms of domination coexisted in imperial formations. Those living under empire could have vastly divergent experiences, depending on their geographical location, socio-economic position, religion, gender, and more.

However, empires also shared certain commonalities. These included the quest for precious resources, from slave labour to gold and silk. They included

the desire to acquire land and control over trade routes, which resulted in large-scale territorial expansion. To legitimise their domination, many imperialists developed feelings of cultural superiority over allegedly primitive 'natives'. And crucially, prestige, territorial, and economic gains fed into a common European race for the best shares of the spoil.

Analytically, it makes sense to distinguish between different imperial types. Many see the key distinction in basic geography and patterns of conquest and rule, thus differentiating between contiguous landed formations, such as the Habsburg, Ottoman, and Russian empires, and maritime powers with territorial extensions and/or colonial possessions overseas, including the Spanish, Portuguese, and British empires. This does not mean that contiguous empires could not have colonies; it only means that they acquired and viewed these possessions differently.

While maritime empires depended on strong navies, landed empires tended to expand by absorbing neighbouring territories. In both cases local resistance could be fierce, which meant that imperial expansion and rule were often ensured by coercion. Some early modern states, including the Holy Roman Empire under Habsburg rule, engaged in 'matrimonial imperialism', that is, the use of marriage bonds between dynasties to bring vast territories under their control, with little military action. Some of Europe's naval powers also used private companies, such as the Dutch and British East India companies, to pursue commercial interests along distant coasts, acting just as exploitatively as other imperialists but with less concern for state-building and colonisation. The Spanish and Portuguese empires, in turn, replicated the model of European kingdoms and imposed this model on native societies.

While these distinctions may be useful, we must remember that all empires were in constant movement and, at different times, driven by extractive, tributary, territorial, religious, and other concerns. Further, as the British approach in Ireland and America suggests, they could pursue different colonial policies at the same time.

Emerging Empires

Between 1450 and 1550, the Spanish and Portuguese monarchies started building vast overseas empires. Their geographical patterns of expansion were the result of a mixture of foresight, experience, and accident.

While the Portuguese had been exploring the Atlantic for longer, the Spanish moved across the ocean in the late fifteenth century. Starting from their first Caribbean land falls, they expanded west and south-west to the American mainland, following the trail of the Aztec and Inca empires. In 1494, Spanish and Portuguese representatives agreed in Tordesillas to divide global spheres of influence between them, establishing a meridian in the Atlantic, the

area west of which became the sole domain of Spanish exploration, and east—including parts of South America—of the Portuguese. In 1529, the Treaty of Zaragoza extended the principle of imperial interest zones to Asia.

Portuguese crown possessions east of the Cape of Good Hope were known as *Estado da India* from 1505. These possessions—home to powerful political entities, heavily populated and technologically partly superior to Europe—were built on older commercial networks. Politically, the Portuguese Empire was not homogeneous but adapted to the diversity of its territories and peoples. In the seventeenth century, as it increasingly lost positions in Asia to the Dutch, it transformed into a more territorial empire in Brazil. The Spanish conquest of the Americas, by comparison, spread from the Caribbean. Though the first voyages had mostly mercantile aims, the search for precious metals encouraged the appropriation of American territory. The conquest of the Philippines in 1656, in turn, opened a trans-Pacific trade route linking the Philippines and East Asia with the Viceroyalty of New Spain (in the Americas). Spanish and Portuguese colonial societies operated with a high degree of autonomy. Rather than think of Spain and Portugal as centralised empires, we should see them as multi-kingdom monarchies made up of European and overseas elements, with multiple authorities.

The Spanish conquest of the native empires was partly justified with reference to the 'civilisation' of indigenous peoples. After the conquest of Mexico-Tenochtitlan, Hernán Cortés (1485–1546) explained the importance of this expansion in a letter (1520) to Charles V, who had just been crowned Holy Roman Emperor in Aachen:

> …The possession of [this country] would authorise your Majesty to assume anew the title of Emperor, which it is no less worthy of conferring than Germany, which, by the grace of God, you already possess.

Later, American silver helped to finance the Spanish struggle against Protestantism, underlining the monarchy's Catholic nature.

By the eighteenth century, Spain still retained most of its American possessions. Portugal, in turn, following the demise of the *Estado da India* and the discovery of gold and diamonds in Brazil, began to colonise the interior of the territory. At the same time, the use of terms like 'empire' and 'colonies' in official documentation reflected the Iberian desire to use the Atlantic to promote Portugal and Spain as first-rate powers.

In north-western Europe, coherent attempts to gain a foothold outside Europe started in the late sixteenth century. The English and Dutch are often characterised as 'merchant empires', but the term is misleading. The private companies running the colonies operated with strong governmental support. What looked like trading companies in Europe operated as conquerors and colonisers overseas.

In North America, where English settlers established the first permanent colony in Virginia, colonisation only took off in 1607. Remarkably, many leading figures of American colonisation, such as Walter Raleigh, had experience in the English exploitation of Ireland, showing how previous experience influenced early modern imperialism. In the Caribbean and South America, English traders established plantation colonies, attempting to copy the Portuguese and Spanish successes in growing sugar. A third variety emerged along Asian and African coasts, where chartered European companies engaged in the trafficking of humans for colonial plantations and the trade in high-value commodities. Empire thus started out as a string of trading stations and fortifications along the coasts.

Allegedly the first Englishman to refer to empire was the polymath and advisor to Queen Elizabeth I, John Dee (1527-c.1609). However, his call for a 'British Empire', only took off in the eighteenth century, a development closely related to the composite nature of Britain after the Treaty of Union (1706). The Dutch, in contrast, in their struggle against Habsburg domination, had developed political theories of Republicanism (and established the Dutch Republic in 1588). These theories also affected their overseas expansion: empires such as that of the 'popish' Spaniards were prone to rise and decline, it was claimed; trade profits were the rationale of Dutch overseas expansion. As a result, the Dutch never sat comfortably with the term 'empire' (incidentally, nor did the Ottomans, for different reasons, who called their political entity, which they did not deem a colonial empire, the 'Sublime Ottoman State').

Although English trade and expansion had a vigorous beginning, their efforts were in many places—with the exception of North America—outpaced by the Dutch. Initially avoiding the Iberian powers, the Dutch grew increasingly bold. From the 1620s to 1650s, they succeeded in pushing the Portuguese to the margins in Asia, firmly establishing themselves in south and south-east Asia. In the Americas, they briefly wrested Brazil from the Portuguese, but after 1650 they retreated, retaining only small footholds in the Caribbean.

In Russia, empire was only formally proclaimed in 1721, after the Tsar's victory over long-term rival Sweden—a large empire itself at this point—in the protracted Northern War. And yet, despite this late formal proclamation, Russia's self-image as an empire had emerged centuries prior. After the fall of Constantinople, Russian rulers began to frame the expanding Principality of Moscow as the 'third Rome', the defender of (Orthodox) Christendom. Ivan IV ('the Terrible') formally adopted the title 'tsar'—a Russian rendering of the Latin 'caesar'—in 1547. Since then, grandiose rhetoric framed Moscow as the only legitimate heir to the Roman Empire.

Although Ivan IV wanted access to the Baltic Sea, Russia failed to capture this region until the eighteenth century. It proved more successful in the East. The incorporation of the Muslim khanates of Kazan (1552) and Astrakhan

(1556) on the Volga River gave the Tsar an opportunity to show his Christian credentials to the world, represented in stone through the iconic St Basil's Cathedral on Red Square. More importantly, this huge expansion turned Russia into a truly multiethnic and multireligious entity.

Russian imperialism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries did not entail overseas colonies, it was more about the advance of its border across the Eurasian landmass. To achieve this, Russian rulers struck deals with neighbouring powers and had new lines of fortification built at regular intervals. They also adopted the techniques of some colonial empires as they started to colonise territories with their own, carefully selected populations while displacing former inhabitants.

By the eighteenth century, colonial expansion was part of Russia's formal rhetoric. That Russia called itself *imperiia* from 1721 articulated both an accomplished fact and a growing ambition. It was meant to show Russia's 'European' pedigree to the world. And with Europe as a yardstick, the tsars wanted colonies of their own. The fact that Russian statesmen identified the Ural Mountains as the border between Europe and Asia in the 1730s established the land beyond the mountains as Russia's own colonial 'Other'. Fur, the 'soft gold' of Siberia, would become the symbol of the empire's untapped riches, with intellectuals soon hailing the unknown promised land as 'our Peru' and 'our Mexico'.

Fig. 1: Hollar, Wenceslaus, "A new map of the English plantations in America" (1675), The New York Public Library Digital Collections, https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47d9–7ab1-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99.

Between Violence and Pragmatism

While empires often expanded through brutal conquest (in some cases with systematic killings, forced resettlement, and the enslavement of native populations), their subsequent operation was often less dramatic. Once their authority was established, the aggressive rhetoric was usually complemented by pragmatic accommodation. Faced with the reality of cultural, racial, and religious diversity, imperial authorities often set out to institutionalise difference. Whereas modern nation-states usually sought to homogenise their polities and people, early modern empires thrived on difference. In so doing, and while integrating their diverse populations as subjects, they also reinforced hierarchies and—in some cases—segregation. While both contemporaries and today's academics often frame colonial populations as victims, 'freedom fighters', or 'collaborators', many locals were none of these things, somewhere in between, or they played different roles at different times. In an economic sense, however, they were heavily exploited. Large parts of the colonial world were turned into a sweatshop for the budding capitalism of Europe. This was perhaps less visible in contiguous empires. While they also extracted resources, the distinction between metropole and colony was often less clear, and inferior social groups such as the peasants were equally exploited.

In many parts of Asia, European powers improvised a bricolage of metropolitan institutions imposed upon local systems of governance: Asian kings, governors, and village heads provided the administrative backbone to enable the Europeans to rule and extract commodities and taxes. In South America, Portuguese and Spanish institutions of government and justice were grafted onto local societies. However, while the Spanish exploited indigenous labour, they depended on the survival of native communities and elites to make the empire work. In the settler societies of less populated (or forcibly emptied) areas, such as South Africa and North America, institutions imported from Europe would dominate because local ones were destroyed or ignored. Landed empires like Russia would employ both approaches at different times: the initial destruction of local institutions in the east and south, where they were considered inferior (before religious tolerance was granted later), and their co-optation in the West—for example, in the Baltic provinces—where local society was viewed as more 'developed' than in Russia proper.

Peoples—Peopling

The early modern imperial expansion triggered the movement of people from Europe. Empire provided a job, an escape from home, and the pursuit of honour and wealth. Some went with the aim to return, preferably rich; others

left their country for good, not least if they had fled from serfdom, service obligations, or persecution.

The Spanish and Portuguese who went to the Indies were a diverse group. Most came from the lower nobility, others were traders. For the *Estado da India*, the defence of trade routes shaped the type of migrants: *fidalgos* (nobles) and officers occupied the key positions to maintain the trade monopolies; most people of Portuguese origin, however, were soldiers, sailors, and convicts. The *fidalgos* had less interest in Portuguese America, where most colonists were soldiers, convicts, and adventurers (partly attracted by the discovery of gold mines). Numerous missionaries were also among the migrants.

In most of South America and the Caribbean, a small number of administrators ran the slave plantations. The absence of significant political structures in Portuguese America made it easier to justify slavery. While slaves of African origin predominated in north-eastern Brazil, indigenous slaves did most of the manual work elsewhere. Forced labour, however, underpinned colonial ventures across the globe. The exploitative nature of colonialism necessitated coercion.

In Russia, locals were co-opted into positions of borderland authority; in exchange for military service, they were granted land on the frontier. While many privileges were withheld from non-Christians, the borderland populations were gradually integrated into imperial society. After serfdom was formalised for peasants who lived on manorial lands (1649), such peasants were transferred from central provinces to the periphery in large numbers: by the eighteenth century, the lower Volga alone had received half a million migrants. Runaway serfs and convicts, retired soldiers, and religious dissidents joined them on the frontier, which outside towns and forts, remained outside the centre's reach. Yet, as in the Americas, the frontier was not 'empty'. Russian rulers displaced borderland communities considered unruly or economically dispensable, including the nomadic Kalmyks and the autonomous Cossacks. The regions forcibly emptied were colonised by Slavic and other European settlers attracted by promises of religious freedom and material benefits.

In Spanish America, the conquest of the native empires, aided by indigenous peoples such as the Tlaxcaltecas, turned most locals into subjects. While they could not be enslaved for this reason, they had to pay tribute and were forcibly Christianised. A differentiated legal regime allowed some pre-Hispanic legal practices to survive and granted indigenous people a degree of autonomy, but it also helped to ensure Spanish domination.

Formal migration was complemented by informal forms of colonisation that reflected the gender imbalance of migratory flows and acted largely outside the law. It led to settlers interacting with local women and producing a *mestizo* (creolised) society. The crown eventually allowed settlers to bring

their wives from Spain, thus reinforcing the Hispanic way of life on the new continent. Passenger records suggest that at least 13,000 Spanish women crossed the Atlantic. Still, intercultural unions grew in number and importance. In Portugal, such unions generated so much concern that the authorities sent Portuguese women, the *horfas de rei*, to some strategic areas, granting them dowries and helping them to start families that would ensure loyalty to the crown. Nonetheless, this did not stop the formation of a multicultural society over time. The same was true along Asian and African coasts, where large communities of creolised people emerged, along with status hierarchies based on perceptions of race. Such hierarchies characterised virtually all colonial empires, though the degree of official racism varied and religious conversion could mitigate exclusionary policies. Still, on some imperial peripheries (including the Eurasian frontier), intermarriage was the exception, rather than the rule.

In general, the British and Dutch were less keen to 'colonise' their territorial acquisitions, in the sense of sending European settlers, than Russia and the Iberian powers. British expansion to North America was an exception: the colonists disembarking in Virginia were the first of more than 350,000 immigrants from the British Isles peopling what became known as the Thirteen Colonies. Africa and Asia drew much smaller numbers of settlers because of the climate, the limited size of most possessions, and because the chartered companies did not allow free settlers. Still, Dutch activity in Asia was not matched by other European powers until the mid-eighteenth century. In the course of almost two centuries, about one million people travelled on Dutch East India Company (VOC) ships to South Africa and Asia. Most of them were from other European countries, especially the German lands.

Conclusion

Early modern empires, for all their diversity and dynamism, differed from their predecessors in several respects. The discovery of the New World and improvements in technology and navigation gave them the possibility of global reach. The compression of time and space emboldened Europeans, stirred up their rivalries, and opened up new possibilities for enrichment.

The late eighteenth century saw some major changes, with the independence of the Thirteen Colonies (1783) and Haiti (1804), followed by most of Spanish America and Brazil by 1824. At the other end of the globe, Dutch power in Asia declined while, from the mid-eighteenth century, the British in India evolved from a mercantile presence into a more dominant, tax-extracting coloniser. The Dutch made this change more reluctantly, continuing to stress the commercial nature of their business.

In Russia, many traits of imperial rule persisted: geographic expansion was accompanied by ever more diversity, the co-optation of locals, elusive rule, but also violent crackdowns. The proclamation of empire, however, did herald a new era, and unlike the Dutch, the Russians were eager and proud to wield the imperial title.

Discussion questions

1. Not all European societies were equally involved in empire-building and colonialism. What were the most important commonalities and differences?

2. What were the consequences of empire-building and colonialism for early-modern Europeans?

3. Do these historical processes still shape Europe today?

Suggested reading

Burbank, Jane and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011).

Disney, A. R., *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire, Vol. I: From Beginnings to 1807* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Elliot, J. H., *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America 1492–1830* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006).

Parker, Charles, *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Restall, Matthew and Kris Lane, *Latin America in Colonial Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Restall, Matthew, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Romaniello, Matthew, *The Elusive Empire: Kazan and the Creation of Russia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012).

3.2.2 Empire and Colonialism in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Esme Cleall, Markéta Křížová, and Matthijs Kuipers

Introduction

In the nineteenth century, large swaths of the world's territory came under colonial rule. By the early twentieth century, close to forty percent of the world's land area was under formal control of either longstanding imperial powers like Britain, France, Portugal or the Netherlands, or new claimants, like the United States and Japan. Most notably, Britain established formal rule over the entirety of present-day India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh in 1858, a year after the suppressed Indian Rebellion. In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Africa was effectively divided by European powers. What set the so-called 'New Imperialism' of the nineteenth century apart from its early-modern predecessors was the shift to the full and formal incorporation of territories into European polities, as opposed to the haphazard and patchwork modes of domination that marked earlier rule, which was often carried out by nominally private entities like the British East India Company (EIC) and its counterparts in other empires. Overseas imperialism may have been around since the early modern period, but the 'red-bespattered maps' that showed an empire on which 'the sun never set' were a product of the nineteenth century.

This chapter explores why New Imperialism emerged, how it operated, and how it was met around the world. The answers traditionally point at economic incentives—imperial powers turned to formal control when informal control, the so-called 'gunboat diplomacy', did not achieve their aims—but as this chapter will show, ideological motives from above and below were just as important. Colonial ventures met anticolonial resistance of many sorts. Colonisers increasingly justified their exploits by claiming to 'bring civilisation,' and partaking in this so-called 'civilising mission' was not limited to citizens from imperial powers, but was a transnational European

affair. Ideas on civilisation, gender, modernity, and race were all determining factors in the day-to-day workings of empire.

Violence, Profit, and Exploitation

One of the worst elements of European colonialism in this period was the transatlantic slave trade, which involved kidnapping men, women, and children from West Africa, and transporting them to the 'new world' over the infamous Middle Passage. Many died in dire conditions during their transport. Those that arrived were sold in the Caribbean and elsewhere in the Americas, and forced to work on plantations in hideous conditions, often until death. The enormous scale and cruelty of the transatlantic slave trade was the subject of contemporary critique, not least by abolitionists (many of them of African origin) who became increasingly vocal in the nineteenth century and who engaged with slave-owning interests in a war of representation over race, which had long-lasting legacies. There were some moves towards an abolition of slavery. Revolution in the French colony of Saint-Domingue, which brought into existence the Republic of Haiti at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was a decisive step that exposed the cruelty of slavery. Subsequently, slavery was officially abolished in the British Empire in the 1830s, in the French Empire in the 1840s, and in other empires (like the Dutch) later in the century. But enslavement continued to be an important feature accompanying colonial expansion. It expanded in some colonies (namely, Cuba, possessed by Spain until the very end of the nineteenth century), and also continued to be legal in some post-colonial states (southern USA, Brazil). The transatlantic slave trade also continued. In fact, in terms of the number of slaves transported across the Atlantic (even though we cannot estimate this precisely, since a great portion of this trade was illegal), the slave trade was actually at its highest in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The cruelty of the plantation slavery system also reached its highest point in the nineteenth century—paradoxically, due to the introduction of technical innovations, such as steam power for the sugar mills that increased the capacity of the plantations in the Caribbean, but which also raised the pressure on the enslaved workforce. Further enslavement in the Caribbean and elsewhere continued to have formative legacies throughout the nineteenth century.

Economic exploitation also fed into the creation of European empires in other ways. The Congo Free State, ruled infamously from 1885 to 1908 as the private possession of the Belgian King Leopold II, is often seen as one of the worst phases in the history of European colonialism. This was, according to some, 'imperialism at its cruelest'. Among the most gruesome practices, carried out in an effort to enforce rubber quotas, was a policy of physical

mutilation—cutting off hands—which became a prime symbol of colonial terror. But rather than seeing Congo as the exception, it can also be seen as representative of the exploitative politics of colonialism at large. A number of recurring themes in the general practice of colonialism can be discerned in the particular case of the Congo Free State. The exploitative nature of colonial rule is the first of these themes. At the start of his colonial reign, Leopold had to promise that the Belgian state would bear no expenses in Congo. This is a practice that can be observed in other empires as well. From 1830 to 1870, the Netherlands installed the policy of '*batig slot*' (positive balance), that stipulated that each year money had to flow from the Dutch East Indies to the Netherlands, and not the other way around. As some historians have pointed out, colonial rule was not always profitable. The returns on colonial investments were not always as high as imagined, and sometimes colonies lost money. The promise of riches, however, remained an incentive for colonial powers.

A second theme is the structural nature of the economic abuses and the far-reaching effects they had. This was not just excess in the search for profit, but an effort to reshape economies in the service of imperial powers. The resulting global economic system chiefly benefitted the West. The profitability of Congo's rubber exploits aside, the fact that this resource could flow into European markets and was used to manufacture tyres had a positive effect on industries well beyond the worth of the rubber industry itself. Other colonial crops had similar far-reaching effects. Cotton, which by 1831 made up for almost a quarter of the annual growth of the economy in Britain, reshaped or even created entire economies. This not only included the plantation economies of the Caribbean and, later, the United States, but also countries like Egypt and India, which were coerced into drastically shifting their domestic agricultural sectors to the production of cotton during the nineteenth century. In this way, the countries became connected to a worldwide market, but at a high price. India's own cotton processing industries were largely destroyed by British economic policies. Similar instances of de-industrialisation can be discerned in other colonies. Another effect was that the use of agricultural lands for cotton growing often took the place of sustenance farming, which made local populations vulnerable to capricious global markets.

Thirdly, while the 'promise of riches' might have been an incentive for the colonising powers, it would be a mischaracterisation to depict the exploitative and extracting colonial politics as an entirely rational affair. Deluded notions about what constituted progress or modernity were often a determining factor. Just one instance among many is the failed British introduction of breadfruit in the Caribbean, which was wrongly believed to be a highly nutritious food for the enslaved population, but turned out not to be the wonder food British colonisers imagined it to be. In other instances, entire economies were remade

based on ideas about progress, race, and civilisation—like with the so-called 'cultivation system' that was introduced in the Dutch East Indies in 1830. The intention of the system was to reorient Javanese agricultural production towards the production of crops for international markets. A central premise was that the colonies had to "contribute to the national wealth", but were unable to do so because Javanese peasants were on a lesser scale of civilisation and needed enforced discipline in order to be productive. Thus, the system forced landowners to use one fifth of their lands to grow export crops like coffee or sugar for the colonial government, and also forced landless peasants to work sixty-six days annually in government fields. The system was open to abuse, and the toll on Indonesians was often much higher than the nominal one fifth of land or labour.

Fig. 1: Josef Kořenský, "A group of palm juice collectors to prepare the drink 'toddy'" (19th c.), National Museum of the Czech Republic—Náprstkov Museum, https://en.esbirky.cz/search/subcollection/4502437. Photo from the archive of the Náprstek Museum in Prague.

Ideas, Ideology, and Imagination

Imperialism was not simply a matter of practice, but also of ideology. The idea that western European states could dominate extra-European territories was an ideology linked closely with ideas about white supremacy and cultural superiority. The (Indian-born) British writer Rudyard Kipling famously

discussed a "white man's burden" whereby indigenous people would have to be carried by their European counterparts along the road of 'civilisation'.

Interventions were justified by claiming a need to offer protection from barbarism. For instance, in the second half of the nineteenth century, slavery within Africa (characterised as a sign of African barbarity) was used as a principal justification for European colonial penetration on the continent— despite the hypocritical participation of Europeans in the ongoing, illegal slave trade between the continent and the Americas.

One chief agent of cultural imperialism and the dissemination of colonial ideologies were missionary societies, which expanded significantly from the late eighteenth century onwards. Both Catholic and Protestant missionaries were deeply interested in religiosity and converting indigenous peoples of all faiths to Christianity, but they were not simply aiming at a religious transformation. The transformation they sought would also impose widescale cultural shifts, from the adoption of Western forms of dress and clothing, to the reformation of marriage and sexuality, to reformed childbearing and childrearing practices. Almost every element of indigenous life and practice was considered appropriate for reconstruction from the missionary's perspective. Missionary organisations were formed even in countries without significant overseas empires, such as Switzerland and Norway. In some places, such as southern Africa and India, there was competition for converts between missionaries of different denominations.

Sometimes missionaries cooperated with and indeed benefited from formal colonial rule. Certainly, many were seen as imperial agents by indigenous people—such as in the run-up to the 1857–1858 Indian Rebellion, when perceived Christianisation was one factor that led to anti-colonial resistance. However, at other moments, the relationship between missionaries and the colonial state was hostile. Again, we can see this in British India, where missionaries were sometimes frowned upon and sometimes banned by colonial officials, concerned that they would generate agitation. The intertwined nature of missionary cultural imperialism and other forms of colonial activity is clear when we consider particular individuals who traversed neat distinctions between these categories of action. This can be seen in the example of David Livingstone, one of the nineteenth century's most famous missionaries, who originally started working as a missionary for the London Missionary Society, but whose explorations across southern Africa also attracted the attention of other agents of imperialism such as geographers—with his findings widely lauded, and later funded, by the Royal Geographical Society. Livingstone became a celebrity figure in his own lifetime, and subsequently became a key figure in the cultural memory of imperialism in Africa, immortalised in many statues and imperial culture.

Missionary activity was just one domain of cultural imperialism: cultural imperialism was also manifest in the spread of European languages across the globe, the spread of European dress and ways of living, and 'Western' style education. The spread of European medicine, particularly in the late nineteenth century, served to showcase the 'superiority' of European science, its capacity to save lives and cure diseases, thus winning support from the newly subjected populations; but on the other hand, by using the bodies of native populations as study material (often without asking for consent) the practice of medicine in non-European settings further confirmed colonial domination.

There were also other sciences that were closely tied to colonialism. In fact, colonies often became 'laboratories' for developing European natural science, or testing grounds for medical experiments. The progress of science and medicine, in turn, was used to legitimise colonial expansion. Thus, colonialism and science reinforced each other—colonialism structured scientific thought and gave new directions to research.

Anthropology, the science of the study of humanity, was established as a standard academic discipline in the course of the nineteenth century, and its objectives and methods were defined within the frame of the second colonialist thrust of European expansion in other continents. Intellectual, specialised systems of knowledge thus immediately acquired political relevance, as through anthropology the supposed superiority of the white European was established as a rationalised, positive 'truth'.

Throughout the nineteenth century museums were purposefully constructed as "temples of science"—a phrase often used by contemporary authors—and as repositories of objective, tangible knowledge. Through museum displays the aspirations of Europe to political and cultural superiority over the rest of the world were given 'scientific' support through showcasing the 'primitiveness' of non-European technologies or non-European religious superstitions. Similar messages were presented in 'ethnographical shows'—live displays of non-Europeans, performing their 'everyday life' in front of paying audiences. These shows were enormously popular in Europe between the 1870s and the First World War.

Through institutions like these, members of nations not directly involved in colonial enterprise could show what Ulla Vuorela has termed (for the case of Finland) "colonial complicity". Colonialist and imperialist discourse was not limited to those countries directly involved in expansion overseas. There were societies within Europe that had remained outside explicit colonial interests or overseas possessions, but nevertheless engaged in colonial projects in a variety of ways—and also benefitted materially from these interactions. They actively participated in hegemonic discourses as these were developed in the colonising metropoles, thus identifying themselves with 'European'

normative civilisation and discursively degrading the non-European rest of the world. For example, if they did not participate directly in physically dominating and exploiting overseas regions, they could participate indirectly in the colonising thrust through acquisition, description, and categorisation of objects brought from afar. Present-day museums are inheritors of this ethos, and are still endowed with the authority to affirm what is historically and culturally significant.

Specific forms of such colonial complicity can be studied in Central and Eastern Europe, region that had often experienced external political as well as economic and cultural pressures from their immediate neighbours: Russia, Prussia/Germany, Austro-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire. Faced with these pressures, the inhabitants of the region were developing a sense of belonging to the whole of 'Europe' as a geographical, political, and cultural category. But there were also specific discursive strategies and reference points that explicitly opposed Central and Eastern European reality to Western European colonial empires, thus breaking the clear-cut dichotomy of 'European coloniser' and 'non-European colonised'.

The entanglements of these various imperial fantasies and real efforts for political and economic dominance have been shown, for example, by Lenny Ureña Valerio in her study of the construction of 'Polishness' in Polish lands under German imperial domination during the period when Poland ceased to exist as a state, its territory being partitioned between Germany, Austria and Russia). She shows how 'Polishness' was constructed in identification with the colonial 'other' in Africa and South America, also facing quasi-colonial penetrations of the German state and German settlers.

The symbolic appropriation of far-away regions also found support in the new medium for knowing the world, photography—a technological invention that was also claimed to show the superiority of Europe over the rest of the world. It apparently offered an 'objective', 'truthful' depiction of a strange reality, but at the same time testified to its otherness.

Gender also became an important area of intervention in terms of cultural imperialism. As Gayatri Spivak famously put it, "white men saving brown women from brown men" was a recurring colonial trope in this period. Dating back to the Enlightenment, the status of women was seen as a marker of 'civilisation'. Indigenous women were thought to need 'saving' from a range of fates including *sati* (the Hindu practice of burning widows on the deceased husband's funeral pyre), child-marriage, polygamy and 'bride-wealth payments'.

Racial thinking, too, shaped the discourse and praxis of colonialisation, not least in its justification of exploitation and colonial violence. Even though the idea of race often remained implicit in the circles of government or education,

it was fed by a racial thinking and pseudo-scientific racism that developed steadily in this period. Religious ideas on race aligned with this form of racial thinking, and manifested among other things in a shift from 'monogenism' (which posited that all humans descended from common ancestors, namely Adam and Eve), to 'polygenism' (which argued that different categories of people had different ancestors) which many have argued led to 'harder' attitudes towards race.

Attitudes towards race were one factor that fed into the 'exoticisation' of the non-European 'other' in this period. Exoticism was closely linked with eroticism, and images of scantily clad indigenous women fed into understandings about empire across Europe, demonstrating the links between ideas about race and ideas about sexuality.

Imperial ideology was not uncontested in this period and, during the nineteenth century, there were also considerable acts of anti-colonial resistance. Anti-slavery rebellions (such as the so-called Christmas Rebellion of 1831 in Jamaica) had contributed to the end of slavery in the first half of the nineteenth century. Perhaps one of the most notable acts of imperial resistance was the Indian Rebellion (then called a 'Mutiny') which broke out in Meerut in 1857. Across the Indian subcontinent there were subsequent protests against a range of conditions including the introduction of the Enfield rifle (which, in requiring soldiers to bite the end of a cartridge rumoured to contain beef and pork fat, violated Hindu and Muslim religious practices), increased seizures of indigenous land, and perceived Christianisation and 'Westernisation.' The revolt was brutally put down by the British and many Indian people were killed. The shock that the Indian Rebellion generated back in the British metropole was extraordinary and led to an explosion of novels, plays, and poems, demonising the rebels and, in particular, the slaughter of European women and children. Many of the ideas that took hold in this period continued to shape the imperial imagination for the remainder of the century.

Conclusion

The central premise of this chapter is that nineteenth-century imperialism and colonialism can be distinguished from its early modern predecessors and postcolonial successors. Among the specific features that set this phase of European imperialism and colonialism apart, a few can be highlighted: the fact of the formal incorporation of territories in a relatively small number of empires; more systematic economic exploitation than before; a ruling ideology that was strongly marked by ideas about race, gender and 'civilisation' (defined through religion, but also scientific and technological advancement)

and that transgressed national and imperial borders. Also, there was great impact in both colony and metropole in terms of wealth, health, education. Empire was the focus of politics and activism, both 'at home' and in the form of anticolonial resistance. It was a source of pride for the ruling elites, and a bolster for nationalist sentiments. The relationship between different agents of imperialism was complex and has been the subject of much historiographical debate.

Discussion questions

1. The text mentions "colonial complicity". What does that mean?

2. Which role did religion play in European imperialism and colonialism?

3. Does the history of colonialism still shape Europe today? Why or why not?

Suggested reading

Beckert, Sven, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Vintage, 2014).

Bennett, Tony, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London, Routledge, 1995).

Bosma, Ulbe and Remco Raben, *Being "Dutch" in the Indies: A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500–1920* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2008).

Burbank, Jane and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011).

Earle, Rebecca, 'Food, Colonialism and the Quantum of Happiness', *History Workshop Journal* 84 (2017), 170–193.

Hall, Catherine, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination 1830–1867* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002).

Lüthi, Barbara, Francesca Falk, and Patricia Purtschert, 'Colonialism without colonies: examining blank spaces in colonial studies', *National Identities* 18:1 (2016), 1–9, https://doi.org/10.1080/14608944.2016.1107178.

Sinha, Manisha, *The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016).

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory*, ed. by Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), pp. 66–111.

Ureña Valerio, Lenny A., *Colonial Fantasies, Imperial Realities: Race Science and the Making of Polishness on the Fringes of the German Empire, 1840–1920* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2019).

Vuorela, Ulla, 'Colonial Complicity: The "Postcolonial" in a Nordic Context', in Suvi Keskinen, Salla Tuori, Sari Irni, Diana Mulinari, eds, *Complying with Colonialism: Gender, Race and Ethnicity in the Nordic Region* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 19–33.

3.2.3 Empires and Colonialism in Contemporary History (1900–2000)

Isabelle Surun, Mikuláš Pešta, and Gabriele Metzler

Introduction

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the world was marked by unprecedented European dominance. It was the Age of Empires, a period of high imperialism which began in the 1870s. Through the following decades, European powers (joined by Japan and the United States), justified by notions of a civilising mission, conquered most of the globe. In 1914, there were not many countries and territories across the world, except for Latin America, which were not subject to one of the existing empires.

Fig. 1: Arthur Mees, *The Flags of a Free Empire, Showing the Emblems of British Empire Throughout the World* (1910), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arthur_Mees_Flags_of_A_Free_Empire_1910_Cornell_CUL_PJM_1167_01.jpg.

However, by the end of the twentieth century, there were only a few remnants of these once-global empires. The steady decline of colonial power and its ultimate disintegration is perhaps one of the most significant trends in the global history of the twentieth century. Yet, even with the decline of direct colonial rule, there are still many imperial remnants around the world that, to this day, influence the development and internal affairs of post-colonial countries.

Contiguous Empires in Eastern Europe

While colonialism is often considered a phenomenon associated with Western Europe, the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe had their own experience with empires too. Until 1918, most territories of Central Eastern Europe were a part of one of four empires: German, Austro-Hungarian, Russian, and Ottoman.

Despite the demise of those empires after the Great War, imperial dreams remained. Germany and Hungary set themselves on a path of revisionism, seeking to reclaim their lost territories, and briefly reinstituting their rule during the Second World War. In particular, Germany under Nazi rule had an ambitious imperial vision of vast East European spaces subjugated to and colonised by German settlers. Soviet Russia also sought the lands it had lost to newly emerging countries after the First World War and tried to retake them in 1939 and then again, successfully, in 1944–1945. But even the new countries, built in 1918 on an anti-imperial narrative, were not entirely immune to imperial temptations. There were voices in both Czechoslovakia and Poland that asked for certain former German colonies, the possession of which was supposed to secure to those countries a place among the Western European powers. Moreover, policies which dealt with minority populations and peripheral territories in the new countries were often not so different from those of the old empires, sometimes creating the impression that the empires did not leave but were only reconfigured. The Balkan Peninsula became a fault zone for several imperial visions. Almost every country in the region followed the path of border revisionism and sought to enlarge its territory. During the 1930s, most of the Balkan Peninsula also turned to different forms of dictatorship, which were more willing to use force to fulfil their ambitions.

In the post-war era, the socialist countries led by the Soviet Union officially denounced colonialism, and support for the anti-colonial national liberation movements became a crucial part of socialist ideology and practice. The dichotomies of the Cold War turned anti-colonialism into a powerful weapon in international relations, which the socialist countries used against the (former) colonial powers. Drawing parallels between imperialism and fascism

and supporting the emerging 'Third World' economically and politically, they tried to use the momentum of decolonisation to get an upper hand in the global conflict.

Nevertheless, the USSR could be also viewed as an empire *sui generis*, even though it does not fit with the classic understanding of the concept of colonialism, associated mostly with the Western European overseas empires. The USSR inherited most of the territories from tsarist Russia and, despite its rhetoric and its nominally federal structure, it remained very centralised, with all power in the hands of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The peripheral Soviet territories, such as Central Asia, remained underdeveloped long after the Cold War was over. Even Soviet allies in Eastern Europe were only semi-sovereign; when one of them deviated from the set sphere of action, a Soviet intervention usually followed to put it back on track. This was the case in the German Democratic Republic in 1953, Hungary in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1968. Even after 1991 in post-Soviet Russia, we can find elements of imperialist thought, embodied in the interventions in what is considered to be a Russian sphere of influence, such as Moldova (1992), Georgia (2008), or Ukraine (2014).

Post-1989 Central-Eastern European societies regarded (and still regard) colonialism as a foreign, Western European problem, which did (and does) not concern them. Debates about colonial legacies are usually pervaded by the argument that Central-Eastern Europe did not possess any colonies, and should therefore not be punished, shamed, or forced to apologise for Western colonialism—largely neglecting the wider circumstances and interconnectedness of early-modern and modern-era trade.

Theories and Practices of Colonial Government

During the 1930s, a dispute emerged between British and French colonial policymakers about the putative superiority of their respective models of colonial administration. On the British side, the model of Indirect Rule, theorised by the British colonial administrator Lord Frederick Lugard (1858–1945) in *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa* (1922), was characterised by recognition of native authorities and respect for local customs: under this system, British administrators would simply supervise indigenous chiefs and 'educate' them in the art of good government. In contrast, the French colonial doctrine was seen as assimilationist and centralising.

A purely direct rule was in fact impossible, partly because the empires did not have the means to deploy a large administrative staff in their colonies, and partly because they would not have had the legitimacy to administer hostile populations. In fact, colonial domination could not have been possible without

the participation of a segment of the colonised populations. In some territories, the colonisers had recourse to traditional indigenous elites (Indian Princes, Rajahs and Maharajas, Javanese *bupatis* or *priyayis*, African chiefs and kings) with varying degrees of autonomy to collect taxes, requisition men for forced labour, and maintain social peace. In others, they enlisted intermediaries ('educated natives', 'évolués', '*assimilados'*) to perform subaltern functions in the colonial administration (interpreters, secretaries, guards).

However, colonial rule was coercive in many ways and for various reasons. Firstly, the agents of the colonial authority concentrated all kind of powers (legislative, executive, judicial and financial) and enjoyed a certain autonomy from the imperial governments because of the remoteness of the metropolis. This led to widespread abuse of power and outbursts of violence, such as the Congo scandals (under both the French and the direct rule of Belgian King Leopold II) caused by forced, labour-intensive requisitions at the time of the rubber boom in the early twentieth century. Secondly, the systemic violence of the colonial policing can be explained by the populations' absence of consent to the colonial order: some historians consider it a symptom of a weak state. Third, the extraction of revenue and men through the levying of taxes, crops, labour, or conscripts was a primary function of colonial rule, which could not be implemented without coercion. Colonial administrators found racialist or paternalistic justifications for it in colonial ideology: it was a matter of 'putting to work' indolent populations who were, in their view, incapable of extracting resources from their land beyond the satisfaction of their vital needs. And when part of these functions was entrusted to indigenous elites, the consequent violence was no less harsh. Finally, colonial administrations put in place exceptional legislation that ensured both the maintenance of colonial order and the proper functioning of the extractive policies: the status of indigene or colonial subject was both that of a subaltern in a system of social and racial domination, and a legal status that subjected the individual to rules and punishments particular to the colony.

The so-called 'civilising mission', a well-known element of colonial ideology, generated paradoxical effects. Indeed, its effective application would have rendered the maintenance of domination irrelevant and futureless, since the Europeans could no longer invoke their alleged superiority. The means put into education were therefore very limited: in Algeria, only 4.5 percent of Muslim children were enrolled in school in 1907, and in India, one in 100 inhabitants spoke English in the 1920s. Secondary education was limited to a handful of individuals, and scholarships to study at university, usually in the imperial capitals, were issued sparingly. Officials feared that they were producing 'uprooted' individuals who would no longer have a place in their native society and would believe themselves to be the equals of Europeans.

In fact, the newly educated elites saw their aspirations disappointed and their social ascent limited by the 'colour bar'. Unsurprisingly, they played an important role in socio-cultural and political transformations: most of the nationalist leaders of the independence era were part of this category. They had turned against the colonisers the weapons they had received through education.

It was only when the empires were threatened that they seemed to take the injunctions of the civilising mission seriously: the schooling of Muslim children in Algeria rose from fifteen percent to thirty percent during the 1950s. Major development projects involving investment in the colonies were launched: the Colonial Development and Welfare Act in the British Empire (1940), the Investment Fund for Economic and Social Development (1946) in the French Empire, or the ten-year plan for the economic and social development of the Belgian Congo (1949). Late colonialism could therefore be referred to as 'development colonialism'.

Decolonisation of Western Empires

After a first wave of decolonisation in the Americas during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the dissolution of European empires continued after the First World War. Outside of Europe, the dependent territories of the vanquished empires did not gain independence; they were only reorganised as League of Nations mandates under one of the victorious powers—either the United Kingdom or France. However, the Wilsonian concept of self-determination, which had proved useful in weakening Germany and the Austro-Hungarian empire, began to backfire in the form of rising demands for independence from the colonies. Even though some of the political bodies for national liberation predate the Great War (such as the Indian National Congress founded in 1886), the struggle for independence can be traced mostly to the interwar period. Inspired by Wilsonian or Leninist or other ideas, the generation of Europe-educated leaders began to fight for national liberation. The fight for national liberation took on global scope: in this era, international organisations such as the League against Imperialism, which sought to foster global anticolonial solidarity, emerged. The times had changed and high imperialism became less and less acceptable in the international community; when the Italians invaded Ethiopia in 1895, it was not contested, as it was not unusual in that time. But when they tried again forty years later, it caused an international crisis.

It was not until after the Second World War, however, that the dynamics of decolonisation could no longer be contained by the European powers. As a result of the Japanese occupations, national movements had strengthened in

Southeast Asia during the war. In India, too, British rule had lost legitimacy over the course of the conflict. While the Netherlands and France struggled in vain for several years to retake their colonies in the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) and Indochina, the British withdrew from India in 1947. Due to inadequate preparations for independence, the British not only caused a humanitarian catastrophe as a result of the partition of India and Pakistan, but also left behind a territorial conflict in Kashmir which is still contested today.
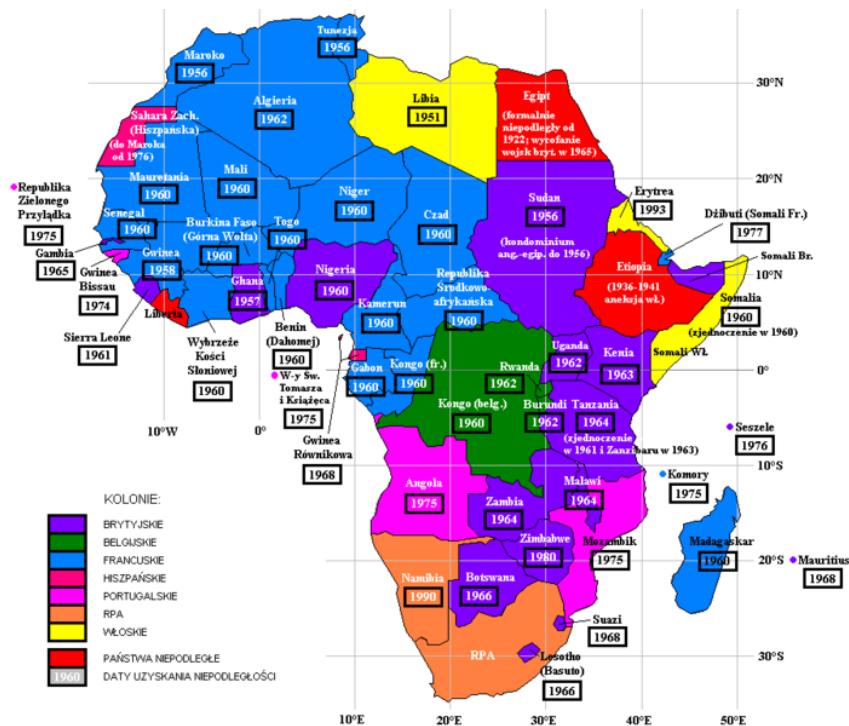
Fig. 2: "Decolonization of Africa", CC BY-SA 3.0, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Decolonization_of_Africa_PL.PNG. This map shows the years in which African countries finally took back their independence from European colonisers. Most notable is the year 1960 (the Year of Africa), in which eighteen African nations declared their independence.

While most of Asia had become independent by the mid-1950s, it took another two decades before independent autonomous states replaced the European colonial empires in Africa as well. The wave of decolonisation in Africa reached its peak in 1960, the 'Year of Africa', which alone saw the emergence of eighteen new states on the continent. As in Indochina and Indonesia before it, Africa's path to independence was often fraught with bloody military conflicts, humanitarian problems, and flagrant human rights violations—a development that was clearly at odds with the pacification of the European continent itself, which was taking place under the auspices of Western European integration. In Africa, 'Year of Africa' enthusiasm was abruptly ended when the former

Belgian colony of the Congo, a huge territory with one of bloodiest and most tragic colonial histories, fell into chaos and civil war mere weeks after the proclamation of independence. The decolonisation of Angola, Mozambique, Spanish Sahara, Portuguese Guinea and São Tomé and Príncipe in the mid-1970s marked the final dissolution of European political rule in Africa. Anti-colonial struggle of a similar kind, however, continued in South Africa and Zimbabwe; while they were independent since 1961 and 1965, respectively, they were ruled by the white settler minority, which was seen as a continuation of the old, colonial arrangement.

Post-colonial Legacies

However, this by no means meant that European influence in the Global South disappeared altogether. At the instigation of France in particular, the early institutions of European integration relied on association with African states, which perpetuated asymmetrical economic relations from the colonial era. Only slowly (and by no means completely) were African societies able to free themselves from this subordination. Moreover, only in a few cases has it been possible to establish stable, democratic, and constitutional orders after decades of foreign rule. The extent to which this is a consequence of colonialism or local conflict structures is disputed in historical and social science research.

European societies also changed as a result of decolonisation. Great Britain and France experienced significant immigration from their former colonies: in the British case mainly from Asia and the Caribbean, and in the French case mainly from North Africa. The integration of migrants was far from a universal success. They often found themselves in difficult social and economic circumstances. While settlers from Algeria, who were read as 'white', quickly gained a foothold in French society, North African Muslims remained marginalised. In many cases, their descendants live in the social hot spots of the *banlieues* and have little chance of upward mobility. In Britain, the rights of nationals of the Empire or Commonwealth have been considerably restricted over the decades, up to and including the threatened expulsion of members of the so-called 'Windrush generation' who themselves or whose parents had arrived in the country in 1948. The integration of post-colonial migrants was most successful in Portugal, where many were able to find jobs within a short time.

This had to do with the regime change in Portugal in 1974. The 'Carnation Revolution' put an end to the right-wing authoritarian regime that had existed since 1933. The experience of the wars waged by the regime in Africa, which were as brutal as they were unsuccessful, contributed directly to the growth of Portuguese opposition and military resistance to the government. In France

as well, a fundamental change occurred as a result of decolonisation crises, when in 1958 the Fourth Republic, weakened by defeat in the Indochina War and the ongoing Algerian War, collapsed. It was replaced by the Fifth Republic under the leadership of Charles de Gaulle who, however, needed until 1962 to consolidate his presidency against domestic crises and the threat of an impending military coup.

Western European societies long refused to face up to their colonial past, including the legacies of conflict-ridden decolonisation. The dissolution of the empires was followed by a long phase of amnesia and deliberate neglect of colonial crimes and human rights violations. Only since the 2000s has a more conscious reappraisal, which is far from being completed, begun. It includes questions of memory culture and political-historical education as well as the eminently political demands of the formerly colonised for the restitution of artifacts, works of art, and human remains as well as for reparations.

Neo-colonialism and Remnants of the Empires

Europe's influence on its former colonies did not cease to exist with their formal independence. In many areas, the former 'mother' country kept a strong position and close business relations with the new states. France maintained strong ties with its former empire, whether in trade, military, or cultural relations (Francophonie). In 1958, Guinea tried to sever those ties and was punished by President de Gaulle for it; the country was boycotted and the staff of colonial administration sabotaged what it could before it left. France also holds a record in the number of military interventions and covert coups (often using mercenaries) in Sub-Saharan Africa.

More subtle ways of exercising influence over the post-colonial states were also employed. The Central African and West African CFA franc that has been pegged to the French franc—and later the Euro—is perhaps the most blatant example of the structural impact a European country can have on its former colonies' trade and monetary policies. Since the 1980s, many post-colonial countries became heavily indebted to the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank; the money, however, came with obligations of 'structural adjustments'. The institutions, to a large extent under the control of Europe and North America, thus created new, neo-colonial tools enabling the North to maintain the upper hand over the South.

Even though most colonial holdings have been abandoned over the course of the twentieth century, there are still remnants of the empires, such as the Canary Islands and Madeira in Africa, several British, French, and Dutch territories in the Caribbean, British and French islands in the Indian and Pacific oceans, and even Danish dominion over Greenland. Some of these

territories were fully incorporated within European state structures, some received different levels of autonomy. In most cases, there is consensus about remaining subject to European administration.

European Third-Worldism

Most of the first generation of anti-colonial leaders were educated in Europe. There, they also adopted the notions of a European nation-state and other concepts, used for building the post-colonial countries, and sometimes they were criticised by later generations of post-independence leaders. However, transfers of knowledge and cultural patterns flowed both ways. Since the late 1950s, the Western European left increasingly looked for inspiration in places other than the Soviet Union, gradually turning to the 'Third World'. It was intellectuals like Frantz Fanon, a Martinican psychiatrist who demanded the dismantling of colonial empires even at the cost of violence, who left a strong impact on the European left. 'Third-Worldism' became a cornerstone of the New Left and protest movements that peaked in the late-1960s. From Algeria, the focus turned to Angola and Mozambique, to the apartheid regime in South Africa, and most of all, to Vietnam. Solidarity campaigns and protests against the US war in Indochina were perhaps the most visible feature of the student movement. In the 'Third Worldist' perspective, the European proletariat was no longer the class that was supposed to lead the revolution, as it had become too comfortable in the system. The new hopes were placed in the rural population of the Global South, the "damned of the Earth" (Frantz Fanon). The theories of Mao Zedong, Che Guevara, or Régis Debray were attractive, because they presented not only an alternative to capitalism, but also to the Soviet bureaucratic socialism, which was seen as discredited—particularly after the interventions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Conclusion

Decolonisation is one of the most significant global processes of the twentieth century. Different kinds of rule in colonial territories gave rise to different kinds of decolonisation. While formal independence has been achieved in most parts of the world, there are still many remnants and long-term ramifications of colonialism. We can still see efforts to maintain asymmetric 'special relationships' between former colonial powers and their former colonies. The consequences of colonialism can be observed in international migration and formation of transnational identities. The emancipation process in the 'Third World' also affected conceptualisations of a global revolution among European leftists.

Discussion questions

1. What were the main features of colonial rule?
2. What was the impact of the rise of the Soviet Union on European imperialism?
3. How successful was decolonisation?
4. In which ways do European empires still shape our world?
5. Is the EU a colonial power?

Suggested reading

Burbank, Jane and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

Buettner, Elizabeth, *Europe after Empire: Decolonization, Society, and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

Hansen, Peo and Stefan Jonsson, *Eurafrica: The Untold Story of European Integration and Colonialism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

Holland, Robert, ed., *Emergencies and Disorder in the European Empires after 1945* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).

Jansen, Jan. C. and Jürgen Osterhammel, *Decolonization: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).

Rodney, Walter, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 1972).

Thomas, Martin and Andrew S. Thompson, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

CHAPTER 3.3

REVOLUTIONS AND CIVIL WARS

3.3.1 Revolutions and Civil Wars in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Lars Behrisch, Benjamin Conrad, and Laurent Brassart

Introduction

Fig. 1: M. McDonald, "Battle of Moncontour, 1569", The Royal Collection Trust (from The Print Collection of Cassiano dal Pozzo Part II: Architecture, Topography and Military Maps, London), 2019, https://militarymaps.rct.uk/other-16th-century-conflicts/battle-of-moncontour-1569. A middle/high oblique view of the Battle of Moncontour, fought on 3 October 1569 between the French Catholics, commanded by Henry Duke of Anjou (later Henry III; 19 September 1551–1552 August 1589) and the French Huguenot army, commanded by Admiral Gaspard de Coligny (16 February 1519–24 August 1572) resulting in a Catholic victory. French Wars of Religion (1562–1598); Third War (1568–1570). Oriented with north (Tramontana) to top.

Civil wars are presumably as old as human history; revolutions are not. There may well have been revolutions, to be sure, before the term was first used—ironically, in a rather unrevolutionary event, the 'Glorious Revolution' of England in 1688. But to talk of a revolution, as opposed, say, to a mere

rebellion, is to talk of a take-over of central power in a state, which in turn requires that some form of centralised state exists in the first place. This was not the case in Europe before the late Middle Ages (although states had also existed in ancient times—and thus, presumably, events that might qualify as revolutions took place). Some regions of Europe were more precocious than others, of course, especially those in the south; the 'Sicilian Vespers' of 1282, a bloody event which saw Sicilians drive their French masters from the island may well have been the first revolution, properly speaking. It also shows another important feature of revolutions: the participation of sections of the population and not just of a small elite in overthrowing a regime—otherwise, we might more fittingly speak of a *coup d'état*, a putsch or a palace revolt.

Western Europe

Although the phenomenon of revolutions is quite a bit older than the term itself, it was nevertheless relatively rare in premodern times for a regime to be overthrown. The reason is simple: states had been created and continued to be ruled by monarchs and their dynasties, and while it might seem legitimate to depose a particular monarch deemed unfit to rule, it was quite unthinkable to depose his (or her) dynastic kin altogether, as state and dynasty were generally seen as one and the same. The situation might be different, though, when a foreign dynasty took over—such as in late-thirteenth-century Sicily—or when the ruler's next of kin was foreign or considered as such. This was the case with the mid-sixteenth-century Spanish inheritance of the Netherlands or, somewhat less conspicuously, the Scottish Stuarts' succession to the English throne in the early seventeenth century. In both cases, rebellion and ultimately revolution were caused by grave blunders and miscalculations on the part of the monarchs—but these mistakes were committed largely because the rulers did not sufficiently understand and respect the political traditions of their new dominions and were in turn accused of just this. In both cases, too, it took many years for resistance to foment into rebellion and many more years for the latter to succeed. Still, they became full-blown revolutions, involving all parts of the population and leading to the deposition of Philip II of Spain (in 1581) and even, in the case of Charles I of England, to the first public execution of a ruling monarch (1649). Both revolutions also led to republican regimes, if only short-lived in England and never entirely without some monarchical traits in the Netherlands.

These two major early modern revolutions had yet another feature in common: a civil war that accompanied them. In both instances, opponents and defenders of the king fought each other over many years; and in both cases, different religious allegiances played a major part in this division (which

remained permanent in the Netherlands with a predominantly Protestant north and a Catholic south—today's Belgium). Other major civil wars in the early modern period were caused principally by religious divisions, too. This is not surprising in a period when, on the one hand, religion was of primordial importance in people's lives, while on the other hand, different variants of Christianity claimed to be the only route to God's grace and to eternal life. The French Wars of Religion (1562–1598) and the Thirty Years' War in Germany (1618–1648) were both civil wars of this kind, although they would have ended considerably sooner had they not intersected with long-standing factional and dynastic strife as well as interventions from the outside—a feature of practically all civil wars.

Factional or dynastic strife, combined with outside interventions, also fuelled a number of civil wars, smaller in scope, that were caused neither by full-blown revolution nor by religious strife. This goes for, among others, the mid-seventeenth century "Fronde" in France, a series of extremely bloody feuds of various groups and factions against the despised regime of Cardinal Mazarin. It also applies to the Portuguese and Catalan uprisings against the Spanish King in the 1640s, of which only the former was successful. France used this opportunity to intervene on behalf of the separatists; Spain soon returned the favour and intervened on behalf of the "Frondeurs". There was a concentration of internal feuds and civil wars in the decades around the mid-seventeenth century, from Portugal and Catalonia through France and England to Germany. Each scenario had its own specific roots and circumstances, but apart from marking a final apogee of confessional strife, this concentration also expresses the fact that across Western Europe, princely dynasties now consolidated their power over large territories, triggering massive resistance from various regional and factional elites. As a rule, princes gained the upper hand—although in Germany, this was not the case for the Emperor but for the individual regional princes. In England, too, royal power was essentially restored in 1660, only to be limited, some thirty years later, by the bloodless 'Glorious Revolution'.

Eastern Europe

As in Western Europe, some civil wars of early modern Eastern Europe took on international significance. Such was the case, for example, in the Hungarian civil war of the sixteenth century, in which Austria and the Ottoman Empire took part as neighbouring countries, each supporting different kings who claimed the Hungarian throne. The war ended in a split of the Kingdom of Hungary. The western part was ruled by the Habsburgs, while the larger, eastern part became a vassal of the Ottoman Empire.

In the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, it was more common for rebellions of the nobility to take on the character of civil wars. The Hen War of 1537 is widely seen as the first rebellion of the Polish nobility. Noblemen demanded that King Zygmunt I Stary ('The Old') relinquish parts of a planned implementation of reforms that would establish a provisional centralised government. However, the noblemen were not confident enough to confront Zygmunt I Stary by force. Some of their demands were accepted, but most were rejected. The Hen War is therefore seen as a failure for the nobility.

Perhaps the best-known civil war in early modern Poland-Lithuania was the Zebrzydowski uprising (1606–1607), in which parts of the nobility opposed the abolition of the elective monarchy and its replacement by a hereditary monarchy. The rebellion was crushed by King Zygmunt III Wasa and his supporters. However, Zygmunt abandoned his initial plans and in 1609 reintegrated the rebels into the political system. In 1665–1666 Poland experienced another uprising, led by Jerzy Lubomirski, against higher taxes. Lubomirski's troops defeated the army of Jan II Kazimierz Wasa in 1666. A compromise was settled and Jan later abdicated. The Lubomirski uprising was therefore more successful. It also marked the end of the Wasa Dynasty in Poland-Lithuania.

In the eighteenth century, struggles in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were exploited in the foreign policy of neighbouring states, which instructed and financed the noble confederations. After 1770, Poland-Lithuania was under extensive Russian influence. The 1792 Targowica Confederation—under the patronage of Russian Empress Catherine the Great—was the last confederation to oppose political reforms in Poland; above all, it advocated repealing Europe's first modern constitution, the *Ustawa rządowa* of May 1791. After the 1793 (second) partition of Poland-Lithuania between Russia and Prussia, an uprising led by Tadeusz Kościuszko (1746–1817) against Russia in 1794 is seen as the first national uprising (*powstanie*) by historians, as Poles fought without help from abroad.

In Russia, rebellions and civil wars were rarer. Historians consider the transition period after the extinction of the Rurik Dynasty and the accession of Mikhail I of the Romanov Dynasty in 1613 as a form of civil war. This period was later called the Time of Troubles (*smuta*). In addition, the exclusion of the Old Believers during Patriarch Nikon's reform of the Russian Orthodox Church in the middle of the seventeenth century exhibited some elements of a civil war. The best-known rebellion in Russia of the early modern period is the Pugachev Rebellion (1773–1774). The peasant leader Emelyan Pugachev organised an army of farmers and Cossacks in central-southern Russia, claiming to be Tsar Peter III and promising land reform and the expulsion of the nobility. After some initial success, Pugachev was captured in 1774 by troops loyal to Empress Catherine the Great and later executed.

1776–1789: An "Atlantic Revolution"?

The American Revolution (1776–1783) was a powerful matrix for the emergence of European revolutionary movements during the 1780s. It was, on the one hand, a triumphant example of a war for national independence; on the other hand, it represented the success of a major political transformation based on Enlightenment ideas—liberty, sovereignty of the people, property, democracy, and the republican ideal (a political system that contemporaries had so far believed to work only in city-states or very small countries).

The influence of the American Revolution was such that in 1955, in the context of the Cold War, two non-Marxist historians, the American Robert Palmer and the Frenchman Jacques Godechot, elaborated the concept of an 'Atlantic Revolution' to link the different revolutionary movements that broke out in America and Europe between 1776 and the 1820s. From the moment it was formulated, however, the Atlantic Revolution was contested by other historians who were critical of a US takeover of European history. In their view, the concept presupposed a centre-periphery framework, negated the power of the French Revolution in European transformations, and obscured the national contexts that made each European revolution different. Recent historiography allows a more nuanced vision that does not entirely disqualify either of these two conflicting approaches.

Two types of revolutionary movement broke out in Europe in the 1780s: those chiefly directed against the occupation of a ruler from abroad (Ireland and Belgium), and those directed against political domination by local oligarchies (Geneva and the Netherlands). In several cities of the Helvetic Confederation, particularly in the French-speaking and Calvinist city of Geneva, well-established and widely held democratic demands began to challenge the existing oligarchic order from the end of the 1770s. The 'Natives'—Genevans born of foreign parents—and the inhabitants of the rural hinterlands wanted to obtain the right of citizenship, while the Genevan bourgeoisie wanted to open up the municipal power held only by a few rich patrician families. Despite its resistance, the municipal oligarchy was overthrown on the revolutionary day of 8 April 1782. But by July, this 'Genevan Revolution' was already crushed by the military intervention of neighbouring powers—the kingdoms of France and Piedmont and the cantons of Zurich and Bern—at the request of the oligarchs.

The traditional political conflict in the Republic of the United Provinces of the Netherlands, inherited from the seventeenth century, pitted the Orange Party of the *stadhouder*, the head of the fleet and army, against the republican States Party, composed of the so-called 'regents' (*regenten*)—the bourgeois and Calvinist oligarchy of the large merchant cities, who held municipal and provincial power in the autonomous provinces. This conflict was revived

after the defeat of the Republic in the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780–1784). Consequently, *stadhouder* Wilhelm V, a traditionalist supporter of the British alliance, was accused of being a traitor to the nation. At the same time, a third political force appeared, largely inspired by the American example, from which it took its name: the 'Patriot' movement. This movement was a coalition of the liberal nobility, who no longer recognised themselves in the Orange Party, and the urban middle classes (lawyers, shopkeepers, craftsmen), who lacked political rights *vis-à-vis* the urban oligarchy. In 1781, the liberal nobleman Johan Derk van der Capellen tot den Pol (1741–1784) anonymously published the best-selling pamphlet 'To the People of the Netherlands', using the American example to call for armed revolt against inadequate government. From 1784 onwards, the Patriot movement demanded that a new constitution be drawn up to recognise the sovereignty of the people and declare the natural rights of man, as in the United States. Militias were formed following the example of the American National Guard and violently attacked oligarchic municipal authorities. Frightened, the regents' party now rallied with the Orangemen against the Patriots; and in 1787, King Frederick-William II of Prussia (1744–1797), the *stadhouder*'s brother-in-law, intervened with his military to crush the Dutch Revolution.

Other revolutionary movements in the same decade targeted foreign domination. In Ireland, colonised by England, the American Revolution encouraged the Anglo-Irish Protestant elite to organise themselves into a 'patriot' movement in order to obtain greater political autonomy, including a proper parliament and a constitution. A militia, the Irish Volunteers, was formed in 1779, with recruits found among the Protestants. To avoid opening a new front in the middle of the American War of Independence, Lord North's British government granted autonomy to the Dublin Parliament in January 1783 and relaxed anti-Catholic measures.

In the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium), from 1784 to 1786, Emperor Joseph II (1741–1790) authoritatively imposed several measures, typical of enlightened despotism, to reform administration, justice, and taxation, as well as the economy and the Catholic clergy. But these measures were perceived as an attack on local traditions. Opposition movements were formed: the more conservative Statists, advocates of the *ancien régime* who called for armed foreign intervention; and the Vonckists, who sought to create a new democratic regime. Taking advantage of revolutionary events in France, the Statists and the Vonckists joined forces and launched the Brabant Revolution in October 1789 against their Austrian overlord. On 7 January 1790, they proclaimed the formation of the Republic of the United Belgian States, clearly endorsing the American federal model. But unity was short-lived: the Vonckists, more sensitive to the French revolutionary model, reproached the new state for being undemocratic. In March 1790, the Statists launched a

violent popular offensive against the Vonckists, who then went into exile in France. The Brabant Revolution now openly took the form of a conservative revolution: the Statists re-established the old regime, only without the Austrian sovereign. However, they soon succumbed to the counter-offensive launched in November 1790 by Austria and its Prussian and British allies.

All of these failed revolutions of the 1780s were inspired by the success of the American Revolution: they took up its slogans, its symbols, and its experience of insurrection and militias. These revolutions, however, cannot be considered merely a European import of the American model, as their objectives and characteristics were so different.

The French Revolution

The nature of the French Revolution, which broke out in the spring of 1789, differed fundamentally from any previous political conflict in Europe. It intensified quickly and massively over a period of five years, as the zeal to 'complete' or 'deepen' the revolution clashed with growing resistance to these ambitions across the country. It also produced entirely new forms and models of politics, society, and culture, and it had massive repercussions throughout Europe and beyond, from Russia to Haiti.

1789 was completely different from all previous revolutions. Unlike the Dutch and English revolutions, the French Revolution originated not with a rebellion but instead with a bid from above to revamp the obsolete machinery of government. It might have ended with the strengthening of royal government through a 'revolution from above', had Louis XVI not been so utterly indecisive and inconstant. As it happened, the old-fashioned Estates-General—convened to re-float governmental finances, but without clear instructions as to how to go about their business—set their own agenda and created a constitution. But while it constrained the power of the King, the revolutionary National Assembly, born out of the Estates-General, did not create a functioning framework for political action; it was not up to the task of overcoming the fissures opening within French society, with religion still being the single most divisive issue. And so the revolution radicalised: in the summer of 1792, the King was deposed; half a year afterwards, he was beheaded, while external and internal war, terror and the guillotine took centre stage until a political thaw set in—fittingly, in the revolutionary calendar's 'heat month' (*thermidor*) of 1794.

Violence and civil war had occurred before, as had depositions and even a decapitation of a king. What was radically new in the French Revolution was that its protagonists began to think in terms of creating a completely new society, rather than just restoring ancient rights or defending religion—the rallying cries of all rebellions and revolutions before it. As a result, the French

Revolution saw the birth of ideologies as blueprints for the future of society; it saw the birth of 'the nation', the idea of a community with a common destiny and a common struggle; and, as a result of these new, comprehensive, and ambitious dimensions of political activity, the French Revolution massively enhanced state power, for example through the invention of mass conscription (the *levée en masse*), and a sense of the state's entitlement to all sorts of action. In short, it brought about the modern state with its almost unbounded capabilities, potentially benign but also potentially destructive.

There is something else that the French Revolution bequeathed to the modern era: the very idea of 'making a revolution'. So far, revolutions were the unintended results of rebellions or else, as in 1789, of derailed governmental attempts at reform. After 1789 it became conceivable, and in some quarters desirable, to change a regime or a political system through concerted revolutionary action.

More immediately, too, the French Revolution had massive repercussions. Perhaps most conspicuously, the revolution in Haiti (1791–1804) led to the abolition of slavery in all French colonies and to the first successful independence of a former European colony. Within Europe, conquests between 1794 and 1799 by French revolutionary armies—of Belgium and the United Provinces, of the left bank of the Rhine, Switzerland and the Italian Peninsula—all led to the overthrow of monarchical regimes and to the creation of an alliance of 'Sister Republics' around France. The invaders could rely on the support of a minority of local revolutionaries, active since the end of the 1780s, who imitated many French inventions—such as the Milanese revolutionaries who drafted the Italian tricolour flag in 1797. But local revolutionaries tended to be influenced less by the French model than by their own experiences, referring also to the republican models of Roman antiquity, the republicanism of Machiavelli and the reformism of the Italian (in particular Tuscan) Enlightenment. In fact, the constitutions of 'Sister Republics' in Naples, Genoa, and Bologna, drafted in 1797 and 1798, were much more democratic and socially-minded than the contemporaneous French one (Constitution of the Year III/1795), even though they drew on the French Jacobin Constitution of the Year II (1793). Like the French revolutionaries of Year II, the Italian revolutionaries also aimed a national, unitary, republican, and social state and are therefore labelled the "Italian Jacobins".

Conclusion

Clearly, revolutions and civil wars in early modern Europe, embedded in their own specific contexts, were too divergent from each other to be subsumed in strong generalisations. What can be said, however, is that dynastic and factional

(especially noble) feuds were the main ingredient for civil war scenarios, often enhanced by foreign intervention and—particularly in Western Europe—by confessional strife, which could also kindle major and long-lasting internal warfare. Rebellions that grew into revolutions with more specific political goals, such as the deposition of a king, were a rare exception and only found true, long-term success in the late-sixteenth-century Netherlands. It was the French Revolution, while to some extent precipitated by rebellious movements in the 1780s, that ushered in an entirely new era and dimension of revolutions: revolutions that were planned and organised, with specific political and social goals, often of a radical nature and a clear ideological basis.

Discussion questions

1. What is the difference between civil war, revolution, and rebellion?

2. Why was the American Revolution so significant for early-modern Europeans?

3. In which ways was the French Revolution different to earlier civil wars?

Suggested reading

Asch, Ronald G., *The Thirty Years War: The Holy Roman Empire and Europe, 1618–1648* (London: Springer, 1997).

Martin, Jean-Clément, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française* (Paris: Perrin, 2019).

Neely, Sylvia, *A Concise History of the French Revolution* (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008).

Parker, David, ed., *Revolutions and the Revolutionary Tradition in the West* (London: Routledge, 2000).

Popkin, Jeremy D., *A New World Begins: The History of the French Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 2019).

Schama, Simon, *Patriots and Liberators: Revolution in the Netherlands, 1780–1813* (New York: Knopf, 1977).

Worden, Blair, *The English Civil Wars 1640–1660* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2009).

3.3.2 Revolutions and Civil Wars in Modern History (c. 1800–1900)

Caoimhe Nic Dháibhéid, Tomáš Masař, Mónika Mátay, and Juan Luis Simal

Introduction

The nineteenth century was a revolutionary century in Europe. As the French revolution continued to shape the continent, the nation emerged as a major source of political legitimacy for the new liberal states. This momentous transformation triggered reactionary movements that often took the form of legitimism. The result was an almost constant struggle to define the nature and scope of the European new polities, the nation-states, which periodically took the form of clashes between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary actors, resulting in international conflicts and civil wars. In the second half of the century, revolutionary aspirations were promoted by socialist, communist and anarchist movements that aspired to overthrow the bourgeois state.

Revolutionary Waves: 1800s-1840s

The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792–1815) spread shockwaves across Europe that on many occasions turned into civil wars. Throughout the continent, local supporters of French-induced changes—whether Jacobins or Bonapartists—fought against self-styled defenders of the nation, who sometimes rejected foreign intervention on account of reactionary legitimism, and at other times attempted to transform their political systems in ways that combined inspiration in the principles of 1789 with local traditions of reformism. Bellicose contexts and foreign interferences brought with them key political, social, and cultural transformations. While many European kings and princes were forced to abandon their realms, national constitutional

assemblies were formed amid war in places such as Cádiz (Spain) and Eidsvoll (Norway), where liberal constitutions were produced in 1812 and 1814.

After the first revolutionary wave receded, following Napoleon's defeat and the meeting of the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815), several pan-European revolutionary movements would return to the continent in 1820, 1830, and 1848.

The revolutionary cycle of 1820 was associated with demands of constitutional reform by certain sectors of European societies—mostly coming from the urban middle classes—that were dissatisfied with the political situation. The revolution started in Spain in January 1820, where King Ferdinand VII (1784–1833) had six years earlier suspended the Cádiz Constitution. Now, he was forced to accept its reinstalment. The events in Spain immediately triggered similar movements in Naples-Sicily, Portugal, and Piedmont-Sardinia, which replicated the Spanish insurrectionary model of *pronunciamiento* (a bloodless military coup accompanied by a political programme agreed with civilian activists) and adopted the Spanish Constitution. In 1821—disconnected from the events of the western Mediterranean except in the eyes of many European reactionaries who feared a continental revolution—the Greek War of Independence began, after Greeks serving in the Tsar's army revolted in the Danubian Principalities. The rebellion against the Ottoman sultan soon expanded to the south, concentrating in the Peloponnese and the Aegean Sea.

The events in southern Europe impacted public opinion across the continent and alarmed the restored monarchs. France sealed the border in the Pyrenees and gave support to the Spanish counter-revolutionary forces that had plunged the northern part of the country into a state of civil war. The French authorities were afraid of contagion at a moment when they faced several insurrections organised by the Charbonnerie (a secret society central to the Neapolitan Revolution) as well as the assassination of the Duke of Berry, the King's nephew. The Austrian Chancellor, Klemens von Metternich (1773–1859), was more alarmed by the threat coming from Italy, which directly affected Habsburg territories. The reactionary powers (Austria, Russia, Prussia, and France) reclaimed for themselves the right to intervene against liberal revolutionaries. Britain failed to give direct support, but consented to see constitutional regimes being put down by force. Thus, by the end of 1823, all of the meridional liberal regimes had been removed by the combined forces of local reaction and foreign intervention (by Austria in the Italian states, by France in Spain).

Yet even after repression, the events in the Mediterranean continued to impact Europe. In 1825, the Russian Decembrists launched a failed insurrection that was partly inspired by the Spanish pattern of liberal militarism and constitutional reform. The European powers, pressed to react to the presaged

crisis of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, intervened in the Greek struggle after their support was obtained by a philhellenic campaign. After a long and bloody war with French, British and Russian intervention, in 1830 Greece became an independent state.

A new revolutionary cycle began in 1830. Initiated in France, where the Bourbons were replaced by the 'bourgeois' King Louis Philippe d'Orléans (1773–1850), its effects were felt across the continent. This wave of revolutions combined national and liberal goals. Only one was successful: Belgium obtained independence from the Kingdom of the Netherlands and established a constitutional monarchy. But repression was the norm in the rest of the continent. The Polish insurrectionaries—some moderate liberals, some republicans—were defeated by the Russian Army, initiating a long period of exile. Likewise, uprisings in the Italian Peninsula were suppressed and some of their protagonists joined the increasing numbers of European revolutionary exiles. Germans were also added to this group, although after 1830 some small and middling German states installed constitutional charters and the pan-Germanist movement continued to grow.

In Spain and Portugal, the 1830s was a decade of intense political strife and civil war, as the succession to both crowns became a gruelling political struggle with rival dynastic candidates representing alternative state projects. Thus, Miguel I of Portugal (1801–1866) and Carlos of Spain (1788–1855) attached themselves to legitimism, while the infant queens Maria (1819–1853) and Isabella (1830–1904)—guided by Maria's father Pedro (1798–1834), former Emperor of Brazil, and Queen Regent María Cristina (1806–1878)—looked for the support of liberal forces. Finally, the liberal contenders secured the throne in both countries, although in cooperation with ultra-conservative forces. Yet revolution as a political tool persisted. In 1868 Isabel II would be overthrown by revolutionary forces led by distinguished men from the army, opening a national crisis that would give way in 1873 to the establishment of a short-lived republic.

Fear of revolutionary contagion also reached the United Kingdom. An enduring myth suggested that, while the rest of Europe was buffeted by revolutionary turbulence, British politics were shaped by measured reform and steady progress. The truth is that the United Kingdom was shaped by the threat of revolution as much as by the promise of reform. Between 1830 and 1832, Britain was in deep political crisis, as dissatisfaction with the post-Napoleonic War slump compounded the tensions engendered by early industrialisation. In the context of large population movements into rapidly expanding industrial towns, the inadequacies of the existing electoral system threatened to spill over into large-scale disturbances. The critical turning point came when the government opted for limited, pre-emptive reform rather than

reaction. The Great Reform Act of 1832 removed some of the worst abuses of the electoral system and created new constituencies to reflect changes to the demographic landscape. However, property qualifications continued to determine the franchise, and women were excluded from voting. Pressure continued to build for more radical reform, well-reflected in the popularity of the Chartist movement. Born out of discontent with the 1832 Act, the Chartists aimed to secure full political rights for working class men. Theirs was a movement of the street: protest marches and riots characterised much Chartist agitation, alongside political petitioning and other print campaigns.
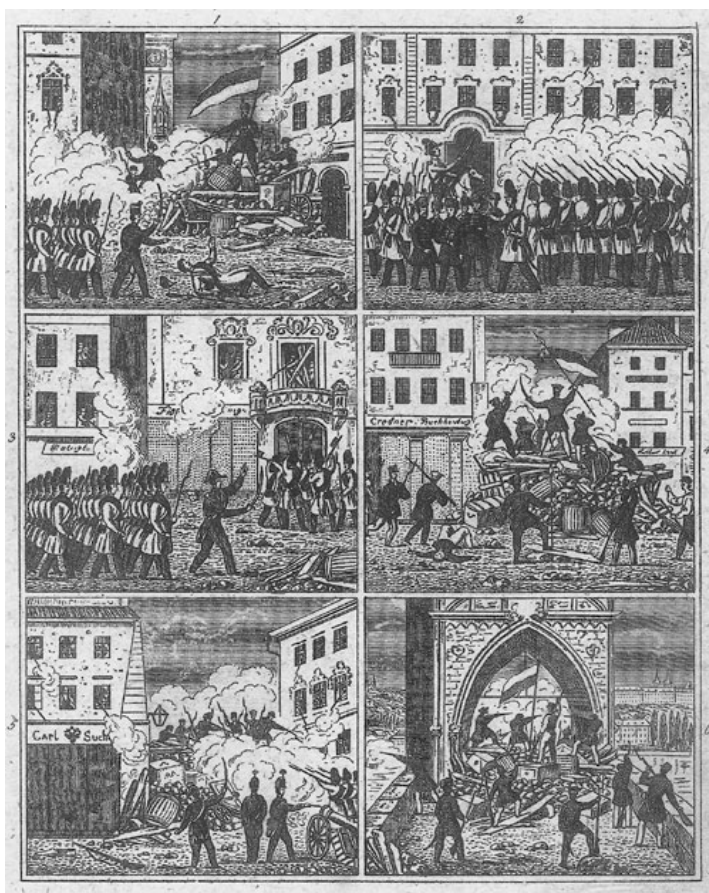
Fig. 1: Joseph Rudl, *Prague, Barricades during the revolution of 1848* (1848), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Praha_Barricades_1848.jpg.

The 1848 Revolutions

In 1848, the revolutionary wave spread swiftly across Europe. The success of the February Revolution in France, which gave birth to the Second Republic, strongly influenced European public opinion.

Several German states introduced liberal laws and governments and in March the first pre-parliament in Frankfurt am Main was assembled. On 1 May, elections took place in German lands but were boycotted in most of the non-German speaking areas of the Habsburg Hereditary Lands. The electoral system and suffrage differed according to the laws of every state, but around eighty-five percent of male inhabitants could vote.

The social composition of the Frankfurt Assembly was homogenous, consisting predominantly of middle-class academics, officials, and liberal elites. The deputies worked on a liberal constitution and in December a law granting basic rights was introduced. On 28 March 1849, the Prussian King Frederick William IV (1795–1861) was elected the new Emperor of Germany, but declined. Shortly after, the Austrian and Prussian deputies left the Assembly. The rest tried to continue working as a rump parliament, but they were first removed to Stuttgart and then dispelled by the army on 18 June 1849.

The situation in the Habsburg Empire was complicated by its heterogenous national composition. The first clashes between the crowd demanding liberal rights and the army in Vienna in March 1848 led to the outbreak of the revolution and fights on the barricades. Emperor Ferdinand I (1793–1875) promptly released the unpopular Metternich and promised a liberal constitution, which was issued in late April. Public disaffection led to new demonstrations and the frightened Emperor left the capital for Innsbruck. Meanwhile, the situation in other parts of the empire escalated. The Pan-Slavic Congress, held in Prague in June, was attended by several radicals and eventually clashed with the army. Barricades were erected and it took General Alfred I, Prince of Windisch-Grätz (1787–1862) five days to pacify the situation.

Despite disorder across the empire, after the parliamentary elections new representatives started to work on a new constitution. But the adverse situation led to another escalation and the Emperor left the capital again, this time for Moravia. Most deputies left with him and continued in their sessions in Kroměříž. Meanwhile, General Windisch-Graetz managed to pacify Vienna and headed towards Hungary. On 2 December Emperor Ferdinand I resigned, designating his nephew Franz Joseph (1830–1916) as successor. Yet he was not planning to accept a liberal constitution, dissolved the parliament on 7 March 1849 and published an octroyed constitution instead.

In Hungary, although the revolution failed and the War of Independence became a bloody civil war, these events are considered the founding narrative of modern Hungarian national identity. During the last years of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth, the Kingdom of Hungary underwent massive efforts of modernisation organised by a group of open-minded noblemen who aimed to develop the archaic economic system and introduce social and administrative reforms. From the 1820s, in the so-called

age of reforms, the liberal reformers proposed several advancements for the country, led by a young, talented, and strong-willed politician, Louis Kossuth (1802–1894).

In 1848 the progressive demands were summed up in the famous Twelve Points, which provided a common platform for Hungarian liberals. They included freedom of the press, the abolition of censorship, the appointment of government by parliament, annual parliamentary sessions, equality before the law, the abolition of serfdom and of tax exemptions for nobles, and the reunion with Transylvania, separated from the Kingdom during the Ottoman era. The Twelve Points served as the basis of the 1848 April Laws.

The revolutionary events in Paris, Berlin, and most importantly Vienna offered an advantageous international background for Hungarian progressive politicians. Hungary experienced a successful and peaceful sequence of constitutional reforms. The new constitution ratified by Emperor Ferdinand I in April 1848 introduced a new legal and social platform for the Hungarian people. The Austrian military forces, however, remained loyal to the monarch. That condition gained importance when the new emperor, the young Franz Joseph I, revoked the April Laws. The legal offence was accompanied by a military campaign against the revolutionary Hungarian government. The non-violent Spring Revolution of 1848 grew into a total and brutal civil war by the autumn, and in 1849 the Emperor defeated the Hungarian revolutionary forces, aided by a Russian army (the Russian Empire was almost untouched by the revolution). Kossuth went into lifelong exile and the leaders of the army were executed. The failed revolution was followed by a period of authoritarian political rule.

By 1848, the British Chartist movement was widespread, particularly in the industrial north. When news came of a revolution in Paris, the Chartists' moment appeared to have come. Yet, when the expected government clampdown arrived, the Chartist leader Fearghus O'Connor (1796–1855) failed to decide between violent revolution or moderation, and in the process the movement fatally lost momentum. Ireland retained serious revolutionary potential. For years, even moderates like Daniel O'Connell (1775–1847) in his ultimately unsuccessful campaign to repeal the 1800 Act of Union, used the threat of revolution in Ireland to gain political leverage. In his 'monster' meetings, he sent a clear message to the British government: grant reform, or face revolution from these unstoppable forces. In 1848, another potential powder-keg came with a short-lived rebellion in Ireland, then in the grip of a devastating famine. The Young Irelanders clearly saw their abortive action as part of the European wave of revolution, but the result was underwhelming and limited to scuffles in a rural district rather than barricades in Dublin.

Unification Wars as Revolutionary Movements and Civil Wars

In 1848 a key question for the German National Assembly was the form of German unification, which would only be resolved after a German civil war. After the refusal of the Emperor and government in Vienna to be included in the so-called 'Greater German solution', the second variant without Habsburg lands ('Smaller German solution') was accepted. In contrast to these earlier liberal and democratic attempts in 1848–1849, the following two decades saw the unification of Germany forced by the power of the Kingdom of Prussia. The first attempt in 1850—the Erfurt Union—was rebuffed by Austria and Russia, though the opposition of Austria was weakened by its defeat in the Italian War (1859), which was later exploited by the new Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898; appointed in 1862). In 1864, joint Austro-Prussian forces defeated Denmark, which was forced to cede Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg. Two years later, in 1866, Prussia knocked down Austria, annexed several northern German states and founded the North German Confederation. The whole unification process was concluded after the crushing defeat of France in 1870–1871. Wilhelm I of Prussia (1797–1888) was proclaimed German Emperor in Versailles and, once the southern German states had joined, the German Empire was founded.

France, Prussia, and Austria were also directly involved in the process of Italian unification, the *Risorgimento*, a cultural and political movement rooted in the experiences of 1820 and 1830. In 1848, even before the French and German revolutionary events, disturbances had occurred in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, which led to the momentary dethronement of the Bourbon monarchy. Elsewhere in the Italian Peninsula, liberal and nationalist forces—divided among republicans and monarchists—found their champion in the King of Piedmont-Sardinia, Charles Albert (1798–1849). In March 1848, he declared war on Austria, which controlled the unruly Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia, but was defeated. Some Italian patriots considered that the Pope should act as a unifying element, but Pius IX (1792–1878) refuted all revolutionary connections after a republic was proclaimed in Rome in 1849. Instead, he was restored by a French army sent by Louis Napoleon (1808–1873) and became a reactionary leader.

The republicans, led from exile by Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872) and Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882), still pushed for the unification of Italy on their terms, but finally accepted an arrangement that would assure them the support of the Kingdom of Piedmont, now with Vittorio Emanuele II (1820–1878) as King and Count Cavour (1810–1861) as Prime Minister. Cavour was an adept politician who managed to secure Napoleon III's support against

Austria. War resumed in 1859, this time with the Austrians facing defeat in the battles of Magenta and Solferino. Austria agreed to surrender Lombardy but kept control of Venetia. Soon after, Piedmont annexed the central Italian states of Tuscany, Parma, Modena, and the Papal Legations. The next target was the southern part of the peninsula. In 1860, Garibaldi's 'Expedition of the Thousand' landed in Sicily and a gruesome combat extended to the mainland, with the arrival of Piedmontese troops, and international volunteers joining the army of the Pope. This resulted in the incorporation of Bourbon and Papal territories into the newly created Kingdom of Italy. In 1866, profiting from the Austro-Prussian War, Italy annexed Venetia. Rome was incorporated in 1870, after the French garrison that protected the city withdrew to serve in the Franco-Prussian War. Thus, the unification of Italy was achieved through the entangled developments of revolution, international conflict, and civil war.

Social Revolution

Entangled with political projects for national liberation, those who hoped for social revolution also played a role in the 1848 Revolutions. *The Communist Manifesto* was written immediately before the 1848 outbreak, although it cannot be considered among its causes. After 1848 the socialist and labour movements adopted an increasingly pronounced internationalist outlook, culminating in the foundation of the International Working Men's Association (IWMA) or First International in London, 1864. Leadership was in the hands of French and British workers and socialists, but almost all European nationalities took part, including notable intellectual figures like the German Karl Marx (1818–1883) and the Russian Mikhail Bakunin (1814–1876). The IWMA aspired to coordinate continental groups of what was already a polyhedric left.

As a consequence of France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War and the collapse of Napoleon III's political system, a revolutionary government, the Paris Commune, ruled the French capital between 18 March and 28 May 1871, introducing radical, anti-religious policies. Socialist, communist, and anarchist trends surfaced during this brief political attempt at social democracy. The Commune was suppressed by the French Army during the 'Bloody Week' in late May 1871.

Social revolutionaries did not abandon the national question. In fact, solidarity with the failed Polish uprising of January 1863 was a catalyst for the creation of the First International, and the causes of 'oppressed' nations continued to interest socialists. Marx considered that an Irish uprising would promote a revolution in England. The threat was real, due to the Fenian or Irish Republican Brotherhood, formed in 1858. The Fenians developed into an extensive underground revolutionary conspiracy in the latter half of the

century. Following an abortive rebellion in 1867, the movement turned away from attempting mass revolution, shifting instead to agrarian agitation, and from the 1880s, a bombing campaign organised from the United States. The United Kingdom continued to grapple with the Irish Question, attempting (but failing) to enact measures of devolution in 1886 and 1893, to satisfy Irish demands for self-government in 1886 and 1893. By the first decade of the twentieth century, these demands had reached boiling point. The British Constitution appeared capable of containing them, but its limits were revealed in the Irish revolutionary period of 1912–1923.

The Paris Commune was mythicised by left-wing forces across the continent but also undermined the cohesion of the First International, which suffered from repression and reduced public support. It also endured internal conflicts like the one between Marxist statists and Bakunian anti-authoritarians. After the First's dissolution in 1876, a Second International would be founded in 1889 without the participation of anarcho-syndicalists.

Disagreements between revolutionary and reformer socialists continued to prevent the unification of the working-class political movement and, ultimately, the opposers of the liberal state and the capitalist system failed to revolutionise Europe. Britain was the most industrialised country in Europe and according to Marxism the natural location for the revolution of the proletariat. But union leaders opted for reformist policies within the constitutional system, based on Chartist demands that formed the basis of political reforms in 1867, 1884, and 1918. In Germany, social democracy was hugely successful among workers. Bismarck established anti-socialist laws in the 1870–1880s after two failed attempts to assassinate the emperor, but he also preventively introduced social rights and benefits for workers. In France, reformist Possibilists held a central position within the socialist movement.

It was rather in Southern Europe where revolutionaries who rejected electoral participation in the liberal state's institutions were more active in their attempts to bring about immediate revolution. In Spain (where in 1873 the Cantonalists endeavoured to create a federal republic) and Italy, a robust, clandestine anarchist movement developed against the background of less industrialised societies and state persecution (as in the infamous *Mano Negra* affair in 1882–83). In the vein of some Russian exiles, including Bakunin, influential Spanish and Italian activists rejected the Marxist fixation on the revolutionary role of the industrial proletariat and attempted to exploit rural unrest to urge widespread insurrectional efforts. Eventually, some anarchists translated the 'propaganda of the deed' into terrorist acts, with spectacular attacks like the assassinations of the French President (1894), the Spanish head of government (1897) or the Italian King Umberto I (1900). Another assassination, that of the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, Archduke

Franz Ferdinand (1863–1914), by a Serbian nationalist, ignited the First World War in 1914.

The war confirmed that, ultimately, nationalism was stronger than internationalism. Rather than maintaining solidarity across class lines, most socialists and syndicalists joined the patriotic fervour and supported the war effort of their respective nations. Yet ultimately the general crisis created by the war allowed for the Russian Revolution in 1917 which, indeed, shattered the whole continent.

Conclusion

Revolution was an ever-present phenomenon in nineteenth-century Europe, with many different causes and aims: a unified nation, a constitution, the liberation of the workers, and more. While there were many revolutionary waves all through the century, the Revolutions of 1848 arguably were the most consequential: a pivotal, pan-European event—the so-called Springtime of Nations—that gave the period its character, and would reverberate even across the Atlantic Ocean. It also unleashed a furious backlash of counter-revolutionary forces that would shape the geopolitical face of the continent in the second half of the century and set the stage for the First World War.

Discussion questions

1. What were the main reasons for the revolutionary waves in the first half of the nineteenth century in Europe?

2. What were the main differences between the revolutions in the second half of the century?

3. Can you think of any ways in which the revolutions of the nineteenth century still shape Europe today?

Suggested reading

Arisi Rota, Arianna, *Risorgimento: Un viaggio politico e sentimentale* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2019).

Avilés Farré, Juan, *La daga y la dinamita: Los anarquistas y el nacimiento del terrorismo* (Barcelona: Tusquets, 2013).

Bensimon, Fabrice, Quentin Deluermoz and Jeanne Moisand, eds, *"Arise Ye Wretched of the Earth": The First International in a Global Perspective* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

Deak, Istvan, *The Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians 1848–1849* (London: Phoenix Press, 2001).

Haselsteiner, Horst, *The Prague Slav Congress 1848: Slavic Identities* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 2000).

Taylor, A. J. P., *Revolutions and Revolutionaries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

Sperber, Jonathan, *The European Revolutions, 1848–1851* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

Richard Stites, *The Four Horsemen: Riding to Liberty in Post-Napoleonic Europe* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014).

3.3.3 Revolutions and Civil Wars in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Beatrice de Graaf and Mikuláš Pešta

Introduction: The Age of Revolutions as the Defining Moment

The 'long twentieth century' (or the period from the 1910s to the 2010s), began and ended with a series of revolutions—accompanied by violent conflicts and civil wars—from the Russian Revolution (1917), via the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), the post-Soviet conflicts (various wars after 1991, up until the Donbas War, 2014-present), and the Yugoslav Wars (1991–2001). To properly understand the significance of revolutions in this period, we must briefly consider how revolution as a defining event and concept was inscribed in history during the Age of Revolutions.

The Age of Revolutions—roughly spanning the era of the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Bonapartist takeover until the end of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in 1815—was the moment that both the history and historiography of revolutions took off. A revolution has since then been understood as a major "change in the way a country was governed, usually to a different political system, and often using violence or war", as defined by the *Cambridge Dictionary*. The American Revolution changed the way the American territories were governed from a monarchy (under the British sovereign) to a republic, just as France cast off the Bourbon monarchy in 1789. Since then, pundits, writers, politicians, and historians have tried to make sense of the revolution (Adolphe Thiers), reject it (Edmund Burke), or take it as a blueprint for new rounds of (violent) transformations (Pyotr Kropotkin).

This contested tradition of dealing with revolutions only intensified in the twentieth century. Are revolutions always a precursor to wars, and to civil

wars in particular? Does revolutionary zeal automatically lead to war and terror, or could such a fallout be averted and transformed into processes of democratisation? For the German historian Thomas Nipperdey, it was Napoleon who completed the transformations that manifested with the revolutionary era, and who, with his Grande Armée unleashing a "total war", would mark the beginning of a disastrous thread of civil wars and revolutions that weaves through German, and European, history. Indeed, civil wars are often a logical outcome or corollary to revolutions, as "wars fought by different groups of people living in the same country" (*Cambridge Dictionary*). Such wars could be driven by the clash of interests that were at stake in the revolution, or that were under threat of being overrun in its course. They would moreover be inspired by the fear or prevention of impending terror, with 'terror' being perceived (since the French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon) *both* as the threat of unilateral invasions and hegemonic repression by means of conquering armies and regimes, *and* as the threat posed by non-state groups aiming to overthrow the sitting government and upend the current state of interests and affairs.

Fig. 1: U.S. War Department, "Enemy Activities—Arrests of Alien Enemies—Bolsheviks in Russia—A scene in the Russian Revolution…" (1917–1918), National Archives and Records Administration, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/31477916. In early 1917, civil war broke out in Russia as the left-wing, socialist Bolshevik political party (founded by Vladimir Lenin) revolted against the standing Russian monarchy. This memo, published by the U.S War Department in December, 1918, shows a violent scene from the Bolshevik Revolution that strengthened revolutionary sentiment around the world.

At the same time, from the Age of Revolution onwards, a codification of international public law, of international humanitarian law, and the rules that guide military conduct also took place. From the 1815 Treaties onwards, via

the first official treaty codifying international humanitarian law in 1820, up until the Hague Convention of 1907 and the Nuremberg Tribunals of 1945, a juridification of customary laws of conduct in war, of permissive rights and prohibitive rights was formulated. According to the classic ('Whiggish') viewpoint, this development was the outcome of a process driven by universalist ambitions and human rights ideals. Yet, it could also be considered a contingent and open-ended reconfiguration of imperial interests, of public pressure, of inter-state and inter-empire competition and cooperation— up until the present day, with the definition of terrorism being wielded by authoritarian and populist leaders as a stick with which to hit their domestic opposition.

In short, this process is subject to ongoing contestations. New types of conflict have been codified—small wars, insurgency, and terrorism—and new crimes have been penalised, such as genocide. In the following sections, we will provide a brief argument on how revolution, revolt, small wars, insurgencies, and terrorism characterised the long twentieth century in Europe and beyond.

Revolution, War and Civil War (1914–1948)

For some historians, the chaotic, dynamic, and violent years spanning from the First World War until the Second World War should be conceived of as one long European Civil War. But in fact, when German historian Ernst Nolte made this claim, he was ostracised for seeming to reduce the 'uniqueness' of the Shoah and putting it on the same footing as the war conducted by other countries in the 1910s and 1920s. Yet, with Dirk Moses' recent work on "genocide and permanent security"—on the entanglements and genealogies of overlapping types of genocide and mass murder on an industrial scale since the nineteenth century—the argument made by Nolte has recurred.

In the twenty-first century, this idea of a European Civil War has gained ground. Conceptually speaking, the long ideological clash between socialism and imperialism, between liberalism and conservativism, and between communism and fascism was frequently the fuel of revolutions, insurgencies, coups and all-out wars during the first half of the twentieth century. The roots of this ideological struggle extended back to before the First World War, with the wave of anarchist terrorism, separatist terrorism, anticolonial violence and opposition to imperial expansion and rule in the overseas territories (Indochina, Indonesia) as an indication. The First World War in this respect 'merely' functioned as a catalyst for the further polarisation of conflict across Europe and within European countries. This trend did not stop in 1918: the Bolshevik Revolution, as a breaking point in 1917, assured the outbreak of new civil wars even after the armistice was signed. The endorsement by the

Entente Cordiale of counter-revolutionary violence by the 'Whites' in Russia and Poland served to illustrate this claim.

Robert Gerwarth has demonstrated how the disenchantment, discontent and violent outrage caused by the outcomes of the formal armistice and Paris Treaties of 1918–1919 led to new rounds of civil and small wars. Further attempts at revolution were spreading through Europe. A revolutionary state in Germany was being proclaimed. Attempts to export the revolution to Poland were being made, the *biennio rosso* was announced in Italy, as was the 'Bolshevik Triennium' in Spain. The 'vanquished' parties, who did not want to satisfy themselves with the spoils of the war (or lack thereof) as they were outlined in 1919–1922 by the Allied powers, resorted to political violence. They radicalised themselves and others, established paramilitary units (fascist or proto-fascist, but also left-wing revolutionary ones), and even tried to launch a *coup d'état*, ending in success (Italy), or further disappointment and resentment (Germany).

The stabilisation of the post-war violence and conflict in the 1920s was intermittently supported by an upward economic trend worldwide and with economic prosperity in many countries all over the world. However, a slew of terrorist attacks, the untimely deaths (homicide or natural) of leading politicians, and (on top of these) the financial and economic crisis of 1929, all conspired to carve out the contours of a new stage for global polarisation. Coalitions were formed in and between countries, with popular fronts on one side, and fascist-conservative alliances on the other. The latter rose to defend alleged national interests, ethnic homogeneity, racial purity, or European civilisation that was proclaimed to be under communist threat; the former to defend universal rights, freedom, and democracy. Liberal democracies were under pressure across the world—even in representative and parliamentary democracies, which were passed over by the 'big' crises of legitimacy, 'smaller' crises in representation and participation erupted.

The Spanish Civil War laid bare the destructive, radicalising potential of these simmering and open-ended political conflicts. It served as a proxy conflict for the European Civil War, with international interventions and the transnational organisation of assistance (with international brigades and the Comintern on the one side, and on the other, Francoist *nacionales* side, international units and direct interventions by fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, including weapons and arms supplies). The Spanish Civil War was also witnessed and visualised—the bombings and the executions—in imagery that was exported all over the world in war reporting, in Ernest Hemingway's novels, and in the unveiling of *Guernica* by Picasso at the World Expo in Paris in 1937 (and further still, on tour through Europe and the US). The eyes of Catholics, Progressives, Communists and Fascists were all on Spain and the terror that was being

waged there. Terror waged from both sides: with Catholic, conservative, and fascist publications making extensive, propagandistic use of the '*terror rojo*', the atrocities committed by republicans, communists, and anarchists against, for instance, priests or nuns.

At the same time, international humanitarian law was being further codified, with the third version of the 1864 Convention inaugurated in 1929, and the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armies in the Field adopted that same year. The League of Nations tried hard to come up with a universal definition and condemnation of terrorism, and in 1937 adopted the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism, inspired by the murder of the Yugoslav King Alexander and French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou on 9 October 1934 by a Bulgarian separatist terrorist belonging to the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (IMRO).

The Spanish Civil War was a prelude to the Second World War, as partisan movements in Italy, France and Greece launched their own struggles against ascendant fascist regimes. This was also the case in Yugoslavia, where the complexities of the radicalisation process between communists and Chetniks transitioned into the civil war on the Eastern front between the Red Army and the Russian Liberation Army, for example in Ukraine. The combination of ideological struggle, revolutionary and counterrevolutionary warfare, small wars and insurgencies, and imperial strategies of isolated and ethnicised warfare (as practised in Africa during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, for example) reached its apex in the ethnic and ideological cleansing and the industrial destruction processes carried out by the national-socialist regime.

After the war, with the Nuremberg Tribunals, genocide and crimes against humanity were codified and laid down in international and humanitarian law. But the cleansing itself did not stop and continued in the pogroms, colonial interventions, and other theatres of small wars and conflicts after 1945, such as in Indochina, Indonesia and North Africa.

Revolt, Terrorism and Democracy (1950–1989)

1945 sealed the victory of the unitary nation-state, which secured the monopoly of violence in post-war Europe (including the implementation of many newer national security agencies and provisions), but also became the key component in the emerging Cold War configuration of the international system. This east-west divide into spheres of influence prevented large scale, international, conventional wars from breaking out, with the threat of the nuclear Third World War hovering over the globe. Yet, it also gave free

reign to nation-states within their respective blocks to allow internal conflicts, revolutions, rebellions, terrorism to foster and thrive—including the escalation of many of these internal conflicts by applying repressive and brute force.

At the same time, a plethora of non-parliamentary action groups, student movements, and social organisations launched their assault on the institutions of representative and parliamentary democracy, and on the Western, US-dominated capitalist system as such. Concerns and protests were voiced by anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian movements in the West (protesting the war in Vietnam for example); anti-bureaucratic, radical socialist or human rights movements in the East (protesting the suppression of the Prague Spring); and in anti-imperialist, anticolonial movements worldwide. Many of them were engaged in mobilising their societies, sometimes even renewing attempts to carry out revolutions, such as the student movement-inspired revolts in the 1960s in the West, or the urban guerrillas in the Americas. For some, the logical outcome of the anticolonial movement was the radical type of revolutionary violence that erupted in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Colombia, and throughout the South American continent, or the revolutionary terrorism that manifested from the early 1970s in Italy (*Brigate Rosse*), West Germany (*Rote Armee Fraktion*), the United States (Weather Underground) or Japan (Japanese Red Army). For others, this type of revolutionary violence had nothing to do with the global rise of the left, and should instead be considered its aberration.

Separatist groups in Spain (ETA), Ireland (IRA), Corsica (National Liberation Front), Cyprus (EOKA), and the Netherlands (the Moluccan Youths) each appropriated symbols, style, and ideology from left-wing radical groups and staged attacks and hijackings of their own. Against this global tide of left-wing revolutionary activism, extremism, and terrorism, an upsurge of neo-fascist radicalisation also bred terrorist attacks from the right, while forging transnational ties between extreme right-wing activists and terrorists in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, and the United States. Were these instances of separatist and right-wing terrorism equally a part of national liberation movements, or rather their opposite?

The result of this upsurge in terrorist attacks and radical violence was an expansion of state security, with aggressive, covert intelligence programmes like the FBI's COINTELPRO and the CIA's Operation CHAOS at the helm, staging activities against (alleged) extremist domestic organisations. In West Germany, the Federal Criminal Agency's (*Bundeskriminalamt*) computer-engineered profiling programmes followed suit. The transnational policing of terrorism and dissent went into overdrive with the creation of the Club de Berne in 1971, an intelligence-sharing forum of European countries, and with a renewed focus on the definition, prosecution and securitisation of radical activism and extremism as a consequence. In 1989, the collapse of socialism

in the countries in Eastern Europe and the fall of the Berlin Wall ushered in the ideological bankruptcy of left-wing revolutionary terrorism (and blew away the cover of many fugitive *Rote Armee Fraktion* terrorists hiding in East Germany).

Yet, while this so-called third wave of modern terrorism (the first one being the anarchist wave, the second the anticolonial wave) was waning, a new wave of 'holy terrorism' was already waxing in Afghanistan, under the cover of the Soviet-Afghan War that was waged between 1979 and 1989.

From Global Cold War to New Chaos (1989–2020)

The revolutions of 1989–1991 seemed to lay bare the innate contradictions of communism and socialism, and also 'prove' that the West and its liberal, democratic system had 'won' the day. Yet, the failure of the Western-dominated, US-propelled global order to secure the 'peace dividend' quickly became apparent in post-Soviet conflicts in the Balkans, Chechnya, Armenia and elsewhere—a half-crescent of conflict surrounding Europe. The Yugoslav Wars that broke out in 1991, centred around the break-up of the communist Yugoslav Federation in 1992, were especially shocking, since they brought home ethnic conflict, ethnic cleansing, and the genocide of Bosnian Muslims to a European continent that had not witnessed anything similar since the Second World War. Only US assistance and NATO bombing brought an end to the war in 1995, although violent conflicts persisted until 2001. Since then, separatist and irrendentist armed conflict has continued, leading to significant numbers of casualties and destabilisation across the region: along the borders of Europe, the Caucasus, Georgia—and in 2014, after the Ukrainian revolution in the Donbas and the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation. The downing of the MH17 passenger flight over eastern Ukraine by pro-Russian separatists on 17 July 2014, in which all 283 passengers and 15 crew members were killed, catapulted the terror of war into the heart of Europe as well.

The centrifugal powers of international anarchy, the increasing multipolarity of the international states system, and the global spread of discontent and ethnic-nationalist conflict simmered throughout the 1990s. The 9/11 terrorist attacks in the USA (2001) proved to be the boiling point, with the subsequent War on Terror creating new extra-legal categories of combatants. The wars in Afghanistan (since 2001) and the invasion of Iraq by a US-led coalition in 2003, with their unilateral, pre-emptive strikes, 'black sites' and 'dark prisons', further undermined the feeble post-Cold War order. The rise of the Internet via Facebook (public in 2006), Twitter (2011), and other social media platforms has raised global patterns of polarisation, radicalisation, and terrorism to a whole new dimension. Populism propelled new-authoritarian leaders to

power in Brazil (Jair Bolsonaro), the US (Donald Trump), and Hungary (Viktor Orbán)—or kept them there, as in certain post-Soviet states and Russia (Nursultan Nazarbayev, Alexander Lukashenko and Vladimir Putin).

At the same time, these authoritarians who came to power by promising security and prosperity to their supporters also unleashed new rounds of escalating violence, crisis, and mayhem in their own countries and worldwide. Once more, as in the 1970s and 1980s, right-wing terrorism seems to be piggy-backing on the alleged fourth wave of holy terrorism (mainly jihadism), parasitising on supposed fears for immigration, 'Islamisation', the 'end of European civilisation', and the alleged 'selling out' of middle-class, 'white' interests. With the threat of the classic, French-style or communist revolution receded into the corridors of history, the most recent revolutions of the Arab Spring in 2011 so far only seemed to have brought forth greater authoritarian backlash and repression in the Middle East and Asia, along with the European populist fallout mentioned above.

Conclusion

The historic and historiographic notions of revolution and civil war can be traced back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the concepts of the international legal system and the unitary state were established. In the twentieth century, the First World War served as a catalyst of the evolving, long-term ideological struggle between revolution and counter-revolution, as some interpretations contend. The afterwar turmoil, nourished by the Bolshevik Revolution and by the sentiments of those whose ideas were not fulfilled during the war, somewhat stabilised around 1923. The 1930s Depression, however, intensified the crisis of legitimacy in the liberal democratic system and strengthened calls for alternatives, both right and left. Traces of these clashes can be found in the international dimensions of the Spanish Civil War and in intra-national conflicts within the Second World War.

The strengthening of the state in post-war Europe, along with the new Cold War division, led to the elimination of inter-state warfare as a tool of politics. But at the same time, it gave way to a new wave of politically motivated revolutionary violence. Even though the goals and ideologies of newly emerged terrorist groups were very different, their shared imagery and discourse led to the interpretation framing them as part of a single wave.

After 1989, the re-emergence of nationalism provoked several local conflicts. The globalised world became the main opponent of various insurgent movements, many of which could be classified as religious. The new era after 2001 led to reconceptualisation of the notions of terror and asymmetric conflict.

Discussion questions

1. Explain the idea of a 'European Civil War.' Do you agree with this interpretation of the twentieth century in Europe?

2. Is this 'European Civil War' over? And if so, what are its legacies?

3. The text above makes a difference between 'small wars' and large-scale conflicts such as the First World War and the Second World War. How are these types of war related in contemporary European history?

Suggested reading

Gerwarth, Robert, *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End* (London: Allen Lane, 2016).

Goff, Krista A., *Nested Nationalism: Making and Unmaking Nations in the Soviet Caucasus* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2020).

de Graaf, Beatrice, *Evaluating Counterterrorism Performance: A Comparative Study* (Milton Park, Abingdon: Routledge 2011).

Moses, Anthony Dirk, *The Problems of Genocide: Permanent Security and the Language of Transgression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Rapoport, David, 'The four waves of modern terrorism', in Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes, eds, *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004), pp. 46–73.

Reill, Dominique, *The Fiume Crisis: Life in the Wake of the Habsburg Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020).

CHAPTER 3.4
PEACE AND CONFLICT

3.4.1 Peace and Conflict in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Roberto Quirós Rosado and Devin Vartija

Introduction

Fig. 1: Jacob de Gheyn, "Overwinning van Karel V op Frans I bij Pavia" ("Victory of Charles V over Francis I at Pavia") (1614), Rijksmuseum.nl, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.446432. At the Battle of Pavia (1525), the army of the King of France was defeated by the more innovative military techniques of the Holy Roman Emperor's army. In this print, a glorious cavalry unity falls at the hands of a tightly-packed infinity unit equipped with long spears.

Though war has been nearly ubiquitous throughout history, one should not view it as a monolith based on mentalities inherent in human nature, for this would obscure crucial transformations in the causes, practices, and

consequences of war at various epochs in the past. One such 'epoch' that witnessed a crucial transformation in warfare was early modern Europe. Scholars write of an early modern 'military revolution', which links the rise of the 'Modern State' to changing practices of warfare. The creation of standing armies, their increasing size, and the concomitant growth in expenditure and bureaucracy to manage ever more complex strategic and logistical questions all necessitated the consolidation of the modern state apparatus. This is just one of the most significant aspects of the history of conflict and peace in the early modern period. In this chapter, we consider some of the key wars and peace settlements of the early modern period, analyse changes in the technology and practices of warfare, present a framework for understanding the shifting political allegiances and the balance of power across the period, and conclude with reflections on the immense political changes wrought by the practice of warfare.

The Iron Centuries

Tradition and Modernity in the Sixteenth Century

The medieval heritage in the early modern age was more decisive than had been assumed in liberal or Marxist historiographies. There occurred a slow evolution in the field of mentalities, social forms, and pre-industrial technology. During those centuries, this slow evolution would bring together traditional models of human behaviour (persistence of the tripartite structure of society based in *milites*, *oratores*, and *laboratores*) or jurisdictional horizons still based on universalisms (Papacy, Holy Roman Empire, the Portuguese concept around the 'Fifth Empire'), with new geographical-territorial realities in the overseas world or in the forms of government, progressively renewed and institutionalised. Due to the current historiographical doubts about the existence of a 'Modern State', especially for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this renewed consideration for the period can also be checked thanks to the evolution of the Art of War.

Europe—organised politically in a succession of kingdoms, lordships, and republics of Medieval heritage—witnessed a string of conflicts during the first half of the sixteenth century. First, there were the so-called 'Italian Wars': a struggle for political and military hegemony between Valois France, and Trastamara Spain under Isabella and Ferdinand, the Catholic monarchs, that continued during the reign of Emperor Charles V of Habsburg. Second, there was a latent conflict between Christian and Muslim powers. Led by the Spanish monarchs and the Ottoman sultans, and dressed up in the ideals of 'crusade' and 'jihad', Christians and Muslims fought for control of the Balkans, access

to the Danube Valley, and Mediterranean shipping routes. Finally, there were several confessional wars which bloodied much of Central Europe as a result of the Lutheran Reformation. This conflict temporarily gave way to an unstable peace between the contenders during the 1550s. The signing of the Peace of Augsburg (1555), which put an end to armed religious conflict in the Empire, was complemented by another Spanish-French peacemaking negotiation at Cateau-Cambrésis (1559) that sealed Philip II's (1527–1598) influence over Catholic Europe. However, fighting in the Mediterranean did not cease, but rather intensified—as shown by the Ottoman failure at Malta (1565) and the victory of the 'Holy League', formed by Spain and the Italian potentates, over the Turkish armada at Lepanto (1571). Spanish hegemony was shattered over the following decades by the revolt in the Low Countries led by William of Orange with English support, while confessional tensions between Catholics and Calvinists (Huguenots) led late-Valois France to a succession of civil wars. To this accumulation of conflicts in Western Europe was added the emergence of other, new actors (the Russia of Ivan the Terrible, first Tsar since 1547) or the consolidation of territorial powers (the creation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1569), all consequences of years of religious instability, aristocratic seditions, and the rise to power of sovereigns and dynasties with a marked expansionism directed at their neighbours.

European warfare in the sixteenth century progressively expanded into other areas of the world. The expansion of the main European powers to other latitudes was a concrete reality: the Ottoman Empire loomed over the Balkans, Asia Minor and the Levant, as well as Egypt and the southern shores of the Mediterranean; the Monarchy of Spain exerted influence over much of Western and Southern Europe, as well as over parts of Africa, America, and Asia from the time of Charles V and Philip II (who added Portugal and its overseas empire to his inherited possessions); the kingdoms of France and England, as well as the United Provinces of the Netherlands, progressively turned to search for new global markets at the expense of the Spanish-Portuguese dynastic conglomerate.

In any case, the Ottoman, Spanish, and Dutch influence in European warfare was based on different, successful and advanced military systems. At the end of the fifteenth century and in the first decades of the sixteenth century, a mixture of ancient and modern warfare practices can be seen clearly in the War of Granada (1482–1492) and the Italian Wars (1494–1559). On a continent accustomed to long and bloody conflicts, martial practices still revolved around chivalry and its codes of honour. The role of the military nobility in the Franco-Burgundian tradition was hegemonic in the conduct of conflicts but, at the same time, was challenged by new innovations in weaponry and strategy. The periodic demise of the French aristocratic elite in battles (Crécy,

1346; Azincourt, 1415) continued during the struggle for dominance over Italy, when Habsburg German mercenary troops or Spanish infantry annihilated the Valois cavalry (Pavia, 1525; Saint Quentin, 1557). The innovative successes of the Habsburgs would therefore come from a communion between the service of the nobility in arms and new corps equipped with heavy artillery, pikes, and firearms integrated into *coronelías* (Spanish military corps organised by Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, the Great Captain (1453–1515)) and the consequent *tercios* (formed by Charles V between 1534 and 1536). This would not mean the demise of chivalric usages, especially in a monarchy—such as the Spanish one—whose highest award was the Order of the Golden Fleece and which had numerous knights belonging to the Order of Malta or the Castilian, Valencian, and Portuguese military 'religions'. This symbiosis, as in other European cases, was based on the dissemination of the archetype of the courtier, skilled in arms and letters, as advocated by Count Baldassare Castiglione (1478–1529) in his book *Il Cortegiano* (published in 1528).

The triumph of the Habsburgs (Charles V and Philip II) over France did not tarnish the success that other powers would enjoy on the continent and in the Mediterranean world. The successful model of military organisation employed by the Ottoman Empire was a case in point. After the conquest of Constantinople (1453) and Turkish expansion over the last Byzantine or Latin principalities in both Asia Minor (Trebizond) and Greece (Athens, Mystras) during the reign of Mehmet II, the need to subdue the Empire's opponents beyond the Danube or the Mamluk Empire required the optimisation of its resources. The forced recruitment and Islamisation of Christian children from lands dominated by the Sublime Porte created a large pool of human capital, the Janissaries, who were fully trained in war and loyal to the sultan and his grand viziers. Alongside the Janissaries, the *sipahis*—Turks who owned a fief (*timar*)—provided the Ottoman land armies with a large cavalry corps, while a systematic plan was implemented to build artillery galleys which, in conjunction with the corsairs of the Barbary Regencies, would periodically ravage the Italian and Iberian coasts and confront the naval forces of the King of Spain or the Grand Master of the Knights Hospitaller of Malta.

Finally, between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and as a direct consequence of the rebellion of Dutch nobles and cities against Philip II, a new system of military order and strategy emerged, one that would have a decisive influence on the evolution of warfare for the rest of the early modern age: the military innovations of Maurice of Orange-Nassau (1567–1625). The son of Prince William of Orange (1533–1584), from his youth he was trained in the combat practices of the Flemish rebels and their English, French, and German allies against the Spanish *tercios*. With strongly disciplined but fewer than usual troops, able to sustain a continuous rate of fire of arquebuses and

muskets, the stadtholder Maurice managed to conquer several positions in Flanders and Brabant, and even to beat the armies of the new Habsburg ruler, Archduke Albert (1559–1621) at the Battle of Nieuwpoort (1600). By then, the war in the Low Countries had become a chessboard in which infantry, and cavalry, galleys and galleons, and (above all) strongholds and bastions designed on the mathematical *trace italienne* settled a conflict that would last for eight decades.

Dynasticism and the Struggle for Continental Hegemony

These advances in military order and technology conditioned the conflicts that continued to emerge at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Crucial elements of warfare were continuous with the preceding century. Dynasticism—the preservation of a ruling family's territory and titles—continued to play a central role in international relations and therefore was indisputably the most common cause of war, at least until the early eighteenth century. The seventeenth century witnessed the consolidation of the fiscal-military state as well as a decisive shift in the balance of power on continental Europe, from Habsburg (Spanish and Austrian) to Bourbon (French), English, and Dutch hegemony. The century also witnessed the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), which was arguably the most significant war of the period.

The Thirty Years' War was the most lethal conflict Europe had seen until that date and would remain the most lethal until the World Wars of the twentieth century. The outbreak of the Thirty Years' War highlights the importance of two features central to early modern warfare: dynastic inheritance and intractable religious conflict. When the Austrian Habsburg heir Archduke Ferdinand (1578–1637) was crowned King of Bohemia in 1617, he began curtailing the rights of Protestants, which led to the revolt of the Estate of Bohemia. The Protestant Frederick V (1596–1632), the Palatine Elector, accepted the throne of the rebellious Estate of Bohemia, a move that would have overturned the Catholic majority of the seven electors of the Holy Roman Empire. The stage was set for a European-wide conflict, as Archduke Ferdinand secured the support of the Spanish Habsburgs and many of the Catholic German states, while Frederick V allied with the rulers of some of the most important Protestant territories—Transylvania, the United Provinces, Brandenburg, and several smaller Calvinist German states. Frederick V also received more tenuous support from his father-in-law, James I of England (1566–1625), Christian IV of Denmark (1577–1648), and from the French, the main dynastic rivals of the Habsburgs. Although the role of confessional strife is clear in the outbreak and course of the Thirty Years' War, it should not be exaggerated either, as the French Bourbons fought against the Spanish and

Austrian Habsburgs—Catholic powers—demonstrating that dynastic rivalry could trump religious concordance. Fighting was not continuous over the thirty years, as historians traditionally divide the conflict into four phases: (1) the Bohemian Period, 1618–1625; (2) the Danish Period, 1625–1630; (3) the Swedish Period, 1630–1635; and (4) the Swedish-French Period, 1635–1648. The scale of the fighting during the war was unprecedented and so were the effects of the war on civilians, especially in the German lands.

The Thirty Years' War ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 after years of negotiations involving all the states active in the conflict, rather than two or three of the major participants. This was unprecedented and would serve as a model for peace negotiations for centuries to come, consolidating as it did the development of permanent diplomatic representation and the commitment of powerful European states to guaranteeing peace settlements. Diplomacy as a distinct institution only developed from the sixteenth century onwards and became increasingly well-defined across the early modern period, with the Peace of Westphalia giving its evolution a significant boost. France and Sweden gained the most from the peace settlement, as France replaced Spain as the preeminent power on the continent and Sweden gained several northern territories of the Holy Roman Empire. The Habsburgs were the greatest losers of the peace settlement, as the Spanish recognised Dutch independence and the Austrians ceded autonomy to the Swiss Confederation and the German princes of the Holy Roman Empire.

During the early modern period through to the last quarter of the seventeenth century, armies consisting of relatively ill-trained, rapidly recruited troops were the norm in Europe. This changed dramatically after the Peace of Westphalia, as sovereigns were wary of troops who were often more loyal to commanding officers (nearly always noblemen) than to distant political rulers. The most significant example of the establishment and growth of standing armies in the second half of the seventeenth century is France, which had an army of about 55,000 troops in the 1660s under the reign of Louis XIV (1638–1715), five times larger than any preceding standing army and the largest in Europe besides that of the Ottoman Empire. These troops were better trained and reflect the importance of the rise of the fiscal-military state, as maintaining such a large army required a more centralised bureaucracy capable of raising the necessary funds. Louis XIV fought three wars in the seventeenth century: the War of Devolution (1667–1668), the Dutch War (1672–1678), and the War of the League of Augsburg (1688–1697). The first two wars were spectacularly successful for Louis XIV, gaining France new territory in the Spanish Netherlands and the western lands of the Holy Roman Empire. This demonstrated the success of the new military machine created under Louis XIV's rule, with the help of his Minister of War Michel Le Tellier (1603–1685) and his son, the Marquis

de Louvois (1641–1691). But France was also immensely strained under the pressure to maintain such a large army and navy and had to agree to the Treaty of Rijswijk (1697) that ended the War of the League of Augsburg, forcing Louis XIV, the so-called 'Sun King', to return almost all the territory he had gained since 1679.

European Warfare until Napoleon

The eighteenth century opened with a major conflict, the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1713), which was settled by the Peace of Utrecht (1713–1714). Three features and consequences of the Peace of Utrecht would characterise geopolitics throughout the century: the fall of France as the most powerful player in European politics, the rise of Great Britain and Russia as major military powers, and the increasing tendency for European conflicts to involve colonial territories far away from Europe. The war began when Spanish King Charles II (1661–1700) died without an heir. He declared Louis XIV's second grandson, Philip, Duke of Anjou (1683–1746), as his successor, which the Austrian Emperor Leopold I (1640–1705) refused to accept. France lost a series of battles against the Holy Roman Empire and England, led by Prince Eugene (1663–1736) and the Duke of Marlborough (1650–1722) respectively. Under the terms of the Peace of Utrecht, Philip was recognised as King but had to renounce any claims to the French throne (thus barring unification of the kingdoms), and France ceded territory in Canada to the British: Newfoundland, the Hudson Bay area, and most of Nova Scotia. Another succession war, that of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748), occurred when Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI (1685–1740) died without a male heir and the Prussian King Frederick II (1712–1786) thought that Charles VI's daughter, the newly-crowned Austrian Empress Maria Theresa (1717–1780), would be too weak to stop his invasion of the rich Austrian territory of Silesia. France joined the fray to humiliate its long-standing enemies, the Austrians, and Great Britain allied with Austria to prevent the French from taking the Austrian Netherlands. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) that ended the conflict, recognised Maria Theresa as Empress of Austria, but she had to recognise Prussian control of Silesia; Frederick II's (later Frederick the Great's) Prussia became established as a great European power with the most efficient and well-organised army of the era.

The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle failed to resolve long-standing colonial disputes, however, and just eight years later, in 1756, there occurred a major realignment of the European powers and the outbreak of what British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (1874–1965) would later famously call the 'first world war': the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). Prussia and Great Britain signed a defensive alliance, which prompted Austria to overlook centuries of enmity with France and ally with Louis XV (1710–1774) in what historians

call the 'Diplomatic Revolution'. The Seven Years' War had two root causes: continental rivalry between Austria and Prussia, and colonial rivalry between France and Great Britain. Frederick the Great won an astounding victory against a much larger Franco-Austrian army at Rossbach in Saxony in 1757, but was soon surrounded by the combined forces of the French, Austrian, and Russian armies. An accident of history saved Frederick the Great, as Empress Elizabeth of Russia (1709–1762) died in 1762, succeeded by the great admirer of Frederick and Prussia, Peter III (1728–1762). Russia thus concluded a peace treaty with Prussia and Frederick was able to hold onto all his territories. Great Britain enjoyed naval superiority from the 1750s onwards and was able to defeat French fleets in North America, India, and the West Indies. The Treaty of Paris (1763), which ended the conflict, had truly colossal consequences: France ceded all of Canada to Britain and removed its military from India, but kept its wealthy West Indian islands. The desire to avenge this humiliating defeat was one of the reasons why France supported the American revolutionaries in the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783), support that was crucial to its success.

Two elements fundamental to modern warfare would develop in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras (1789–1815): a popular, subscription-based army infused with patriotism, and the mobilisation of almost all of society's resources for warfare ('total war'). Revolutionary and Napoleonic France was at war with every European power at one point or another in this period, and was sometimes in conflict with all at once. While initially suffering from disorder and lack of experience, the revolutionary army quickly won spectacular victories, partially thanks to the use of innovative battle tactics made possible by patriotic troops fighting for a revolution they themselves had helped to create. Napoleon (1769–1821) was able to mobilise the energy unleashed by the revolution into a very effective war machine capable of fighting quick and decisive battles, trampling over the balance of power system that had characterised the conduct of war throughout the eighteenth century. Once Napoleon met his demise in Russia and Waterloo between 1812 and 1815, there developed a new conception of European international relations captured by the term 'Concert of Europe'. This was characterised by greater self-restraint on the part of large power players and the more ready recognition that the legitimate interests of other states must be recognised for longer-term stability to be achieved.

Conclusion

European warfare changed so dramatically in the early modern period that if an observer from 1500 could have witnessed practices of war and peace in 1800,

she would have been utterly astonished. Perhaps most significantly, the size of armies increased dramatically across this period. During the Thirty Years' War, the average size of an army in battle was 19,000; by the Napoleonic Wars a century and a half later, the average size had nearly quadrupled to 84,000. The resources required to coordinate and administer such large and complex movements of troops contributed to the consolidation of the modern state as a powerful institution that centralised its political power. The sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation added a new, religious dimension to conflicts both within and between European states, reaching its nadir in the bloodiest conflict of the period, the Thirty Years' War. In the sixteenth century, France fought the Habsburgs of Spain and Austria for continental hegemony but had to contend with rising Dutch and Swedish power in the seventeenth century. By the mid-eighteenth century, France's military power had been decisively checked by a more powerful Great Britain and Prussia. While European conflicts already had a global dimension in the sixteenth century, transoceanic connections intensified especially in the eighteenth century, meaning that developments in colonies far from the European continent could directly impact conflicts internal to Europe at an unprecedented scale by the outbreak of the Seven Years' War of the mid-eighteenth century. Not only did warfare change, but so, too, did practices of establishing and maintaining peace. Arguably, the most significant development in this regard was the establishment of permanent diplomatic representation between states and the rise of the idea of a balance of power that states should be committed to maintaining. The eighteenth-century Enlightenment saw the birth of both the perspective that war should be made more 'humane' since it cannot be avoided, and the perspective that perpetual peace is a real possibility (as in Immanuel Kant's famous 1795 tract), two views that continue to underpin debates about war and peace in the twenty-first century.

Discussion questions

1. What role did religion play in peace and conflict in early modern Europe?

2. Why was the Thirty Years' War so transformational for early modern Europe?

3. Early modern warfare was closely related to the development of the state, for example in raising taxes for standing armies. Do you see any parallels to modern warfare?

Suggested reading

Black, Jeremy, *A Military Revolution? Military Change and European Society 1550–1800* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1991).

Frigo, Daniela, 'Prudence and Experience: Ambassadors and Political Culture in Early Modern Italy', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38:1 (2008), 15–34.

Gunn, Steven, David Grummitt, and Hans Cools, 'War and the State in Early Modern Europe: Widening the Debate', *War in History* 15:4 (2008), 371–388.

Lynn, John A., *Giant of the Grand Siècle: The French Army, 1610–1715* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Parker, Geoffrey, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Parrott, David, *The Business of War: Military Enterprise and Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Rodríguez Hernández, Antonio José, *Breve historia de los Tercios de Flandes* (Madrid: Nowtilus, 2015).

Sherer, Idan, *Warriors for a Living: The Experience of the Spanish Infantry during the Italian Wars, 1494–1559* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

Torres Sánchez, Rafael, *Military Entrepreneurs and the Spanish Contractor State in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

3.4.2 Peace and Conflict in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Beatrice de Graaf, Nere Basabe, Jan Hansen

Introduction

There is a lingering debate among historians as to whether the long nineteenth century—the period between 1789 and 1918—should be considered an age of relative peace with localised and short-lived wars, or whether it should rather be seen as a particularly violent century. First, the period saw the Napoleonic Wars, which came to an end in 1815 and which had devastating consequences for the whole of Europe. Additional wars throughout the century included a series of regional conflicts, and—at the very end—the beginning of the First World War. But the era also witnessed the development of collaborative institutions and the idea of the 'Concert of Europe', which helped to contain violent conflicts. The nineteenth century also gave birth to increasing transnational peace movements. Certainly, the answer to the question of whether the nineteenth century was particularly violent or particularly peaceful depends on where one looks. In their colonial empires, the European powers were anything but peaceful. There, they exercised brutal violence against indigenous populations and deprived the colonised territories of their resources. The European powers were also indirectly involved in the American Civil War (1861–1865), which was extremely costly. The nineteenth century saw both the birth of industrial warfare, and has nonetheless often been characterised as an epoch of 'peace and prosperity'. How can we explain these two phenomena and their apparent contradiction?

The Birth of Industrial Warfare

With the revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars between the years 1792–1815, an age of continuous warfare reached its nadir. Although the battles of 1792–1815 had not been bloodier or more gruesome than the battles during the Seven

Years' War (1756–1763), historian David Bell nonetheless speaks of a new, 'total war'. Civilian casualties range between 0.75 and 3 million; in Tirol, Spain, Italy, Russia, and France irregular bands of armed rebels and citizens fought alongside conscripted soldiers. On top of all casualties, countless soldiers came home as invalids, thereby adding to the misery and poverty of their family members. In the Netherlands, seventy percent of conscripts never returned.

These wars were among the last belonging to the 'age of men', when wars were waged with infantry and cavalry. The 'age of machines and technology', with its industrial capacities to destroy, had not yet arrived, but the last large battle of the Napoleonic Wars, the Battle of Waterloo (1815), already demonstrated the tremendous power of artillery, devastating columns of infantrymen. The socio-economic, military and especially human costs of these wars were catastrophic. They provoked new reflection from figures such as the Prussian strategist Carl von Clausewitz, who himself participated in the wars, developing his military theory in the book *On War* (published posthumously in 1832). More than half of all the casualties and victims fell in the last three years of the wars, when the scale of armies and battlefields grew considerably.

The effect of this was first and foremost to create vivid, lasting memories of death and destruction in the minds of the citizens of Europe, which endured after the war was over in 1815. The wars left not just the European continent, but also India, the Middle East (with the sack of Jaffa by Napoleon in 1799), and the Americas with deep traumas and scars of a protracted period of warfare. A striking example of these traumas (and their long aftermath) is the massacre of the French and French Creole population in the wake of the Haitian Revolution in 1791. The ensuing battles and massacres occurred in the context of France's long and troubling colonial rule in Saint-Domingue (as Haiti was called before 1804), but it was also a 'subaltern genocide' against the colonisers, killing between 3,000 and 5,000 people and demonstrating how new technologies of warfare were already being used in non-European spaces by1804.

The wars also prompted a transition away from increasingly obsolete fortresses—with the last great fortresses being erected along the north-eastern border of France, the 'Wellington Barrier', and along the North American East Coast. Instead, there was new investment in rapid transportation infrastructures (with the advent of railroads), new information and communication technologies, and the training and use of mass-conscripted armies. Napoleon had raised the stakes with his use of *levées en masse* and the introduction of semaphores (optic telegraphs) into his operational communications: the post-1815 monarchies and empires would not forget these developments.

The industrial age expanded the scope of warfare, both on land and at sea. Warfare moved from hand-to-hand combat and beyond the immediate

visual range to an early form of remote warfare, 'beyond the hill'. Because of technological improvements in rifles, firepower, explosive shells, guns, and accompanying infrastructures (thanks to innovations in metallurgy), warfare was carried out increasingly in trenches, with the Crimean War (1853–1856) as the first large-scale manifestation of this development. In the lead-up to the First World War, machine guns, chemical weapons, landmines, and early armoured tanks were already being tested and introduced. Many of these new techniques were tested in colonial territories and at sea, leaving Europe and the Americas more or less peaceful until the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871), and the American Civil War. This high-casualty war between the US North and South is generally considered to be the first industrially fought war in modern history.

Peace and Prosperity?

The theory of 'the long peace' was compounded by Paul Schroeder in his seminal work *The Transformation of Europe*. Schroeder traced the intricate diplomatic settlement in and beyond Europe from 1763 to 1848, with a pivot on the Congress of Vienna and the ensuing Concert of Europe in 1815. According to Schroeder, the trauma and devastations of the previous years had prompted the powers of Europe to invent and consolidate mechanisms of alliance building—not just in preparation for war, but also for maintaining peace. The European powers tried out new instruments of conflict management, which in many cases preferred peaceful conflict resolution to the violent assertion of interests. A new type of diplomacy, based on negotiation, cooperation and the establishment of norms and rules, was attempted, and ultimately coalesced under the title of 'European Concert' in 1814–1815.

It is important to note that this post-1815 system should not be considered an era of 'restoration' since there had been no "turning back of the clock." Instead, "the spirit and essence, the fundamental principles and operation, of the international system […] were anything but backward looking, were instead progressive, oriented in practical, non-Utopian ways to the future" (Schroeder). Indeed, part of the explanation for the long peace is the fact that the self-appointed and so-called 'first rank powers' (France, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Britain) kept consulting each other in ambassadorial and ministerial conferences. With only a handful of congresses taking place between 1648 and 1815, the generations following 1815 organised conferences on almost every issue that plagued international relations: conferences on the Belgian Question, the Papal Question, conferences on sanitation, on Syria, on the postal system, on seaports, and on the organisation of quarantine stations across the borders of the European lands.

From the mid-nineteenth century onward, attempts can be identified to codify legal standards for international relations, including warfare. Arguably the most famous example is the Lieber Code of 1863, which explicated the law of war for land battles in the American Civil War. A year later (1864), the first Geneva Convention initiated the modern law of war. The Hague Peace Conferences (1899/1907) finally brought far-reaching agreements on warfare, constituting one of the first attempts by the international community to abolish war as an institution. Even before the Lieber Code, fifty-five nations agreed in 1856 to the Declaration of Paris, which governed maritime warfare. This international system was far more institutionalised than the states system of the *ancien régime*, with its loose wartime coalition and cabinet wars. It was supported by 'middle men', second-tier officials, who invested themselves in the new culture of security, peace, and prosperity. When the traumas of the Napoleonic Wars waned, this system still did not completely dissolve or unravel in 1822, nor in 1848, as some historians have contended, but transformed itself, and was constantly reconfigured as a system of conflict and security, of empire and revolution throughout the long nineteenth century. The various ministerial conferences, ambassadorial meetings, the making of international law, and the inter-imperial 'rage for order' initiated by the empires of Europe did not cease to exist, but in fact spread across the world and intensified in scope and impact up until the First World War and beyond, when European ambitions and emotions set the world in flames once again.

The European Concert sanctioned the right to interfere in order to maintain the security of the states system as a whole. As a consequence, there were various military interventions against revolutionary countries that were seen as a potential threat to the system, because civil conflict between supporters of absolutism and liberalism was far from being eradicated. Resultant clashes included the Austrian invasion of Italy in 1821, and the French invasion of Spain in 1823. The Holy Alliance did not officially intervene in the Greek War of Independence (1821–1830) against the Ottoman Empire, but that lack of action itself triggered a massive mobilisation of public opinion and resulted in many volunteers across the continent mobilising to fight for the independence of Greece.

This transition not only occurred at the level of statesmen, diplomats, and generals, but also at the intellectual and societal levels. Liberal doctrine promised, in its most idealistic version, a future of perpetual peace, with warlike societies replaced by commercial societies: against a model of enemies and confrontation, the prosperity linked to free trade promoted peaceful exchange for the benefit of all. The nineteenth century thus saw the proliferation of a multitude of publications concerning peace and the emergence of organised pacifism and mass peace movements, all of which indicated a change in social values and norms.

These moments of conflict appear closely linked to the proliferation of schemes for 'perpetual peace', with the publication of such visions peaking at turbulent moments such as 1800, 1814–1815, or 1830. In Italy, between 1795 and 1800, at least 140 peace projects were proposed. The irenic ideal of perpetual peace was a long-standing medieval tradition. Most of its formulations advocated the establishment of world governance through supranational institutions, or the federation of the continent as a means to achieve the ultimate goal of a definitive, universal peace. This debate was reformulated by late-Enlightenment figures such as the Abbé de Saint-Pierre (1712), Rousseau (1761), Jeremy Bentham (1789), Kant (1795), or Görres (1797), who withdrew the idea of a universal monarchy or a league of kings, and opted for a federal and republican version in the form of a league of peoples, ruled by a representative assembly of nations.

This intellectual tradition was further developed at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but was now shaped by Bonapartist predominance. The Italian Piattoli and the Polish Czartoryski (1803–1805), under the auspices of the Tsar Alexander, opted for a British-Russian alliance to ensure a system respectful of liberal, pacifist, and national principles against Napoleonic expansionism. The French J.J.B. Gondon (1807), conversely, proposed a supranational government for Europe as a means of achieving civil peace and prosperity, while the Italian G. Franci still conceived in 1814 of a continent divided into four large and well-balanced empires, harmoniously coexisting. The real turning point was the project *On the Reorganisation of European Society* by the Count of Saint-Simon, written in 1814 during the preparations for the Congress of Vienna. In this work, Saint-Simon aimed to give an answer "to the greatest question of the moment: the European peace and regeneration". His aim was to overcome the Westphalian system, which in his opinion was responsible for the state of war throughout the continent. The medieval and Enlightenment genre of writings on Perpetual Peace was thus still very popular in the nineteenth century, adapting to new liberal or socialist ideas, widening the European space in response to the so-called "Eastern Question" (relating to the problems caused by the instability and disintegration of the Ottoman Empire), and proposing worldwide institutions (parliaments, international courts to mediate in disputes between nations), while still respecting national identities and aiming to ensure, within the new commercial and industrial society, the end goal of international peace.

Towards the middle of the century, these utopian projects crystallised in the emergence of social movements for peace. It was certainly no coincidence that the first peace organisations were founded in Europe after the Napoleonic Wars: for example, the London Peace Society began its work in 1816 and held the first, momentous International Peace Congress in 1843. Middle-class

women played a major role in these movements, introducing gendered conceptions of peace. From the mid-nineteenth century onward, the emerging labour movements (trade unions as well as socialist, social democratic, and communist parties) embraced anti-militarism as a prime political goal. This trend also held true for the European continent, where—in the context of the 1848 Revolutions which embraced the "brotherhood of nations and peoples"—the Peace Congress of 1849 took place. The congress was held in Paris and led by Victor Hugo, who, in a famous inaugural speech, claiming for the "United States of Europe", a future "when there would be no battlefields other than those of markets opening to commerce and the minds to new ideas, and when bullets and bombs would be replaced by the force of votes of the universal suffrage." The famous writer also attended the Peace Congress of Lugano in 1872, where, discouraged after the Franco-Prussian War, he spoke in much more pessimistic tones. The question of pacifism was hugely controversial within the German Social Democratic Party on the eve of and during the First World War—and has remained so ever since. The dispute over the war credits (1914) and the split of the party (1917) underscore the difficulty of maintaining pacifist positions in times of war and upheaval. The difficulty of maintaining pacifist positions was also evident in colonised spaces.

Fig. 1: Victor Gillam, "Keep off! The Monroe Doctrine must be respected" (15 February 1896), Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%22Keep_off!_The_Monroe_Doctrine_must_be_respected%22_(F._Victor_Gillam,_1896)_(with_watermark).jpg. In this political cartoon, the symbolic American figurine of Uncle Sam stands guard of American lands from both European colonisers and representatives of native South and Central American populations.

Rage for Order in the Colonies

After 1815, the European powers turned their gaze again towards overseas territories, and with more intensity. Rather than fighting among themselves, the European empires were far more inclined to cooperation, working together in the fight against piracy, slave trade, and also—later—anarchism. They invested in joint operations—a European military intervention in Syria, or joint campaigns against piracy on the open waters. Sea power was further developed to uphold the post-1815 inter-imperial order. Even though rivalries increased after this period, the cooperative spirit in Europe continued to permeate and even propel the ongoing colonial and imperialist relationships with the non-European world throughout the century.

Ford and Benton offer a convincing explanation for this imperial cooperation after 1815: the rage for order of empires, struggling not just with diverging military, commercial, and political interests, but also with the increasing importance of private investors and stakeholders, caused the state-led expansions to prioritise the juridification of colonial rule. The 'rage for order' was perhaps even more important as a driver for colonial expansion than open greed and exploitation. The drive for legal reform that underpinned many expeditions and invasions in colonial backwaters cannot simply be explained by pointing to the liberal type of imperialism, focusing on the advance of human rights, civilisation or other types of benevolent reforms. The mere presence of the post-1815 states (rather than their non-state, mercantile commercial predecessors) in the colonial territories drove them to more bureaucracy, more state-like procedures and institutions that needed to be established in order to settle (commercial) conflicts peacefully, or to curtail petty despots that abused their power in faraway lands.

Cooperation between states and large-scale empires also led to the proliferation of treaties, constitutions, and agreements on dividing spheres of influence. The Monroe Doctrine of 1822 issued by the US Administration, and the Nanking Treaty between Britain and the Netherlands underscore this point: these are our areas, and we determine law and order here—no other interventions or incursions allowed.

Wars of conquest in Asia (Britain, the Netherlands), the Middle East (France), and Liberation Wars (Americas) were paired with counterinsurgency campaigns, and an increase of civil wars in the wake of the nineteenth century.

With industrial warfare, European powers stepped up competition towards the end of the nineteenth century again. The opening up, exploitation, and occupation of rivers in Africa for example, led to the Conference of Berlin (1884–1885), where the principle of effective occupation precipitated the course to military action against 'insubordinate' colonial inhabitants. These

practices of 'permanent security' (Dirk Moses) prompted an escalation of counterinsurgency campaigns, and already prefigured the method of concentration camps and genocidal techniques, imbued and informed by an increasing racial and biological understanding of imperial hierarchies.

Conclusion

In short, the long nineteenth century, which had started with the trauma of 'total war', secured peace on the continent and between empires for some decades. It was underpinned by new methods and means for cooperation, consultation, and deliberation, accompanied by the emergence of early peace movements and a thriving scene of pacifist thought. Yet, this cooperation led to large-scale expansive projects in overseas territories. The development of industrial warfare, of mechanised sea power, and the division of global spheres of influences, gave a new boost to imperial expansion and after 1885, increasing competition, leading up to the First World War.

Discussion questions

1. The nineteenth century is seen as a relatively peaceful period in European history. How was this peace achieved?

2. What was a 'total war' and how did it differ from other wars?

3. What was the 'rage for order' and how does it relate to the relative peacefulness in Europe?

Suggested reading

Bell, David, *The First Total War: Napoleon's Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know It* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007).

Benton, Lauren and Lisa Ford, *Rage for Order: The British Empire and the Origins of International Law, 1800–1850* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

de Graaf, Beatrice, *Fighting Terror after Napoleon: How Europe Became Secure after 1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

Evans, Richard, *The Pursuit of Power: Europe 1815–1914* (London: Viking, 2016).

Hippler, Thomas and Miloš Vec, eds, *Paradoxes of Peace in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

Klose, Fabian, "*In the Cause of Humanity*": *Eine Geschichte der humanitären*

Intervention im langen 19. Jahrhundert (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2019).

Moses, Anthony Dirk, *Problems of Genocide: Permanent Security and the Language of Transgression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Robins, Nicholas A. and Adam Jones, eds, *Genocides by the Oppressed: Subaltern Genocide in Theory and Practice* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009).

Schroeder, Paul, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Strath, Bo, *Europe's Utopias of Peace, 1815, 1919, 1951* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

Todd, David, 'A French Imperial Meridian, 1814–1870', *Past & Present* 210 (2011), 155–186.

3.4.3 Peace and Conflict in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Eirini Karamouzi, Jan Koura, and Stéphane Michonneau

Introduction

Eric Hobsbawm wrote in 2003 that "the world as a whole has not been effectively at peace since 1914 and is not at peace now". The two World Wars and the ensuing Cold War dominated most of the century. The previous century saw an unprecedented accumulation of arms, with a dominant rise of the military-industrial complex in order to combat the notion of a perpetual war. The dropping of the nuclear bomb and then the proliferation of nuclear weapons—despite their supposed defensive character—contained the seeds of more violence and destruction. It is not a coincidence that the major publications on Europe of the twentieth century have predominantly focused on the history of war and conflict, paying much less attention to the practices of peace-making. When historians do pay attention to the history and ideas of European peace, the process is undeniably complicated. To begin with, it is almost impossible to write about peace and conflict in a clear, straightforward manner. How people responded to the experiences of total wars had a direct effect on the kind of peace they envisioned. Peace therefore did not emerge automatically, nor can it be understood merely as the absence of war.

The Puzzle of Peace

Peace is a dynamic and controversial process that takes place in different geographical and political spheres and is infused with different meanings from a multitude of actors: governments, civil servants, non-governmental peace advocacy groups, scientists, anti-colonialists, to name a few. Moreover, extensive use of the term in the public sphere further impedes scholarly

attempts to properly define it. During the century in question, most militant action took place in the name of peace and fascists, socialists and democrats alike co-opted the language of peace for their own political aims. There was therefore an unprecedented politicisation of peace that sometimes advanced its cause and at other times thwarted its realisation.

Firstly, attempts to realise a non-violent reordering of international affairs took place between governments. In the aftermath of the Great War, there were two opposing ideas for the restructuring of the world. One was pronounced by American President Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924) in his Fourteen Points address and the other was promulgated by Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924) in his Decree on Peace, which called for social reform, if not revolution. Often, negotiating peace led to the signing of peace treaties or the creation of international organisations that would guarantee collective security. The League of Nations, founded in 1920, was one result, succeeded by the United Nations following the end of the Second World War. Indeed, a flurry of European organisations were created in the service of peace in the post-war period with the most enduring being the European Economic Community (created in 1957), and the Council of Europe (founded in 1949).

For much of its history, peace was predominantly driven by religious motives. However, it was during the twentieth century that socialists and feminists broadened the agenda to point to issues of social and economic justice, and the unfairness of patriarchal society. The active involvement of women in different pacifist organisations such as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom created in 1919 were extremely active throughout the century, significantly influencing the peace agenda. The gendering of peace meant more attention was paid to social dimensions. This demand was accentuated in the post-war years of recovery where there was a powerful expectation in Europe that 1945 would herald a new age. In this new era, most nation states in the continent perceived material and social security as a precondition for a peaceful settlement. Prosperity was sought on all fronts, with countries like Britain hosting popular campaigns on the need for a welfare system and investing renewed interest in volunteering, relief work, and humanitarianism.

It was also during this period that mobilisation for peace became more systematic. Large-scale peace movements took place after the end of the First World War, during the interwar years, and peaked in the 1980s. The mobilisation against the deployment of US Pershing and Cruise missiles armed with atomic warheads reinvigorated the peace movements. In Great Britain, 400,000 people turned up at Hyde Park in October 1983 opposing missile deployment while the Federal Republic of Germany was similarly swept up in anti-nuclear fervour, with more than one million joining the anti-missile demonstrations. The

peace movement was a heterogeneous phenomenon encompassing a broad spectrum of autonomous activists and youth movements but also institutions such as political parties, trade unions, and churches.

Civil Wars

While the advent of the modern nation state changed the nature of war through universal conscription, war also changed nations, for it turned out to be a highly effective instrument for unifying territories and nationalising populations. War nationalises territories and renders national traditions sacred and immaculate. War therefore provides an occasion for accelerated homogenisation of national cultures, thus acting as a crucible for nations. But war may also be a major factor hastening national dissolution. There are two telling illustrations of this in the twentieth century: the dismantling of great empires, and internal conflicts within existing nations.

In 1914, the Austro-Hungarian authorities feared separatism from the national minorities which resided within the empire, yet loyalty to the dynasty prevailed through to 1916. Even in the Russian Empire, the national representatives at the exceptional sitting of the Duma in August 1914 clearly asserted their loyalty to the Russian state. But over the course of the conflict, the limits to the community of combatants became clear, for army discipline was not based solely on patriotism but also on constraint, obedience, and social pressure. From 1916 onwards, the largest number of defections from the Austro-Hungarian Army were by national minorities: Czechs, Slovaks, and Croats who refused to shoot at Russians or Serbs on the grounds of pan-Slavism. Thus, nationalist demands were strengthened by the war, though still linked to political and social matters.

The emergence of new conflicts within communities which were nominally homogenous in national terms followed a different pattern—conflicts in nations such as Finland (1918), Spain (1936–1939), Italy (1943–1945), and Greece (1946–1949). The battles between liberal democracy and communism in the 1920s (Finland), between democracies and fascism in the 1930s (Spain), and as part of the Cold War after 1947 (Greece), were not fought primarily along ideological, more than national, lines. Each of the various camps claimed to embody national independence, inexorably leading to civil wars with revolutionary tones. These civil wars were the theatre for overt international interventions, such as that of Bolshevik Russia in Finland, of fascist Germany, Italy, and Portugal in Spain, and of Yugoslavia, the United Kingdom, and later the United States in Greece. Rebuilding national unity after these internal wars came at the cost of fierce repression of the defeated camp.

At the front, national dissent could lead to mutiny and revolution. In 1917, there were several waves of desertion, including the famous mutiny by about 40,000 French soldiers between April and May of 1917, and by soldiers in Germany who allowed themselves to be taken prisoner without fighting, who voluntarily mutilated themselves, and sometimes undertook acts of collective fraternisation. The phenomenon was most widespread in countries where opposition to the war intersected with calls for political democratisation and social equality: in Russia, about one million soldiers deserted in between September and October of 1917; in Germany, the navy had to quell mutinies at Wilhelmshaven in August 1917 and October 1918. Additionally, in all countries, tensions between the front and the rear threatened to tear the community apart. War gave rise to or reinforced new antagonisms: between towns and the countryside as regulations largely failed to reduce tensions between producers and consumers; in factories, where women were considered mere temporary replacements, and did not win the emancipation they expected from their mobilisation; certain categories of the population felt abandoned or betrayed, such as farmers and retailers who, unlike big companies, were subject to draconian controls.

Wherever the national consensus was weakened, there was increasing surveillance of internal minorities and foreigners, feeding into enthusiastic and widespread xenophobia: war provided an opportunity to resort to racism and reject foreigners. In France, foreigners were insulted and abused during the two World Wars: foreign nationals from enemy countries, even those who were naturalised, were placed in prison camps, including Alsatians and Swiss, who were viewed as Germans. There were numerous instances of violence against minorities in Germany (the Jews) and in Hungary (the Slovaks). War generated violent forms of exclusion for minorities.

The Cold War

The Cold War was a different kind of war. The nature of the conflict, which never resulted in a direct military confrontation in Europe at least, was fought at the global level using a broad array of political, economic, and diplomatic instruments, as well as new forms of rivalry such as proxy wars or psychological warfare. It largely shaped the history of Europe in the second half of the twentieth century and significantly transformed its role in the international system. The European continent occupied a different position in the newly emerging post-war order, which was heavily influenced by the United States and the Soviet Union. With the help of domestic communist and socialist parties, the Soviet Union created a bloc of 'fraternal states' in East-Central Europe after the Second World War. Eastern bloc countries had only limited control over their foreign

policy and began to adopt features of the Soviet political and economic system. In contrast, Western parts of the European continent welcomed different forms of Americanisation while adapting them to their diverse national contexts. The strong American presence in the reconstruction of Western Europe resulted in the creation of an 'empire by invitation' which gradually resulted in the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949. By the early 1950s, Europe was divided into two power blocs, representing two different political and economic systems with two different approaches to modernisation, competing with each other in the international arena.

The European states on both sides of the 'Iron Curtain' were instrumental in disseminating the superpowers' global modernisation models, adding legitimacy to the claim that the Cold War was predominantly a war of ideas. The fight against communism meant welcoming even the authoritarian states of Franco's Spain and Salazar's Portugal within the American orbit of influence. The United States also began to replace European countries as the hegemon in the Third World, which began to decolonise intensively from the mid-1950s. The Suez Crisis of 1956 demonstrated the weakness of formerly influential colonial powers like the United Kingdom and France, and publicly showcased the difficulties they faced in advancing their goals in the non-European world without the consent of the United States. Decolonisation also presented an opportunity for the Eastern bloc countries to penetrate areas that had previously been the domain of the Western European colonial powers. East-Central European socialist countries assisted the Soviet Union to transfer the Soviet modernisation model to the newly decolonised states of the Global South. The Third World became an important Cold War battlefield.

However, both superpowers' hegemonic position in Europe was not entirely stable and was constantly in flux throughout the Cold War. While Soviet leader Joseph Stalin kept his empire close, his successor Nikita Khrushchev inaugurated a process of destalinisation that sent unintended signals which encouraged Poland and Hungary to go their own way in building socialism. But the bloody suppression of the Hungarian Uprising in 1956, as well as the Prague Spring twelve years later, showed that the Soviet Union was not about to give up influence in its 'satellites'. It was only a combination of several factors, notably economic problems and the change in Soviet leadership in the mid-1980s, that caused a loosening of ties between the USSR and its 'satellite' countries, resulting—ultimately—in the collapse of Soviet hegemony over East-Central Europe.

The United States initially supported the European integration process after the Second World War, but some of the Western European countries began to increasingly define themselves politically and economically against US influence from the 1960s onward. The European Communities (EC)

became a competing economic project for the United States and the promotion of a different agenda by the EC was evident during the negotiations of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), negotiations which led to the 1975 Helsinki Accords. By the 1970s, the American 'empire by invitation' came to an end, although through NATO, Western Europe was still dependent on the United States' security umbrella, a situation that persisted even after the end of the Cold War.

The Cold War, even though it lasted for decades, remained cold partly due to the arrival of nuclear weapons. Their eventual use could have resulted in global Armageddon, which discouraged both superpowers from using them. In contrast to bloody proxy wars and conflicts outside Europe, the Cold War in Europe itself brought a certain degree of stability, peace, and predictability to the international order.
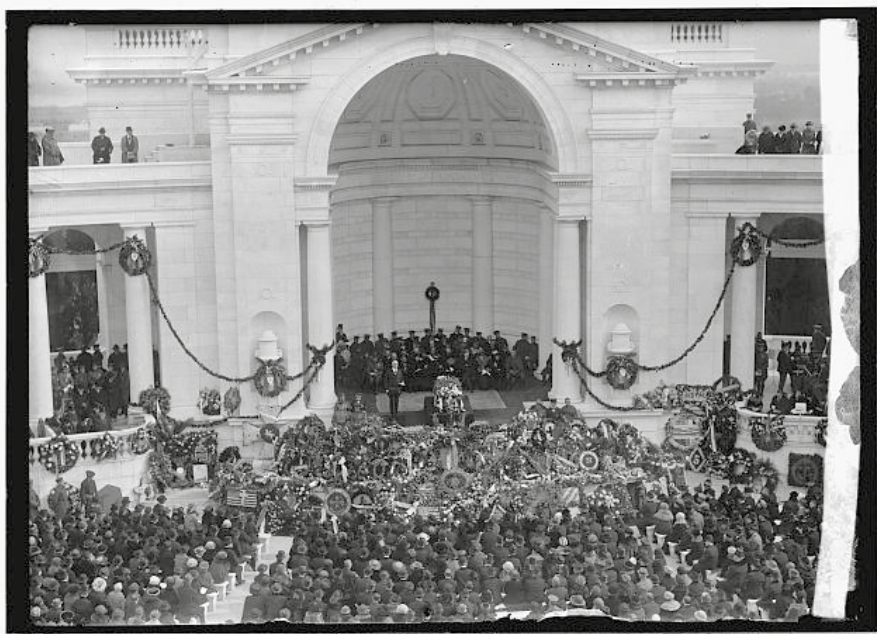
Fig. 1: Unknown, "Burial of an unknown soldier", 11 November 1921, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2016845783/. Under the symbolic Arc de Triomphe in Paris (1919), an unknown soldier was laid to rest in a beautiful casket with a patriotic ceremony.

Memories of Wars

Memories of war often underpin national identity. The way combatants understand war is bound up with pre-existing cultural considerations: mobilisation draws on pre-existing narrative structures appealing to heroism or historical figures magnified by the 'national story'. In France, the cult of citizens who died at war gained particular impetus after the French defeat

against Germany in 1870, following rituals far removed from the triumphalist monuments and ceremonies of the Napoleonic Wars. Immediately after the First World War, countless memorials were erected in towns and villages to represent the multifaceted memories of war and to bind these memories to the experience of combatants on the home front. This was taken a step further with the cult of the unknown soldier, whose tomb was placed beneath the Arc de Triomphe in Paris in January 1921, imitating the initiative at Westminster Abbey (London) in 1919. Managing the memories of war became vital in the process of reconciliation for a mourning nation, and thus became an issue for both state and society.

In Germany after the First World War, there were an increasing number of military parades by Steel Helmets. Denial of the defeat and—even more importantly—of responsibility for the war prevented the construction of a minimal consensus around memory of the war. The tomb of the unknown soldier was only erected in 1931, in the courtyard of the *Neue Wache* building in Berlin. In 1927, a memorial to the Battle of Tannenberg was erected in Eastern Prussia, providing a substitute narrative to defeat on the Western Front. It became a monument for those nostalgic for empire, and a site where paramilitary groups maintained a heroic and positive vision of the war. With worship of the dead thus monopolised by a few groups, the only place left to pay homage to the dead was within the church.

In addition to political instrumentalisation of war memory by different regimes, populations themselves also have their own, multiple memories of the experience of war. Thus, in post-1945 France, various memories co-existed simultaneously: the Resistance, deportation, the first liberated colonies, combatants, civilians, supporters of the Vichy regime, Nazi collaborators. These multiple memories were not all expressed equally within society, nor through the same channels. Overall, victimisation nevertheless provided a way of unifying the population around a set of coherent memories. Through to the 1970s, Gaullism and communism deployed a '*resistancialist*' vision of the war, which presented the majority of the French as resisting Nazism.

Yet memories of the traumas of war may long remain dormant. They erupted in Western Europe in the 1980s and in Central Europe after the Berlin Wall came down. Memories of the Shoah provoked numerous conflicts in the following decades, with marked contrasts between the West and the East of the continent. Equally, memories of the aerial bombing in Germany during the Second World War re-emerged at a later date, not triggering debate until the 2000s once the country had been reunified. Lastly, memories of colonial wars are still painful, and remain largely undealt with by states: in France, memories of the Algerian War (1954–1962) fuel a feeling of unease which undermines national cohesion. In 2021, recognising the abuses committed in

the colonies motivated Germany's acknowledgement, for example, that the 1904 Herero massacre in Namibia was a 'genocide'.

Conclusion

The European conflicts of the twentieth century took many forms—from civil armed conflicts to ideological, cultural, and propaganda rivalries during the Cold War. Compared to previous centuries, however, the main European wars of the twentieth century took on a global character with significant consequences for non-European territories. European civil wars of the last century were always subject to foreign intervention, of varying degrees of explicitness, in some cases calling into question the underpinnings of the nation and the coherence of the imagined community. Memories of war still evoke controversies and occupy an important place in national narratives, public discourses, and the foreign policy orientations of today's European states. Peace-building processes and the peace movements belong to modern European history just as much as the conflicts, however they were often abused for political or ideological purposes or culminated in more division and disagreement.

Discussion questions

1. Which role did political ideologies play in conflicts in twentieth-century Europe?

2. Why did memories of war become so important during this time?

3. In which ways was the Cold War different to other conflicts in twentieth-century Europe?

Suggested reading

Cortright, David, *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Dockrill, S. R. and Geraint Hughes, eds, *Palgrave Advances in Cold War History*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

Goedde, Petra, *The Politics of Peace: A Global Cold War History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

Hobsbawm, Eric, 'War and Peace in the Twentieth Century', in *War and Peace in the Twentieth Century and Beyond*, ed. by Geir Lundestad and Olaf Njølstad (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2003), pp. 25–40.

Kalyvas, Stathis, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

Leffler, Melvyn P. and Odd Arne Westad, eds, *Cambridge History of the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Lundestad, Geir, 'Empire by Invitation: The United States and Western Europe, 1945–1952', *Journal of Peace and Research*, 23:3 (1986), 263–277.

Nehring, Holger and Helge Pharo, 'Introduction: A Peaceful Europe? Negotiating Peace in the Twentieth Century', *Contemporary European History* 17:3 (2008), 277–299.

Payne, Stanley, *Civil War in Europe, 1905–1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

CHAPTER 3.5

PROTEST AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

3.5.1 Protest and Social Movements in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Laurent Brassart and Maarten Prak

Introduction

Traditionally, the early modern period has been seen as an era of social movements and protest, for the simple reason that ordinary people had no alternative means to make their voices heard before the rise of modern democracy. We now know that democratic procedures did exist long before 1789, albeit locally much more than nationally. Nonetheless, that protest and social movements shaped the era can be seen from the two revolutions bracketing the early modern period: the Reformation at the beginning, and the French Revolution that marked its end. Between those two revolutions, many more political upheavals occurred, shaped by the involvement of large numbers of people. Think of the Fronde in France and the English Civil War, both in the middle of the seventeenth century. However, most of those upheavals never made it into the history textbooks, because they were too small or short-lived. Still, they sustained a tradition of popular mobilisation that would prove crucial during major events.

Following much of the historical literature, we have made a distinction in this chapter between urban and rural revolts and revolutions. We have also decided to discuss at some greater length the two most significant social movement events of the period, the Reformation and the French Revolution. In our discussion we will look at causes, numbers of protesters and their social profile, and at insurrectionary repertoires and demands. It is our claim that protest and social movements were not isolated incidents, but rather structural features of political life in early modern Europe.

Fig. 1: Unknown, "Titelblatt 12 Artikel" ("The Twelve Articles") (March 1525), Wikimedia Commons (from: Otto Henne am Rhyn, *Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Volkes*, Zweiter Band, Berlin, 1897), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Titelblatt_12_Artikel.jpg. This image shows the front cover of the Twelve Articles (also known as the Memmingen Articles of War) that articulated the peasants' demands during this powerful 16th century rebellion. The cover page shows German peasants armed with an assortment of intimidating home-made weapons.

The Revolutionary Reformation

Calculated by the size of his domains, which covered the Holy Roman Empire (Germany and Austria), the Low Countries (Belgium, Luxemburg, and the Netherlands), Spain, as well as substantial parts of Italy, not to mention overseas territories in Asia and the Americas, Charles V (1500–1558) was the most powerful ruler of the early modern period. His power was, however, challenged throughout his reign. It started with the *Comunero* revolt in Castile and the simultaneous *Germanias* (guilds) revolt in 1520, in Valencia, Mallorca, and Aragon. Charles managed to subdue them militarily, but he afterwards gave in to many of the rebels' demands. In Germany, however, he failed to suppress the Reformation, and this failure, highlighted in the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, led directly to his voluntary abdication in that same year. How did ordinary Europeans manage to topple the most powerful ruler of their time?

Martin Luther's (1483–1546) criticisms of the doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church, first shared with a wider public in 1517, became politicised almost from the start. This was inevitable, given the intricate connections between religion and politics in the sixteenth century. But it was also inevitable because Luther provided a perfect vehicle for certain political agendas. In sixteenth-century Europe, one of the most important issues was the balance between central authority and local autonomy. This had been the key issue in the Spanish revolts and it would prove to be in many Reformation struggles.

In June 1524 hundreds of farmers in the Breisgau area of southwestern Germany rose in arms against the exactions imposed by their lord. This movement had been imbued with Reformation ideas by a travelling preacher. The unrest then spilled over into neighbouring regions of southern Germany, where the rebels coordinated their activities in a 'Peasants' Parliament' in March 1525. They adopted a common programme, the Twelve Articles, which articulated both social and religious demands. The first article insisted that each town and village would have the right to elect its own priests, in effect taking control over the priesthood and their ideas away from the Catholic Church. Other rural areas and many small towns then joined this massive rebellion, which came to be known as the Peasants' War.

In 1525, while large parts of Germany were in turmoil, the guilds of Münster in German Westphalia extracted various concessions from their own lord. Westphalia was ruled by a bishop, who resided in Münster. The city's elites and citizens, however, broadly resented the bishop's authority over them. After the 'peasants' had been defeated, all concessions were reversed, but the Reformation movement did not disappear. In 1532, the parish of Lamberti selected a reform-minded priest, who went on to publish a booklet in which he rejected child baptism and proclaimed that transubstantiation was a symbolic act, that the bread and wine did not really change into the flesh and blood of Christ. He was thus undermining two sacred ideas of the Catholic Church and demonstrating his allegiance to a group called the Anabaptists, who favoured adult baptism. Other Anabaptists were invited to come to Münster. The bishop, in the meantime, amassed his troops around the city, triggering a full-blown revolution. Private property was abolished and polygamy introduced, showing that radical religious ideas could lead to much broader reforms. All of this happened with the ostensible support of broad sections of the town's population and more specifically the artisans and shopkeepers who made up the membership of the local guilds. The leaders of this rebellion, who came from the adjacent Low Countries, were also artisans. Ultimately, the Münster Anabaptist revolution was defeated by the military might of the bishop, but in

many other places in Germany the Reformation became firmly established as a result of collaboration between local elites and their citizens.

Outside Germany, the Reformation triggered the Catholic Pilgrimage of Grace in northern England in 1536, the Prayer Book Rebellion in the southwest of England in 1549, and Wyatt's Rebellion in 1553, all three taking issue with the religious policies of Henry VIII (1491–1547) and his successor Queen Mary (1516–1558). In the Low Countries, religious unrest erupted in the 1566 Iconoclasm, which subsequently evolved into a full-blown revolution against the rule of Charles V's son and successor Philip II (1527–1598) and ultimately led to the establishment of a new state, the Dutch Republic. In France, a series of nine civil wars were necessary between 1562 and 1598 to determine the religious features of French society, with more Protestant rebellions following in the first half of the seventeenth century. In most of these rebellions, religious issues were mixed with questions of political authority. Time and again citizens demanded more self-rule and less interference by central government authorities.

Urban Citizens Rebel

In the Dutch Republic, itself the product of a revolution, major waves of rebellion erupted during the 1610s, in 1672, in 1703–1715, in 1747–1748, and during the 1780s. The latter wave would have led to another revolution, had the Prussian Army not intervened in September 1787 to prop up the Orangist *stadhouder* and his government. In Holland, the most populous and most prosperous province of the Republic, twenty-seven local food riots took place during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, over half of them in 1740–1741. Half of Holland's twenty-three tax revolts also occurred during the seventeenth century, most of them local, but in 1747–1748 the rebels forced the authorities to introduce major reforms in the way taxes were collected. The great majority of these rebellions emerged in towns and their participants came from the working classes, but also from the middle classes. Among the leaders of a massive rebellion in Leiden in 1748, which managed to take over the city for several weeks, we find twenty bakers, publicans, and other professions related to the town's food supply, sixteen drapers and other entrepreneurs from the town's dominant textile industry, as well as a surgeon, three schoolmasters, three booksellers, but only one whose job description suggests he was an employee.

The urban emphasis in civil unrest may have had a lot to do with the high levels of urbanisation in the Dutch Republic and in Holland in particular, but in other countries, too, urban citizens were active participants in rebellions and

revolutions. An important explanation for their successful mobilisation was the fact that they were already organised for other purposes. Neighbourhoods, craft guilds and civic militias all provided frameworks to discuss political issues, and where necessary to recruit leaders and participants to support social and political claim-making. These organisations were, moreover, legitimate parts of the urban system of governance. And they subscribed to a shared ideology.

This ideology was perhaps not very sophisticated, but it was persistent and could be found in all corners of Europe. German historian Heinz Schilling has called it "urban republicanism". A core element in this urban republicanism was the idea that all citizens enjoyed fundamental rights and personal liberties. On this basis, it was argued, citizens should be consulted by the urban authorities before important decisions were taken; these authorities represented the civic community. Some reformed preachers, most prominently among them Jean Calvin (1509–1564), moreover argued in the sixteenth century that it was acceptable for citizens to rise against 'unjust' governments, providing further legitimacy to rebellious movements.

Rural Rebels: Goals and Chronology

Rural societies of the early modern period were never quiet. They fought against the manorial system, opposed the growth of the 'warfare' state, and contested the diffusion of new agrarian and economic ideas, using wide-ranging repertoires of contention. Chronologies differ, of course, from issue to issue and from region to region, but roughly speaking until the mid-seventeenth century rural societies expressed their opposition in insurrections and riots. Then, because of the success of state violence against them, rural social movements changed their tactics to legal and illegal resistance (1660–1770), before returning to insurrection and revolts from the 1770s.

In Western Europe, the great peasant riots of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries forced the feudal powers to abolish serfdom. With the new manorial system, freeholders could cultivate and acquire land, but they were still subject to unpaid days of work (*corvées*), the payment of taxes on agricultural production, land transactions, and the use of collective tools (mills, for example) for the benefit of the lords. From the seventeenth century, the peasants' resistance to this manorial system often took the form of legal proceedings, in particular lawsuits. If this proved unsuccessful, however, they could start to destroy dovecotes or refuse to pay taxes.

In Central and Eastern Europe, the dynamic of the manorial system evolved in the opposite direction: a free peasantry was reduced to serfdom on the large aristocratic estates from the sixteenth century onwards. Even if small, localised

revolts exploded during the seventeenth century, it was not until the second half of the eighteenth century that major uprisings broke out in opposition against this system. In Russia, more than 10,000 insurgents led by Emelyan Pugachev (1742–1775), a Cossack chief, took over an immense territory, stretching from the Urals to the Don, for two years (1773–1774). At the same time, several great serf revolts broke out in the Habsburg Empire. In January 1775, more than 10,000 peasants, asking for bread and an end to serfdom, destroyed castles in the countryside of Bohemia, but failed to take Prague. In the autumn of 1784 in Transylvania, Romanian serfs led by the serf carpenter Vasile Ursu Nicola (1741–1785), called "Horea", rose against their Hungarian and German lords and burned down or looted 230 castles, demanding an end to serfdom and the division of land. Though the government of Emperor Joseph II (1741–1790) initially suppressed these rebellions by force, a few years later it relieved the status of serfs.

The early modern state's increasing fiscal claims to fund the military were rejected in the countryside in the name of local liberties. Whereas in Spain and Italy the great anti-fiscal revolts were mainly urban, in France the countryside took the lead. The French peasant wars of 1630–1660 called neither social hierarchies nor the monarchical regime into question. On the contrary, they mobilised local solidarity between the nobility, the landlords and the peasantry against the tax abuses of the "King's bad advisers". Their repression by the absolutist state gave rise to new tactics, such as "bad will from day to day": in other words, aggression towards tax agents, refusal of payment, and so on, as well as localised and often ephemeral riots that the state found difficult to control (in France alone, 799 riots between 1701 and 1730).

The rise of agrarian individualism and economic liberalism in the countryside was another source of contestation. Think of the enclosures in England and, at the end of the eighteenth century, the clearances in the Scottish Highlands. In the spring of 1607, a revolt erupted in the English Midlands with freeholders destroying the hedges of large estates and reopening the land. During the English Civil War (1642–1651), the number of revolts against enclosures exploded. In the eighteenth century, Parliament passed legislation allowing common lands to become privately owned without the consent of rural communities. Rural people turned to clandestine resistance strategies: poaching in the hunting reserves, attacks on the lords' properties. The Black Acts (1723–1724) imposed the death penalty on such acts of opposition. Nevertheless, radical ideas of egalitarianism and Christian economy against liberalism, labelled by historian E.P. Thompson as the "moral economy", became very popular. A similar resistance to the new liberal economy also emerged in Spain with the *Motín de Esquilache* in 1766 and in the Parisian 'Flour War' of 1775. In both cases, urban and rural people rose against the freedom

of the grain trade in times of scarcity. More than just food riots, these events revealed the rebirth of great peasant insurrections and—a new phenomenon—their politicisation against liberalism and the manorial system.

With the exception of England, the European countryside was troubled by revolts from the 1770s onwards. Many of these movements evolved into politicised protests. In Ireland, in the 1780s, the movement of the Rightboys, farmers who fought against new lease conditions imposed on them by the English landlords, made a connection with the Irish nationalist organisation of the Defenders.

Fig. 2: Charles Thévenin, "The Storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789 (Prise de la Bastille le 14 juillet 1789)" (ca. 1793), Metropolitan Museum of Art, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/90058195. In this scene from July 14, 1789, an angry mob of Parisian citizens storms the Bastille, a state prison and symbol of the French monarchy's dictatorial rule. This historic day when these revolutionaries breached the Bastille fortress is remembered today as the French National Day, the day of French unity.

The French Revolution

As we have made clear, the French Revolution was not a thunderbolt in an otherwise calm European sky. It was, however, unique in its political and geographical impact. Some historians (first and foremost R.R. Palmer) have portrayed it as part of a broader "Atlantic Revolution", with numerous bilateral circulations and appropriations of revolutionary ideas between North America

and Europe; political and social revolutions broke out in the United States of America (1776–1783), Geneva (1785), the Netherlands (1785–1786), France (summer of 1789) and the Austrian Netherlands (October 1789). But if newer generations of historians have accepted the importance of the circulation of ideas and models of struggle between these revolutions, attention to the distinct features of each revolution means that the concept of an Atlantic Revolution is no longer fashionable.

For the French Revolution, certainly the most radical, three revolutionary stages can be distinguished: in May and June 1789, a revolution led by the social elites during the Estates General (*États généraux*) at Versailles; from mid-June to mid-July, the revolution of urban citizens in Paris (the storming of the Bastille) and subsequently other towns and cities; from mid-July, the Great Fear (*Grande Peur*) in the countryside, an anti-feudal uprising. These distinct but partly overlapping popular dynamics forced the deputies to declare an end to the *ancien régime* on 4 August 1789. As a result, the manorial system was partially abolished and in 1790–1791, the National Constituent Assembly (*Assemblée nationale constituante*) established a liberal economic order: the guilds were abolished, and the liberty of trade and production became a sacred right.

These policies changed the nature of popular protests once again: eight rural uprisings from 1790 to 1792 appeared to fight the liberal order as well as the leftovers of the manorial system. In the cities, social protest transformed into a political movement, the *sans-culottes*. The *sans-culottes* sought to create a society of independent producers in a regulated economic system. On 11 August 1792, the day after the fall of the monarchy, the manorial regime was finally abolished. In June 1793, Robespierre and the Montagnards took power, introduced a cap on prices and wages, as the *sans-culottes* had demanded, and the adoption of measures to help the poorest peasantry, though without land sharing. The *Directoire* regime (1795–1799) restored the liberal economic order, from which the urban people suffered more than their rural counterparts. The regime quelled the popular urban riots (the Conspiracy of Equals led by Gracchus Babeuf in May 1796), but also confirmed the definitive end of the manorial system in the countryside. These principles were extended to the annexed European territories: Belgium, the Netherlands, Northern Italy, Switzerland, and the left bank of the Rhine. Napoleon would pursue this policy from 1800 to 1815 in Central and Eastern European, in particular by abolishing serfdom.

Conclusion

Long before democracy was introduced in Europe, ordinary Europeans were routinely involved in politics. Without voting rights, and often also without

representative institutions, urban and rural populations were forced to employ a range of methods to oppose unwanted policies or demand reforms. They were sustained by often poorly articulated but strongly-held ideas about right and wrong. A lot of these ideas centred around some form of local self-rule. We see such ideas in the early-sixteenth-century Reformation movements, and again during the French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. Rebellious peasants and urban citizens used local institutions to mobilise and organise. They were helped by the fact that they were usually armed, while the state did not have local police forces in every community. States were often successful in suppressing rebellions, but tended later to introduce reforms that partially satisfied the rebels' demands. The great changes of the early modern period would not have happened without the active participation of peasants and citizens.

Discussion questions

1. What were the main differences between urban and rural protest and social movements in early modern Europe?

2. Against what did people rebel in early modern Europe, and why?

3. Do you see any parallels with today?

Suggested reading

Bercé, Yves-Marie, *Révoltes et révolutions dans l'Europe moderne* (Paris: Persée 1980)

Bercé, Yves-Marie, *Revolt and Revolution in Early Modern Europe: An Essay on the History of Political Violence*, trans. by Joseph Bergin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987).

Klooster, Wim, *Revolution in the Atlantic World: A Comparative History* (New York: New York University Press, 2009).

Palmer, R. R., *The Age of the Democratic Revolution. A Political History of Europe and America, 1760–1800* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014 [1959]).

Schilling, Heinz, 'Civic republicanism in late medieval and early modern German cities', in Heinz Schilling, *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society: Essays in German and Dutch History* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 3–59.

te Brake, Wayne, *Shaping History: Ordinary People in European Politics, 1500–1700* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

Thompson, E.P., 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', *Past & Present* 50:1 (1971), 76–136.

Tilly, Charles, *European Revolutions, 1492–1992* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

Wood, Andy, *Riot, Rebellion and Popular Politics in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

3.5.2 Protest and Social Movements in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Claire Barillé, Kevin Lenk, Colin Reid, and Erika Szívós

Introduction

While much of Europe during the nineteenth century was ruled by absolute or constitutional monarchs, no part of the continent was immune from the legacy of the French Revolution of 1789. The revolution gave form to ideas such as popular sovereignty, nationalism, and liberalism. It popularised the idea of the 'people' as a legitimate (and, indeed, sovereign) political grouping and challenged traditional assumptions about the ability of monarchical and aristocratic regimes to provide good governance for all. Social movements sprang up throughout the continent during the nineteenth century to agitate for inclusion in the political nation and the expansion of (political) rights. These often internationally entangled movements could take manifold shapes: some called for an expansion of voting rights, others for women's rights and suffrage, others for the abolition of slavery and the improvement of labour rights and conditions. And since they all faced modernising states, they were all compelled to reinvent themselves in the ways they protested, especially in asking themselves the question of whether violence was an acceptable means to their political ends—and if so, to what extent?

Voting Rights

In the nineteenth century the right to vote became a key marker of citizenship. Nineteenth-century Europe was an extensive patchwork of different forms of political regime, from the democratic structures of the Second and Third Republics in France, to the constitutional monarchies of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, and the absolutism of Tsarist Russia. But a common feature across the continent was that the electorate was often a small minority of the adult population. Just under three percent of the population of the United

Kingdom had the vote before 1832. While some countries, such as France, Switzerland, and Denmark, adopted universal manhood suffrage in the wake of the 1848 Revolutions, this was in most cases a sudden leap forward: France, for example, had a much smaller electorate than Britain until 1848.

There was, therefore, a considerable number of people formally excluded from the political process. Campaigns for franchise reform aimed to win inclusion into the political nation. This was an 'old' radicalism, drawing on ideas of political representation, democracy, and popular sovereignty—as opposed to the 'new' radicalism of socialism, which was primarily concerned with a critique of capitalism. Many social movements were middle class in character, vehicles for bourgeois frustration at the aristocratic hold over the levers of power throughout Europe, although some of the most notable contributions were made by working-class individuals and movements.

The argument for 'inclusion' in the political nation as a voter and thus a full citizen was articulated by many social movements. In Ireland during the 1820s, mass mobilisation and political protest were pioneered by the Catholic Association, which campaigned for the removal of all political prohibitions on Catholics, including the right to sit in parliament. The withholding of this right, Association members argued, deprived a majority of the Irish population of a voice in the sovereign assembly of the United Kingdom. After intense pressure, and fearful of creating a revolutionary situation in Ireland, the British government passed the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829.

Other social movements focussed more intently on suffrage. The working-class Chartist movement in the United Kingdom campaigned for universal male suffrage and other radical parliamentary reforms. Its first historian, R.G. Gammage, a former member of the movement, stressed the moral, social, and economic transformation that inclusion in the franchise promised. In 1854, he argued that the masses contrasted their financial hardship to the opulent conditions of "the enfranchised classes", reasoning that "exclusion from political power is the cause of our social anomalies". This was a powerful non-socialist radical critique: only by allowing the working class to be able to choose their own political representatives could economic justice be established. The logic was that the progressive transformation of society would follow the widening of the franchise.

In other countries, the spark for democratising the franchise came from more middle-class sources. The driver of the 1848 Revolution in France was the pursuit of wider suffrage, which united radical republicans and moderate Orléanists, both of whom were firmly bourgeois. It was a decidedly non-parliamentary activity—the reform banquets of 1847–1848—that popularised and energised the reform campaign. Much like the Chartists, the French reformers envisioned universal suffrage as the path to political inclusion and greater social harmony.

Indeed, the impact of the French Revolution of 1848 inspired uprisings elsewhere in Europe, many of which were based on expanding the franchise. As the century unfolded, political elites throughout Europe made their peace with increased suffrage as the price of stability and enhanced legitimacy: even Bismarck was reconciled to the need for universal suffrage to elect the newly established Reichstag in 1867, believing in the inherent conservatism of public opinion. Protests in Britain reached their zenith in 1866, when a reform meeting in London led to a riot; the following year, responding to this 'pressure from without', the government awarded suffrage to a section of the working class. As more of the population gained inclusion into the political nation, protests notably scaled down—that is, at least until campaigns for female suffrage, violent and peaceful, gained traction throughout Europe in the opening decade of the twentieth century.

Women's Movements

In nineteenth-century Europe, the situation of women differed significantly from that of men. Although the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* (1789) declared the equality of all men and stated that every citizen should be entitled to the same rights, women were considered as merely passive citizens and denied civil and political rights.

Inequalities affecting girls and women were systemic and institutionalised. Girls in most European countries, for the most part of the nineteenth century, could not attend the same types of schools (except for elementary schools) as boys and, with some exceptions, they could not study at universities until the 1890s. Throughout the nineteenth century, there were countless occupations which women could not pursue. Once a woman married, she was subjected to her husband's legal, financial, and personal authority. The lack of voting rights affected all women, irrespective of their social standing.

As early as the 1790s, basic inequalities were addressed by outstanding women such as the French author Olympe de Gouges (1748–1793) and the English writer Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797). Later, women's movements sought to remedy the most fundamental inequalities coded into the social order. Associations played a crucial role in the articulation of emancipatory demands regarding women's education, legal status, employment opportunities, and political participation. Women's rights groups, initially at least, recruited primarily middle- and upper middle-class membership. Working-class women's organisations were formed at a later stage; by the 1880s, they were usually associated with workers' parties. Bourgeois and socialist feminist groups often pursued different agendas. However by the late nineteenth century, the struggle for the vote became a common denominator of all women's movements.

In nineteenth-century European societies a relatively large number of women (primarily singles and widows) were property owners or had businesses of their own, even while their economic independence was limited by the legal system. Across Europe, millions of women became breadwinners by the second half of the century, although frequently out of necessity rather than choice. Besides the female workforce employed in various trades, domestic service, industry, and agriculture, a growing number of middle-class women appeared in white-collar occupations (clerks, teachers, journalists, etc.), thanks to the improving standards of girls' education and the new fields of study to which women had access by the 1860s and 1870s.

Women's universal exclusion from political rights was increasingly considered an anomaly in the light of their growing tax obligations, qualifications, and aptitude in their chosen professions. The idea of female suffrage was discussed more and more frequently in the press and in pamphlets. It was advocated by activist organisations, the members of which were often called suffragists or suffragettes. Women's demands for political representation received support from certain liberal-minded male contemporaries such as John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), the political philosopher and member of the British Parliament, who published *The Subjection of Women* in 1869.

By the eve of the First World War, universal suffrage—including voting rights for all adult women—seemed like an increasingly realistic goal in most European countries. The first to introduce unlimited female suffrage (including the right to be elected) was Finland in 1906. In most European states however, women had to wait until the end of the First World War to gain active and passive voting rights.

Abolitionist Movements: The Abolition of Serfdom

In Western Europe, the disappearance of serfdom and manorialism was a gradual process which had already started in the late Middle Ages and ended no later than the eighteenth century. In Central and Eastern Europe, however, serfdom continued to exist, prevailing in the Habsburg Empire, Prussia, and Russia at least up until the early nineteenth century. There, the abolishment of serfdom occurred within relatively short periods during the nineteenth century and was regulated from above by laws and decrees.

In Prussia, serfdom was abolished in the whole kingdom in 1807 as part of a much broader set of reforms, although the regulation of details—such as the services which peasants owed their landlords and the conditions on which they could become owners of their plots—took several more years. In other German states, the elimination of serfdom was decreed between 1804 and 1808.

In the Habsburg Monarchy, after a long process involving various reform concepts such as peasants' voluntary redemption of their plots, serfdom was abolished first by the Hungarian Parliament and later by the Imperial Diet during the revolutionary year of 1848. After the suppression of the revolutions, this process was finalised by the Imperial Patent issued by Emperor Franz Joseph I (r. 1848–1916) in March 1850. Abolition was thus a top-down measure in the Habsburg Empire too, albeit prompted by the same societal and political demands that had fuelled the revolutions of 1848. In the Russian Empire, serfdom was abolished in 1861 under the reign of Tsar Alexander II (r. 1855–1881).

The Abolition of Slavery

Fig. 1: *Illustrated London News*, "Rebecca Riots" (1843), Wikimedia Commons, https://commons. wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RebeccaRiots_(cropped).gif. In this series of protests between 1839–1843, tenant farmers objected to the tolls charged by rich businessmen for use of the main roads. The "Rebecca Riots," named after a symbolic passage in the bible where Rebecca declares the need to repossess the gates of their enemies, famously featured a group of men disguised as women. These men called themselves "Rebecca and her daughters."

Movements for the abolition of slavery mostly emerged in European states that possessed colonies outside Europe, as well as in former colonies which became independent states during the modern period. Principles of the Enlightenment, with their emphasis on universal human rights, had already made slavery an aberration in the eyes of several contemporaries in the late eighteenth century. In the British Empire, the abolitionist movement began with a legal precedent. In the case of *Somerset vs Stewart* in 1772, the court's decision to free a slave declared that "on English soil" there is no legal basis to force a person into

slavery. Although the decision of the judge did not explicitly mention slavery in the overseas British colonies, it opened the way for broader interpretations and effectively launched the anti-slavery movement. Finally, the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 put an end to slavery in most parts of the British Empire. The 1833 Act made the ownership of slaves illegal, while former owners of slaves were financially compensated.

Internationalism

One of the characteristics of the nineteenth century was the internationalisation of revolutions and protest movements, often around the issue of nationalities or democratic representation. Perceptible from the beginning of the century and more intensely from the 1820s onwards, the nationalities movement was based on the revolutionary principle of the 'right of peoples to self-determination'. It led to national or liberal attempts at insurrection, culminating in the revolutions of 1830. Multiple circulations—of people, ideas, know-how—and a transnational mobilisation process were at the heart of these attempts.

These movements were mostly driven by a cosmopolitan elite and point to the discrepancy between the aspirations of the liberal elites and the other groups involved in the revolutionary process (the disappointment of the Philhellenes with the Greek people, or the conflicts that arose from the July 1830 Revolution, for example).

From the 1830s onwards, insurrectionary political movements began to broaden their popular base, often in the clear image of the democratic inspiration that we can find at work in Mazzini's 'Young Italy' movement. The process of extending the political participation of the working classes can also be seen in revolts motivated by economic, social, and political issues (the Swing Riots in 1830 in England, the Rebecca Riots in Wales in 1839 and 1842–1843, and the revolt of the *canuts* in Lyon in 1831 and 1834).

The simultaneity of the revolutionary movements during the nineteenth century is remarkable and suggests a dense circulation of information in a context of growing internationalisation. Most of the time, these were popular uprisings with a strong national idea to which democratic or liberal demands were added. The revolts of 1848 initially produced forms of power that took these expectations into account, but they were quickly suppressed.

The emergence of the labour movement is another example of the growing internationalisation of a movement that flourished throughout the industrialised countries. The idea of a popular international organisation, which originated in the circles of political emigration, had given rise to various endeavours in the wake of the revolutions of 1830 and 1848. This aspiration, however, would not be realised until the founding of the First International

Workingmen's Association (often known as the First International) in 1864, which claimed twenty-one British, nine Frenchmen, ten Germans, six Italians, two Poles and two Swiss in its committee. Numerous sections of the First International then developed in Belgium, France, Italy and Germany, and later in the Netherlands, Denmark, Switzerland and Austria. With several hundred thousand members, the International was run by a General Council based in London and convened annual congresses. It was represented in each country by a national bureau and seemed destined to play a considerable role in the structuring of European socialism in each country. But the quarrel between the followers of Marx and Bakunin soon led to its dislocation in 1876. In 1889, the various socialist movements reconstituted a Second International which, in 1896, declared the exclusion of the anarchists but did not manage to impose real ideological cohesion on the various national sections.

However, the anarchist movement continued to operate in almost all European countries. Until 1900, terrorist action—"propaganda by deed"—prevailed. Reduced to small minority groups, the anarchists isolated themselves from the workers' movement. The 1890s were marked by numerous individual attacks, primarily on sovereigns and heads of state (President Sadi Carnot of the French Republic in 1894, Empress Elisabeth of Austria in 1898, King Humbert I of Italy in 1900). In the last years of the nineteenth century, they gave up clandestine action and tried to reconnect with the masses through revolutionary syndicalism.

Violence

Protesters during the nineteenth century employed a variety of violent means to draw attention to their causes or even to reach their goals. Strikes and labour disputes all over Europe would often turn violent, if not deadly. When rapid industrialisation changed economic relations, British textile workers, known as the Luddites, expressed their protest by destroying the machines they associated with their declining economic circumstances. Intense riots to protest the increasing prices of everyday consumer goods were also a common occurrence. For example, when on 1 April 1873 local public houses in the German town of Frankfurt am Main raised the prices for beer by 12.5 percent, enraged citizens gathered and systematically attacked breweries and pubs throughout the town. The local police were unable to curb the 'Frankfurt beer riots' and the army was deployed, resulting in twenty deaths. Beer prices were subsequently lowered again.

Violent riots were not perceived as a generally unacceptable assault on the established social order. Although often crushed by force, protestors deemed riots a functional tool to coerce political or economic authorities to make

concessions. Furthermore, authorities had developed patterns of behaviour to negotiate with rioters. Political riots were to a certain extent a tool for political negotiation.

Though violent political protest was far more common than it is today, nineteenth-century Europe saw an overall decline in political violence; instances decreased notably in all European states, with the exception of Italy. On the one hand, this was the result of the increasing power of the state, and its more sophisticated means to curb violent protest. On the other hand, the increasing influence of constitutional activism, the rule of law, modernised bureaucracy, and more widespread education opened up non-violent channels to handle political and social conflict.

Although there was a general decline in political violence during the century, this period also saw the birth of terrorism as a political strategy. Of course, political assassinations can be traced back to antiquity. Yet around the time of the French Revolution, a fundamental change in the use of deadly political violence against rulers or other persons in positions of power occurred. While pre-modern assassinations usually aimed at disposing of and punishing the targeted individual as an individual within the existing political framework, modern terrorism worked differently. It aimed to use the emotional and political shockwaves of the individual killing to attack the dominant political regime and inspire its overthrow. Rather than a mere act of killing, modern terrorism became a form of violent political communication. Terrorists hoped that through their violence they would provoke an overreaction by the regime, which in turn would intensify public disgust toward it, while drawing public sympathies to the insurrectionary cause. They also intended to publicly highlight the vulnerability of the regime and thus inspire further attacks or even open revolt.

The birth of modern terrorism was deeply rooted in three larger historical developments during the long nineteenth century. First, terrorists drew on the still radiant promises and ideals of the French and American Revolutions. These promises upheld that liberty and equality could be obtained within democratically organised nation-states and that this goal could be reached by force if necessary. Second, terrorist acts were primarily media events. The revolution of media and transport during the nineteenth century made it possible for news, stories and even images of violent acts to travel quickly through Europe, enhancing and expanding their intended political impact, and inspiring imitators. Third, the increased capability of modern European states to secure the monopoly on violence inspired the strategy behind terrorism. With the state's growing ability to curb violent unrest—and the general public's decreasing willingness to solve conflict by violent means—radical oppositions saw the likelihood of overthrowing regimes through open revolt

dramatically reduced. In turn, they resorted to the strategy of terrorism, aimed at achieving maximal political and psychological impact without the need for extensive military means. Terrorism was a strategy of those who could not hope to prevail in direct violent confrontation with the state.

Conclusion

Protest and social movements across nineteenth-century Europe took many forms—from riot to revolution—and were integrated in campaigns for numerous causes. People across the continent mobilised for inclusion in the franchise, women's equality, or the abolition of slavery. Many movements were organised to give an expression to the increasingly powerful impulse of public opinion, with the ambition of lobbying governments to legislate and correct perceived wrongs. By the 1860s, and the emergence of the First International, the politics of protest embraced a transnational approach, which underpinned the emergence of socialism as an internationalist idea. Violence was a dynamic associated with various protests and movements, ranging from riots to terrorist campaigns. Violent action could be popular and spontaneous, or organised and secretive.

Many social groups were met with resistance from the state, and this often dictated the form of protest deemed appropriate. Yet, a compelling aspect of the development of the state in nineteenth-century Europe was its uncanny ability to subsume the aims of radicals over time. The Chartists campaigned for the 'People's Charter', six goals relating to radical parliamentary reform. While these aspirations were derided by conservative opinion during the heyday of Chartism in the 1830s and 1840s, five of the six had been implemented by the British state by 1918. A similar story can be found across Europe, especially relating to women's rights. Thus, the success of protest groups should not, perhaps, be judged solely within their own lifespans. The foundations of the modern liberal and democratic state, as well as the concept of transnational social activism, owe much to campaigners in the nineteenth century.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways were the social movements of nineteenth-century Europe gendered?

2. What was the role of international cooperation in social movements in modern Europe?

3. In which ways did the social movements of the nineteenth century shape the political landscape of contemporary Europe?

Suggested reading

Dietze, Carola, *The Invention of Terrorism in Europe, Russia, and the United States* (London: Verso, 2021).

Frevert, Ute, *Women in German History: From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation* (Oxford: Berg, 1990).

Hobsbawm, Eric, *The "Machine Breakers" and Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour* (London: Basic Books, 1968).

Rapport, Mike, *1848: Year of Revolution* (London: Basic Books, 2010).

Roberts, Matthew, *Political Movements in Urban England, 1832–1914* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2009).

Steinbach, Susie, *Women in England 1760–1914: A Social History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

3.5.3 Protest and Social Movements in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Claire Barillé, Kostis Kornetis, Erika Szívós, and Andrew Tompkins

Introduction

Over the course of the twentieth century, protest and social movements changed dramatically. In the first half of the century, much of the European continent was embroiled in conflict between right- and left-wing movements that sought to take power through revolutionary upheaval. By the end of the Second World War this central conflict had led to very different outcomes, which reconfigured the possibilities and aims of protest according to where it took place. In Southern Europe, right-wing dictatorships ruthlessly persecuted their leftist opponents for decades, but protests around 1968 proved formative for the democratic revolutions that would eventually take place once these regimes were weakened. In the liberal democracies of Western Europe, there was decidedly more scope for protest than there was under dictatorship and, in the 1960s, young people in particular questioned the limits that authorities imposed on both protest and on democracy itself. In Eastern Europe, uprisings against Soviet-style communist dictatorships were violently repressed, but they eventually gave way to forms of dissent and ultimately open protests that called for democracy. Developments across the continent differed greatly by region, but by the end of the twentieth century, there was a general trend that culminated in the fragmentation of political movements, blurring the lines between left and right and simultaneously leading to intense—and inconclusive—contestation over what 'democracy' could and should mean.

Fig. 1: Sailors from the liner "Prinzregent Luitpold" on deck of the ship with plaque reading "Soldatenrat Kriegsschiff Prinzregent Luitpold. Long live the socialist republic" (1918), CC BY 3.0, Wikimedia, Bundesarchiv, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_183-J0908-0600-002,_Novemberrevolution,_Matrosenaufstand.jpg.

Left- and Right-wing Movements in the Period up to 1939/1945

The First World War was a time when protest movements struggled to make themselves heard. European nation-states established internal political truces, known in several countries as the 'Sacred Union', which meant a pause on strikes and direct action, as agreed both by socialist parties and larger conservative and liberal parties. By the beginning of 1917, there was general weariness among the belligerent nations of the war. As a result, the Sacred Union could not be maintained for very long. Under pressure from their members, many socialist parties left their positions in government and their trade union propaganda was resumed. In Russia, a revolution led by liberals broke out in March 1917, but they were unable to hold on to power and finally the Bolsheviks, who favoured the rapid conclusion of a peace treaty, succeeded them in October.

Even after the end of the war in 1918, intense conflict continued, sometimes lasting until the mid-1920s. Initially, protests emanating from the left made it appear that a socialist or communist revolution might be imminent. In Germany, sailors in Kiel revolted against the continuation of the war in October 1918, quickly leading to a broader uprising. In the main industrial

centres, workers joined troops in the revolt and formed councils, much like the Russian soviets. Germany then fell prey to generalised unrest: in January 1919, the Spartacists (the revolutionary far left), disappointed with the progress of the revolution, decided to take over Berlin. In Hungary and Austria too, communist parties founded by charismatic leaders met with varied success. All these movements were quickly subjected to fierce repression. In Germany, the army and the *Freikorps* (heterogeneous volunteer armies) violently crushed the Spartacist insurrection. In Hungary, counter-revolutionaries received the support of the Allied troops occupying the country; the Romanian intervention in July-August 1919 sounded the death knell for the Hungarian communists: Bela Kun had to flee to Russia and Admiral Horthy began an authoritarian regency.

In the other European countries, governments reacted differently to the revolutionary strikes that followed the war. In France, trade union leaders were arrested and the main left trade union *Confédération Générale du Travail* (CGT) was declared illegal. In Italy, the government depended on the support of many large industrialists and landlords, enabling the fascists and Mussolini to extend their influence. In Britain, the army put down the railway workers' strike. In Spain, waves of peasant revolts and strikes, led by socialists and anarchists, were severely and drastically put down by the government and the employers' federation. By 1920, with the exception of Soviet Russia—the focal point of the revolution—revolutionary movements were ending in failure throughout Europe.

The economic crisis that hit European countries in the 1930s improved the fortunes of both right- and left-wing movements. The struggle between them often degenerated into street clashes. In Italy and in Germany, dictatorships set to work mitigating the effects of the economic crisis and reorienting their economies towards the preparation for war, while also restricting public and individual liberties. Poland and Hungary offered examples of authoritarian regimes that were not strictly fascist in nature: Piłsudski carried out a policy of cleaning up political life by using forceful decrees and censorship (*Sanacja*), while Horthy steered Hungary along the path of nationalist and antisemitic conservatism. In Spain, the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera failed in 1930 partly due to the economic crisis and partly because of dynastic, republican, nationalist, and extreme-left opposition.

Communism, though, had the wind in its sails in the 1930s. It was strengthened by the difficulties caused by economic crisis, the lack of enthusiasm among Europeans for the apparent inefficiencies of liberal democracy, and by the hopes of youth that had not given up the dream of an ideal society. This partly explains the favour enjoyed by the young communist movement.

The extreme right also experienced a resurgence. However, fascist parties and reactionary formations in the countries of Western and Northern Europe,

even though they expanded greatly, failed in seriously threatening the powers that be. In France, the *Ligues* on 6 February 1934 violently opposed left-wing movements during an anti-parliamentary demonstration organised in Paris in front of the Chamber of Deputies which turned into a riot and resulted in a dozen deaths and several hundred injuries. It also led to the fall of the Daladier government, but the right-wing groups did not manage to take power. The British Union of Fascists, founded by Oswald Mosley in 1932, had 50,000 members in 1934 and around 100,000 supporters, and reached its peak in 1939. Despite significant results in the 1937 London municipal elections, the party became unpopular in the late 1930s. Indeed, most of these fascist parties declined rapidly after 1936.

Between 1939 and 1945, the Nazis conquered most of Europe and protest movements went underground. Economic plunder, propaganda, repression against adversaries (self-declared or named by the state), and persecution against the 'inferior races' all became part of daily life in the occupied countries. Local governments participated in this subjugation, whether willingly or not. But there were also resistance movements that fought the Nazis, inspired by the governments that took refuge in London or which spontaneously refused German tutelage. Beyond the military stakes, the Resistance became a reflection of popular European will for political and social renewal. There was nevertheless a divide between communist resistance fighters on the one hand, and on the other, a more reformist resistance aligned with the restoration of traditional institutions and societies. In the post-war period, this opposition erupted in broad daylight, as in Greece, where it led to civil war.

Protest Movements in Southern European (Authoritarian) Contexts after 1945

The post-1945 condition in the European South was characterised by political violence and its after-effects. Civil wars and their aftermath, long-running authoritarian regimes, and 'disciplined democracies' gave way to waves of discontent, which started being expressed in the 1950s. In Greece the repressive political system that followed the Civil War of the 1940s reached its climax in 1967 with the Colonels' putsch, while in Spain and Portugal, the autocratic rule of Francisco Franco (1892–1975) and António de Oliveira Salazar (1889–1970) remained virtually unchallenged from the late 1930s and mid-1920s, respectively. These conflicts were followed by systems of political and social exclusion for left-wingers, and waves of political (and, later on, economic) refugees flooded Western and, to some extent, Eastern Europe. The Portuguese, Spanish and Greek Communist Parties remained outlawed up until the 1970s.

While protest emerged in each country during the 1950s for different reasons, by the 1960s protest potential was present everywhere. This decade was marked by a general qualitative upsurge of student unrest, this time coupled with workers' movements that were previously dormant. In Spain, a strong trade unionist movement was becoming visible by the early 1960s, with the semi-legal and Communist-controlled *Comisiones Obreras* initiating several major incidents of organised opposition, such as massive strikes in Asturias in 1962. Greek and Portuguese state-controlled trade unions were unwilling to organise strikes, despite occasional outbursts. A major exception occurred in July 1965 in Athens, when a wave of workers' strikes and demonstrations against the direct involvement of the crown in Greece's politics paralysed the country.

The mid to late 1960s marked the beginning of a protest wave. The apparent softening of censorship in Spain, Portugal and Greece provided a space for action and allowed for the import of political and artistic stimuli from France, Italy, and West Germany. At the same time, the upheavals of 1956 and especially 1968 created major rifts within left-wing organisations, leading to the gradual emergence of a 'New Left' and, from the early 1970s onwards, a Eurocommunist contingent. Other forms of left-wing politics were also on the rise. Maoists and Trotskyists immersed themselves in new radicalism inspired by Mao Zedong, Ho Chi Minh, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. They sought mobilisation at all costs, importing the *tiers-mondiste* frame of guerrilla movements from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Fantasies of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist violence proliferated in this framework, wherein local authoritarianism was often seen through the prism of US neo-colonialism. In fact, the Basque separatist organisation ETA framed the Basque country as the 'European Cuba' and intellectuals such as Jean-Paul Sartre famously supported this idea.

State response to agitation was so brutal that it resembled the Eastern European or Latin American model of protest policing. This was the case with the 1968 occupations of the Universities of Madrid and Barcelona, along with occupations of the Law School and Polytechnic School in Athens, in February and November 1973 respectively, with the latter ending up in a bloody intervention by the regime.

Despite some breakthroughs in terms of gender and sexuality within the movements, the absence of strong feminist, homosexual, or ecologist demands is striking. These so-called new social movements only flourished in the post-authoritarian European South after the fall of the regimes in the mid- to late 1970s. In a sense, from the mid-1970s up to the early 1980s, protest movements in these countries were synchronised with, and increasingly resembled, their counterparts in Western Europe.

Protest Movements in Western and Northern Europe after 1945

In Western Europe after 1945, war-weary citizens were initially more concerned with economic reconstruction than political protest. Post-war democracies combined elements of classic liberalism with economic planning, trade union representation, and welfare state measures. This alleviated some of the economic grievances that had fuelled protest in earlier periods and facilitated the consolidation of democratic institutions. As a result, protest became less common and more muted during the first decade of the post-war era.

However, 'post-war' Europe was in many ways still at war, both within and beyond the continent. Like other empires, France resisted decolonisation, and the Algerian War of Independence (1954–1962) gave rise to large-scale strikes by Algerian workers in France, soldiers' protests against conscription, and underground organising on the right as well as the left. As the Cold War took hold, citizens from Britain to West Germany demonstrated against nuclear weapons, backed up by the moral authority of famous intellectuals like Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell. By the beginning of the 1960s, anti-imperialism and opposition to the Cold War had become key elements of a revitalised, transatlantic 'New Left'.

The New Left grew in part from disenchantment with the limits of post-war representative democracy, dominated in most countries by conservatives who remained in power for decades (for example, until 1969 in West Germany, 1974 in France, and 1981 in Italy). However, many New Leftists were also repelled by Soviet communism, especially after the 1956 invasion of Hungary. Rejecting both Cold War options, they advocated 'participatory democracy' instead. Young people born after the Second World War were more acutely aware than their parents of how 'freedom' often failed to live up to its promises: initially small protests on matters ranging from sexual norms to the Vietnam War all encountered harsh repression throughout the 1960s.

Even under liberal democracy, police violence was a major catalyst of protest. After police killed a demonstrator in West Berlin in June 1967, the West German student movement radicalised. In May 1968, police repression of small-scale student protests in Paris quickly led to a general strike among workers across France. Demonstrations in one place frequently inspired protests elsewhere. The issues at stake differed from one country to the next, but protesters readily identified with one another and borrowed tactics from abroad, creating the appearance of a worldwide revolt. When these dramatic protests seemingly failed to lead to revolutionary change, many activists directed their political energies elsewhere.

During the 1970s, feminism quickly became the single most important social movement in Western Europe. Though women in most of Europe had already gained the right to vote at least twenty years earlier, they still had lower-paid jobs and the additional burden of unpaid housework, while men monopolised power in political parties, companies, and even protest groups. Organising amongst themselves, women engaged in consciousness-raising, created their own media and publishing houses, and launched transnational campaigns for abortion rights. Only months after 343 French women publicly declared in April 1971 that they had had illegal abortions, 374 West German women made a similar declaration on the cover of a magazine. The women's movement of the 1970s inspired gay liberation as well as later movements challenging intersecting oppressions of race, class, and gender.

Protests over peace, human rights, and the environment developed in parallel. While the upheavals of 1968 remained an important point of reference, demonstrations against the stationing of American nuclear warheads in West Germany in 1981–1983 attracted millions of participants—far more than the thousands that had protested there in 1968. The arms race of the 1980s, the Chernobyl nuclear power accident (1986), and the war in the former Yugoslavia (1991–2001) also illustrated that these and other issues were globally interconnected. As the Cold War gave way to a new wave of capitalist globalisation in the 1990s, disparate social movements converged again, for a time, in a 'movement of movements' that contested the inequalities created by globalisation.

Fig. 2: Nagy Gyula, "Kossuth Lajos utca a Ferenciek tere felől nézve. 1956. október 25-e délután,— Fortepan 24652" ("Kossuth Lajos Street seen from Ferenciek Square. On the afternoon of October 25, 1956"), Internet Archive, https://web.archive.org/web/20190123034910/http%3A//www.fortepan. hu/_photo/download/fortepan_40060.jpg.

This image from 25 October 1956 in Budapest Hungary shows the anti-communist and nationalist revolutionaries marching towards the Hungarian Parliament building to present their anti-Soviet demands. Hungarian flags with a hole in the middle were a powerful symbol during the protests, because the communist coat of arms was cut out from the fabric. The day ended in tragedy, when shots were fired at a large crowd on Kossuth Square in front of the Hungarian Parliament.

Protest and Social Movements in East-Central Europe, 1945–1990

At the end of the Second World War much of East-Central Europe came under Soviet dominance. By 1948–1949, communists had taken over and consolidated their hegemony in the region. The party-state endeavoured to exercise control over society, either by eliminating rival political parties or, in countries such as Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, reducing them to mere 'bloc parties' that remained subordinate to the Communist Party. With genuine political pluralism at an end, social movements and institutions were also brought under communist control. For example, diverse youth organisations and women's associations, formerly affiliated with various political parties and the churches, were banned or dissolved; only the officially approved, communist varieties were allowed to exist. In most Eastern Bloc countries, all types of social and cultural organisations, as well as the state party itself, were integrated into the so-called people's fronts or national fronts.

By the late 1950s, Stalinist regimes were giving way to less oppressive forms of state socialism in most East-Central European countries, and certain civic, local, or cultural initiatives gained official recognition. But the system's fundamental intent to keep societal movements under state control remained unchanged. Activism of any kind continued to face severe limits: social initiatives, civic efforts, and protest movements could go only as far as they were tolerated by governments. At the same time, reforms by domestic governments—including economic reforms, the liberalisation of the public sphere, and the extension of various freedoms—could go only as far as the Soviet Union permitted. This became glaringly evident in revolutionary situations as well as in periods in which communist authorities cracked down on protest participants and dissident movements.

Central and Eastern Europe witnessed several major crises and uprisings during the communist period, including the Berlin Uprising of 1953, the Hungarian Revolution and Poznań Uprising of 1956, the Prague Spring of 1968, and the Polish Crisis of 1980–1981. These events grew out of popular dissatisfaction with oppressive policies and economic shortcomings, the

latter resulting in generally low wages and salaries, modest living standards, and recurring shortages of certain products. The extent of such problems, as well as the extent to which individual rights and freedoms were curtailed, varied from country to country. There were also specific factors, such as the continuous Soviet military presence, which in Hungary was one of the main causes of the national uprising in 1956.

From the late 1970s, dissident movements emerged in most countries of East-Central Europe, inspired by various traditions and revolutionary ideologies, contemporary activism in Western Europe, and by the legacy of 1968. The movements were diverse, with opposition groups gathering different constituencies and taking on different issues, but their common denominator was the desire to build up a new, democratic order. Charta 77 in Czechoslovakia was a movement of dissident intellectuals who signed a democratic charter. Solidarność in Poland was an alliance of trade unions with a mass following of workers and other employees, counting about 10 million members in 1980. The so-called democratic opposition in Hungary in the 1980s was largely composed of liberal intellectuals, whereas other groups of Hungarian dissidents consisted of populist-conservative writers and intellectuals or veteran '56ers.

Opposition movements often crystallised around established, older institutions. The Catholic Church in Poland, for example, was a powerful counterweight to the communist regime; the first visit of Pope John Paul II to his homeland in 1979 catalysed subsequent mass protests. The Lutheran Church in the GDR played a similar role.

Various civil movements, albeit not primarily political, could potentially acquire political overtones as well: heritage protection, environmentalism, and the question of national or ethnic minorities could all serve as issues through which citizens could express their criticism toward the regime. The end of the period brought about the escalation of societal discontent in Central Eastern Europe: the mass demonstrations which unfolded during the autumn of 1989, culminating in the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, the dismantling of the Berlin Wall in East Germany, and the Romanian Revolution. These events paved the way for democratic transformation, and other countries of the region underwent nonviolent transition during 1989–1990.

Conclusion

While the Russian Revolution left a powerful imprint on all sociopolitical struggles of the interwar period, the rise of fascism and National Socialism altered the dynamics of social movements more generally, resulting in conflicts between the extreme right and left. The late 1930s signalled the

crushing of protest movements and things soon came to a standstill with the advent of the Second World War, which nevertheless favoured communist-led anti-fascist resistance. The drive for revolutionary change in the post-1945 period was subject to temporal and geographical differences throughout the continent. The most important change was the impact of institutionalised socialism in Central and Eastern Europe, where Soviet-aligned communist parties attempted to control protest at all costs. From the mid-1950s onwards, the parallel intervention of the Soviet Union in Hungary and the proliferation of antinuclear movements in countries such as West Germany and Britain gave rise to a rift between the Old Left and the New Left. This would crystallise in the student and workers' movements of 1968, as well as through the Warsaw Pact's intervention in Czechoslovakia.

While the idea of introducing state reforms to achieve 'socialism with a human face' seemed to vanish at the end of the 1960s, new trends, such as the centrality of human rights, came to the fore. At the same time, protest against censorship and the violation of basic human rights in the authoritarian European South reached its peak. Police violence and state repression, especially targeting young activists, were catalysts of protest for most movements of the 'long 1960s', with qualitative differences depending on the context. Whereas in the West, identity-based politics and new social movements such as feminism, environmentalism, and peace movements developed in parallel, such demands only flourished in the south after the fall of the dictatorships in the mid-1970s. In the 1980s, these and other interrelated issues fuelled the development of 'civil society', culminating in the 1989 revolutions. With the end of the Cold War, a new set of movements emerged, this time focussing on the adverse effects of globalisation on democracy.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways did left-wing and right-wing protest movements differ in twentieth-century Europe?

2. Which role did the Cold War play in the development of social movements in twentieth-century Europe?

3. How do current protest movements (such as Fridays for Future) differ from movements in the twentieth century? Why?

Suggested reading

Bantigny, Ludivine, *1968: De grands soirs en petits matins* (Paris: Seuil, 2018)

Horn, Gerd-Rainer, *The Spirit of '68: Rebellion in Western Europe and North*

America, 1956–1976 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Berend, Ivan T., *From the Soviet Bloc to the European Union: The Economic & Social Transformation of Central & Eastern Europe since 1973* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Berend, Ivan T., *Central and Eastern Europe, 1944–1993: Detour from the Periphery to the Periphery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Bolton, Jonathan, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech Culture under Communism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

Gildea, Robert, James Mark and Anette Warring, eds, *Europe's 1968: Voices of Revolt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Hara, Kouki and Eduardo Romanos, eds, *Protest Beyond Borders: Contentious Politics in Europe since 1945* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011).

Jackson, Julian, Anna-Louise Milne, and James S. Williams, eds, *May 68: Rethinking France's Last Revolution* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

Kenney, Padraic, *1989: Democratic Revolutions at the Cold War's End: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford and St. Martins, 2010).

UNIT 4
KNOWLEDGE

Jan Steen, *Scholar in his study with Death entering* (1600s), Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jan_Steen_-_Scholar_at_his_Desk.JPG.

CHAPTER 4.1

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

4.1.1 Science and Technological Change in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Jan Hansen, Jiří Janáč, Lilla Krász, and Marco Mostert

Introduction

In Europe, the early modern period was a time of societal transition, from the traditional towards the modern. Framed by the global expansion of European settlement, driven by the rivalry between the great powers on the continent, and by their efforts to discover and control new lands and resources at home and overseas, the era witnessed the gradual formation of Europe. It provided the conceptual and material base for European global dominance in the nineteenth century. Scientific and technological change played a central, if often overlooked part in this process, which is usually described in terms of the expansion of capitalism and the related development of institutions and innovation cultures. The invention, development, and dissemination of the printing press from the fifteenth century onwards, as well as other early modern technologies, reveal how science and technological change went hand-in-hand, and how knowledge (about mathematics, optics, astronomy, chemistry, and medicine) and the media used to convey it, were evolving in tandem. Arguably, new knowledge cultures and associated technologies were an achievement from which large parts of the enlightened eighteenth-century elites derived their self-conception, embodying progress and modernity.

This chapter discusses some aspects of this transformation by exploring the emerging written culture and other infrastructures of knowledge, technological networking across Europe, the diffusion of innovations through migrant knowledge, and industrialisation. First, we will look at the ways in which the printing press changed the infrastructure of knowledge. Next, we will discuss technological change and the role of migrating craftsmen in the diffusion of innovations. Finally, we will see how industrialisation was helped by inventions that were developed by craftsmen, experimenting tinkers, and

self-taught mechanics rather than by scientists. This holds true both for the fifteenth-century printing press and for the eighteenth-century steam engine. These inventions were among those that spread wherever Europeans set foot. Ingenious devices were developed in the colonies as well, and they contributed considerably to the global expansion of Europe.

Fig. 1: Philip Galle, "Boekdrukkunst" ("Printing art") (ca. 1589–1593), Rijksmuseum.org, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.115331. Printworks at the end of the sixteenth century, showing typesetting, the act of printing itself, and printed sheets hanging to dry.

The Infrastructure of Knowledge

During the early modern period, the ways in which people learnt about the world and their place in it were transformed through changes in the infrastructure of knowledge: in the use of speech or making visual images to convey information, the proliferating uses of the written word, and the invention and development of the printing press.

Orality was still important in early modern Europe, and much technical knowledge relied on learning one's trade or art in practice. However, the development of writing, which had gradually taken root since antiquity, became an increasingly important medium for transmitting messages. Written texts could be read and listened to when they were read aloud. They could also be copied and kept for later use. The use of writing led to the formation of institutions such as the archive, meant to keep documents, and the library, for keeping written texts in book form. Schools were developed, in which knowledge was imparted about the various ways of dealing efficiently with

written texts. Writing began to form part of social reality. 'Literate mentalities' developed, which allowed those who could read and write to form a different view of the world.

In the thirteenth century, the numbers of documents that were produced increased dramatically, as did school texts. Books began to resemble the books we use today. Catalogues and inventories were made to help visitors find texts in libraries and archives. Earlier oral legal practices were put into writing, and trust in the written word increased. It became necessary to learn to write correctly in order to study at a university and embark on a career in law or medicine, or to be trained as a notary public. 'Knowledge' and 'applied knowledge' became separated from one another, and teaching was shifting its attention towards society's new demands for literacy. A flywheel was set in motion and started to gather speed. This was fed by formal schooling in the arts of the written word. Schooling imbued knowledge which might be applied as a technique—as 'technology'. The development of technology deepened the complexity of society. This increased complexity, in turn, increased demand for schooling, and so on. All this made the thirteenth century into a key period in the history of European literacy. An audience developed for the products of the movable-type printing press, developed by Johannes Gutenberg (c. 1400–1468) around 1440. This happened especially in the towns, where formal schooling took place, where universities developed, and where the demand for consulting books shaped new forms of written texts.

The introduction of the printing press was momentous. The medieval millennium produced some 11,000,000 manuscript books; but in only the first half-century of its existence, until around 1500, the printing press had already produced several millions of books. Not all printed books contained texts that modern-day Europeans would consider as 'knowledge'. But some books did, and the printing press generated a written culture that over the early modern centuries saw the rise of forms of scholarship and science with which we are still familiar today. An intellectual community of scholars, the so-called Republic of Letters, corresponded by letter and published the results of their research in printed books. Printed scholarly journals first appeared in the seventeenth century. From the fifteenth century, scholars housed their libraries in studies at their private homes. These small rooms could also house collections of curiosities. The first European museums also appeared in the fifteenth century, as did the first public libraries. Meanwhile, small laboratories came into existence for alchemy and medicine. Places for research in teams were to develop only in the nineteenth century; until then, pure scientific research and scholarship required considerable investments of time and money.

The eighteenth-century Enlightenment saw writing as the engine of civilisation, and the prehistoric period as somehow of lesser value than periods

and cultures that knew writing. And they considered the printed word to be intrinsically better than the handwritten word. It was print culture, so it was thought, that allowed the development of public opinion: a tribunal that was independent of all powers, and that would be respected by all powers. It is certain that, building on the developing culture of literacy and the infrastructure of reading, early modern Europe experienced a boom of applied technologies that benefitted trade and communication networks. That was made possible, even if only in part, by the printing press.

Technological Change, Infrastructures, and Networking

Early modern technological change is often associated with notions of revolution (e.g., the 'military' or 'scientific' revolutions). But radical new innovations tended to appear sporadically; the steam engine and the printing press are the most often mentioned exceptions. Indeed, rather than being driven by heroic figures and major inventions, technological change developed gradually, through the expansion and improvement of networks, the growing intensity of expert exchange and the circulation of knowledge, and assisted by improvements in (transport) infrastructures. Instead of radical transformation, technological change often followed a path of gradual improvements based on trial and error and learning by doing. Science, rather than being a driving force of technological change itself, followed the knowledge and practices developed by craftsmen and engineers.

Between 1450 and 1800, European merchants expanded their trading networks on a global level, leading to their operation of regular trans-oceanic exchanges, connecting Europe through seaports with virtually every corner of the planet. Technological innovations were crucial for this expansion. The expansion of global contacts facilitated the introduction in Europe of advances in shipbuilding (such as the Asian lateen sail and leeboard), weaponry (Chinese gunpowder), and navigational instruments (compass, astrolabe), all of which originated in other parts of the world. They were skilfully combined by their new users.

Efforts of merchants, shipbuilders, and sailors active in the Dutch trade in the Baltic during the sixteenth century led to the development of the *fluyt*, a sailing vessel superior to those used by their European competitors. Designed to facilitate trans-oceanic trade with a focus on maximum cargo capacity, minimal crew, and low building costs, the *fluyt* marked a significant improvement on Mediterranean vessels such as carracks and galleons, the original vehicles of European expansion. By significantly reducing transportation costs, this new type of vessel contributed to the success of the Dutch Seaborne Empire, built on an extensive merchant fleet which by the mid-seventeenth century

represented approximately half of the total European capacity. Later on, British shipwrights adopted and improved the original design, in turn enabling the expansion of the British Atlantic trade.

Sometimes the state played a central role in infrastructural development and technological change, especially from the rise of absolute monarchies. In the mid-seventeenth century, Europe witnessed a turn from private initiative towards designs and efforts orchestrated by the state. An early example is the systematic development and standardisation of postal services, which started at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Networks of horse-riding couriers for regular diplomatic communication across the large European kingdoms and empires appeared. The Habsburg monarchy, spanning an area that stretched from the Atlantic coast to the borders of the Ottoman Empire, played a leading role, establishing the Imperial Post to connect the main centres of the empire. When this network also started to provide services to non-state customers, cities such as Venice connected themselves to it as well.

With traffic levels gradually increasing, in the eighteenth century European states started to develop an interest in improving roads and waterways, either by stimulating private investment (the British turnpike roads) or by building national road networks (on the continent).

The development in postal services (using the improving road networks) and in shipbuilding (which supplied global trade networks) significantly contributed to the intensification of communication both within Europe and between Europe and the wider world. They thereby also contributed to the formation of Europe as a self-aware cultural and economic unit.

Migrating Craftsmen and the Diffusion of Innovations

Who used the new technologies and scientific advances that appeared in early modern Europe? The question about the users and consumers of knowledge and technology is significant because the invention of a device would be meaningless without its subsequent use and further development. This is just as true for the invention of the printing press as it is for the invention of the mechanical pocket watch (1510), the microscope (1608), the steam engine (1712), and the loom (1764). The people who used these devices were scholars, artisans, craftsmen, engineers, and entrepreneurs, among others. In the early modern period, ever more people took up these professions. This mirrored an increasing social complexity between 1500 and 1800.

The boundaries between those who advanced science and technological change and those who used these achievements were fluid. A significant example to study the persona of the innovator-user is that of migrating craftsmen. It was a fundamental part of the training of every carpenter,

shoemaker, or baker to spend their apprenticeship years on the move. In several professions, migration was regarded as a prerequisite for a craftsman to become a master. Many guild regulations contained detailed provisions in this regard. Ambitious architects and engineers were expected to travel to Italian towns early on in their careers to continue their education there. The result was a trans-local, trans-regional, and trans-territorial transfer of science and technology, making the early modern period a remarkably dynamic epoch. By acquiring practical skills and knowledge and transferring it to other places, craftsmen contributed to the production and transformation of science and technology.

Many of these craftsmen kept travel diaries in which they took notes about the knowledge and skills they acquired. Some of them even published their diaries. This connects to the increasing literacy rate and the importance of the printing press in the early modern period. On a large scale, letterpress printing affected the circulation of knowledge and influenced practical skills among craftsmen, workers, and others engaged in handicraft and technical professions. Cheap editions of books and guidebooks found a wide circulation and readership, and they were carried around by craftsmen on the move. This early modern readership was composed of educated readers at the courts and universities, but it also came from the emerging middle classes and, occasionally, from working people. In all these cases, however, this extending readership did not necessarily represent radical new beginnings, but rather built on developments rooted in the Middle Ages.

The printing press also contributed significantly to the development of a joint horizon of expectations in terms of science and technological change, on the part of those literate Europeans who participated in the discussions that fostered the development of public opinion. These processes had a specifically European dimension. Exchanges through transnational infrastructures such as roads, canals, and the postal system accelerated the interaction between the users of technological advances in different regions of Europe, from the urban centres of Italy to the rural peripheries of northeastern Europe. Travelling craftsmen, with their spatial and intellectual mobility, fostered a transnational culture of experts in the early modern period. But these developments also had exclusionary effects that were previously unknown to the people of Europe. Above all they resulted in demarcations, as can be seen in the emerging law on patents, for example, which was intended to protect inventions from unauthorised imitations. The first patent letters are documented for medieval England (1331). In Italy this development began somewhat later: in 1416, the Republic of Venice granted the first patent for a device that processed wool into felt. It was in Venice that a distinct patent culture developed in the following decades, initially in glass-making, which gradually spread across Europe through migrating craftsmen, among others.

Overall, from about 1500 onwards, the everyday experience of large populations in Europe was increasingly shaped by products of technical innovation. Printed books were tangible outcomes of these transformations. The most lasting changes, however, came from developments that we summarise with the term *industrialisation*.

Industrialisation

Economic development in the early modern period, which has been termed by posterity the period of 'proto-industrialisation', was characterised by the proliferation and coexistence of artisans' workshops in cities and market towns, and by the division of labour among small enterprises operating within a framework of home industries. There were relatively few large-scale factories or mining enterprises at this point. Urbanised settlements made it possible for entrepreneur merchants and manufactory owners to supervise the activities of nearby rural home producers by distributing raw materials and tools to them (a process called the *Verlagssystem*), or by setting standards and schedules for the deliveries of semi-manufactured products and seeing to the marketing of finished goods (the *Kaufsystem*). The final phase of the production process was carried out in the cities and towns, where the workshops of major guilds and manufactories (the so-called proto-factories) were operating. At the same time, large numbers of the peasantry were hired on a seasonal or part-time basis and gradually turned into 'labourers', becoming dependent on an entrepreneurial system well before the development of large-scale industrial production. The early modern system of distribution had first appeared in the fourteenth century, and the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw it adopted by the textile industry; the system remained in use until well after the onset of the 'industrial revolution'.

In the early modern age, the dominance of small-scale forms of industrial activity is clearly shown by the fact that approximately 2.2 million people were employed as artisans in the Holy Roman Empire, of whom one million were operating on the basis of a distribution system relying on household industries, compared with the 100,000 people working in large-scale manufactories or in mines. Similar proportions and phenomena are discernible in the northern Italian weaving industry and in the early industrialisation of France, where two-thirds of industrial production were dependent on small-scale businesses.

In Lancashire, commonly regarded as the birthplace of the industrial revolution in England, just as many people were employed in small workshops as in factories. This over-representation of home industries was largely due to low wages and entrepreneurial flexibility. Not surprisingly, these circumstances also account for the belated mechanisation process of industrial production in other parts of Europe.

The first large-scale businesses, such as the manufactories, were established to satisfy the needs of modern states, which were undertaking to develop their armies in the sixteenth century. The state was especially interested in arms production, the textile industry, and metallurgy. Manufactories were heavily subsidised by the state.

Manufactories also acted as indispensable levers of technological transfer. Apprentices of small workshops (operating with two or three employees within the guild system) tended to acquire work and life experiences in the course of their wandering about Europe. With the manufactories, finally, there seems to have developed an intrinsic relationship between migration and innovation. Italian craftsmen producing highly esteemed stained glasses or silk fabrics fled from the Spanish Inquisition and settled in the Holy Roman Empire in the sixteenth century. Huguenot weavers and makers of Gobelin tapestries fled from France in the late seventeenth century and settled in England and the United Provinces of the Netherlands, and they exerted lasting influence on the development of Prussia's network of manufactories. Nevertheless, the proportion of large-scale businesses remained relatively low in the early modern age: even at the end of the eighteenth century, in continental Europe there existed very few manufactories employing as many as several hundred people. Barcelona stood out in this respect, as there were approximately 100 large manufacturing plants in the city.

The rise of the modern industrial age could not do without the division of labour, large-scale specialisation, technological innovation, and continuous capital investment. This first manifested in England from the 1730s onwards, with the advent of the industrial revolution. The term 'revolution' may be somewhat misleading, however, as the development was far from radical and swift.

Regarding the direct application of set procedures, the skills and knowledge involved in the eighteenth-century beginnings of modern industry were rather precarious, though certain practices based on observation and experimentation had already been methodically applied from the late seventeenth century onwards. The most striking feature of eighteenth-century technical innovations in England had not been worked out by scientists, but rather by experimenting tinkers, self-taught mechanics, engineers, and entrepreneurs. The early decades of the eighteenth century saw two foundational innovations which had lasting effects. First, there was the introduction of coke heating in the process of melting iron, getting rid of the dependency on charcoal (invented in Coalbrookdale in 1709 by Abraham Darby (1678–1717), an ironmonger). The second invention, which supplemented and gradually replaced the wind and water wheels as a source of energy, was the development of the steam engine (invented in 1712 by Thomas Newcomen (1664–1729), tinker and ironmonger in Staffordshire; and developed in 1769 by James Watt, mathematician and

tool maker in Glasgow). These innovations and procedures originated with technicians rather than scientists and were soon adopted on the continent. It was these early modern innovations—which can at best be termed 'applied science'—which shaped the further course of industrialisation.

The early modern period also saw the intensification of communication within Europe and the sophistication of trade networks and colonial expansion by European powers worldwide. In the colonies, crucial inventions were developed as well, such as the cotton gin developed by the American inventor Eli Whitney (1765–1825) in 1793 in the recently independent United States. This made it easier to separate the cotton fibres from the seeds of the plant, speeding up production. New techniques developed by European settlers and their descendants were tried out on slaves and indigenous people whenever this seemed profitable. The exploitation of colonised people and the extraction of resources in many cases was the prerequisite for industrialisation in Europe. This is the darker side of what Europeans understood by scientific and technological progress.

Conclusion

In the early modern period, science and technology were intimately connected. Technical innovations and their diffusion were based on new bodies of knowledge, while new devices helped to expand knowledge horizons. This is evident on several levels. From the thirteenth century onward, a distinct written culture emerged. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, ever more texts were produced and read by clerics, scholars, and other members of the literate elites. Gutenberg developed the printing press around 1440, making it easier to produce books. The channels for distributing pamphlets, books, and other printed texts improved as well, based on complex infrastructures of knowledge. The result was a Republic of Letters.

Science and technology developed in and through networks—the interpersonal communication networks of scholars, artists, craftsmen, tinkers, and engineers, but also the material networks of infrastructure, such as roads, canals, and the postal system that transported scholars' letters.

Knowledge of technological innovations circulated between European countries and around the globe. This diffusion of innovations emanated from the hub of Italy, because craftsmen and artisans who travelled there brought knowledge (and methods of protecting knowledge through patents) back home with them. These travellers were producers and consumers of technology at the same time. Thus, in the early modern period there was an intimate connection between innovation and migration. This new knowledge was a precondition for the industrialisation that unfolded from the eighteenth century onward, especially in England. Even before the 'industrial revolution,'

however, there were new forms of production related to scientific and technological change. This early form of industrialisation first took place in micro-spaces such as artisan workshops and home industries, before large-scale industrial production advanced from the eighteenth century onward, profoundly changing the (early) modern world.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways did the development of the printing press influence early modern society in Europe?

2. Is it right to argue that the introduction of the printing press led to industrialisation in Europe? Why or why not?

3. What was the role of colonialism in the history of technological change in early modern Europe?

Suggested reading

Michael Adas, ed., *Technology and European Overseas Enterprise: Diffusion, Adaptation and Adoption* (London: Routledge, 1996).

Burke, Peter, *A Social History of Knowledge: From Gutenberg to Diderot* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000).

Chartrier, Roger, *The Order of Books* (Cambridge: Polity, 1994).

Horst, Thomas, Marília dos Santos Lopes and Henrique Leitão, eds, *Renaissance Craftsmen and Humanistic Scholars* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2016).

Christian Jacob, ed., *Lieux de savoir: Espaces et communautés* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2007).

Park, Katharine and Lorraine Daston, eds, *The Cambridge History of Science, vol. III: Early Modern Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Raymond, Joad and Noah Moxham, *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016).

Reid, Phillip, *The Merchant Ship in the British Atlantic, 1600–1800* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2020).

Rogers, Everett M., *Diffusion of Innovations* (New York: Free Press, 1962).

Scott, Hamish, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History, 1350–1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

4.1.2 Science and Technological Change in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Mathias Grote, Jiří Janáč, and Darina Martykánová

Introduction

The period between the French Revolution (1789–1799) and the outbreak of the First World War (1914–1918) was marked by the unforeseen dynamism of research and technology, by the formation of the independent academic disciplines that we know today (including biology, chemistry, history, philology and the first social sciences), and also by a growing gap between the sciences (*sciences*, *Naturwissenschaften*) and the humanities (*lettres*, *Geisteswissenschaften*). It was also a period in which technology radically transformed the production of goods and came to shape the everyday lives of a growing number of people in Europe and across the world, increasing human interconnectedness. While the relationship between science and technology has always been far from straightforward, the long nineteenth century was characterised by growing efforts to organise and institutionalise the links between the two, particularly under the logic of utility and profit, but also with the aim to expand human knowledge, in fields such as astronomy. Moreover, this period witnessed the professionalisation of scientific pursuits: due to the broadening field of state intervention and the growing investment of governing elites in science and technology, more and more people—mostly, but not exclusively, men—could earn their livelihoods 'doing science'. While science and technology were presented and understood as universal, they were shaped by existing relations of power and their imbalances, which were particularly pronounced in the era of the 'Great Divergence', the socioeconomic shift during the nineteenth century in which the Western sphere emerged as the wealthiest civilisation, eclipsing the rest of the world. European powers used technology and science

to extend their domination around the globe and to exploit their domains with greater efficiency, while those residing in the colonies and in the independent countries beyond Europe (including Japan, the Ottoman Empire, Latin American republics, and the Kingdom of Hawai'i) creatively appropriated both science and technology in an effort to resist European and American imperialism and to strengthen their own position in the world—in military, political, economic, and also cultural terms.

Science and Medicine

The turn of the nineteenth century saw, in addition to political upheaval and a new ordering of the empires and nations of Europe, other events understood as revolutionary. Chemistry, for example, underwent dramatic changes: the introduction of modern elements (the story of oxygen and Antoine de Lavoisier is well-known), animal electricity (Luigi Galvani and Alessandro Volta), chemical formula, the periodic system (Dmitri I. Mendeleev) and the chemistry of life—the conceptual innovations of this fledgling discipline were spread across Europe. Like pearls on a chronological chain, these discoveries help to illustrate, in retrospect, a notion of scientific progress that became the pride of the emerging professions of academic researchers and teachers. However, recent historiography of science has taken a skeptical stance on such a notion of progress and its focus on individuals. Nevertheless, chemistry illustrates the technological and economic potential of science for the nineteenth-century state. Entire industries were built around the knowledge of carbon compounds that were isolated from industrial mining products, such as coal tar, and these industries would later change the material world through innovations in hygiene, pharmaceuticals, nutrition, or textiles.

The extent to which the sciences were a source of material wealth as well as a secularising force can be demonstrated by the most important development in nineteenth-century biology: the theory of biological species formation through variation and selection—evolution—as formulated by the Victorian scientist, Charles Darwin. Darwin's theory was tied to geological insights into the long history of the Earth (fossils) and to practices of breeding. The rules of heredity, first analysed by the famous pea cross-breeding experiments of Moravian monk Gregor Mendel, were only 're-discovered' in 1900. Evolution promoted a secular account of the descent of humankind, becoming thereby both a cornerstone of a modern scientific worldview as well as an object of contestation by religion. The theory of natural selection—of species changing and adapting to their environments over time—has of course changed its purview dramatically in the past 150 years. The theory also reveals science's connections to the exploration of the world by European powers: Darwin's

voyage on the ship, *HMS Beagle*, bore testimony to this, as did Alexander von Humboldt's earlier trip to Spanish Latin America, as do the vast collections in the natural history museums of European capitals to this day. The provenance of these collections and discoveries in regimes of colonial domination stands in stark contrast to their insight into the diversity of life and its ecological dimensions, thus revealing a downside of scientific 'progress'. Similar could be said of the damage done to humankind and the environment by the developing industries of this period.

Diseases such as cholera or tuberculosis became a challenge to medical science in the nineteenth century, spreading due to the pauperisation and urbanisation of industrialising states, as well as increasing international commerce. The European empires each pursued research on what came to be known as infections of the human body by 'invading' microorganisms: Louis Pasteur, Robert Koch, and Joseph Lister were celebrated as heroes of the triumphalist narratives of scientific modernity. This has sometimes obscured competing explanations, which gave the social factors of suffering and epidemics more weight than biology. State-sanctioned hygiene policies (disinfection, vaccination) and state-funded institutions—ultimately undergirded by the persistent dream of 'silver bullets' that would free humankind of these scourges—remain an enduring heritage of the late-nineteenth century and the golden age of both hygiene and bacteriology. Equally persistent, though, is the critique of such ideals of health and purity, not least regarding the colonial context or eugenics.

The global expansion of the British and French empires in particular, but also all kinds of lesser actors, along with transatlantic exchange, migration, and commerce, brought with it the need for faster communication, which was established in this period by intercontinental telegraph cables. In turn, these electrical networks had repercussions on the perception of space and time, paving the way towards conceptual innovations that culminated in the theory of relativity in the 1910s. Time zones, or the standardisation of units in the metric system, would cast an ever-growing web of measurement across the planet and the universe, supported by ideas of universal languages and repositories which could catalogue the masses of new knowledge. But the prestige of science's pursuit of an ideal of mechanical objectivity, bolstered by technologies such as photography, did not remain uncontested. Critique and scepticism of the positivist ideal abounded in literature, religious activities, and the humanities, pitching it against the individual, tradition, or irrationalism. Even a founding figure of the social sciences such as Max Weber would soberly concede in 1917 that the sciences could only yield descriptive causal analyses, but could never tell a human being what they ought to do in a normative sense. Thus, at the turn of the twentieth century, the modern

individual living in a world of science and technology—with all its insight into, and power over, nature and society—was also perceived as contingent, isolated, and vulnerable.

Fig. 1: Robert Charles Dudley, "H.M.S. Agamemnon Laying the Atlantic Telegraph Cable in 1858: a Whale Crosses the Line" (1866), CC0 Public Domain, Metropolitan Museum of Art, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/383810. This painting shows the method by which American and British ships uncoiled the first transatlantic telegraph cable in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Technology and Politics

Technology came to be seen as historical in itself during the period considered here. As a field of human activity and politics, a specific technological domain hardly existed prior to the arrival of industrialisation. Only since the mid-eighteenth century had the concept of technology entered public and academic discourses, being as it were a significant component of the transition from the pre-modern social order to a new industrial one. Simultaneously, new practices of technology politics emerged, pitting technological development (innovations) as a driving force of progress and modernity and a vital precondition for prosperity. States started to intervene heavily in the development and adoption of new technologies in their territories, establishing engineering schools, universities and research institutions (see for instance the French École Polytechnique, 1794, the Prague Polytechnical Institute, 1806, or the Delft University of Technology, 1842).

This emphasis on technology marked a shift from protecting stability towards nurturing perpetual technological change. Sometimes associated with the expansion of liberal capitalism and industrial production (Schumpeter), this shift coproduced a rapid development of new technologies throughout the nineteenth century. While the initial phase of the Industrial Revolution was built upon incremental innovations in textile and steel production and the associated transition to the mechanisation of production, the so-called Second Industrial Revolution brought significant leaps in many fields of technological knowledge and production, this time properly engineered and science-based. To list just a few examples: the rapid development of electrical engineering, including the telegraph, lighting, electric generators, and radio; chemical industry such as fertilisers—see the work of the German scientist and engineer Justus von Liebig (1803–1873); and machinery such as the steam turbine for generating electricity, developed by the British engineer Charles Parsons (1854–1931), or the famous internal combustion engine designed by Rudolf Diesel on the basis of the principles of thermodynamics. These advances significantly increased energy efficiency in the production of industrial and agricultural goods and transformed livelihoods across European societies.

During the nineteenth century, Europeans started to identify with technology, which they began seeing as a defining characteristic of their civilisation and essential proof of its superiority. In the words of Michael Adas, technology became a "Measure of Men"—not only in encounters with non-European cultures, but also within Europe. Following the Great Exhibition of Products of French Industry held in Paris in 1798, annual national industrial fairs and exhibitions became a common sight in European capitals in the first half of the nineteenth century, providing an opportunity for regions to demonstrate and compete over their technological prowess. The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations, organised in London in 1851, for which the Crystal Palace was famously constructed, shifted the competition to an international level.

International competition sometimes transformed into a broader rivalry, or fit into a pre-existing one. Such was the case of the Franco-Prussian 'Great Train Race' between 1815 and 1914. National politics of technology required centralisation and control over the adoption and development of new technologies. State authorities made considerable efforts to standardise, supervise and organise implementation of these new innovations. Often, especially in case of communication and transport infrastructures, the military played an important part in technological expansion. Some even speak in this sense of the formation of the 'infrastructural state', characterised by an ideology of centralisation, expanding state-controlled networks, and the administration of 'development' by growing expert bureaucracies. Both France and Prussia

(and later Germany) faced difficulties in pursuing national railway policies, associated with the demands of private companies and the diverging policies of the many German states. In the end, especially after 1870, military interests drove both countries to outdo each other in terms of the absolute length and relative density of their railway networks.

Despite such efforts towards nation-building, however, technology contributed significantly to the gradual formation of Europe as a cultural and economic unit. The international standardisation of national communication and transport networks enabled a growing intensity of contact between European regions and peoples. The Bern Convention of 1886 offers a good example of such cooperation. Until then, Europe had been divided by the Alps into three largely incompatible railway networks (roughly French, Italian, and German). Construction of a trans-alpine connection interlinking the three networks required harmonisation between the differing standards, and in that regard the Bern Convention was a success. Prior to the First World War, a unique European railway regulatory regime was developed, combining various national, commercial, and non-governmental bodies and institutions. This system would manage an efficient operation of rolling stock on the network extending from the Atlantic to Russia. Standards developed in Europe often became universal standards and found application around the globe, driving the wheels of—and being driven by—the Europe-led expansion of global capitalism.

Technology, Science, and Global Capitalism

Europeans in the long nineteenth century, particularly those living in urban areas, experienced an unprecedented technological transformation of their work and everyday lives. Changes ranged from the sewing machine to the rise of the factory workplace, from the systematic construction, expansion, and maintenance of sewers to the gasification and electrification of the main streets and the development of urban public transport. In rural areas, changes consisted mainly of the growing possibilities of commercialising agricultural goods, stemming from new and improved infrastructures (roads, railways, steamships) that expanded the range of foodstuffs that could be sold for profit in faraway places. Railways and steamships became the fetishes of the century, symbols of the progress of civilisation. They fostered commerce and facilitated the spread of revolutionary ideas, diseases such as cholera, as well as massive European migration to America. At the same time, they were tools of imperialism that helped governments to get a tighter grip on their territories, in Europe and beyond. The (in)famous term 'gunboat diplomacy', linked to European and US imperialism, points to the less benign aspects of

nineteenth-century technologies. As the long century progressed, torpedoes, rapid-firing weapons, personal defence weapons and poison gases greatly improved the capacity of humans to kill each other in huge numbers; aviation, still in its beginnings, would soon take part in this mortal enterprise. Weapons and the war material successfully conquered the world, not only in the hands of European and American colonisers, but also in those of others—rulers and rebels all over the world who bought, adapted, produced, or used these armaments.

Not all novelties were as striking as the steam engine, but many brought with them revolutionary changes, too, from the spinning mule of the first Industrial Revolution to the industrial applications of modern chemistry in the second. Sewing machines made it possible for many women to earn a decent living from home, while bicycles facilitated the everyday mobility of hundreds of thousands of Europeans. Daguerreotype and photography made it possible even for poorer people to have their loved ones 'immortalised'. A German migrant to Buenos Aires could send a postcard with a panoramic view of the city to the family she left behind. Mass production of goods, whether or not they were accompanied by technological improvements, made many luxury commodities (iron tools, boots, china, furniture) more affordable for urban and rural dwellers in Europe and beyond. Technological changes and the re-organisation of production in factories, combined with the widespread discourse of freedom, equality and usefulness, together had collateral impact on the rise of labour movements and working-class identities.

Technological change has often been represented as the work of geniuses. It has also often been understood as derived from scientific knowledge. Regarding the first of the two ideas, the nineteenth century is largely 'at fault'. Men like James Watt, George Stephenson, Nikola Tesla, Thomas A. Edison, Guglielmo Marconi or the Lumière brothers embodied the notion of a bright inventor with great efficiency. However, many of their innovations were in fact the collective works of many people, and were improved and adapted as they circulated around the world. Regarding the second idea, the links between technology and science were much more fluid and less unidirectional than is often imagined. Many nineteenth-century inventions were not based on a scientific understanding of the principles of their operation, nor were they derived from research. Many of the people who invented or improved machines, tools, or procedures had little scientific knowledge. It is true, though, that these links became more solid and organised towards the end of the century, and that efforts were made to institutionalise the cooperation between scientific research and industry. The blurred frontiers between the old and the new, between science and technology, between knowledge and skills were evident in, for example, the coexistence of the patent system with

the free circulation of knowledge cherished by scholarly culture. While men of science received a great part of their status and prestige from publicising their discoveries and theories, anyone who engaged in the commercialisation of technologies strove to keep some of the information secret. Or, within the liberal logic of free trade and industry, they appealed to the state to establish and protect their 'right' to be financially rewarded for their innovations from those who wished to produce them for profit. The tension between these two opposing cultures, of intellectual commons versus property, characterised the century.

Europe was a hub both of high-profile scientific institutions and of industrial production, in which technology played a key role. The continent was also the site of several colonial metropolises from which projects of colonial conquest and rule were designed and launched, turning new technologies such as steamships, railways, and innovative firing arms into instruments of European domination in Asia and Africa. In some cases, most famous being that of Egypt and the Suez Canal, investment in construction projects, railways and new military technologies led to the substantial indebtment of local rulers, and the failure to pay such debts was used to legitimise direct or indirect takeover of these countries by European powers. Nonetheless, it would not be accurate to understand Europe purely as a centre from which science and technology radiated to the rest of the world. For instance, the prestigious engineering and medical schools of Paris, Liège, Lausanne, Zurich, and Vienna only remained global centres of knowledge transmission so long as elites from the Balkans, Latin America, or Asia acknowledged them as such, and continued to send their youth to study there. Among those elites we see a major change in the reputation of engineering schools towards the end of the century, with the popularity of Belgian, Swiss, and German institutions on the rise to the detriment of the French schools. Moreover, many of the greatest works of nineteenth-century engineering were built outside of Europe, such as the Suez and Panama Canals. European and North American experts and investors played an essential role in their construction, but so did local and migrant workers, along with local rulers and bureaucrats. This constant intermingling of efforts was essential to making technology and technology-related professions truly global, irreducible to any specific race, nationality, ethno-religious identity, social class, or gender.

Conclusion

The nineteenth century was often perceived by its contemporaries as the century of progress. If asked why it deserved such a label, they would most probably list some of the technological wonders that characterised the

period, such as railways, steamships, telegraph and iron constructions, gas lighting and electricity, or refer to scientific discoveries and procedures, such as modern medicine's capacity to explain—and to a lesser extent cure—a growing number of diseases. They might speak of a 'revolution' in chemistry and its huge impact on agriculture (fertilisers) and industry (dyes), or the world-shattering theory of evolution that made the millenarian notion of divine creation hard to sustain on anything other than a symbolic level. Science and technology were deemed useful by governments in Europe and beyond, and they proved ready to invest in them, driven by military but also administrative and economic concerns. The speed of these changes and their place in the more general *Weltanschauung* of the 'progress of civilisation' led to a proliferation of narratives and projects of a better future, in which science and technology played an important role. Scientific utopias did not convince everyone and, in parallel, anxieties emerged over the corrupting effects of new technologies and the consequences of replacing a religious worldview with a scientific one. The hopes deposited in the sciences and technologies as tools of social change were accompanied by dystopian visions of madness, dehumanisation, and annihilation. For the most part, though, explanations and practices based on scientific knowledge acquired weight in justifying new legislation and in legitimising political action by both governments and by subversive movements. They became more and more present in public debate and even in the private lives of women and men in Europe and beyond. Science and technology often served to showcase European superiority and legitimise imperialist intervention and domination. But because they were understood as universal, they were often welcomed and creatively appropriated by people in different parts of the world, who saw science and technology as part of a process of regeneration that would save them from perishing under the boot of foreigners. By the end of the nineteenth century, sciences and technologies had become weapons in both the material and symbolic realms.

Discussion questions

1. Which of all the inventions mentioned in the text was the most consequential in your opinion? Why?

2. Modern technology was a force for good in nineteenth-century Europe. Discuss.

3. In which ways is our world still shaped by the inventions of the nineteenth century?

Suggested reading

Adas, Michael, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989).

Cahan, John, *From Natural Philosophy to the Sciences* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003).

Daston, Lorraine and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (Cambridge, MA: Zone Books, 2007).

Hařd, Mikael, and Andrew Jamison, *Hubris and Hybrids: A Cultural History of Technology and Science* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

Headrick, Daniel R., *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850–1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

Guldi, Jo, *Roads to Power: Britain Invents the Infrastructure State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

Jardine, Nicholas, Emma C. Spary, James Andrew Secord and Helen Anne Curry, eds, *Worlds of Natural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

Kaiser, Wolfram and Johan Schot, *Writing the Rules for Europe: Experts, Cartels, International Organizations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.)

Mitchell, Allan, *The Great Train Race: Railways and the Franco-German Rivalry, 1815–1914* (New York: Berghahn, 2000).

Osterhammel, Jürgen, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

4.1.3 Science and Technological Change in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Mathias Grote, Jiří Janáč, and Darina Martykánová

Introduction

The 'short' twentieth century, bounded by the outbreak of the First World War (1914) and the end of the Cold War (1989), has been called the "age of extremes" (Eric Hobsbawm). Certainly unique in terms of political history, this period's significant acceleration of technological change would undoubtedly rank high among those extremes. Processes of development and the implementation of new technological innovations became more deeply institutionalised and systematic than ever before, with states playing an increasingly active role. Furthermore, the production of innovations was built upon a growing state involvement with scientific research, which correspondingly became more and more organised. Advances in energy production and long-distance power transmission enabled the electrification of factories and households both in the cities and in rural areas, which sped up in the decades immediately following the Second World War. The rapid development and expansion of infrastructural systems such as central heating, water supply, transportation and the electrical grid significantly transformed people's lives and living environments—urban areas were gradually getting rid of the ubiquitous coal dust, hygiene and housing standards improved, and livestock disappeared, first from urban yards and later from most of the country dwellings. New synthetic materials such as nylon or Bakelite made fashion and various technological gadgets more accessible to everyone. Various electric home appliances introduced on the European markets transformed the organisation of family life. Science and technology, now joined into an inseparable whole, reconfigured their European users who, for their part, started to consciously influence and shape

the direction of scientific and technological change with a growing intensity, particularly once they became aware of substantial downsides to ever-growing living standards—chiefly environmental degradation, but also increased dependence on complex technological systems.

Science and Engineering

The beginning of the First World War marked a break in the development of the sciences and the humanities. Many researchers on both sides rapidly endorsed nationalist rhetoric, using achievements as well as traditions for propaganda, but it was the physical and the chemical sciences in particular that became actively involved in warfare. While chlorine gas was originally intended for use in the trenches of Belgium and France in 1915 to remedy shortages of ammunition, specific chemical weapons were subsequently developed and have since been used repeatedly.

The Second World War reinforced this picture: the development of airplanes and rocketry should be mentioned alongside secretive projects to develop an atomic bomb, which used the skills and hard work of a great number of physicists, chemists, and engineers. While the American 'Manhattan Project' represented the largest and most consequential of these projects, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union pursued these goals as well. Where gas warfare relied on the knowledge of organic chemistry and physiology, the atomic bomb was based on the discovery of radioactivity (Marie Skłodowska Curie), insights into the make-up of atoms and quantum mechanics (Niels Bohr) as well as Albert Einstein's relativity theory.

Meanwhile, biology's fall from grace in the period up to 1945 was eugenics. Research to 'improve' humankind's genetic make-up was conceived of as a strategy to cope with the perceived 'degradation' of human beings, due to social problems of industrialisation and urbanisation (alcoholism, neglect, prostitution). It rapidly became fused with racist theories from anthropology, often related to colonialism, as well as long-standing prejudices against Jewish or Roma Europeans, among others. Eugenic thought and practice, including sterilisation programmes, were widespread in many countries and endorsed by various political actors during the 1920s and 1930s, but the field reached a completely different dimension under German National Socialism after 1933. Antisemitic legislation and the murder of asylum inmates display clear continuities with the Holocaust, which many German scientists and medical doctors approved of, carried out actively, or used as an opportunity for their research.

After 1918 and 1945, the active enrolment of science in discrimination, war, and genocide provoked widespread disillusionment and doubt over its

civilising role—which had previously been firmly linked to Enlightenment ideals of rationality, cosmopolitanism, and benefit for humankind. Following Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, and other critics from the humanities, the scientific pursuit has been understood as a display of power over others and nature. This downfall of the sciences from the pinnacle of optimism they had reached in the long nineteenth century, however, should not obscure the fact that the sciences have also remained an agent of cooperation, pacifism, and increasing human welfare, not least through international organisations such as the World Health Organization or Paris-based UNESCO.

The Cold War led to an ideological polarisation of the sciences across the Iron Curtain that split Europe along a line from the Baltic Sea to the Adriatic. The best-known and most infamous example of this divergence relates to the inheritance of acquired characteristics championed by the Soviet agronomist Trofim Lysenko, which was at odds with Mendelian genetics, but matched well with the premises of Marxism-Leninism under Stalin. 'Lysenkoism' was considered as 'pseudoscience' in Western Europe and America. Ideological fault lines divided researchers and accelerated superpower competition, such as the development of aeronautics (with the launch of the first satellite, Sputnik, by the Soviet Union in 1957, followed by NASA's moon landing in 1969), or advancements in automatisation, information science and early computing (grouped under cybernetics, the science of steering and control). Yet, the sciences also developed tendencies to overcome division: first, through international organisations such as the Geneva-based Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire (European Council for Nuclear Research, CERN) or the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL, Heidelberg/Cambridge, UK). Second, researchers began to actively reflect on their involvement in the "military-industrial complex" (Eisenhower). They shifted, for example, from nuclear research to ecology, formed civil society associations or became politically active on both sides of the Iron Curtain, for issues like disarmament, gender and economic equality, or the environment.

Needless to say, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 introduced another turn for the development of the sciences in Europe. Large-scale institutional changes in Central and Eastern European countries, along with shortages of public finances, led to migrations of highly skilled personnel westwards, where computing, genomics, and biotechnology became the most prominent fields. Since the 1980s, these fields have focussed on the persona of the scientific entrepreneur and business models such as the 'start-up'.

Conceptually, the scientific twentieth century has often been characterised by its discontinuous and dramatic changes, or 'scientific revolutions'. While this concept clearly draws on the early modern study of nature, associated

with names such as Bacon, Copernicus, Descartes or Huygens, the model of scientific revolutions put forward by physicist-philosopher Thomas Kuhn took inspiration instead from the rupture of classical Newtonian physics with the early-twentieth-century theories of quantum mechanics and relativity. For the life sciences, the mid-century surge of molecular biology tied to the DNA double helix discovered by James Crick, Rosalind Franklin, and James Watson, has also been evoked as a scientific revolution.

Fig. 1.: Aleksandr Nevezhin, "A family standing in front of the Monument to the Conquerors of Space in Moscow" (1964), CC BY 3.0, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RIAN_archive_557655_Second_Moscow_Watch_Factory_locksmith%27s_family.jpg.

Politics of Technology

Growing dependence on technology in all spheres of human activity, together with prevailing enthusiasm for its power to improve the world, opened space for the knowledge and ideologies of science and technology to be broadly applied in the management of human affairs. Building on the argument that technology and innovation bring progress and prosperity— and that engineers with their technical expertise are uniquely equipped to manage such a change (framed as 'development')—governments across Europe started to contemplate and implement designs to run the state and

social affairs as a problem of engineering, rather than politics, in the interwar period. The technification of administering social affairs, emphasising ideas of rationalisation, standardisation, and de-politisation, resulted in a large-scale proliferation of 'scientific planning'. In response to the Great Depression of the 1930s, technocratic forms of governance grew in relevance and popularity. The atmosphere of post-war reconstruction gave further urgency to such attitudes, peaking in the 1950s and 1960s — a period often characterised as 'high modernism'. In the name of 'national development' for all, and not of profit for a few, technologies were employed in the construction of large public works, predominantly various types of technical infrastructures, which secured general improvements in living standards. Consider large dams and flushing toilets, cold chain logistics and home freezers, to name a few. Particularly under the authoritarian regimes of Eastern Europe during the Cold War, state authorities and their expert bureaucracies acquired substantial administrative powers with which grand designs to transform and order nature and society could be developed. That said, Soviet attempts at planned industrialisation and the transformation of nature (in Stalin's Great Plan of the late 1940s) and even human beings (the "New Soviet Man") differed only in scale rather than in quality from Western European proposals for rational housing and urbanism (see Le Corbusier, for example), or for river-improvement schemes designed as blueprints for large-scale social transformation through technology.

Military technologies and military systems-building — themselves products of state-building — were the crucial driving force behind technological innovation in the modern era. In the pre-modern period, military technologies reflected change rather than fuelling it: consider the relative stability of navy ship design from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries. But by the twentieth century, the combined effect of industrialisation and the state's growing role in society (including its management of technological innovations) had ushered in the state-sponsored development of technological change. This also blurred the threshold between peace and war, as nation-states tended to employ war as a political tool. Particularly since the Second World War, national military-industrial complexes have been driving technological change. Developments of missiles (rocket science, associated especially with pre-war Soviet and German military research programmes) and nuclear technologies (United States) can serve as primary examples here. Computing and the Internet — again, predominantly developed by US actors (ARPANET) and later imported to Europe — clearly document such a tendency. The ideas of automation (the reduction of human factors in processes ranging from factory production to data collection and communications) and digitisation (the conversion of data into a computer-readable format) did indeed receive prominent attention from military strategists, who faced wartime labour shortages at home and

the risk of losses on the warfronts. The dawn of the 'information age', in which machines started to communicate with each other seemingly without human intervention, arrived in the military sphere decades before computation reached individual consumers.

But technologies and technical expertise did not blossom solely under the auspices of the growing power of the state. After the First World War, experts developed pan-European efforts and organisations aiming at the formation of a 'European' technological space, interconnected through common infrastructures, standards and regulatory regimes for the use of technologies. During the Great Depression, pan-European expert organisations developed plans which explicitly tied the building and operation of networks with the idea of Europe (what scholars such as Frank Schipper and Johan Schot call "infrastructural Europeanism"). After the Second World War, the cooperation of European nations in technology development and regulation intensified on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Nuclear technology provides an illustrative example here. In the West, an intergovernmental research organisation called CERN appeared in 1951, soon to be followed by the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR) in Moscow. Other examples would be the European Space Agency (1975) or the rather less successful case of the Eurofighter Typhoon. Despite the existence of the Iron Curtain, the second half of the twentieth century witnessed a slow and contested process of technological integration across the continent, which contributed to the successful reintegration of both sides after 1989. Europe's international E-road network, the interconnected power grid, and the standardisation of television and radio broadcasting systems represent illustrative examples.

Nonetheless, the overwhelming march of modernity—imagined as the wheels of 'inevitable' progress transforming lives and landscapes across Europe—aroused the suspicion of those who feared, perhaps naturally, the potential of technology to subvert divine, human, or natural orders, variously defined. Envisioning an ultimate clash between man and machine, critics of technology often claimed to defend the cause of humanity against de-humanising mechanisation and the reductive over-rationalisation of life from the position of morals and ethics. With the arrival of the Great Depression such voices became louder, perhaps best captured by Aldous Huxley's dystopian novel *Brave New World* (1931). Technological innovations related to the Second World War, including nuclear power and rocket science with their combined potential to eradicate humanity, added new urgency to the debate. European philosophers and public intellectuals such as Jacques Ellul and Martin Heidegger published radical and penetrating critiques in the mid-1950s, of modern society's domination by technology, thereby echoing the dystopian vision of technology that the Frankfurt School's Theodor W. Adorno

and Max Horkheimer had brought forward a few years earlier in response to genocide and war. These sophisticated arguments challenged the image of technology as a blessing, or as a neutral tool to be employed either for good or evil. Meanwhile, many contemporaries started to observe the visibly harmful effects of technological progress with growing uneasiness. Cataclysmic events such as the 1963 collapse of the Vajont Dam in Northern Italy, leading to 2000 casualties, or the dramatic and pollution-induced forest dieback in Germany during the 1970s and 1980s (*Waldsterben*), continued to fuel popular criticism of technology. This pinnacled in response to the Chernobyl disaster of 1986: the accident at the Soviet nuclear power plant quickly became a symbol of the destructive potential of technology. In the following years, not only did Europeans largely reject further construction of nuclear power plants, they also abandoned various other large technological projects (for example, the construction of multipurpose dams), referring to their problematic impact on the environment and on humanity. Once apostles of techno-optimism and technological progress, Europeans turned techno-cautious.

Technology, Science, and the Global Market

The commercialisation of technology worldwide is no new phenomenon. In the early modern era, for instance, pistols and watches had travelled thousands of kilometres and crossed the ocean to reach their buyers. In the twentieth century, imports and exports of technology grew unprecedentedly. This worldwide trade, heavily dominated by products made in Europe and North America, was at the same time accompanied by a growing consciousness among governing elites that relying on imports could have serious repercussions on their countries' sovereignty. Therefore, nationalist leaders all over the world promoted policies of industrialisation, creating or boosting local industries that were both state-owned and privately owned. In general, the aim was not for complete self-sufficiency but rather to reduce the political and economic dangers of dependence on particular providers. Moreover, this was also part of an effort to join the group of the so-called developed countries, a category linked to infrastructural development and industrial production, among other criteria. For countries emerging from the process of de-colonialisation, but also for independent countries whose economy had long been dominated by European companies and investors, the control of natural resources was a key political issue: nationalising existing infrastructures (refineries, mines) and constructing dams and powerplants were measures implemented by all sorts of regimes, left and right, authoritarian and democratic. During the Cold War, the countries of the so-called Third World skilfully exploited the rivalries between and within the two blocks in order to secure advantageous conditions

for drug licences, to expand and build transport and energy infrastructures, or to get help in training a skilled workforce, including high-level technical experts. Syrian, Egyptian, Indian, Vietnamese, and Latin American youth studied engineering, medicine, physics and other 'useful' degrees in the USA, USSR, France, West and East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and other European countries on both sides of the Iron Curtain. They were sponsored by their home governments, but also by the host countries as a way of expanding their political, economic, and cultural influence.

By 1970, many countries beyond Europe and North America were producing bikes, motorcycles, cars, fridges, radio, televisions, and washing machines. The aviation industry, beyond small aircraft, remained a privilege of few global centres. While some of these national industries were not profitable, as the century progressed many countries beyond Europe and North America found success in producing all kinds of technologies, for export as well as domestic demand. Since the 1970s, the state often retreated from these industries. Many of them flourished under private ownership, but we should not forget that without public intervention they would have never come to exist in the first place. Moreover, in the second half of the century there were several non-European countries able to compete and succeed in development and industrial production at the global level, namely Japan, South Korea and, towards the end of the century, also China and Brazil (Embraer airplanes). Robotics, computers and gaming gadgets such as those produced by Nintendo clearly show that East Asian countries are not merely skilful imitators of a 'Western' technology, but instead that they have contributed on more than equal terms to shape technological development in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, setting trends in the production and consumption of technology. While the logic of the national economy dominated technological production during the middle decades of the century, the closing decades were marked by a process of globalisation and de-localisation: the actual production of goods moved from rich, industrialised countries, to countries that could provide large firms with human capital and reasonable infrastructures, but without strong efforts to impose environmental and labour regulations. High-tech industries have been impacted less by this trend, while the more optimistic view among economists is that the so-called knowledge economy is now the highest stage of human economic development in a globalised world. However, the issue of how scientific research and technology are shaped by power and identity (including the specific locations of company headquarters and their sites of production; the legal framework that regulates the research, patenting, production, testing, distribution and use of technologies—and even the nationalities of researchers and producers) has been brought back into the

limelight during the Covid-19 pandemic, not only regarding vaccines, but also concerning simple 'technologies' such as facemasks.

Conclusion

The sciences as a stronghold of rationality became disputed in the twentieth century by means of their inextricable involvement with aggression towards and domination of humankind and nature. What is more, reflections on the natural sciences, not least in the humanities, psychology, or the social sciences, have questioned their optimistic pursuit of models of linear progress—increasingly so in the last third of the century. In light of the challenges of the twenty-first century, such as climate change and rising authoritarianism, it may seem that the tide has changed once more, with the sciences again finding frequent association with the cause of democracy and progress. Regarding the development of technology, some authors describe the second half of the twentieth century as the period of Americanisation—a process during which Europeans embraced and internalised the principles of a consumer society. Technological gadgets, such as fancy cars, refrigerators, portable radios, colour television, or more recently mobile phones, all contributed significantly to that process. Living in an affluent society built on the constant production of new innovations provided by technoscientific research, Europeans were slow to realise and admit to the harmful effects of the global extension of their supply networks. Enjoying the fruits of technological 'progress', their longing for new and better instruments and things helped to spin the wheels of global capitalism and significantly contributed to anthropogenic changes in the environment, with potentially hazardous effects on the entire planet. Now, somewhat paradoxically, they are again invoking the capacity of state-organised science and technology to confront global threats and challenges, by redirecting the aims of technological politics from provision of welfare towards sustainability and environmental protection.

Discussion questions

1. What was the role of the Cold War in the development of technological change in Europe?

2. Why did Europeans become "techno-cautious" in the late twentieth century? Do you think they were right?

3. Which of all the inventions mentioned in the text was the most consequential for the twentieth century in your opinion? Why?

Suggested reading

Agar, Jon, *Science in the Twentieth Century and Beyond* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012).

Gordin, Michael D., *On the Fringe: Where Science Meets Pseudoscience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

Högselius, Per, Arne Kaijser and Erik van der Vleuten, *Europe's Infrastructure Transition: Economy, War, Nature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

Kaiser, Wolfram, and Johan W. Schot, *Making Europe: Experts, Cartels, and International Organizations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

Kuhn, Thomas S. and Ian Hacking, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

Oldenziel, Ruth and Karin Zachmann, eds, *Cold War Kitchen: Americanization, Technology, and European Users* (Boston: MIT Press, 2009).

Oreskes, Naomi, *Why Trust Science?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019).

Schipper, Frank, and Johan Schot, 'Infrastructural Europeanism, or the Project of Building Europe on Infrastructures: An Introduction', *History and Technology* 27:3 (2011), 245–264.

Shapin, Steven, *The Scientific Life: A Moral History of a Late Modern Vocation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

CHAPTER 4.2

SOCIAL ENGINEERING AND WELFARE

4.2.1 Social Engineering and Welfare in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Lars Behrisch, Jiří Janáč, and Sünne Juterczenka

Introduction

The early modern period saw a considerable growth in population. Many people moved to towns and cities, urban poverty increased, and rural areas also endured impoverishment. The onset of industrialisation contributed to this trend, with large swaths of the population dependent on low wages and insecure employment. Increasing poverty in turn increased vagrancy and begging. Authorities tried to contain this development by separating foreign poor from those originating from within their own jurisdictions, based on the principle that poor relief could only be granted to locals. The growing number of poor and homeless people was seen as a social and political threat. As a result, legislation was introduced that discouraged vagrancy and begging and regulated the financing and distribution of poor relief. In England, a national system of poor relief that combined these aims was first created during the reign of Elizabeth I. Work and schooling were seen as a means of social and moral betterment and were often made mandatory in connection with poor relief; the poor were subjected to policing and 'correction'.

The early modern period also saw a tendency to rationalise welfare and bring it under lay control, although religion remained a strong impetus for charitable activities. Welfare policies were implemented by individual parishes. Ecclesiastical and corporate charity operated independently of, but still related to, the authorities' own poor relief. Early modern welfare measures targeted basic needs, such as for meals and clothing, as well as more complex issues like healthcare, housing, education, and care for the elderly, orphans, and those with disabilities. The growing complexity of social organisation, associated with the emergence of a global economic system and proto-industrialisation,

contributed to the gradual evolution of broader and tighter networks of social relations. Western monarchies overcame traditional localism and assumed an increasing share of competence and power also in the social sphere.

Charity and Religion

In Christian communities, both religious and private giving were based on the concept of Christian charity. This concept was rooted in biblical commands for mutual responsibility and the readiness to help the needy. Poverty and sharing were also Christian ideals. Since the Middle Ages, love of the neighbour had been closely related to the love of God; acts of charity had been regarded as a visible expression of faith. Charity had been extended mainly through hospices, refuges, and almsgiving. Women had gained some degree of influence in distributing poor relief through the charitable work of monasteries. One important purpose of charitable acts had been to promote to the donor's salvation through beneficients' prayers. This changed with the Reformation, when Luther extolled charity as a spontaneous expression of love for the neighbour, without which there could be no love of God. The Protestant communities that emerged from the Reformation subsequently interpreted charity slightly differently: Lutherans tended to rely more on secular authorities than Calvinists.

Jewish people had neither access to the relief provided by secular authorities nor to that offered by the Christian churches. Hence Jewish communities organised and funded their own system of poor relief, coordinated through synagogues. Jewish poor relief was based on the principle of *tzedakah*, the religious obligation to act righteously. In continental Europe, Jewish people were required to house and feed travellers and the travelling poor in exchange for written vouchers (*Pletten*) regularly submitted to the synagogues by each household. Despite this system, the Jewish population was disproportionately affected by the growing poverty towards the end of the early modern period, due to its exclusion from many trades.

Charitable activities that were motivated by religious principles sometimes undermined secular attempts at rationalising, communalising, and regulating poor relief. By contrast, pietism, a religious movement that originated in the seventeenth century, championed cooperation between state authorities and Protestant communities, especially with regard to education.

Welfare and Education

Starting with the Reformation, Protestant clergy who promoted Bible reading demanded universal schooling. As early as the sixteenth century, compulsory

education laws were passed in some German territories. This concern for Christian education was taken up by orphanages such as those in Frankfurt am Main and Glaucha near Halle an der Saale, which sought to integrate work and education in poor relief. The Halle orphanage is a prime example of how welfare and schooling intersected. The orphanage was established towards the end of the seventeenth century by the Lutheran pietist and divinity professor August Hermann Francke (1663–1772). Francke started a charity school aimed at enabling the local poor to learn a trade and earn a living, and later built his orphanage with the support of the Prussian King. This institution grew over time and eventually also offered education for the children of the local nobility and more wealthy citizens. Francke prioritised religious instruction, but languages, natural sciences, and practical skills were taught as well. The orphanage was intended to be economically viable; it ran a publishing business and bookshop as well as a medical dispensary. Through Francke's teaching at the local university, Halle also became involved in missionary work. Missionaries trained at Halle forged alliances with religious organisations such as the London-based Anglican Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) and thus extended their charitable enterprise to other European countries and to other parts of the world. The Francke Foundations later became a model for similar institutions globally.
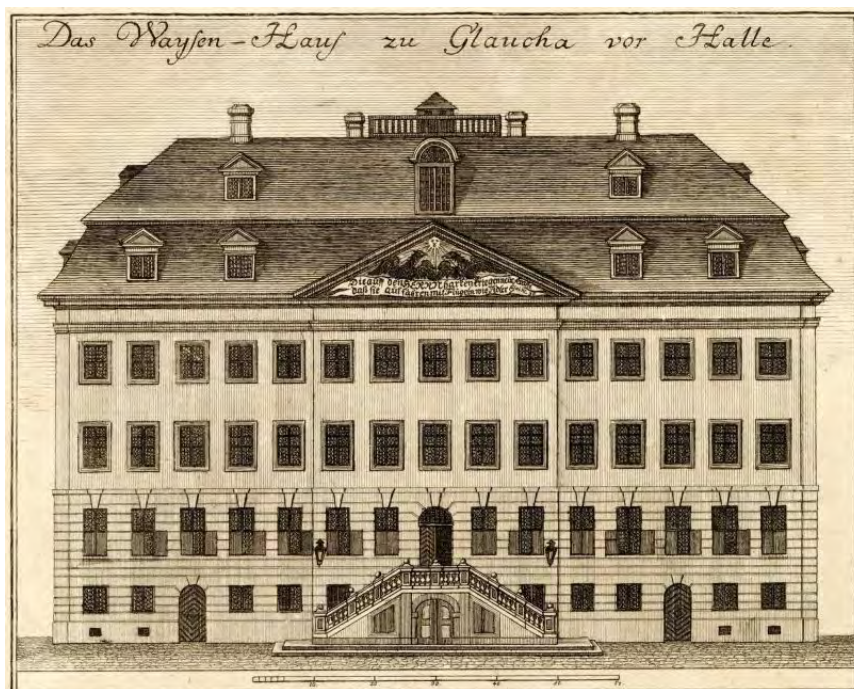
Fig. 1: Gottfried August Gründler, *The Halle Orphanage* (1749), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:FranckescheStiftungen_3.jpg.

Philanthropy

The example of Halle and its missionary connections illustrates how welfare continued to be linked to religious motives even as welfare measures were further secularised during the eighteenth century. Social issues became a major concern to Enlightenment thinkers and social reformers. 'Philanthropy' (literally meaning 'love of mankind')—the private promotion of welfare—developed into a bourgeois phenomenon based on enlightened humanitarianism. It spawned organisations that campaigned for a wide variety of improvements, ranging from adult education, prison reform, aid for especially vulnerable social groups like immigrants, prostitutes, and mariners, to the abolition of slavery. Some devoted themselves to more specific concerns like saving people from drowning. Through a combination of public, private, and religious interests, a 'mixed economy of welfare' emerged. Like religious charity, philanthropy was designed to benefit donors as well as recipients. It can be argued to have been instrumental to both welfare and social control. Unlike earlier welfare measures taken by authorities and churches, this new brand of benevolence extended moral responsibility beyond local communities. Philanthropists co-operated transnationally and regarded themselves as cosmopolitans.

Social Engineering or Social Control?

There is much discussion as to whether the early modern period saw attempts at 'social engineering', be it of a religious or of a secular kind, or a combination of both. For those who think that some form of 'social engineering' did take place, the key concept is 'social discipline', a translation of the German term *Sozialdisziplinierung*. It suggests that there were indeed conscious and long-term attempts by church and/or lay authorities, starting somewhere in the sixteenth century under the influence of the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation, to mould people's behaviour, uproot traditional mentalities and belief systems, and transform entire populations into pious and obedient subjects. Even among those who believe that such attempts existed, however, there is considerable dissent concerning the level of success that they might have had.

A lot of criticism has been levelled against the notion of 'social discipline'. Many studies have shown that there are few indicators of overall behaviour changes through conscious efforts 'from above'. More than that, it has also been argued that few conscious efforts for such societal moulding by the authorities existed in the first place. It is true that churches tried—egged on by confessional competition—to inculcate moral values and behavioural norms, but such efforts were often of a short-term nature. Secular authorities, in turn,

tried to enforce tax demands and other, more immediate obligations; but the extent to which such demands succeeded depended on the cooperation of local elites, such as urban oligarchies or village elders. Government in the early modern period, to use the expression of Charles Tilly, was not 'direct' but 'indirect'—i.e., mediated by regional, local, professional, and other elites, rather than being exerted directly on the population as a whole. As a consequence, early modern populations could not be transformed into uniform subjects. It may be true that royal courts, the only places where rulers had a more direct impact on behaviours and norms, were platforms for a kind of elite education, as the sociologist Norbert Elias has argued, influentially, for the court of Louis XIV. Even here, though, as recent scholarship has shown, the relationship was more complicated, as the King himself had to heed aristocratic values.

Long-term changes of behaviours and mentalities both among elites and populations at large did occur, to be sure, and they were not entirely unrelated to different actions and efforts by churches and secular authorities. However, because these efforts diverged in their aims and changed over time, rather than following some thought-out master plan, those changes cannot be considered direct results of social engineering from above. At best, such change was the long-term and often unanticipated consequence of various short-term policies. To take an example, the rate of homicide in most parts of Europe decreased gradually from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. The extent to which this very long-term trend was the result of concrete government initiative, the result of religious or cultural mentalities, or the consequence of yet other factors (economic, for example) is still much disputed.

The difficulty of answering these questions is compounded by methodological problems. What can we really know about people's behaviour in such a remote era? Are sources such as criminal records in any way reliable? Perhaps a decline in registered violence was a decline in registration rather than a decline in actual violence itself? Many case studies have in fact shown that we can only very rarely be sure about the actual patterns of behaviour behind the recorded sources. The specific case of homicide rates seems to be a more reliable indicator, as violent deaths had been registered relatively systematically since the late Middle Ages. But what is the real significance of homicide rates as an indicator? We might expect it to be a reliable measure of overall violence—but this is not the case, given that (among other factors) minor wounds could often lead to death due to a lack of proper treatment and medical hygiene; as these gradually improved, everyday violence may have produced fewer cases of (apparent) homicides in later centuries without a decrease in overall violence. Similar methodological problems concern the long-term development of sexual behaviour. A number of different sources suggest that, for example, pre-marital sex declined between the seventeenth

and the eighteenth centuries, in line with—if delayed by more than a century—church inculcations and related government efforts. Still, questions of changes in statistical reliability crop up, as does the question of factors of short- or long-term causation.

As a result of such critical insights, the more neutral concept of 'social control' has come to be generally accepted as more suitable than that of 'social discipline'. This concept takes into account the essentially 'horizontal' (mutual and social) character of norm control and behavioural change. At the same time, it leaves room for the notion that government and church initiatives would also influence and, at least in the long run, inform social control and thus at least indirectly shape changes of behaviour. To come back to the example of homicide and violence, by the beginning of the early modern period, it was still broadly accepted that a violent reaction was a legitimate response to an insult to a man's or woman's honour. Insults in fact were themselves considered a form of violence, all the more so as they affected not just individuals but families, neighbours, or colleagues, too. Since the fifteenth century, however, many local authorities stipulated that violence was not a legitimate reaction to an insult and ought to be punished, while insults to someone's honour should be brought to court (and duly punished) rather than being avenged on the spot. These initiatives took many decades to bear fruit, but in the long run, they do seem to have influenced everyday behaviour—if only with a considerable delay, distorted and redirected by many other factors pulling in different directions, and in any case only in tandem with changing local patterns of social control.

Social Utopias

Despite their relatively limited practical application and political success, explicitly articulated visions proposing reorganisation of social relations marked a distinctive break in this era with the medieval traditions—in fact, they foreshadowed in many respects the progressivism and social engineering of the modern era. Observing the growing social problems in cities with swelling numbers of urban poor and the negative impact of the emerging agricultural capitalism on living standards of the peasants, intellectuals across Europe began to contemplate the role of the state (sovereign) and community. They developed radical proposals for a reorganisation of society and its institutions based on rationality, with an aim to secure 'welfare' for all. Equality of citizens, not only in terms of legal rights, but also cultural and even economic equality, represented a guiding principle of such treatises. This call for reform, clearly traceable in writings of influential humanists and advisors of princes and

kings from the fifteenth century onwards, often highlighted the obligation of the state to develop and institutionalise secular care of people and their health.

English Catholic politician Thomas More (1478–1535), who served as Chancellor of England to Henry VIII in his fictional, socio-political satire *Utopia* (1516), described an ideal society inhabited by rational men, contrasted with a contemporary Antwerp stricken by mounting social ills. In a more explicit way, the converted Spanish Jew and scholar Juan Luis Vives (1493–1540) addressed the social problem. Vives had spent a short spell at the court of the English ruler Henry VIII and later became a teacher of a prince and archbishop of Toledo, William II de Croÿ. In his *De subventione pauperum* ('On Assistance to the Poor') he explicitly called for the state to provide social and financial relief for the poor. In his eyes, neither the Church—of which he was mostly suspicious— nor individual almsgiving could stand up to the new challenges associated with urban population growth in places such as Bruges, the city which had commissioned his treatise. Besides providing funding and shelter, Vives also suggested the state should provide education to the poor and unskilled who, as he argued, could not be blamed for their fate. His propositions for a secular poor relief system fell by the wayside amid the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Nonetheless, an emphasis on the provisioning of education for impoverished children remained a crucial part of nascent welfare policies, as evidenced in the writings of, among others, the Moravian theologian and pedagogue John Amos Comenius (1592–1670).

While the practical achievements of humanist scholars remained rather modest, their works inspired social relief legislation in Western Europe through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and marked a decisive step towards the development of modern welfare policies and social engineering— including the unfortunate belief that a well-functioning community (urban and national) requires cultural homogeneity, excluding marginalised groups.

Population Policies and Statistics

There was one long-term ambition that was a more consistent goal in many early modern states, namely the goal of increasing the territorial population. It was on the agenda more consistently because the number of people living in a polity had a direct impact on its fiscal and military power. Italian thinker Giovanni Botero (c. 1544–1617) and French political philosopher Jean Bodin (1530–1596) in this sense equated population with the wealth of a state. Efforts to increase the population potentially touched on people's everyday lives—but once again, they were rarely enforced and did not seem to have had a fundamental impact on people's reproductive behaviour. There are few indications of their success, with the sole exception of some major waves of

immigration such as that of the French Huguenots who, towards the end of the seventeenth century, were invited and encouraged by some rulers to settle in their territories in large numbers. In the second half of the eighteenth century, 'populationist' ideas and policies came to be refined with various incentives, state welfare programmes, and efforts to improve hygiene conditions and health care. It is possible that these efforts began to usher in the massive population growth of the nineteenth century. Ironically, however, at the same time, a negative view of population growth set in, soon to be labelled 'Malthusian' after the English political economist Thomas Malthus (1766–1834) who gave it its clearest expression. Malthus claimed that population growth was limited by agricultural, economic and infrastructural resources; it would be harmful above a certain threshold and therefore had to be carefully monitored and contained.

Additionally, in the second half of the eighteenth century, a new technique began to be employed more and more systematically to measure und number the population and the factors of its growth, as well as to specify its relations with the economy—namely, the instrument known today as 'statistics' (the term took on this sense at the very end of the century). The deployment of statistical calculations and projections was arguably the closest early modern protagonists came to such a thing as 'social engineering'. Once again, though, the endeavour remained largely theoretical—although some statisticians did propose systematic manipulations of the economy as well as of the population, based on their numerical projections and planning (the first to do this was one of the inventors of statistics, the seventeenth-century English political economist William Petty [1623–1687]). It can thus at least be argued that the statistical instruments that would enable later 'social engineering' had been created in the early modern period.

Conclusion

While European welfare systems did not evolve in a linear fashion and the early modern period in particular saw both continuity and change, the time between the Reformation and the onset of full-blown industrialisation clearly emerges as crucial in this process. Religious reform, utopian thinking, political decisions, and private initiatives did lead to significant shifts in the perception and handling of poverty; but economic factors, wars, environmental conditions, and epidemics which impacted demography and wealth distribution were also contingent upon the dynamics that shaped early modern welfare. While both ecclesiastical and state efforts at containing the rise in poverty became more noticeable and systematic, welfare did not become universally available. Poor relief and access to education improved significantly for some social

groups, especially in urban areas, but others remained marginalised and largely without support. Welfare, like other sectors of early modern societies, underwent a gradual and often tortuous transformation. The complexity of the multifaceted and at times contradictory development of early modern welfare is mirrored in the complexity of scholarly debates. It is safe to say, however, that the ground was at least prepared for later attempts at 'social engineering' that would promote ever closer connections between welfare and social control during the nineteenth century.

Discussion questions

1. The early modern period saw a tendency to rationalise welfare. What did this mean in practice?

2. In which ways was welfare a way to control the population in early modern Europe?

3. What was the role of religion in welfare in early modern Europe?

Suggested reading

Behrisch, Lars, 'Social Discipline', in Friedrich Jaeger, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Modern History*, *vol. XII* (Leiden: Brill, 2022).

Gorski, Philip S., *The Disciplinary Revolution: Calvinism and the Rise of the State in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

Grell, Ole P. and Andrew Cunningham, eds, *Health Care and Poor Relief in Protestant Europe 1500–1700* (London: Routledge, 1997).

Jersch-Wenzel, Stefi et al., eds, *Juden und Armut in Mittel- und Osteuropa* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2000).

Johnson, Eric A., Eric H. Monkkonen, eds, *The Civilization of Crime: Violence in Town and Country Since the Middle Ages* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996).

Ogilvie, Sheila, '"So that every subject knows how to behave": Social Disciplining in Early Modern Bohemia', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 48:1 (2006), 38–78.

Sadler, John E., *Comenius and the Concept of Universal Education* (London: Routledge, 2014).

Safley, Thomas M., ed., *The Reformation of Charity: The Secular and the Religious in Early Modern Poor Relief* (Leiden: Brill 2003).

Spicker, Paul, ed., *The Origins of Modern Welfare: Juan Luis Vives, "De subventione pauperum", and City of Ypres, "Forma subventionis pauperum"* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2010).

Spierenburg, Pieter, *The Prison Experience: Disciplinary Institutions and their Inmates in Early Modern Europe* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991).

Tuttle, Leslie, *Conceiving the Old Regime: Pronatalism and the Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Wilson, Renate, 'Philanthropy in Eighteenth-Century Central Europe: Evangelical Reform and Commerce', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 9:1 (1998), 81–102.

4.2.2 Social Engineering and Welfare in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Claire Barillé, Julia Moses, Gábor Sonkoly, and

Heike Wieters

Introduction

The long nineteenth century saw a dramatic shift in European social landscapes. Industrialisation, mass migration within Europe and overseas, urbanisation, and an explosion in population numbers brought new social problems and suggested new solutions. Alongside these structural changes came significant demographic, social, and cultural developments. Family sizes gradually decreased, leading by the end of the century to anxieties in some countries about population decline, and large family networks became more scattered as individuals left home in search of new opportunity. Meanwhile, workers began to turn to each other for support more and more, organising in trade unions and other associations to demand more rights at work and in retirement. Social commentators also called for new action to address the woes they associated with modernity: urban squalor, injured workers, broken families, and indigent poor. Some turned to philanthropic organisations and the Church as a bastion of charity and humanity, while others urged a greater role for the state as a protector of individuals, individuals who increasingly saw themselves as citizens worthy of social rights. And yet others turned instead to each other, seeking out new utopian living arrangements in small collectives. Regardless of where people looked for answers to social questions, many—including individuals, organisations and governments—agreed that something needed to be done to address them: that is, to engineer society in one way or another.

These developments were, of course, uneven over time and space across Europe. Industrialisation and urbanisation took place at different times and in different ways throughout the continent, meaning that the kinds of social problems experienced by different regions, cities, and countries were varied.

Expectations about what society should look like also differed over time and across Europe; what seemed like an ideal social policy in one country might make little headway—or even be outright condemned—in another. Nonetheless, many of the experiences with social engineering and welfare were common across Europe, not least because people travelled across borders, and so did their ideas.
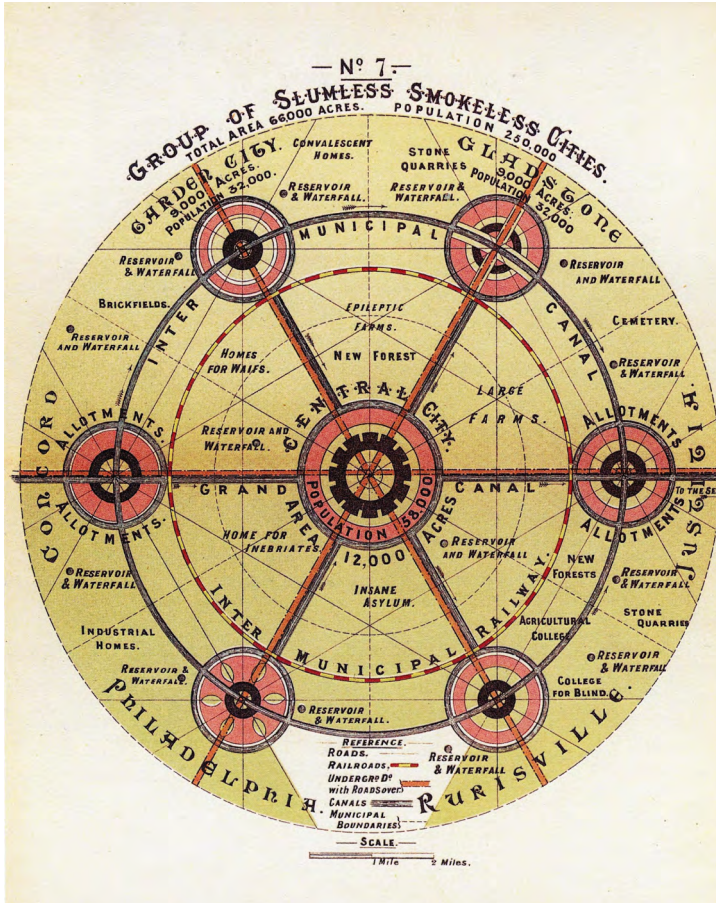
Fig. 1: Ebenezer Howard, "Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform" (from: London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co, 1898), Public Domain, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Diagram_No.7_(Howard,_Ebenezer,_To-morrow.).jpg. As a response to the crowded and dirty conditions of many European cities (specifically London) at the turn of the eighteenth century, Howard proposed a city model that would combine the most favored elements of urban and rural living. In his Garden City Movement, Howard organised a concept in which radial streets and ample green space would create a network for independent but adjacent urban communities that would altogether compose the greater metropolitan area.

Urbanisation and Urban Planning

Urbanisation was one of the most significant experiences for Europeans in the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, every tenth

European person lived in a city, but by 1900, every third European dwelled in an urban settlement. This unprecedented growth increased the European urban population from less than 20 million to 110 million people. The proportion of urban population and the scale of its growth in absolute terms differed from one region to the other: England and the Low Countries were the most urbanised territories, whereas Southeastern Europe, Scandinavia, and Switzerland remained the least urbanised. London, as the first city with more than one million inhabitants in the 1800s, remained the largest city in the nineteenth century with a population above five million by 1900. Paris was the first continental city that reached the population of one million in the 1830s, followed by Berlin, Istanbul, Saint Petersburg, Moscow, and Vienna in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Urbanisation as a demographic process did not only take place in these large cities, but also in medium-sized and smaller cities and towns, which together gradually established an urban hierarchy on an increasing proportion of the territory of Europe. Nineteenth-century urban planning was characterised by the question of how to handle this spectacular migration to urban settings, which required urgent solutions in an increasingly complex and coherent urban system, in which the exchange of information was accelerating very fast. In the late nineteenth century, the concrete embodiments of the shared and/or imposed norms of urban planning varied from the easily perceptible institutions of central power in France (city halls, courts of law, post offices and schools) to similar railway stations in the cities of Austria-Hungary, as well as the monuments to great personalities mushrooming all over Europe.

Nineteenth-century cities were the products of accelerated industrialisation and commercialisation, and they necessitated systematic management. Providing that systematic management stretched the representative capacity and the regulative power of now-outdated, eighteenth-century governing institutions to its limits. Although the institutionalisation of professional urban planning began only at the very end of the nineteenth century with the publishing of Ebenezer Howard's book about the Garden City movement (1898) and the foundation of the first Town and City Planning Association (1899) in the United Kingdom, the history of pre-professional urban planning can be traced back through significant interventions of urban renewal and through initiatives to create liveable industrial settlements (see Figure 1).

One of the major challenges for the fast-growing cities was the transformation of cramped medieval cores and street structures into large arteries of boulevards and avenues, which were suitable not only for operating the increasing inner traffic, but also for linking urban transport networks to the extended national ones. Important examples of such reconstruction were renewals designed in London (1848–1865), Paris (1853–1869), Vienna

(1857–1865) and Brussels (1867–1871) as well as in Ildefonso Cerdá's plans for Barcelona (1859). The demolition of the old city walls allowed for the construction of boulevards (such as the *Viali* in Florence, 1865) or green belts (such as the *Planty Park* in Kraków, 1822–1830).

Baron Haussmann's neo-conservative reconstruction of Paris (in which some 27,000 buildings were destroyed and some 100,000 rebuilt) became not only a model of efficient traffic management (i.e., boulevards connecting train stations) and empire aesthetics (i.e., splendid views of monumental buildings), but also that of the political control over the revolutionary urban crowds, who could defend themselves less easily against the shots of the artillery in the widened avenues and boulevards. Whereas renewed urban centres with new buildings and a new system of streets were immediately occupied by the new bourgeois class, the sordid situation of the areas inhabited by the working class remained mostly unaddressed before the Garden City movement. The ideologies and the experimental settlements of the Utopian thinkers, such as Charles Fourier's *Phalanstères* and Robert Owen's cooperative movement, which proposed inspiring solutions to the social evils of capitalist society, could reach out to very few poor city-dwellers (see also Chapter 7.1.2).

Labour and Class Struggles

The nineteenth century was marked by vigorous growth but also by strong socio-economic inequalities. The social question was very much on the agenda in the European countries that had been won over by industrialisation, now concerned with improving the living, health, and working conditions of the increasingly numerous working class.

The first social surveys date back to the first third of the nineteenth century and highlight the difficult conditions of housing, food, hygiene, and working environments created by emergent industrialisation. Surveys were carried out by hygienists such as Dr James Phillips Kay in Great Britain or Dr Villermé in France, or by other reformers throughout Europe. These observers measured poverty across the continent, with terrible findings—particularly accentuated by epidemics, such as cholera, which swept through Europe in the early 1830s. In the middle of the nineteenth century, the life expectancy of a worker did not exceed twenty-five years from Manchester to Rouen.

Paternalism was one response to the social question, formulated by the large industrial families: they would provide housing, guarantee security of work, and access to care—including maternity care, as for example with the Schneider family in Le Creusot or the Krupp family in Essen.

Responses to the deterioration in workers' conditions of employment are numerous and do not all follow the same path. From the beginning of the century, philanthropists—who were sometimes industrialists themselves,

like Owen in Britain—denounced the misdeeds of capitalism and unbridled industrialisation. Saint-Simon in France joined in this criticism, putting forward the idea of an ideal society in which the happiness of humanity would be based on the progress of industry and science. Other Utopian socialists also emerged in France and Germany during the turmoil of the 1830s and sometimes gave birth to ideal communities such as the Familistère de Guise, built from 1858 onwards, inspired by the ideas of Fourier and his phalanstery, a place for community life made up of dwellings organised around a central courtyard such as the Guise Familistery in France.

For their part, Engels and Marx criticised these socialists. They considered capitalist society to be defined by class struggle between the holders of capital (the bourgeois), and those who have only their labour power (the proletarians). In their perspective, the perspective of historical materialism, this must lead inevitably to revolution.

The 1860s and 1870s saw the spread of workshop regulation, laying down detailed prohibitions and penalties and leading to the factory space becoming a place of further alienation and self-dispossession for workers. There were, however, many ways of getting around these restrictions: absenteeism and the resulting high turnover was the cause of significant difficulties for heavy industries at the end of the century. Despite a relatively active paternalism, the Krupp factories had an annual labour turnover rate of thirty-six percent. This mobility is a known strategy used by workers to maximise their earnings and reduce disciplinary pressure.

From the 1880s onwards, reformist movements emerged in several liberal democracies. These movements were generally in favour, if not of state intervention, then at least of collective action on behalf of the working classes. In Great Britain, reformist institutions such as the National Committee for the Organisation of a Retreat, supported by the Congress of Trade Unions, made themselves heard by royal commissions. In France, reformers were more numerous in the Republican Party, which has been dominated until that point by liberal ideas. Among the radicals, the *solidarisme* of Léon Bourgeois manifested another form of reformism, in opposition to Social Darwinism. Despite the Law on Workplace Accidents (1898) in France, the most important social legislation was passed after 1900 in both France and Great Britain.

Family and Reproduction

Against this backdrop of vast urban change and anxieties about social protections for workers, the family, on the surface, seemed a locus of comfort and stability in the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, it too was coloured by concerns about social change. Scholars like the French sociologist Ferdinand LePlay and British lawyer Henry Maine theorised about modernisation and

the declining impact of kinship networks. Industrialisation and urbanisation across much of Europe during the long nineteenth century meant a shift towards wage earners and male family breadwinners. As a result, individual, nuclear families would need to fend more for themselves, and sometimes turn to charity or the state, for example, through poor laws or the new field of social work, to seek help. Assistance for the poor was itself experiencing vast transformation during this period—for example, in the reinvention of the English Poor Law in 1834 to be a more restrictive system. Other examples of these transformations in assistance for the poor included the creation of social insurance systems linked to paid employment. Such systems favoured the model of the breadwinner family by rewarding wage earners (and, by extension, their families) with protections in case they were injured at work, came into ill health, or retired.

Meanwhile, feminist groups like the German League for the Protection of Mothers (1904) sought to break down old patriarchal systems that gave husbands and fathers ultimate authority in the household. They aimed instead to augment women's rights as mothers and wives. Concerns about the protection of women as mothers led to innovative new policies on maternity leave, including—for example—the Swiss Factory Act of 1877, and additional legislation in Germany in 1878 and 1883, and France in 1909. The movement to protect women, wives, and mothers often intersected, both in terms of its arguments and in terms of its members, with campaigns to protect children. A number of countries across Europe introduced new legislation in the middle of the nineteenth century to reduce labour hours and increase schooling for children, or to ban them outright from employment in certain industries.

Policies on the protection of children and infants connected in the latter part of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century with anxieties about declining birth rates as well as high infant mortality rates. For example, during the 1840s in France, England, and Sweden, nearly 150 out of every 1,000 babies died in their first year of life. Poor sanitary conditions in urban areas contributed to this problem, as did illness and poor nutrition. As a consequence, a number of innovative municipalities around the continent developed milk dispensary schemes and education in breastfeeding in order to help provide sanitary milk to babies.

Moreover, across many European countries, birth rates were also slowing. This seemed a particularly pressing problem both in light of worryingly high infant mortality rates and in the wake of war, which led to fears that families were failing to produce enough children to provide for future armies that could defend their homelands. For example, the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871 sparked a pronatalist movement in France that sought to increase the country's diminishing birth rate. These fears resonated elsewhere as well,

and were amplified during and after the First World War, which was marked by what contemporaries saw as a 'lost generation' of young men.

Anxieties about the birth rate intersected with a broader movement that was gaining traction in social policy circles during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century: eugenics. Following the publication of Charles Darwin's 1871 *The Descent of Man* and other works, a number of scholars began considering whether specific traits could be inherited. Driven by this thinking, some posited that certain individuals should be encouraged to reproduce (through, for example, the incentive of family allowances) while others should be discouraged from reproducing (by means of other disincentives, such as marriage bans on the disabled or on those with sexually transmitted diseases like syphilis). These concerns stretched across Europe, from Britain—where Darwin's cousin Francis Galton helped spearhead the Eugenics Society in 1907—to Russia, and could be found across the political spectrum.

Social Policies

The social question became particularly urgent and politically meaningful in the course of the nineteenth century. The erosion of traditional ties, industrialisation, rapid urbanisation, and both old and new forms of social and economic inequality pushed the question of how to prevent (or channel) social unrest to the fore. The various social groups in Europe responded quite differently to this challenge: while workers often opted to unionise or organise social solidarity within political parties, charities and/or families or extended households, self-employed people and members of the bourgeoisie mostly relied on savings or basic insurance schemes provided by professional associations (such as guilds or other work-related fraternities) or commercial life insurance companies. These latter options were, however, only available to the better-off parts of the population in Europe, whereas workers and their families mostly continued to live under precarious conditions. By mid-century most 'collective risks', such as invalidity, sickness, old-age, widowhood or joblessness were still not covered by any central welfare institutions. Existing institutions were mostly local and failed to insure members that were moving away from their home region. Given the rising mobility of the industrial labour force, more encompassing and overarching solutions needed to be found.

The nineteenth century was, by and large, the century of the nation-state, in which the ideas and concepts that had framed its 'invention' since the seventeenth century resulted in the foundation of dozens of new nation-states in Europe. These states did not only assume responsibility as military, political, or economic agents; they also aimed at widening their outreach in social affairs. Dreading social unrest and looking for ways to bind their citizens

to the national state, governments discussed ways to enhance the state's impact on citizens' health and hygiene as well as social affairs in and around the workplace, most prominently in and around the factories. Apart from creating and widening extensive hygiene regimes—by investing in sanitation infrastructure and (often socially discriminatory) hygiene education—most European governments also passed legislation regulating compensation for accidents in the workplace. Social policies aiming at the protection of (nursing) mothers and children were introduced across Europe throughout the nineteenth century. In addition, invalidity, unemployment and old age were discursively defined as looming social problems for which solutions had to be found.

These debates were pushed forward by different players and on different levels. The labour movement, while closely embedded locally (often running its own welfare organisations), was also transnational in nature. Its leaders, such as Louis Blanc (1811–1882) or Ferdinand Lassalle (1825–1864), fought for the improvement of social conditions, while pointing out that inequality and misery of the working classes were mostly the effect of the capitalist order—which ultimately needed to be overcome. On the other side there were various so-called social reformers, often high-ranking civil servants, men and women of the bourgeoisie (including some factory owners), as well as scientists and intellectuals, who drew attention to the 'social question' and its potentially detrimental implications for the stability of the rising European nation-states. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, reformist European and even transatlantic debate, as well as pressure from organised workers, led to the establishment of large, government-run welfare programs in many European countries.

In Germany, for instance, the first state-run social insurance schemes were invented in the 1880s. Health insurance (1883) and especially old-age or invalidity insurance (1889) were established as central programmes granting limited sick leave (e.g. after accidents at work) and (rather minimal) funds to invalids and the elderly (older than 70). The introduction of these 'Bismarckian' insurance schemes, named after the German Chancellor Bismarck (see Figure 2, which depicts German welfare programmes as branches of a German oak tree), were closely monitored by international reformers and government experts and adapted to local conditions in many European states afterwards. Subsequently, government-run insurance models (to which employers and workers contributed) as well as tax-based welfare programmes—often means-tested and only accessible after close scrutiny of whether applicants were 'officially' needy—emerged in many European countries. While the programmes differed between nations, most European governments were keen to define a new role for the state in social affairs. Slowly but surely, the idea that welfare and social prevention were a collective challenge—a challenge

that could best be met by central, state-run welfare programmes—was gaining ground.

Fig: 2. "Diagram of Workers' Insurance" (1909/1914), Public Domain, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_146-1980-091-21,_Schaubild_der_ Arbeiterversicherung.jpg

Conclusion

In many regards, the long nineteenth century was a period of accelerated change and unprecedented dynamism. Traditional social ties eroded quickly as industrialisation, urbanisation, mass migration and open class struggle became the new normal. Social conflict, but also utopian thinking and new intellectual concepts framing transnational debate about modernity and the future of humankind in the industrialising world, impacted all societies on the European continent and beyond.

The 'social question' was not only a theoretical or intellectual endeavour: it also impacted and motivated political players all over Europe. The labour movement, social reformers and intellectuals, as well as government experts and political leaders, promoted diverse solutions—intellectual and institutional—hoping to foster stability, order and (new or proven) political models for the European societies in the making. Dealing with change

and trying to build better futures was what united the various—and often divergent—approaches discussed in this chapter. In addition, the national state emerged as a central player, not only widening its administration and bureaucracy but also assuming new responsibilities in the fields of social planning, welfare and social policies—a development that would continue far into the twentieth century.

Discussion questions

1. 1. What was the 'social question' and why was it so important in nineteenth-century Europe?

2. 2. Which roles did cities play in the development of welfare in modern Europe?

3. 3. In which ways was welfare a political issue in nineteenth-century Europe?

Suggested reading

Allen, Ann Taylor, *Feminism and Motherhood in Western Europe, 1890–1970: The Maternal Dilemma* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

Beecher, Jonathan, 'Early European Socialism', in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Political Philosophy*, ed. by George Klosko (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 369–391.

Ewald, François, *The Birth of Solidarity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020).

Herren, Madeleine, 'Sozialpolitik und die Historisierung des Transnationalen', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 32:4 (2006), 542–559.

Humphries, Jan, *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Kott, Sandrine, *Sozialstaat und Gesellschaft: Das Deutsche Kaiserreich in Europa* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014).

Rodgers, Daniel T., *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Schorske, Carl E., *Fin-de-siècle Vienna, Politics and Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1980).

van der Linden, Marcel, *Workers of the World: Essays Toward a Global Labor History* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

4.2.3 Social Engineering and Welfare in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Claire Barillé, Julia Moses, Gertjan Plets, and

Gábor Sonkoly

Introduction

The twentieth century witnessed a number of significant external pressures on populations across Europe, from two World Wars and an economic crash between them, to the Cold War, the crumbling of colonial empires, and the fall of the Iron Curtain. Against this backdrop, there were major reconfigurations of the urban landscape and the experiences of work, social class, and gender relations. Meanwhile, new research, alongside increasing academic and professional specialisation, contributed to greater knowledge about social problems and generated innovative policy ideas to tackle them. These transformations intersected with broader trends in thinking about the role of the state in an era that many saw as 'modern'. What were the problems of 'modernity', and would they require new social policies? Would they require the creation of what came to be known—sometimes derisively—as 'the welfare state'? To what extent were these interventions attempts at 'social engineering'?

The tone and extent of state-driven interventions in the social sphere—interventions in the workplace, in the family and reproduction, and in individuals' health and wellbeing—increased greatly over the twentieth century. In part, the increase in activity stemmed from the rise of new political ideologies and concomitant social and political experiments under fascism, National Socialism, communism, and liberal social democracy, each of which sought to carve out its own ideal of 'modern life'. Yet it was also the growing capacity of European states to intervene, as well as increasing information and expertise, that may have proved most significant for this transformation.

We explore three aspects of social politics in twentieth-century Europe in this chapter—urbanisation and urban planning, work and social class, and the family and reproduction—before reflecting on the broader transformation of social welfare systems during this period.

Fig. 1: K.K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei in Wien, "Plan Stadterweiterung Wien 1860" ("City expansion plan for Vienna in 1860"), Public Domain, Wikimedia Commons, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Datei:Plan_Stadterweiterung_Wien_1860.jpg. A plan for the expansion of Vienna's city centre, including the famous *Ringstrasse* (Ring Street). It was meant to connect the city's centre to the bourgeoisie of the growing Viennese suburbs, and also to promote the city centre as a hub for shopping and culture.

Urbanisation and Urban Planning

During the twentieth century, the urban population of Europe quadrupled, attaining 450 million inhabitants. Europe became a predominantly urban continent, in which three out of four people lived in cities and towns. Contrary to the previous century, however, this impressive progress was not the result of steady, unbroken growth. European urbanisation and the urban planning associated with it can be divided into two major periods, separated by the 1970s. The first period is characterised by intense industrialisation inherited from the nineteenth century, and it was only temporarily halted by the two devastating World Wars and the economic crisis of the 1930s. This is the period of the institutionalisation of urban planning as a discipline and as a set of successive theories to solve the problems of the urban societies of the industrial age.

The second period is the emergence of the post-industrial city, which is marked by urban deindustrialisation, by the rise of the service economy, by increased connectivity in travel, migration, and mass tourism, as well as by the intensification of the inter-regional disparities and continental unification characterised by the decommunisation of Central and Eastern Europe starting in the last decade of the twentieth century.

In *fin-de-siècle* urban Europe, rising social tensions required professional solutions, which led to the institutionalisation of urban planning as an academic concern, with the first course on it offered at the University of Liverpool in 1909. The successive paradigms of this discipline were marked by two major characteristics: (1) they took it for granted that the proper urban design determined by a suitable ideology generated a principled urban society free from the social evil of uncontrolled capitalism; (2) urban planning as a discipline was often playing catch-up, as its new schemes for reformed urban life were constantly being superseded or pre-empted by unexpected factors, like rapidly changing technologies and fast-evolving social conditions. Consequently, these unexpected or unconsidered factors (such as automobiles, individualisation, commercialisation, the growing significance of leisure time, deindustrialisation, etc.) could lead to the discreditation and the replacement of the precedent paradigms and to the reconstruction or degeneration of the urban landscape created by them.

The most significant movements of the first period of urban planning were:

- 'Garden Cities', which offered an alternative at the turn of the twentieth century to overcrowded, immoral, and industrial neighbourhoods by proposing resettlement in remote greenbelts, but later criticised as the predecessor of suburbanisation models and dormitory cities;

- 'City Beautiful', which was the twentieth-century North American reception of nineteenth-century European urban interventions with the purpose of grandiose political representation (such as the reconstruction of Paris by Georges-Eugène Haussmann (1809–1891) and the construction of the Viennese *Ringstrasse*), which returned to Europe in the 1930s, when totalitarian regimes applied its models to rebuild their capitals (such as Nazi Berlin or Stalinist Moscow) in order to impose their megalomaniac visions;

- 'Zoning' and modernist urban planning, a category of various movements united by their quest to establish an enduring equilibrium between various urban areas determined by their specific activities (such as production, services, residence, recreation, etc.), but later criticised for having amplified unhealthy and individualistic car transport, for segregating urban neighbourhoods from each other, for

establishing soulless 'new towns', and for causing urban blight in city centres.

The successive failures of these planning paradigms, accompanied by the effects of economic crisis, and the growing democratisation and identity movements in the 1970s, led to the (1) deurbanisation of many industrial cities; (2) the dwindling economic role of central power in an increasingly neoliberal urban planning; (3) the subsequent reurbanisation of urban centres and cities and towns, which were disfavoured by enforced zoning and industrialisation; (4) growing awareness among urban citizens of the distinctive identity of their neighbourhood, which was legally recognised as participative urban design in several Western European countries; (5) the gentrification of formerly abandoned urban areas causing social and cultural tensions between the old and the new inhabitants.
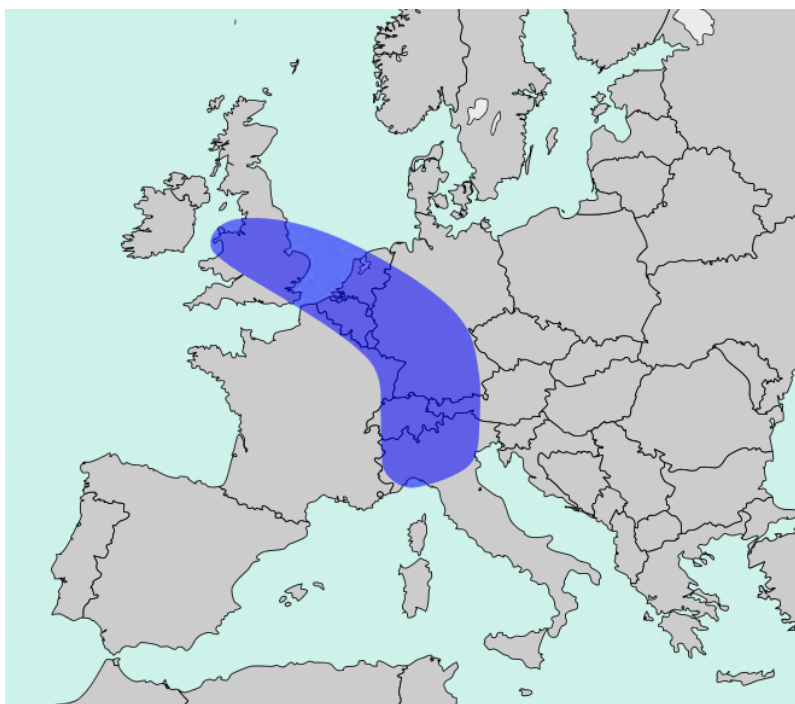
Fig. 2: Arnold Platon, "Blue Banana"(21 February 2012), CC BY SA 3.0, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Blue_Banana.svg. This strip of urban centres in western Europe, drawn around the six focal cities specified above, outlines one of the most rapidly developing regions of the twentieth century. In the mid-twentieth century, the 'Blue Banana' contained one of the world's highest concentrations in people, money, and industry.

The corresponding reinterpretation of the European city followed in the 1980s, when a transnational urban axis of cities was recognised in Western Europe. These cities were successfully emerging from the deindustrialisation process thanks to their combination of advanced manufacturing and tertiary

occupations. This axis—designated the 'Blue Banana', and stretching from Manchester to Milan, including London and Paris as pre-eminent centres—could be interpreted in two ways. It could be seen either as the new, innovative hub of Europe replacing the former significance of industrial regions or, conversely, as the return of a long-lasting urban network obstructed by the rise of nation-states and national urban systems since the nineteenth century.

The late twentieth century European city was furnished with a post-industrial (or post-modern) urban planning, which was simultaneously more receptive to local needs and more vulnerable to private or corporate economic interests, with the new ideal of the sustainable city harmoniously integrating urban culture, urban economy, urban society and urban environment as inducements for innovation.

Labour and Class Struggles

The twentieth century saw overall improvements in working conditions for all categories of workers. Nevertheless, economic crises, war, and globalisation had lasting consequences for the ways in which people viewed their relationship with work.

In most European countries, liberalism came under serious criticism in the early years of the century. Between 1906 and 1914, the British Liberal Party converted to the idea of social intervention by the state, in response to pressure from the trade unions. It was therefore not surprising that the Old Age Pension Act was passed in 1908, granting a retirement pension to the most destitute over the age of seventy, without prior contribution. The National Insurance Act in 1911 covered sickness and unemployment. In France, the logic of assistance prevailed with a series of laws that brought relief to the poorest wage earners: the law on free medical assistance (1893), the social protection of the elderly and the infirm (1904), or aid granted to large families with four or more children (1913). The German model of a compulsory health and old-age insurance system was adopted by several countries such as Austria in 1888, Denmark in 1891–1892, Belgium in 1894 and Luxembourg in 1901.

State intervention became widespread during the First World War, and the unions were involved in industrial and labour policy. However, no ambitious measures were taken when peace was restored. In April 1919 in France, the vote on the eight-hour day and the recognition of collective agreements did mark a step forward, but its scope was limited by many derogations. In Great Britain, the law of 1920 expanded old-age benefit, and unemployment insurance, which was initially introduced in large industries, was extended to workers in all sectors of industry. In Germany, social policy was one of the foundations of an otherwise very fragile Weimar regime: the Bismarckian

legacy was perfected, particularly in the fight against unemployment, which was on an unprecedented scale since post-war demobilisation.

The crisis that hit all European countries from 1929 onwards weakened the social policies already implemented. In Germany, the serious effects of the crisis (unemployment, galloping inflation) led to a reduction in social spending: unemployment insurance was denounced as an aggravating factor in the crisis. The system was partially saved by the state in 1930–1931, with a severe reduction in benefits. In Great Britain, too, the crisis weakened the system of assistance to the unemployed and cuts were made to the aid granted. Finally, in France, despite important measures aimed at promoting social progress, the Popular Front hardly modified France's social protection policy, which remained limited to the social insurance laws of 1928 and 1930.

Government action and state intervention in economic life played a decisive role during the period of reconstruction, and an accompanying role in growth during the so-called '*Trente Glorieuses*', the prosperous three post-war decades from 1945 to 1975. Until the early 1970s, most economic policies were inspired by John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946) and aimed at regulating the pace of growth. In some countries, the statist tradition and the influence of socialist ideas and organisations meant that interventionism was taken further: in France, numerous nationalisations were carried out between 1944 and 1946, and similar action was taken in Great Britain after the 1945 Labour election victory. The other aspect of this coordinating state policy was planning, and again it was France which, led by Jean Monnet, was one of the states which went furthest in this field.

Governments also intervened more and more in the social sphere: in relations between employers and employees, setting minimum wages and working conditions (duration, paid holidays, etc.); by developing education and pension schemes; or by setting up—and this was the great innovation of the post-war period—social protection systems aimed at ensuring a minimum level of security for all. Thus, in the aftermath of the war, the field of the welfare state expanded, the philosophy of which consisted no longer in basing 'social security' on the traditional concept of the employment contract and insurance (which guaranteed certain elements of the population against a limited number of risks), but instead basing it on the principle of national solidarity: the community of the nation should ensure well-being for all.

Family and Reproduction

Concerns about transformations associated with 'modern life' lay at the heart of widespread debates and new policies on the family and reproduction over the course of the century.

The dawn of the twentieth century was marked by anxieties about declining fertility and the health of babies and children. As a consequence, efforts to improve the birth rate as well as the health of infants and children took off in many European countries in the years leading up to the First World War. These discussions were shaped by war, driven by concerns about past defeats and potential future defeats. In France, these debates originated in the aftermath of an embarrassing loss in the Franco-Prussian War in 1870–1871, while in Britain, they were influenced by dissatisfaction with British performance in the Boer War in South Africa in 1902. Meanwhile, observers during this period took increasing notice of high and (in some places) rising infant mortality rates. For example, the last quarter of the nineteenth century in Britain saw a decline in the adult death rate but an increase in infant deaths. These considerations contributed to new questions about how to engineer society through reproduction and the family—and one answer to that question was eugenics.

Against a backdrop of centuries of continental European warfare and increasing military skirmishes in imperial outposts, alongside worrying statistics about stagnant or even growing infant mortality rates, policy proposals for infant milk dispensaries (to combat potential illness from exposure to unsanitary or insufficient food and water for babies) and family allowances gained support across the political spectrum. Encouraging and protecting the family became an issue for both right-wing nationalists, keen to pursue national glory through a high birth rate and healthy military recruits, and also feminists who sought to assist mothers and their children. This trend could be seen, for example, in the work of feminists like Eleanor Rathbone in the United Kingdom, who campaigned for family allowances for over twenty years until they were ultimately introduced in 1945. They could also be seen in initiatives like France's *Médaille de la Famille française*, Adolf Hitler's Mother's Cross programme (1938), and the Soviet Order of Maternal Glory (1944), which were introduced to encourage women to have more children. These initiatives were all based to a certain extent in eugenics—the children of these families needed not only to be plentiful but also to be raised well.

After the Second World War, the language and some of the policies related to the family and reproduction were necessarily restrained by a backlash against the kind of eugenics associated with Nazi Germany. However, state-run policies on the family and reproduction continued to play a large role and were even expanded. Post-war concerns about 'problem families' and troubled youths meant that, in Great Britain, social work and interventions into a growing number of single mother households became more widespread. Meanwhile, growing numbers of women in the workforce both during the war and in the decades afterward led to an expansion of publicly funded education and childcare as well as the expansion of maternity (and, later, parental) leave.

Across the Communist bloc, the increase in public early years provision was especially marked. For example, in the German Democratic Republic, women were expected to return to work soon after their children were born, and high-quality nurseries were set up to take care of their infants. Across much of Western Europe, by contrast, women in the middle decades of the twentieth century were expected to stay at home—or for those who had worked during the war effort, to return home—to care for their young families, and they were encouraged to do so with various forms of child benefit.

Debates about fertility rates, as well as child benefit and childcare, continued to shape European welfare politics well into the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. These discussions were partly shaped by the mass introduction of the birth control pill after 1960, which meant that women and couples could shape their own reproductive lives more than ever before. However, the birth rate was now not as much a reflection of worries about nationalism and militarism—although, of course, these nationalist anxieties never diminished entirely from view, especially as new waves of post-war migration from former European colonies and beyond (such as 'guest workers' from Turkey) precipitated anxieties about increasing numbers of 'non-white' populations or interracial children. Instead, the declining birth rate in countries such as West Germany and Italy was primarily a concern because the large social security systems that had been erected after the Second World War relied on new, young workers to contribute part of their salary to keep them going. At the same time, demands for access to affordable, high-quality childcare grew in the decades after 1968 along with the associated rise of Second Wave Feminism, which saw an increase in women not only working but seeking long-term careers and well-paid jobs.

Thus, over the course of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, expectations that social policy and the state more generally were necessary and useful supports for the family grew. Nonetheless, the relationship between the state and the family was always complex, sometimes morally challenging, and often fraught.

Welfare Systems in and as Government—East and West— in the Twentieth Century

During the twentieth century, grassroots socio-political activism, changing ideals, and a changing political landscape culminated throughout large parts of Europe in the institutionalisation of various types of welfare systems. In the West, the aftermath of the Second World War is often associated with the birth of the modern welfare state. Although states and governments in previous centuries also set up initiatives and instruments to ensure the welfare

of its subjects, from the mid-twentieth century more comprehensive systems were put into place that shaped almost every aspect of human life. Another strong difference with previous periods was the strong institutionalisation and development of elaborate bureaucracies. This aggressive involvement of the state in poverty reduction, education, housing, and healthcare should be seen as a response to the economic depression of the 1930s and the deep social problems caused by *laissez-faire* capitalism.

There was also a political dimension to the introduction of the welfare state in Europe. In an effort to tap into changing values around the redistribution of wealth, and aiming to co-opt communist ideals, in the late 1940s and 1950s elaborate welfare mechanisms were introduced. Drawing on the ideal types of sociologist Gøsta Esping-Anderson, three variants of welfare state can be discerned: (1) liberal welfare states characterised by a minimum involvement of the state (Britain, USA); (2) conservative models where the state is especially engaged in family-based assistance (e.g. Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, etc.); and (3) social democratic regimes where the state is considerably more involved in supporting social life (France, Belgium). Although Esping-Anderson's classifications have received some criticism because many examples lay at the boundaries of or between these different regimes, it is still widely used as the main typology in research today. Although the countries of the Socialist Bloc and the Soviet Union do not fall within the more traditional definitions of the welfare state due to their illiberal democratic system, east of the Iron Curtain elaborate welfare systems based on Marxist ideals were also established and even lay at the heart of the *raison d'être* of these states.

Towards the end of the twentieth century reforms have dramatically eroded the welfare systems of countries both east and west of the Iron Curtain. From the late 1970s and especially the early 1980s, neoliberal ideas, at that time promoted in the US and UK, increasingly entered the political discourse in the democracies of continental Europe. Liberal parties, inspired by Reagan and Thatcher, explicitly questioned the dominance of the state in especially economic affairs and advocated for a greater freedom for the individual. By the 1990s, the logic of the market would stand central, and welfare programs and subsidisation policies would receive scrutiny (e.g. government involvement in key industries boosting employment such as coal mining). Many programmes were phased out for ideological reasons, but an underlying economic imperative also contributed to the disappearance of elaborate welfare programmes. Globalisation had been creating a race to the bottom, especially in industry. Tax incomes of states decreased, while states needed to cut taxes for large companies to deter them from moving their production to low-income countries with a more favourable tax system. The pervasive logic of the market also impacted social democratic parties (i.e. social democrats)

who opted for a 'Third Way', where there would be still room for policies enabling egalitarianism, education and healthcare, while programmes geared towards redistributing wealth were rejected and phased out.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, many socialist countries were forced to embrace capitalism almost overnight. In effect, this meant that entire economic systems based on Marxist principles—and citizens who had lived in those systems—had to suddenly operate according to new, neoliberal principles. The rapid and unprepared privatisation of industry and the service sector had considerable impact on the welfare systems in place. Furthermore, parts of these systems were subsequently also privatised, triggering an almost total collapse of the welfare system. In both east and west the memories of the welfare state are diverse and often conflicting. Today the welfare systems of the post-war period are either remembered with nostalgia where there is a longing for state intervention and benefits, or on the other side of the spectrum more critical perspectives instantiate the welfare state as a critical flaw that is a root problem for the economic competitiveness of many social democratic and socialist countries.

Conclusion

The twentieth century experienced substantial demographic, geographic, and economic changes. These included the quadrupling of Europe's urban population, a steady improvement in working conditions across the board—even if war, economic crisis, and globalisation dramatically affected the nature of work at different junctures throughout this period. Not least, this era saw tremendous changes in terms of family life, including reproduction, with dropping fertility rates in Europe at the dawn of the century and an increased focus on the family as a source of stability in the interwar and immediate post-war eras.

These developments, alongside growing grassroots political activism, increasingly powerful states, and potent new political ideologies, contributed to new movements to 'engineer' society in various ways. For some—like the British economist and politician William Beveridge (1879–1963)—the 'welfare state', with its comprehensive coverage from 'cradle to grave', could offer security in times of crisis, and over the usual life course. This view was not unique to liberal democracies like Britain, nor to Western Europe; vast social experiments and efforts to provide some form of social security extended across Europe, and beyond the Iron Curtain during the Cold War. From the late 1970s, however—and increasingly after the end of the Cold War—a move towards curbing the state and moving towards public-private partnerships in providing for 'social' goods became more prominent throughout Europe.

This tension between public and private, and different ideologies of caring for issues related to the social sphere, continue to course through Europe in the present day, just as Europe itself continues to witness transformations in work, family life, and the environment, both urban and rural.

Discussion questions

1. Which modern problems did the building of the 'welfare state' address?

2. How did the development and the meaning of welfare systems differ in Eastern and Western Europe over the course of the twentieth century? Why?

3. Do you think the construction of the 'welfare state' contributed to the development of a European identity? Why or why not?

Suggested reading

Castel, Robert, *From Manual Workers to Wage Laborers: Transformation of the Social Question* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2003).

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

Quine, Maria Sophia, *Population Politics in Twentieth-Century Europe: Fascist Dictatorships and Liberal Democracies* (London: Routledge, 1996).

Thane, Pat, *The Foundations of the Welfare State* (Harlow: Longman, 1996 [1982]).

Wakeman, Rosemary, *Practising Utopia: An Intellectual History of the New Town Movement* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2016).

CHAPTER 4.3

EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

4.3.1 Education and Knowledge Transfer in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Lilla Krász and Dirk van Miert

Introduction

> *Cornelius:* My ink is too thin. I poured in water now and then.
> *Andreas:* My pen cloth has become hard and dry.
> *Cornelius:* Blow your nose in it unless you'd rather pee on it!
> *Andreas:* No, I'll ask somewhere else for one.
> *Cornelius:* It's better to have one at home than to borrow one.
> *Andreas:* What is a student with no pen and ink?
> *Cornelius:* What a soldier is without shield and sword.

Thus runs, translated from the Latin, a fragment from one of Erasmus' *Colloquies*. The great humanist reformer established them as a collection of simple dialogues geared towards schoolchildren, published in 1522. For a change, readers of the colloquies could relate to their own daily lives instead of some Roman conqueror. Gradually, as the collection of colloquies grew, they were reprinted time and again and used at grammar schools to teach Latin, even well into the nineteenth century. As was his custom, Erasmus not only familiarised school students with Latin phrases for daily use, but also ridiculed many pastors and monks in these elegant Latin conversations. Theologians teaching at universities across Europe were not amused—and in Rome, the dialogues were put on the Index of Forbidden Books, along with many other works by Erasmus.

Humanism and Scholastics: Side by Side

For all his critique of monks and the corruption of the church, Erasmus was above all a reformer not of religion, but of education. He built on a tradition that had been firmly established since the mid-fourteenth century, the time

that Petrarch started to give a voice to scholars who were attempting to breathe new life into Roman antiquity, as well as Greek antiquity from the early fifteenth century. The new *studia humanitatis* were implemented at the schools of famous humanist educators such as Gasparino Barzizza (1360–1430), Guarino da Verona, and Vittorino da Feltre (1373–1446/1447). They were also the endeavour of a mass of lesser-known people who worked at the grassroots level, implementing the pragmatic focus on rhetoric, the pedagogic genre of manuals and textbooks, and the aspiration to go back to classical sources. Meanwhile, the economic upsurge of northern Italy had led to an increased focus on the teaching of merchant skills, such as handling the *abbaco* (counting frame) and double-entry bookkeeping. From the thirteenth century onwards (up until the end of the nineteenth century), the transfer of vocational knowledge across Europe was largely channelled via the guilds, where the tacit knowledge of crafting was taught through years of guided practice. One of the more peculiar institutions that was rooted in the guild system was the university.

Although humanists were active at the universities, it proved more difficult to change the curricula of these conservative institutions, which continued to be dominated by theology faculties until the end of the early modern period. Universities retained the base hierarchy of three major faculties—theology, law, and medicine—supported by a propaedeutic faculty comprising the liberal arts. This hierarchical classification of the domains of knowledge continued to act as a framework for the organisation of universities across Europe. Scholastic theology held strong, with Protestant universities retaining scholastic methods in their theological faculties until well into the seventeenth century. Gisbert Voetius, the orthodox reformed theologian and rector of Utrecht University, railed against colleagues who started to expound Cartesian ideas in their teachings—even at a time when philosophers across Europe were adopting thoughts and methods from philologists and other philosophers like Joseph Scaliger, Isaac Casaubon, Francis Bacon, René Descartes and Marin Mersenne. Voetius stuck to Calvin, but also (and somewhat counterintuitively) clung to Catholic commentators from the School of Coimbra. Despite all the religious differences throughout Europe, the hierarchy and methods in science and scholarship were surprisingly similar across the continent.

The Organisation of Teaching

Although Erasmus in his *Colloquies* frequently staged women who outsmarted their male interlocutors in their own fields, academia kept its doors closed to women. Even if Voetius in Utrecht famously allowed the polymath Anna Maria van Schurman to follow his public lectures from behind a curtain, and even if

Schurman and others (male and female) argued for the intellectual capabilities of women, her case proved a rare example. In Italy, Elena Cornaro received a doctorate in philosophy (Padua, 1678) and in Bologna the physicist Leonara Bassi became the first female professor in 1732. While primary education was open to girls, secondary and in particular tertiary education was not.

In Habsburg territory the teaching of elementary knowledge in all major and some minor localities took place in primary schools run by Catholic parishes and Protestant ministries. The main goal was to acquaint students with the basic principles of religion and ethics, and in relation to these, the basics of reading, and possibly writing and counting in the mother tongue of the localities (in German, Hungarian, Slovakian, Croatian, etc.). These institutions were attended primarily by the children of craftsmen and merchants. Further sites of elementary education were the municipal Latin schools and, typically in Hungary and Transylvania, the beginner classes of Protestant grammar schools.

Until the advent of the Counter-Reformation, the Protestant provincial schools *(ständisch-protestantische Landschaftsschulen)* in the Habsburg Hereditary Lands acquired the leading role in the secondary education of noblemen and urban citizens. They adapted the pedagogical models introduced by Melanchthon, Jakob Sturm, and Valentin Trotzendorf in the Lutheran schools of the Holy Roman Empire. As for Catholic education, the old monastic schools continued to operate, but with the appearance of the Jesuits, the dynamic rearrangement of power structures had begun. From the second half of the sixteenth century, Protestant schools were gradually taken over by them, and even in the Protestant north, humanistically oriented pedagogues were inspired by the Jesuit *Ratio Studiorum* (adopted in its final form in 1599), which emphasised the traditional classical-rhetorical ideal of education. Yet, in Habsburg territory, the victory of the Counter-Reformation in the Thirty Years' War meant the collapse of the Protestant school structure. As a result, the education system of the Hereditary Lands took on an emphatically Catholic-ecclesiastical character.

Central Europe

The Thirty Years' War led to massive displacement of scholars: many a Protestant in Central and Eastern Europe fled westward to Dutch gymnasia and universities, or eastward to Transylvania. Thus, the German poet Martin Opitz arrived at the college in Gyulafehérvár in 1622. A few years later, he was followed by other German scholars, such as the encyclopaedist Johann Heinrich Alsted, the physicist Johann Heinrich Bisterfeld or Ludwig Piscator, the professor of Greek and Hebrew. Having helped set up educational

institutes in Thuringia, Essen, Moravia, Silesia, England and Sweden, Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius, the Moravian educator of European fame) taught from 1650 in Sárospatak and there wrote his *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (1658), a multilingual elementary textbook with illustrative engravings. Moving to Leszno and then fleeing Catholic persecution, he arrived in Amsterdam in 1657, where plans to make him a professor at the local Athenaeum foundered. Yet, he exercised a profound influence on later generations of educators, a consequence of his unabated activity in English-Dutch-German intellectual networks, alongside his education theories regarding curricula that could fit the natural development of children. His ideas were also central to the so-called Hartlib Circle—a network of Protestant educational reformers who spanned the arc of Northern Europe, from England to Bohemia. The activities of these people led to modern, practice-oriented subjects finding their ways into curricula, including geography, mathematics, or experimental physics, which incorporated the theories of Leibniz, Wolff, and Newton.

Yet, despite the so-called scientific revolution, it was the philological-historical humanist tradition that in Germany was drilled into every new generation until well into the eighteenth century. It is often assumed that the devastation of the Thirty Years' War destroyed the institutions and networks of learning, but scholars, teachers, and the learned book trade proved remarkably resilient. Individual German states might have attempted to exert rigid control over their educational systems, but from a bird's-eye view, the patchy territories of Germany showed not only a large number of schools and universities but also a highly diverse and incredibly competitive market. Political fragmentation did not cripple the educational system, but enriched it. Latin schools proved tremendously flexible and independent in attending to local needs and regional competition. Despite the constant adaptations in pedagogical method, in the daily routine there was little taught or discovered that was truly innovative. Ramism, a procedural system of classification expounded by the French philosopher Pierre de la Ramée (1515–1572) as an alternative to Aristotelian categorisations, proved very popular in the schools of central Germany in the seventeenth century. Latin schools were often centres of learning outside courts and academia. German Latin schools played a crucial double role in education: their lowest forms were tailored to a German-speaking market of artisan families, while their higher forms targeted aspiring students. These schools were successful in enhancing the social mobility of families—not quickly, but steadily over generations.

The mobility of scholars was not only caused by wars and persecution. It tied in with a generations-old practice of students travelling around Europe for educational reasons. As part of their *peregrinatio academica* or *gelehrte Reise*, or *Kavalierstour*, students and noblemen toured the universities of Europe,

often following established routes. Though not all were headed for the Italian Peninsula, a doctorate at an Italian university was indeed a jump-start to a successful career in science and scholarship. The innovative theatrical teaching of anatomy in Padua was something of a scientific spectacle. Following empirical methodologies, natural history developed specialised anatomical and botanical insights, along with *Kunstkammern*: cabinets of curiosities that displayed both regularities and monstrosities from the mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms. Such practices were part of a culture of collection and curiosity that tied together scholars and scientists in what these correspondents themselves referred to as the 'Republic of Letters'. These empirical approaches also made their way north. The popularity of the University of Göttingen for traveling students was due partly to their propagation of practical studies. The empirical approach is particularly striking among both Lutherans and Calvinists from the 1750s onwards.

Fig. 1: Johann Heinrich Tischbein, "Return from the *Kavalierstour* of the Sons of the Count of Stadion to Warthausen" (1780), Public Domain, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Adel_im_Wandel12.jpg. This oil painting shows the tradition and drama surrounding early European study tours. This wealthy family from Mainz, Germany greets their sons as they return from their studies abroad.

From the middle of the eighteenth century, under the reign of Maria Theresa and Joseph II, the educational reforms introduced in the Habsburg Empire brought about spectacular methodological and structural changes in the school system on each level, from elementary schools to universities. Practices characterised by concepts rooted in Enlightenment thinking, such as utility, or citizens' welfare and the duty of rulers to care for their subjects, came into

force when the whole imperial school system was taken under state control and reformed according to uniform and universal models. The primary goal was to promote the training of public officials who would serve the state as 'useful subjects'.

In short, the diversity of educational and academic institutions resulted in the simultaneous presence of rather heterogeneous forms of knowledge in the Habsburg Empire that motivated both the gradual rise of scientific and educational standards in already-existing institutions, but also the development of the modern disciplinary structure.

Western Europe

While the Austrian branch of the Habsburg family coped with the Reformation, the Spanish branch set in place the Counter-Reformation, in the Iberian Peninsula and further afield in the American territories that they occupied. In fact, alongside violence, schooling was an important instrument of colonisation.

The Spanish Empire was a flourishing part of the international Republic of Letters and boasted a string of intellectual centres, such as one of the three oldest universities of Europe, at Salamanca. They were followed by universities in Valladolid and Madrid in 1293. Just as elsewhere in Europe, new universities were founded over the next few centuries. They floated on the vast infrastructure of schools run by humanistically oriented masters, whose interest in Latin was, like on the Italian Peninsula, joined by studies of Greek after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. They were not all as famous as Antonio de Nebrija or his student, Erasmus' *protégé* Juan Luis Vives, the antiquarian Antonio Augustín, or the philologist Benito Arias Montano. But they were successful pedagogues. The small Aragonese town of Alcañiz, for example, produced schoolmasters, playwrights, theologians and many Latin poets, including Pedro Ruiz de Moros, who studied in Bologna and went on to make a career as the legal advisor of King Sigismund II Augustus of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Moros established a university in Vilnius and opened up an avenue for Spanish Jesuits to build schools in Lithuania, even though he himself feared competition from them.

Erasmus inspired many, but he himself had been inspired by the teachings of others. One was the humanist and biblical scholar John Colet, whom Erasmus met in England. Erasmus also found a cognate spirit in the humanist Thomas More. More fostered relatively liberal ideas for the learned education of girls, although in his *Utopia* (1516), the masses are expected to learn primarily agricultural skills. English educational reform was propelled moreover by the Latin grammar of Thomas Linacre (1524). Colet and Linacre strongly

advocated the learning of Greek, which then inspired Erasmus to create a trilingual college in Leuven in 1517. While humanism was firmly implemented in the sixteenth century, it later became somewhat stifled in the seventeenth century. The Dutch School-Order of 1625 was meant to create a curriculum allowing mobility across the provincial borders of the United Provinces, but such federative ideals proved no match for the competition between regional schools, where masters opted for their own published books. This was more a question of competition than of dynamic innovation.

Competition was also noticeable on a larger scale, as rulers tightened their grip on the universities in their countries. Universities also became more bureaucratic, drawing up rules for examinations and becoming more streamlined in their organisation. Newtonian natural science had largely replaced Aristotelian physics by the end of the seventeenth century; and over the course of the eighteenth century, natural science grew in importance at the expense of theology and of humanist topics taught traditionally at faculties of liberal arts, such as history and rhetoric. Philosophy as a whole, and metaphysics in particular, was maintained throughout the Enlightenment, culminating in Kant's plea for its primacy. But universities were not centres of innovative ideas and lagged behind in their programming. Whereas the sixteenth century had been the heyday for the growth of universities, the number of students in Europe stabilised or even dropped in the seventeenth century. Then, in the first half of the eighteenth century, registrations in southern universities started to increase again. In France, for example, student numbers were on the rise, particularly in law faculties, while in most northern European institutions their numbers continued to drop. In the second half of the eighteenth century, numbers rose again all over the continent. Lower classes, however, enjoyed fewer opportunities to enter the universities: whereas the humanistic institutions of education had been relatively open to people from poorer backgrounds, the universities of the eighteenth century were increasingly populated by students drawn from the aristocratic layers of society. Overall, the universities became more 'national' in character.

As public administration tightened along national lines, student mobility was constrained. The mobility of pedagogical reformers such as the Dutch Erasmus, the Bohemian Comenius and the Spanish Ruiz de Moros was facilitated by the universal use of Latin. But during the Enlightenment, the rise of the vernacular and the centralisation of states stifled student mobility: the traditional study trip, in which students hopped from one university to the other, became a journey enjoyed only by aristocratic students.

Conclusion

Across Europe, higher education adopted a relatively uniform humanist paradigm in the sixteenth century. Although this paradigm survived the scientific revolution and continued to shape students during their first years at universities, the liberal arts—informed by history, philology, and rhetoric—failed to hold their ground alongside the emancipation of natural sciences. The development of atomistic, Cartesian, Newtonian and Leibnizian metaphysics rendered the Greek and Roman tradition outdated. It was not until the modern age that a combination of Kantianism and a neo-humanistic study of antiquity accompanied the rise of a new type of research university, which spread from Germany to the rest of the continent.

The institutional landscape was in broad terms largely the same across Europe: a secondary tier prepared students for a tertiary education based on scholastic and humanist learning, rooted in a productive combination of Greco-Roman and Christian traditions, which were also shaped in many ways by Arabic and Jewish scholarship. Latin was important as a European *lingua franca*, despite the rise of Italian in the sixteenth century and French in the seventeenth century. What is particularly striking is the high number of schools: relatively small towns harboured Latin schools that might not have attracted many students, but that were symbols of cultural capital for communities that wished to elevate themselves in the regional competition for power. Although confessional differences hampered institutional exchange, and universities as a rule did not appoint professors of different religious backgrounds, universities generally accepted students of other confessions. The wide array of topics that were understood to be part of the *artes*, along with the three higher faculties of theology, law and medicine, offered a rich body of skills and ideas. With the overarching frames of Christendom and classical tradition ensuring a common frame of reference, learning might have appeared conservative locally, but from a bird's-eye view, the educational landscape was rich and variegated, creating a relatively open market for ideas.

Discussion questions

1. What was the role of the Thirty Years' War in the development of education and knowledge transfer in early modern Europe?

2. What was the role of religion in the development of education and knowledge transfer in early modern Europe?

3. Why did early modern scholars travel so much?

Suggested reading

Balázs, Éva H., *Hungary and the Habsburgs, 1765–1800: An Experiment in Enlightened Absolutism* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1997).

Blair, Ann M., *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

Celenza, Christopher, *The Intellectual World of the Italian Renaissance: Language, Philosophy, and the Search for Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

de Ridder-Symoens, Hilde, *A History of the University in Europe, Vol. II: Universities in Early Modern Europe (1500–1800)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Fillafer, Franz Leander, *Aufklärung habsburgisch: Staatsbildung, Wissenskultur und Geschichtspolitik in Zentraleuropa, 1750–1850* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2020), https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/51289.

Goudriaan, Koen, Jaap van Moolenbroek, and Ad Tervoort, eds, *Education and Learning in the Netherlands, 1400–1600* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004).

Grendler, Paul F., *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literary and Learning, 1300–1600* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

Hammerstein, Notker, ed., *Handbuch der deutschen Bildungsgeschichte, Bd. I.: 15 bis 17. Jahrhundert. Von der Renaissance und Reformation bis zum Ende der Glaubenskämpfe* (München: C.H. Beck, 1996).

Hammerstein, Notker and Ulrich Herrmann, eds, *Handbuch der deutschen Bildungsgeschichte. Bd. II: 18. Jahrhundert. Vom späten 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Neruordnung Deutschlands um 1800* (München: C.H. Beck, 2005).

Feingold, Mordechai, ed., *History of Universities, vols. I–XXXIII* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980–2020).

Maestre, José María, *El humanismo alcañizano del siglo XVI: Textos y estudios de Latín renacentista* (Cádiz: Universidad de Cádiz, 1990).

Ross, Alan S., *Daum's Boys: Schools and the Republic of Letters in Early Modern Germany* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015).

Rüdiger, Julia and Dieter Schweizer, eds, *Sites of Knowledge: The University of Vienna and Its Building: A History 1365–2015* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2015).

4.3.2 Education and Knowledge Transfer in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Gabriel Galvez-Behar, Pieter Huistra, Lars Lehmann, and Imre Tarafás

Introduction

Education and knowledge transfer underwent a complex and far-reaching transformation in nineteenth-century Europe. This chapter looks at the characteristics of the dynamics that drove this change, many of which began before and continued after the nineteenth century. It examines the *expansion* of the educational and research field: as the number of schools, universities, and other educational and scientific institutions grew rapidly, the tasks assigned to knowledge increased enormously. New techniques were founded and existing research methods were changed. Furthermore, this chapter describes the new role of the state and its bureaucracy in the research and education sector. States started to understand scientific and educational institutions as part of a coherent system which could be transformed through centralised politics. Education and knowledge transfer were accompanied moreover by a double dynamic of nationalisation and internationalisation, both trends shaping the understanding and interpretation of science and education during the nineteenth century and beyond.

Expansion

In 1900, the number of history teachers at European universities totalled more than five hundred. This may not seem much by the standards of the early twenty-first century, when Sweden and Norway alone can account for a similar number of university historians. But compared to the situation in

1830, the contrast is marked: only around 150 history professors in total, with countries such as Greece, Spain and Portugal having no history professorships at all. The sharp expansion of history professors can be explained not only by nineteenth-century interests in the past, but also by taking into account the enormous expansion of scientific and scholarly enterprises throughout this period. At the end of the nineteenth century there were simply many more scientists, scholars, professors, and students than at the beginning of the century. Dutch universities, for instance, enrolled only 559 students in 1816, with this number rising to 2816 students in 1900. This growth opened up universities to the wider middle class. In short, educational institutions and their personnel grew dramatically in the nineteenth century.

The nineteenth-century expansion in education and knowledge transfer manifested itself in more ways than sheer numbers. Scientists developed new techniques and working methods which significantly increased the capacity of science to shape and change the world. Medicine, for example, progressed enormously, first in its capacity to diagnose illnesses and later— more importantly from a patient's perspective—in its ability to cure or prevent them. This was highly publicised work that found fame for scientists such as the German microbiologist Robert Koch (1843–1910), who managed to isolate the bacteria causing anthrax, tuberculosis and cholera, and his French colleague Louis Pasteur, whose vaccines for diseases such as anthrax and rabies dramatically reduced the mortality rate. Pasteur's work is an impressive example of the transfer of scientific knowledge to society. So-called 'pasteurisation'—the mild heating of foods such as beer, milk, and wine— improved public health but also led to profound changes in agriculture and industry. In a similar fashion, the 'second' industrial revolution was driven by all kinds of scientific, often chemical innovations. One example is the German chemistry professor Justus von Liebig, whose name for generations has been connected to the canned meat, soups, and bouillons that were fabricated using a procedure developed by him, and thus bore his name on the packaging.

Industrial food processing, vaccines and artificial fertilisers are prime examples of the expansion of science into society and industry during the nineteenth century. But the expansion of the sciences also occurred on a global level. Scientists made spectacular travels around the globe, pushing the geographical boundaries of knowledge to map the world further. Charles Darwin's voyage on the ship *HMS Beagle* from 1831 to 1836, which proved instrumental in the development of his theory of evolution, was just one of many nineteenth-century undertakings to measure land masses and sea depths, or to identify new species of plants and animals. We can additionally speak of the polymath Alexander von Humboldt, who travelled to the Americas and Central Asia, and whose writings had a lasting impact on numerous

scientific disciplines including geography and ethnology. The geographical expansion of science went hand-in-hand with the expansion of European colonial empires. New scientific institutions were set up as a part of the state bureaucracy, or under its protection. The Dutch government, for instance, supported the founding and expansion of the national botanical garden *Buitenzorg* in Bogor—the institution today known as Kebun Raya Bogor. What started as an institution with the taxonomical mission of collecting flora in the vast Dutch colony of Indonesia later turned into a biological laboratory for hands-on research, and a hub for many scientists from around the globe.

Fig. 1: Conrad Martens, *HMS Beagle at Tierra del Fuego* (1832–1836), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:HMS_Beagle_by_Conrad_Martens.jpg.

Although science often presented itself in the guise of objectivity and impartiality, its practice and its outcomes were far from neutral or innocent. The world was divided into knowing subjects—Western, white, male scientists—and the rest of the world, which was simply an object for study. Women are one example: for a long time, women could not advance in science because neither were there any positions for them, nor did they have a chance to enter university education. It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that they gained access to universities. In Belgium, the universities of Brussels, Ghent and Liège opened their doors to female students in the 1880s, while at the Catholic University of Leuven these doors remained closed until 1920. Also objectified by science were the indigenous peoples living in colonial empires; rather than being consulted as possessors of knowledge, they were treated as objects of study. The Dutch scientific enterprise in Indonesia was not only directed at collecting and ordering plants. So-called anthropometrists set out to do the same with the inhabitants of the many islands of the Indonesian

archipelago: they measured their bodies and particularly their skulls in an attempt to arrive at a racial classification of indigenous peoples. Although it turned out to be impossible to establish any sound racial divisions, this scientific work supported the racial ideology underpinning the entire colonial project—another example of how nineteenth-century scientific knowledge shaped society.

State Control, Bureaucratisation and Professionalisation

In the nineteenth century, a growing *bureaucratisation* of secondary and tertiary education became apparent. Governments in many countries established centralised state administrations that could address general challenges in science, education, and culture. In an early example of a centralised educational system, the so-called *Studienhofkommission* was established in 1760 in the countries of the Habsburg Monarchy, serving as the main state body for all schools, priest houses, universities and academies. The *Studienhofkommission* merged into the *Ministerium des öffentlichen Unterrichtes*, established in 1848. Another example is the French *Ministère de l'Instruction publique*, founded in 1828. Such administrations were intended to allow the government to coordinate and reform educational activities in general, particularly in higher education. This trend was evident even in federally organised states like the German Reich. In 1898, Friedrich Althoff, Ministerial Director in the Prussian *Kultusministerium*, suggested bringing together senior officials from regional state ministries to form a higher education conference of the German Reich. Althoff's initiative led to a permanent body that met regularly and can be seen as the forerunner of today's *Kultusministerkonferenz* (Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs). Even with its federal structure, the German Reich attempted to ensure that the nation-state would be able to act in the education sector.

The example of Habsburg Central Europe shows a serious attempt at centralised coordination in research and education, with varying results on the local level. The idea of general schooling was conceived as early as the late eighteenth century, though the results fell short of expectations. Schooling improved a great deal during the century and illiteracy decreased considerably as a result, but there were significant differences between the regions and nationalities of the empire. Whereas the Czech Lands already boasted an impressive schooling system in the 1820s, illiteracy levels in Galicia remained extremely high even in the 1870s. Despite such setbacks, it remained the concern of the state in most parts of Europe to steer science and education systematically.

The state-oriented character of education and culture was also reflected in the increasing dependence of academy and university staff on financing from their government. While professors in the early modern period were usually financed by money paid by their students to attend lectures, between the eighteenth and early twentieth centuries the state took over this task for the most part. In many European countries, professors and lecturers became civil servants, and many universities were transformed into state universities. The state-orientation of science and education can also be seen in the founding of national associations of school and university representatives, which acted as interest groups. At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the first national conferences of rectors were established in Western European countries. These included the Netherlands, with its Rectors' College founded in 1898, and Switzerland, with its University Rectors' Conference founded in 1904.

In the sciences and humanities, a *differentiation* of disciplines began to emerge. While the medieval universities typically had only four faculties—theology, medicine, law, and philosophy—a broad system of subjects developed in the course of the nineteenth (and twentieth) century which led to the establishment of new faculties and institutes. One example among many was the establishment of new disciplinary university degrees, such as the history degree, which replaced the more generic philosophy degree in Belgium in 1890. An increasing demand for more practical subjects such as engineering and chemistry resulted in the establishment of new natural and technical science faculties. In a similar move, the more policy-oriented social sciences faculties complemented the older humanities. Separate natural science and technology colleges emerged, alongside specific schools for subjects such as mining and agriculture, which over time were integrated into existing universities or upgraded to full universities.

The *differentiation* and *professionalisation* of research fields was accompanied by a restructuring process within the universities. New positions were created, and the number of teaching staff expanded. Besides professors and students, positions were established for lecturers, research assistants, administrators, and coordinators. The ideal of the university as a community of equal scholars was often replaced by the hierarchical university, in which full professors, known in the German-speaking world as 'Ordinarius' and in the English-speaking world as 'Don', held a dominant position.

As a result of professionalisation, the ideal image of a humanist scholar wearing his gown was replaced by the model of an expert professor in a white lab coat. Rather than individualistic, artist-like figures, academics became experts and members of a scientific community doing collective work. Objective measures for scientific achievement were established, and specialised

reviews became the guardians, or 'police', of the disciplines by acknowledging those scholars who acted according to these rules and excluding those who did not. Professionalisation also changed how certain scholars regarded their larger community, the nation. Historians from Central Europe, for instance, tended to act less as 'fathers of the nation' and saw themselves more as part of a scientific community that respected scientific standards, even if this meant sometimes challenging the prevailing ideology in their own nation. In the late nineteenth century, Czech philologists and historians exposed Václav Hanka's forged medieval manuscripts (supposedly discovered in the early nineteenth century), which up to that point were seen as proof of a highly developed early Czech literature; many considered the exposure of these documents to be an act of treason.

(Inter)nationalisation

During the nineteenth century, a double dynamic can be identified in the institutions of knowledge transfer: teaching and research were regarded as primary instruments in the *national* integration process, while in the meantime, *transnational* and *international* networking were subject to previously unknown dynamics.

Nationalisation in education was reflected in, among other things, the growing importance of state agencies and their financial resources for educational and scientific institutions; as well as in the nationalised rhetoric of teachers, lecturers and rectors. Many elites and intellectuals that contributed to the awakening of their nations saw knowledge transfer and scientific research as essential elements in the process of national integration. A main concern was the cultivation, improvement, and in some cases quasi-invention of a national language. Learned societies and academies often fulfilled these tasks, although in theory they were dedicated to all scientific disciplines. Several of these institutions were established in Habsburg Central Europe during the first half of the century, their profile and standard largely determined by their respective national community's social development and position in the empire. In Hungary, the Academy of Sciences was founded in 1825, in Bohemia it was the National Museum that fulfilled the same role. For smaller, Slavic national communities, the Serb *Matica*, founded in 1826 in Pest, can serve as an example. In the countryside, reading societies were created in order to fight an enemy of the national ideal, one that was more acrimonious than the censorship of the imperial state: indifference.

Instruction in the mother tongue was a central aim in many parts of Europe. In primary schools, this was often achieved. But the matter was especially pressing in universities, which were responsible for educating secondary

school teachers who in turn were in the position to influence future elites. One of many steps for nationalising universities was the creation of an individual department for the language in question. In Habsburg Central Europe, conflicts erupted frequently when an originally German-language university was to be nationalised. The most infamous case was that of the Charles University of Prague, where a large German minority strived to prevent the 'czechisation' of the oldest German university. After violent conflicts erupted between Czech and German students, a compromise was reached in 1882, according to which the university was divided into a German and a Czech part, both of which could keep the historical name.

Museums were also lined up in service of national integration. Their new task was to strengthen the community by elaborating the connection between its past, present, and future. In Central Europe, national museums gained special political significance and were eminent institutions of guarding and using the national language, particularly in Prague and in Pest (where the oldest national museum was established in 1802).

Nevertheless, besides the undeniably strong tendency of nationalisation, the connections, crossings, and mutual influences between nations are also apparent in this period. One major expression of the internationalisation of sciences and humanities in the nineteenth century was the dynamism of international congresses. They were often encouraged by the organisation of universal exhibitions, starting in 1851, and sometimes echoed major economic debates on a European scale, as evidenced by the Brussels Congress on Literary and Artistic Property (1858). From 1878 onwards, international congresses multiplied and contributed to the international structuring of scientific communities, concerning both human and natural sciences. The internationalisation of the research sphere also led in part to a *standardisation* of instruments and methods, especially in the social, natural, and technical sciences. These instruments and methods were often promoted by international institutes, such as the International Statistical Institute founded in 1885 and the International Bureau of Weights and Measures established in 1875. Standardised instruments and methods simplified the traceability of knowledge and its practical application beyond national borders.

International exchange was also important for emblematic figures of nationalist movements who maintained contacts across national borders. For example, one of the founding fathers of the Czech national revival, Josef Dobrovský, was in close contact with Ferenc Széchényi, founder of the Hungarian National Museum, where the former conducted important research. The same is true for academies that regularly honoured famous scholars from rival nations. The transfer of scientific practices was not necessarily hindered by political differences. For example, the German model of research university

and its system of seminars were introduced in Austria during the 1850s, in the midst of the *kleindeutsch-großdeutsch* rivalry. Reviews, even though their primary task was to promote national science and literature, were also sites of cultural transfer: it was through these reviews that French literature influenced the famous Viennese Modernism, which in turn (also via literary reviews) spread among the South Slav writers of the Habsburg Empire.

Conclusion

The development of education in the nineteenth century was marked by several paradoxes. Its expansion at the primary, secondary and higher levels was accompanied by a large number of social, geographical and gender inequalities. Moreover, while the dynamic of knowledge construction was largely transnational, education remained anchored in national political structures that were developing alongside it. The humanities were lined up in the service of the nation-state, yet professionalisation brought about ideas in certain disciplines which could contradict nationalist goals. Another tension within education was economic in nature: while the scientific disciplines were gradually aspiring to their autonomy and thus defended an ethos of objectivity and impartiality, they remained strongly influenced by economic interests. In addition to the universities, which were becoming increasingly differentiated, non-university research institutes were established, alongside research and development departments in private companies. New sectors of industry were fostered through the combination of research and industrial production. Research findings in natural sciences such as physics and chemistry were put to economic use on a large scale. The expanding state-financed education systems thus became increasingly important for nation, society, and economy. Education was both the result of prosperity, and its prerequisite. Recorded from the middle of the century onwards, this educational progress was one of the drivers of the second industrial revolution. The development of education thus reinforced an ideology of universal progress, but it also enabled new forms of domination which meant that, in practice, large groups such as women or colonised subjects remained excluded from this progress.

Discussion questions

1. What were the reasons and consequences of the expansion of university education in nineteenth-century Europe?

2. What role did nationalism play in the development of education and knowledge transfer in the nineteenth century?

3. In which ways do European universities today differ from those in the nineteenth century?

Suggested reading

Fara, Patricia, *Science: A Four Thousand Year History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Geppert, Alexander C. T., 'World's Fairs', *European History Online* (EGO) (2018), http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/crossroads/knowledge-spaces/ alexander-c-t-geppert-worlds-fairs.

Osterhammel, Jürgen, *The Transformation of the World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).

Rüegg, Walter, ed., *A History of the University in Europe, Vol. III: Universities in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries (1800–1945)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Sysling, Fenneke, R*acial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2016).

4.3.3 Education and Knowledge Transfer in Contemporary History (1900–2000)

Zsuzsanna Gyimesi, Pim Huijnen, and Lars Lehmann

Introduction

Research and education in Europe underwent enormous, dynamic, and drastic changes during the twentieth century. The educational and scientific system was closely connected to economic, political, and cultural developments and was impacted massively by two World Wars and the rise of totalitarian ideologies. The so-called massification of education that had already started to evolve in earlier centuries was a basic trend in most parts of Europe, albeit with many differences between timing and regions. The number of pupils and students grew, as did the number and size of schools, technical colleges, and universities. While in 1800 there were only around 100,000 students registered, today around 20 million students are studying at European universities. Furthermore, education and research advanced greatly in terms of professionalisation, differentiation, and specialisation during the twentieth century. New disciplines with specific methods and theories emerged and were integrated into universities and other institutions. In the nineteenth century, transnational cooperation had already become an integral part of science, culture and education. This trend proved to be unstoppable despite the turmoil of the World Wars, and continued throughout ideological conflicts. It led to a common European research and education area being established as the century came to a close. This chapter takes a closer look at these developments by following a chronological approach.

The Early Twentieth Century

At the turn of the nineteenth century, European scientific exchange was flourishing. Attending international congresses had become as much an

integral part of academic life as memberships in international scientific associations. Technical innovations fostered transnational exchanges, with infrastructures such as railroads, steamships, and telegraph poles making it possible for academic and cultural circles to establish contacts with foreign colleagues. Technical universities and research laboratories were established and led to a professionalisation of scientific research and education in natural and technical sciences.

With the outbreak of the First World War, transnational exchange in culture, science, and education came to a temporary halt. The initial war euphoria in European societies produced a collective mentality, called *Burgfrieden* in Germany and *union sacrée* in France. Scientists often showed solidarity with the political and military ambitions of their respective nations. Professors dissolved their cooperation with colleagues from universities in enemy countries. Numerous researchers returned the honours and prizes they had received abroad, and research administrators excluded colleagues from enemy countries from their academies and associations. In return, researchers supported national war objectives with their specialist knowledge. Engineers, chemists, and physicists in particular supported national military interests through war-related research. The German chemist Fritz Haber, for example, enabled through his research the use of the poison gases chlorine and phosgene as weapons of war. The war was also supported by humanities scholars and cultural workers. German artists and writers signed, for example, the so-called 'Manifesto of the Ninety-Three', in which they declared unity between the German military and German intellectuals. The First World War thus also became a war of brains.

Even if international cooperation in science, culture, and education experienced a renaissance in the interwar period, the nationalist *esprit* continued to affect the mindsets of many intellectuals. For example, the reorganisation of international scientific cooperation in the newly founded International Research Council (IRC) after the First World War excluded German and Austrian scientists. Even scientists from countries that were neutral during the war—such as the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland—were only reluctantly admitted as members of the IRC. The lines of conflict of the First World War were thus maintained. Nevertheless, many countries hoped for prestige and a better standing through international appearances. For example, the engineer and inventor Leon Theremin, who constructed the first motion detector in Russia and the world's first electronic musical instrument, the *theremin*, was staged as a symbol for the genius of Soviet scientific life. In the 1920s, Theremin toured the USSR, Central and Western Europe, and the USA performing with his musical instrument in front of crowds, illustrating the power of Soviet physics.

Fig. 1: Corbis Bettmann, "Leon Theremin demonstrating his instrument" (1927), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Termen_demonstrating_Termenvox.jpg.

The dynamics of forced migration began to affect the academic world. This crystallised after the 1917 Russian Revolution, which drove a wave of emigration of artists and scientists from Russia to Western European capitals (such as Prague, Berlin and Paris) up until the mid-1920s. One landmark of this 'brain drain' was the action taken in 1922–1923 by the so-called philosopher's steamboats, which transported over 200 leading intellectuals who had been expelled from Soviet Russia due to their ideological backgrounds.

The Second World War and Post-war Europe

The totalitarian ideology of National Socialism and the Second World War unleashed by its adherents led to an existential crisis not only for international cooperation, but for the entire European educational, research, and cultural sphere. During the war, academic cooperation in Europe could scarcely be maintained. Although international scientific events were held in areas occupied by the Nazis, these were primarily held for propaganda purposes. For example, Werner Heisenberg, a German nuclear physicist and 1932 Nobel Prize winner, was sent during the war to the occupied territories to propagate a positive image of German culture under the Nazi regime. The consequences for universities were enormous. Still, they tended to be more drastic for the universities of Eastern and Southern Europe than for those in Western and Northern Europe. In France under the Vichy regime, non-Jewish students and teachers were able to follow an apparently normal university

life as long as they did not openly resist the Nazis and their ideology. Some secured the continuation of their research activities by cooperating with Nazi authorities. Others continued to work in silence and ignored abuses by Nazis and Nazi collaborators in their milieu. In much of Central and Eastern Europe, Nazis systematically destroyed scientific and research institutions. Numerous university members were murdered, while others fled, leaving behind their homeland, family, language and culture.

After the end of the Second World War, Europe's universities, schools, and cultural institutions were mostly re-established within nationally-oriented education and cultural systems. Additionally, there was also a renewed dynamic of internationalisation. The revival of internationalism after the end of the Second World War was notably expressed in the form of large-scale research projects that were jointly financed by the governments of several countries. In Western Europe, the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN) was founded in 1952 and the European Space Research Organisation (ESRO) in 1964. These are two of many examples where governments pooled their resources in order to jointly develop stature in costly fields of research. Post-war internationalisation also took on a dynamic that had been almost unknown until then: after 1945, governments set up plenty of new international organisations which fostered European and international policies in the fields of education, science, and culture.. In Western Europe, under the circumstances of economic integration and east-west conflict, governments founded a number of organisations in which science and education policies were debated, including the Council of Europe, the Western European Union, NATO and the OECD. Thus they established a global infrastructure for international policymaking in education, culture, and science, marking a contrast with the period before and after the First World War. In addition to these governmental organisations, multilateral cultural and educational initiatives were launched in the process of Europe's political unification. Although these bodies emerged under the influence of governments, they soon claimed non-governmental status for themselves. This is exemplified by the College of Europe in Bruges, which was established in 1950 as an independent graduate school for areas of emerging European integration, or by the European Cultural Foundation, founded in 1954 on the initiative of the Swiss philosopher Denis de Rougemont.

After 1945, the socialist countries in Europe's east mostly took Soviet education as a role model and adapted it in their own ways. In general, all forms and levels of education were state-owned and free of charge. The uniform elementary education from eight to ten years led into three options of secondary education, two of which provided an opportunity to apply for higher educational options. Schools offering vocational education was less socially prestigious. Russian was taught as the first foreign language all over

Eastern Europe. Extracurricular activities were intense and expected to focus on the ideological and political education of young people. The church was deprived of its role in education, except in Poland. Unlike in Western Europe, university studies in Eastern Europe remained a privilege for the few. There was a system of two-tier entrance exams and only the best were admitted to universities, though children from socially privileged families who earned poor grades were admitted to universities by political patronage. The so-called Friends' Associations between nations (for instance the Soviet-Hungarian or the Soviet-German Friends' Association, referring to East Germany) were supported as an early form of intercultural public diplomacy, establishing international contacts between representatives of the sciences, arts, sports, industries, and culture in general.

In the Eastern Bloc, the organs of the state enforced strict controls over the humanities, fearing the genesis of uncontrolled ideas. But the phenomenon of *samizdat*—home-made publications that were illegally handed over from person to person in uncensored formats—shows that human thought could not be controlled, even if it was a question of life or death. Centralisation of and state control over knowledge transfer gave a distinctive shape to scientific life in Eastern Europe. On the one hand, science became a battlefield for political issues, since the findings of all fields of academic research were meant to support state ideology. On the other hand, the idea of knowledge held great prestige in socialist societies. Most parents wanted their children to become well-educated and knowledgeable grown-ups. Secondary and higher education were positioned as routes to ascend social hierarchies.

Regarding the mobilisation of scientific exchange, travelling abroad was a delicate issue in all socialist countries. It was not enough for scholars to have obvious academic merits—it was also necessary to be politically reliable. Not only did citizens lack the right to organise trips on their own, they also lacked the savings to finance them. It was forbidden by law to have foreign currency at home. If someone was assigned a visit to a Western country, it also meant that their superior was required to guarantee that the employee would return back home. Otherwise, the superior would get into legal trouble. Political criticism and opposition to state ideology started to show up in the sciences during the 1960s, the most important representative of this shift being the physicist Andrei Sakharov, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1975. During the Cold War, cooperation between east and west remained limited. However, a rapprochement between actors from the western and eastern parts of Europe, blocked by the so-called 'Iron Curtain', gradually became possible from the end of the 1950s, during the Khrushchev period. This possibility was later marked by the incipient Helsinki Process of the early 1970s, which led to the formation of the OSCE. Travelling abroad was a great privilege, even

within the socialist camp. Individually organised professional trips were not allowed—they were possible only via appointment by the workplace (known as the system of *komandirovka*).

The Late Twentieth Century and Steps towards a United Europe

Since the end of the nineteenth century, many European universities took on increasing numbers of students. This was a trend that accelerated in Western Europe after the end of First World War, eventually leading to a fundamental transformation of its universities from the 1960s onwards. Previously, universities had usually addressed only a small minority of a population, making them something of an elite institution. As student numbers grew, they transformed into mass institutions. Although the student body has been further growing from the 1960s onwards, the financial resources in the education sector have increased only slightly or remained unchanged in proportion to rising student numbers. This has led to generally poorer educational conditions and growing dissatisfaction among the increasingly diverse composition of the student and teaching body. The massification of higher education and its consequences were some of many forces that drove protests around the year of 1968, which led to demands for the democratisation of society in general and the educational system in particular. However, proposals for a 'group university' in Western European countries such as Germany and the Netherlands, which would correspond rights to defined status groups (students, academic staff, non-academic staff and professors), were usually rejected after a few years. The massification of the educational sector was also countered by educational offerings via new technologies. Distance learning and online universities, as well as video platforms, produced new forms of knowledge transfer. The nation-state framework for science, culture and education was thus transformed by alternative forms of knowledge transfer that were virtually independent of statehood.

The development of industrial research from the 1960s onwards is in fact part of much longer processes, on the scale of the 'long' twentieth century. In Germany, the creation of the Physikalisch-Technische Reichsanstalt in 1887 was inspired by the German electrical industry, which expressed a growing need for precise measuring instruments. This institutional innovation was notably imitated in Great Britain with the National Physical Laboratory (1900), and in France with the establishment of a testing laboratory at the Conservatoire national des arts et métiers (1901). At the same time, the first in-house research structures were developed in Europe in large companies. The period leading up to the First World War and the conflict itself expedited

the institutionalisation of industrial research. The founding of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft in Germany (1911), for example, made it possible to intensify collaboration between industrialists and scientists. During the war, the creation in Britain of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (1915–1916) was part of the same movement, lasting until after the Second World War. The Second World War, whose outcome demonstrated the importance of scientific mobilisation in times of conflict, was followed by a strengthening of ties between science and industry. In Germany, for example, the Fraunhofer Society (1949) was charged with funding applied research.

By the 1960s, however, a new dynamic was established as a result of the space race and the Sputnik 'shock'. The creation of the OECD in 1961 provided an opportunity for coordination across Western European states aimed at promoting industrial research. National ambitions to connect science and industry led to the creation of the Ministry of Technology in Great Britain (1965) and the Agence nationale de valorisation de la recherche in France (1967). The economic crisis of the 1970s, the emergence of Japan as a technological power, and the development of new technologies (information technology, biotechnology) would later encourage European economic powers to strengthen, on a transatlantic scale, the links between science and industry. With the support of the OECD, the European Industrial Management Association was created in 1965 on the model of the US Industrial Research Institute (1938). This institution brought together major European companies on matters of research and development, and helped establish new links with the academic world. In this new context, new forms of collaboration were established between universities and economic players. Technopoles were developed, such as the Sophia Antipolis Technology Park (1969) and the Cambridge Science Park (1970). In addition, companies reoriented their activities: Solvay, for example, turned from 1977 towards the biochemical industry. One of the major features of this period was the globalisation of research and development, which corresponded to the globalisation of trade. Today, large multinational companies structure their industrial research on a world scale and must manage their collaborations with the academic world at the same level.

The professionalisation of university management in this period seemed to become as inescapable as the growing importance of administrative tasks in the academy. Ideas from New Public Management have found their way into many educational institutions. Neoliberal elements have steadily grown in the fields of science, education, and culture—in Western Europe since the 1970s and in Eastern Europe since the 1990s. Economic theories and practices of corporate governance have deeply affected researchers, educationists, and cultural workers, in the European sphere as well as internationally. This has

been the impact of mechanisms behind European funding schemes such as the European Research Framework Programmes, which have existed since 1984 to promote cross-border research and development. In order to receive funding, applications must be written, expert opinions must be prepared by third parties, a ranking of the applications is made, and the research must then be evaluated for future application processes. Thus, the logic of competition has prevailed in higher education.

In addition, a debate on student mobility and the standardisation of courses and degrees gradually emerged in the late-twentieth century and led, for instance, to the implementation of the ERASMUS programme, which has co-financed the mobility of students and young researchers in Europe since the 1980s. The so-called Bologna Process (1999 onwards), through which European ministers of education and science have sought to create a single European Higher Education Area by ensuring the comparability of higher-education qualifications, was another outcome of this debate.

Conclusion

Europe in the twentieth century was characterised by a general expansion of education and knowledge transfer and, as a consequence, by the spread of educational and academic institutions. Broadly speaking, elementary education became available for almost all Europeans in the first half of the century. Secondary education became a desirable level of study after the Second World War, and the need for higher education started to expand on a broad scale from the 1960s onward. Higher education gradually lost its elite character, except for some outstanding universities. Academic knowledge transfer via congresses and conferences became ubiquitous, while memberships of vocational and scientific associations proliferated, both in national and international frames. Though the content of education was often determined and controlled by state authorities, for most of this period academic freedom and the autonomy of universities' freedom were not questioned—at least in Western democracies.

A different development was evident in the young USSR, where members of the upper classes could not gain access to higher education or to any intellectual jobs. This schema spread across socialist countries after the Second World War. But in parallel to the oppression of the traditional middle and upper classes in the socialist bloc, a broader range of society was granted access to knowledge. Financial situations were difficult for most citizens of socialist countries, apart from the *nomenklatura*, and there was strict ideological control by the state over intellectual life. But this also resulted in an important and remarkable growth of real knowledge. When the Iron Curtain became more permeable, the knowledge from the two parts of Europe met, along with

their respective practices and attitudes towards knowledge, and in some cases these were fruitful encounters. The effects of these differences still prevail and continue to enrich European intellectual life.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways was education in the twentieth century shaped by ideologies?

2. Which role did the Cold War play in the development of education and knowledge transfer in Europe?

3. In which ways is your university education today different from the twentieth century?

Suggested reading

Etzkowitz, Henry and L.A. Leydesdorff, eds, *Universities and the Global Knowledge Economy: A Triple Helix of University-Industry-Government Relations* (London: Pinter, 1997).

Kamminga, Harmke and Geert Somsen, eds, *Pursuing the Unity of Science: Ideology and Scientific Practice from the Great War to the Cold War* (London: Routledge, 2016).

Krige, John, 'Atoms for Peace. Scientific Internationalism, and Scientific Intelligence', *Osiris* 21:1 (2006), 161–181.

Krige, John, *American Hegemony and the Postwar Reconstruction of Science in Europe* (Boston: MIT Press, 2008).

Rüegg, Walter, ed., *A History of the University in Europe, vol. IV: Universities since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Rüegg, Walter, ed., *A History of the University in Europe, vol. III: Universities in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries (1800–1945)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

CHAPTER 4.4

UNDERSTANDING AND CONTROLLING THE ENVIRONMENT

4.4.1 Understanding and Controlling the Environment in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Laurent Brassart, Jessica Dijkman, Jan Hansen, and Jiří Janáč

Introduction

In early modern Europe there were not many 'natural' landscapes in the sense of nature untouched by man. Almost everywhere, the environment had been modified by human land use, technology, or anthropogenic climate change. While Europeans had been interacting with their environment since prehistory, in the early modern era the pace and magnitude of human interventions increased. Intensified exploitation of natural resources gave rise to transformations of the environment that affected the entire continent, and in some respects the world beyond Europe as well. Attempts were made to overcome the dangers posed by the environment, for instance through the construction of dikes to prevent flooding. Attitudes towards the environment also changed: Europeans increasingly felt that man should and could control and manage the natural world. These changes were related to a number of developments characteristic for the era. Population growth and urbanisation, industrialisation, commercialisation and the growth of long-distance trade all contributed, as did the formation of increasingly powerful states able to initiate action. The scientific revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also played an important role. It allowed Europeans to acquire a better understanding of the world around them and provided them with new technological means to exploit and control it, as is demonstrated by the use of new engineering techniques in the construction of canals.

Natural Resources and the Transformation of the Environment

The early modern era witnessed an expansion and intensification of the extraction of natural resources across the continent, for direct consumption (fish, game, food crops), construction (wood, stone, clay), fuel (wood, peat, coal), fertilisation (bird excrements, ashes) and various industrial uses (ores, minerals, industrial crops). This process was associated with demographic growth and the emergence of merchant capitalism in north-western Europe. Demographic recovery after the recurrent plague epidemics of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was generally very slow, but there were important regional differences. The urban areas of north-western Europe, such as the Low Countries and the London region, experienced a steep rise in population. These regions soon faced the problem of feeding their populations using regional agriculture and required food imports, while simultaneously developing an economy based on manufacturing and trade. Reaching the limits of traditional local supplies, methods of production and established trade networks, Dutch and English merchants moved their attention initially to adjacent areas, but from the mid-sixteenth century predominantly to more distant sources in the Baltic region and overseas.

Practices of mass production of crops and the exploitation of nature for exports emerged in peripheral parts of Europe, significantly altering local environments. A good example is the exploitation of woodlands. Wood represented a critical resource in the development of early modern European societies, and the economist Werner Sombart (1863–1941) even coined the notion of the 'Wooden Age' to emphasise this. While England gradually turned to coal and the Netherlands relied on peat from the late Middle Ages onward, wood remained indispensable as a fuel in most of Europe. It was also irreplaceable as a raw material for various industries, in the form of charcoal (for smelting and iron forging) and potash (a by-product of burning utilised for textile manufacturing and glass melting). Furthermore, a steady supply of timber was required for the construction of housing in growing urban centres, to fuel mining rushes, and in shipbuilding as a necessary precondition for maritime trade and war—it has been estimated that the construction of one seventeenth-century warship consumed twenty-four hectares of mature forest.

Some areas in Europe witnessed a considerable reduction of woodland areas: France lost fifty percent of its forests between 1550 and 1789, Denmark almost two thirds between 1600 and 1750 and Ireland and Spain lost their forests almost entirely. Deforestation and parallel population growth drove wood prices up: the firewood necessary for cooking was sometimes more expensive than the meal itself. In response to the great demand for wood, central and northern Europe witnessed the development of systematic forest

management in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the aim of maximising yields (and profits). Based on scientific criteria, forest planners created monocultures and planted trees in rows separated by corridors, thus making forests manageable. Transport of the wood to distant markets made use of a timber rafting infrastructure. While this rational approach limited deforestation of the continent to a certain extent, it also prevented traditional cooperative agricultural uses of forests for the provision of winter fodder, tillage and forest grazing, and transformed large areas of European woodlands into private plantations.

Expanding markets and long-distance trade sparked a large-scale commodification of nature and induced significant changes in land-use patterns. European entrepreneurs were involved in land reclamation in north-western Europe (the English Fens, the Dutch polders) and the Mediterranean (the Venetian Lagoon) and also explored new opportunities overseas. With improving sea transportation, they became able to develop plantation economies in tropical regions, including attempts at timber production. Species imported from the 'New World' altered the traditional diet of Europeans and due to their resistance to local pests provided a reliable source of calories. The ensuing complex 'Columbian Exchange', characterised by a mixing of the hitherto largely separated biological life of the American, African, and Eurasian continents, marked a distinctive step towards the development of a global agricultural market.

An additional push towards change in traditional practices of nature management in Europe came from the natural world itself. The period of climate cooling known as the 'Little Ice Age', characterised by harsh and freezing winters, brought about significant changes in agricultural production. Viticulture disappeared from some of the less favourable regions and in northern Europe grains were partly replaced by the cultivation of the more cold-resistant potatoes. While only a small group of Europeans engaged in resource exploitation associated with long-distance trade, many farmers, peasants, and fishermen had to cope with often fundamental changes in their agrarian ecosystems caused by natural factors.

Coping with Risks

As suggested by the impact of the Little Ice Age, the environment of early modern Europe could pose risks to human lives and livelihoods just as well as it could provide essential resources. Although these risks often originated in natural phenomena such as the weather (storms, floods or droughts), seismic activity (earthquakes, volcanic eruptions) or biological incidents (epidemics), their ultimate impact depended on the interaction between man and the environment. In fact, many risks were caused, or at least exacerbated, by

human exploitation of natural resources. In fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Holland, for instance, digging peat for fuel created large inland lakes that eroded the shoreline during inclement weather.

Early modern societies responded to environmental risks in various ways, employing both new and traditional methods. People often learned from experience, especially where hazards were repetitive and predictable: they anticipated recurrences and adjusted to the situation, finding ways to live with risk. Conversely, there were also attempts to reduce threats by actively transforming the environment. This often involved new technology, which required coordination, capital, and expert knowledge. The development of flood defences in Holland is a good example. Diking to protect the land from flooding had started in the high Middle Ages. The first dikes were small-scale affairs, constructed and maintained by local communities. Over the centuries, short dike stretches were connected, raised, and reinforced. Maintenance, originally in the hands of farmers, was increasingly professionalised and entrusted to designated regional organisations, called 'waterboards'. Improvements in milling technology allowed for better drainage. Especially between ca. 1550 and 1660, large areas were reclaimed and transformed into agricultural land. Funding was often provided by merchant companies, while technological expertise increasingly came from qualified surveyors. In the seventeenth century, many of them had received formal training at the school for (military) engineers at Leiden University established in 1600—forerunner to the technical schools that in the eighteenth century were also to appear in other European countries.
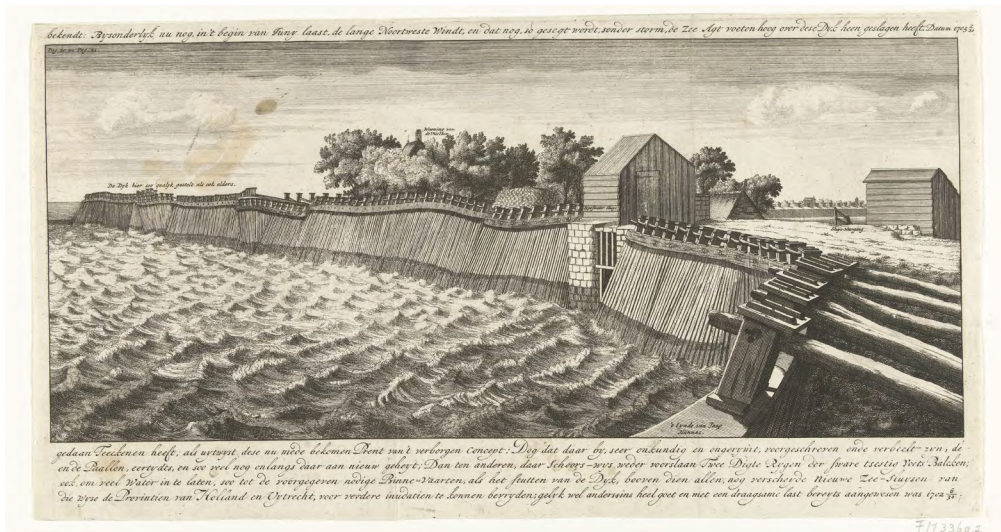
Fig. 1: Anonymous, "De slechte toestand van de Zeedijk vanaf Diemen tot aan Jaap Hannes (tweede deel)" ("The poor condition of the Zeedijk from Diemen to Jaap Hannes (second part)") (1705), Public Domain, Rijksmuseum.nl, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.472534. In this image from the early 1700s, a dike protects farmland in the northern Netherlands from pervasive flooding.

Attempts to prevent or at least contain the outbreak of epidemic disease showcased a similar mix of traditional and new methods. Throughout the period, cities and states everywhere in Europe combatted the many outbreaks of infectious diseases by issuing regulations aimed at isolating the sick, imposing hygiene in public places, and restricting trade with the outside world. Such measures could be quite effective if they were strictly enforced—which was not easy. New methods, adopted from the Middle East, were employed in the fight against smallpox: from at least the early eighteenth century onward, forms of variolation were practiced in various parts of Europe. Healthy individuals were inoculated with small amounts of pus or scabs from a smallpox patient in order to trigger a mild case of the disease, gaining immunity in the process. The practice was not without risks, but through trial and error doctors gradually refined variolation methods, reducing the number of casualties. One of these doctors, Thomas Dimsdale (1712–1800), published his method in 1767/1768. Variolation paved the way for the next step, which followed at the very end of the century: experiments by the English physician Edward Jenner showed that inoculations with the relatively benign cowpox virus also conferred immunity against smallpox.

Technology and the State

Early modern societies experienced a dramatic technological change inextricably linked to their increasing control over the environment. Two major lines of development were important. First, the scientific revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries led to a more comprehensive and precise grasp on the environment. Statistics show a surge in scientific discoveries and technological inventions between ca. 1500 and 1700. With physics and chemistry providing new models and categories for understanding the environment, and scholars such as Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), Johannes Kepler (1571–1630), and Isaac Newton (1643–1727) publishing foundational works that would help tame natural forces, the early modern age also saw the introduction of prototypes of calculating devices and telescopes, which would fundamentally alter human understanding of the environment. Second, this process was embedded in the larger context of empire and conquest. As mentioned earlier, the early modern period was an epoch in which humans were constantly expanding their radius of movement and intervening more and more in both indigenous civilisations and ecosystems. The 'discovery' of America is just as much a part of this story as the technological penetration of hitherto sparsely explored European peripheries.

Early modern Europeans used both new and old technologies to adjust the environment to their needs. New scientific methods and bodies of knowledge, as well as new scientific discoveries and associated technology, aided the

control and exploitation of the environment to a previously unforeseen extent. The construction of advanced infrastructural works, such as roads and canals, illustrates this. Some of these works were great feats of engineering, such as the Canal du Midi between the Atlantic Ocean near Toulouse and the Mediterranean Sea near Vauban, completed in 1681. The canal crossed the European watershed and helped circumvent the long and arduous journey around the Iberian Peninsula. This was only possible thanks to technological advancement in the use of hydraulics and the construction of a number of locks. The Canal du Midi was a transformative intervention in the natural waterways of the region, and allowed for a great simplification of trade routes from the seventeenth century onwards.

A century later, technological innovations such as the steam engine, the spinning machine or the mechanical loom helped develop new forms of industrial production, first in England and then in Belgium and the German lands, resulting in further alterations of the environment in these regions. Resource extraction both intensified and changed: coal mining in particular increased rapidly, making use of newly developing techniques for underground mining. Early forms of industrialisation were inextricably linked to the growth of cities, long before nineteenth-century urbanisation took shape. New urban centres emerged, for example, in the Ruhr region and existing towns across Europe changed fundamentally. These processes were not only linked to technology, but also to ever-unpredictable natural crises. Disasters such as the destruction of Lisbon by an earthquake in 1755 triggered a profound transformation of both built environments and people's religious beliefs and value systems. The earthquake brought with it devastating fires and a tsunami, destroying the Portuguese capital almost entirely and shocking contemporary eyewitnesses. Nonetheless, despite this devastation, the city's reconstruction was remarkable in its scale and ambition. A truly new city was planned and built, with wide and straight alleys and large squares. More importantly, earthquake-resistant construction methods were now being developed and implemented.

The intensification of land use, the transformation of environments and more sophisticated extraction of natural resources which characterised the early modern era were accompanied by a change in statehood and state power. As technological expertise grew, so did the reach and power of state authorities over populations and over the environment. Human interventions into the environment were frequently initiated or stimulated by states that simultaneously increased their own scope of action. Early modern forestry again provides a good example: the introduction of rational forest management in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries owed much to attempts to supplement state revenues. In the words of political scientist and anthropologist James C. Scott, the state made both nature and populations

'legible', i.e., it rearranged them according to the needs of government. Parallel to the intervention in the environment, authorities developed early forms of state bureaucracies, which enabled them to gain more oversight and access to individuals and the environment.

Changing Attitudes

In the early modern period, the theology of nature was the dominant discourse regarding the relation between man and environment. Nature was considered God's creation and natural disasters were seen as an expression of God's punitive wrath or as his warning to compel people to change their behaviour. It would be wrong to think that the scientific revolution produced a discourse of rationalism that was antagonistic to this providentialism. Even though the French philosopher René Descartes (1596–1650) wanted "to make man master and possessor of nature", he saw God as the "great Horologist", the One who invented the mechanism of Nature and gave it its initial impetus. For Descartes, living as a good Christian was a condition for avoiding natural disasters and successfully farming the land.

Nevertheless, attitudes changed from the late seventeenth century onwards. Increasingly, states, communities and individuals did not leave their survival up to divine intervention, but actively worked to prevent natural disasters and mitigate their impact. For example, the development of probability calculation about human mortality by the English statistician John Graunt (1620–1674) and the Dutch physicist Christiaan Huygens (1629–1695) allowed for the development of the insurance system: in 1686, Lloyd's was founded in London and in 1698 the first life insurance contracts were established. Drawing up and implementing specific regulations was another way for the state and cities to protect the people at risk. For example, after the Great Fire of London (1666), new regulations on urban construction were adopted all over Europe—thatched roofs and wooden houses were banned, minimal distances between houses were established, and chimney sweeping became compulsory.

It was not only the state that acted: changing attitudes also came from below. During the eighteenth century, some farmers and peasants tried to improve yields (and avoid starvation) by cultivating their fallow land with new crops such as potatoes and leguminous plants, which allowed for the regeneration of the soil, and also by using urban dung as fertiliser, thus challenging limits to population growth. The eighteenth century also witnessed an 'olfactory revolution'. Urban elites could no longer tolerate strong smells, which were described as a danger to health. Thus, washing the body became a social expectation. Meanwhile, the authorities adopted regulations for collecting urban waste and moving cemeteries outside the city limits. In this context

of early hygienism, the social images of nature evolved: in Great Britain, the aristocracy left the dirty city for the safe countryside and all over Europe the mountains, which had long been rejected, became fashionable for their supposed therapeutic virtues.

Another significant change in attitude towards the environment concerns the measures introduced by states to counteract the negative consequences of the exploitation of natural resources. Ideas of sustainability were primarily applied to the issue of wood management. As the use of wood increased, particularly in shipbuilding, it became a precious and strategic resource. The Republic of Venice had already set an example in the fifteenth century with the creation of an administration for the forest resources of its hinterland. In France, the edict of 1669 on water and forests created royal oak groves and a forestry administration with sustainable methods. During the following century, state forestry methods would also be implemented by private owners and landlords in order to protect their properties: in England, the adoption of the *Black Act* in 1723 aimed to protect royal and private forests from all acts of delinquency—which were now punishable by death. Rural communities were thus evicted from the forest and its uses.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, we can observe the first signs of a growing awareness of the need to preserve nature for its own sake. This awareness grew in the European tropical colonies after the 'ecocides' committed to establish a plantation economy during the previous century. The fashionable theory of desiccation highlighted the interplay between vegetation and climate change: aridity appeared as the consequence of the lack of rainfall caused by deforestation. Then, in Mauritius, in 1769 the French botanist and colonial administrator Pierre Poivre (1719–1786) led "an environmental moral economy" based on a policy of forest conservation and the acclimatisation of new plants to put an end to the destruction of nature. For British historian Richard Grove, this conservation policy constituted "the invention of ecology in the colonies".

Conclusion

Early modern Europe witnessed an intensification and expansion of human exploitation of the environment. Europeans controlled, managed, and exploited the world around them on a scale unknown until then, aided by growing state power. This would not have been possible without a good understanding of the environment. Learning about the environment and finding out how best to deal with it was partly a matter of everyday experience, but in the early modern period old methods were increasingly supplemented by new ones that relied on scientific discoveries, novel technologies, and rational application

of knowledge. The acquisition of knowledge and changing attitudes towards nature developed in tandem: despite persistent providentialism, the belief that man could and should control the natural world gradually gained ground.

Greater control of the environment raised production, improved living standards, and offered protection from risks, but it also had negative effects. Intensive exploitation of natural resources could destroy landscapes and ecosystems, inadvertently creating new risks and disrupting communities. In a world increasingly shaped by international trade, these effects were felt over long distances. It is perhaps not a coincidence that some of the first concerted efforts to preserve nature were made in Europe's overseas colonies.

Discussion questions

1. Was the intensification of the extraction of natural resources in early modern Europe a consequence or rather a cause of an expanding long-distance trade?

2. How and why did the concept of 'nature' change in early modern Europe?

3. Most people are very much aware of the fragility of our ecosystems today. Do you see any roots of this awareness in the early modern era?

Suggested reading

Crosby, Alfred W., *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, CN: Praeger, 2003).

Grove, Richard, *Green Imperialism. Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origin of Environmentalism, 1600-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Marks, Robert. B., '"Exhausting the Earth": Environment and History in the Early Modern World', in *The Cambridge World History, vol. VI,* ed. by Jerry H. Bentley, Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 29–53.

McNeill, J. R., 'Energy, Population and Environmental Change Since 1750: Entering the Anthropocene', in *The Cambridge World History, vol. VII*, ed. by J. R. McNeill and Kenneth Pomeranz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 51–82.

Radkau, Joachim, *Wood: A History* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012).

Warde, Paul, *The Invention of Sustainability: Nature and Destiny, c. 1500–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

4.4.2 Understanding and Controlling the Environment in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Hans Schouwenburg, Jiří Janáč, Sophie Lange, and Juan Pan-Montojo

Introduction

Confronted with resource scarcity, industrialisation and colonial exploitation, Europeans in the nineteenth century conceptualised and experienced the natural world in new ways. In scientific and political discourse, the notion emerged that man depended on a fragile and interconnected system, which needed to be used wisely and preserved in order to endure. Nineteenth-century ideas about ecological limits to growth, sustainable use of resources, and intrinsic links between the economy, society, and the natural environment provided the conceptual building blocks for the sustainability discourse which shaped environmental thinking in the twentieth century.

From the eighteenth century onwards, there emerged two distinct views of nature, which environmental historian Donald Worster has called 'imperial' and 'arcadian'. The imperial tradition, with intellectual roots in Francis Bacon's natural philosophy and underpinned by God's proclamation in Genesis 1:28 to "fill the earth and subdue it", gave mankind authority over all living creatures and scientific and technological means with which it could master, exploit, and control nature. This human-centred view, most strongly expressed in Carl Linnaeus' (1707–1778) *Systema Naturae* (1735), remained influential in the nineteenth century. It provided a rationale for ever-increasing state intervention in managing natural resources. Below the surface, however, a parallel arcadian tradition, imagined—in the words of Worster—"a simple, humble life for man with the aim of restoring him to a peaceful coexistence with other organisms".

Embodied in Gilbert White's (1720–1793) *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* (1789), the arcadian view assigned man a moral responsibility to take good care of God's creation. This strand of thought gained momentum in the wake of the industrial revolution and shaped the early conservation movement that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century.

Natural Resources and Political Power

Fundamental to the imperial view of nature was a conceptual division between the natural world and human society. Modern science and technology, understood in terms of applied science, played a crucial role in constructing and further deepening this dualism. Physical items such as rocks, soil, vegetation, climate, or plants and animals became subjected to thorough scrutiny by an emerging professional community of natural scientists who first described, mapped, and later modified and improved 'nature' to serve the needs of society.

The first stage of this process can be described as concerned with mapping the world and focused on the observation and classification of nature. Newly acquainted knowledge was presented and arranged in practical terms as a guidance or an instrument for improving living standards and the economic welfare of European societies (or at least their elites). Scientists and researchers throughout Europe engaged in a massive effort to classify, catalogue, and describe nature—living organisms, rocks or newly-discovered lands in the colonies. In the mid-eighteenth century, when Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus in his *Systema Naturae* captured the variability of plant species, he described them as stable, and in so doing, he created a system that ordered the natural world into discernible groups. Around the same time, the French chemist Antoine Lavoisier (1743–1794) discovered and named oxygen and carbon, overthrowing the traditional belief that fire was caused by a mysterious substance of phlogiston.

This first process of classification and observation developed into a second stage, in which scientists directly focused on the exploitation of nature. In the early nineteenth century, Charles Darwin's (1809–1882) theory of evolution, Charles Lyell's (1767–1849) idea of uniformitarianism, and Jean-Pierre Perraudin's (1767–1858) glacier theory all showed that nature was not immutable, but constantly evolving. Embracing the ethos of liberal capitalism, scientific understanding thus shifted towards seeing nature as a dynamic result of competition between various actors and elements, which needed to be dominated by humans and cultivated into a dependable economic resource. Nature, from now on, had to be conquered and tamed. Perhaps the most illustrative example of this view were Gregor Mendel's (1822–1884)

pea plant experiments conducted in Moravia in the 1850s, which provided a scientific basis for traditional forms of crossbreeding and enabled the development of more efficient agriculture. In practice, however, such efforts undermined the ideological divide between nature and society: the natural environment became more and more intertwined within emerging human-made technological systems.

The conceptual division between the natural world and human society provided monarchies throughout Europe with a rationale to intensify centralised efforts to regulate scarce natural resources, especially timber. In a context of ever-growing demand for trees, forestry manuals—starting with Hans Carl von Carlowitz's (1645–1714) *Sylvicultura oeconomica* (1713)— provided royal employees with a technocratic and quantifiable framework. Carlowitz identified man's greed, lack of knowledge, and mismanagement as causes of deforestation and called for "a continuous, resilient, and sustainable use" of forest resources. As a result, forestry services, first established to manage the domanial forests of ruling families in Central Europe, developed— between the 1760s and the 1800s—a science of forestry, which would be adapted in other countries and applied to the royal or newly-defined public lands almost everywhere in Europe. Wherever they had the means, forestry officers attempted to create homogeneous masses of trees in order to facilitate their commercial exploitation and increase fiscal revenues. These services and other state officers did not only undertake the transformation of domanial and public forests: the use of village woodlands was very often subject to strict regulation from above.

The results of these trends were manifold. From an environmental point of view, the application of scientific forestry brought about a simplification of species in forests with the aim of producing monocultural, even-age, and geometrically ordered landscapes. The 'rational' forests were very productive and their weaknesses, such as their tendency to decay, only became evident in the long run. On the other hand, public or publicly regulated monocrop and protected forests had often negative consequences for local peasants: traditional use of forest resources was criminalised, with peasants deprived of pastures, wood, and other raw materials at risk of fines or imprisonment.

The impact of forestry and wild lands regulations were larger, because customary systems of tenancy and property experienced a parallel change. Church lands were privatised in most Catholic countries between the French Revolution and 1848, whereas seigneurial rights were redefined as public and private rights in a long sequence of reforms that would culminate in Russia in 1861 with the emancipation of the serfs (peasants who had hitherto been tied to specific manorial estates and subject to diverse personal obligations and to the jurisdiction of their lords). These reforms very often went hand-in-hand

with the enclosure of land and the privatisation of the commons, a tendency against communal forms of land holding and work that became widespread throughout Europe. The case against communal tenancies and usages was based upon a mixture of liberal principles and fiscal objectives. Its success brought about the reduction of untilled surfaces. The ploughing of land and the destruction of spontaneous pastures had both social and environmental consequences: among the environmental consequences were a reduction of biodiversity, a transformation of landscapes, and, in the Mediterranean countries, a shorter supply of organic fertilisers which had a significant impact upon agriculture.

Land and forests were not the only resources that were regulated by national and imperial states. Water streams and springs increasingly became public resources or—in countries where they were not turned into public goods—at least subject to public regulation. Local management of water was very often subjected to national rules. Its use was further transformed by concessions to private and public companies for the building of canals (such as the Canal du Rhône au Rhin or the Ludwig-Donau-Main Kanal), supply systems for urban centres and factories (the Canal de l'Ourq in Paris and the Canal de Isabel II in Madrid), or large irrigation schemes (the Canale Villoresi in Lombardy or the Canal de Tamarite de Litera between Aragon and Catalonia). At the end of the nineteenth century, the first hydroelectric plants were constructed.

Fig. 1: Worksite of the dam Pontón de la Oliva for the Canal de Isabel II in Madrid in the 1850s taken by Welsh photographer Charles Clifford (ca. 1850s), Biblioteca Nacional de España, http://bdh-rd. bne.es/viewer.vm?id=bdh0000258154.

At the same time, views on natural catastrophes and their political prevention changed and new protective measures were carried out: floods were tempered by straightening rivers like the Rhine; canalisations were carried out in major cities like Hamburg, Vienna, and London; and there were efforts to reforest mountains to prevent avalanches in Switzerland. A growing amount of legislation tried to keep pace with the new needs of capitalism and new expectations placed by citizens on national authorities, and the ability of those authorities to protect citizens and give them new resources, developing complex schemes and redefining the exact rights of local communities.

Industrialisation and the Environment

The industrialisation process in the long nineteenth century had far-reaching impacts on the natural environment. The economic, technological, and societal change from an agrarian to an industrial society marked the transition from hand-made to machine-made production and led to growing populations, improving living standards and accelerating national productivity. Propelled by the invention of steam and combustion engines in the eighteenth century, as well as the commercial use of electricity at the end of the nineteenth century, the industrial revolution marked a fundamental turning point in the history of the relationship between humans and nature. The key element enabling this revolution was energy. Coal replaced water and wood as the prime energy source. The exploitation of coal, the need for faster transportation systems for goods, and rapid urbanisation—caused by the influx of rural populations into cities—profoundly transformed the natural environment.

British cotton factories and Manchester's bleaching industry, the iron, steel and coke industry in the Ruhr Area, and Borsig's *Maschinenbau-Anstalt zu Berlin* drained, polluted or even poisoned waters in nearby rivers and seas or emitted heavily polluted air due to the combustion of coal. These hazards caused health problems among people and animals living in close proximity to industrial areas. As a result, people started to complain about dirty and foul-smelling water and demanded better protection from the hazards of industrial waste. However, the most common response to such problems was to increase the heights of chimneys at factories, a solution that limited local contamination, but spread the toxic fumes to wider areas. Environmental problems like the so-called 'smoke pest' or 'smoke plague' (*Rauchplage*), sulphured air, and toxic water became vital issues in cities.

Closely related to industrialisation was urbanisation. Crowded cities in which people had been crammed together to work in factories provided fertile ground for pest, cholera, and other epidemics like typhus. Cholera outbreaks caused by contaminated water in London in 1854 and Hamburg

in 1892 stimulated scientific research. Such research helped contribute to a better understanding of infectious diseases and led to improvements in health and sanitation. Miasma theory—the belief that diseases spread because of bad smells—for example, was replaced by germ theory. An analysis of London's waste water in the mid-nineteenth century proved that cholera was caused by microbes, a discovery that ultimately led to the production of a cholera vaccine. In addition, the introduction of municipal sewer and canalisation systems and the further development and broader distribution of the flush toilet further improved sanitary conditions in cities by the end of the nineteenth century. These improvements thus motivated city councils to further centralise and regulate water supply and removal systems. In the 1860s, Britain—the first country to address at full scale the environmental effects of industrialisation—passed the so-called Alkali Acts to regulate emissions from the chemical industry. Gradually, other pieces of legislation were introduced, but most other industrial countries did not follow Britain's path before the interwar period (1918–1939).

Around 1850, agrochemical scientists and social reformers in Britain and Germany (such as Edwin Chadwick and Justus Liebig) started a transnational discussion about the recycling of human waste and other city garbage. However, attempts to establish a kind of circulatory process with the use of manure in a sewage farm in Berlin were not successful. One reason for this failure was the increase of industrial waste within urban waste which made the circuit useless. Nonetheless, the increase of non-degradable waste led to advanced garbage collection systems and the first waste incineration plants in Nottingham and Hamburg in 1874 and 1896, respectively.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in response to all the challenges that came with urban life, organisations and movements were founded which strived for the improvement of social and sanitary conditions in cities. Middle-class social reformers demanded that their municipal authorities provide better protection from air and water pollution. For example, Rudolf Virchow (1821–1902), an early social hygiene reformer in Prussia, was a medical practitioner who fought for the establishment of hospitals and children's playgrounds in poor districts as well as for medical education for nurses.

The sanitary, public health or nature preservation movement was also strongly connected to scientists from different fields. Academics from chemistry to political economy warned that the industrialisation process was reaching its limits. The British economist William Stanley Jevons (1835–1882), for example, argued that the United Kingdom was bound to lose its advantage over other nations because of an overconsumption of coal. He predicted that economic growth would abate and even decline, and—following Thomas Malthus (1766–1834)—imagined a gloomy future in which living conditions

would deteriorate rapidly. In 1852, Robert Angus Smith (1817–1884), a Scottish chemist living in Manchester, one of the world's first industrial cities, identified the role of the burning of sulphur-rich coal in the emergence of acid rain. By the end of the nineteenth century, Swedish chemist Svante Arrhenius (1859–1927) shifted discussion of the problem from a regional to a global scale, when he theorised the threat of global warming induced by growing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Rapid development from the nineteenth century onwards in industrialisation, urbanisation, population growth, and the exploitation of resources (especially the massive use of coal) launched the beginning of a new geological era called the 'Anthropocene'. Already in 1873, geologist Antonio Stoppani (1824–1891) introduced the idea of an "anthropozoic era" in which humankind started influencing the biosphere's biological, geological, and atmospheric processes. In 2000, following Stoppani's idea, chemists Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer started an international discussion about the notion that humankind was effectively a geological factor which now altered the relatively stable environmental conditions of the Holocene.

Rise of the Conservation Movement

By the end of the nineteenth century, rapid environmental changes led to the idea that the natural world was a fragile and interconnected system that needed protection. It was in the European colonies overseas, before the environmental consequences of the industrial revolution became visible at home, that scientists from Britain, France and Germany for the first time experienced how human expansion and activities degraded a natural beauty that they equated with the biblical Eden. Tropical islands under colonial rule, such as Mauritius and Saint Helena, appealed to European fantasies about unspoiled and unadulterated nature, vividly depicted in romantic literature and art. Because of their surveyable size tropical islands provided sites ideally suited for botanical research, and it was here that ideas about ecological connections were first envisioned.

It was in the colonies, too, with the economic interests of the metropole and local hunting interests in mind, that enlightened administrators applied forest and soil conservation measures for the first time. As part of an imperial policy protecting timber, for example, the British colonial regime in India established forest reserves in the 1850s. At the end of the century, in some provinces more than thirty percent of forest land was formally protected. In a similar vein, the British colonial administration in the Cape Colony in present-day South Africa enacted legislation protecting forests (in 1859) and wildlife in hunting reserves (in 1886).

At the end of the nineteenth century, imperial ideas about the natural environment as an interconnected system were transported to the European core and converged with Gilbert White's arcadian view of nature, and concerns over the environmental effects of industrialisation. Two broader developments led to the foundation of the first nature conservation organisations in Britain and elsewhere. First, following the example of Gilbert White (and paradoxically facilitated by the invention of the steam locomotive that connected urban areas with the surrounding countryside), natural history became a popular pastime in Victorian Britain. The study and observation of nature by amateur field naturalists who escaped overcrowded and polluted cities in search of tranquillity and wonder, in turn, stimulated a desire to protect rare plant and animal species, and ultimately the landscape as a whole. Second, as part of a larger 'civilising' movement, middle-class reformers, including many women, started a campaign against cruelty to animals. Members of the bourgeois Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, founded in 1824, believed that cruelty to animals, like slavery and alcohol addiction, stemmed from savage impulses that needed to be restrained. They persuaded parliament to prohibit dog fights and to pass legislation protecting wildfowl and wild birds whose plumage was used for women's fashion.

Other European countries followed suit and after the foundation of the Society for the Protection of Birds in Britain (1889), the *Bund für Vogelschutz* was established in Germany in 1899. In contrast to Britain, however, the German nature conservation movement, inspired by romanticism and nationalism, combined concerns over birds and plants with a concern for the preservation of cultural heritage and regional identities, resulting in a nationally-oriented campaign to protect the German landscape (*Heimatschutz*). At the beginning of the twentieth century, after the International Congress for the Protection of Nature in Paris (1909), national organisations established the foundations of a transnational nature protection network. It was within this context that a sustainability discourse emerged.

Conclusion

The ways in which humankind controlled and understood the environment changed in the nineteenth century. On the one hand, the natural environment became an important scientific object which triggered new political, economic, and technological developments and opportunities. With a better understanding of the natural world as a fragile ecosystem, there emerged a need to take responsibility for the well-being of all species and habitats. The idea to utilise nature in a more sustainable, improved, and economic way found its expression in the political need to regulate common resources like

land, forests, and water more thoroughly. On the other hand, the developments and processes of industrialisation and urbanisation resulted in increased exploitation of resources, especially coal, and led to environmental pollution on an inconceivable scale. As early as the nineteenth century scientists discussed the idea of an 'Anthropocene', a new geological epoch in which humankind decisively shaped the environment. Today, geologists seem to agree that the Anthropocene is a reality, although they still debate the period's exact starting point: did humankind become a geological force in the sixteenth century with colonialism, in the nineteenth century with the industrial revolution, or only after 1945 with the beginning of the atomic era and the great acceleration of resource exploitation?

Discussion questions

1. How and why did the concept of 'nature' change in nineteenth-century Europe?

2. Describe the impact industrialisation had on the way Europeans thought about the environment.

3. Environmentalism was 'invented' in the European colonies. Discuss this statement.

Suggested reading

Diene, Hans-Liudger, *Herrschaft über die Natur? Naturvorstellungen deutscher Ingenieure, 1871–1914* (Berlin: GNT Verlag, 1992).

González De Molina, Manuel and Gloria Guzmán Casado, *Tras los pasos de la insustentabilidad: agricultura y medio ambiente en perspectiva histórica (siglos XVIII–XX)* (Madrid: Icaria, 2006).

Grove, Richard, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600–1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Osterhammel, Jürgen, *Die Verwandlung der Welt: Eine Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (München: C. H. Beck Verlag, 2009).

Warde, Paul, *The Invention of Sustainability: Nature and Destiny, c. 1500–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

Worster, Donald, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

Uekötter, Frank, *Umweltgeschichte im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2007).

Diogo, Maria Paula and Dirk van Laak, *Europeans Globalizing: Mapping, Exploiting, Exchanging* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 2018).

Blackbourn, David, *The Conquest of Nature: Water, Landscape, and the Making of Modern Germany* (London: J. Cape, 2006).

Radkau, Joachim, *Nature and Power: A Global History of the Environment* (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 2009).

4.4.3 Understanding and Controlling the Environment in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Jiří Janáč, Sophie Lange, Juan Pan-Montojo, and Andrew Tompkins

Introduction

Over the course of the twentieth century, Europeans, the European environment, and their mutual relationship underwent dramatic changes. The acceleration of industrialisation at the turn of the century amplified existing problems like water and air pollution. So, too, did two catastrophic World Wars which dramatically affected humans and their environment: bombshell-scared landscapes are still seen today; phosphor from sunken munitions is often mistaken for amber on the beaches on the Baltic Sea.

As the Cold War developed, Europe was separated into two opposing blocs—communist and capitalist-democratic. As much as these two were ideologically opposed, both sides still shared a strong faith in planning, which would have an important impact on the environment. Belief in a 'scientific-technological revolution' in the East and systematic modelling of the future in the West led to the construction of large-scale infrastructure projects, which exacerbated environmental problems that had already emerged with industrialisation in the nineteenth century.

The world beyond Europe had also been environmentally divided into North and South. A mechanised, chemically intensive agricultural sector and the development of mass consumption generated new environmental questions regarding waste deposits and energy supplies, for example, or the 'outsourcing' of environmental problems from richer to poorer countries. By the 1970s the environmental crisis had caught up with European societies: the environment became established as a political field, an object of diplomacy, a topic of public as well as scientific debate, and an issue for social movements.

The Environmental Consequences of Agriculture and Food Consumption

Before the Second World War, industrialisation, mining, and urbanisation had already visibly depleted particular natural resources and destroyed parts of the natural landscape. After 1945, the threatening impact of Fordist capitalism on the environment was apparent, as mass production and mass consumption necessitated extractive processes throughout the world. As these extractive practices accelerated in the 1950s and 1960s to supply an ever-expanding commodities market, so too did the accumulation of waste.

In the nineteenth century and especially in the first four decades of the twentieth century, public and private research centres transformed longstanding practices of plant and animal selection and hybridisation (which meant combining organisms of different breeds, varieties, species or genera to obtain new plants or animals). After the Second World War, Marshall Plan subsidies led to the introduction of agricultural technological packages (seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, and machinery, with precise instructions for their combined use, the calendar and features of tasks) developed by American agribusiness in the 1930s and 1940s. Throughout non-communist Europe, agricultural agencies and multinational firms diffused high-yield crop varieties, which enabled a rapid rise in the production of certain outputs, thanks to the use of more non-agricultural inputs (including fertilisers, pesticides, and antibiotics to fight animal diseases). Agri-scientists from the Soviet Union and elsewhere in the Communist Bloc constructed similar packages with similar contents which were adopted in socialist countries.

This new biotechnological model thus spread in Europe and was eventually exported to Asia and Africa under the label of the 'green revolution' in the 1960s. It had a large impact in agro-environmental terms: local varieties, well-adapted to local conditions, were replaced—and often disappeared entirely. Beyond agriculture, biodiversity in general suffered as well. Living organisms of all types were destroyed by pesticides, and the increased use of fertilisers polluted underground and surface waters. Although access to more plentiful foodstuffs clearly improved health standards in Europe, new chemical inputs brought about immediate harm and most likely mid-term increases in allergies and degenerative diseases.

The post-war period also saw other, significant changes in agricultural equipment. From the nineteenth century onwards, new industrial machines and tools were introduced in the European countryside. However, most of these machines were propelled by human force and especially by draft animals, which placed a limit on mechanisation, since more animals necessarily required more land dedicated to feeding them. After the Second World War,

tractors and combustion engines—which had been extremely scarce before the war—began to replace animals through a generalised process of motorisation which affected nearly all European farms by the 1970s. Hence, agriculture that had previously been autonomous in terms of energy, since it transformed solar power into biomass, started its transition to an energy-consuming activity based upon mineral fuels and inputs.

The subordination of agriculture to agro-industrial concerns which sold inputs and/or bought final products went hand-in-hand with the so-called 'modernisation' of agriculture (which might be summed up as 'biotechnology plus tractors'). The internationalisation of productive and commercial chains, especially after the 1970s, fostered new transformations in the types of technology created for agrarian production. New international flows started to deliver food globally, food which was produced in places where the balance of factors among prices, technology, and environmental regulations made it cheapest or where it enabled goods to be supplied year-round (thus reducing seasonal limitations on production). This was the continuation of a trend which can be traced back to the eighteenth century and, on a larger scale, to the age of empire. Through its import of foodstuffs, Europe began to consume more and more natural resources from around the world. It increased the energy consumed and the waste produced by agricultural production on other continents. The split between places of consumption and production thus contributed to the concentration of environmental degradation and enabled Europeans to export their environmental costs. This happened not just in agribusiness, but also in the case of a pan-European electrical grid as well as—for instance—in the production of uranium, first mined within Europe, and later (in the context of globalisation) overseas. For example, France closed its mines for safety reasons and now imports fuel for its nuclear power stations from Africa.

Since the twentieth century, certain trends (as well as some countervailing tendencies) have become more pronounced. The development of genetically modified organisms means that the control and centrality of agribusiness within the agricultural sector has increased through the production of seeds for plants which do not reproduce and which thus make farmers more dependent on agribusiness corporations. Transgenic agriculture demands more external inputs (although it can also eliminate some of them), favours soil destruction, and tends to reduce biodiversity. At the same time, new consumer and socio-political movements—some linked to green parties and associations and some linked to health or consumer protection—are demanding a more eco-friendly agriculture. They are promoting the consumption of local seasonal products, grown with fewer or no inorganic inputs, and pushing for livestock to be raised extensively (in open-air pastures) instead of intensively (in high-density 'factory farms' that require heavy capital investment).

Scientific Expertise

With a recognition of the growing complexity of environmental issues faced by rapidly industrialising countries in the twentieth century, as discussed with regard to the agricultural sector above, science and scientific expertise played ever more dominant roles in both environmental management and public debate. In their quest for control over their respective territories, European nations eagerly but selectively employed scientific knowledge. Growing armies of engineers and scientists within state bureaucracies served the state's mission to outpace other nations in mobilising national natural resources with the aim of maximising output.

Driven by the modernist dream of controlling and exploiting the natural environment for the benefit of the nation, these 'Prometheans' transformed natural hydrological networks and river basins into artificial water systems, which facilitated energy transition first by harnessing water power and later by introducing nuclear power plants. While these efforts were initially shaped by national frameworks, experts have also cooperated at the European level since the early twentieth century.

Fig. 1: Viktor Govorkov, "We can defeat drought too!" (1949), Public Domain, *Seventeen Moments in Soviet History*, http://soviethistory.msu.edu/1947-2/famine-of-1946-1947/famine-of-1946-1947-images/#. In this propaganda image from 1949, Stalin leans triumphantly over an illustrated map and plan for the reforestation of Russia.

States used the power of science and technology to subdue the natural environment and thereby legitimate their power and their existence. As a radical version of modernist technocratic ideology, Soviet communism indeed identified applied science as a crucial instrument for the transformation of

both man and nature. The famous motto of Russian agricultural scientist Ivan V. Michurin (1855–1935) captured these feelings clearly: "We cannot expect favours from nature; it is our job to take them from her!" Following such a motto, the Soviet Union attempted a bold, large-scale environmental transformation scheme known as 'Stalin's Plan for the Transformation of Nature'. When the USSR faced extreme drought under Stalin in the late 1940s, experts developed a plan to redirect water streams from the southern USSR in order to change local climates and soils elsewhere, and also to enable the growth of forests and the agricultural use of the country's arid steppes. Gradually abandoned after Stalin's death in 1953, the project achieved limited success in increasing the production of rice and cotton, but significantly contributed to ecological catastrophes like the desertification of the Aral Sea, which has since shrunk to less than ten percent of its original size. Paradoxically, it appears that Soviet planners tried to establish a new, sustainable ecological balance while simultaneously worsening the same landscape as a result of political and economic pressures, pressures which demonstrated the limits of scientific knowledge and capabilities. The Soviet scheme represents an extreme case, but in principle, the attitudes of other European governments—including capitalist ones—did not differ greatly, especially in the period since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

However, science simultaneously helped to undermine faith in the omnipotence of human reason. From the 1950s onward, voices emphasising a cautious approach to the environment moved slowly from dissent to the mainstream. Leading thinkers of ecological science such as the German Ernst Haeckel (1834–1919) hinted early on at the mutual interdependence of various elements of nature, organisms and their surroundings, and the immense complexity of the natural world. The Russian Vladimir Vernadsky (1863–1945) and the Englishman Arthur Tansley (1871–1955) further developed the argument in the interwar period. In effect, post-war economic reconstruction brought not only massive pressure on the environment, but also the emergence of ecology as a universally accepted field of science. The harmful effects of industrial waste on ecosystems suddenly became widely discussed in terms of pollution. As poisoned air and toxic water easily crossed national borders, it became a matter at the international level.

Environmental Policy and International Diplomacy

Neither environmental problems nor environmentalist traditions were unique to the twentieth century. One approach to environmentalism, which emerged in the nineteenth century and whose influence continued into the twentieth, came from 'nature protection societies'. These societies were comprised of

members who drew on scientific training and who regarded both nation-states and the international system as relevant arenas for action. The interwar period even fostered their direct engagement in international politics through the League of Nations (1920–1946), which provided the first bureaucratic infrastructure for international environmentalism. Modernist belief in the human ability to master nature had been shaken by the rise of pollution, and critical scientists were among the first to perceive its negative consequences. After 1945, Europe witnessed an increase in international scientific exchange and the entry of this exchange as a relevant factor in politics and policy fields. For example, scientists from industrialised countries met regularly to discuss measures to fight air pollution, such as after 'the Great Smog of London' in 1952. However, policy mostly focused on end-of-pipe solutions that tackled problems like air pollution by building chimneys to disperse smoke rather than reducing the problem at its source by installing filters or reducing the consumption of coal.

While environmentalist ideas, grievances, and organisations thus had deep roots, it was not until after the Second World War that ecological issues became the object of intense political contention. Concerned scientists like the American Rachel Carson (1907–1964), whose book *Silent Spring* (1962) led to the banning of dangerous pesticides, helped place certain problems on the political agenda.

But policy changes, especially at the international level, always suffered a certain time lag. Oil pollution in the sea is a case in point. While technical solutions like oil separators in ships already existed at the beginning of the twentieth century, their implementation long remained a political and economic matter. An International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation was only agreed in 1990, though the League of Nations had tried to address the problem as early as the interwar period. This conflict over oil pollution lasted half a century for two reasons: on the one hand, the sea as a transnational space long remained an unlegislated *terra nullius*, in which state and non-state actors alike dumped chemical, nuclear, plastic, and other hazardous waste, which only began to be regulated with the 1972 Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London Convention). On the other hand, the question of who would pay for the costs of pollution remained unresolved.

As environmental problems are borderless, societies increasingly recognised that they were interdependent. One key turning point at the international level was the discovery by Swedish scientists that air pollution from industrial centres in West Germany, the United Kingdom, and countries in Eastern Europe like the German Democratic Republic or Poland caused the acidification of Swedish lakes and rivers. This became one reason for the United Nations to convene the Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE) in

1972, hosted by the Swedish government in Stockholm. Most of the Western and former 'Third World' countries took part in the Stockholm conference, but the Soviet Union and its allies mainly boycotted it for Cold War diplomatic reasons. At the conference, the UN established its Environment Programme (UNEP), which is now based in Nairobi, Kenya. The conference adopted a declaration whose ecological ideas had first been introduced at the UN Conference on Man and the Biosphere in 1968 in Paris. One of its principles was the 'Polluter Pays Principle' (PPP), by which those who cause pollution—and not those who have to suffer its consequences—are responsible for covering the costs of eliminating or compensating for the resulting problems. But the PPP and other recommendations of the UNCHE did not become international law in the 1970s. Even today, introducing preventive technology remains a controversial topic.

The UNCHE in 1972 was a starting point for the establishment of national environmental institutions like ministries or agencies as well as international environmental diplomacy, management, and law. In the last three decades of the twentieth century, Conventions on the Protection of the Wetlands (1971), on World Heritage (1972), on Flora and Fauna (1973), on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (1979), on the Protection of the Ozone Layer (1987) and on the Regulation of the Disposal of Hazardous Waste (1989) were adopted. The second worldwide UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 enshrined the concept of 'sustainable development' in international law. A direct, successful consequence of this conference was the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, a major diplomatic contribution to the fight against global warming.

Environmentalism: Popularisation and Protest

Environmentalism was not, however, simply a question of science or a matter of high politics, but a set of concerns that also animated social movements across Europe and beyond. Environmentalists have sometimes worked closely with governments and often used science in order to create pressure for political action. However, they have just as frequently challenged state policies and worked to develop their own, independent expertise in order to call industry scientists into question.

After the Second World War, environmental problems became increasingly difficult to ignore, as competition between the two Cold War blocs accelerated industrialisation and worsened pollution. In parallel, advancements in technology, mass media, and economic globalisation fostered a new sense of global interconnectedness, one which was dramatically illustrated, for example, by photos of the Earth from space ('Earthrise', 1968). Within Europe, oil spills from ships like the *Torrey Canyon* (1967) and *Amoco Cadiz* (1978) in the

Atlantic and major industrial accidents such as the dioxin leak in Seveso, Italy (1976) or chemical spill in Basel, Switzerland (1986) brought greater attention to international pollution problems.

More fundamentally, the finite supply of natural resources in Europe and the wider world called into question the sustainability of post-war industrial society. Bestsellers like *The Population Bomb* (Paul Ehrlich, 1968) or *Blueprint for Survival* (Teddy Goldsmith, 1972) helped popularise environmentalist discourse beyond academic and scientific circles, as did the work of journalists like Michel Bosquet and Robert Jungk. In 1972, a widely publicised study on *The Limits to Growth* was commissioned by the Club of Rome. Its researchers used computer modelling of data on population growth and industrial production as well as the availability of food and non-renewable resources to show how exponential growth in human consumption would quickly outstrip the planet's ability to replenish itself. Only a year later, the book's point was driven home forcefully by the oil crisis, which demonstrated just how dependent European societies were on fossil fuels for energy. As economic globalisation accelerated in the late 1960s and early 1970s, environmental problems large and small that had once seemed to be primarily local in scope came to be perceived in relation to an interconnected, global whole.

By the 1970s, the human relationship to the environment became increasingly politicised. Though the upheavals among students and workers that had taken place across Europe around 1968 had had little to do with the environment, they fostered an atmosphere of protest that was not bound by any single issue. Feminism, gay liberation, solidarity with the so-called 'Third World', human rights activism, and environmental movements thus all developed in parallel in the decades that followed. Paradoxically, environmental activism was also helped by its seemingly 'apolitical' nature, which attracted the participation of people who were otherwise wary of being associated with left- or right-wing politics.

Among environmental issues, nuclear energy became one of the most contentious, particularly as Western European states backed the construction of a wave of new nuclear power stations during the 1970s. Wherever nuclear facilities were proposed, concerned citizens protested in opposition to them. Over time, local and regional anti-nuclear initiatives built up national and international networks, as different groups came together to oppose risks associated with radioactivity, accidents, and the civil use of technology initially developed for military purposes. In 1986, the Chernobyl accident underscored the dangers that activists had been opposing for more than a decade.

In Eastern Europe, environmentalism as a political movement developed somewhat later, but drew on some of the same impulses that had animated protest in Western Europe. After all, both the communist and capitalist

systems had built their post-war legitimacy on 'progress', placing large-scale production and consumption at the centre of their parallel pursuits of improved standards of living. However, communist countries persisted for longer in emphasising heavy industry as the basis of broader economic development. By the 1980s, pollution of air, water, and soil in many countries had become dire. As environmental protest developed in tandem with human rights and peace activism in that decade, all three of these supposedly 'apolitical' issues became important vehicles for criticising communist authorities.

By the 1990s, environmentalism had become a professionalised domain of protest. Faced with government- and industry-backed 'experts' supportive of nuclear energy, environmentalists developed their own 'counter-expertise', contributing to the pluralisation, popularisation, and contestation of scientific knowledge in the late twentieth century. In order to lobby for legislation on air pollution, water quality, and animal protection, many activists banded together within non-governmental organisations, some of which were international (e.g. Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace). In several countries, they also formed political parties specifically focused on environmental issues. While green parties have had mixed success in national elections in different countries, they have been a persistent fixture of the European parliament since the end of the twentieth century.

Conclusion

The twentieth century was one of enduring environmental crises, most of them precipitated by industrialisation and modernisation. To tackle these problems, European societies pursued a range of different approaches, from technological solutions and policy changes to scientific exchange and environmental activism. By the end of the century, the extent to which human activity had changed the environment was unmistakable. It was no longer a question of whether the planet's ecosystems might change, but how much and how fast: the problem of 'global warming' that had been discussed as a preventable possibility in the 1970s and 1980s became, a half-century later, the reality of a 'climate change' that could only be managed or mitigated. The twentieth century witnessed what environmental historian J.R. McNeill has described as "The Great Acceleration" of human activities affecting the Earth's climate, biodiversity, and ecosystems. By the dawn of the twenty-first century, the public had begun to take notice that the world had entered a new geological era: the 'Anthropocene' was characterised not by an independently changing environment that shaped possibilities for living beings, but by the ways in which human beings specifically changed their environment, with consequences for all life on the planet.

Discussion questions

1. How and why did the concept of 'nature' change in twentieth-century Europe?

2. Describe the impact the Cold War had on the way Europeans thought about the environment.

3. How does the way we think about the environment today differ to the twentieth century and in which ways has it remained the same?

Suggested reading

González de Molina, Manuel and Víctor Toledo, *The Social Metabolism: A Socio-Ecological Theory of Historical Change* (Berlin: Springer, 2014).

Harwood, Jonathan, *Europe's Green Revolution and Others Since: The Rise and Fall of Peasant Friendly Plant-Breeding* (London: Routledge, 2012).

Kupper, Patrick and Seefried, Elke, '"A Computer's Vision of Doomsday": On the History of the 1972 Study the Limits of Growth', in *Exploring Apocalyptica: Coming to Terms with Environmental Alarmism*, ed. by Frank Uekötter (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 2018), pp. 49–74.

McNeill, John R., *Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001).

McNeill, J.R., and Corinna Unger, eds, *Environmental Histories of the Cold War*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

McNeill, J. R., and Peter Engelke, *The Great Acceleration: An Environmental History of the Anthropocene since 1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

Milder, Stephen, *Greening Democracy: The Anti-Nuclear Movement and Political Environmentalism in West Germany and Beyond, 1968–1983* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

Radkau, Joachim, *The Age of Ecology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014).

Tompkins, Andrew S., *Better Active than Radioactive! Anti-Nuclear Protest in 1970s France and West Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Uekötter, Frank, *The Greenest Nation? A New History of German Environmentalism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014).

Wöbse, Anna-Katharina, *Weltnaturschutz: Umweltdiplomatie in Völkerbund und Vereinten Nationen 1920–1950* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2012).

UNIT 5
ECONOMY
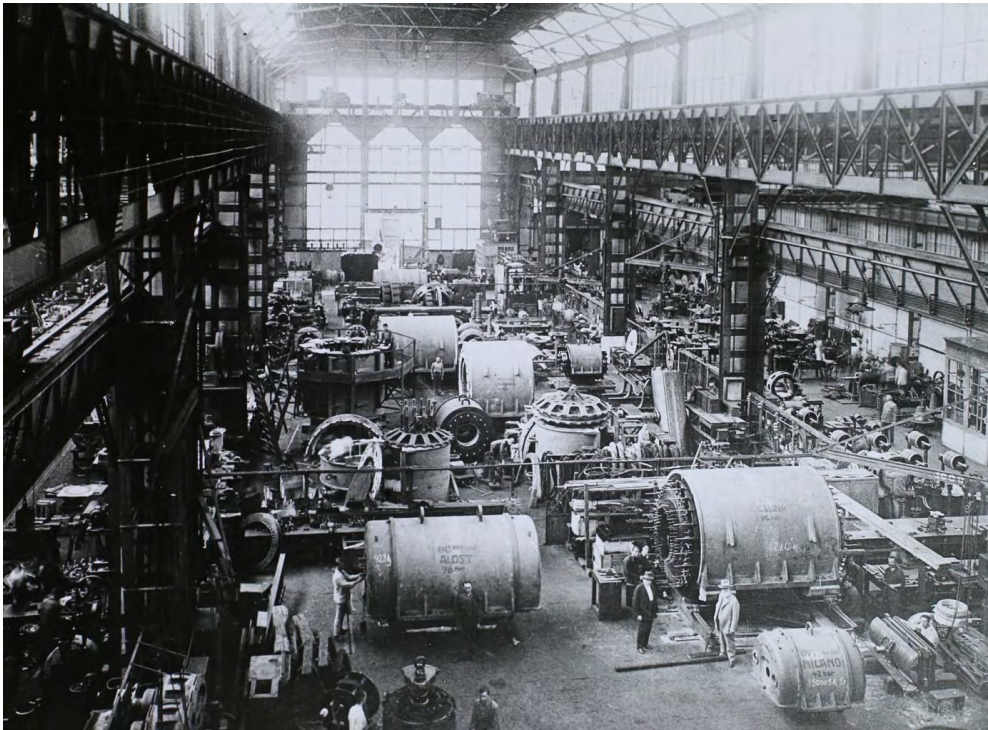
The hall of the Ganz factory in Budapest (1922), Fortepan 95160, Hungarian Geographical Museum, Slide Collection, https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?id=95160.

CHAPTER 5.1

ENTREPRENEURS, COMPANIES AND MARKETS

5.1.1 Entrepreneurs, Markets and Companies in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Cristina Bravo Lozano, Benjamin Conrad, and Thomas L. Leng

Introduction

One defining feature of the early modern period as traditionally understood is the expansion of European influence across the globe, initiated by the exploratory voyages of Columbus and Vasco da Gama. As well as marking the beginnings of modern European empires and the subsequent expropriation of land and resources, the position of Europe within the Eurasian economy was transformed by direct sea access to its Chinese and Indian Ocean heartlands. Importantly, this was a competitive process amongst European states, which adopted different institutional solutions to the problems of accessing and controlling distant markets. This chapter begins by discussing how the Portuguese and Spanish empires attempted to secure the gains of their overseas possessions through the regulation of shipping and traffic. By the late sixteenth century, the Iberian monopoly was under pressure from the northern European Atlantic powers, and both the Dutch Republic and England came to rely on novel corporations to spearhead their challenges. Institutional innovation was thus associated with intra-European competition for global leadership: as well as a 'great divergence' between a Europe heading towards industrialisation and the rest of the world, the early modern period saw divergences within Europe and a shift in the economic centre from south to north. This cannot wholly be explained with reference to the global economy: the divergence between the labour regimes of Western and Eastern Europe had deeper roots. Divergence does not preclude integration, however, and the chapter ends by considering how the rise of the Northwestern European economies influenced the development of those East of the Elbe.

Fig. 1: Theodor de Bry, *Departure from Lisbon for Brazil, the East Indies and America*, engraving from ca. 1592, Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Departure_of_fleet_from_Lisbon_harbor.jpg.

The Portuguese Trading Empire

Against a backdrop of religious clashes in the Mediterranean, the spice route was virtually blocked for the Christian powers as the late Middle Ages progressed. After the Portuguese conquest of Ceuta (1415), the expansionist aspirations of the Infante Henry the Navigator led to the exploration of the East coast of Africa, which he circumnavigated to reach India. The Portuguese expeditionaries set up factories, military posts, and trading enclaves, establishing one of the main centres of the slave trade in the Gulf of Guinea. From these enclaves they gained access to and partially controlled the Atlantic trade routes and, after Vasco da Gama's voyage, the Indian Ocean. At the same time, Pedro Álvares Cabral began the Portuguese expansion into Brazil and the exploitation of its sugar plantations. The Portuguese 'conquest, navigation and trade' in America and Africa was administered by governors and donatary captains, while the growing possessions in India would be encompassed from 1510—with the establishment of a colony in Goa—in the State of India under the command of a viceroy. This projection in Asia would lead the Portuguese, from 1543, to trade with the Japanese Empire, but without having a stable base in its territory.

The Portuguese monopoly in African, Indian, and Asian waters sparked strong competition with the Crown of Castile. As their respective overseas expansion ventures progressed, various treaties were concluded to settle their

competing claims and delimit their respective areas of navigation and private trade, giving rise to an Iberian *mare clausum*. For the administration of his overseas empire, and according to the *Casa da Guiné e Mina*, Manuel I founded the *Casa da Índia* in Lisbon around 1500. This institution was responsible for the commercial affairs of the factories, the customs registration of overseas goods, the provision of caravels and ships that traded with the various Portuguese enclaves, the organisation of the *Armadas da* Índia that connected Lisbon with Goa every year, the monopoly on certain products, the sponsorship of expeditions and the preservation of mercantile interests.

In 1580, the integration of Portugal into the monarchy of Spain created a vast empire with dominions in all four parts of the world. The Iberian Union, personified by Philip II, posed a challenge to its overseas administration, although each crown retained its sovereignty, economic autonomy, and mercantile structure. Both crowns would see their trade routes cut off in the face of corsair attacks and piracy by the English and Dutch. After sixty years of shared existence, the War of Restoration (1640–1668) separated their interests once again at a time when the threat of third powers ended up breaking the *mare clausum* in the face of the new dynamics of extra-European economic exploitation.

Across the Seas: Spanish Projection

The arrival of Christopher Columbus in America in 1492 opened up new markets for the Crown of Castile. Access to and exploitation of raw materials, as rich as gold or the coveted spices, allowed the access of people eager to participate in the lucrative business, and the circulation and exchange of goods of high mercantile value. The regulation of Atlantic traffic that followed the four voyages of Columbus, the process of expansion and settlement of the population, and the establishment of trade circuits was articulated in a system centralised in a cardinal institution for the interests of the Spanish monarchy. In 1503, the Catholic kings formalised the foundation of the *Casa de la Contratación*. Located in Seville, the only port authorised for overseas imports and exports, this body mediated the *Carrera de Indias*, the American convoy. This court controlled the navigation and commercial activity of the metropole with the Caribbean islands and the lands of the American continent, governed by the *Consejo Real y Supremo de las Indias* (1511–1524). The functions of the *Casa de la Contratación* were to supervise the reception of ships coming from America, to authorise the provisioning of vessels bound for the New World, to manage and register the shipment of passengers and royal officials, and to recognise new shipments of goods to those kingdoms to avoid fraud.

In this active bidirectionality, the institution assumed the monopoly of Spanish trade in the Atlantic. In 1543, the creation of the *Consulado de Cargadores*

a Indias in Seville assumed the legal powers in the civil sphere of the *Casa de la Contratación* to protect the interests of businessmen and merchant traders with business in America against the interference of other private individuals and foreigners. Apart from administering the *avería* (tax for the protection of merchant ships), this commercial lobby was the driving force behind the organisation of two fleets or armadas that covered the route to the mainland and New Spain each year. These convoys transported the silver extracted in the Peruvian and Mexican mines. The much-demanded that precious metal was sent back to the Old World, and was additionally used for the exchange of Asian goods through the Manila Galleon.

The *Casa de la Contratación*, like the Portuguese *Casa da Índia*, had a scientific function. Among its maritime attributions, it was in charge of training the pilots who would cover the inter-oceanic crossing, the design and production of nautical charts—such as keeping the Royal Register up to date—and other navigational instruments, and the administration of the news received from the geographical advances of the different expeditions sponsored by the kings of Spain. In 1717, the definitive transfer of its headquarters to Cadiz, together with the *Consulado de Cargadores*, had a strong impact on Seville, which ceased to be the epicentre of the *Carrera de Indias*. This change of location had been planned for decades, but it was not until that year that it was officially formalised. However, Charles III's reforms and his measures in the last quarter of the eighteenth century to liberalise American trade weakened the mercantile strength that the *Casa de la Contratación* had enjoyed since its creation.

Fig. 2: Aelbert Cuyp, *VOC Senior Merchant with his Wife and an Enslaved Servant* (ca. 1650–ca. 1655), https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/SK-A-2350.

The Dutch and English East India Companies

Well before the late eighteenth century, the Iberian empires were facing rivalry from aggressive intruders, particularly England and the Dutch Republic. The Dutch Revolt had robbed the city of Antwerp of its previous role channelling Mediterranean goods to northern Europe. The exodus of Antwerp's mercantile population northwards boosted the capital and expertise available to the new state, the United Provinces of the Netherlands. Commercial incentives for merchants to seek new routes to purchase goods from the Far East were further reinforced by the strategic desirability of interrupting Iberian traffic during the Dutch War of Independence from the Habsburg Empire. In the late 1590s a series of mercantile consortiums funded expeditions from different Dutch cities to the Far East, enterprises that would in 1602 be amalgamated in a new organisation, the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC, or the United Dutch East India Company). This organisation followed Iberian precedents insofar as the Dutch States General endowed it with considerable monopoly privileges but differed by being funded through joint stock equity funding, with around 1,800 investors drawn to the initial share issuance. This was a sign of how the pre-existent stock market in government bonds had created an investing public. Thus, the VOC was extremely successful in enlisting private investment, but this enterprise was closely associated with the Dutch state, pursuing its war aims aggressively in the Far East by conquering such Portuguese bases as Malacca. Violence was not only used against European rivals: the inhabitants of the nutmeg-producing Banda Islands were subject to near extermination when they reneged on supposed 'agreements' to sell their product exclusively to the VOC, which became a territorial ruler managing slave-based plantations. Jayakarta, part of the Banten Sultanate on the island of Java, was also sacked by the VOC, then becoming the site of its Asian headquarters, Batavia. Because of its importance to the Dutch war effort, the VOC was required to be a perpetual entity, with investors denied the opportunity to withdraw their stock, although they could sell their shares.

The relationship between the crown and the English East India Company (EIC) was less close than that between the VOC and the Dutch States General, although the EIC did received royal privileges in the form of a charter granting monopoly trading rights and making it a corporation with the right to own property and take legal action independently of its members. This was an extension of an established corporate tradition in England which encompassed the regulation of overseas trade, with companies acting as the governmental framework to engender cooperation amongst independent merchants. What distinguished the EIC from most other companies was its joint stock, although this was not referenced explicitly in its founding charter. Instead, members were

constituted as 'freemen', granted participatory rights to meet in a general court and vote for company governors, irrespective of how much they had invested. The EIC was initially financed on a voyage-by-voyage basis, with investors paid a share of the profits on return; only in the 1650s was a permanent joint stock founded. This difference in organisation was reflected too in the EIC's commercial strategy as compared to the aggressive VOC. Initially, the EIC was reluctant to engage in expensive military and territorial enterprises, hoping to profit from arbitrage (buying low in Asia and selling high in Europe) via a network of trading factories, rather than control production in Asia. Even so, it was increasingly drawn into participation in the intra-Asian 'country' trade as a means to generate purchasing power to pay for imports into Europe, where there was an imbalance of trade with Asia. The EIC's inability to prevent its agents in Asia from trading independently ultimately became an asset, expanding its network, so much so that the practice was formally permitted (a contrast to the VOC). Only in the second half of the seventeenth century did the EIC acquire rule over extensive trading settlements like Bombay, beginning its gradual shift into a territorial power in India. By the 1690s its shares were being traded on the London stock market.

The Significance of the Joint-stock Company

These joint-stock companies successfully overcame the barriers to entering the far eastern market, not least Portuguese hostility. The VOC was able to overwhelm the Portuguese thanks to its fiscal power, whilst the corporate form enabled the longevity necessary to build up a presence in the Asian market; these were important antecedents to modern business corporations. On the other hand, these 'company states' performed roles quite alien to the modern corporation: they were granted rights of government (including to make war, at least with non-Europeans). This was a sign of their origins in Europe characterised by 'hybrid' sovereignty which could be deployed creatively in Asia: the VOC could assume a very different face when acting as vassals to the Tokugawa Shogun as compared to its role as colonial power in the Banda Islands, for instance.

The success of these companies also meant that they were imitated, both by other European nations seeking to trade with the Far East, and in order to challenge Spanish domination in the Atlantic. Here they were less successful: the joint-stock Virginia Company, chartered by the English Crown in 1606, foundered once Virginia became a crop-producing economy in which long-term investment and local management was advantageous. The Dutch West India Company had a longer existence and conquered Iberian Brazil and Angola. However, its endeavours were extremely expensive, and it was less

successful commercially than militarily. As the slave-trading Royal African Company would find out, the Atlantic economy proved to be difficult to monopolise by corporate means, and in this region merchant networks and partnerships would play the major role.

Markets and Enterprise in Central and Eastern Europe

The rise of the northern Atlantic economies ultimately contributed to a new north-south division in the European economy, but historians have also identified a continental divide between the East and West. Was there a divide in early modern Europe between an advanced western and backward eastern part, with the Elbe as its border splitting the Holy Roman Empire into two parts? On the one hand, scholars have pointed out early elements of urbanised countries in Western Europe, linked to early market societies and the putting-out system. The economy of the Dutch Republic, for instance, is often described as the first modern market society. The states of the Holy Roman Empire, besides several smaller and short-lasting attempts, never did take part in overseas colonisation. But they nonetheless benefitted from the overseas trade, with the southern German company of the wealthy Fugger family as a notable example. Italian states such as the Republic of Genoa in the Ligurian and Tyrrhenian Sea or the Republic of Venice in the Adriatic Sea also benefitted from this overseas trade as their power peaked in the sixteenth century. On the other hand, the *folwark* or manorial economy in Eastern Europe lasted until the nineteenth century. Founded upon serfdom, a renewed form of enslavement, and enduring together with the remaining vestiges of the feudal system, the manorial economy has been described as a conservative, Eastern European form of economic order.

For the Baltic Sea region, the transition from the Middle Ages to the early modern age marked the end of dominance by the Hanseatic League. New states such as Sweden and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth gained access to the Baltic Sea, followed by Russia in the eighteenth century; however, they often relied on German sailors, who came from their German minority populations. Furthermore, in many cases trade was carried out by foreigners, especially from Britain or the Dutch Republic. In the eighteenth century, the influence of Western European companies in Eastern Europe grew. Dutch trade and banking houses, mostly from Amsterdam—for example, Hope & Co. or Theodore de Smeth—became major financiers of states and particular nobles. The House of Hope gave loans to Sweden, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and Russia. These ties endowed the creditors with a certain degree of influence on the domestic and foreign policies of monarchs and governments. In Poland-Lithuania, for instance, the king and several magnate

families were heavily indebted. By 1801, Russia owed 137 percent of its annual state income to Hope & Co., an enormous sum.

The trade between East and West allowed a small elite of landowners and a limited number of seaports to accumulate a considerable amount of wealth. Thus, the German-speaking city of Danzig was Poland's biggest and only port of significance. Königsberg was Danzig's equivalent in East Prussia and in Russia's case the new capital of St Petersburg, founded in 1703, assumed this role alongside Riga in Livonia. The immense wealth of these few towns stood in stark contrast to their poor hinterlands.

It is worth noting that the process of integration of the European economies and the demographic and economic growth of Western Europe led to a stabilisation of the *folwark* or manorial system in Eastern Europe. Eastern European noblemen in Austria, Hungary, Poland-Lithuania, Prussia, and Russia could deliver grain at cheaper prices than Western European countries. While Western European landowners were obliged to pay wages, their East European counterparts could forgo these expenses on account of the *corvée* of the peasantry. This represented the key difference between Western and Eastern European economies.

Conclusion

In recent years a major theme of early modern economic history has been the divergence between Europe and Asia, with debates about the timing of this shift and its causes. In terms of the latter, historians have tended to either highlight changes internal to Europe, such as new energy sources or political regimes and cultural beliefs supporting enterprise, or Europe's often predatory relationship with other regions. Ostensibly the themes of this chapter might be seen to fit most with the first of these explanatory frameworks. New forms of business organisation, including those which aided the integration of eastern and western economies, might appear to be a sign of European success in cultivating dynamic enterprise. However, this chapter has shown that these innovations were often associated with Europe's global interactions, and the inter-European competition this entailed. European rulers might have been compelled to respect private property rights internally, but this was accompanied by expropriation overseas. European states were also willing to deploy violence when infringing on each other's claimed monopolies, which they did in alliance with private agents. This is a sign of how, although the early modern period saw important innovations in global enterprise that foreshadowed later developments in business organisation, there were important differences. For instance, in the different political climate of the nineteenth century, its military and political functions would make the EIC

appear outdated, a private company intruding in the proper sphere of the state, which consequently absorbed its Indian territories into the British Empire.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways did early modern economies differ in Eastern and Western Europe?

2. What was the economic role of colonialism in early modern Europe?

3. In what ways did global expansion promote new forms of enterprise in Europe?

4. In which ways does the early modern period still shape the European economy today?

Suggested reading

Augustyniak, Urszula, *History of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: State—Society—Culture* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2015).

Bouza, Fernando, Pedro Cardim and Antonio Feros, eds, *The Iberian World, 1450–1820* (New York: Routledge, 2019).

Buist, Marten Gerbertus, *At Spes Non Fracta. Hope & Co., 1770–1815: Merchant Bankers and Diplomats at Work* (Den Haag: Martinus Nuhoff, 1974).

Harris, Ron, *Going the Distance: Eurasian Trade and the Rise of the Business Corporation, 1400–1700* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020).

Phillips, Andrew and J. C. Sharman, *Outsourcing Empire: How Company-States Made the Modern World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020).

5.1.2 Entrepreneurs, Markets and Companies in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Judit Klement, Martin Lutz, and Ander Permanyer

Introduction

In the nineteenth century, the operation of the economy changed fundamentally throughout Europe. With the process of industrialisation, a new age of capitalism began: merchant capitalism was replaced by industrial capitalism, characterised by the widespread use of the factory system of manufacturing, the expansion of mass production, the massive use of wage labour, the worldwide interconnection of markets, and the spread of (new or renewed) capitalist institutional frameworks (e.g., company registers, joint-stock companies). Although there were significant differences in the characteristics of nineteenth-century capitalism within Europe, free competition prevailed as a general principle, which required the free movement of capital and labour, the freedom of enterprise, the freedom to acquire property, and freedom in employment. All this meant the disappearance of the economic framework of the traditional economic system, including—for example—the abolition of guilds and serfdom. The nineteenth century was the age of the birth of nation-states, but at the same time, the economic intervention of the state was mostly limited in all Europe. European states operated according to the economic policy principles of economic liberalism. (The state played a greater role only in certain areas of the economy, like building the modern infrastructure, and in Eastern Europe.) The volume of trade increased dynamically throughout the nineteenth century, and in the middle of the century, free trade prevailed without any customs tariff. Although the increasing isolation of 'national' customs territories, protectionism, became more and more characteristic from the 1870s onwards, the nineteenth century was the era of the first wave of economic globalisation. Among the complex features of industrial capitalism,

this chapter focuses primarily on market conditions and business actors (entrepreneurs, companies), and for the illustration of the complexity of the century, it represents three case studies, showing the trade in tea and grain, and the development of the electric industry.

Economic Environment

Liberalisation and industrialisation characterise the most prominent aspects of economic transformation in nineteenth-century Europe. At the same time, these were uniform processes and their historical trajectory exemplifies the continent's huge divergence. While already in 1800, the textile mills of Northwestern England used the steam engine and the spinning-jenny in large-scale factories, even one hundred years later a remote village in the Bavarian Alps was scarcely touched by this new economic world. Nineteenth-century European economic history is thus marked by the coexistence of industrialisation and rural stagnation, market enterprise and state intervention, prosperity for some and poverty for many.

Why Europe industrialised first remains one of the most contested questions in historical scholarship. Answers brought forward address the role of technology, culture, religion, institutions, ideas, (frequently violent) global expansion, entrepreneurship, the free market, and the power of the emerging modern nation-state. The Enlightenment provided some of the most influential economic ideas for nineteenth-century transformation. Some of the most notable contributions to liberal thought include the moral philosopher Adam Smith with his book on the *Wealth of Nations* (1776), David Ricardo's work on market-exchange (*On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*, 1817), and John Stuart Mill's thoughts on freedom and utilitarianism *(Principles of Political Economy*, 1848). Contrary to liberalism, Karl Marx, as well as socialist and anarchist thinkers, focused on the striking inequalities brought forward by industrialisation and liberalisation. The widespread poverty and starvation of the 1840s in many European regions in particular inspired a countermovement to capitalist industrialisation. By the late nineteenth century, the traditional Christian institutions also developed a framework for a social and economic ethic, including for example Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, or the German Lutheran church's social reformist movement.

As part of liberalisation, land holding was deregulated, serfdom abolished and the power of guilds severely limited, allowing for increasingly freer movement of capital and labour. This fed into a rapidly expanding market economy. Farmers increasingly retreated from subsistence economy to rely on market income. Land and labour became commodities traded on markets, with a new labour class emerging in the industrialising hubs of Europe, such

as the mining areas of Belgian Wallonia, the textile manufacturing of Łódź or the Ruhr Valley. International treaties, such as the formation of the German *Zollverein* (German Customs Union) that in 1833 established a large economic bloc in Central Europe, helped accelerate this process. In international trade, the British set the pace in the repeal of the corn laws (import duties on grain) of 1848, ushering a wave of free trade agreements, for example the 1860 Cobden-Chevalier Treaty with France. This trade liberalisation contributed to a huge increase in international trade and specialisation of national economies. The era of international trade liberalisation did not last long, however: by the end of the century protectionism was on the rise again. In general, the implementation of liberal ideas and industrialisation diverged across the continent. Britain, France, and Belgium forged ahead, followed by Prussia. Southern Europe, and the vast empires of Austria-Hungary, Russia, and the Ottomans lagged behind.

The rise of the market economy was made possible in part by an institutional revolution of patent rights, insurance, corporate law, and the standardisation of measurements. These institutions formed an increasingly dense and internationally viable net that provided legal protection, allowed for the management of risk and in general provided the grease necessary to facilitate market transactions where buyers and sellers increasingly were brought together from every corner of the continent.

Geography played a crucial role in the industrialisation process, with the endowment of natural resources, such as the coal fields of Upper Silesia or the rich, fertile black soil in the southern steppe of the Tsarist Empire, shaping economic possibilities. Sea and river harbours could exploit their advantageous position as increasingly European and even global trade hubs, with entirely new economic centres appearing on the map such as Trieste in the Austrian Empire or Odessa on the Black Sea. Liverpool, Le Havre, and Antwerp connected imperial centres with vast global colonies and the emerging world market. The modern state was often crucial in exploiting natural resources, by providing the necessary institutional and physical infrastructure. The state also played an active role in promoting economic development through its customs policies, as well as its investments in the railroad and telegraph infrastructure.

The state also played a crucial role in furthering scientific research and technical education. The British Royal Society was the foremost scientific organisation of its kind which provided a space for researchers and inventors to exchange ideas and form scholarly networks. Next to these scholarly societies, technical and commercial colleges and universities became crucial incubators of innovation and skilled engineers who would bring their scientific training to production and management. Ideas flowed relatively easily across the European continent, allowing new ideas to turn into new products that in

turn formed the nucleus of entirely new industries. While the first phase of industrialisation was largely dominated by coal and steel, later innovations enabled the emergence of the electrical industry, the chemical industry, the automotive industry and much else.

What exactly caused industrialisation in nineteenth-century Europe (and only in parts of Europe) remains an open question in the scholarly debate. What is evident is that these processes allowed for European imperial powers to forge ahead and turn economic progress into political clout and military strength, with consequences that would become fully apparent in the disastrous conflicts from the end of the long nineteenth century and the first wars of the industrial era.

Types of Economic Actor

The economic transformations of the nineteenth century were led by the family business, while the modern corporation did not develop institutionally until well into the century. Excepting banks and railways, most economic initiatives were organised under individual and familial partnerships. These early associations resulted from groups of individuals that pooled capital, and thus the degree of responsibility of each over the sums of money being utilised needed to be clearly defined. Such legally binding obligations are called 'liabilities'; early individual and familial partnerships relied upon collective partnerships with unlimited liability. This meant that the individuals engaging in business activity were personally liable for loans. The high levels of risk which resulted from this unlimited liability, as well as poor legal and institutional development, explain the prevalence of familial and ethnic ties behind partnerships. Such connections provided the basis for relationships of trust, and were still the main source of human and money capital in order to find new employees or finance. The family business, whose partners were linked by kinship and whose priority was to accumulate and control property, thus took charge of all spheres of economic activity such as trade, transportation, insurance and credit, relying upon underdeveloped management systems.

The unlimited liability of collective partnerships gradually gave way to other methods which limited the liability of each partner to his/her invested capital, thus allowing the mobilisation of greater amounts of capital. Large quantities of capital had already been mobilised by the chartered companies of the early modern period, by which the monarchies expanded trade and colonial interests in the extra-European world. However, chartered companies required political sanction, usually in the form of royal charters. The new publicly-held corporation was developed free of such government sanction, and could thus be established by general incorporation and public registration.

Public corporations mobilised the savings of the middle classes through shares and bonds. From 1850 onwards, various European countries sanctioned limited liability public companies established by general incorporation. Economic transformations boosted the establishment of public companies and stock markets with bank arbitrage, thus leading to the birth of the modern joint-stock company. Initially arriving in two new sectors—railways and telegraph—the joint-stock company would by the late nineteenth century become the dominant economic unit. Its structure, finance, management, and accounting would become complex and specialised, managed by salaried executives, and administered through analytical accounting. Management and ownership were thus separated; the former became more complex, and the latter, dispersed.

Growing modern corporations needed private capital. Traders and businesspeople created new institutions—banking corporations—which combined commercial and business banking. This was the birth of the modern banking system. Commercial banks invested in short-term operations, while their liabilities were dominated by demand deposits—thus limiting long-term loans required by big companies. Diversified banking corporations' liabilities had more varied sources. Issuing shares, selling private bonds and placing government debt all became more important to diversified banks—even as they maintained short-term deposit operations. Diversified banks could thus provide stability in times of liquidity crises, and national capital markets took shape. During the second half of the nineteenth century, a process of banking concentration took place, leading by the early twentieth century to a structure dominated by big banks with branch offices scattered at the national level.

The spread and consolidation of the modern corporation by the late nineteenth century changed the nature of the economic system: the integration of international markets, generalised growth and specialisation, and a decrease in transportation and insurance costs, led to international convergence of prices. The multinational company appeared with the expansion of the size and scope of firms and the consolidation of their multidivisional structure. New production plants were created in both domestic and international spheres. This allowed companies to evade tariff barriers, to obtain new sources of raw materials, to increase their market share, and to reduce production and distribution costs in new countries. In addition, there was a process of vertical integration through the management of previous or subsequent phases in the production process. Such integration involved the acquisition of raw materials, and/or the creation of department stores and chain stores so as to control distribution and gain control over prices.

Competition increased in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as prices declined, profit margins fell, and—except the internal space of the British

Empire—tariff barriers increased. Increasing international competition, and the capital-intensive character of most economic sectors, blocked the creation of new firms, and brought about an oligopolistic industrial and business structure. Big companies established various forms of horizontal combination strategies. The cartel was thus a defensive cooperation plan among companies from the same sector, aimed at limiting competition, dividing up the market, and fixing prices. This could result in the limitation of production in their respective plants, and/or the establishment of barriers to the entrance of new competitors, both at a domestic and international level.

How Business Worked in the Nineteenth Century: Three Examples

Tea

With early industrialisation, tea became affordable to all social classes. While still retaining its refined appeal to the elites, it also became a product for mass consumption as a stimulant suited to the new factory discipline, as a substitute for alcoholic beverages, and thanks to the availability of sugar from the West Indies. Contrary to other mildly addictive commodities—such as coffee, tobacco, and cocoa—tea cultivation was not based in the New World but was instead maintained in Asia. Since the early modern period it spread as an item of conspicuous consumption among the upper classes of various European countries, including Great Britain, the Netherlands, France, Germany, and Russia. While tea consumed in Russia was brought by land through Siberia, the other countries imported it by sea. The Dutch initially dominated imports from Asia, but the British broke through in 1784, the year in which import fees were severely reduced so as to revive the English East India Company (EIC).

China was the main exporter of tea until the mid-nineteenth century. However, the European balance of trade with China was negative. Until 1833, the EIC monopolised imports from China into Britain and exported opium from India into China, resulting in serious consequences for Chinese society and government. After 1833, private merchants such as Jardine, Matheson & Co. entered the trade.

In the late eighteenth century, the British introduced tea cultivation in northern India. In 1839 the Assam Tea Company was formed, and by the 1860s cultivation had spread to other regions in the Himalayan foothills, particularly Darjeeling, but also Ceylon after 1879. Exports of tea from India to Europe began to displace Chinese production in the 1870s; between 1870 and 1900, Assam Tea exports out of India increased twentyfold. Industrialised tea cultivation was introduced, with ambitious deforestation plans and changes

in transportation. This transformation had serious consequences for local seminomadic populations. Railways facilitated transport from India's interior to Bengal ports, while fast clippers, as well as steamships, conveyed tea to Europe. Small firms in Europe retailed tea in their respective national markets, including Fortnum & Mason, Twinings, and Hornimans in Great Britain, and Mariage Frères in France.

Grain and Wheat

The trade in grain and wheat can illustrate some important elements of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism. On the one hand, an increase in agricultural production and productivity was a precondition for industrialisation, without which the growing non-agricultural population would not have been possible. On the other hand, the demand for agricultural commodities and products of the food industry steadily increased as the population, especially the urban population and the number of people employed in industry, increased. The result of these mutually reinforcing processes was the development of agriculture and the dynamic growth of international trade in wheat and other cereals during the long nineteenth century. Agricultural commodities (like wheat) and the products of the food industry (like flour) were dominant in international trade, and about half of the trade was accounted for by these items during the century.

Grain trade, especially wheat, had been booming since the 1840s, due to the steady and dynamic growth in demand in Western Europe. In response to expanding demand, supply also expanded, supported by the continuous improvement of transport facilities (railway, steamship) and trade liberalisation. Along with this intensive trade in cereals, markets became more integrated, which was also reflected in the combined change in prices. It was the age of the first wave of globalisation and the grain trade was one of the key factors of this wave. The integrated nature of the grain trade was also demonstrated by the early emergence of trade networks. In the middle of the century, Greek merchants were particularly successful in this market. Then, by the end of the century, they were replaced by large grain-trading-houses, modern trading companies, some of which still exist today.

Trade continued to expand, driven mainly by British and then German imports, and by exports from the Russian, and to a lesser extent the Austro-Hungarian Empires, later rivalled by exports from Romania. The international grain trade was mainly an intra-European trade until 1914, despite the emergence of the United States' market as a new exporting country after the American Civil War. From the 1870s on, the large volumes of American production as well as growing production from Russia meant a significant oversupply of crops in this already integrated grain market, resulting in a

steady fall in the price of grain, especially wheat and flour. This crisis—which was clear evidence of the integrated market—resulted in growing customs tariffs and protectionism in many countries but did not ultimately hamper globalisation. The integrated grain market ended during and especially after the First World War, together with the collapse of the first wave of globalisation.

Fig. 1: Siemens Brothers Ltd., Woolwich Works near London (ca. 1890), Siemens Historical Institute, D V., used with permission.

Electric Industry

Siemens was a first mover in the nascent electric industry in the mid-nineteenth century. Its founders, Werner Siemens and Johann Georg Halske, utilised earlier scientific and technological advancements in Britain to develop a telegraph system. Relying on these technological spillovers, they founded the Telegraphen-Bauanstalt in 1847 that quickly became the dominant telecommunications firm in Central and Eastern Europe. By the 1860s, Siemens & Halske was one of a small number of firms that implemented large projects globally, with the Indo-European Telegraph connecting London and Calcutta (today: Kolkata) being one of the most prestigious projects. Further scientific advancements allowed for new product lines in power generation, electric trams and trains, electric motors, and electric lighting. By the late nineteenth century, the electric industry was one of the driving forces behind the second wave of industrialisation.

Moreover, Siemens exemplifies the pan-European dimension of increasingly connected businesses. Founded in Berlin in Prussia, the firm quickly ventured

abroad. It built a vast telegraph network in the Tsarist Empire in the 1850s. Its London subsidiary, Siemens Brothers Ltd. became a large player in the global submarine cable business from the 1860s onwards. Further subsidiaries in Vienna, Budapest, Paris, and Warsaw complemented the character of Siemens as a multinational corporation.

For most of the nineteenth century, Siemens & Halske was a family firm owned and operated by three brothers, Werner, William, and Carl. Only in 1895 did the firm go public. Even then the family remained in control of the majority of shares and the supervisory board. Siemens & Halske thus represents a much wider phenomenon in most of continental Europe, where business tended to be a family affair. In contrast to the corporation and managerial capitalism in the United States, the European economies were much more intricately embedded in the social fabric of entrepreneurial families.

Conclusion

The nineteenth century was the age of industrial capitalism in all Europe when traditional business elements (e.g., guilds) disappeared from economic life and were replaced by modern capitalist institutions (e.g., modern corporations). In this period, the first wave of globalisation unfolded, markets became increasingly integrated, and the first multinational companies emerged. However, in a globalising economy and together with the developing big business—when big modern corporations became more dominant—family businesses and entrepreneurial families continued to play a significant role in the European economy.

Discussion questions

1. What did industrial capitalism mean in the long nineteenth century?
2. What were the signals of globalisation in the long nineteenth century?
3. What kind of special character did Europe have in terms of business actors in the long nineteenth century?

Suggested reading

Aparicio, Gema and Vicente Pinilla, 'International trade in wheat and other cereals and the collapse of the first wave of globalization, 1900–38', *Journal of Global History* 14:1 (2019), 44–67.

Berend, T. Iván, *An Economic History of Nineteenth-Century Europe: Diversity and Industrialization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Broadberry, Stephen and Kyoji Fukao, *The Cambridge Economic History of the Modern World: 1700 to 1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Fernández Pérez, Paloma and Andrea Colli, eds, *The Endurance of Family Businesses: A Global Overview* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Johnston, Jean-Michel, *Networks of Modernity: Germany in the Age of the Telegraph, 1830–1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

Jones, Geoffrey, and Harm G. Schröter, eds, *The Rise of Multinationals in Continental Europe* (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1993).

Nafziger, Steven and Matthias Morys, 'Economic integration with Western Europe and the global economy, 1800–1914' in *The Economic History of Central, East and South-East Europe 1800 to the Present*, ed. by Matthias Morys (Abingdon: Routledge, 2021), pp. 97–127.

5.1.3 Entrepreneurs, Companies and Markets in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Károly Halmos and Heike Wieters

Introduction

From the perspective of business history, the conventional periodisation of a 'long' nineteenth century (1789–1914) and a 'short' twentieth century (1914–1989) is hard to maintain. Business cycles have their own logics that often do not overlap completely with political developments. Arguably, the starting point of the modern world market was the Panic of 1873 that led to economic depression in the United States (US), Austria-Hungary, Germany, France, and Britain. The magnitude of the crisis of 1873 was eventually surpassed in 1929 by the Great Depression, which subsided only with the preparations for the Second World War. The subsequent decades of economic growth were cut short by the so-called oil crisis in 1973, which caused a worldwide depression. The last crisis of that magnitude was the 2008 crash of the US mortgage securitisation market. All these events shaped the development of the modern European economy, and provide markers for a different periodisation of economic history. That said, the major events of the twentieth century—the First and Second World Wars, the Cold War and its end—did have a transformative influence on economic development in Europe.

The Development of the Firm in Twentieth-century Europe

In Europe, the modern managerial firm did not become the dominant form of industry until the end of the Second World War. According to business historian Alfred D. Chandler Jr., the modern enterprise is not only a place for production—it is also an organisation for the distribution of products. The essence of this new institution was effective contract governance and

managerial organisation. However, this modern form of enterprise mainly developed in North America, where markets were far away from their suppliers.

The nation-state system in Europe did not allow for the establishment of a single market similar to the United States. Not only were markets territorially fragmented, but consumers were also not as far from producers as they were in the American case. There was no need for a manufacturing firm to control the sales of their own products. Production (processing and manufacturing) firms as well as commercial ones (trading houses) were detached from each other and there was no serious need to integrate the productive and the commercial functions. Family firms were—and still are—much more common in Europe than in the United States.

This started to change during the first half of the twentieth century. While the nineteenth-century economy had been characterised by the concentration of the factors of production, i.e. land, labour, and capital, the First World War and the Great Depression complicated this process. While the tendency of conglomeration—i.e., business enterprises getting bigger and bigger—was obvious on both sides of the Atlantic, the reactions to that tendency were different. In North America anti-trust laws were introduced and enforced. On the European continent, cartels (a form of restricting competition) were not abolished: on the contrary, coordination between enterprises in certain sectors was openly encouraged and developed.

The fact that capitalist economies differed in Europe and the United States raised the question of which model was better—that is, which model was more stable, more functional, and better for society as a whole. There were, however, no simple answers, even though economists across the globe debated this issue, and economic theory throughout the twentieth century very much centred on the question of how to build stable and prosperous economic systems.

Command Economies in Eastern Europe

In the context of the First World War, governments across the globe started to introduce strict measures to regulate national and international markets. Tolls were introduced or raised, taxes increased, and import and export quotas were enforced to protect national markets and to ensure that supply chains for important goods were upheld. After the war, revolutionary movements gained in strength across Europe, especially in the countries that had lost the war. In terms of business relations, many of these revolutionary movements and parties were rather conservative and argued for even tighter market regulations and government-enforced economic measures.

The most important case was that of Russia and, later, the Soviet Union. During the Russian Civil War (1917–1923), the Bolshevik revolutionaries set up the system of so-called 'war communism', characterised partly by the overwhelming power of the state (labour duty, requisitions, bans on private enterprise) and partly by government-run intra-firm management to secure the supply of the army, control foreign trade, enforce strict labour discipline, and implement strict coordination between productive units.

The experiment in war communism ultimately failed, mainly because of a lack of cooperation and support from the peasants, who were not fully integrated into the national market system, and because—in the long run—productivity was too low to secure provisions and prevent food shortages in the urban centres. To tackle the looming food crisis and to push the rapid industrialisation of the country forward, the Soviet government eventually introduced collectivisation—a policy that forced nomads (e.g., in Kazakhstan) to settle down as farmers, and the peasants in the Soviet empire (e.g., in the Ukraine) to give up their individually-used farms and join large collective agricultural units. Historians such as Robert Kindler and Robert Conquest have convincingly argued that these measures led to severe and recurring famine and may have cost more than 1.5 million lives.

Collectivisation went hand-in-hand with industrialisation, and in 1928 the first five-year plan (*pyatiletka,* 1928–1932) was introduced. This system of command economy—where the economic plans were *de jure* laws and not fulfilling them was an infringement of the law—was later expanded to the economies of post-World War Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe. The system lasted until the collapse of the Eastern/Soviet Bloc in 1989–1991. While Soviet command economies seemed to be working for a while, especially— as economic historians such as Eric Hobsbawm and others have argued—in the context of crises, wars (especially the Second World War), and during reconstruction, economic performance soon diminished. From the 1960s onwards, it became apparent that neither their productive capacities nor their stability and ability to fulfil public demand for goods and services could in any way compete with the economies in Western Europe and the United States. Hence, from the 1970s onwards, most planned economies were sliding from crisis to crisis.

The Marshall Plan and the Reorganisation of Western Europe

The Second World War and its aftermath transformed the economies and markets of Western Europe. It has been argued that, in many ways, they became more American: countless US consumer products were in high

demand and many techniques from both production and marketing were adopted in Europe.

Fig. 1: E. Spreckmeester, "Marshall Plan poster" (1950), Wikimedia Commons (from the Marshall Foundation), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marshall_Plan_poster.JPG. This poster was created by the Economic Cooperation Administration, an agency of the U.S. government to sell the Marshall Plan in Europe. It includes versions of the flags of those Western European countries that received aid under the Marshall Plan (clockwise from top: Portugal, Norway, Belgium, Iceland, West Germany, the Free Territory of Trieste (erroneously with a blue background instead of red), Italy, Denmark, Austria, the Netherlands, Ireland, Sweden, Turkey, Greece, France and the United Kingdom). The poster does not explicitly depict Luxembourg (whose flag is very similar to the Dutch flag), which did receive some aid.

Both during and after the Second World War, the European economies, which had hitherto been at the centre of global commerce, decreased in importance and standing relative to the economy of the United States. On the continent, both winners and losers of the Second World War were heavily indebted (mostly to the American government) and large parts of the remaining European infrastructure was either in ruins or outdated. The United States filled the void and used its new dominance to shape the recovery of the European economy through, for example, the European Recovery Program (ERP), better known as the 'Marshall Plan', after the American Secretary of

State George C. Marshall (1880–1959). The Marshall Plan was a system of economic aid that ran from 1948–1951 and was worth 12.4 billion USD (about four percent of the annual average US GDP at the time). The aid was not a loan and the countries that signed up to it did not have to repay any money. They were required, however, to rebuild, reorganise, and modernise their economies and financial systems along the lines of the American model. They also agreed to cooperate closely in terms of financial and trade flows. The aid was nominally offered to the whole of Europe, but Soviet leader Joseph Stalin (1878–1953) banned Eastern European satellite states from participation. While opinion is divided among economic historians about the final impact of the Marshall Plan in the recovery of the war-torn European economy, it did harmonise the continent's markets outside the 'Iron Curtain' and created incentives to establish a free market based on multilateralism. Under the given circumstances, this system gave an advantage to countries that could supply trade with generally accepted currency, viz. the US. While this made the American form of business organisation, including a managerialisation (separation of ownership and leadership) of enterprises, more attractive for European business actors, family firms (uniting ownership and leadership) remained a characteristic element of the European business environment.

The Appeal of State Intervention in the West

Although it is common to refer to the post-war party-state countries in the Soviet sphere with planned, command and control economies as 'socialist', Western European countries also found some forms of state intervention attractive. This could include actual nationalisation, as was the case in Britain with the coal mines in the case of industry, the railways in the case of material services, and the health insurance system in the case of non-material services. In France, several large banks and companies were deemed to have been collaborators during the war and were nationalised after 1945 on those grounds. Elsewhere, state intervention meant state planning—not instructional planning—as in France and the Netherlands. The countries of the Iberian Peninsula that remained neutral during the war, as well as Italy, were characterised by the survival of corporatism. The free-market system was most prominent in West Germany, where the system of state intervention was gradually replaced after the war by a system of so-called 'ordoliberalism' based on market order. According to ordoliberalist thought, the state should not only create the necessary conditions for a free-market economic order with competition, but also maintain it. In ordoliberalism, the preservation and safeguarding of free competition is served by the creation of a legal framework by the state.

European Integration and the Single Market

In addition to the external impetus of the Marshall Plan, the integration of the Western European economies was also fostered from within. Next to countless international organisations focussing on international (and European) commerce and labour relations, such as the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC; today OECD), or the International Labour Organization (ILO), the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was founded in 1951. With the Treaty of Paris, the signees Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany decided to jointly regulate their coal and steel industries. The ECSC was headed by a joint (tripartite) high authority and is often seen as one of the first cornerstones of even deeper European market integration. This deeper European market integration continued more officially with the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, which declared the ambition to "lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe", to ensure the economic and social progress of their countries by common action to eliminate the barriers which divide Europe", and to remove "existing obstacles" to eventually "guarantee steady expansion, balanced trade and fair competition", among other goals.

While the member states had originally planned to form three joint communities—the EEC, the European Atomic Community, and a Joint European Defense community—the latter could not be realised as no agreement could be found on how to proceed. Hence, much focus was placed on creating a jointly regulated European market without tolls and with easier import/export regulations between the partners.

As (economic) historians such as Barry Eichengreen, Kiran Patel, and others have shown, there is considerable debate on how much the EEC contributed to the European '*Trente Glorieuses*'—meaning the thirty-year period of prosperity and rapid economic growth in most economies in Western Europe and beyond following the Second World War—especially given the countless other global economic networks the six member states were also involved in during this era. There is wide agreement, however, that despite countless crises (such as the 'end of the boom' in the 1970s, the two oil crises and various economic slumps, including the latest financial crises after the turn of the millennium) the process of creating a single European market, aimed at eventually facilitating the 'four freedoms'—meaning free movement of goods, service, people, and capital—has significantly deepened European economic cooperation and standardisation.

The single European market currently comprises twenty-seven member states which hold privileged trade relations with many external partner

countries across the globe, making the European market one of the largest and most stable projects of economic integration worldwide. A joint currency was agreed upon in the 1990s and was introduced in January 2002 by twelve member states that met the jointly agreed criteria. Other members joined the currency union in the following years, and the Euro is currently used in nineteen European states.

The Collapse of Command Economies and the Transformation of Eastern Europe

The economic systems of Eastern Europe prior to the collapse of communism were seen in these countries as having eliminated the exploitation and loss caused by market fluctuations. The cost of this was that the production units operated without real owners. The state bodies that managed the assets of the companies were in fact acting on behalf of non-existent proprietors. However, these planned economies, and the cooperation between them, were characterised by inefficiency. Socialist companies and production plants had few and tenuous links with their markets, and the movement of capital was not regulated by the market but by a system that worked by taking the profits of successful companies and transferring them to less productive ones, under the pretext of the principle of responsibility to supply. The principle of redistribution was also used in the context of international business relations between the planned economies. The institutional framework of this system was the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), founded in 1949 as a response to the recovery efforts of the Marshall Plan and the formation of the OEEC. Its dominating political power, the Soviet Union, supplied the satellite Comecon states with relatively cheap energy and the latter delivered agricultural and industrial products to the rather undemanding Soviet market.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a desperate search for alternative proprietors. One of the extreme cases among the small Comecon countries was that of East Germany, the provinces of which joined West Germany, accepting the political and economic constitution of its erstwhile rival. Other countries tried different solutions. In Poland, the so-called 'Balcerowicz Plan', named after Leszek Balcerowicz, the finance minister of the country's first non-communist government, introduced a programme of 'shock therapy', withdrawing the guarantee of existence for all state-owned companies and allowing investment by foreign companies and private people. Some countries reprivatised confiscated real estate, but if a government did not find this feasible, there was still the possibility of compensation via marketable bonds. In most cases, what happened was a rapid concentration of capital in the hands of a few. The solutions proved to be relatively well-accepted by the

constituent populations of these countries who were facing a transformation crisis the magnitude of which was comparable to that of the losses during the Second World War. Some of these countries found some relief by joining the European Union (created from European Economic Community in 1993), since this offered the new members access to resources in the form of direct investments and modern technologies. At the same time, the opening of non-consolidated markets to the old members of the Union did also come with liabilities. As for the foreign markets of these post-communist states, after the collapse of the Soviet market, the German-speaking countries often assumed a leading role in their foreign trade—returning to the predominant pattern prior to the Second World War.

Conclusion

Looking at the roles of entrepreneurs, companies, and markets in the 'long' twentieth century, it can be argued that developments have been shaped by both globalisation and 'localisation'—or rather regional differentiation processes. While the differences between the command economies in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and the market economies in Western, Northern and Southern Europe are certainly one of the most visible economic rifts that shaped the economic history of the twentieth century, it is still necessary to take a closer and more nuanced look at the many regional differences on both sides of the 'Iron Curtain'. Capitalist economies in Europe were neither uniform nor convergent, and they were also not simply modelled on the US—even though many American trends and practices were adapted and integrated into the European economies. Despite international exchange and globalising tendencies, European economic relations, capitalist markets, and entrepreneurial traditions remained very much dependent on local conditions and traditions. This included—and still includes—government interventions, market regulations, economic planning as well as cartels and corporatist arrangements to varying degrees. The same can be said for the command economies in (South-)Eastern Europe. Socialist approaches to tackling industrialisation, economic growth, and provision of the population were also highly varied and diverse in the different countries of Eastern Europe. While productivity was generally lower than in the market economies of the West, provision, welfare and distribution of goods were organised differently in these countries.

Having said that, both socialist and capitalist economies struggled with recurring economic crises—on the regional, the national, and the international levels. While, in the long run, productivity was too low to satisfy public demand for many goods in most command economies, the capitalist economies were

confronted with recurring economic crises as well: the oil and financial crises of the 1970s demanded new international models of economic cooperation and showed the vulnerabilities of the capitalist economies in a globalising world. European integration and the creation of the European single market was one pillar of building more stable and interconnected markets and stronger economic ties between European economies. But there are also other international agreements, such as the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) or the General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs (GATT), which were forged to help regulate markets across borders. After the end of the Cold War and the transformation of former command economies into new market economies, European economic relations and markets have both consolidated and become more interdependent—especially in the context of the European single market. Yet, as recurring economic crises have shown, market economies in Europe (and beyond) remain prone to instability and disequilibrium—rendering permanent political cooperation, market regulation and economic intervention a necessity.

Discussion questions

1. Was European integration and the development of the European single market inevitable after 1945?

2. Why did a different economic system characterised by command economies develop in Eastern Europe?

3. In 2021, the United Kingdom left the European single market. Do you think this was a good decision? Why? Why not?

Suggested reading

Beckert, Jens, *Imagined Futures: Fictional Expectations and Capitalist Dynamics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

Berghoff, Hartmut, *Moderne Unternehmensgeschichte: Eine themen- und theorieorientierte Einführung* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2004).

Chandler, Alfred D., *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977).

Eichengreen, Barry J., *The European Economy since 1945: Coordinated Capitalism and Beyond* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt7rpfs.

Hobsbawm, Eric J., *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914–1991* (New York: Michael Joseph, 1994).

Jones, Geoffrey, ed., *The Rise of Multinationals in Continental Europe* (Aldershot: Elgar, 1993).

Jones, Geoffrey, *The Evolution of International Business: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1996).

Kindler, Robert, *Stalin's Nomads: Power and Famine in Kazakhstan* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018).

Müller, Philipp, *Zeit der Unterhändler: Koordinierter Kapitalismus in Deutschland und Frankreich zwischen 1920 und 1950* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2019).

Patel, Kiran Klaus, *Project Europe: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

Raphael, Lutz, *Jenseits von Kohle und Stahl: Eine Gesellschaftsgeschichte Westeuropas nach dem Boom* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2019).

CHAPTER 5.2

DISTRIBUTING WEALTH

5.2.1 Distributing Wealth in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Thomas L. Leng, Saúl Martínez, and

Christophe Schellekens

Introduction

How societies think about and organise the distribution of wealth has a profound impact on various domains. It affects how people can provide their livelihood, feed themselves and their children, take care of the elderly, and defines the extent to which they can consume beyond bare-bone subsistence. It also affects how much time they can or must spend on various types of work and on leisure. In this chapter, we provide a succinct but broad overview of the role of wealth distribution in early modern European societies. In this overview, we pay attention to the interplay between ideas, practices and legal regimes in the social and economic sphere, and the role of political action and contestation.

Ideas on Wealth and Its Distribution

A shorthand term to describe the predominant economic policy between 1500 and 1750—i.e., before the advent of capitalism, industrial work, and the development of global markets—is *mercantilism*. Austrian political economist Joseph Schumpeter (1883–1950) indicated that the three shared features of early modern mercantilist thought were "export monopolism, exchange control and balance of trade". These three principles contributed to restrain the creation and distribution of wealth, and they favoured the maintenance of a social structure headed by landed aristocracy and ecclesiastical privilege. Before 1750 basic ideas on affluency, commerce, benefits, and morally acceptable forms of creating wealth in Europe were considerably different from our present notions. Consequently, views on the distribution and redistribution of wealth also varied considerably.

Fig. 1: Salvator Rosa, *Allegory of Fortune* (ca. 1658–1659), https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/103RE3.

Around 1750, new theories of political economy blossomed, and *laissez-faire* principles gained popularity. This trend of thought opposed the intervention of governments in aspects related to exchange and commerce and promoted de-regulation. The less governments intervened, the more commerce would function as a source for prosperity and a model for relationships between both persons and states. In the mercantilist system, distribution of wealth was mainly thought of as a problem of price control but did not conflict with the maintenance of an inequal social system. However, fictions of equality and self-regulation dominate *laissez-faire* theories, which are more concerned with the suppression of barriers to the creation of wealth. Simultaneous with these changes in economic thought, inequality was aggravated by the extension of capitalism, industrialisation, growing dependence on wage-earning labour, and migration to cities. These processes therefore produced long-term shifts in theories concerning social justice and the redistribution of wealth.

During the period 1500–1750, ideas on wealth distribution were sometimes expressed in terms of economic policy, but usually tackled broader problems concerning both religious precepts, justice, and moral behaviour. Moreover,

these ideas were entrenched within more general conceptions of the political and social order. Therefore, notions about the distribution of wealth were usually linked to ideas about what is considered a just relationship between the prince, the most affluent, and the least so.

According to the Flemish humanist Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) a king should be generous, but with proper judgement and moderation. To illustrate the same contrary values of liberality (or generosity)—which was regarded as a virtue—and prodigality (profuse or wasteful expenditure), the Spanish diplomat Diego de Saavedra Fajardo (1584–1648) proposed a contrast between the mountain snow that melts slowly and permeates the fields through small streams, on the one hand, and big rivers that flow without control and pass without truly benefiting the valleys and fields they cross, on the other. Continuing with the same metaphor, Saavedra advised the prince not to give water to the big lakes that do not need it, and not to leave dry and thirsty the sands that represent the people. The prince is further advised by Saavedra not to give the powerful what is owed to the poor, and Saavedra also warns of the dangers of perceived vain expenditures and an excess of pomp. Finally, the ruler is reminded of the importance of a just distribution of the recompenses he offers. All these perspectives show that the early modern age coded the idea of redistribution as a chain that emanates from the will of the powerful and extends to the poor.

This chain of redistributing the excess of wealth in the form of generosity also applied to noblemen and other privileged sectors of the society. A general Christian principle for distribution—help the poor—guided these redistributive efforts. Dominican friar and theologian Tomás de Mercado (ca. 1523–1575) reminded fellow clergy of the overarching presupposition about the excess of riches, stating that their status obliged them "more to distribute the surplus of their incomes than does to seculars". Aristocrats were also impelled to share these beliefs, and their testaments and last wills often included donations to the poor. In fact, poor people and poverty posed a major test for notions of distribution and care in the early modern age. Throughout the period from 1500 to 1800, prevailing moral views on the poor oscillated between suspicion and compassion. Poverty continuously grew and a negative image of the poor slowly gained ground. Much effort was aimed at differentiating the 'authentic' poor from fake, dishonest requests. Poverty was increasingly criminalised and stigmatised, but fundamental principles around care and poor relief did not disappear completely.

Three primary areas of wealth distribution within the essentially unequal social system of the early modern age were the control of prices for basic products and supplies, control of financial tools such as interest rates, and tax distribution. The three operated under the general moral principles already

described and were often the subject of heated debates, conflicts, protests, and other disruptive practices.

Price controls were common in the period. As Historian Keith Thomas notes, in *ancien régime* societies a good part of the population was more concerned with avoiding risks in the regular supply of essential resources than with maximising benefits or income. This does not mean that there were no opportunistic individuals who tried to accumulate lands or properties, but amassing riches was a unique activity and required solid justifications. Defence against such individuals and their activities was a general aim of economic measures such as the control of prices. In many polities of early modern Europe, different authorities issued norms to establish a just price for essential goods, such as wheat (or kneaded and baked bread) or clothing. These measures were aimed at avoiding shortages, curbing prices, and mitigating the effects of inflation on the price of basic commodities.

Usury was a traditional moral and financial problem. Justus Lipsius expressed forcefully the problematic interconnection between morals and wealth: "Virtue and God never love him, who loves wealth". Given this moral framework, it is not surprising to see that it was usually theologians who wrote about profits between 1500 and 1750. And they wrote on such matters because they were concerned about their moral consequences and ultimately about the salvation of souls. This strong tradition of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian thought about money and exchange was inherited from the Middle Ages. Usury (the exigence of additional money in exchange for lending money), together with several strategies to disguise money loans, were considered both a vice and a sin. Money changes, and other contracts which involved exchanges of goods, were cautiously regulated. Controlling benefits can be considered as a form of distributing wealth, since it aims to avoid excessive inequalities, but also as a form of social control, since it restricts the creation of wealth.

Inequality in Practice

Based on the reconstruction of data series through empirical research, we can observe that overall inequality was rising throughout the period between 1450 and 1800. This goes up for various places and periods and is based on various approaches of assessing and measuring inequality. Most of such work on inequality takes households as units of analyses, as data are best reconstructed on that level. It is worthwhile however to look somewhat more in depth at how this general trend took shape in particular settings, and what caused the exceptional cases that went against this trend.

First of all, we need to differentiate between practices and cases of inequality of income, of wealth, and of rights. Overall, we have more data on inequality of wealth than of inequality of income, as the sources tracing the daily or annual income of households are even more scarce than sources on accumulated wealth. As the discussion above on ideas and norms has made clear, pre-modern societies were marked by vast inequalities in terms of who had the right to hold a property, was allowed to perform a type of work or to engage in a commercial activity. For example, many craft guilds throughout Europe upheld restrictions in terms of ancestry, birth in a jurisdiction and gender as to who could engage in a particular type of craft. These inequalities in terms of rights in their turn affected the income and wealth one could acquire. At the same time, guilds could also implement restrictions, for example on the maximum number of tools a craftsman could own or the number of journeymen a master could hire, thus preventing rising inequality within the craft itself.

Another form of inequality in rights that influenced the rise or moderation of wealth inequality was inheritance law. Throughout Europe, various types of legislation determined how capital could be transferred from one generation to the next. Some of these regimes favoured the firstborn son, thus facilitating the increasing concentration of wealth over generations. Other legal regimes put up hurdles to sell (parts of) an inheritance on the market, thus preventing further wealth concentration by investors.

Inequality of income and of wealth could be seen in the economic situations of particular regions and cities. Throughout the period, various places became centres of trade and production that attracted merchants and labour migrants from near and far. This was the case in for example Antwerp throughout the sixteenth century and in Amsterdam a century later. Some people from a modest background indeed were able to make a fortune there. However, these places were sites of rising inequality that condemned many to economic hardship.

The economic booms of commercial cities should not let us forget that the majority of the population of early modern Europe spent their lives in the countryside. Agricultural activities were the main form of work for most people. In most rural communities, inequality was also rising. It should be noted however that rates of wealth inequality in villages were generally less high than in urban areas. Again, legal regimes, local customs and forms of local self-organisation and coordination could mitigate or counter these trends. That self-organisation could take the form of protest and contestation, but it could also take the form of installing forms of taxation that had a moderating effect on inequality. Pre-modern taxes were often regressive, falling hardest on the poor and contributing to increasing levels of wealth and income inequality.

An example is the taxation of consumption of primarily basic goods such as food and drinks. Moreover, as the rise of taxation on a state level was often caused by increasing military spending in times of crisis, it hit hard especially in times of economic stagnation. However, some small communities installed regimes of taxation that primarily taxed the wealthier households and thus moderated inequality to some extent. This was the case, for example, in some communities in Catalonia.

It has been suggested that throughout the early modern period catastrophic events such as floods, earthquakes, droughts, diseases, and wars had an inequality-reducing effect. The reasoning behind this argument is that such catastrophes either destroyed forms of wealth or had a demographic shock effect that impacted the distribution of wealth and income. However, there is little to support this generalisation. In many places throughout Western Europe the plague of 1346–1353 indeed had an inequality-reducing effect over the long term. However, this was an exceptional case, and later plagues would often lead to an increase in inequality. Other disaster at times had an inequality-reducing effect in the short term but led to increases in inequality in the longer term. Also here, local political arrangements, power relations and systems of coordination determined the evolution of inequality.

Reactions to Inequality

The gradual erosion of 'feudal' arrangements in parts of Europe in the late medieval period can be understood in terms of peasants taking advantage of changing demographic conditions after the Black Death to transform the terms of their tenure, throwing off burdensome labour services and restrictions on movement, and negotiating limits on rents that were justified in terms of manorial custom. At the same time, they asserted collective rights over certain resources such as access to common lands, again framing these as customary rights held since time immemorial. Thus, in contrast to early modern political and mercantilist theory, which presented the sovereign and the rich as sole determinants of the distribution of wealth, in certain parts of Europe at the outset of the early modern period non-elites had secured considerable agency over how wealth was distributed at the local level. Defending and extending these rights was one element of the late medieval tradition of popular revolt. That said, the economic changes of the early modern period meant that this position was increasingly under threat from landowners, while the social solidarity of rural communities was being eroded by the changes implicit in the demise of 'feudalism'.

These contests were particularly apparent in England, where 'custom' possessed a notable power due to the system of common law based on

precedence. Population growth and inflation in the sixteenth century led many landowners to attempt a revision of customary rents in their favour, as well as a limitation of the extent of access to common resources which could be monetised, such as firewood. Opposition to such actions did not necessarily entail demands for social levelling: criticism of 'rent-racking' landlords was often coupled with a nostalgia for the generosity and hospitality of their forbearers, although to describe this as simply conservatism misses the degree to which village people could evoke a sense of communal living independent of, and perhaps excluding, the rich and powerful. This social vision was not entirely incompatible with the perspective of rulers, however, and the mid-Tudor state was often sympathetic to those resisting enclosure, for instance, which was seen as avaricious and in conflict with prevailing religious ideals. Opposition to enclosure often happened through the law. But the attitude of legislators was also coloured by an awareness that 'depopulating enclosures' fed into social conflict and sometimes large-scale revolts, such as Kett's Rebellion in Norfolk in 1549. Even those revolts ostensibly driven by resistance to Protestantism, such as the Western Rebellion (also 1549) were in part about the distribution of wealth, as the Reformation had entailed the confiscation of church resources which were often seen as the property of the local community, which had invested in church buildings and ornamentation over generations.

However, the year 1549 was a watershed in the tradition of popular rebellion in England. Increasingly, the more prosperous beneficiaries of greater freedom of movement and more generous leases in the rural economy came to identify their interests less with their poorer neighbours and more with the state, which by the late sixteenth century had committed to a programme of social discipline of the poor. For village elites, controlling access to common resources became a priority: the right to glean—to collect leftover grain from the harvest—might be limited to the 'deserving poor', at the expense of 'vagrant' outsiders. The impetus to enclose common fields might also come from below rather than from the landowners. Custom, of course, can be a socially restrictive ideal, and in the divided village communities of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the landless poor increasingly felt the brunt of this. Although they obdurately clung to their remaining rights to collective resources, because their ability to do this often rested on their ability to assert their status as the honest poor, the landless poor's actions arguably endorsed and shored up rather than challenged the increasingly unequal distribution of wealth in rural communities. Social protest might then be reduced to seditious talk targeted against the authorities and the rich, but limited in its ability to transform society. Action in defence of the 'moral economy' that had once informed price controls could still encompass a broader range of local society, however.

England was a relative leader in the extent to which serfdom had been unrolled by the sixteenth century, though a similar pattern of growing social polarisation eroding a broad tradition of corporate revolt can be observed in the Low Countries. The most extensive rural revolt of the early modern period, the Peasants' War, was also mobilised around a programme of attacking feudal obligations and asserting common rights, extended to encompass rights over control of religious life. The 'gospel of social protest' inspired by the Reformation developed into the sectarian reformation of the Anabaptists, whose ideals could sometimes translate into attempts to build communities free of social or economic divisions, holding property in common. Following the British Civil Wars of the 1640s, a similar experiment in communal living was attempted by the followers of the 'Digger' Gerrard Winstanley. Although generally short-lived and readily suppressed, radical utopianism of this sort with its potential to offer an alternative vision of society and the distribution of wealth, alongside the defence of customary rights and freedoms, would eventually contribute to the development of a plebeian culture of resistance in the very different circumstances brought about by industrialisation.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have presented how rising inequality of wealth and of income was a fundamental characteristic of early modern European societies. This rising inequality was not a force of nature. Although natural phenomena such as epidemics and weather conditions could affect the distribution of wealth in the short term, they rarely affected the distribution of wealth over the longer term. Legal, social, and political regimes, as well as policies and institutions, were the main forces that determined the distribution of wealth and the level of inequality in a society. These regimes were influenced by ideas from theologians as well as philosophers and other authors who published on the role and responsibilities of a ruler and the ruling elite. Ideas about a just price and about control over trade through mercantilist policies dominated through to the eighteenth century, after which philosophers began to more strongly advocate free trade. Apart from changing ideas, political action in the form of protests and rebellions could also affect the distribution of wealth. Often, these actions invoked a vocabulary of attachment to old customs and resisted new policies by emerging state institutions and rising economic elites. The distribution of wealth in early modern Europe was thus a process that was deeply affected by ideas, sentiments and aspirations of intellectuals, political and social elites as well as the lower strata of society.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways did economic inequality shape people's lives in early modern Europe?

2. Why did so many people accept inequality in early modern Europe?

3. What role did religion play in inequality in early modern Europe?

Suggested reading

Blickle, Peter, *The Communal Reformation: The People's Quest for Salvation in the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1985).

Thomas, Keith, *The End of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Wood, Andy, Riot, *Rebellion and Popular Politics in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

van Bavel, Bas, 'Looking for the Islands of Equality in a Sea of Inequality: Why Did Some Societies in Pre-Industrial Europe Have Relatively Low Levels of Wealth Inequality?', in *Disuguaglianza economica nelle società preindustriali: cause ed effetti / Economic Inequality in Pre-Industrial Societies: Causes and Effect*, ed. by Giampiero Nigro (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2020), pp. 431–456, https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/55638.

5.2.2 Distributing Wealth in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Jiří Janáč and Judit Klement

Introduction

The standard image of the long nineteenth century is a picture of fast economic growth fuelled by industrialisation and early globalisation. For the second half of the nineteenth century, a slow rise in living standards is evidenced by rising real wages and biological indicators (e.g., life expectancy at birth, infant mortality, height, literacy). Although both interrelated processes (industrialisation and globalisation) have significantly improved the performance of both the European and global economies and have undoubtedly contributed to a rapid increase of their overall prosperity in general, the extent to which particular regions, social classes, ethnic, and gender groups have participated in this growth varied. Wealth and income inequality had been steadily growing in Europe since the sixteenth century, but this trend accelerated significantly in the nineteenth century and was only broken at the beginning of the twentieth century and especially by the First World War. While all this—economic growth combined with rising living standards and increasing inequality—was a general tendency across Europe, the level of individual indicators and the extent to which they changed over time varied from country to country. This chapter shows how increasing inequality was perceived over the course of the century, what intellectual responses and debates it generated, and what reactions it provoked at the social and socio-political levels.

Manifestations of Unequal Wealth Distribution

One way to approach the study of inequality is to focus on income and living standards across a wide spectrum of social classes. For more than a century now, economic historians have discussed the development and changes in living standards as indicators of the spatial and social distribution of wealth during the industrial revolution. They have identified industrialisation as

unfolding unevenly across different regions of Britain and Europe, and see it (and its associated social and economic changes) as a spatially dynamic process, shaped by local contexts. These interpretations can be divided into two major strands. The first strand is more optimistic, claiming that as industrialisation took off, living standards generally improved: despite an unequal distribution of wealth, the less fortunate also gained from industrialisation. After all, in general the nineteenth century witnessed rising wages of industrial workers and gradual expansion of industrial production across the continent, and there were material benefits from this process for ordinary people. The second view is far more pessimistic. This view emphasises the fact that gains from industrialisation were more complex, and the situation differed depending on a number of variables. Rising wages alone, those who subscribe to this view would argue, do not simply guarantee better living: to assess industrialisation, it would be necessary to consider changes in social relations, general price levels, and other types of social costs. All in all, there is today a widespread consensus on the fact that at some point in the process of industrialisation living standards did indeed start to grow and wealth distribution became more equal.

Current debates focus mostly on the exact timing of the change in the trend (starting either in the early nineteenth century or only in its second half, depending on the particular place), and how universally it applies (again, mostly depending on location, but also on social position). The arrival of industrialisation undoubtedly exacerbated divisions of income and fuelled rising social and economic inequality, but there was a certain levelling later in the process. At the beginning, large parts of the population were left behind and did not gain from the benefits and wealth brought about by industrialisation. The use of machinery and growing factory production (first in Britain, later elsewhere) triggered a rapid growth of productivity and profits, in which workers did not share. Due to the almost limitless supply of labour coming from the rural countryside, factory owners could keep wages at the subsistence level. Furthermore, many local producers and craftsmen could not compete with the high quality and cheap price of industrial production and fell into poverty with their families. The initial stage of the industrial revolution was thus characterised by extremely uneven distribution of profits, which resulted in a growing army of urban poor, a relatively (in numbers) small capitalist class and an emerging middle class—merchants, skilled employees, shopkeepers, or bureaucrats.

Striking contrasts between the modern and healthy lives of the wealthy, moving in carriages on paved streets from their villas and palaces to summer houses in the countryside, and the urban poor, often surviving on the streets or in overcrowded cottages and slums in unsanitary conditions, spending most of their time manually working or looking for work, became symbolic expressions

of the era of early industrialisation in European memory—perhaps assisted by the portrayals of socially sensitive novelists such as Charles Dickens. Reality often lined up closely with this image. For instance, in Bohemia, one of the first industrialised regions of East-Central Europe, the financial and political elites (in 1800 mostly nobility and in 1900 mostly nobilitated businessmen) consisted of less than one percent of the population both at the beginning and at the end of the century and their numbers could be counted in thousands. By 1869 there were more than 3.5 million poor—i.e. mostly unpropertied workers, which gradually concentrated in industrial centres during the intensive industrialisation in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Paradoxically and in contrast to much of the continent, in Britain the trend in income inequality started to reverse at the time of the publication of *The Communist Manifesto* (1848). According to most economic historians, in the second half of the century, investments and growing consumption on the part of the wealthier social strata created new job opportunities and wage rates started to grow. Together with social reforms, this process to a certain extent curtailed the furthering of the distance between different social classes and mitigated the class war envisioned by Marx. In Bohemia and other parts of the continent, wages started to grow approximately thirty years later.

The changes in the spatial distribution of wealth have generally followed the pattern associated with the expansion of international trade, dividing the continent into centres and peripheries. In the early nineteenth century, economic growth in the core areas of industrialisation in the North Sea region greatly exceeded that of the rest of Europe, although some areas (such as Germany) matched it in the periods before the First World War. However, even within individual states, there was internal differentiation and income gaps opened between town and country, but also between emerging industrial and rural regions, depending on their success in the process of industrialisation. However, some authors, in contrast to the traditional view that industrialisation triggered regional differentiation in the initial phase, only to balance out again later (i.e. that the inequality developed similarly in the horizontal, spatial plane as in the vertical, social plane) now argue that—for example—the differences between North and South in Italy and Spain, or West and East in the Habsburg Empire, may well simply reflect links and structures that existed already back in the eighteenth century. The envisioned closing of regional income disparities in later phases of industrialisation after 1900 does not hold up on closer inspection, and regional differences prevail.

Responses to Inequality

Growing inequality evoked different responses in practice in the nineteenth century. The mass emigration from Europe to North America, especially the

United States, characteristic of the second half of the century and particularly the turn of the century, can be interpreted as a spontaneous social response: they left Europe in hopes of a better livelihood. However, in addition to growing inequality, population growth also played a significant role in the process: the reason for emigration at that time was clearly economic. Between 1880 and the 1920s, nearly twenty-five million Europeans migrated to the United States. The reason behind this flood of migration was also the fact that the 'long trip' became cheaper and more accessible because of the expansion of railroads in Europe and the steam-powered oceangoing ships between the continents. The peak of this trend was in 1907 when 1.3 million legal immigrants were registered in the United States. Although a significant proportion of immigrants (estimated to be about one third) lived in the United States only temporarily to earn money and raise capital, population movements were intense.

The most important form of geographical mobility in the century, however, was urban migration from the countryside, by those in search of a better life. European urbanisation gained momentum in the nineteenth century, and the urban population increased sixfold, although most of the European population still did not live in cities before the First World War. The social consequences of growing inequality became particularly visible in cities due to population concentration, and also because the people who moved to cities mostly lost their traditional supportive social network. A possible consequence of this lack of social support was urban pauperisation, with recurrent epidemics, poor housing, and health conditions. All of this became an increasingly problematic issue for city governments during the century. Accordingly, everything that these governments did to address urban pauperisation can also be interpreted as a response to the increasing sharpening inequal distribution of wealth and income: from the regulation of housing conditions or construction of social housing to the development of urban social policy. The latter mostly took the form of housing subsidies and aid to the urban poor.

Another type of social reaction to inequality was the increase in social self-organisation. The century was particularly marked by the self-organisation of industrial labour, greatly affected by urban pauperisation. The primary purpose of labour associations was initially to provide mutual assistance to members (e.g., in the event of unemployment or job searches), which was accompanied by the articulation of common interests as employees. In addition to criticising working conditions (e.g., working hours, the danger of accidents, an unhealthy workplace), most workers' initiatives were aimed at raising wages and questioning the distribution of income. The standard of living of wage labour was particularly vulnerable to business cycles, and rising prices and rents could have immediate, negative consequences. The number of strikes also increased during such price-sensitive periods, as at the turn of the century. The self-organisation of labour increased workers' ability to assert

their interests, which took the form not only of workers' associations, but trade unions and political (e.g., socialist, social democratic) parties. (In Germany, for example, the General German Workers' Association was founded in 1863, and the Social Democratic Workers' Party in 1869.) The trade unions and the political parties were already signs of a growing mass labour movement in Europe. Moreover, with the establishment of the First International in 1864, the labour movement also became international. The main political demand of labour was universal suffrage.

The movements for changing the suffrage system also dealt with the distribution of wealth and income in society, as censitary suffrage was a common phenomenon in all European countries before the First World War. Censitary suffrage meant that the right to vote belonged to the citizens with a given level of income—measured in paid tax—or wealth and/or a specific educational level. By the end of the nineteenth century, there were real social debates about the prospect of extending the franchise to women and lower-income social groups, due to quite a few mass demonstrations throughout the continent. In some countries (like Austria or Italy), the property qualification for suffrage was decreased by the end of the nineteenth century, and the range of voters widened slightly as a reaction to these popular demands.

The nineteenth century witnessed only the beginning of the state social insurance system. Prussia took the lead in introducing it: at the initiative of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), sickness insurance (1883), accident insurance (1884), old-age and invalidity insurance (1889) were introduced in the 1880s first for workers, then for all employees. The initiatives in Prussia served as a model for many countries including, for example, Hungary. Despite the fact that these new measures hardly affected the distribution of wealth or income, important progress was made in regulating labour law and introducing compulsory sickness and accident insurance prior to the development of the welfare state in the twentieth century.

Intellectual Debates

The issues of economic inequality and the distribution of wealth in society came to the fore in the context of discussions about civil equality during the first half of the nineteenth century. While the gradual implementation of the liberal and Enlightenment concept of equality before the law removed the traditional privileges of the elites and made parts of Europe more equal, the economic liberalisation that was associated with this process also made economic inequality more visible by stripping away the traditional checks on wealth accumulation and trade (such as guilds, duties, tolls and other regulations). Initially, theories about the distribution of income among social classes and individuals developed predominantly in the discipline of political

economy, which celebrated the liberal economic system based on competition and free from regulatory mechanisms. In their theories of income distribution, classical economists such as Adam Smith (1723–1790) or Thomas Robert Malthus (1766–1834) stressed the importance of functional relations between rent, wage, and profits, but did not explicitly address the moral and political dimension of wage (income) in the wealth distribution. It was only their successor, the English political economist John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), who on the margins of his magnum opus *Principles of Political Economy* (1848) noted that the distribution of wealth "depends on the laws and customs of society. The rules by which it is determined, are what the opinions and feelings of the ruling portion of the community make them and are very different in different ages and countries."

Mill, unlike his predecessors, could respond to debates about the need for social reform and redistribution of society's wealth to ensure at least a minimum standard of living for the growing army of the urban industrial poor. The growing social criticism directed against economic liberalism and its callousness towards the working poor had been strongly manifested since the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The French theorist Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1825) pioneered the idea of socialism and envisioned a meritocratic society in which wealth and privileges would no longer decide one's status.
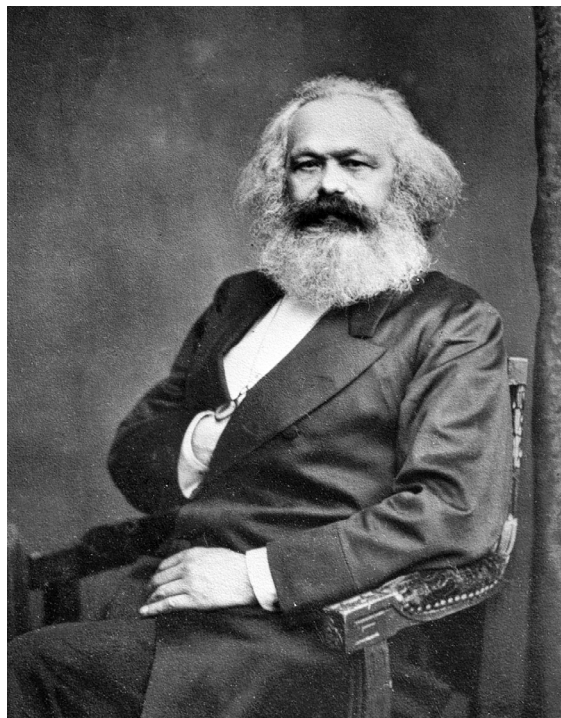
Fig. 1: John Jabez Edwin Mayal, Portrait of Karl Marx (before 24th August 1875), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Karl_Marx_001.jpg.

The German philosopher Karl Marx (1818–1883), in contrast to Mill, was quick to add that customs and values are actually produced by the economic relations in the same way as wages, and thus the principles of income and wealth distribution are fully dependent on the entire working of the economic system. In his critique of capitalism, Marx argued that one of its systemic features is exploitation. A worker is only paid a subsistence wage (if he is employed at all), which does not correlate to the value of what he produces, but to the value of his skills on the market. The difference between the market price of the product and paid wages, Marx argued, is actually workers' unpaid wage and constitutes a major part of the profit of a capitalist. In their writings, Marx and his colleague Engels addressed the existing situation of the large numbers of the emerging English working classes during the industrial revolution. Building upon vast statistical evidence and contemporary surveys and reports on incomes, living standards or health of the industrial labourers, they argued that workers experienced dire social and economic conditions, and most were even worse off than before industrialisation.

In response to Marxism, proponents of classical economics argued that inequality is in itself not a negative thing. By the end of the nineteenth century, Italian political scientist and economist Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923) studied the distribution of wealth in Italian society. Finding out that approximately twenty percent of the population controlled eighty percent of national wealth, he considered the examples of other European countries. Interestingly, the results roughly corresponded to the Italian case. The so-called 'Pareto principle' became a generally accepted distribution pattern, according to which the extremely rich strata of a population within a given economy control most of the nation's wealth. Pareto, who harboured strong anti-socialist sentiments and is usually classified as one of the leading figures of the 'neoclassical revolution' in economic thought of the late nineteenth century, argued that some level of wealth inequality within a society is both natural (independent of the particular social and political system) and even productive.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, levels of income inequality started to significantly decline. Economic historians studying the rise and decline in inequality, echoing Pareto's explanation, stress the role of structural variables such as demographic change, technological change, and income effects in explaining this process. Variables such as these initially boost inequality and gradually tend towards a new equilibrium. When explaining inequality, however, it would be unwise to ignore the role of public policies, often framed as under the influence of economic experts. As the English economist Arnold Toynbee (1852–1883) rightly observed in his *Lectures on the Industrial Revolution* (1884), industrialisation in Britain was accompanied by the process of democratisation, characterised by extension of parliamentary suffrage and

ensuing progressive legislation. Whether ruling elites expanded the franchise for ideological reasons, or due to instrumental calculations aimed at avoiding insurrection or in order to foster economic growth (by subsidising education of the poor and thus indirectly allowing for their political mobilisation), the fact is that Britain and later most of Europe introduced reforms and policies targeting income inequality and its negative implications on social welfare and cohesion.

Conclusion

The nineteenth century saw growing wealth inequality both within and between European countries. The reason for this increase in inequality was an unequal distribution of gains from dynamic economic growth. Wealth disparities were particularly pronounced in cities where industrial labour was concentrated. Tackling urban poverty resulted in action by city authorities, like regulation of housing conditions. The labour movement became a massive phenomenon and spurred government action, like changes in the suffrage system or the introduction of social insurance. The economic growth of the era nonetheless led to an increase in living standards for all in the long run.

Inequality in the distribution of wealth and income that grew significantly in nineteenth-century Europe shrank remarkably in the twentieth century, but inequality is now once again widening in the present. In his widely read book *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (2013), the French economist Thomas Piketty characterises this as the return of social inequalities of the Belle Époque and the Gilded Age. According to Piketty, the price of economic growth and progress is extreme inequality in the distribution of wealth and income in the twenty-first century. This is and will remain an important issue. As long-run historical approaches to inequality have shown, growing inequality cannot be expected to decline automatically with economic growth, and institutions and human agency have a significant role to play in either remedying or ratifying inequalities.

Discussion questions

1. How did wealth and income distribution change in the long nineteenth century?

2. How can geographical mobility be interpreted in the context of distribution of wealth and income during the nineteenth century?

3. What kind of intellectual debates emerged about the distribution of wealth during that time?

Suggested reading

Allen, Robert C., 'Class structure and inequality during the industrial revolution: lessons from England's social tables, 1688–1867', *The Economic History Review* 72:1 (2019), 88–125, https://doi.org/10.1111/ehr.12661.

Alfani, Guido, 'Economic Inequality in Preindustrial Times: Europe and Beyond', *Journal of Economic Literature* 59:1 (2021), 3–44, https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.20191449.

Atkinson, Antony and François Bourguignon, eds, *Handbook of Income Distribution* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2000–2015).

Brenner, Yehojachin Simon, Hartmut Kaelble and Mark Thomas, eds, *Income Distribution in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Clark, Gregory, 'Farm wages and living standards in the industrial revolution: England, 1670–1869', *The Economic History Review* 54:3 (2001), 477–505.

Cvrček, Tomáš, 'Population and Living Standards, 1800–1914', in *The Economic History of Central, East and South-East Europe 1800 to the Present*, ed. by Matthias Morys (London: Routledge, 2021), pp. 128–157.

Feinstein, Charles H., 'Pessimism Perpetuated: Real Wages and the Standard of Living in Britain during and after the Industrial Revolution', *Journal of Economic History* 58:3 (1998), 625–658.

Leonard, Carol and Jonas Ljungberg, 'Population and living standards, 1870–1914', in *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Europe, vol. II,* ed. by Stephen Broadberry and Kevin H. O'Rourke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 108–130, http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511794841.007.

Milanovic, Branko, *Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016).

Pamuk, Şevket and Jan-Luiten van Zanden, 'Standards of living', in *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Europe, vol. I,* ed. by Stephen Broadberry and Kevin H. O'Rourke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 217–234, http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511794834.011.

Scheidel, Walter, *The Great Leveler: Violence and the History of Inequality from the Stone Age to the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).

5.2.3 Distributing Wealth in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Eszter Bartha and Jiří Janáč

Introduction

Twentieth-century Europe became a stage for social experimentation. The experience of nineteenth-century industrialisation and its often negative social consequences—perhaps best exemplified by the impoverished condition of the rapidly growing 'urban proletariat'—translated into the political mobilisation of the working class which, within the structure of strong nation states with universal suffrage, paved the way for a large-scale implementation of redistributive policies. European models of wealth distribution did indeed succeed predominantly due to the support from the politically strong labour movement. Trends in income inequality over the twentieth century, measured by household income within individual countries, followed a U-shaped curve in most of Europe: declining from the end of the nineteenth century through to the 1970s and rising again in the last three decades of the century. The rise and fall of the labour movement across all European countries almost perfectly correlates with this development.

In their analysis of the twentieth century, some contemporary social theorists at least implicitly support the thesis that wealth distribution within a given society generally tends toward growing inequality in the long term, which is occasionally corrected by catastrophic events, such as pandemics and most importantly large-scale military conflicts. Other historians argue that instead of 'shocks', structural, cyclical 'Kuznets waves' explain the (generally undisputed) levelling of the income gap and its stabilisation at relatively modest levels before 1970. In their perspective, globalisation, technological change, and associated social consequences were primary drivers behind the

rapid rise in inequality not only in Europe but on the global stage in the last decades of the twentieth century. Economist and historian Thomas Piketty articulates a third interpretation—he emphasises the role of the two World Wars as "great levellers" which incited significant constriction of wealth disparities. However, he continues, wars and other shocks could hardly guarantee singlehandedly the narrowing of gaps in wealth. What is needed to level gaps, is a particular social and political configuration, in which the masses of ordinary people have strong leverage and a voice in the articulation of the response to a shock. European industrial societies could indeed serve as a primary example of such configurations.

Trends in Inequality

Generally, twentieth-century Europe witnessed a process sometimes labelled the 'great levelling in the rich world'. Almost without exception, European countries experienced massive reductions in income inequality as social democratic policies, characterised by higher taxes on the wealthy (progressive taxation) and redistributive programmes—policies associated with the 'welfare state'—became almost universally accepted. Initially, this trend was attributed to the economic cycle of liberal capitalism associated with the processes of industrialisation, which first led to concentration of wealth in the hands of economic elites in the nineteenth century, followed by the growing participation of emergent middle classes in the distribution of wealth thereafter. Nonetheless, recent studies propose less deterministic perspectives, pointing out the crucial effect that the Great Depression and the two World Wars cast on wealth distribution trends. Furthermore, the narrowing of the income gap has not always been followed by a corresponding trend in wealth inequality: some countries, such as the Netherlands, showed relatively low-income inequality while preserving considerable wealth inequality (Gini coefficient of 0.29 vs 0.89 as of 2016—with zero meaning perfect equality and one absolute inequality). While there is a clear connection between the two—since income from property in the end contributes to income inequality—it would be short-sighted to focus simply on the former.

While the general trend holds over the entire European continent, the situations in particular countries show significant variation. For instance, Sweden departs from the model by recording a continual decline in the income gap between 1890 and 1980, while most European countries experienced a short-term reversal directly before the First World War and then again in the relatively prosperous 1920s, up until the arrival of the Great Depression. By comparison, in Francoist Spain, inequality remained relatively stable (with a Gini coefficient of 0.35 in 1910, 1950 and 1970). The regimes in communist

Eastern Europe played a dominant role in the preservation of extremely low levels of income inequality in those countries throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

While wealth and income inequalities were particularly high in Eastern Europe before the Second World War, the triumph of the Red Army and the consequences of the Yalta Conference opened a new chapter in the history of these countries. They became part of the Soviet/Eastern Bloc and adopted Soviet models of political and economic governance, including the dictatorship of the proletariat and the planned economy. Stalinist industrialisation after the Second World War was accompanied by a radical redistribution of wealth. The abolishment of private ownership of 'the means of production' rendered income almost dependent on earnings, where a radical levelling could also be observed. However, labour unrest showed that even workers were not satisfied with the regime: revolts broke out in the German Democratic Republic, in Poland, and in Hungary, where the Revolution of 1956 was led by young workers and intellectuals. To consolidate their political power, communist parties sought to win over the working classes through material concessions. The promise of a 'socialist welfare state' was an attractive slogan after the lean years of high Stalinism in the 1950s. There were concrete improvements as a result of this new policy towards labour: the increase of workers' wages, the construction of new blocks of flats providing better housing, the building of nurseries, kindergartens, and the provision of free education and healthcare. However, statistics showed that educational inequalities continued to exist as the intelligentsia invested more in its cultural reproduction.

The steep decrease in income inequality between 1930 and 1960 seems to be indeed a universal pattern for the vast majority of European economies, and from the 1970s the trend is again towards rising inequality. The eventual collapse of state socialism in 1989/1990 dismantled the 'Iron Curtain'. With the collapse of state socialism, wealth and income inequalities rose quickly in Eastern Europe, too. The collapse of traditional industries was accompanied by very high levels of unemployment and the impoverishment of masses of people. On the other hand, technocratic and financial elites accumulated such wealth that these elite groups could catch up as individuals with the middle classes of the advanced western countries. The numbers tell the story: the income share of the top one percent of the population in Poland dropped from fifteen percent in 1935 to ten percent during the Second World War and fell to almost three percent during the period of high Stalinism. Between 1990 and 1995 the income share of the top one percent rose back to twelve percent, and after a short period of stabilisation it rose again to fifteen percent by 2008. These trends triggered new challenges to the democratic order in Eastern Europe as many people were disappointed with the consequences of a neoliberal

economy, and this disappointment has been mobilised and harnessed by both populist forces and political elites.

Responses and Intellectual Answers to Inequality

Capitalism created stunning inequalities in the distribution of wealth, and the first comprehensive intellectual and practical answer to these stunning inequalities was put forward by German philosophers Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895). In *The Communist Manifesto*, published in 1848, they argued that human history was the history of class struggle. In their account, capitalism had two main classes: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and the latter was exploited by the wealthy classes (landed aristocracy and capitalists). Following the death of their progenitor, Karl Marx, a schism split Marxist parties between two different perspectives on the path to power. One perspective, that of the communists, argued that parliamentary democracies served the interests of the bourgeoisie, and therefore the labour movement had to be revolutionary and conquer political power through the means of class struggle. Social democrats, on the other hand, thought that universal suffrage would help the working classes to power without revolution. While the communists were suspicious of the welfare measures of capitalist states, which 'softened' the revolutionary consciousness of the 'oppressed' classes, for social democrats, universal suffrage (which was expected to bring the socialist parties into political power) and the economic programme of a welfare state (creating a more proportionate wealth and income distribution through state measures) was a means to achieve the social, economic, and cultural emancipation of the working classes.

The English historian E. P. Thompson originated the concept of moral economy (1971)—the idea that peasant communities share a set of normative attitudes concerning social relations and social behaviours that surround the local economy (e.g., the availability of food, the prices of subsistence commodities, the proper administration of taxation, and the operation of charity). This is sometimes referred to as a 'subsistence ethic': the idea that local social arrangements should be structured in such a way as to respect the subsistence needs of the rural poor. The associated theory of political behaviour argues something like this: peasant communities are aroused to protest and rebellion when the terms of the local subsistence ethic are breached by local elites, state authorities, or market forces. The social reactions to the gross material inequalities that capitalism can trigger are varied: the formation of protective working-class associations such as trade unions or charities, taxation, social patronage, the welfare state or—as the most radical form of social change—the building of a communist society.

Fig. 1: Vladimir Lenin Speaking to a Crowd. Wikimedia, Public Domain, https://commons. wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vladimir_Lenin_Speaking_To_Crowd.jpg.

The Russian Revolution of October 1917 was the first historical event that sought to establish a truly equal society and the abolishment of social classes. After the abandonment of the idea of 'world revolution', the Soviet Union—an underdeveloped economy with huge, mostly illiterate peasant populations and geographically concentrated, small-scale industries (mainly driven by western capital)—remained the world's single socialist country. It was a fundamentally impoverished society, exhausted by the First World War and the Russian Civil War between the Red and White Armies. Huge debates began among the Bolshevik leaders about how to build a socialist economy and a socialist society in circumstances that were objectively so unfavourable. Two opinions gradually formed. Following the lead of the economist Preobrazhensky, Leon Trotsky argued that the capital necessary to finance socialist industrialisation should be extracted out of the agricultural sphere. Nikolai Bukharin, however, recommended the opposite: the peaceful development of agriculture (this was expressed by the slogan directing the peasantry to "enrich yourself!"). These intellectual debates were accompanied by concrete struggles for political power and the contestation of Lenin's legacy—which were resolved in the rise and dictatorship of Stalin. Following Preobrazhensky's concept, Stalin adopted the economic programme of collectivisation (the nationalisation of all land), super-industrialisation, the nationalisation of all means of production and the eventual abolishment of private ownership. This programme laid the foundations for what has been called Stalinism. While wealth and income

inequalities drastically fell, other forms of inequality arose: the privileges of state bureaucracy, which included better state housing, the maintenance of a car, access to more exclusive shops, more lucrative canteens and restaurants, etc. These privileges were tied to the state offices, and, in principle, they were not inheritable.

Many western intellectuals refused to recognise the Soviet Union as a socialist country. They described the system as state capitalism, arguing that since the state occupied the property vacuum as a result of its extreme form of nationalisation, the state itself became the main accumulator of wealth, and—therefore, to them—state capitalism is the most suitable term for the Soviet system.

Since most western leftists did not follow the Soviet model, and historical circumstances also did not favour such a development, the western answer to social inequalities was the building of a welfare state. This was, for instance, expressed by the 'Bad Godesberg Programme' adopted by the German Social Democratic Party in 1959, where they renounced the idea of replacing capitalism, and declared their intention to reform it instead, improving workers' material conditions, and elevating them to the middle class.

Ironically, in the 1960s, alongside the development of the welfare state, one could observe a global Marxist renaissance. In the United States, the New Left adopted a strong Marxist language and a Marxist ideology. Alongside Karl Marx, they thought that alienation was the result of the private means of production and increased levels of consumption (and consumption for consumption's sake). The most radical wing of this movement was led by countercultural icon Jerry Rubin, who also founded the Youth International Party—a party which called for a drastic change of private ownership generating a more equal society. The hippie movement, however, in general lacked a feasible economic programme; this was partly the reason for its defeat. In Europe, the left-wing youth of the 1960s achieved their greatest success in France, where the youth movement was actively assisted by the labour movement.

While the hippies of the 1960s advocated for less consumption—or rather, they rebelled against the consumer society—in Eastern Europe the intellectual trend was in the opposite direction. Left-wing intellectuals strongly criticised Stalinist-type societies for creating new inequalities in the form of special privileges reserved for the state bureaucracy, and they called for more, rather than less, socialism. Examples of these perspectives include the Budapest School with Ágnes Heller and Iván Szelény, the Praxis Circle in Yugoslavia, Polish intellectuals such as Adam Michnik or Zygmunt Bauman, and the intellectual advocates of the Prague Spring. At the same time, the economic 'planners' envisaged a more 'capitalist' society in the sense that there ought

to be higher levels of consumption and a more mixed economy (with more market-incentives).

The 1970s and 1980s saw the final defeat of the global Marxist renaissance in western countries. According to left-wing authors such as the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek, the capitalist state appropriated the slogans of the New Left but formed them in its own image. Since the programme of the welfare state was a state-driven project, the idea that the state should 'withdraw' from education, health care, and the economy (through privatisation), placed the welfare state under serious pressure. Following the lead of the Austrian School of economics, neoliberals saw capitalism as the most important means for unleashing human creative potential and creating the highest amount of possible wealth. They thought that if the neoliberal project were implemented, and more wealth was accumulated around the world, even the lower classes would gain more than in socialist societies. Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan were the first 'pioneers' of this new form of capitalism, which contradicted the Western German model of a social market economy.

From the 1970s the outsourcing of traditional industries to developing countries—mainly to the Asian continent—created high levels of unemployment and posed a huge challenge to the labour movements throughout the western region. Labour was consequently willing to make concessions to capital in order to preserve workplaces. The arrival of the neoliberal order triggered new levels of inequality in income and wealth distribution not only within the capitalist countries but also between the countries of the Global North and the Global South.

Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky, and Lenin had previously argued that differences in the economic development of countries translate into gross inequalities in income and wealth distribution between the advanced capitalist countries and underdeveloped peripheries. This theory was further refined by Immanuel Wallerstein and the World-systems School (from the 1970s). Proponents of this theory argued that the core countries (the capitalist centre) provide the peripheries with industrial goods, while the periphery serves as a market, a supplier of raw materials, and a source of cheap labour. Thus, the hierarchical relationship between the centre and the periphery is established through unequal exchange.

Alongside the decline of the western left, the state-socialist countries experienced a decline in their economic performance and efficiency. Many countries such as Poland, East Germany, and Hungary became heavily indebted to the West. The tacit compromise with their working classes was no longer feasible: it became increasingly difficult for the communist parties to finance the increasing consumer needs of the population. The workers were envious of the Western levels of consumption. With the opening up of the

world and increasing globalisation, it was no longer possible to lock the West out of the state-socialist countries.

Some critical western authors such as Peter Gowan have argued that after the collapse of state socialism, Eastern Europe became a new laboratory of neoliberalism. Followers of the World-systems School warned of the negative social and economic impacts of the adoption of neoliberalism in Eastern Europe: new forms of unequal exchange, economic dependency on the West, declining standards of living for unemployed people, an increasing income gap, etc. While western leftists hoped that this would lead to the strengthening of the political left in Eastern Europe, in reality, the radical right was more successful in exploiting people's dissatisfaction with the neoliberal order and—in some cases—with liberal democracy itself. Massive migration from East to West also led to political tensions in western societies (such as Brexit in the United Kingdom). Anti-globalist and anti-EU forces pose further challenges to the unity of the European Union, since many people believe that they have lost employment because of globalisation and turn to the radical right for protection from global forces. However, when considering these unfortunate trends, we should also keep in mind the fact that the radical right still constitutes a minority in Europe and liberal democracies have shown considerable resilience.

Conclusion

Income and wealth distribution throughout Europe presents a highly varied picture both historically and geographically. While pre-war Europe was characterised by high levels of inequality and different social problems (e.g., the maintenance of the large estates in Eastern and Southern Europe), after the Second World War, communist parties in Eastern Europe radically reduced wealth and income differences through the imposition of a Soviet-type political and economic order. While this model was unacceptable for many western leftists, the expansion of the welfare state everywhere reduced income gaps and wealth inequality to such an extent that German sociologist Ulrich Beck argued that class had altogether lost its meaning. While we should not exaggerate the similarities between the socialist East and the capitalist West, it can still be argued that both socialist societies and welfare states were driven by the state, whose interference in the capitalist economy the neoliberals intended either to abolish or to drastically decrease.

The neoliberal world order, which has become more entrenched after the collapse of state socialism, reversed the drive for (more) social and material equality. The last decades of the twentieth century—in Eastern Europe the very last decade, after the fall of the Berlin Wall—indeed marked a decisive

departure from the levelling trend throughout the continent and globally. After a decrease in income and wealth inequalities in the post-war era, from the 1970s onwards, but increasingly after the collapse of state socialism, we can again observe rising inequalities in income and wealth distribution. The combined effects of economic globalisation and technological progress produced a rise in inequality which was famously described by Christoph Lakner and Branko Milanovic as an 'Elephant Curve'. Lakner and Milanovic argue that between 1988 and 2008, the global elite enjoyed massive income growth, while traditional middle classes and the poor saw their income stagnate. However, new middle classes outside the Global North experienced a rapid growth in income. While the accuracy of the chart and the methodology behind it has been disputed, it nonetheless serves as a powerful symbol of rising global inequality, a process which seemingly leads to even greater concentration of wealth—if it is not regulated by political action. European models providing free education and healthcare proved relatively successful in limiting income inequality and, according to recent scholarly investigations, in relative terms Europe remains the most equal region of the world.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways did inequality change in Europe over the course of the twentieth century? What were the most important reasons for these changes?

2. How was inequality in income and wealth distribution decreased in capitalist and socialist countries?

3. What was the impact of the Cold War on inequality in twentieth-century Europe?

4. How is the situation regarding inequality different today, and how is it still similar to the twentieth century?

Suggested reading

Alvaredo, Facundo, Lucas Chancel, Thomas Piketty, Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman, eds, *World Inequality Report 2018* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

Bauman, Zygmunt, *Globalization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

Beck, Ulrich, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* (London: SAGE, 1992).

Milanovic, Branko, *Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of*

Globalization (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

Piketty, Thomas, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

Scheidel, Walter, *The Great Leveler: Violence and the History of Inequality from the Stone Age to the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017).

CHAPTER 5.3

PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

5.3.1 Production and Consumption in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Marjorie Meiss, Maarten Prak, and Phil Withington

Introduction

One of the defining features of the early modern era in Europe was economic development. Between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries, changes in the way that goods were produced, exchanged, purchased, and consumed had a huge impact on the lives of all European men and women and significant ramifications for European relations with the Americas, Asia, and Africa. This chapter introduces these developments by focusing on the concept of 'consumer society', meaning a society in which significant numbers of people have at once the disposable means (in cash or credit), opportunity (through supply and retail), and desire (however constructed) to choose to purchase goods that they may or may not 'need'. Since the 1990s, 'consumer society' has become a key concept of economic, social, and cultural history, and is a useful way of thinking about the range of economic change that characterised much of Europe before the onset of industrialisation in the nineteenth century.

When Was the Consumer Society Born?

Historians agree that consumer society flourished after the Second World War in the western world, but there is intense debate concerning its date of birth. A long-lasting narrative depicted consumer society as a result of the industrial revolution: in this account, profound change in the conditions of production of consumer goods at the end of the eighteenth century and during the nineteenth century led to an impressive growth in supply and lower prices. New advertising and selling practices as well as new commercial spaces (shopping arcades, department stores) induced customers—including the better-off working classes—to buy more and more goods.

However, many historians of the early modern period dispute that narrative, arguing that it does not take into account decisive, earlier changes in consumer habits. In a pioneering study published in 1978, Joan Thirsk showed that the standard of living of the English peasantry improved between the first half of the sixteenth century and the end of the seventeenth century: at the end of the period, ordinary people had more objects, of more diverse kinds. Thirsk therefore denied the idea that the development of consumption was only a result of the industrial revolution. In his very influential *The Birth of a Consumer Society* (1982), Neil McKendrick has followed the same path, pointing out how widespread such consumer goods as cotton cloth, tea or china were in England in the 1760s. He has also claimed, moreover, that some innovative merchants like Josiah Wedgwood already promoted their products through effective advertising practices. Thus, according to McKendrick, the increase in demand came first and changes in the conditions of production followed.

Within this alternative interpretative framework, historians of the early modern era have proposed different chronologies and geographies for the development of consumption in European societies. For instance, according to Lorna Weatherill, a major shift occurred in England between 1675 and 1725, when objects which used to be rare (like china, curtains, or clocks) became more and more common. For Carole Shammas, the very first signs of this evolution can be seen as early as 1550 and some new products such as tobacco (for example) were already widely available before 1650. Jan de Vries, for his part, argues that an 'industrious revolution' occurred in the Low Countries (and to a lesser extent in England and in some parts of France and Germany) between 1650 and 1800: eager to enjoy the delights of consumption, families devoted more and more time to wage labour, he claims, in order to earn enough money to purchase new commodities available on the market (cloth, pocket watches, mirrors, small decorative objects, etc.). Renaissance historians even suggest going further back in time. For Richard Goldthwaite, in particular, the artistic blossoming of the Renaissance can be understood as a consumption phenomenon, a "demand for art" that emerged during the Quattrocento in the cities of Northern Italy, where the distribution of wealth allowed a substantial part of the population to buy objects crafted by goldsmiths, painters, sculptors, or ceramists.

Despite the importance of these chronological and geographical variations, at least two consensual conclusions have been reached. First of all, a basic observation: by the end of the eighteenth century, households of all social levels throughout Europe held more objects, of more diverse kinds, than they did around 1500 (even if scarcity, self-consumption, and reuse were still major features of the material world). Objects that used to be luxuries were now within reach for a larger part of the population. Second, some

categories of product played a key role in this development: cotton fabrics (painted calicoes imported from Asia then printed on cotton cloth produced in Europe), which gradually allowed ordinary people to wear more colourful and more fashionable clothes; exotic groceries like pepper, then tea, coffee, and cane sugar (which intimately connects the 'consumer revolution' with the development of the plantation economy and slavery); ceramic tableware—including china for the elite, or even cheaper china for the middle classes—and copper cookware; and the wide 'toyware' sector, that is to say the small-scale metalworking which produced clocks, scientific tools, jewels, small decorative objects and more.

Fig. 1: François Boucher, *The Breakfast* (1739), https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010059924.

Obviously, some people benefited more (or sooner) than others from these developments, and the relative pace by which different social groups became involved in consumer practices depended on the social structure of particular countries and regions. In France, for example, aristocrats, wealthy merchants, lawyers, and clerics were the pioneers, while the peasants adopted the new consumer habits long after them—if at all. Although not necessarily wealthier, urban popular classes were more likely to become 'modern' consumers than

peasants. The former were more involved in urban life and commerce, while the latter often preferred to invest in land when they had accumulated some savings. The peasantry finally entered the early modern 'empire of things', albeit slowly and hesitatingly. In England, by contrast, the opportunities for commercial farming and rural industry meant that consumer practices spread more quickly among the rural classes than in France, especially among the yeomanry and wealthier husbandmen, and in the Low Countries high levels of urbanisation meant that, for contemporary commentators, the Dutch were in the vanguard of consumerism. But from Scandinavia to Iberia to Eastern Europe, variations in social structure and the distribution of wealth inevitably affected the timing, nature, and extent of consumption.

Having introduced these key questions and concerns, the next section turns to the more specific issue of increases in both the quantity and quality of goods produced in early modern Europe. The chapter concludes by outlining the set of interconnected factors which, along with transformations in craft and manufacture, made the development of consumer societies possible: commercialisation, globalisation, urbanisation, and the adoption of consumer practices.

Development in Production

Between roughly 1400 and 1800, European industrial producers achieved a small miracle. Many of their products became increasingly sophisticated, while at the same time the prices of those products were decreasing steadily. As a result of these two developments, many industrial products that were only accessible to the richest class of people in 1400 were available to ordinary people by 1800. Moreover, these cheap 'populuxe' goods of the eighteenth century were often of a higher quality than their very expensive predecessors from the Middle Ages.

One example is clocks and watches. Mechanical instruments to keep time emerged in the Middle Ages, probably in the German lands, but the Italians also stake a claim to their invention. In the beginning, clocks were big and expensive, but by 1800 they had become small and affordable. The centre of watchmaking shifted from France to England, and to the western parts of Switzerland. The clock and watch-makers were sometimes organised in special guilds, the first of which emerged in the sixteenth century, while in other locations they were members of a general metal-workers' guild. The first clock-makers were migrant workers, moving from one church to another. By the time the watch came around it developed into an urban industry. However, the eighteenth-century watch industry moved back to the countryside, in the Swiss Jura.

Glass provides a second example. It was used for a variety of purposes, including windows and mirrors, drinking vessels, jewellery (glass beads), and household ornaments. It has been estimated that the output of all French glass-makers increased four to five times between the middle of the seventeenth century and the French Revolution. Italy was the first European region to develop a strong glass industry, and Venice was its core. Despite efforts by local authorities to prevent artisan migration, the Venetian 'secrets' were shared with other localities through migration, and from the mid-fifteenth century also in writing. Although Italian masters remained an important source of knowledge, other countries became increasingly involved in the diffusion. For example, crown glass (i.e. a thick round type of glass used for early windows) was introduced in England by artisans from France in the mid-sixteenth century.

Fig. 2: Jan Luyken, Alchemist (1694), https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-P-OB-44.546.

Similar stories can be told about books, paintings, silk and other textiles, porcelain, and many other industrial consumer goods. What enabled artisans to achieve these improvements? One important factor must have been apprenticeships. Crafts were taught individually, under a contract settled between a master craftsman and his—sometimes her—apprentice. Guilds were increasingly setting rules for the training of young artisans. Gradually, a model emerged that was also followed for apprenticeships outside the realm of incorporated trades. This model was relatively uniform throughout Europe. Apprentices' travel, compulsory in some countries, and the temporary and permanent migration of fully qualified artisans, ensured that best practices were shared between production centres.

Another factor was the emergence of craft manuals. In the fourteenth century, books full of so-called craft secrets appeared—so-called, because publication by definition ended the secrecy. They were perhaps never meant to be 'secret', but there was some 'mystery' to the crafts, which could only be mastered through plenty of direct, hands-on training. Still, these manuscripts purported to give the reader access to the procedures of artisan production. After the invention of print, in the middle of the fifteenth century, craft manuals multiplied and became very popular. Contributing to this popularity were the increasing numbers of literate craftsmen and women. One exemplary craft manual was a book about human proportions published by the well-known German painter Albrecht Dürer in 1528. A century later, Rembrandt had a copy in his studio in Amsterdam, apparently for the instruction of his pupils. The number of titles devoted to 'science, technology and medicine' published in Britain increased from 5.5 to nine percent during the eighteenth century; many of those titles had a practical aspect. It was difficult, if not impossible, to learn a craft exclusively from a textbook. However, those who had acquired the necessary skills could improve them by reading such books.

Moreover, such books were increasingly illustrated, allowing the reader to see what the often complicated instructions amounted to. Dürer had lavishly illustrated his book on human proportions, with pictures on the left-hand pages and text on the right-hand side. In the fifteenth century, various types of engraving emerged in Europe, possibly imitated from the Chinese. In the beginning wood-cuts dominated, which were often course and did not permit much detail. But from the sixteenth century, this was another area where craftsmen became more sophisticated, producing (for example) 'exploded views', showing the inside of complex machinery. Together, illustrations, texts, and practical instruction helped craftsmen and women all over Europe to improve their working practices and—through improving their working practices—the products they supplied to consumers.

Commercialisation, Colonisation, and Urbanisation

Beginning in Italy and moving across the Alps to Germany, France, and the Low Countries, these transformations in guild and craft production were integral to the emergence of 'consumer societies' in pre-modern Europe, whereby men and women below the level of the aristocratic elites could choose to purchase a range of goods based on criteria other than simple utility or need. However, developments in craft production were not the only reason behind the greater availability and choice of commodities. Neither do they explain the greater capacity and willingness of different social groups to enter the market to buy

new goods—to engage in 'consumer behaviour', as economic historians would describe it.

Additional factors influencing the nature, variety, and supply of goods over the later medieval and early modern eras are relatively straightforward to identify. One was commercialisation—the development of trading institutions and networks within Europe that facilitated the exchange of commodities across space, and which gave consumers the power to choose goods which were not necessarily produced or cultivated in their own communities. Another was commerce and colonisation beyond Europe. Before the sixteenth century, the Mediterranean region served as the economic centre of Europe as much because of its trade routes into the Levant, Arabia, and Asia as the productivity and creativity of its inhabitants. The expansion of Portugal and Spain into the Atlantic and Indian Oceans challenged this hegemony by introducing new commodities like potatoes, tomatoes, tobacco, and chocolate into European diets and using colonial slave labour to increase the supply of traditional luxuries like silver, sugar, and spices. These methods of armed commerce, colonisation, and slavery were then adopted by the Dutch, French, and English, transforming Europe's world of goods in the process. They did so not only by introducing new comestibles and commodities on a mass scale, but also by stimulating new practices of production among European manufacturers. Asian workmanship, materials, and design—for example in furniture, silk, and porcelain—were copied and reproduced. In the meantime, inventories from the later seventeenth century clearly demonstrate how 'colonial groceries' like tobacco, coffee, tea, chocolate, and sugar supported a burgeoning and socially extensive material culture devoted to their preparation and consumption.

In addition to indigenous developments in production, then, intensifications in both European commerce and global expansion contributed to the increasing supply and availability of consumables before the nineteenth century. Cities and towns were deeply implicated in all these developments, serving as centres of manufacture and industry, as nodes of national and regional commerce, and as the metropolitan hubs for extra-European networks. Indeed, it is no coincidence that the chronology and geography of consumerism in pre-modern Europe closely shadows the history of European urbanisation. But cities and towns were also, of course, centres of retail and consumption, reminding us that changes in the production and supply of goods were only one set of factors behind Europe's so-called consumer revolutions. As important was the changing—increasing—demand for goods among different social groups.

It would be a mistake to understand this demand as merely a function of supply or the cumulative consequence of consumer decisions based on a 'rational' appreciation of availability, needs, wants, and costs—although these

must have been a factor, too. However, early modern views on the matter were much more complicated.

First, there were plenty of powerful ideological positions against consumerism. Christian teaching was opposed to individual acquisitiveness to excess, and to unnecessary indulgence. It preached instead the importance of charity, moderation, and modesty. These messages were reinforced by the civic humanist valorisation of citizenship, virtue, and temperance over 'luxury' and self-gratification, and by the assumption that men and women should dress, eat, drink, and live according to their social position and place, avoiding the perils of novelty and fashion. In the face of these proscriptions, it was neither easy nor straightforward to be a consumer in early modern Europe. Second, early modern commentators were also very conscious that consumer decisions varied from place to place and were shaped not simply by personal desires and ideological controls, but also by what we would understand today as 'cultural' factors that were geographically and socially specific. To that end, there was an extensive early modern vocabulary describing the particularities of everyday material and comestible culture: the world of goods was very much regarded as part of the 'customs', 'habits', 'practices', 'rituals', and 'ceremonies' by which and through which individuals, households, and communities lived their lives. Third, when early modern commentators moved beyond the cultural relativism of customs and practices and looked to explain consumption in singular and universalistic terms, they tended to reach for the concept of 'emulation'. By this they simply meant the human propensity for social imitation, whereby the customs and practices of one social group were admired and copied by others. Most usually, the direction of travel was assumed to be downwards, with the lower orders admiring and adopting the behaviour of the elites whenever possible: as William Prynne noted in 1628, "Inferiors [...] commonly adore [their] Superiors' chief and greatest vices, as so many glorious and resplendent virtues". But emulation could also be trans-cultural, with England's consumer revolution after 1660 often explained by contemporaries as the successful emulation of the Dutch.

Conclusion

It is striking that when early modern historians rediscovered consumption as a key feature of Europe's economic history, they also reached for theories of emulation to explain the proliferation of watches, coffeepots, bookcases, silks, linens, cottons, porcelain, glass tableware, cutlery, and so on. Most influentially, it was argued that, after 1650, the potent combination of colonial groceries and 'populuxe' goods tempted the middling and lower-class households of Northwestern Europe to fundamentally alter their habits of consumption by

becoming 'industrious' enough to afford the goods and lifestyles previously monopolised by their social betters. However, as many historians have noted, concepts of emulation assume as much about human psychology and motivation as the economists' model of the rational consumer. More to the point, they also risk eliding the contingencies and meanings of custom and practice that also concerned early modern commentators. As such, it is perhaps worth concluding with Lorna Weatherill's more cautious but also more open suggestion that any overarching explanation for the rise of consumer societies needs to be attuned to the diversity of motives and meanings of consumption across geographical and social space.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways did early modern Europeans live in a consumer society?
2. Which role did colonialism play in the development of the early modern consumer society?
3. In which ways does the early modern consumer society still shape our experience of consumption today?

Suggested reading

Blondé, Bruno and Wouter Ryckbosch, 'In "Splendid Isolation": A Comparative Perspective on the Historiographies of the "Material Renaissance" and the "Consumer Revolution"', *History of Retailing and Consumption* 1:2 (2015), 105–124.

Brewer, John and Roy Porter, eds, *Consumption and the World of Goods* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

Landes, David, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

Prak, Maarten and Patrick Wallis, eds, *Apprenticeship in Pre-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

Trentmann, Frank, *Empire of Things: How We Became a World of Consumers, From the Fifteenth Century to the Twenty-First* (New York: Collins, 2016).

Weatherill, Lorna, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660–1760* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

5.3.2 Production and Consumption in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Jiří Janáč, Judit Klement, and Heike Wieters

Introduction

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Europe (and especially its northwestern part) emerged as the global economic core, at the centre of long-distance trade routes connecting virtually all continents around the globe. Over the previous centuries, Europeans consolidated their position in the world economy and accumulated wealth without actually producing goods of particular interest to other parts of the world, instead enriching itself by trading products originating out of Asia, Africa, and America. The European position within global trade networks contributed to specific circumstances which gave rise to industrialisation and modern economic growth. Relatively high wages (when compared to the rest of the world) and a relative abundance of goods coming from overseas created a pressure towards transformations of production and consumption patterns—known as mechanisation and industrialisation—which in turn helped to create conditions for transition towards the sustained economic growth associated with industrial capitalism. Initially located in areas along the Atlantic Coast, the transition soon affected even the most distant corners of the continent. However, the spread of industrialisation and modern economic growth produced important spatial inequalities. The differentiation of the European territory followed the North-West South-East gradient, with western countries adopting changes more quickly (around the 1850s) and becoming the economic core, while Eastern and Southern Europe reacted more slowly, and rather than developing industrialisation instead provided agricultural products for the West.

Economic Growth

Economic historians of Europe generally interpret the nineteenth century as a period marking the decisive transition from the traditional growth model

to modern economic growth. While the former essentially corresponded with Malthusian principles (i.e., economic growth was tied to population growth due to relatively stable labour productivity, with population growth further limited by available resources), the latter was based on rapid acceleration in the efficiency of production (thanks to growing labour productivity) and significant structural changes (for example, shifts from agriculture to industry and services, or from individual entrepreneurs or workers to large firms and corporations). There were indications that the 'Malthusian trap'—a theory from English economist Thomas Robert Malthus (1766–1834) that growth was ultimately and inevitably capped by limited access to finite resources, particularly food—was being broken. These indications first appeared in the North Sea region of Europe in the eighteenth century, but the escape from the 'Malthusian trap' remains generally associated with the onset of the industrial revolution and industrialisation in Britain. Indeed, available evidence suggests that prior to that moment of industrialisation, incomes tended to fluctuate from place to place and year to year, but due to stable productivity did not generally trend upwards.

The new conditions emerging in Britain did not escape the eye of contemporary observers. Even prior to Malthus, Adam Smith (1723–1790) articulated a theory of economic growth capturing the change unfolding before his eyes. What he witnessed in Britain and described in his theory was a rise in labour productivity by means of the division of labour (specialisation), which depended on previous accumulation of wealth enabling investments necessary for increasing specialisation. What is important to note here is that Adam Smith articulated his thesis without referring to the early results of industrialisation, thus—rather than addressing technological change—he highlighted the emerging institutional framework of commercial capitalism.

It was only the combination of industrialisation (the mechanisation of production) and capitalism that really triggered the historically unprecedented era of continuous economic growth in Britain and later in the rest of Europe. Over the last few decades, economic historians have corrected often exaggerated estimations of scale of growth in the British economy during the Industrial Revolution, arguing that even in Britain the change was gradual and evolutionary rather than revolutionary in nature. (That is why industrialisation rather than Industrial Revolution is a more appropriate term for the process.) Also, the initial belief in the significant role of industry and technological change in triggering growth has somewhat waned recently, with institutional frameworks now being heralded as the crucial variable in the onset of industrial capitalism.

Between 1700–1870 the transition to sustained modern economic growth spread across the continent, from Britain first to Western Europe: beginning

from the 1840s, Belgium, the German states, France, and the Netherlands all launched their particular versions of industrialisation. In Southern and Eastern Europe, however, growth remained limited to pockets in Spain and Northern Italy until the late nineteenth century, while territories East of Germany generally witnessed the arrival of industrial capitalism in the agricultural sector, due to their orientation toward supplying the West.

Besides the spatial differentiation, growth also showed considerable variation over time. Contemporary economists were quick to recognise patterns in such fluctuations, and identified their cyclical nature based on their analysis of prices. First, Clement Juglar (1819–1905) described trade cycles of seven to nine years, followed by Nikolai Kondratiev's (1892–1938) sixty-years-long waves, associated with demographic data and technological innovations. Indeed, prices in the now relatively integrated European market witnessed similar long-run trends. While prior to the 1800s such cycles were much shorter (with downturns appearing every three to four years) and instances of sustained growth over a period of several years were rather scarce, with the transition from agriculture to trade and manufacturing as leading economic sectors, cycles of growth extended initially to about six years and downturns were—under these conditions—of relative, rather than absolute, nature as before. However, the stabilisation of modern economic growth on the continent brought steeper swings from the 1870s on: decline between the mid-1870s and mid-1890s (the period of the so-called 'Long Depression') was substituted by rapid growth associated with high inflation prior to the First World War (the so called 'Belle Époque').

Industrialisation: Productivity, Innovation, Production

This economic period was long called an 'industrial revolution' based on the scale of significant economic change it saw. Referring to it as a revolution evoked the rapid and drastic nature of the change and transformation taking place in industry, which was similar in consequence to the social change caused by the French Revolution. As noted above, it has now become commonplace among economic historians to argue that industrialisation is a more appropriate term to describe this change. Economic growth was not of such a rapid and radical scale to justify the revolutionary marker, but was rather a long-term, sometimes fluctuating, but continuous change.

The nineteenth century was an era of industrialisation throughout Europe, although in England the process began as early as the mid-eighteenth century. European countries did not progress in industrialisation at the same time, at the same pace or in the same way, but by the nineteenth century—in one way or another—the change had already reached all European regions.

Industrialisation as a process saw the population, which until then had mainly lived off agriculture, take jobs in industry in increasing numbers, and also saw the relative importance of industry in production grow. Industrialisation is thus a phenomenon of both social and economic transformation. The more the process of industrialisation progressed in a country, the more the number of people employed in industry increased and the number of people dependent on agriculture decreased.
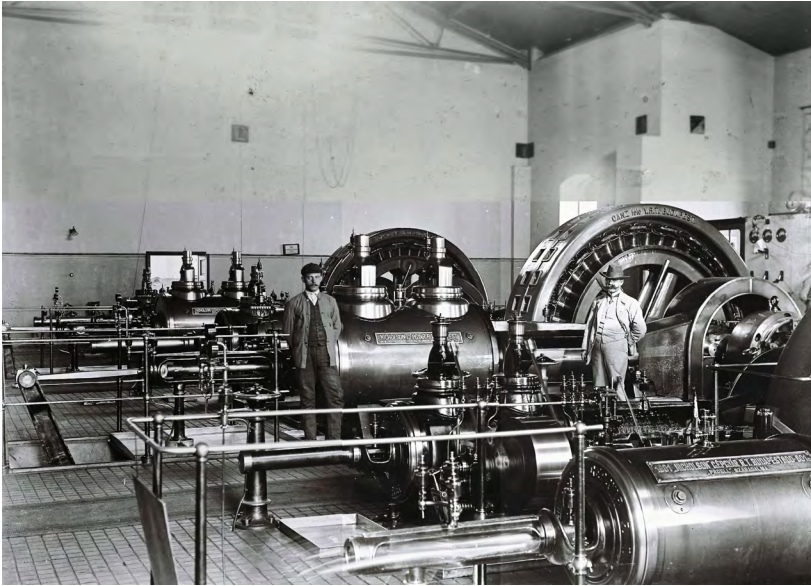
Fig. 1: Steam engines, Nicholson Machine Factory, Újpest, Hungary (1914) Somkuti Ágoston / Fortepan 211141, https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?id=211141.

As a result of industrialisation, economic growth was no longer restricted. One source of this economic growth was increasing productivity—i.e., in the nineteenth century a worker produced significantly more products in the same amount of time relative to earlier eras. Beside the division of labour, another reason for the improvements in productivity were technical developments and innovations utilised in production. Scientific and technological innovations spread slowly through the economy as a whole, and initially the textile, iron, and steel industries in particular were at the forefront of technological innovation. Nonetheless, during the nineteenth century, slowly, all sectors of the economy were transformed by technical developments even beyond industrial production itself. The invention of the steam engine (1769)—seen by some as the starting point for industrialisation—is a good example of how the impact of innovation spread across the economy as a whole. The steam engine enabled mechanised mass production in industry, and transport (and thus trade) was revolutionised by its use in the steamboat and especially in

the steam locomotive (1814). But agricultural production was also transformed by the steam plough—which enabled the mechanisation of ploughing—and especially by the steam threshing machine (1849), which enabled the mechanisation of grain threshing.

In fact, without an increase in agricultural productivity, industrialisation would not have been possible. Workers were able—and had—to leave agriculture and make a living from industry in increasing numbers: agricultural productivity improved, so even fewer hands were necessary to increase agricultural production which, in turn, rendered additional agricultural workers surplus. The development of agricultural productivity was made possible by crop rotation, the use of iron tools, seed selection, stable livestock farming, fertilisation (later chemical manure) and the mechanisation of certain work phases, such as threshing and ploughing. Although the development of agriculture made industrialisation possible, its progressive industrialisation also had repercussions, as a growing (primarily urban) population engaged in industrial labour had to be provided with food. Thus, industrialisation resulted in increasing demand for agriculture, encouraging further increases in agricultural productivity.

Industrial production also underwent significant transformation during industrialisation. Former handicraft production was gradually replaced by the manufactory industry, and from the beginning of the nineteenth century, an increasing number of factories appeared. Factory production—as a new institutional form of production—meant a division of labour, mechanised production with a much larger number of workers (into the thousands), using machines driven by steam power (later electricity). Factories also enabled the mass production of goods, which reduced the price of industrial products and made them available to a wider range of consumers. This, in turn, had a significant effect on the culture of consumption. In addition to a larger workforce, mechanised large-scale production required much more capital, as the acquisition and operation of machinery, the maintenance of factories, and the use of a larger labour force significantly increased the financial resources required by industry. The higher need for capital in the age of industrialisation resulted in the spread of joint-stock companies, where the cost and risk of production were shared among several shareholders. However, the joint-stock company was important not only as a new source of capital but as an institutional innovation of capitalism itself. The division of labour and the specialisation of all work processes (i.e., not only production) characterise the operation of a joint-stock company. This also allows effectiveness in highly complex workflows (for example, in corporate governance and control) and enables diverse activities, such as the mass production of a wide variety of products or simultaneous sales on different markets. British Economist Ronald

Coase pointed out (*The Nature of the Firm*, 1937) that the joint-stock company reduces transaction costs—namely the costs of operating on the market—when a task is solved not from the market but within a company itself; an example of such a manoeuvre would be for a firm to set up a marketing and sales department rather than entrusting sales to a dealer.

In the age of industrialisation, the growing capital needs of economic actors together with the escalating risks of production brought to life the modern banking and insurance sector. The (classic) English commercial banking services were limited to deposit collection and short-term lending. During the nineteenth century, the range of activities of credit institutions and insurance companies considerably grew. One nineteenth-century development was the emergence of universal banks, which could take part in the establishment of companies by providing long-term loans, and in their operation as shareholders as well.

Consumption

When it comes to consumption, the nineteenth century was not necessarily as 'long' as historians have claimed it to be in other respects. Cross-border markets and modern European (and as such highly interwoven) consumer societies started to emerge in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Goods such as coffee, tea, cocoa, and spices became available for wider segments of society, and newly fashionable clothing and accessories were created. These new consumer styles and the demand for the respective goods often traversed borders of social status. In their free time, servants sometimes found joy in wearing clothes adapted to models worn by people from the upper classes, and small accessories such as feathered hats were tailored to imitate objects formerly worn by the nobility. Oriental rugs or new fabrics such as chintz and calico (printed cotton from India) ultimately created new demand for certain goods which—as has been argued—incentivised industrialised production even further.

The industrial revolution was accompanied or even preceded by an "industrious revolution" (Jan de Vries), meaning that many citizens were ready and able to work more in order to fulfil their cravings for certain goods and services. This dialectic process—connecting cultural, mental, and economic transformations—certainly accelerated in nineteenth-century Europe. Due to rapid urbanisation, both a growing bourgeois 'middle-class', and an increasingly mobile labour force made their imprint on growing cities. Subsistence farming and closed household economies—that had once contributed to the everyday sustenance of many families—vanished fast. Mass consumption became an increasingly everyday reality, and necessitated the

purchase of almost all household goods including food, clothes, pottery, and toiletries. While small shops emerged everywhere—particularly in the inner cities and around those quarters where people lived in close proximity—warehouses were built in the outer quarters. These wholesalers set out to reorganise the retail sector in the cities, especially as new ways of packaging goods in smaller batches were invented.

Towards the mid-nineteenth century, department stores opened in big cities and emerging metropoles. France was a European forerunner. Fashionable department stores such as *Au Bon Marché* in Paris presented wide assortments of both every day and luxury goods—incentivising consumers, especially women, to take a stroll through the display sessions and buy the goods that came in different qualities across a wide price range. Even for those not well-off enough to afford these goods, window-shopping became a cherished pastime that created aspirations and further incentivised consumer behaviour and culture. In his great European novel *Au Bonheur des Dames* (1883), the French writer Émile Zola tried to capture the excitement visitors to these new kind of shops were experiencing: "And there, in that chapel dedicated to the worship of feminine graces, were the clothes: occupying the central position there was a garment quite out of the common, a velvet coat trimmed with silver fox; on one side of it, a silk cloak lined with squirrel; on the other side, a cloth overcoat edged with cock's feathers […]. There was something for every whim, from evening wraps at twenty-nine francs, to the velvet coat which was labelled eighteen hundred francs." (Zola, *The Ladies' Paradise*,. Translated from the French original by April Fitzlyon. [Alma Classics Ltd 2013], p. 6.)

Those who could not save enough to buy the objects of longing were increasingly relying on credit. While private borrowing (often based on long established relations of trust) has a long history and had been done for centuries, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the first consumer credit models were also offered. Consumer credit could mostly be obtained in smaller shops, but slowly credit associations and other financial brokers also joined this new market.

This process was accompanied by new marketing techniques and shifts in advertising, which also increasingly included hints on how to afford and finance these goods. The rise of the print media in the second half of the nineteenth century offered new ways to publicise consumer goods and create objects of longing for consumers in Europe and beyond. Fancy packaging or artsy and colourful presentations of goods in newspapers and magazines helped shape distinct consumer societies in Europe and created more complex business cycles involving a growing variety of professions.

While many goods—especially certain luxury objects—were still mostly affordable only for the middle- and upper-classes, being a part of the emerging

consumer society was no longer a privilege for the rich. Throughout the nineteenth century, consuming became something that defined and shaped the everyday life of European citizens in the cities as well as in the countryside. Consumerism became an integrative force both connecting and distinguishing Europeans across social strata as diverse consumer cultures emerged.

Conclusion

During the nineteenth century, the frameworks of production and consumption changed fundamentally. Specialisation (a division of labour), technical innovations, and institutional changes transformed production: productivity increased significantly, and industrial production in factories—using machines and power machines—as well as mass production, became commonplace. Productivity growth was characteristic of both agriculture and industry. This was the era of industrialisation, a period when first industry, and later the service sector became more and more important within the economy. Along with sectoral change, the number of persons employed in industry, and subsequently in the service sector increased, while those living from agriculture decreased. The age of industrialisation also transformed trade and consumption. Department stores, commercial specialisation, and mass consumption emerged. As part of these economic transformations, a modern banking and insurance sector developed.

This process characterised the whole of Europe, however the commencement, pace, and course of industrialisation varied in different parts of the continent. In England, industrialisation began as early as the eighteenth century, followed by the countries of Western Europe in the early nineteenth century. The industrialisation of Eastern and Southern Europe started later, as their production was initially dominated by the growing demand for food from the West. This also signalled the extent of globalisation, the interconnection of markets.

As a result of industrialisation, economic growth was able to step out of the 'Malthusian trap': growth was no longer limited but rose and fell in new economic cycles. The second half of the nineteenth century was defined first by the 'Long Depression' then—before the First World War—by the 'Belle Époque'.

Discussion questions

1. What role did industrialisation play in production and consumption regimes in nineteenth-century Europe?

2. In which ways did the development of production and consumption regimes differ in Eastern and Western Europe?

3. In which ways did developments of the nineteenth century shape the consumer society today?

Suggested reading

Broadberry, Stephen and Kevin H. O'Rourke, *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Europe, vol. I: 1700–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Haupt, Heinz-Gerhard, 'Consumption History in Europe: An Overview of Recent Trends', in *Decoding Modern Consumer Societies*, ed. by Hartmut Berghoff and Uwe Spiekermann (New York: Springer, 2012), pp. 17–35.

Stearns, Peter N., 'Stages of Consumerism: Recent Work on the Issues of Periodization', *The Journal of Modern History* 69:1 (1997), 102–117.

Fouquet, Roger and Stephen Broadberry, 'Seven Centuries of European Economic Growth and Decline', *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 29:4 (2015), 227–244.

Logemann, Jan, ed., *The Development of Consumer Credit in Global Perspective: Business, Regulation, and Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

Vries, Jan de, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behaviour and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

5.3.3 Production and Consumption in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Sina Fabian, Pim Huijnen, Juan Pan-Montojo, and

Zsuzsanna Varga

Introduction

Summing up the performance of the European economies in terms of production and consumption between the First World War and the first general economic crisis of the twenty-first century (2007) is not an easy task. The nation-states of the continent have not followed a unified trend in terms of overall economic performance—especially GDP growth. Trends have varied considerably over certain periods, not least because after 1917 two economic systems coexisted in Europe, and between 1947 and 1991, the Soviet system was imposed on many countries. Most comparisons are done between national-states, but if we take regions as our unit of analysis instead, we see that the absolute distance between the poorest and the richest regions in Europe has increased over the twentieth century, although economic disparities have declined in relative terms.

However, as this chapter shows, there have also been many common traits in the history of production and consumption across the continent. Despite chronological disparities, productive cycles have followed similar trends. Sectoral organisation of different economies has followed common patterns with different rhythms: the decline in terms of output and the share of employment dedicated to the agricultural production, the gradual rise until the 1970s of industrial production, and the constant growth of the service sector, which, since the 1970s, has become the largest sector in most European countries.

Consumption in terms of quantities and qualities has been very diverse across political and social frontiers, but both capitalist and socialist societies experienced large transformations that started in the 1950s in Northwestern and Central Europe, and in the 1960s in Southern and Eastern Europe. Moreover, as we will underline, the fall of the communist system has brought about a certain convergence in consumption and waste patterns in aggregate terms all over Europe, while the social structure of consumption has quite probably become more unequal.

Economic Growth

The twentieth century was a time of rapid growth in Europe. In fact, the difference in terms of income per capita between Europe and the poorest countries in the world was larger in 2000 than in 1900. On the other hand, there was a process of convergence in the second half of the century between European countries and the other rich economies (USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand), which has been partially attenuated after 2000. In terms of the *Human Development Index*, since 1950, there has been a substantial decline in the gap between Europe and poor countries.

The high growth rates of European economies in the long twentieth century reflect both the availability of new sources of energy—especially oil and raw materials imported from other continents—and rapid technological progress. However, growth was not continuous. Three 'Kondratiev cycles' have been identified between the 1890s and the 1990s. (Kondratiev- or K-cycles are long-term cycles usually explained in terms of long waves of technological innovation.)

The first cycle started in the 1890s and had an upswing until the First World War, a period known in retrospect as the *Belle Époque*. The downswing of this first cycle coincided with the interwar period and can be divided into three stages: the post-war crisis, the 'roaring twenties' (not uniformly 'roaring' in economic terms in Europe), and the long crisis after 1929 (the Great Depression). European economies grew less in the interwar years than the USA, and the recovery from the crisis was in many places delayed until the late 1940s. Political and economic responses to the Great Depression refashioned economic policies and institutions in democratic countries, under the influence of heterodox economists like Keynes and the members of the Stockholm School. The crisis also triggered the application of the so-called fascist 'third way'. In the late 1930s and especially after the Second World War, European governments were deeply influenced both by the American New Deal and by the planning techniques applied in the USSR after 1928.

The second K-cycle—which began in the USA after 1939—became general with the end of the war. For Europe, the first decades following the Second World War, after the critical years of 1945–1947, stand out as a unique episode: they witnessed the most rapid economic growth of the twentieth century. Mass production and mass consumption, a combination sometimes called Fordist capitalism, spread throughout Western Europe. This long wave of economic expansion in Western Europe was initially fuelled by the Marshall Plan and took place under a new system of international economic relations established at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944. In the context of the Cold War (1947–1991), states carried out very active interventions that directly affected economic performance on both sides of the Iron Curtain. In the Western European economies, full employment and stable growth became governmental aims. In the communist countries, states followed the Soviet modernisation model aiming at accelerated growth.

Between 1968 and 1973, the basic elements that had enabled the long post-war period of European growth were shaken by a confluence of different factors. On the one hand, economic relations between the USA and Western European countries changed, because of the industrial progress of the latter, and the Bretton Woods settlement was threatened. On the other hand, the ex-colonial countries denounced the status quo of international trade and attempted to transform it through cartels of producing countries. In 1973, coinciding with the Yom Kippur War, oil producers managed to fix higher prices. The oil crisis shook the economies of all petroleum-importing countries, particularly Europe. In Western Europe, the crisis hit societies where full employment had been achieved and the labour movement was strong, and where many sectors had oligopolistic traits: consequently, income redistribution produced by the oil-shock multiplied inflationary pressures, further enabled by lax monetary policies.

The downswing of the second K-cycle was followed after 1984–1991 by the beginning of a third cycle. The upswing in the 1990s took place in a new economic and political environment shaped by globalisation, the end of the Cold War, and the expansion of the European Economic Community (EEC, later the European Union, EU), all under the doctrinal hegemony of what was very often called 'neoliberalism'. The new crisis after 2007 shattered this predominance and might have opened a new phase in economic policies.

Capitalist Production

The broadest structural changes in production in the capitalist countries during the twentieth century were: first, an enormous increase in both agricultural and industrial production; and, second, a shift in the workforce from agriculture

towards the industry and, later, services. These changes had their roots in the nineteenth century but gained new speed after the First World War.

When it comes to agricultural production, wheat production in particular rose greatly from the mid-1920s onward, because of an increasing demand from the industry, but also because Russia as the largest grain exporter had disappeared from the market. As a result, other, mostly eastern European countries increased their wheat output, while the USA exported large amounts of wheat to Europe as well. This trend of increasing production in agriculture while employment shares dropped continued after the Second World War. The sharp decline in the agricultural workforce (from more than sixty-six million in the whole of Europe in 1950 to 17.6 million in 2000) was both cause and effect of technologisation processes like irrigation, tractors, hybrid seeds, fertilisers, and pesticides. Supported by considerable state protection and investment (like the Common Agricultural Policy of the EEC), agricultural production reached its peak in Western Europe in the 1980s.

Over the course of the twentieth century, the share of people working in the secondary and tertiary sectors increased throughout Europe. During the 1920s, industrial production in Northwestern and Southern Europe quickly surpassed pre-war levels. This was as true for coal, which remained the most important primary energy source in the first half of the twentieth century, as it was for steel. This period saw the rise of the motor industry and electrical engineering as important new sectors of industry. Meanwhile, the Germans kept dominating the chemical industry and strengthened their position by merging the leading companies into IG Farben in 1925. The United Kingdom countered by undertaking similar action with Imperial Chemical Industries. These two national conglomerates controlled the global trade in chemicals throughout this period. In the 1930s, the Great Depression hit industrial production in Europe hard. Germany was among the countries that suffered most severely from the economic crisis, because—among other reasons—countries suddenly stopped providing them credit, with unemployment exploding as a consequence.

After the devastations of the Second World War, industrial supply and demand started to boom, culminating in the 'golden age' of the 1950s and 1960s. Household appliances like refrigerators and microwaves, televisions and automobiles, together with processed food and leisure products, were both driving and responding to new markets and societal changes. 'Efficiency' and 'productivity' became the magic words of these decades for manufacturing, resulting in new modes of mass production, technological innovation, and specialisation, which made these products affordable for the masses. Production and consumption were bound in an upward cycle: falling prices led to an increase in demand that, in turn, made possible economies of

scale thus enabling further reductions in costs for the industry and prices for consumers.

The energy crises of the 1970s brought an end to the production boom, a boom which came from sectors relying on cheap energy. Industry was forced to become more adaptive to changes, but this only increased the outflow of labour from the secondary to the tertiary sector. With the steady decline of industry's share of total employment, the potential for production growth diminished as well. The ever-stronger internal market of the EEC and EU concentrated high-tech industry within Europe, while outsourcing low-skill assembly industries to other regions (mainly East Asia). The growing production of high-tech electronic and office machinery was one small exception to this rule.

Socialist Production

By the 1920s, the revolutionary upheavals which had followed the First World War across Europe had subsided, and the Soviet Union began the great experiment, the construction of 'socialism in one country'. Within a short time, the Soviet Union wanted to turn their underdeveloped rural country into a modern, industrial economy. This attempt at modernisation built on state ownership and a planned economy instead of private ownership and a market economy. Accordingly, land was nationalised, and the factories became state-owned. Production was not driven by any supply-and-demand business plan, but by calculations and estimates presented by the central planning office, which created economic plans from estimates for specific periods (mostly for five years). These were then passed along to the production plants through compulsory plan directives. For example, the Central Planning Office calculated how many pairs of shoes industry would produce for the Soviet population each year. Prices and anticipated earnings were also regulated centrally. The interests of heavy industry always overshadowed the production of consumer goods. Therefore, the supply of goods was always kept below the actual market needs, and the demand for goods was guaranteed. The same strategy was applicable to foreign trade, which was carried out by state-owned enterprises. In order to find buyers from free market countries, producers designated to produce goods for export had two production lines: superior standard ones for export and inferior ones for the local market.

In the five-year plans, the development of heavy industry and military industry was given priority, and agriculture became an 'inner colony', from which income and labour could be reallocated to industry.

This economic model was exported by the Soviet Union to the territories that came under its influence after the Second World War. As a result of nationalisations and collectivisation campaigns, private enterprise was almost

completely eliminated. Priority was given to the development of heavy and military industry due to the tensions of the Cold War. However, the planned economy soon proved that the state-owned enterprises only fulfilled the plans imposed on them quantitatively, without enough attention to quality.

All socialist countries experienced these problems of the planned economy, and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) did not help. However, when social tensions became critical due to supply problems, the party leaderships made concessions to private craft, retail and towards a so-called 'second economy'. Participation in the second economy, necessary in the socialist era to procure products in short supply, became, for many, a matter of survival.

The first changes in this direction took place in 1953 after Stalin's death. Then after the 1956 Polish and Hungarian crises, new reforms were undertaken, and more changes followed in the mid-1960s. Of these new policies, the Hungarian New Economic Mechanism was the most radical, as it wanted to combine the market economy with the planned economy. However, these reforms were halted after the 1968 invasion of Prague. Later, due to the growing indebtedness of socialist countries, another series of reforms was launched in the first half of the 1980s.

Consumption

Patterns of consumption differed greatly in the early twentieth century throughout Europe, not just between countries but also within regions. While European metropoles and the upper and upper-middle classes experienced the beginning of a modern consumer society, including the use of an automobile and electricity at home, rural patterns of consumption changed less rapidly. Although consumption overall increased in the first half of the twentieth century, it was not a linear process. Economic crises such as the Great Depression had disastrous effects. Even in most advanced consumer societies such as Great Britain many could not afford even basic consumer goods. The two World Wars and totalitarian regimes brought food shortages and rationing in most countries as well.

Mass consumer societies, therefore, only fully emerged in the second half of the century. In line with economic growth, an increase in production, and the expansion of the welfare state, household expenditure income in Western Europe significantly increased. As a result, larger sections of society were able to afford durable and expensive consumer goods such as telephones, televisions, and cars. The decades following the Second World War also saw shifts in expenditure from basic commodities such as food and clothing to non-essential goods like leisure expenditure, travel, and transport.

In the initial period of socialist systems in Eastern Europe, industrial development gave priority to heavy industry, with an emphasis on military industry. This precedence decreased the relative importance of all remaining sectors (agriculture, light industry, services). As a result, there appeared a gradual shortage of food and consumer goods. In order to build a socialist system, the party leaderships expected socialist citizens to limit or postpone their consumption desires. Constant queuing, empty shelves, and chronic shortages of basic products became part of everyday life. The first major economic adjustment began after Stalin's death. Gradually, the Iron Curtain became more permeable, and the perception of the West began to change. Khrushchev proclaimed the twenty-year programme to catch up and overtake advanced capitalist countries (1960–1980). The competition between the socialist and capitalist systems also extended to consumption. From the 1960s, there was a rapid growth in mass consumption, giving households access to goods such as washing machines, vacuum cleaners, and televisions. Additionally, in the socialist countries there was a wider supply of collective goods, at least in comparison to similar income countries elsewhere: for example, education facilities, cultural events, and sports facilities were very often in higher supply than in certain capitalist countries.

While Great Britain had a clear leading role as a consumer society in Europe between 1930 and 1990, the years between 1970 and 1990 also saw a great expansion of consumer goods in most Eastern and Western European countries. However, the prices of coveted consumer goods in the East were set at such high levels that the possibility to buy them was limited.

The expansion in consumer goods did not come to an end in the 1970s like the boom in economic growth and production did. Less well-off sections of society especially have only been able to fully participate in mass consumer society since the 1970s and 1980s. As a result, differences between the haves and the have-nots diminished. Therefore, 'taste' became the dominant form of distinction, according to French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Since many people now owned cars, brand, size, and features became important to highlight one's status. As in the West, privately-owned vehicles became the symbol of the family's well-being and sophistication in Eastern Europe. However, the socialist automotive industry could not produce enough to meet demand, so those people who could afford a car had to wait years for them to arrive. It is worth noting that within Soviet-bloc countries state-owned banks were offering loans and credits only for designated products (e.g. construction of a house). The policy stands in sharp opposition to the market-driven scheme of financing offered to customers in different product and service categories.

Conclusion

In spite of all the regional and chronological differences, all parts of Europe witnessed the same structural economic changes throughout the twentieth century: the rise of industry and services at the expense of agriculture, the birth of mass production, the shift from consumptive shortages to abundance, as well as the interdependence between Europe and the rest of the world. However, while the Western European countries focused on the economic development of light industry, dedicated to supply growing community needs, the Soviet-bloc countries prioritised development of heavy industry to secure their defence (military) needs. It is worth noting that the market potential which appeared in Eastern Europe after the regime change in 1989–1990 brought unprecedented sale and investment opportunities, as there was an acute shortage in practically every sphere of the consumer segment.

The collapse of socialist economy left consumers without any distribution and retail network. This gap was immediately filled with global players whose expertise and international supply network were unreachable for any domestic competition. This move turned out to be of advantage to consumers as they could enjoy competitive prices. At the same time, it put producers in an inferior position in negotiating sale prices of their goods. In some cases, the financial success of some distributors was greater abroad than in their own country of origin.

At present European producers have chosen a model of market growth based upon seeking regions with lower production costs, which is why China became an important production centre for the European market giants. The global market was no invention of the twentieth century but, particularly since the end of the Second World War, globalisation impacted economies worldwide on an unprecedented scale.

Discussion questions

1. What were the most important differences between capitalist and socialist production?
2. Why did 'taste' become so important in consumer societies in the twentieth century?
3. In which ways did the production and consumption regimes of the twentieth century still shape European society?

Suggested reading

Broadberry, Stephen and Kevin H. O'Rourke, *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Europe, vol. II: 1870 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Daunton, Martin J. and Matthew Hilton, *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America* (London: Berg, 2001).

Kaelble, Hartmut, *A Social History of Europe, 1945–2000: Recovery and Transformation after Two World Wars* (New York: Berghahn, 2013).

Tomka, Béla, *Austerities and Aspirations: A Comparative History of Growth, Consumption, and Quality of Life in East Central Europe since 1945* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2020).

Trentmann, Frank, *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

CHAPTER 5.4

LABOUR AND FORCED LABOUR

5.4.1 Labour and Forced Labour in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Mikołaj Malinowski and Stephan Sander-Faes

Introduction

Any inquest into the role of pre-industrial labour may well begin with the reminder that the subject is neither as clear-cut nor as neatly distinguishable as it may appear. 'Labour' used to refer primarily to agricultural work, especially physical toil, which constituted the mainstay of pre-industrial production. The emergence of proto-industry in the early modern period witnessed a gradual, if non-linear, shift in employment structures, which corresponds to a secular decline of the agricultural workforce.

Analytically, 'labour' covered a wide spectrum that ranged from free (voluntary) wage labour to various forms of unfree labour determined by a combination of property rights and an individual's legal status. The degrees of freedom were determined by taxation levels, landownership, labour rents and services, legal status, and individual dependencies, including temporary limitations (e.g., military conscription, convict labour), various grades of subjection, and personal unfreedom (slavery). Though their diffusion varied considerably across time and space, these overlapping types of labour were found all over Europe: (a) free labour (un-/skilled labour), (b) partially free labour (tenurial relations, incl. serfdom), and (c) unfree labour (e.g., convicts, slaves).

Occupational Structures

The idea of a dualism between 'free' and 'unfree' labour is closely correlated to a number of assumed structural characteristics, such as the urban-rural divide and the socio-economic divergence between Eastern and Western Europe. One must further differentiate between two interlocking long-term trends that played out differently across time and space: the population crash of the late Middle Ages in the wake of the Black Death (1348) that disproportionately

affected the more urbanised areas of Western Europe, which—in part due to ensuing labour shortages—experienced rising real wages and thus moved towards an extensification of (agricultural) production. Eastern Europe, which was less urbanised, was comparatively less affected in socio-economic terms.

Scholars continue to dispute and debate the driving force behind European economic development during the early modern period. Explanations range from material production to military competition, from higher levels of productivity ('industriousness') to the institutional framework, and from fiscal-financial innovation to a range of cultural traits. Whatever the ultimate causes, there exists a wealth of empirical evidence that documents gradual, if non-linear, shifts in population and occupational structures, as well as labour productivity in both Eastern and Western Europe from the late Middle Ages through the early modern period.

Despite increasingly organised warfare, demographic reconstructions indicate that Europe's population roughly doubled between 1500 and 1800. Both England and the Low Countries were outliers in these trends, with much larger increases in urban and rural non-agricultural sectors. Europe's agricultural population grew less and averaged ca. thirty-five to thirty-nine percent during the same period. Recent reconstructions of economic output reveal strikingly similar patterns of low growth all across Europe. These results are buttressed by largely analogous trends in fertility, life expectancy, and mortality, all of which remained virtually constant throughout the early modern period.

Taken together, these findings reveal an ambiguous image of early modern Europe. While population increased everywhere, growth was most pronounced in England and the Low Countries. Demographic growth affected all sectors, with most indicators pointing to small differences in the increase of the agricultural population. By contrast, the rural non-agricultural sectors show much larger variation, with growth ranging from a low thirty percent in Southern Europe to much higher growth indicators in the Low Countries, Poland, and England.

In terms of population distribution by sector (urban, rural non-agricultural, agricultural), the following trends across early modern Europe are apparent. Around 1500, urbanisation outside Northern Italy (twenty-two percent) and the Low Countries (twenty-eight to twenty-nine percent) averaged less than ten percent. Early modern Europe's rural non-agricultural population averaged around eighteen percent of the workforce, with the agricultural population standing at roughly three quarters. By contrast, around 1750, urbanisation rates of about twenty-two to twenty-three percent are documented for England, Belgium, Northern Italy, and Spain, with the Netherlands firmly in the lead at thirty-six percent. Even more significant changes had occurred in

the two other sectors, with the rural non-agricultural population in the North Sea Region averaging around twenty-seven to twenty-eight percent, with no discernible changes from 1500 levels in Southern Europe. Still, there occurred an overall decline of Europe's agricultural population, which fell to around sixty percent, with even lower rates in England and the Low Countries at around forty-five percent.

These shifts occurred as Europe's population grew from around 70 million (1500) to around 130 million (1800). Demographic change was neither steady nor geographically uniform, with marked increases before the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) and after the mid-eighteenth century. Still, it is also an indicator of—at least—commensurate increases of economic output, and thus it may serve as a crude proxy for overall productivity gains.

From the late medieval period onwards, Europeans achieved incremental gains in agricultural and manufacturing output (glass, textiles, printing), seafaring, science (observation, theory), and material accumulation that to a certain degree exceeded population growth. These advances varied widely, did not last, and differed considerably from region to region, depending mainly on the natural environment and pre-existing social formations (social orders) as well as the availability of resources and labour.

Most proto-industrial enterprises (e.g., mining, processing) were typically concentrated outside urban centres and made use of all kinds of labour (e.g., free, partially free, and/or unfree labour). Economic activity relied virtually exclusively on organic materials (wood) and traditional energy inputs (muscle, water, and wind power). Hence, productivity gains were often the consequence of organisational modifications of societal command and control differentials, which manifested themselves differently, ranging from incentivised pressures to increased authority of the landowners. In short, as early modern Europe's output increased, its labour force also grew more regimented and disciplined.

Free Wage Labour

Free labour refers to individuals and groups who sold their labour to the highest bidder in exchange for a daily, monthly, or annual wage. While free workers may refrain from engaging in any kind of labour, a lack of savings and the need to sustain themselves served as primary incentives to enter the labour market. In a competitive labour market, wages received would be determined by one's marginal productivity, therefore—at least in theory—the more productive a worker was, the higher the wage that worker would receive.

Before the Industrial Revolution, productivity gains were due to skills and specialisation rather than technological improvements. Labour may further be subdivided into unskilled and skilled workers, who possessed different levels

of human capital. Training in early modern Europe was regimented by guilds that restricted both the supply of skilled labour and output, thus regulating prices. Workers had to go through years of apprenticeship to become certified craftsmen. Due to the high training costs, wage differences between skilled and unskilled workers—constituting a so-called 'skill premium'—were high.

Unskilled labourers constituted the majority of the free wage earners. Data on the daily wages of construction workers from across Europe serves as a helpful proxy for their living standards. They were typically among the poorest urban dwellers. Nominal wages (received for their labour) increased across early modern Europe, but this rise was a result of the inflation caused by the inflow of precious metals from the Americas. At the same time, basic prices (food, housing, clothing) rose even faster, contributing to (at best) stagnation or decline in levels of income.

Wages of unskilled workers were high in the period directly after the Black Death (1348). The low availability of labour and its higher marginal productivity (in theory, less available labour equals fewer diminishing returns to any extra unit of labour and thus higher wages) initiated what is known as the 'golden age of labour' in preindustrial Europe. However, on the whole—everywhere outside the Low Countries and England—wages ultimately declined during the early modern period. The most common explanation is population growth, or the so-called 'Malthusian trap': productivity gains were eventually offset by demographic pressures, which drove down wages while also leading to higher food prices and lower overall living standards. Comparatively speaking, the North Sea region continued to increase agricultural output and maintain higher standards of living for longer than the rest of the continent. This was due to the use of animal power and manure to increase farm productivity, which in turn provided the means to offset population growth by importing grains. Yet, despite these productivity gains, wages of agricultural workers remained below those in the cities, which further stimulated urbanisation in the long run.

Higher wages in cities meant that more labourers could use their purchasing power to afford education. By one estimate, between 1500 and 1800 literacy in England and the Netherlands increased from six to ten percent to fifty-three to sixty-eight percent, respectively. By contrast, wages in Southern and Eastern Europe remained lower as were literacy rates, which remained below twenty percent. At the same time, a greater supply of skilled labour explains the lower skill premium in the North Sea region. As higher wages also imply higher opportunity costs for not working, this constellation may explain the emergence of what scholarship calls the industrious revolution: it is held that higher wages afforded skilled workers the ability to buy imported goods (tea, coffee, sugar), which served as direct 'rewards' for their higher productivity.

Fig. 1: Medieval illustration of men harvesting wheat with reaping-hooks, on a calendar page for August. Queen Mary's Psalter (Ms. Royal 2. B. VII), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons. wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Reeve_and_Serfs.jpg.

Partially Free Labour: Tenurial Relations, Subjection, and Serfdom

While cities offered many opportunities for free labour, rural areas were typically characterised by various forms of partially free labour. Despite the decline of Europe's agricultural working population, the overwhelming majority of farmers and leaseholders tilled plots they did not own in their own name. Typically, ownership was concentrated in the hands of either the ecclesiastical or secular landlords, who could either be legal (e.g., convents, corporations) or natural persons (individuals). This system of property ownership revolved around the consignation of payment (rent) in exchange for land use (usufruct) rights, and it is known as 'land tenure'. Historically, the system can be traced back to the Middle Ages. It existed until the French Revolution West of the Rhine, and East of the Rhine it continued well into the second half of the nineteenth century.

Throughout the early modern period, the multi-dimensional personal relationship between landlord and the resident tenant population continued to predominate. Scholarship refers to this highly variegated system as 'demesne lordship': a distinct power hierarchy deriving mainly from property relations and tenurial status, which could also include various forms of personal bondage of the tenant (and his family) to the landowner. This basic principle was found all over early modern Europe, although it varied widely in its concrete manifestations according to regional and local circumstances. This

relationship is known as 'subjection'—meaning the legal status of domination of landlords over the resident population. This status was primarily connected to landownership, but it could also extend to the administration of justice by the landlord and, in its most hierarchical expressions, included control over subjects' marital states, succession duties, as well as mobility restrictions.

While tenurial relations and subjection characterised all of Europe, 'serfdom' had a much more limited geographical extent. Under serfdom, the landowner concentrated in their hands powers of land tenure, the administration of justice, and personal bondage. Unlike tenurial relations or subjection, the landlord enjoyed much greater discretion over the resident serfs, including the specific right to acquire, sell, and/or transfer serfs from one property title to another. Serfdom as a social system evolved most fully in parts of Schleswig-Holstein, Mecklenburg and (Western) Pomerania, in the Baltics (present-day Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), Russia, Moldavia, and Wallachia, as well as—to a lesser degree—in parts of Hungary and Transylvania. The central element of serfdom was economic co-dependency, which meant that both lords *and* serfs enjoyed rights and mutual obligations, such as the landlord's duty to help their serfs in times of hardship, famine, disease, and war in exchange for the serfs' labour duties. Because serfdom resurfaced in these regions after a period of relative decline in the late Middle Ages, scholarship also refers to these phenomena as 'refeudalisation' or the 'second serfdom'.

Another distinction which emerged over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries between tenurial relations, subjection, and serfdom derives from the fact that in some regions there also existed forms of 'hereditary subjection', meaning that the landlords' power automatically extended over the tenants' children. While this practice existed all across Europe, additional burdens deriving from it were greater in East-Central Europe, especially in terms of forced labour rents (*corvée*, or *robota/robot*).

Apart from the changing normative frameworks that governed these relationships, the practices of subjection and serfdom in particular varied greatly across time and space. There exists no single legislative or executive act that unambiguously and unchangingly established either as a 'system' in any area. Conditions and relations between property owners and the resident population changed gradually, if in a non-linear fashion, and the characteristics of these mutual ties were continually changing as well.

Seigneurial interference with the tenants' freedom of mobility, the administration of justice, property rights, and (forced) labour rents manifested themselves differently across early modern Europe. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, tighter control was imposed over the landlords' own titles—their 'demesne lordship', i.e., those areas that were not cultivated by the tenants. Obviously, the local availability of resources, climatic conditions, and

the possibilities (and limitations) of preindustrial production influenced the varying manifestations of the demesne economy. From the eighteenth century onwards, however, expansion of the state power gradually encroached on the sway held by the landlords over the resident population, a process which coincided with the liberalisation of labour relations.

Unfree Labour: Slavery, Indentured Servitude, Convicts, and Conscription

Apart from these two analytical groups, there existed a third category in early modern Europe, which consisted of individuals or groups that could neither decide on the type of work they carried out, nor enjoy freedom of movement: these were slaves, indentured servants, convicts, and conscripts.

The institution of slavery is about as old as civilisation itself, and it denotes people who were the personal property of their owners and could be bought, transferred, and sold at will. Under Roman Law, a slave was defined as anyone who had either been captured in battle, been born to an enslaved mother, been sentenced to slavery as a criminal punishment, or who had sold themselves to redeem debts. Infidels, heretics, and pagans could also be enslaved. While many of these legal stances withered away over the course of the Middle Ages, indentured servants (who did unpaid work to repay debt, a condition of subjugation which carried across generations) as well as convicts remained an important source of labour. While serfdom might also fit (partially) into this category, both convicts and indentured servitude possessed even less freedom of action. Through history, unfree labour was a crucial source of largely unskilled labour in agriculture, construction, transportation, entertainment, and warfare, even though there were also skilled slaves who often performed vital administrative tasks.

In the Middle Ages, the spread of Christianity and canon law gradually limited slavery in most of Europe. While non-Christians could still be enslaved, Christianity forbade Christians from holding other Christians as slaves. The disappearance of enslaved Christians facilitated the emergence of the various forms of partially free labour. These developments were more fully complete in Western Europe, with England abolishing the slave trade in 1102; however, in Russia, slavery remained legal until 1723.

Slavery as an institution continued to exist in Europe and its colonies, although it remained limited to non-Christians or tied to personal indebtedness (chattel slavery). In Europe, non-Christian (and often black) slaves were frequently 'collected' by powerful rulers, while in the Ottoman Empire slavery remained a common practice. The most (in-)famous form of slavery in the Ottoman Empire was the *devşirme*, or 'blood tax', which referred to the forcible

induction of Balkan Christian children into the Ottoman state institutions, especially the administration and the elite Janissary corps.

European expansion from the eleventh century onwards also made use of slave labour. While there were strong continuities with (late) antiquity, the Crusades gave Christian proprietors the opportunity to construct a (partially) slave-powered overseas plantation economy (oriented around cotton, rice, and sugar cane). At first located mainly in the (Eastern) Mediterranean, the systematic use and subsequent importation of slaves on a large scale to toil in overseas mines and plantations was eventually employed across the Atlantic from the fifteenth century onwards.

The discovery of the Americas and the sea route to the Indian Ocean gave rise to European colonialism, which became a major driving force in the diffusion and growth of the triangular slave trade between Africa, the Americas, and Europe. Between 1519 and 1867, around twelve to thirteen million enslaved Africans were sold to Portuguese, British, French, Dutch, and Spanish merchants and forcibly relocated across the Atlantic. Competition among West African states was at the root of the Atlantic slave trade, which was fuelled by the exchange of slaves for European weapons and goods. This dynamic led to a vicious cycle with severe long-term consequences for economic development.

As elsewhere, slavery in the Americas was dreadful, with the overwhelming majority of enslaved people ending up on Caribbean and South American plantations and mines owned by Western European proprietors and investors. especially from the mid-seventeenth century onwards. Slaves were used to produce export commodities (such as cotton, or sugar molasses) to be consumed by high-earning wage labourers in Northwestern Europe. These dynamics paved the way for the eventual emergence of a second triangular trade that saw European manufactured goods such as textiles exported to Africa and the Americas in exchange for slaves and plantation products, respectively.

Proprietors, investors, and craftsmen also employed other means to secure inexpensive labour. The two most important categories were 'indentured servitude' (contract-based work without pay for a specified period of time, which included apprenticeships) and convict labour. Indentured workers could be transferred from one employer to another, and these migrant workers constituted a sizeable part of the original population of Britain's colonies in North America. While indentured servitude and debt bondage were intimately related, prisoners of war and convicts were also often shipped overseas.

In warfare, prisoners and convicts were also used as forced labour, with impressment (forced military service) a subset of these categories. From the eighteenth century onwards, capital punishment was gradually replaced by chain gangs and, in more recent times, convict leasing.

Great Britain eventually outlawed the slave trade in 1807, and slavery itself was gradually abolished during the nineteenth century (Denmark-Norway, 1803; United Kingdom, 1833; Brazil, 1888). This was certainly a move towards freer labour relations, but various forms of unfree labour—ranging from universal compulsory conscription (introduced in the 1790s), to convict leasing, and various forms of modern chattel slavery—continue to exist even in the present.

Conclusion

For the most part, the seemingly clear-cut distinction between free and unfree labour obscures the fact that the distinction is in fact one of degree rather than kind. Furthermore, all of these categories were found all over early modern Europe. Research since the 1960s has shown that early modern economic development—as in most contemporary developing countries—hinged on the intensification of labour. Adapted to local and regional circumstances and typically supported by state power, pre-industrial landowners and merchant-capitalists invested in productive capabilities, ranging from agricultural improvements to proto-industrial ventures to integration into long-distance trade. These dynamics were highly variegated and geographically diffuse. Hence, rather than dividing Europe between, for example, (free) western and (unfree) eastern parts, it is more helpful to think about economically active 'hotspots', both rural and urban, embedded within distinctively pre-modern social relations that persisted well into the nineteenth century.

Discussion questions

1. What are the main differences between serfdom and slavery?

2. This chapter argues that the difference between free and unfree labour was gradual in early modern Europe. What does this mean and what were the reasons that the difference was not more pronounced?

3. In which ways does our understanding of labour differ from early modern Europe? Why?

Suggested reading

Allen, Robert C., 'Economic Structure and Agricultural Productivity in Europe, 1300–1800', *European Review of Economic History* 4:3 (2000), 1–25.

Allen, Robert C., 'The Great Divergence in European Wages and Prices from the Middle Ages to the First World War', *Explorations in Economic History* 38:4 (2001), 411–447.

Brenner, Robert, 'The Rises and Declines of Serfdom in Medieval and Early Modern Europe', in *Serfdom and Slavery: Studies in Legal Bondage*, ed. by Michael L. Bush (London and New York: Longman, 1996), pp. 247–276.

Broadberry, Stephen, and Mikołaj Malinowski, 'Living Standards in the Long-Run: The Place of Central, East and South-East Europe in the Divergence Debate', in *The Economic History of Central, East and South-East Europe, 1800 to the Present Day*, ed. by Matthias Morys (London and New York: Routledge, 2021), pp. 13–38.

Cerman, Markus, *Villagers and Lords in Eastern Europe, 1300–1800* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

Domar, Evsey D., 'The Causes of Slavery or Serfdom: A Hypothesis', *The Journal of Economic History* 30:1 (1970), 18–32.

Malanima, Paolo, *Pre-modern European Economy* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009).

Ogilvie, Sheilagh C., and Markus Cerman, 'The Theories of Proto-Industrialization', in *European Proto-Industrialization*, ed. by Sheilagh C. Ogilvie and Markus Cerman (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), pp. 1–12.

Pamuk, Şevket, 'The Black Death and the Origins of the "Great Divergence" across Europe, 1300–1600', *European Review of Economic History* 11: 3 (2007), 289–317.

5.4.2 Labour in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Corinne Boter and Jürgen Schmidt

Introduction

Nineteenth-century Europe witnessed momentous changes in the character and organisation of labour. The secondary sector of production and manufacturing—in contrast to the primary, agricultural sector, and the tertiary sector of services—expanded as more and more countries embarked on industrialisation, which eventually led to an expansion of the tertiary sector as well. While for most of human history the majority of people's livelihoods had been based on their own means of production, working for wages became the norm as industrialisation progressed. This increasing dependence on wages spurred the development of labour movements, which had the goal of protecting the wage labourer against mistreatment by their capitalist employer. Indeed, working conditions in both agriculture and industry significantly deteriorated during the early stages of industrialisation, which would eventually lead to protective labour legislation. These changes have been thoroughly researched by labour historians who, in trying to make sense of the complex term 'labour', have arrived at different definitions. First, work can be paid or unpaid. The former includes all types of work that are performed for a (financial) reward, including both self-employed and waged labour. The latter is performed without any type of remuneration, such as domestic labour within one's own household or voluntary work. Second, labour can be unfree, semi-free, or free. Unfree (or forced) labour is a work relation in which people are put to work against their own wishes. Modern Europe relied heavily on unfree and semi-free labour in the form of slavery and coolie labour, but mostly outside the borders of Europe itself, in the countries it had colonised (such as on the plantations in the West and East Indies). Although semi-free labour also existed within Europe in the form of serfdom, most labour within Europe was considered 'free', although the extent to which factory labours actually

enjoyed freedom can be debated. Third, historians distinguish between blue-collar and white-collar work, the former being physical work in agriculture, industry, and crafts, and the latter being non-physical service work. Using these distinctions, this chapter will give an overview of the most important changes that took place in the agricultural, manufacturing, and service sectors as well as the social and political consequences of these shifts.

Fig. 1: The Atelier of Mór Erdélyi, Bean peeling (1908), Fortepan 86885, Magyar Földrajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Geographical Museum], https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?id=86885.

Agriculture

During the nineteenth century, the European agricultural sector underwent drastic changes in labour organisation, technology, and output. Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, an 'agricultural revolution' took place in Britain, with increasing agricultural output and rapid population growth as a result. Many historians believe that this agricultural revolution paved the way for the Industrial Revolution (further discussed in the next section), because it freed up labour due to rising productivity per farmer. However, this argument is not uncontested. For instance, other historians have emphasised the gradual nature of agricultural change and speak of an evolution rather than a revolution. According to them, agricultural development was a sequence of innovations and inventions, including the introduction of the four-field rotation system and land enclosures during the early modern period and the invention of artificial fertiliser in the nineteenth century. There is nonetheless consensus on the fact that these developments had a profound impact on agricultural productivity, with Britain leading the charts up until at least the turn of the

twentieth century. However, during the nineteenth century, countries in continental Europe started to catch up—especially the Netherlands, Denmark, and Belgium—and Southern and Eastern European countries also experienced significant increases in agricultural output.

Because of these changes the relative share of the total labour force working in the agricultural sector significantly decreased in nineteenth-century Europe. The rapidly expanding industrial and service sectors absorbed large chunks of the agricultural labour force, and this decline in agricultural employment was made possible by the aforementioned increases in agricultural productivity. The world-wide relative decrease of the agricultural labour force happened gradually, starting in Western Europe roughly around 1800. For instance, in Britain this share dropped from forty percent in 1800 to less than ten percent in 1900, and in Belgium from sixty-two percent to thirty-eight percent in the same period. Southern and Eastern European labour markets remained dominated by agriculture for much longer, but here too the agricultural labour force would eventually shrink—although by 1900, the agricultural sector was still the most important employer in these regions. It is important to realise that an *absolute* decrease of the agricultural labour force did not occur until much later, but roughly followed the same pattern as the relative decline, i.e., starting in Western Europe around 1850 and slowly moving to other countries during the subsequent century.

Besides the regional differences in the relative and absolute size of the agricultural population, there were also notable differences inside Europe in the way labour was organised—particularly in the use of free and unfree labour. The medieval institution of serfdom, which tied agricultural labourers to the land on which they worked in exchange for protection, was gradually abolished in Western and Central Europe during the early modern era and many countries officially abolished this practice during the period of the French Revolution. Conversely, in some Eastern European countries, serfdom persisted for much longer. For instance, in Russia serfdom was only abolished in 1861, a change that had been set in motion when the country found itself on the losing side of the Crimean War (1853–1856). Right before the emancipation of the serfs, almost half of the rural population of European Russia was legally bound to the land they worked, although there were considerable regional differences. It has been argued that the abolishment of serfdom was an important reason for the surge in Russian agricultural productivity during the second half of the nineteenth century. According to this argument, peasants were incentivised to work harder and more effectively, for instance by making better use of technology. Therefore, one must bear in mind the great social and economic impact of the abolition of serfdom in Eastern Europe. Elsewhere in nineteenth-century Europe, the use of unfree labour was rare. People either

worked for wages on a large farm or ran their own agricultural business. Whether large-scale farms with an extensive wage-labour force or small(er) family businesses without wage labourers dominated the labour market varied in different periods and from country to country.

Fig. 2: David Octavius Hill, St. Rollox Chemical Works at the opening of the Garnkirk and Glasgow railway (1831), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:StRolloxChemical_1831.jpg.

The Industrial Revolution and the 'Social Question'

As mentioned above, the 'Industrial Revolution', which started in Britain halfway through the eighteenth century, instigated important economic and social changes in nineteenth-century Europe. Although the timing, causes, and even the term 'Industrial Revolution' itself are heavily contested, it is accepted that all over Europe, albeit at different moments in time and in varying ways, economies and populations were affected by rapidly changing production techniques, propelled by technological innovation. The steam engine was the most important of these technological advances, making it possible to use heat, as opposed to raw muscle power, to produce motion. These economic and technological changes in turn affected economic structures, labour organisation, and social legislation all over Europe.

During the first stages of industrialisation, the share of employment in manufacturing expanded while the relative agricultural labour force shrank. Developments in the primary and secondary sectors went hand-in-hand, although the direction of causality is debated. It has long been argued that increasing outputs in British agriculture freed up a considerable workforce to

move to industry. Others have argued instead that it was the relatively high-paid industrial activities which pulled people from the countryside to cities, which in turn forced the agricultural sector to modernise and mechanise, a process which even further accelerated urbanisation. No matter the exact causation, economic structures in most European countries changed dramatically. During later stages of industrialisation, the service sector gained in importance as well. Intensifying bureaucratisation boosted the demand for white-collar workers such as secretaries, which opened up new jobs for (mostly young, unmarried) women. Moreover, improved methods of communication—including railroads and the telegraph—created new possibilities for the global movement of people, products, and ideas, which likewise expanded work in the service sector.

These economic changes also had major consequences for the ways in which labour was organised. Manufacturing was largely displaced from homes and small workshops and moved to large factories. Modern machinery simply took up too much space and required vast capital investments, something only wealthy entrepreneurs could do. Consequently, an increasing number of labourers became dependent on wage labour as opposed to their own means of production. With the spread of the factory system, the production process became more specialised and formalised. One worker became responsible for only one specific part of the production process, a system which significantly lowered the costs of labour. Seeing that labour was increasingly concentrated in factories, it was possible to coordinate a specialised work force. These changes initially met resistance from labourers: the Luddites, a famous example, were a group of textile workers who destroyed machinery because they felt the equipment would make their skills useless.

Even though most European economies grew significantly as a result of their growing manufacturing sectors, there were serious downsides to these developments. As a result of rapid urbanisation and population growth, living conditions in exploding factory cities, such as the English textile city of Manchester, were very poor. In Manchester, the small houses which sheltered the new industrial workers were built closely together and lacked proper sanitation systems or clean drinking water. The working conditions in factories were equally bad, with unhygienic working environments and insufficient regard for workers' safety. Moreover, poverty and unemployment were widespread. The dismal working and living conditions of the working class could, at a certain point, no longer be ignored by governments or higher social classes. It came to be seen as a problem to be solved, and was referred to as the 'social question'. Protective legislation was one of the ways in which governments tried to improve the living standards of the working class. The first laws were designed to protect women and children, curtailing their

working hours and prohibiting very young children from working in factories entirely. Most of these early laws, however, did not apply to women and children working in agriculture. Furthermore, labourers were increasingly protected against misfortune as a result of accidents, unemployment, and old age (pensions).

Initiatives to solve the social question often had a heavily moralising tone, aiming to 'civilise' the working class. One important aspect of this mission was to keep the married woman at home, making sure that her family was well taken care off, while her husband was out earning money. These shifting social norms changed the organisation of labour within households. All over Europe, women's *formal* labour force participation decreased during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. However, research has shown that the transition to a 'male breadwinner society', in which the husband was the sole wage earner, was far from complete by the start of the twentieth century, and married women found other ways to generate an income besides working full-time outside their homes. Such work could include labour in the home industry or the cultivation of a plot of land. Indeed, despite the increasing importance of wage labour, subsistence agriculture remained an important additional resource for many households throughout rural Europe. Moreover, the expanding service sector also opened up new job opportunities for unmarried women whose educational attainment had improved significantly in most European countries over the course of the nineteenth century.

Labour Movements

The labouring class did not stand idle in the face of the fundamental processes of structural change, industrialisation, urbanisation, and the social question. Although labour movements have a very long tradition, and activities like strikes had been long-practiced, during the nineteenth century labour unions emerged all over Europe. These unions eventually developed into strong organisations with mass membership and economic, political, and social influence. The factory labourer became the symbol of the suffering working class, forced into dismal conditions of life and employment by capitalist entrepreneurs.

Throughout the nineteenth century, different actors participated in the process of improving the situation of the working classes and in finding answers to the social question. The nation state began with legal regulations, elements of the middle classes advocated for more humane conditions, employers offered paternalistic support, and the workers organised themselves to stand up for their own interests. In the first three quarters of the nineteenth century, mainly young journeymen (with their knowledge of handicraft organisations) built

the core group of the movement in associations, trade unions, and parties. In the first half of the century, journeymen and workers in the putting-out system were active in Luddism—that is, following the example of the Luddites and destroying machinery—as forms of action beyond associational models. Later in the century, factory workers increasingly participated in these organisations as well. Especially in the labour parties, which emerged in the 1860s, left-wing intellectuals also played an important role.

The ideological groundings of the labour movements were shaped by intellectuals as well as labourers. In France and Germany, so-called 'craft socialism' became very prominent, promoting the idea that a just and equal society could be 'crafted'. Likewise, the demands of the democratic Chartist movement in England, which aimed to give the labouring class a political voice by pleading for universal suffrage (for men), were formulated and carried by skilled workers. Such socialist/communist ideas culminated in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, a pamphlet written by the German philosophers Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) and published in 1848. The Manifesto was above all an analysis of past and present class struggles and of how the capitalist society would eventually evolve into a socialist society.

The influence of the manifesto would remain limited for decades after its publication, but its ideas were ultimately adopted and used as the foundation of labour movements across Europe, albeit in different ways. For example, in Great Britain a closer connection between labour and liberals existed, while in Southern Europe anarchist movements gained influence. The aims and values of labour movements were threefold. First, they aimed at improving working conditions through higher wages, shorter working hours, and valuing (physical) work. Second, their political demands focussed on participation, democratisation, and freedom. Third, an equal society, solidarity, and a vision of a 'classless society' represented the social aims of the labour movement. In the fight for respect as worker and citizen these aims coalesced and found symbols, metaphors, and cultural expression. The aims of white-collar organisations, which developed very late in the nineteenth century, however, concentrated much more on preserving their already privileged positions in society and at work.

To achieve their aims, the labour movement possessed a great variety of practices and actions. Luddism as a direct form of violence disappeared in the first half of the nineteenth century due to more effective forms of protest and more durable and powerful organisations. Instead, strikes became a powerful weapon, ranging from small-scale events on the shop floor to nationwide mass strikes. In the organisation of these strikes, trade unions played an important role, although they sometimes shied away from using this weapon where futile strikes could imperil their organisations. Besides grassroots activism and trade

union organisations, political engagement and political associations came to the fore. Although political labour parties faced state persecution throughout Europe, their success in many countries demonstrated that persecution was not the answer to this political-societal rise of the labouring class. In addition, mutual help and insurance fostered solidarity among the workers and was an important starting point for national insurance schemes against the risks of illness, unemployment, work accidents, and old age beginning from the late nineteenth century. Finally, international cooperation strengthened the power of the labour movements and demonstrated the importance of transnational networking—that this ideal of transnational cooperation would ultimately collapse in 1914 with the outbreak of the First World War was not foreseeable in the nineteenth century.

Despite their success, labour movements contained unsolved problems. Because the labour unions and parties had their origins in craft traditions and associational organisation patterns, they mainly represented skilled workers. In striving for respectability, the 'lumpenproletariat'—as the lowest societal strata had been called by Marx and Engels—was excluded. Moreover, a consciousness of the suppressed in colonial peripheries only partially developed and many labour movement leaders believed in a European, imperial civilising mission. Nonetheless, there was criticism of colonial regimes and slavery put forward by the labour movements. Finally, labour movements were shaped by male behaviour and membership. It took a long fight for female workers to be accepted as comrades on equal terms and not as rivals on the labour market. Since this fight was only partially successful, female labour organisations developed in parallel with the men's organisations

In conclusion, European labour movements achieved both successes and failures in the nineteenth century. Despite the rhetoric of class struggle, a socialist revolution did not take place in Europe, except the short-lived Paris Commune of 1871—an upheaval of the left-wing, republican, proletarian Paris population against the conservative-monarchic government leading to the first political instance of a council republic. The supporters favoured republicanism and advocated radical socialist change. The Commune was ultimately destroyed by the French Army in a massacre which killed thousands. In general, nineteenth-century revolutions were liberal, middle-class actions fighting for parliamentarism, democracy, and political freedom. These were also the aims of the labour movements. But the labour movement's fight for social equality and against exploitation and alienation did not turn into revolutionary reality. The level of political power achieved by the working class also remained limited. In Great Britain, the cooperation between liberals and labour helped the trade unionists enter parliament. In France, individual

socialist politicians only briefly participated in bourgeois government. In Germany, with the biggest labour movements in Europe, working-class organisations were strong, but due to the political system only had limited influence. In Russia, socialists continued to be persecuted. At the same time, throughout the nineteenth century an integration process occurred in which labour movements became much more closely attached to their nation states, gained influence on the municipal level, and helped to improve the economic-social situation of the working class.

Conclusion

The composition and character of European labour markets changed drastically during the nineteenth century as a result of increasing agricultural productivity and industrialisation. The expanding industrial and service sectors absorbed large parts of the agricultural labour force and wage labour, as opposed to self-employment, became increasingly important. Initially, these developments had a negative impact on working-class people, who more often than not lived in unhealthy houses, worked in dangerous places, and did all of this without any (financial) protection against misfortune. During the second half of the nineteenth century, labourers all over Europe started to organise themselves into labour unions and eventually managed to influence government policies, which ultimately resulted in protective legislation and increasing social welfare systems.

Discussion questions

1. What was the 'social question' and what role did the changes in the labour market in nineteenth-century Europe play in it?

2. How did the role of women on the labour market change during the nineteenth century?

3. Is the *Communist Manifesto* still relevant today? Why? Why not?

Suggested reading

Allen, Robert C., *The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Bensimon, Fabrice, Quentin Deluermoz and Jeanne Moisand, eds, *"Arise Ye Wretched of the Earth": The First International in a Global Perspective* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

Berger, Stefan, 'Labor Movements', in *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. by Stefan Berger (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006), pp. 164–177.

Chase, Malcolm, *Chartism: A New History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

Geary, Dick, ed., *Labour and Socialist Movements in Europe before 1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

Heerma van Voss, Lex, ed., *Class and Other Identities: Gender, Religion and Ethnicity in the Writing of European Labour History* (New York: Berghahn, 2002).

Humphries, J., *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Prothero, Iorwerth, *Radical Artisans in England and France, 1830–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Vries, Jan de, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behavior and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

5.4.3 Labour and Forced Labour in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Ondřej Daniel, Jürgen Schmidt, and Zsuzsanna Varga

Introduction

Through the twentieth and early twenty-first century, changes in patterns of work and labour in Europe occurred on a tremendous scale. At the beginning of this period in most of the European states the majority of people still worked in agriculture. By 2020, in the countries of the Eurozone only three percent of the employed labour force worked in agriculture, but seventy-four percent worked in the service-oriented tertiary sector. Work in industry declined, as did physical and manual work more generally. In this respect, the characterisation of the Global South as workhouse for the West has a lot of truth. However, one should bear in mind exceptions to the rule, such as—for example—the fact that in Europe in 2018, 3.65 million people still worked in the automobile industry, with many still performing manual work on the shop floor.

Besides these socioeconomic changes further developments reshaped practices of labour in Europe. The male breadwinner model was contested, and the proportion of female workers in the labour force rose. However, this trend did not follow the same pattern everywhere, with significant national divergences after 1945. In Western Europe, France and Germany stood for different paths in female employment. In Eastern Europe—to a much higher degree—female labour was part of the system.

The organisation of work accelerated under mass production, and researchers often divide the twentieth century into Fordist- and Post-Fordist eras. Work became more productive, intense, and demanding. On the other hand, working hours per week and over the life-course decreased, and leisure time grew (see Figure 1). However, the experience of 'non-work' is mixed. Labour markets since 1900 underwent several periods of mass unemployment. Different forms of social insurance schemes throughout Europe sought to

minimise the risks of lost paid work due to unemployment, illness, or work accidents. Finally, work as a central value changed. Consumption, excitement, and experience became values to be pursued, beyond work as an end in itself.
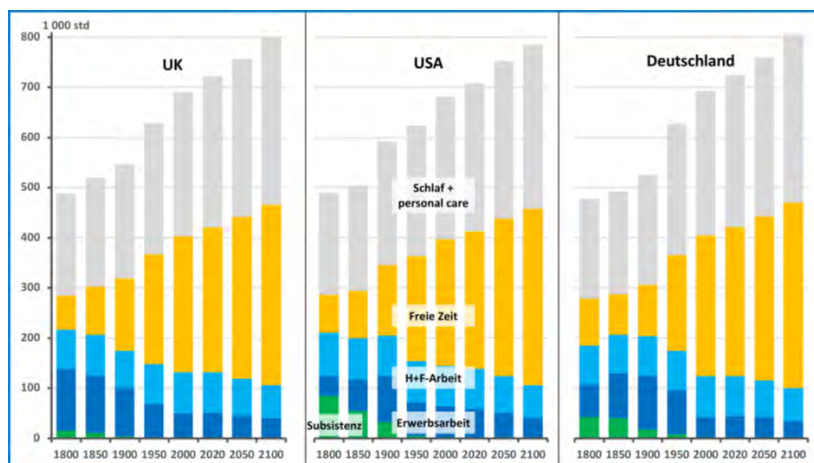
Fig. 1: Use of lifetime in Great Britain, the United States and Germany 1800–2100. Description: Grey—Sleep and personal care. Yellow—leisure. Light blue—Home and care work. Dark blue—Wage work. Green—Subsistence Work. For example, in 1900 life expectancy was about 540,000 hours. Of these hours about 100,000 hours were dedicated to wage work. *Source:* © Institut für die Geschichte und Zukunft der Arbeit (IGZA), *Matrix der Arbeit. Materialien zur Geschichte und Zukunft der Arbeit* (Bonn: J. H. W. Dietz, 2022) (in print).

Free and Unfree Labour

The First and Second World Wars, combined, ended about sixty million lives in Europe. Over this period, technological research was oriented towards the goal of building up military advantage, and—consequently—brought production, processing, transport, and storage to much more sophisticated levels. The introduction of supply chains increased both output and quality in practically all fields of the economy. This statement is true for the capitalist areas of Europe, but the Soviet bloc was also inspired and fascinated by the Fordist production regime.

Just as the Nazis or fascist dictators in Southern Europe decided to defame their local minority groups, whom they classified as enemies, and forced to work in labour camps, in some cases later death camps, Stalin and his subordinates did not hesitate in forcing those labelled as 'class enemies' into forced labour camps. There were hundreds of labour camps in the Soviet Union between 1930 and 1953, in which first internal enemies and then, after the Second World War, prisoners of war and civilians deported from the occupied territories were forced to work under extremely poor conditions. The wider world knew about everyday life of exiles in the Gulag, the Soviet forced-labour camp system from works such as *The Gulag Archipelago* (1973) by Russian author and political prisoner Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1918–2008).

In Eastern Europe, in countries under Soviet influence, the average citizen also gained new experiences of work during the decades of socialism. Through nationalisation and collectivisation, the state became the main employer. In the rhetoric of these regimes, this put an end to exploitation, and as a result, the worker's attitude to work also changed. Work became a moral duty and the source of self-pride. The planned economy achieved full employment. However, if someone did not want to work under the socialist system, it was a criminal offence. In socialism, more women took up places in the workforce than ever before. The lack of male labour due to the Second World War played a crucial role. However, state discourse emphasised employment as a prerequisite for female emancipation. The female tractor driver became a symbol of the modern socialist woman. Conversely, the woman who ran her household and raised her children became a symbol of anachronism. From the late 1940s, large masses of women were undertaking paid work not only in the socialist industry but also in collectivised agriculture.

Following the great migrations which took place after 1945 within Europe, it is worth noting the beginning of postcolonial migration. The collapse of colonial regimes outside Europe triggered a massive flow of immigrants, who started to change the community models in most Western European countries. In most cases, the newcomers were given the opportunity to find employment only in low-paid sectors of the economy. In other cases, local entrepreneurs found new business channels, established through those who were privileged to have good personal contacts in their countries of origin. During the post-war reconstruction, labour migration was also organised in different states according to the model of guest workers (*Gastarbeiter*).

Fig. 2: Factory workers working on bathroom fixtures to be baked in tunnel ovens at Royal Sphinx in Maastricht, the Netherlands (ca. 1960–ca. 1970), CC BY 3.0, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sphinx_sanitairproductie,_jaren_60_%285%29.jpg.

The collapse of socialist systems in 1989–1990 led to a complete restructuring of their economies. After previous full employment, the emergence of mass and long-term unemployment caused a huge shock. After 1989, the flow of labour from Eastern Europe to the West was very diverse. Many of those who moved from the East to the West had solid skills, and thus were able to receive well-paid jobs. Some of them found positions as executives in newly formed enterprises in emerging markets. Women from Eastern Europe in some cases found employment as sex workers. Migrants from the East also found themselves caring for the elderly. The accession of the former socialist countries to the European Union (EU) has made labour migration from East to West a mass phenomenon. Forced labour in the form of human trafficking, as well as new and less organised forms of exploitation of migrant workers in the EU, can be highlighted at the end of the twentieth century. Intra-EU labour migration has taken on such a scale that some regions and countries—typically those in the South and East of the EU—provide the workforce for the service-based industries in the economic centres of the EU. There were also special regimes negotiated for workers from non-EU countries, in order to enable large segments of industries and agriculture to profit from their workforce.

Since the mid-1970s, finding countries with cheaper labour became a prime target for many European companies, and this cost-cutting strategy became a vital element of industrial competitiveness. These processes led to the de-industrialisation of the West from at least the second half of the 1970s and accelerated in the fully globalised economies at the end of the twentieth century in the form of offshoring. This meant simply closing down sites of production (typically factories) in one part of Europe and moving them either within the enlarged EU to countries with lower wages or beyond (for instance to Turkey, Morocco, China, or Indonesia). The automotive industry is an illustrative example of this process, with many automotive factories closed in France and Belgium and re-opened in the Czech Republic, Romania, and beyond.

It took the decision-makers around fifty years to realise that by offshoring production and reaching the target of lower labour costs, they were undercutting the economy in their own countries. This is because those who were made redundant due to the closure of their workplace could not so easily acquire new skills and find an alternative source of income. This issue has become far more visible lately, with the widespread introduction of artificial intelligence, bots and algorithms.

In the present day, the rhetoric of free and unfree labour has received new momentum. Over the past decade, there has been a growing pressure to replace human labour with artificial intelligence. At first this pressure was applied to manufacturing and assembly plants, to gradually make them more

and more productive. Just as military conflicts—like the two World Wars and, later, the local wars of the Cold War period—triggered technological leaps, the Covid-19 pandemic has revolutionised office work. Online activities have transformed private households into both family and office premises, with undefined legal frameworks for this new and unforeseen situation. It remains an open question as to whether this new development will open new doors to autonomous, self-determined, and fulfilling free labour.

Involuntary Non-work and the Welfare State

Depending on wage work means that periods of non-work in which one does not earn money can lead to existential crisis. Hence, the welfare state is here understood with regard to the risks of non-work. Aspects of the welfare state relating to housing, distribution, education, and tax politics are set aside. The risks which could cause one to fall into the existential crisis of non-work are omnipresent. However, how these risks are perceived and how one may seek to avoid their negative consequences have changed over time. The steps by which different risks were protected through social insurance schemes show which dangers were perceived as more legitimate than others. The introduction of nationwide, compulsory social insurance schemes shows a process whereby first work accidents, then illness, old age, and unemployment and, finally, late in the twentieth century, long-term care and phases of upbringing were insured in succession.

In this long process we find many different actors. The labour movements were spurring governments on with their demands and growing power. But many different political tactics and power considerations coincided in the emergence of social insurance schemes. In addition, discourses about work were important. An agreement that entrepreneurs and the state had responsibility for workers who were injured during their workday or could not attend work due to illness was easier to reach than an acknowledgment of similar responsibilities regarding unemployment. That nationwide unemployment insurance was often the last type of insurance to be implemented had a lot to do with the long debate about 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor. Was someone who did not find work simply lazy, and therefore undeserving of support? It took a long time until the view that unemployment was a permanent threat to (property-less) employees in the capitalist era was accepted (and even then, it was not accepted everywhere).

The importance of insurance schemes is illustrated by the fact that public unemployment protests have gained little success and that the interests of the unemployed are difficult to organise. In addition, not being a supplicant, but an active person with legal entitlement gave individuals self-consciousness in

a period of crisis marked by doubts and fear, as the pioneering social study about the 'unemployed community of Marienthal' in 1933 demonstrated.

Due to economic cycles, unemployment varies across time and space. In a broader perspective we can define four phases of unemployment patterns (see Figure 3). From the late nineteenth century to the First World War, unemployment rates were relatively low and cyclical variations were moderate. This changed after 1918 and shot upward in the years of the Great Depression. After the Second World War, development was different: for about twenty years most Western European states faced an economic boom with very low unemployment rates. Since the 1970s, with the oil crisis, over-production and economic change, unemployment increased. Further increases hit after 1990 in the Eastern European states—where unemployment had previously been low and relatively hidden from view—and the peaks of the economic cycle were higher than at the beginning of the twentieth century.
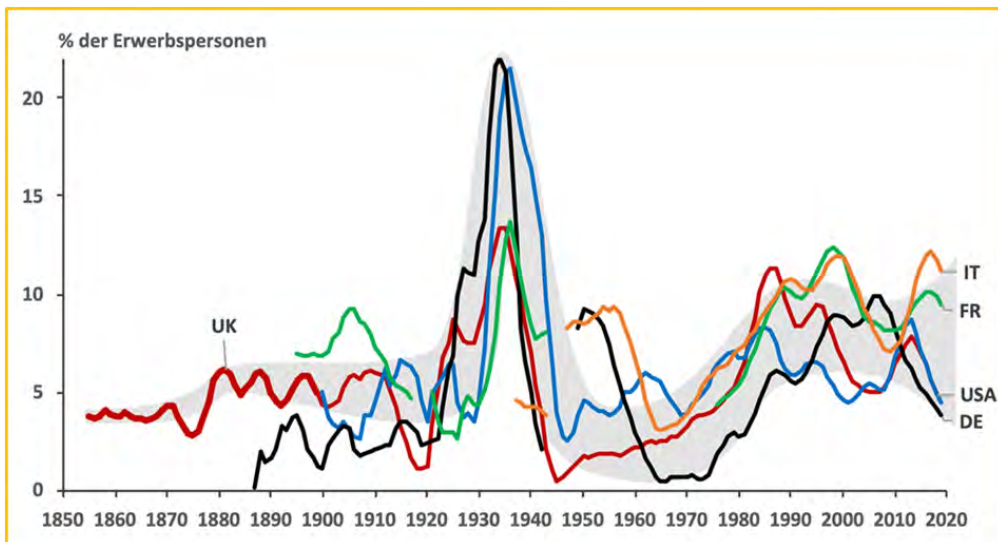
Fig. 3: Development of Unemployment in European Countries and the US 1850–2020. Unemployment in percentage of people in the labour market. DE—Germany. FR—France. IT—Italy. UK—United Kingdom. USA—United States of America. *Source:* © Institut für die Geschichte und Zukunft der Arbeit (IGZA), *Matrix der Arbeit. Materialien zur Geschichte und Zukunft der Arbeit* (Bonn: J. H. W. Dietz, 2022).

Especially from the 1950s onwards, social insurance was impressively extended. Coverage rates rose and benefits became better and higher. The number of days without paid work secured by insurance was also impressive. For instance, the number of paid sick days among the approximately 14 million members of the health insurance system in Germany already amounted to almost 114 million in 1910. And in 2000 in Europe, each person got between six (Lithuania) and twenty-four (Czechia) paid sick day allowances (see Figure 4).

Number of paid sick days per person and year

Country	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018
Austria	14,4	13,3	12,7	12	13	12,9	12,8	12,3	12,5	13,1
Belgium				9	9,7			12,3	13,4	
Czech Rep.	23,6	24,7	21,4	21,2	19	13,7	12,6	13,5	15,4	16,3
Denmark	8,3	8,5	8		9	8,6	8,1	8,3	8,4	8,5
Estonia	9,8	9	9,9	10,3	11,3	8,2	7,3	8,1	8,5	9
France	8	9	8,8	8,4	7,8	8,2	8,3	8,3	8,4	8,8
Great Britain	7,8	6,8	6,8	7					6,3	5,9
German	16,5	16,3	14,2	13,3	14,6	15,9	17,6	18,1	18,6	20
Hungary	14,7	15,4	13,8	12,7	11,9	10	6,9	7,2	8,4	8,8
Ireland						17,2	15,2	11,7	10,4	9,4
Lithuania	6,1	5,2	4,9	6,3	7,4	5,4	5,9	6,5	8,2	8,9
Luxembourg	11,7	12,4	13,3	9,7	10,1	10,8	12	11,7	11,8	12,1
Netherlands	14	14	11	11	11	11	10	10	10	11
Norway		18,6	17,4	17,2	17,9	17,1	16,4	16,2	15,9	15,8
Portugal	10,6	12,4	7,2	7,8	6,8	6,5	6,3	6,6	7,2	
Slovakia					12,6	14,7	15,6	11,9	12,1	14,2
Slovenia	13,8	14	13,4	11,5	10,8	12,3	12,2	11,3	12,2	13,5
Spain	9,2	10,6	11,8	12,4	11,7	10,7	9	9,4	11,1	12,3
Sweden	16,8	20,9	18	14	10,2	6,7	8,6	10,6	12,5	11,3

Fig. 4: Number of paid sick days per person and year, 2000–2018. *Source:* https://stats.oecd. org/index.aspx?queryid=30123. The OECD adopted the national data referring both to insured persons and in other cases (Denmark, Estonia, France, Ireland, Slovenia, UK) to the labour force (OECD Health Statistics 2020. Definitions, Sources and Methods, ibid.).

But the insurance of involuntary, non-work time was not a permanent success. As early as the late 1970s, with changes in the political economy (neoliberalism), political and social forces sought to roll back the social insurance system. After 1990, the end of the Cold War reinforced this trend.

The years after the global financial crisis of 2007–2008 and the Covid-19 pandemic (2020–2021) demonstrated the need for a strong welfare state. Short-term compensation prevented mass unemployment. In 2020, thirty-three out of thirty-six OECD countries used this labour market policy instrument during the Covid-19 crisis. Securing and improving the welfare state to protect people in times without paid work should be a European aim for the future.

Workers' Struggles For and Against Work

One can observe several patterns as the workers' movements of the twentieth century fought either for reform or revolution. As discussed in the previous paragraphs, labour movements, whether unionised or not, successfully

managed (depending on economic cycles) to put pressure on owners and the state in order to soften the most flagrant conditions of precarity, winning—for example—reforms such as health or social insurance. During the Cold War, the labour movements managed to effectively harness the fears of western states in order to create and maintain welfare state models that guaranteed steady wage growth and thus the overall improvement of working conditions, at least during the thirty years after the Second World War.

However, the role of trade unions as a mediating body between workers' and owners' interests was deeply questioned in some parts of Europe, for example in Italy in the 1960s and 1970s. The experience of workerism (*operaismo*) as a particular kind of labour movement resulted from the tumultuous industrialisation of the Italian Peninsula and the massive influx of labour migrants from the Italian South to the North (Lombardy, Piedmont, Emilia-Romagna). These workers started to question their working conditions as well as their living conditions, and began to formulate a particularly strong critique against the alienation of their work. By the end of the 1960s, Italian workers joined forces with the student movement, which defended the former against the interests of the owners, which were enforced by the police and fascist violence. Their critique of the social factory—an entire society organised as a place of production—enabled the spread of the workers' struggle into working-class neighbourhoods, and the creation of a self-help movement based on a collectively agreed reduction of the prices of food and services such as gas or electricity. In the East, a similar workers' struggle can be found in the independent and free-trade union 'Solidarity' (*Solidarność*) in Poland.

Nevertheless, after the 1973 oil crisis, a new political economy of radical liberalism began to dominate in the West and eventually broke both the welfare state and the labour movements. The results of this new ideology were the destruction of the centralised workplace (such as factories) by a fragmentation of the production cycle and the extensive use of sub-contracting. Some of the reforms achieved during the post-war decades were kept, but their distribution was deeply uneven among the different countries of the EU. The process of dismantling the welfare state in Europe was accelerated by the fall of the Soviet bloc in the early 1990s and the enlargement of the EU to include countries whose economies had been transformed by neoliberal shock therapy.

Changing Working-class Cultures

The changing nature of work in the twentieth century carried with it important shifts in working-class cultures. The gradual improvement of workers' literacy was an important trend with transformative results for both the nature of work itself and the conditions of the workers, who started to engage more

in the intellectual spheres of culture and politics. Popular culture emerged as a hybrid form situated between elite and folk culture, with an important element of consumerism to which workers were attracted in the periods of economic growth.

Generally, during the twentieth century, one can also observe the convergence of workers' culture with that of the 'middle classes'. Ideologically motivated critiques described these processes as 'embourgeoisement', with a new class category called the 'new petty bourgeoisie' and formed of supervisors and highly skilled workers. Different cultural changes among workers can nevertheless be observed according to generational divisions, as well as the geographical division between Western and Northern Europe on one side and Eastern and Southern Europe on the other. An illustrative model of these processes can be provided through the representation of workers in two movies depicting different working-class experiences, first in half of twentieth century and second at its end. The film *Bicycle Thieves* (1948) presented a social critique through the aesthetics of Italian neorealism. Its story centres around a long-term unemployed worker from Rome who suddenly receives a job offer with the condition of owning a bicycle as a means of transport to work. The bicycle is eventually stolen and the drama of the worker and his son searching for it in the streets of Rome underlines the critical necessity of work as a means of survival in the city. Shot almost fifty years later, the British film *The Full Monty* (1997) presents a similar picture of psychological suffering due to unemployment. The context here is deindustrialised northern England, and the city of Sheffield in particular. A group of former colleagues from a closed steelworks copes with their boredom and threatened masculinity due to the loss of their roles as breadwinners. They eventually find a way out of their isolation and depression by performing male striptease.

The evolution of working-class cultures in the second half of the twentieth century was due to an increased share of university students from working-class environments, particularly from the mid-1960s onwards. This phenomenon was evident in most European countries and found its expression in particular in the movements active in the 'long 1968' in France, Germany, Italy, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. In the following two decades, close cooperation and connection between students' and workers' movements followed in other European countries, for instance in the Athens Polytechnic Uprising in November 1973. What young workers shared with students was an emphasis on culture as a political expression. This focus manifested itself in different, individualised (but collectively celebrated) lifestyles, particularly related to protest and rock music. Certain factions of workers were however not too enthusiastic about cooperation with academics, due to their different work roles. This tension was illustrated in the deployment of industrial

workers and miners in Bucharest in June 1990 to physically confront the mainly urban, academic protesters marching against the Romanian post-communist government.

Conclusion

Work in the twentieth century did not lose its multifaceted nature. Especially during the first half of the century, devastating impacts of different kinds of work abounded in Europe: alienated work in Fordism, forced labour in camps, or involuntary non-work as mass unemployment. The situation improved in some ways during the second half of the twentieth century thanks to a powerful and vital welfare state, strong unions guaranteeing better working conditions, and a decline in forced labour. On the other hand, there were new, onerous changes. Low-paid jobs which did not guarantee a living kept many in precarity, with a declining, but still indisputable gender pay gap, job insecurity in a period of growing automation and artificial intelligence, and the exploitation of work and workers in the Global South in the name of lifestyle and consumption in Europe.

While European demographic growth is in decline, this will create pressure to increase social security for retired pensioners. Sooner rather than later, this will bring either a sharp increase in corporate income tax (CIT) or a further loosening of fiducial restrictions. Finally, as the fastest growth of GDP is observed in regions other than Europe, boosting production should be the ultimate focus to meet growing expectations for a better standard of living. It is as yet an open question whether or not such a development will occur in Europe, the birthplace of capitalism.

Discussion questions

1. How did the world of work differ in Eastern and Western Europe during the twentieth century?

2. In which ways were the 1970s an important turning point in the history of labour in Europe?

3. What are the most important differences between work today and in the twentieth century?

Suggested reading

Eribon, Didier, *Returning to Reims* (London: Penguin, 2019).

Hofmeester, Karin and Marcel van der Linden, eds, *Handbook Global History of Work* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2017).

McIvor, Arthur J., *A History of Work in Britain, 1880–1950* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001).

Schmidt, Jürgen, *Arbeiter in der Moderne: Arbeitsbedingungen, Lebenswelten, Organisationen* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2015).

van der Linden, Marcel, ed., *The Global History of Work*: *Critical Readings, vols. I–IV* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

Wright, Steve, *Storming Heaven: Class Composition and Struggle in Italian Autonomist Marxism* (London: Pluto Press 2002).

UNIT 6

LIVING WITH DIFFERENCE

People sitting at the base of Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square (1983), CC BY-SA 3.0, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:People_sitting_near_the_Lion_at_the_Base_of_Nelsons_Column_in_Trafalgar_Square_-_1983.jpg.

CHAPTER 6.1
RELIGIONS

6.1.1 Religions in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Cristina Bravo Lozano, Péter Erdősi, Marjorie Meiss, and Dirk van Miert

Introduction

The conventional image of the religious landscape of early modern Europe is characterised by the master narrative of the Reformation developing into Lutheranism and Calvinism and the Tridentine Counter-Reformation. In contrast, this chapter emphasises the pluralistic reality of religious situations across early modern Europe, leading to a more diverse picture that pays attention to Judaism, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and factions within Protestantism as well as Catholicism.

The Confessionalisation of Europe

From 1517, Europe entered an era of profound religious upheaval. The lightning-speed success of Luther's ideas, the rupture brought about by the violent reaction of the Church of Rome, and the proliferation of reform movements modified the religious landscape of the continent in lasting ways. Of course, medieval Europeans were not unaware of the diversity of beliefs: they had experienced the schism between Eastern and Western Christendom (1054), as well as episodes of heresy. Christians rubbed shoulders with Jewish minorities in many cities, and with Muslim populations (and powers) in the Iberian Peninsula and Eastern Europe. From the 1520s onwards, however, Western Christianity crumbled. The Scandinavian kingdoms were taken over by Lutheranism from the 1520s to the 1530s. The Helvetic Confederation, which was close to the 'Protestant Rome' (Geneva, a state that was independent at the time), was divided into Reformed cantons, Catholic cantons, and mixed cantons as a result of the two Kappel Wars (1529–1531). The Italian Peninsula remained

a land of almost uncontested Catholicism, but the political fragmentation of the Germanic area was coupled with a religious fragmentation by virtue of the *cuius regio, eius religio* ('whose realm, their religion') principle that prevailed at the time of the Peace of Augsburg (1555). France, after almost forty years of civil war (1562–1598), remained Catholic but with a large Reformed minority. The former Netherlands, which rose up against its Iberian ruler in the Eighty Years' War (1568–1648), was split between a South that finally returned to Catholicism, and a North dominated by Calvinism (but where Catholics and Lutherans remained numerous). England, after the Henrician Schism (1534), hesitated and then followed its own path, that of an Anglicanism inspired by Calvinist theology but with an ecclesial organisation close to Catholicism. The Iberian Peninsula, less sensitive to Protestant ideas, reinforced its Catholic exclusivism by expelling or forcibly converting its Jewish and Muslim populations (1492–1525), then by expelling in 1609 these new Christians, many of whom had remained clandestinely faithful to the faith of their ancestors.

To analyse the reactions of populations to this new religious situation, historians have used the concept of confessionalisation. This concept originated in the work of Ernst Walter Zeeden on the constitution of confessional identity (*Konfessionsbildung*) in the Holy Roman Empire. In the 1960s, the German historian showed that the rivalry between Catholic and Protestant confessions had contributed to shaping the institutional and social realities of the various states and cities of the empire and to differentiating them through the construction of antagonistic identities. Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinist spaces emerged, and defined themselves in opposition to each other in increasingly exclusive and intolerant ways. In the following decades, Zeeden's interpretative scheme was developed further and granted a key role to political powers and elites. These elites acquired, thanks to the Peace of Augsburg, the power to impose their religious choices on the population. Consequently, from the 1560s onwards, states and churches would subject the population to social discipline (*Sozialdisziplinierung*) by means of a series of acculturating mechanisms geared towards inculcating the faithful with the norms of their rulers. Through an intense catechetical effort and increased surveillance of morals, the civil and ecclesiastical authorities thus turned believers steeped in superstition into 'true' Catholics, Lutherans, or Calvinists. Over the last thirty years, historical research has nevertheless nuanced this schema by reducing the weight of the authorities in this process and by acknowledging that ordinary folk had a measure of agency and choice. In particular, the involvement of communities of believers in the surveillance of morals and dogmatic abuses has been re-evaluated, emphasising the role played in this respect by Protestant consistories or Catholic brotherhoods, and highlighting the demand for repression from the population.
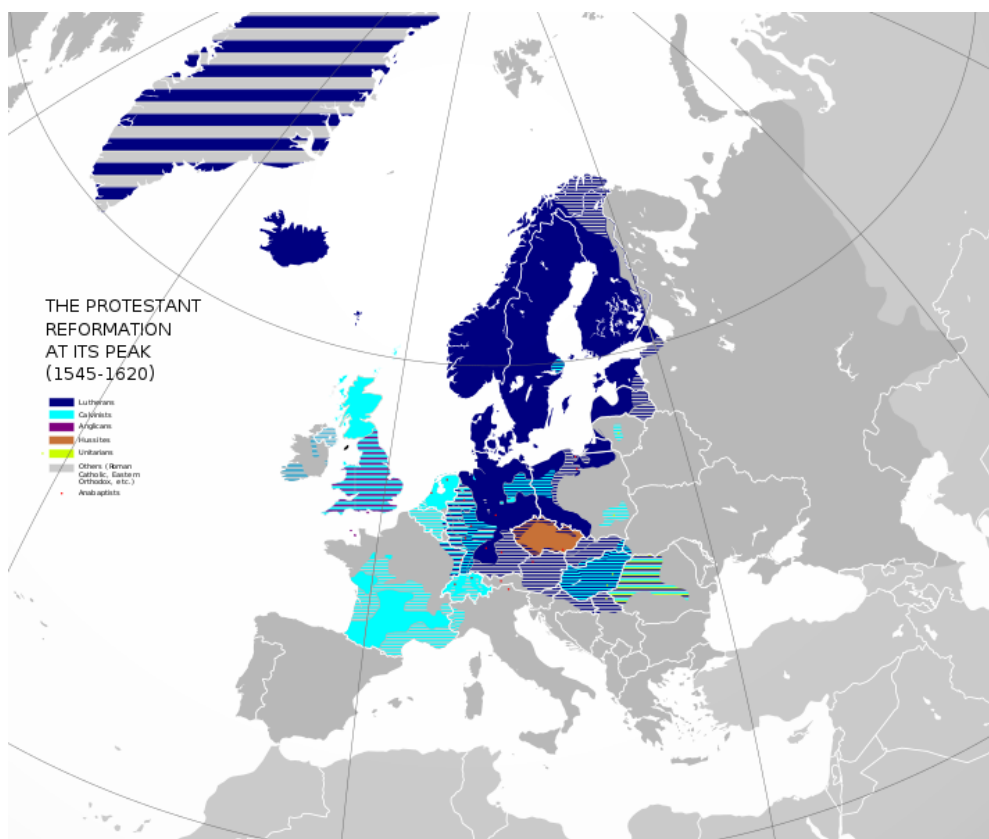
Fig. 1: Europe at the time of the greatest confessionalisation (initiated by the Reformation) (ca. 1620), CC BY 4.0, Wikimedia, Ernio48, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Protestant_Reformation.svg.

Nevertheless, the confessionalisation of European populations was never complete. In the first decades of the Reformation, many people were hesitant, their adherence to a particular confession often incomplete or based on a vague knowledge of doctrinal differences; indeed, confessional boundaries were still fluid in this period of heated theological debate. Once confessional identities were more firmly established in the second half of the sixteenth century, diversity of belief remained a reality in many places. Minorities, whether tolerated or clandestine, continued to exist. In the empire, the reality was more nuanced and complex than the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* would suggest. In Catholic Cologne, for example, there were large Protestant minorities. In areas where religious minorities were officially tolerated—such as in France after certain edicts of pacification and then from the signing of the Edict of Nantes until its revocation (1598–1685)—solutions had to be found to live together and coexist in difference, which was not without difficulties and violence. In the 1560s, for instance, Catholic and Reformed inhabitants of several towns and villages in the Rhone Valley and in southwestern France

joined together in pacts of friendship, swearing not to quarrel and to guarantee a peace that was essential for the security and prosperity of the community. At the end of the Wars of Religion, the weariness of fighting and its devastating consequences led the peasants, whatever their confession, to unite to protect their fields. Moreover, the higher echelons of European trade were always home to coexistent beliefs: if Venice sheltered the first Jewish ghetto in history (when the Jews of the city were grouped together in Canareggio in 1516), the city of the doges also saw Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Jewish, and Muslim merchants rubbing shoulders on a daily basis, and erected religious buildings for them.

The Impact of the Council of Trent

While the European continent was gradually fragmented by religious differences, the struggle between religions led to a profound transformation of the Catholic Church. Principles defined by the Council of Trent (1545–1563) would govern the new model of church, which emerged as a response to the reformed confessions burgeoning in Europe at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Previous initiatives and movements were limited to specific territories, such as the Low Countries or the Spain of the Catholic Monarchs Isabella I of Castile (1451–1504) and Ferdinand II of Aragon (1452–1516). These included the renewal of the episcopal hierarchy, the renovation of religious orders, or the introduction of humanism and the ideas of Erasmus of Rotterdam in universities such as Salamanca or Alcalá de Henares.

Progressively, the lifestyle and discipline of priests and the religious was modified. The traditional religious orders (Franciscans, Carmelites) were reformed, and others were created with a new spirit, such as the Theatines, the Ursulines, or the Capuchins. The Society of Jesus was the most prominent foundation of that time. The institute was structured by Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556) as a hierarchical body of a quasi-military nature, with a fourth vow of obedience to the Pope. It was to be concerned with the evangelisation of Asia and America, the defence of Roman Orthodoxy, and the formation based on the pedagogical model of the *Ratio Studiorum*.

But it was above all the Council of Trent that would define the internal reform of the church and the principles of Catholic orthodoxy from then on. In the face of the reformed churches, the post-Tridentine fundamentals clarified and ratified Catholic dogmas in pastoral terms. The corrected version of the Bible, according to St Jerome, was to serve as the main source of faith. Works had value in themselves, mediated by the grace conferred through the seven sacraments. Eucharistic transubstantiation constituted the renewal of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, priestly orders would distinguish between lay

and ecclesiastical. Clerics were obliged to fulfil the three vows, to be trained in seminaries and to maintain a discipline for the care of souls through preaching, administering the sacraments, and teaching catechism from their parishes. However, there was no question of profound changes in the curia, a work carried out by the popes, nor of the interference of princes and secular authorities in religious matters. Also purified were popular traditions and practices, such as processions, devotional confraternities, Marian and saintly zeal, the recognition of certain miracles, and the canonisation of new saints. New catechisms, liturgies and homilies, missions, the ritual use of images and symbolic objects, sacred music, and the standardisation of religious texts were essential to this work.

In Catholic Europe, the Tridentine decrees were imposed in different ways. In Spain, Philip II set himself up as a champion of the faith and adopted the decrees through royal patronage and other proselytising instruments. Such dynamics were closely followed by the Holy Inquisition. This religious tribunal was charged with preserving the Catholic religion in the face of the heterodox movements that were beginning to spread throughout the dominions of the Crowns of Castile and Aragon—Protestants, *alumbrados* and Erasmians. With some delay, caused by the Wars of Religion and the rise of Gallican ideas, it was finally accepted in France. In the Pontifical Court, the post-conciliar popes introduced profound modifications to make Rome the head of the Church, with the institutionalisation of permanent congregations for ecclesiastical supervision, the establishment of national colleges and seminaries, and the sending of pontifical nuncios to Catholic courts and republics. One of the last works derived from the Council of Trent was the foundation of the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* (*Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples*, 1622) for the spread of Catholicism through missionary exercise in the so-called 'Four Parts of the World'. In other territories, religious coexistence was determined by anti-Catholic policies which, as in the case of Ireland, ended up provoking a migratory movement towards Spain, the Netherlands, and France in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the activation of missionary strategies for the preservation of the Catholic religion.

Religious Diversity

The fact that it took almost twenty years for the Council of Trent to formulate anew the article of faith indicates that the post-Tridentine regime was not easily constructed. Different schools of thought continued to flourish even in the seventeenth century. In the second half of the seventeenth century, the Jesuits campaigned against the theology of the Louvain theologian Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638), whose ideas about grace and free will were opposed to

those of the 'Molinism' of the Jesuit Luis de Molina (1535–1600). After a fierce controversy, Pope Innocent X (1574–1655) in 1653 condemned 'Jansenism' as a heresy. Within Calvinism itself, the roles of grace and free will continued to be debated. A controversy between the two Leiden theologians Franciscus Gomarus (1563–1641) and Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609) led to a public crisis that brought the young Dutch Republic to the brink of civil war, precisely during the period of the Twelve Years' Truce (1609–1621). 'Arminianism' (or Remonstrantism) was condemned by the Reformed Church during the international Synod of Dordrecht (1618–1619). The canons of this Synod, together with Calvin's *Institutions* and the Heidelberg Catechism (1566), effectively functioned as the new collection of articles of faith for the Dutch Reformed Church, although even then debates continued to rage.

On the other side of the Channel, meanwhile, the English Civil War (1640–1649) had seen a variety of political-religious factions pitched against one another in diverging opinions about the role of bishops in the Church of England: Scottish Presbyterians and English Protestants (later labelled Puritans) resisted the Arminianism of the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud (1573–1645). Other 'dissenters' formed a colourful range of critical thinkers, including Quakers, Baptists, Congregationalists, and Brownists. The distinctions were not clear cut and some of these currents were rather fleeting. Even in these small communities, splits arose: the English Mathew Slade (1569–1628), originally a Brownist, went on to form an English community of the Dutch Reformed Church, in parallel to the French-speaking Walloon Churches. The latter were frequented largely by Huguenots: Protestants who had fled France and the southern Low Countries, and who set up their own Latin-French communication networks all across the northern part of Europe. These migrants contributed to the scholarly institutionalisation of Protestantism via professorships, the book industry, and journalism. Later generations in the Huguenot diaspora assimilated into the regional reformed churches.

The Huguenots were not the only religious group to go into exile and spread out over early modern Europe. Sephardic Jews moved out of the Iberian Peninsula, fleeing religious persecution and setting up communities in London and Amsterdam, where they met with Ashkenazi Jews. Creating vast economic and intellectual networks, Jews occupied important positions in such port cities as Livorno and Amsterdam, whereas Vilnius was an important theological centre. From Kraków to Venice, Jews maintained networks that were involved in the Hebrew book trade, stimulated by fierce debates over messianic movements such as Sabbateanism and by Christian Hebraists who sought to better understand the Bible via the Rabbinic traditions.

In Central Europe the religious mosaic is largely the result of early modern transformations. To an ethno-cultural and linguistic heterogeneity existing since the Middle Ages, growing religious diversity was added, from the sixteenth century, on account of two major changes. The first was Ottoman conquest in Europe, a process begun in the fourteenth century and which continued with further expansion in the sixteenth. Countries in the southern part of the region either became parts of the Ottoman Empire or were contiguous areas in direct contact with it, and thus witnessed the spread of Islam. In territories under Ottoman rule, the dominance of Islam did not exclude the presence of religious minorities, Christian and Jewish alike, and these territories were destinations of evangelising missions. The other paramount change was the advent of the Reformation, which produced a spectrum of Protestant communities, such as the Lutheran, Calvinist, Zwinglian, Anabaptist, and Antitrinitarian ones, as well as the coming of the subsequent Catholic Reform; the confrontation between the Reformation and the Catholic Reform produced very different confessional landscapes in each part of the region. Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Christians, and a Jewish diaspora enlarged by Askhenazi immigration, augmented the complexity of these landscapes.

Case Study: Transylvania

For the religious heterogeneity of Central Europe, the Principality of Transylvania is a case in point, as far as conflict and compromise are concerned. A fragment of the Hungarian Kingdom falling to pieces with Ottoman conquest, Transylvania, as a newly established state, avoided Turkish occupation and was paying annual tribute to the Porte. In parallel with the Ottoman campaigns against Hungary, the medieval Catholic Church of Transylvania fully disintegrated, and its holdings were secularised and given to the treasury. Catholics became a minority while three Protestant denominations, Lutheran, Calvinist and Antitrinitarian, took strong positions all over the country. The process of confessional change, concomitant with political turns, can be drawn up in three phases during the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century history of Transylvania. In the first phase, Antitrinitarians grew to prominence in the political elite of the princely court, and Antitrinitarianism was embraced by John Sigismund (1540–1571), the Catholic-born prince. In the second phase, from the 1570s to the 1590s, the Catholic ruling family of the Báthorys was striving to restore the institutions of their church; through the Jesuits, the pressure of Rome was growing stronger, albeit temporarily, with Sigismund Báthory (1573–1613) waging war against the Turks with support from Pope Clement VIII (1536–1605) and Emperor Rudolf II of Habsburg (1552–1612). The anti-Ottoman and Catholic project failed; the Jesuits were expelled by the

Diet. The third and longest phase, unfolding over the seventeenth century, was marked by the rule of a series of Calvinist princes. The peace treaties of Vienna (1606) and Linz (1645) between the Habsburgs and Transylvanian rulers contributed to the consolidation of the rights of Protestants in Hungary.

Notwithstanding confessional upheavals perturbing the court elite, religious conflict was significantly moderated by a system of compromise stemming from a series of laws issued by the Transylvanian Diet during the late sixteenth century. The result of these legal instruments was the official acknowledgement of four 'accepted religions', Calvinist, Lutheran, Antitrinitarian (or Unitarian), and Catholic; religions other than these four were merely 'tolerated' by the state. Religion, an organising principle of the Transylvanian society of estates, joined with a political category defining one's status, the 'natio'. The state acknowledged a system consisting of three political units, called 'nations' (an early modern term with a different meaning from the one established in the nineteenth century) each having a set of special privileges as well as representation at the Diet: Hungarian nobles, Saxon (ethnic German) burghers and the Székler (or Székely), a Hungarian-speaking group that differed in legal terms from the Hungarian nobility. The two categories—political and confessional—could overlap, as in the case of Saxons being predominantly Lutheran, or be detached from each other, as with Hungarians having Calvinists, Antitrinitarians, and Catholics among them. The system's featuring of four accepted religions and three political nations was not all-embracing. Most notably, it did not allow Romanians, who were predominantly Orthodox (though the Protestant Reformation and the Greek-Catholic/Uniate project affected their ranks) to create a 'natio' on their own and advance their confession among the accepted ones, despite their demographic significance. After the 1690s, when the Habsburg Dynasty captured Transylvania, the confessional system remained basically unchanged, with the difference that the Catholic institutions of Transylvania were restored. The exclusion of Romanians from both categories, preventing them from representing themselves by autonomous bodies in political and religious terms, was a cause of rampant tension from the eighteenth century onwards. By the nineteenth century, the limits and obsolescence of the twofold system became all the more visible in the context of liberal reforms and national movements.

Conclusion

Whereas the early modern religious history of Europe is usually framed as a split within Christianity in which the Reformation led to a conflict between Protestants and Catholics, Christianity was much more pluriform and fluid

than this narrative suggests. The fragmentation of Protestantism due to intra-confessional theological and political disagreements is a well-known element of the familiar narrative, but as we have seen in this chapter, Catholicism harboured a plurality of strands as well, and confessional identities continued to be unstable even after the establishment of confessional formularies of faith in the second half of the sixteenth century. Apart from the Christian story, however, Europe was also populated by non-Christians whose positions in society were contested, but whose economic or military power remained a force to be reckoned with. Persecution by the Inquisition is one part of the story, but *Realpolitik* aimed at coexistence was ubiquitous, even if such politics were not yet informed by positive philosophies of tolerance and expressions of epistemic humility that were formulated during the eighteenth century. Much has been made of 'secularisation' in this century of 'Enlightenment', but it should be underscored that religion continued to be a major political force and that the number of people who claimed to be atheist was very small.

Discussion questions

1. What was 'confessionalisation' and what were the consequences of this process?

2. In what ways did religious diversity fuel political conflict in early modern Europe?

3. Do you think religion plays less or more of a role in Europe today? Why?

Suggested reading

Doyle, William, *Jansenism: Catholic Resistance to Authority from the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Houndmills and New York: MacMillan and St Martin's Press, 2000).

François, Wim and Violet Soen, eds, *The Council of Trent: Reform and Controversy in Europe and Beyond (1545–1700)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018).

Lachenicht, Susanne, 'Huguenot Immigrants and the Formation of National Identities, 1548–1787', *The Historical Journal* 50:2 (2007), 309–331.

Louthan, Howard and Graeme Murdock, eds, *A Companion to the Reformation in Central Europe* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015).

O'Malley, John W., *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

Parker, Charles H., 'Reformed Protestantism', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. by Helmer Helmers and Geert H. Janssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 189–207, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316771549.

Po-Chia Hsia, Ronnie, *The World of the Catholic Renewal, 1540–1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Ruderman, David B., *Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

Tyacke, Nicholas, *Aspects of English Protestantism, c. 1530–1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).

Zeeden, Ernst Walter, *Die Entstehung der Konfessionen* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1965).

6.1.2 Religions in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Laszlo Csorba, Sylvain Lesage, and Thomas Schad

Introduction

The French Revolution and its exportation had a profound effect on the religious history of Europe in the nineteenth century. From the emancipation of the Jews and Protestants to the attempt to create a civic religion, or from the abolition of Catholicism as a state religion to the schism between the constitutional clergy and the refractory (non-swearing) clergy, this revolutionary episode encapsulates the upheavals in European religious practice throughout the nineteenth century.

But this century was first and foremost the century of industrialisation and the affirmation of science. The affirmation of a rationalist stance on these developments was thus decisive in the evolution of religious thought and practice. On the one hand, the progress of science favoured a scientistic reading of the world, one of the major points of which was the theory of evolution, which denied divine creationism. However, the expansion of knowledge was only one of the factors in the decline of religious practice. The progress of industrialisation, increasing urbanisation, and the widening gap between the working classes and the churches are certainly more decisive factors. In return, the fragmentation of religious practice gave birth to new religious movements and favoured the rise of new forms of piety.

Thus, the nineteenth century was marked by an intense philosophical, artistic, and scientific effervescence alongside debates on dogmas and religious institutions. The affirmation of modernity and the aspiration to freedom born of the French Revolution forced governments and religious authorities to redefine their respective positions within a changing society and to compete for control over education, thus laying the foundations of contemporary Europe. Analysing religions in Europe in the nineteenth century therefore raises two series of questions. First, from an institutional point of view, how

did churches adapt to modern states and how did they maintain religious control over secularised populations? The second question is situated at a more personal level: what did it mean to be religious in modern times? How are faiths challenged and reconfigured by modernity, in its scientific, industrial, political, and social forms?

Churches and Revolutions

The French Revolution annihilated the tradition of monarchic rule by divine right and paved the way for the creation of society and state on the basis of human rights. A second revolutionary power—the Industrial Revolution—transformed the economy and society of much of Europe during the nineteenth century. Industry attracted the bourgeoisie and working people to the growing urban centres. The result, combined with the influence of the French Revolution, gave rise not only to the first period of prosperity in modern urban culture, but also to many new social problems and injustices on the dark side of metropolitan life. During the nineteenth century, the churches had to adapt themselves to the many developments occurring around them.

The absolutist government of France under the last Bourbons was extremely unjust. Thinkers of the Enlightenment helped precipitate revolutionary changes by suggesting new visions of human rights, civil society and the modern constitutional monarchy. On 14 July 1789, French civilian revolutionaries attacked the Bastille in Paris, capturing the fortress that symbolised the *ancien régime* and freeing its prisoners; soon after, it was demolished. In August, the old feudal absolutism was brought to an end when a *Declaration of the Rights of Man* was published by the National Constituent Assembly. The church lands were taken into public ownership, in an attempt to finance the revolutionary changes taking place. The Church was dealt with in the *Civil Constitution of the Clergy*, enacted in 1790. Many went along with this, others refused, and the Church split over the issue. In practice, the power of the papacy was abolished in France.

The Jacobin regime (1793–1794) persecuted the resistant Catholic priests, but instead of an atheist regime the Cult of the Supreme Being was established. When General Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) came to power, he decided to restore normal relations with Pope Pius VII (1740–1823). According to a new concordat in 1801, the French clergy were to receive a regular income from the state. Although the Pope was to appoint bishops, the state could veto his appointments. Protestants were granted freedom of religion. Religion was thus at the heart of the revolutionary turmoil that France experienced in the years that followed 1789, with repercussions throughout the nineteenth century.

Many important elements in the modernisation of society and public administration have spread through much of Europe via the Napoleonic Code. This preserved the enlightened, absolutist practice of excluding churches as institutions from state administration. The application of human rights resisted the prescription of state religion, because all are born with the freedom to follow any religion. The modern bourgeois state is thus neutral in matters of faith and regards churches as private societies supported by their faithful. Citizens, on the other hand, are free to form political organisations, parties, associations, advertise them in the press, and so on.

The success of this model is evidenced by the history of Belgium. When the Dutch Protestants oppressed the Belgian Catholics, they teamed up with the Belgian Liberals (*unio*) to fight for universal religious freedom—because if all religions were free, the Catholic religion would be free too. Thus, the unionism of the Belgian Revolution in 1830 liberated the Catholics and brought about the modern freedom of religions. In the first half of the nineteenth century, however, the papacy rejected the political cooperation of liberals and Catholics. The popes supported the Holy Alliance (1815), in which the armies of the absolutist powers—Russia, Austria and Prussia—oppressed the national and liberal movements. It was for this reason that the pope did not protest when Orthodox Russia defeated the Catholic Poles during the November Uprising in 1831.

This Catholic restoration was also aided by the new religious sensibilities intertwined with romanticism (new waves of the cult of Virgin Mary, new regulated companies and orders of monks, etc.) that emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century, against the prevailing rationalism of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. François-René de Chateaubriand (1768–1848), the immensely popular romantic writer, presented in *The Genius of Christianity* (1802) a powerful argument for Christianity based on the aesthetic values of past Christian centuries; it supported, for example, the Gothic Revival in architecture and the Nazarene School in painting. On the basis of the restoration of the Roman Papal State there arose a new political ideology called *Ultramontanism* (literally, "beyond the mountains"). Its believers generally refused the compromise with the liberal states and were militantly loyal to the pope as the supreme authority in matters of faith and practice.

The inspiring encounter of romanticism and religion strengthened restoration efforts. Liberal thinkers did not accept that the idea of liberating individuals and peoples would be hostile to the Christian tradition. Félicité Robert de Lamennais (1782–1854) gradually moved away from his earlier hopes for an alliance between Ultramontanism and royalism. When in 1830 he founded the newspaper *L'Avenir*, the forum of liberal Catholics, his cause was to promote liberty for the Church from the state. Lamennais and his followers

rejected the divine right of kings and advocated popular sovereignty. Pope Gregory XVI (1765–1846) condemned the teachings of Lamennais and *L'Avenir* in the encyclical *Mirari Vos* (1832).

Struggles for human rights and the freedom of oppressed nations also drew strength from biblical narratives and messianic faith—with devotees praying to the 'God of Freedom'. The popes steadfastly opposed the *Risorgimento* (national movement for the unification of Italy), for they feared the loss of temporal power in the Papal States. Meanwhile, the 'prophet' of Italian nationalism Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872) and his compatriots dedicated their flag with the motto "God and the people" against the tyrants of the Italian Peninsula. When General Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882) defended the short-lived Roman Republic against the French troops in 1849, he was dubbed "The Nazarene of Trastevere" by the enthusiastic crowds.

Religions and National Identities

Europe in the nineteenth century was a continent in constant turmoil, far from uniform with regards to concepts, developments, treatments, or even the given range of existing religions and denominations. In France and in many of the territories conquered by Napoleon, traditional religions and their institutions underwent the process of weakening described above, yet the situation in the continent's eastern and southeastern stretches was significantly different, as the case of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans shows.

In contemporary terminology, the Ottoman Empire was a multiethnic, multireligious, pre-national and feudal empire. It was dominated by a Muslim Emperor, the Sultan (or *padişah*), who simultaneously claimed the status of the Caliph: the spiritual leader of the global Muslim community (*ummah*). Given that the sultan's palace was on the European shore of the Bosporus, Europe was the seat of the most influential spiritual-political Islamic commonwealth of the time.

Although Muslims enjoyed significant privileges when compared to the other groups, the European lands of the Ottoman Empire (Rumelia) were characterised and inhabited by a multitude of religious communities. Most numerous were the Orthodox Christians (Rum), spread across Rumelia and originally bound to the religious authority of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The second largest group were Sunni Muslims, often settling with a high concentration in the urban centres of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Thrace, and among Albanian speakers. The Sephardic Jews were another important group, originally from Andalusia, with centres in Thessaloniki, Istanbul, Skopje, and Sarajevo, among other cities. There were also Catholic Christians, Armenians, and heterodox or syncretic groups like the Bektashi.

The fact that these different groups settled together in the Balkans is one of the reasons, up to the present day, why nationalist tensions regularly occurred with the rise of the nation-state—a political framework that generally leans on the idea of a homogeneous population.

Notably from the mid-nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was often referred to as the 'sick man of Europe', as it lost more and more of its former territories and power. In 1821, the Greeks declared their independence, followed by the Principality of Serbia in 1833. Up until the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913, the Ottomans would lose all of their Rumelian lands. The religious institutions of the Balkans were transforming, but remained important—though the continuous significance of religion as such does not necessarily correspond to the actual practice of religion or spirituality. Instead, religion transformed into one of the key markers of national identity.

The notion of the 'millet' system is used, often with critical discussion, to describe the multireligious venture of the Ottoman Empire's Balkan nations—as well as the younger Turkish nation, where the term is still in use, meaning "people", "nation", or "nationality". Millet, in that sense, denotes a proto-national group whose main authority beyond the sultan was the respective head of the religious community; in the nineteenth century, there were millets for each of the Catholic, Orthodox, Jewish, and Armenian communities in the Ottoman Empire. The Orthodox millet was headed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. In the long run, the decline of the patriarch's position is the most important transformation regarding religious institutions in the nineteenth-century Balkans: Orthodox adherents from Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, and elsewhere became detached from this very old institution. They became autocephalous—a term hailing from the Greek word αὐτοκεφαλία, meaning "being self-headed".

A New Religious Sensibility?

The middle of the nineteenth century was marked, in Western Catholic countries and particularly in France, by a new religious impetus that strengthened traditional faith in the face of the doubts inherited from the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, the rise of the twin threats of liberalism and rationalism, and the acceleration of the rural exodus and urbanisation, which expedited the uprooting and decline of religious practices.

The nineteenth century saw the appearance of the first episcopal surveys, studying this phenomenon through the decline in the number of people attending Sunday Mass and Easter Mass. This laid the groundwork for a sociology of religion that emerged in the work of the Frenchman Émile Durkheim (1858–1917), descendant of a line of rabbis and a founding figure

of French sociology, who took an interest in the secularisation of European societies from his thesis in 1893 to the *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912). This radioscopy of religious practices culminated in the mid-twentieth century with the surveys conducted jointly by the French sociologists Gabriel Le Bras and Abbé Boulard. Their research highlighted the fact that the decline in religious practice was very clearly differentiated by gender: a sexual dimorphism in religious practice had increased throughout the nineteenth century—to the extent that in France the 1905 separation of church and state was voted for by men and imposed on women.

The difference in religious practices (mass attendance, confession) between men and women continued to widen. Women were then considered to be the privileged agents of the conversion of men and children, through their influence in the family as mothers and wives. The clergy then developed forms of spirituality deemed more suitable for a female audience. To raise awareness among the crowds, the Church favoured a demonstrative devotion fuelled by the splendour of liturgical festivals and a climate of miracles (for example, Marian apparitions at La Salette in 1846, or Lourdes in 1858).

Fig. 1: A postcard depicting the apparition of the Blessed Virgin in Lourdes on 11 February 1858 (1900s), https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10570952k.r=miracle%20lourdes?rk=85837;2#.

The Church also relied on women's associations to consolidate its position in the social and spiritual fields. This was the great century of women's congregations for care and teaching, but also of Catholic women's associations that defended social and spiritual motherhood by caring for children and the most destitute. Thus, in the field of mission, education, and care, religious authority was

increasingly embodied by women over the century. This configuration led women to occupy unprecedented positions; entering religious institutions could enable them to escape the authority of their fathers and husbands, to exercise responsibilities, and to build real professional 'careers'.

Catholicism in the nineteenth century took on a less severe, more indulgent, and more sentimental face than before. The "pastoral care of fear" (Jean Delumeau), inherited from the Middle Ages, gradually gave way in the middle of the century, thanks to the spread of the more flexible moral theology of Alphonsus Liguori (1696–1787; proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1871). The priestly generations were being renewed and Roman and anti-Jansenist ideas progressed among the clergy—the tone had changed markedly. The preaching of hell receded and that of purgatory returned to the forefront. The clergy became more prudent, prompted by their awareness of the importance of voluntary abstention from the sacraments, particularly among men, and the problems posed by the spread of contraceptive practices among the population (the moralists' "Crime of Onan"). Some authors and preachers began to argue in favour of frequent communion. Henri-Dominique Lacordaire (1802–1861), in 1851 at Notre-Dame de Paris, publicly attacked the thesis of the "small number of the chosen" that had long been dominant in theology. The multiplication and spread of particular devotions testify to the continuing movement towards the individualisation of belief, which lent itself to a more affective and warm-hearted kind of piety.

This change in religious sensibilities went far beyond the borders of the Catholic world. Throughout Europe, in reaction to the Enlightenment and the coldness of reason, romanticism emphasised the exaltation of feeling and nature. First taking shape in Germany and England, this romanticism spread throughout Europe and was expressed in literature, painting, and religion. After the French Revolution, the romantics regretted the loss of belief at a time when the rise of science was promoting scepticism, or even a generalised atheism. These plural romanticisms nourished different Protestant revivalist movements, defending a more existential and sentimental piety, 'awakened' from a faith judged to be stale or mundane. The revivals aimed to bring about a more existential and demonstrative piety, based on personal experience rather than on adherence to a teaching. The revelations were a protest against a predominantly intellectualist religion, with a strong emphasis on feeling, in line with the romantic sensibility and the definition of faith *as* feeling by the German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher. Launched in the mid-eighteenth century by Anglican preachers George Whitefield and John Wesley in the United Kingdom and then in America, the revivals reached French-speaking countries in the 1820s to 1850s.

At the same time, Methodism took a clear liberal turn in the face of the challenges of industrialised society, in line with its engagement with the working classes. Interdenominational societies promoted the dissemination of the Bible and religious treatises as well as the development of education (the development by an Anglican and a Quaker of the pedagogy known as mutual education). Under the impetus of female figures—Josephine Butler, Elizabeth Fry and Florence Nightingale—the defence of prostitutes, the improvement of prison conditions, and the improvement of health care were also important concerns. Thus, far from being merely an "opium of the people", as Marx famously put it, religion was at the heart of the debates and conflicts that shook nineteenth-century European societies. A force for conservatism, or even reaction, but also a force for progress and social reform, religion adapted its messages and structures to the new context sketched out by urbanisation and industrialisation.

Conclusion

As it entered industrial and political modernity, Europe saw the rise of new approaches to religion. For Marx, religion was an "opium of the people" in the sense that religion was used by those in power to oppress workers, and that it brought spiritual comfort that distracted the proletariat from the revolution. In the struggle between conservatism and liberalism, churches have, more often than not, weighed in on the side of the status quo. But churches have also been on the side of emancipation and social progress, fighting for human dignity, building school systems, and providing assistance to the poor.

After a century of political turmoil, of economic and social change, religious practices were radically transformed. Challenged by the affirmation of scientific and rationalist understanding of the world, religions were also weakened by industrialisation and urbanisation. In response, new forms of piety have tried to adapt to a changing context.

Discussion questions

1. What role did religion play in the development of nationalism in nineteenth-century Europe?

2. "The French Revolution ended the dominant position of religion in European society." Discuss this statement.

3. Describe the situation of religious minorities in nineteenth-century Europe. How does it differ from their situation today?

Suggested reading

Burleigh, Michael, *Earthly Powers: The Clash of Religion and Politics in Europe from the French Revolution to the Great War* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005).

Braude, Benjamin, 'Foundation Myths of the Millet System', in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire, vol. I*, ed. by Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1982).

Cholvy, Gérard, *Les religions et les cultures dans l'Occident européen au XIXe siècle, 1800–1914* (Paris: Karthala, 2014).

Menozzi, Daniele, *La chiesa cattolica e la secolarizzazione* (Turin: Einaudi, 1993).

Rémond, René, *Religion et société en Europe: Essai sur la sécularisation des sociétés européennes aux XIXe et XXe siècles 1789–1998* (Paris: Seuil, 1998).

6.1.3 Religions in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Laszlo Csorba, Sylvain Lesage, Ángela Pérez del Puerto, and Thomas Schad

Introduction

In the twentieth century, the role of religion and religious institutions in Europe was far from uniform across the continent's diverse landscape of religions and confessions. From Portugal in the southwest to Russia in the northeast, these range between traditional forms of religion like Catholicism, Protestantism (Lutheranism, Anglicism, Calvinism, etc.), Judaism, (Greek, Serbian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Russian, etc.) Orthodoxy, Islam, and even Buddhism (in Russia's Kalmykia). On the other hand, the increasing number and impact of atheism, agnosticism, anti-religious regimes, alternative spiritual movements, civil religions, and immigrated religions also played a significant role. As this chapter will show, religion remained a highly relevant category in Europe: whether on the side of the powerful (as in Spain), as an important differentiator of national identity (as in Northern Ireland), or as a target for oppression (as in the case of the Holocaust or in the Balkan Wars).

This chapter chooses to follow a chronological order, and focuses on a series of key moments illustrating the transformations of religions in Europe: *laïcité* and the separation of church and state in France; the Russian Revolution as the starting point of state-led, socialist secularisation; the interwar period and Second World War and the project of eradicating religious 'minorities'; postwar economic growth and the challenge posed by increasing individualisation; Vatican II and the major *aggiornamento* by the Catholic Church, and so on.

Separating Church and State

In France, the 1905 Law on the Separation of the Churches and the State marked a turning point in relations between churches and the state, and encapsulates the challenges faced by religions in the twentieth century in

liberal democracies. Passed in a climate of conflict, the 1905 law was initially a law of rupture that put an end to a century-old regime, established for the Catholic Church by the Concordat negotiated by Napoleon Bonaparte with Rome in 1801, and extended by the Organic Articles to the two reformed confessions, Lutheran and Calvinist, and then to Judaism. Based on the neutrality of the state and the plurality of religions, this regime functioned with varying degrees of success for about a century. The 1905 law separating churches and state unilaterally abrogated this treaty-based system and completed the evolution initiated a quarter of a century earlier by the secularisation policy of the Republican Party, which aimed to remove society from the control of the Catholic Church. With the culmination of this policy, the French Republic no longer recognised any religion: this was the end of the public service of religion. From now on, there were to be no legal relations between the public authorities and any religious denomination. However, the law did not exclude the presence of religions in society—how could it do so, except by engaging in a policy of persecution? Yet the inspiration for the Law of Separation was tolerance. It ensured freedom of conscience: this was, in fact, its *raison d'être*.

To an even greater extent, 1917 represents a milestone in the new relationship between church and state. The year 1917 was a major turning point for the history of Russia as well as the Russian Orthodox Church. The Tsarist government was overthrown by the February Revolution and after a few months of political turmoil, the Bolsheviks took power in October and, among other things, declared a series of radical changes in the private sphere of society. The decrees issued on 17 and 18 December in the spirit of secularisation and female emancipation stated that in the future the Russian Republic would only recognise civil marriages (and divorces), and would consider church weddings as private affairs for married couples in addition to compulsory civil marriages. On the last day of the year, a decree was issued separating the state and the Church and the Bolshevik Government seized all church lands. The official religious status of Orthodoxy was denied, although in January 1918 the freedom of 'religious and anti-religious propaganda' was also declared.

The decrees led to a marked decline in the power and influence of the Russian Orthodox Church. It was also caught in the crossfire of the Civil War that began later the same year, and many leaders of the Church supported the 'white' counterrevolutionary forces, which would ultimately be the losing side. According to the main leader of the Communist Party, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870–1924), a communist regime could not remain neutral on the question of religion but had to show itself to be merciless towards it.

After the Civil War, the Soviet Union officially claimed religious tolerance, but in practice the government discouraged organised religion and did

everything possible to remove religious influence from Soviet society. Actions against Orthodox priests and believers included torture and execution, or transfer to prison camps, labour camps or mental hospitals. In the first five years after the Bolshevik Revolution, 28 bishops and 1,200 priests were executed. The Solovki Special Camp was established in the monastery on the Solovetsky Islands in the White Sea. Eight metropolitans, twenty archbishops, and forty-seven bishops of the Orthodox Church died there, along with tens of thousands of the laity. Of these, 95,000 were put to death, executed by firing squad.

After Nazi Germany's attack on the Soviet Union in 1941, the party and state leader Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin (Joseph Stalin, 1878–1953) decided to revive the Russian Orthodox Church as a means of intensifying patriotic support for the war effort. On 4 September 1943, three metropolitans were officially received by Stalin and they discussed the details. Certain temples were opened and on 8 September 1943 the Synod elected Sergius (Stragorodsky) as the new Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia (Patriarch Tikhon had died in 1925). Some priests were released from the prisons and camps and were forced to serve the Soviet dictatorship, but everyday church life became possible again. This model was followed by the new 'People's democracy' regimes after the Second World War.

The First World War, the Interwar Period, and the Second World War

The interwar period and the Second World War were a difficult and violent time for millions of Europeans, many of whom did not survive the oppressions or were forcibly expelled from their homes. This especially applies to those who were perceived as national and religious minorities by the respective dominant population. Due to its religious and confessional setup, the situation was especially complicated in the continent's southeast. The relatively new nation-states in the Balkans—including Serbia, Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, Albania, and Croatia—inherited their religious-confessional diversity from the preceding Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian rulers, who did not pursue the ideal of homogeneity in their populations. The idea of the European nation-state, however, is based on the assumption of a homogenous national identity. In the Balkans, nearly all of these national identity concepts (with the exception of Albanian nationalism) followed the pattern of one nation, one religion (or confession). Building on the so-called millet system of the late Ottoman period, the Balkan nations evolved out of the structures of the religious millet.

The combination of the idea of homogeneity with high religious diversity among the Balkan populations meant that the new national elites operated as

demographic engineers and decided to expel those who were unwelcome due to their religious identity, while new fellow nationals could be drawn from adherents of their own group. The most prominent case of this 'unmixing of peoples' is the Turkish-Greek population exchange, as sanctioned *ex post facto* in the Treaty of Lausanne (1924): nearly all Muslims had to leave Greece and were brought to Anatolia and Eastern Thrace, while conversely, all Christians were expelled from present-day Turkey—with some exceptions, like the autochthonous Greek Orthodox inhabitants of Istanbul: the Greek nation-state would become a Christian state, while Turkey saw itself as a Muslim state. However, the interwar period saw a much broader series of resettlement agreements in the post-Ottoman sphere. Each of the respective groups for resettlement was defined according to religious affiliation. Examples include the Turkish-Romanian agreement on the resettlement of tens of thousands of Romanian Muslims in 1935, or the Turkish-Yugoslav agreement targeting 200,000 Muslims from Yugoslavia.

While these deportations and resettlements did not include plans for killings, religious affiliation alone turned out to be a death sentence for millions of people in this period, particularly in the case of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust (also called Shoah). During the Armenian Genocide from 1915–1916, nearly the entire Armenian Christian population of the remaining Ottoman Empire was extinguished, whether directly or indirectly. In the same context, members of other Christian denominations were targeted, like the Syriac Christians of South-Eastern Anatolia. It is estimated that at least one million Armenians died, while the death toll for Syriac Christians amounted to around 250,000 people. The most well-known case of genocide according to religious affiliation is the Holocaust: nearly the entire German and European Jewry, at least six million, were killed.

Catholic Identities in Europe after the Second World War

The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) profoundly changed the direction in which Catholicism was evolving, perhaps to an extent comparable to the Council of Trent (1545–1563). The Second Vatican Council is undoubtedly the most significant event in the history of the Catholic Church in the twentieth century, symbolising its openness to the modern world and contemporary culture, taking technological progress, the emancipation of peoples, and increasing secularisation into account. As a result of years of hard work and discussion by more than 2000 participants, the council adopted many dogmatic texts, among which the four 'constitutions' had a major impact. The first, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963), marks the end of the Latin Mass. It is in fact devoted to the renovation and simplification of the rites, allowing for celebration in vernacular languages and thus greater participation of

worshippers in the liturgy. The second constitution, *Lumen Gentium* (Light of the Nations), abandons the dogma of papal infallibility, which made the Pope a true monarch. Instead, the constitution emphasises the equality of the members of the "people of God", where each is "called to holiness", as well as the role of the bishops and the laity. The Catholic Church also recognises in this central text that there are "elements of truth" in other Christian churches, not mere heresies to be eradicated. The declarations *Nostra aetate*, on relations with non-Christian religions, and *Dignitatis humanae*, on religious freedom, also mark a clear shift in favour of tolerance and religious freedom. In the last constitution, *Gaudium et Spes*, the Church officially expresses its position on "the Church in the modern world", affirming its commitment to the poor.

If Vatican II corresponds to an opening of the Church to the world and an *aggiornamento*, the pontificate of John Paul II (Karol Jozef Wojtyla, 1920–2005) corresponds to a backlash. While he was a cardinal, Karol Wojtyla was an active member of the Second Vatican Council. A proponent of modernising the image of the Catholic Church, he supported many of the reforms adopted by the Assembly of Bishops. From his native Poland, he nevertheless observed with concern the consequences of the Second Vatican Council on a Church that was undergoing profound reform, not without trauma and internal conflicts. Close to Opus Dei, he was critical not only of certain liturgical excesses (the introduction of secular texts or music, among other things), but also of many of the concrete applications of the council's decisions. He was strengthened in his convictions by his Polish Catholicism, vigorous in his spirituality marked by the cult of the Virgin Mary, rigid in his morals, culturally hegemonic in Polish society, where he was the cement of the nation and the soul of the resistance to communism. All of this was to lead the Pope to a doctrinal, moral, and institutional restoration of the Catholic Church at the end of the twentieth century.

Twentieth-century religion developed very differently depending on the national context. In the case of Spain, after the secularist experience of the Second Republic between 1931 and 1936, Catholicism played a very active role in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) in its decision to support the *coup d'état* against the democratic republican government. The Catholic 'Crusade', as the war was called, initiated a close collaboration between the Catholic Church and Franco's dictatorship, consolidated after the Second World War when the dictator moved away from the defeated fascist ideas and completely redefined the dictatorship as a conservative, Catholic and anti-communist regime—an ideal definition to navigate the dynamics of the Cold War. Spanish Catholicism would thus enjoy decades of doctrinal and ideological hegemony. This situation was confirmed with the signing of the 1953 Concordat between the Spanish State and the Vatican, which legitimised the dictatorship through mutual collaboration. This marked the beginning of National Catholicism:

the participation of the Church in Franco's government and, therefore, in its repressive policies.

This process of collaboration crystallised in the 1950s with the arrival of prominent politicians from the ranks of Opus Dei who pushed the dictatorship towards openness and international acceptance. However, this decade was also when the dynamics began to change. The Second Vatican Council meant for Spanish Catholicism a new look at the modern world and freedoms in issues such as liturgy, parish government, the role of the faithful in the Church and in society, as well as demands for dialogue and recognition and tolerance towards other forms of militancy. This was closely connected with the ideological process of Liberation Theology, with a growing transfer of Catholics towards militancy and political commitment to the left or, at least, to democratic proposals. In addition, there was a clear influence in the 1960s of Marxist doctrine in the Catholic and workers' ranks. The dictatorship tried to curb this tendency with some concessions and, on the other hand, support of the most conservative sectors of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. This led to an absolute rupture in the Spanish Church during the 1960s, between two different ways of understanding the church-state relationship: a conciliar Church, critical of Francoism and open to democratic and socialising options, and an anti-conciliar Church that validated Franco's Spanish Catholic model.

The arrival of Pope Paul VI (1897–1978) at the Vatican consolidated this gap, since his figure was key in the rupture of the Spanish Church with the Franco regime in the 1970s. Bishops were renamed, and figures of the hierarchy strongly identified with Francoism were removed. The role of the Church in an increasingly secularised Spanish society was set in motion. This was accompanied by the increased militancy of Catholics and priests in dissident movements against Francoism, the creation of clandestine Catholic political parties, and the affiliation of many of the faithful to progressive and left-wing labour unions.

This rupture connects the Spanish Church of the 1960s and 1970s with the international dynamics of a post-conciliar European Catholicism: dominated by a tendency towards secularisation; the adoption of concepts and methods of Marxist analysis; the crisis of faith and Christian and ecclesial identity; and disaffection towards the Church as an institution. This process eventually led Spanish Catholicism to play a decisive role in the transition to democracy after 1975, and to participate in the signing of a constitution recognising the existence of a secular state. By the 1980s, these changes allowed Spain to have a legal framework that regulated the life of an increasingly secularised society with a growing rate of civil marriages and divorces, a decline of the faithful, and openness to incorporate into its legality social advances such as marriage equality, approved in 2005, which made Spain the third country in the world to guarantee this right to its citizens.

Religions in Central/Eastern Europe after the Second World War

After the Second World War, Europe was divided by the Iron Curtain, as agreed by the world powers. Joseph Stalin wanted the creation of a 'sphere of influence' in Central and Eastern Europe in order to provide the Soviet Union with a geopolitical buffer zone that separated it from the Western capitalist world. Soviet-style dictatorships and ecclesiastical policies were soon introduced in countries occupied by the Red Army. In this zone, religion was subjected to varying degrees of restriction. Bishops who resisted were imprisoned on fabricated charges, such as Cardinal József Mindszenty (1892–1975) in Hungary. In Albania all religion was rooted out, and it was professed to be the world's first truly atheistic state. Churches in Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia worked under severe restraints. However, in Poland the level of religious freedom remained extremely high for a communist state. The overwhelming majority of the people identified with the Roman Catholic Church, and it provided the spiritual and ideological backing for the Solidarity (*Solidarność*) movement which in 1989 formed the first non-communist government in Eastern Europe since the imposition of socialism in the immediate post-war years. In Hungary, the 1956 Revolution was defeated by the Soviets, but the situation of the various religions improved from the 1960s.

The churches supported the Prague Spring reforms of 1968 and the mass protest against Soviet pressure in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. But after the armies of four Warsaw Pact countries—the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Poland, and Hungary—invaded Czechoslovakia, the reform movement collapsed and the position of religious institutions temporarily deteriorated.

The regime of the (East) German Democratic Republic guaranteed a substantial level of religious freedom and the existence of university theological faculties, religious publishing houses, and a large number of churches. But there was subtle discrimination in employment against practicing Christians, and the regime provided various substitute rituals and activities to lure young people away from religion. More significantly, in 1978 church leaders reached an understanding with the state which allowed churches greater freedom of action. They, in turn, agreed to function as 'the Church within socialism'—that is, to minister within the system.

Although the Church laboured under severe constraints both in the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras, it was clear by the 1980s that times had changed. When Mikhail Gorbachev assumed power in 1985, he proclaimed new policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, which included the further relaxation of pressures on religions. Prisoners in labour camps were freed, Bibles were allowed in the country, closed churches reopened, regulations restricting

religious education were modified, and Christian leaders could freely attend international gatherings.

Then in 1989, when it became clear that the Soviets would no longer interfere in the internal affairs of the bloc, a wave of grassroots uprisings swept through Eastern Europe. Following the Polish example, first Hungary and then East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania replaced their communist regimes with democratic ones. Christians were visible in all of these societies, and the appeal and power of religions in all the countries of the region was temporarily strengthened. Another consequence of the abolition of censorship was the appearance of different esoteric cults and alternative movements thriving strongly among other faiths.

Fig. 1: President Ronald Reagan Meeting with Pope John Paul II at The Fairbanks Airport in Alaska, 2 May 1984, Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:President_Ronald_Reagan_meeting_with_Pope_John_Paul_II_at_the_Fairbanks_Airport_in_Alaska.jpg.

Following the Second World War, the censuses of countries under the influence of the Soviet Union did not measure religiosity. It was thought that religion as a social phenomenon would gradually disappear. Yet from the late 1970s, indirect data indicated an increase in religious activity—perhaps an expression of political resistance against the communist dictatorships. This was confirmed by the significant contribution of the spectacular world politics of Pope John Paul II to the fall of the socialist states in the 1990s, for example his trip to Poland and Hungary on 13–20 August 1991.

During the 1990s, the influence of previously established religions initially grew stronger in Eastern European countries, because the collapse of the party-state dictatorship now raised the prestige of those previously persecuted in the

eyes of many. By the early 2000s, however, the strengthening of religiosity had faded, while the number of groups claiming to be religious in their own way, or to practise their religiosity specifically outside of church organisations, was increasing. The number of believers continued to decline in the 2010s, while the appeal of non-traditional denominations and the so-called small churches increased. Furthermore, the number of people who do not even comment on their religion or worldview in opinion polls is continually growing.

Conclusion

The ideas presented analyse the trajectories of religions in Europe throughout the twentieth century. Beginning with the official separation of church and state in 1905 in France, the different relationships that religious institutions have established with the state are presented. In Russia, the Civil War and Bolshevik policies after 1917 brought about a secularisation that in practice resulted in the persecution of religious practices and the cornering of the Orthodox Church until, for the needs of the Second World War, Stalin restored a relative normality to religious life. In other regions of Europe, for example in the Balkan area, the interwar period involved a process of construction of national states that based their national identity on features of religious homogeneity, which led to the persecution and expulsion of minorities that did not conform to these identity patterns, the Armenian Genocide being a clear example of this. In Spain, the Church, in its strategy of survival after years of secularist republicanism, allied itself from 1939 with the Franco dictatorship to restore its sphere of power until at least the 1960s. For their part, the religions of the countries in the Soviet sphere of influence saw their presence in society greatly reduced, with the exception of Poland, until well into the 1980s, when Gorbachev relaxed the pressure on churches. In this whole process, the Second Vatican Council and its redefinition of the principles and values that defined the Catholic Church, as well as its relationship with the population and with other religions, marked a turning point in the changes that crystallised at the end of the century with the restructuring of the world after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Discussion questions

1. The first half of the twentieth century was full of violent conflicts in Europe. What role did religion play in these conflicts?

2. "The Catholic Church helped end the Cold War." Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

3. Religion played an important role in politics in twentieth-century Europe. Compare this to the role of religion today. What are the differences and similarities?

Suggested reading

Akçam, Taner, *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility* (London: Henry Holt & Company, 2007)

Davie, Grace and Danièle Hervieu-Léger, *Identités religieuses en Europe* (Paris: La Découverte, 1996).

Kippenberg, Hans Gerhard, Jörg Rüpke and Kocku von Stuckrad, eds, *Europäische Religionsgeschichte: Ein mehrfacher Pluralismus, vols. I and II* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2009).

Horn, Gerd-Rainer, *The Spirit of Vatican II: Western European Progressive Catholicism in the Long Sixties* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

Inglis, Tom, *Moral Monopoly: The Rise and Fall of the Catholic Church in Modern Ireland* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 1998).

Jelen, Ted Gerard and Clyde Wilcox, *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective: The One, The Few, and The Many* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Lannon, Frances, *Privilege, Persecution and Prophecy: The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875–1975* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

Morack, Ellinor, *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921–1945* (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2017).

Schad, Thomas, 'From Muslims into Turks? Consensual demographic engineering between interwar Yugoslavia and Turkey', *Journal of Genocide Research* 18:4 (2016), 427–446.

Sigalas, Nikos and Alexandre Toumarkine, 'Ingénierie démographique, génocide, nettoyage ethnique: Les paradigmes dominants pour l'étude de la violence sur les populations minoritaires en Turquie et dans les Balkans', *European Journal of Turkish Studies* 7 (2008), https://journals.openedition.org/ejts/2933.

Wood, John Carter, ed., *Christianity and National Identity in Twentieth-century Europe: Conflict, Community, and the Social Order* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016).

CHAPTER 6.2
IDEOLOGIES

6.2.1 Ideologies in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Marie-Laure Legay

Introduction

The European thinkers of the early modern era are essential for understanding the development of political thought in general. Their contributions brought about paradigm shifts in the way politics was thought of and experienced. Although their writings were known only to a few, many channels helped to spread their ideas. In order to understand the foundations of modern political thought and its evolution during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we must identify the cultures in which the great intellectuals lived and worked, some of them (like Machiavelli and Bossuet) siding with the rulers, others distancing themselves from the elite, while remaining aware of the theological, ecclesiastical, legal, or political stakes of the disputes of their time. Let us note from the outset that 'dissident' thought, which would be that of a perspective on the role of the prince, does not necessarily emerge from observers who do not hold power, and that it is not possible to dissociate 'conformist' intellectuals from 'dissident' intellectuals in modern political thought: Thomas Hobbes legitimised the strong power of the sovereign, considering it a good companion of the natural rights of peoples (1651); François Fénelon remained close to Louis XIV for a long time, but expressed his reservations in *The Adventures of Telemachus* (1699); not to mention the ambiguity with which the philosophers of the Enlightenment praised despots. In this chapter, therefore, political ideas are presented in terms of the questions they reflected as well as in terms of the political criticism they conveyed. The central issue in these debates is the implementation of good government, the strict definition of which varies according to the period. In order to understand these debates, we must appreciate the hold of the state and religion on people's minds at the time, understand the notion of freedom in its context, and observe the dialogue between society and the powers that be.

Humanists and Republicanism

The sixteenth century in Europe was marked by humanism and the Renaissance, which gave rise to a republicanism that drew its models from classical antiquity, but also from a new evangelical ideal. Erasmus (1466–1536) exhorted in *The Education of a Christian Prince* (1516): "You cannot conciliate God by any other service than by showing yourself to be a prince devoted to the salvation of his people". Machiavelli (1469–1527), whose great model was the Roman Republic, helped to anchor the ideal of the prince entirely devoted to virtue, capable of freeing himself from the whims of fortune, in order to act in the world. However, by insisting on the aim of the prince's actions "to maintain his state", Machiavelli emphasised political qualities that had not been seen as important until then. According to Machiavelli, the sovereign must ensure "security and power" for himself while guaranteeing "stability and safety" for his subjects; therefore, wisdom, intelligence, temperance (moderation, honesty, etc.), valour, as well as justice can be put at the service of an economy of violence considered useful to the state.

Fig. 1: François Dubois, *St. Bartholomew's Day massacre* (ca. 1572–ca. 1584), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:La_masacre_de_San_Bartolom%C3%A9,_por_Fran%C3%A7ois_Dubois.jpg.

The leaders of the Reformation also promoted the idea of a strong prince, not through political reason but through divine omnipotence. The assertion that the whole world is governed by providence leads, both in Luther and Calvin, to the idea of an authoritarian republic which is difficult to disobey without offending God. However, the inference from such a statement had a

resounding theoretical echo: what happens if the prince fails in his Christian duties? In the context of the Wars of Religion (1562–1598), conflicts in France between Protestants and Roman Catholics, this question arose repeatedly, especially among Calvin's followers in the aftermath of the St Bartholomew's Day massacres in 1572. The Monarchomachs then affirmed more categorically the duty of disobedient subjects caught in the clutches of a tyrannical power.

At the end of the sixteenth century, political thought therefore shifted significantly towards constitutional thinking. Princely virtue was no longer sufficient to guarantee a happy republic; it had to adopt clearer legal contours defining the power of the sovereign in his political relationship with the confessional society. The ideal of a regime by assemblies defended by the Monarchomachs gained momentum. The Catholic nobility also made it their credo, supported by neo-Thomists such as Pedro de Ribadeneyra (1527–1611; *Treatise on the Religion and Virtues That a Christian Prince Should Have,* 1595) or Juan de Mariana (1536–1624; *De rege et regis institutione,* 1599). This political ideal was, however, opposed by jurists such as Jean Bodin (1530–1596), who, in *The Six Books of the Republic* (1576), provides a universal definition of sovereignty as a monopoly of the law:

> Now, those who are sovereign must not be subject to the commands of others and must be able to give law to their subjects and to break or destroy useless laws in order to make others. This cannot be done by those who are subject to the laws or to those who have authority over them. That is why the law says that the prince is absolved from the power of the laws.

New Conceptions of Freedom

In the seventeenth century, the political effects of the confessionalisation of society during the previous century became clear. A neo-Roman conception of civil liberty was forged at this time, which influenced the first English Revolution (1640–1660). One of the most important intellectuals of the first English Revolution was John Milton (1608–1674). An expert on the works of antiquity, Milton took up the arguments of his predecessors in *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649), according to which the right of resistance is a duty when the king goes against the interests of the governed. Beyond that, he gives an original interpretation of freedom, based on the biblical idea that truth is gradually revealed to men, and that consequently tyrants remain in error.

If John Milton was still inspired by the Gospels, many European intellectuals of this period freed the field of political activities from the idea of divine intervention. In 1612, the Spanish philosopher Francisco Suárez (1548–1617) argued in his *Tractatus de legibus ac de Deo legislatore*: "No king, no monarch has or has had the political principate immediately from God or by the act of a divine institution, but by means of human will or institution".

The school of natural law further deepened this autonomy and definitively changed the way of thinking about politics in Europe, through the promotion of law. The German jurist Samuel von Pufendorf (1632–1694) sought to make this discipline a universal science, based on a law of sociability that obliges everyone to respect each other's commitments. According to Pufendorf, the rules of natural law were first and foremost those of the conservation of life. Therefore, the political contract must aim at the safety of free individuals. The Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) adopted the same approach, convinced of the existence of a law common to all peoples. He laid the foundations of the law of war in *On the Law of War and Peace*, published in 1625.

The works of English philosophers Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and John Locke (1632–1704) stem from this same individualism, this same concern for peace and security. Moreover, the doctrine of natural law allowed any power to be justified as long as it appeared reasonable and useful to society. Thus, as absolutism lost ground, theories of natural law took on a different political content from that of Grotius or Pufendorf. For Thomas Hobbes, the individual's right to self-preservation justified absolutism. As a rationalist, Hobbes observes the laws of nature which dictate that men defend their property and hence surrender their rights to the prince. The state, both ecclesiastical and civil, is thus the result of an irreversible contract and has the task of defending everyone and guaranteeing peace. The influence of his magnum opus *Leviathan*, published in 1651, was far-reaching. On the one hand, it sparked the disgust of Catholics, Anglican bishops, and libertarians, but on the other hand it laid the foundations for a mechanistic political thinking that is still influential today.

John Locke's understanding of the nature of politics as a purely human activity was particularly influential. He returned to the purpose of power from the reflections of Hobbes, arguing that the great end for which men enter into society is to enjoy their goods in peace and security. But unlike Hobbes, Locke believed that the state of nature was a peaceful state of freedom and equality, and that private property existed in this original state, prior to civil society. From then on, "all that the power in question must be used for is to make laws". Locke is therefore a theorist of the superiority of legislative power. As a result, he considered in his work *Two Treatises of Civil Government*, published in 1690, that in all states the first and fundamental positive law is that which establishes the legislative power. His political theories are opposed to the ideas of the English theorist Robert Filmer (1588–1653) or the French bishop and author Bossuet (1627–1704), both of whom defended the divine right of kings. For Bossuet, royal authority is, as with Locke, paternal and reasonable, but princes are seen as God's lieutenants on earth; their authority is therefore sacred.

With Locke, Europe witnessed the ideological triumph of liberalism, which, according to historian Quentin Skinner, not only discredited the neo-Roman

theory of civil liberty, but also the Protestant foundations of political authority. Liberalism requires a type of voluntary subjection and self-control, but in stark contrast to Puritanism, its political vision is based on an unshakeable sense of human reason and the relative ease with which order can be achieved. This confidence of liberalism removes the need for repression and the permanent struggle against sin. This ideology undermined the traditional foundations of political authority, provoking, according to historian Paul Hazard, "a crisis of conscience" by demystifying power.

The entire eighteenth century in Europe was marked by the denunciation of credulity and false beliefs. The French author Pierre Bayle (1647–1706), who inspired the Enlightenment with his *Historical and Critical Dictionary* (1697), as early as 1681 denounced the superstitious interpretation of the passage of the Great Comet in December 1680 and cut the Gordian knot that had been intertwining politics and religion for centuries. Bayle not only heralded the Enlightenment: he established the figure of the 'critical intellectual', who had to face the challenges of his time. The French archbishop and writer François Salignac de La Mothe Fénelon (1651–1715) also illustrates this archetype of late modernity: "Princes that have been accustomed to consider their will only as law, and to give the reins to their passions, may do any thing; but their power of doing any thing is necessarily subverted by its own excess", he wrote in 1699 in *The Adventures of Telemachus*.

Liberalism and Constitutionalism

Eighteenth-century liberal thought can be divided into many strands. Economic liberalism is one that questions the formation of state power from the productive capacity of people. In France, the economist and physician François Quesnay, author of *Tableau économique* (1758) and a treatise on the natural rights of men (1765), the Marquis de Mirabeau, author of *La philosophie rurale* (1763), as well as authors like Mercier de la Rivière, Dupont de Nemours and the Abbé Baudeau, all belonged to the physiocratic school of thought, which called for the formation of assemblies of owners. The economist and statesman Turgot (1727–1781) was close to this school. A supporter of free trade in corn, the abolition of the *corvée* and of trade communities, but also of municipal assemblies, he was opposed by financiers, parliamentarians, the clergy, and the court. In Scotland, the philosopher Adam Smith (1723–1790) was also a representative of the liberal school. After frequenting the Parisian salons and making the pilgrimage to Ferney, Smith wrote *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776). For him, since *homo economicus* is driven by the pursuit of individual profit, only free competition allows for the best possible orientation of capital, which determines production, and the best distribution of the products of labour. This *laissez-faire* approach leads to

a harmony between needs and resources that bears witness to the "invisible hand" of providence: the alchemy of particular interests produces the general interest. In this sense, The French writer Montesquieu (1689–1755) is influenced by Smith when he states: "each individual advances the public good, while he only thinks of promoting his own interest".

However, Montesquieu is best known for his political theories. His liberalism was developed when he discovered the functioning of the Lower House of Parliament in London:

> England is now the freest country in the world, I do not exclude any Republic. I call it free because the Prince has no power to do any conceivable wrong to anyone, for the reason that his power is checked and limited by an act. But if the Lower House were to become the master, its power would be unlimited and dangerous because it would also have executive power. (Montesquieu, 'Notes sur l'Angleterre', Œuvres complètes, 1818)

A scheme of thought of universal scope, inspired by Lockean constitutionalism, then takes shape: the balance of powers guarantees the law that guarantees freedom. Montesquieu's method of analysis involves taking into account the diversity of regimes, relativism (the spirit of the laws consists in the various relationships they may have with different things: the terrain, the climate, morals, religion, trade, etc.) and rationalism. Montesquieu researched political laws and came up with two major theories: the theory of governments, whose principles vary according to the regime; and the theory of checks and balances—"power must stop power". According to him, freedom is the right to do whatever the laws allow. From this point of view, democracy and aristocracy are not free states by nature. Political liberty is found only in moderate governments. In the same vein, the Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711–1776) expounded his empirical relativism and his vow of moderation, but unlike Locke or Montesquieu, he thought that abstract liberty was a fiction, feared the dictatorship of parliament more than the abuse of royal prerogative, and conceived of the general interest as a set of particular interests limited to each other.

A reader of Locke and Montesquieu, the French philosopher Voltaire (1694–1778) was much less involved in political theory. His admiration for English thought can be seen in his *Letters Concerning the English Nation* (1734) and his *Dictionnaire philosophique* (1764), but in practice he defended the enlightened despotism of Frederick II of Prussia to extend his protections in order to escape the wrath of censorship and prison. Denis Diderot (1713–1784), for his part, placed himself under the protection of Catherine II of Russia. A writer (of works such as *Rameau's Nephew* and *Jacques the Fatalist*, both published posthumously, in 1805 and 1785, respectively) and philosopher, indefatigable and curious about everything, Diderot believed in movement and was opposed to any idea of innatism, fixism or fatalism. His materialistic positions earned him serious setbacks. His *Letter on the Blind* (1749) convinced

the censors that its author, who had been under surveillance for some time, was a dangerous individual. The work was condemned and Diderot was arrested at his home and taken to the Château de Vincennes, where he was imprisoned for three months. During his imprisonment, Diderot was visited by his friend Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) who, on the way, had the famous epiphany that led him to write his *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences* (1750). His painful imprisonment traumatised Diderot and prompted him to be very careful in his publications. At the time when the first volume of the *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, appeared (1751), the political affairs of France went through a very tumultuous phase and the various bodies of the monarchy, without being 'contentious', were bitterly debating the foundations of Versailles' decisions, in particular the creation of the Twentieth Tax (1749). In this context, the article on "political authority" returns to the foundations of royal authority. Diderot discusses the origin of authority based on the ideas of John Locke, which are clearly identifiable. He also evokes the historical foundations (the conquest), then discusses submission to God and to the prince, and the forms that this submission takes by considering the limits of the prince's power, since his legitimacy draws its source from "the body of the nation".

Fig. 2: Maurice Quentin de La Tour, Portrait of Voltaire (ca. 1736), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:D%27apr%C3%A8s_Maurice_Quentin_de_La_Tour,_ Portrait_de_Voltaire_(ch%C3%A2teau_de_Ferney)_-001.jpg.

A perfect representative of the French Enlightenment, Diderot did not, however, advocate the introduction of a constitution. In the twilight of the *ancien régime*, the French constitutionalist movement was poorly represented because it required specific prolegomena on freedom, but also a more detailed reflection on inequality between men. From this point of view, Rousseau considers two kinds of inequality: physical and political, the latter consisting of "the different privileges, which some men enjoy to the prejudice of others" (*Discourse on the Origin of Inequality among Men*, 1755). The French politician and philosopher Gabriel Bonnot de Mably (1709–1785) later translated this into less abstract terms: "the distinction between nobles and commoners can only be the result of several events and revolutions from which the vanity of some citizens took advantage to attribute particular prerogatives to themselves and to form a separate class". Hence the idea of a legitimate convention based on an equitable, useful and solid *Social Contract* (1762), itself based on a supreme general will. Rousseau established the principle of popular sovereignty, while the French priest and statesman Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès (1748–1836) completed the reflection by defining the 'nation', which is certainly by natural right, but which needs a political and administrative organisation—a public process, in the words of the author of *Qu'est-ce que le tiers état?* (1789). The era of revolutions committed the constitutionalist intellectuals of the time to thinking about representation in politics. The intellectual Thomas Paine (1737–1809), who later became a French citizen and a member of the National Convention, published a pamphlet with the very characteristic title of *Common Sense* a few months before the American Declaration of Independence in 1776. This republican-inspired work contains a sharp criticism of the English Constitution. He presents royalty as a "political papism" and insists on the distinction between society and government: "society is produced by our needs, government by our vices; the former procures our happiness in a positive manner; by uniting our affections; the latter in a negative manner by restraining our vices". Paine advocated a redesign of political systems through universal suffrage.

Conclusion

Political thinkers of the early modern era were faced with remarkable intellectual challenges. The ideal of good government established during the Middle Ages was challenged by the promotion of Christian individualism and the resulting demand for freedom. Defining princely virtues, and supporting them with faith or reason, was only a fraction of the process. The *res publica* required not only a contract defining the terms of the use of authority, but also a legal and social art that founded the nation. These ideas would influence

the political and intellectual landscape of Europe and the rest of the world for centuries to come.

Discussion questions

1. What was the role of religion in early modern political thought?

2. The thinkers cited in this chapter were all men. Do you think this influenced their ideas? If so, how?

3. How do the ideas of early modern thinkers still influence our society and politics today?

Suggested reading

Burns, J. H. and Mark Goldie, eds, *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

Dunn, John, *The Political Thought of John Locke: An Historical Account of the Argument of the 'Two Treatises of Government'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

Hirschman, Albert O., *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

Skinner, Quentin, *The Foundations of Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

van Gelderen, Martin, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

6.2.2 Ideologies in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Nere Basabe Martínez and Ido de Haan

Introduction

The nineteenth century can rightly be called the century of ideologies. The French Revolution, in which so-called 'ideologues' played a central role, sparked the development of a range of political movements, from liberalism to socialism, that would shape European society. Enlightenment philosophy was an important influence on these modern ideologies, and the idea of rationality and the question of the natural rights of man were their central tenets. At the end of the century, however, the attraction of rationalism and human rights seemed to fade.

The Rise of Ideologies

At stake in the period after the French Revolution was not only the question of which ideology deserved support, but also of how the rise and rule of ideologies should be evaluated. Initially, ideology was perceived in a positive light. The term 'ideology' was coined around 1795 by the French philosopher and revolutionary Antoine Destutt de Tracy (1754–1836), who published *Élémens d'idéologie* (1801–1819), in which he defined ideology as the science of ideas. Ideology was a doctrine of truthful ideas that would serve to create a just society and help to improve the moral state of its members. Destutt built on the ideas of Enlightenment thinkers like the French philosophers Voltaire (1694–1778), Nicolas de Condorcet (1743–1794) and Étienne Bonnot de Condillac (1714–1780), but also the German thinker Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). In his essay *Answering the Question: What is Enlightenment?* (1784), Kant defined as the core idea of the Enlightenment that the autonomous use of human reason

allows us to determine what is true and just, and to liberate ourselves from prejudice and delusions.

The rise of ideology, or 'ideologisation', was part of what the German historian Reinhard Koselleck has defined as the *Sattelzeit*, the transitional period between 1750 and 1850, when many people in Europe embraced the idea that a future society could be arranged on the basis of a rational blueprint, independent from the traditions of the past. Ideas thus became movements. This is what is meant by the suffix '-ism' (as in liberalism, conservatism, socialism, nationalism, and so on): a political movement with its own system of ideas and political culture, from which emerges a programme that seeks to project itself towards a future horizon.

The design of such a rational order relied on supposedly universal principles. These entailed the idea, derived from the English philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) and expounded by the French thinker Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), that the rules of a civil government emanate from a social covenant between autonomous individuals with inalienable and equal human rights. A second idea, formulated by the French philosopher Montesquieu (1689–1755), specified that in order to limit any possible abuse of power, the powers of the state are divided in a constitutional system of 'checks and balances' between executive, judicial, and legislative powers. Yet a third idea, formulated by Rousseau, but also by the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), was that the power of the state emanated from, and thus could be revoked by, the sovereignty of the people. A final idea, formulated by Adam Smith (1723–1790) in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) was that a prosperous society required civil liberties and a state that respected the free-market principle of '*laissez-faire*'.

All of these ideas inspired the French revolutionaries to declare the rights of man and citizens; to create a democratic constitution, based on the sovereignty of the people and the rule of law; and to abolish the aristocratic privileges and the guilds that stood in the way of a free market. In order to preserve the accomplishments of the French Revolution, Destutt de Tracy and like-minded thinkers gathered from 1795 onwards in the Society of Ideologues, a loose-knit group of people who met in the salon of Anne-Catherine Helvétius (1722–1800). Like some of the Enlightenment philosophers, the ideologues assumed a leading political role, with the conviction that a society ruled on the basis of rational principles and empirical knowledge was better served by an enlightened elite than by the fickle opinions of the people. They welcomed Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821), who they saw as the forceful protector of the revolutionary spirit. Yet Napoleon did not return the favour: he introduced the pejorative use of the term 'ideologues' and denoted those who criticised his encroachment on liberty and justice as 'metaphysicians', intellectuals, or

outright imbeciles, who failed to understand the realities of power. Although the ideologues around Destutt were side-tracked by the increasingly despotic Napoleon, they nonetheless stood at the frontier of the emergence of the nineteenth century's leading ideologies.

Liberalism and Democracy

Liberalism was born in the struggle to find a middle way between the revolution, which created liberty as well as licence, and Napoleon, who had introduced the revolutionary order through all of Europe by means of a military despotism. In France, Germaine de Staël (1766–1817) and Benjamin Constant (1767–1830) acknowledged Napoleon's ability to save the revolution by embedding the rights of man and citizens in a stable legal structure, yet they deplored the stifling of public opinion and the limits to the freedom of the press and association, which they deemed essential for a prosperous society. In the process, they reformulated the notion of freedom. Notably, Constant distinguished between the positive liberty of warrior societies, or the "liberty of the ancients", and the negative liberty of modern commercial societies, the "liberty of the moderns". In ancient warrior societies, being free meant assuming the autonomy as well as the responsibility of self-government—of not being a slave. Being free was assimilated to collective rights such as political participation and self-government (a meaning that, according to Constant's interpretation, was wrongly applied by the French Revolution). Modern liberty, in reverse, was based on individual liberty free of prohibitions and oriented towards the private sphere, where political rights are exercised through representation. Liberty was also protected by a constitutional balance between different powers in the state, in which the neutral power of the king was juxtaposed to the executive, the aristocratic power of the senate or the intermediate powers of local politics. Strongly influenced by his companion Germaine de Staël, Constant initiated a more moderate liberalism in Europe. This cleavage was already patent in the Spanish Liberal Triennium (1820–1823) between the *doceañistas* (an elder generation of constitutionalists) and *afrancesados* (liberals who supported the regime of Napoleon's brother, José I), and the radicals of the more popularly based secret societies. French liberalism, chastened by revolutionary excesses, opted for a middle way between absolutism and revolution: that is why the Doctrinaire liberals, with François Guizot (1787–1874) at their head, called themselves the men of the *juste milieu* (the middle way), and seized power after the July Revolution of 1830. Supporters of the doctrine of *laissez-faire*, the Doctrinaires conceived of the state as an instrument at the service of the bourgeoisie, and to demands for

universal suffrage, Guizot simply replied "enrich yourselves" (through hard work and thrift) to those who wanted to vote.

Meanwhile in Britain, nineteenth-century liberalism took the path of radicalism under the name of *utilitarianism*. Its leading representatives were Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806–1873). Utilitarianism left behind the doctrine of natural law and focused on the social 'utility' of individual rights. Bentham conceived of the legislator as a social reformer whose aim should be to achieve "the greatest happiness for the greatest number", harmonising individual interests and the common good, even if the latter was understood as the sum of those individual interests. He believed that happiness was calculable in terms of empirical pleasures, material well-being, and the concrete aspirations of individuals. The result would be a pluralistic society in which individuals act rationally (and know what is best for themselves, hence the advocacy of universal suffrage) under a neutral state that allows them freedom of action. To limit any abuse of power by the state, he added the idea of annual elections, as well as other radical ideas such as the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords, the importance of education, equality of the sexes, and animal rights. Mill, for his part, critical of the utilitarianism of his elders, responded that happiness was not quantifiable, and introduced social aspects into his economic liberalism: an interventionist state (without renouncing private property or the free market) that would not abandon the weakest members of society. Mill was a convinced feminist— much of his work was written jointly with his partner, Harriet Taylor Mill (1807–1858)—and critical of the principle of selfishness. His defence of freedom and individuality was nevertheless radical: sovereignty of the individual over his body, his life, and his conscience was inalienable, and he reclaimed the right to dissent. To this end, he introduced the principles of proportionality in legislative representation (which would also represent minorities), along with pluralism and weighted voting, seeking to unite the idea of universal suffrage with that of the social quality of individuals based on education and merit.

While Bentham, Mill, and Taylor were staunch defenders of universal suffrage, including the vote for women, other liberals were much more hesitant about this. This was the case, for instance, with the French liberal Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859). Having grown up in an aristocratic family repressed by the revolution, Tocqueville travelled on a government mission to the United States in 1831, where his impressions of political life inspired him to write his most famous book, published in two volumes between 1835 and 1840, *Democracy in America*. More than a political system based on popular sovereignty, democracy was for Tocqueville a society in which all perceive each other as equals. He acknowledged that the "democratic revolution" was an irresistible force, yet he was concerned about the place of liberty in a society

where equality prevailed. Initially, he mainly worried about the "tyranny of the majority", but in the second volume of *Democracy in America*, his main concern became the fact that in a democratic society, without the intermediate power of aristocracy that had characterised the *ancien régime*, individuals were powerless against the "tutelary power" of the state. In his view, American society had managed to avoid the predicament of "democratic despotism" thanks to participation in social networks of communal self-government, churches, voluntary associations and a free press. These institutions functioned as the new "intermediate powers" that curbed any possible abuse of central power. That is how freedom was preserved in a regime of equality, something which, in his opinion, had not yet been achieved in Europe, because the old continent did not understand that democracy was a social revolution rather than a political revolution.

Fig. 1: William Edward Kilburn, View of the Great Chartist Meeting on Kennington Common (1848), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartist_meeting_on_Kennington_Common_by_William_Edward_Kilburn_1848_-_restoration1.jpg.

Socialisms and the Marxist Critique of Ideology

Ideology was a positive, programmatic vision for liberals of the first half of the nineteenth century. They inspired the fight for equal political rights, seen on the largest of scales in the English Chartist movement between 1838 and 1857. In this respect, liberals resembled the early utopian socialists, like Claude Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), Robert Owen (1771–1858), Charles Fourier (1772–1837) and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1856). In fact, there was considerable

overlap, first of all in their rationalist expectations that a well-ordered and just society was feasible, but also in the social composition of these movements' protagonists and supporters: aspiring middle-class people and self-reliant skilled workers in crafts, trade, or the liberal professions. Utopian socialists also differed from the liberals, however, in the sense that they focused less on equal political rights and argued instead that it was primarily the organisation of production and the distribution of wealth that formed the most important source of injustice. The utopias they sketched were proposals—and in some cases also real-world experiments—for communal forms of production and solidaristic modes of distribution. However, for some socialists, realising social justice in this way was a chimera: following the analysis of François Noël Babeuf (1760–1797; also known as Gracchus Babeuf) and other French revolutionaries, some expected that leading by utopian example would never convince the property-owning classes to share their wealth. Nor would the owners of the means of production be persuaded to cease exploiting their workers as nothing more than a tool to maximise their profit. This could only change by way of a popular uprising, in which the masses would take their rightful share by force.

All of this utopian and populist optimism of the early socialists was delusional, according to Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. They argued that the history of societies was determined not by ideas or ideals, but by the objective relations of production: the conflict between social classes programmed into the basic structure of society due to unavoidable tension between the bourgeois owners of the means of production (capital) and those who had no other property than their own physical power to sell (labour). This class conflict had its own logic to follow, from increasing immiseration of the workers, to the seizure of state power to expropriate the bourgeoisie, as an intermediate phase towards real freedom for all under communism. In this context, ideas were nothing but the expression of these conflicted relations of production, and the dominant ideology was thus a legitimation of the interests of the ruling class. In this context, ideology was no longer a positive projection of a future just society, but an idealist hindrance to the inevitable coming of a communist society, and the opposite of the scientific nature Marx and his followers claimed for his ideas.

The advent of Marxism in the 1840s and its development into the creed of the socialist movement and mass parties that were to emerge—in the 1860s in Germany, later in other parts of Europe—was as impressive as it was problematic. In the logic of scientific Marxism, there was no active role to play for the organisations of workers; the realisation of communism just had to wait for the objectively right moment in the history of the class conflict. If Marxism had a role to play as an ideology, it was only to prepare the working class for

its role in world history. For many on the left, this was too limited. Anarchists returned to the activist stance of the first radical socialists by launching a violent campaign, culminating in the murder of a number of prominent European leaders at the end of the nineteenth century. Yet they also pleaded for the creation of a real utopia in the present, and rejected the Marxist deviation via the dictatorship of the proletariat and the seizure of the state, before the state would finally wither away under communism. For anarchists, it was not just the capitalist state, but the state as such that was the problem—in that sense they paved the way for the libertarians of the twentieth century.

Yet much more influential were the revisionist social democrats, notably Eduard Bernstein (1850–1932), one of the founders of the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD, 1890), who gained prominence in the socialist movement across much of Europe by sketching a highly active role for organisations of the working classes. By formulating concrete reforms (including universal suffrage, the eight-hour working day, social insurance against the risks of hard labour, good education, and a decent retirement) and actively mobilising the working class in electoral support of their party, the SPD hoped to create a parliamentary majority that could peacefully legislate socialism into a reality.

From Liberalism to Social Darwinism

In their reformist endeavours, social democrats at the end of the nineteenth century found some support from progressive liberals, who, in the footsteps of John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill, acknowledged the rights and needs of the working classes—and in many cases those of women too. Yet these social liberals were an exception to the conservative turn most liberals took in response to the rise of the working class as a political force to be reckoned with.

Already in the 1850s, many liberals lost their faith in the potential of rational progress. They were put off by the rise of the masses and abhorred the cynical manipulation of democratic ideals. Their fear of the masses was confirmed by the rise and rule of Emperor Napoleon III (1808–1873) in France, who created an authoritarian regime under the guise of democratic legitimation— elections, referenda, plebiscites—and legitimated by the nostalgic ideology of Bonapartism. Similar tendencies were developing in the newly established German Empire, where the rule of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898) was founded on domestic military shows of force. Yet at the same time, liberals and bourgeois entrepreneurs felt attracted by the active investment policies of the imperial state, both within Europe and increasingly also beyond it, in the parts of the world it had colonised.

These changes in the liberal outlook were accompanied by an intellectual reorientation. From the mid-century onwards, liberalism evolved towards a confluence with new scientific theories, receiving a new conservative twist. The positivism of Auguste Comte (1798–1857) looked for a 'scientific' solution to political and social problems, modelled on the natural sciences. He abandoned any idea of individualism, revolution or democracy, and opted for the famous slogan "Order and Progress". The idea of progress, a central concept of Enlightenment liberalism (the faith that humanity was advancing in infinite perfectibility) was now restrained by the conservative idea of 'social order', pitted against the new workers' movements. In Britain, through Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), positivism took the form of evolutionism in the light of Charles Darwin's new discoveries. It soon became 'Social Darwinism': based on alleged biological arguments, the evolution of mankind was now understood as a struggle for survival in which the strongest would prevail ('the survival of the fittest'). Social Darwinism therefore justified inequalities while rejecting any idea of redistributive policy as state intervention that would disrupt what was seen as a 'natural' evolutionary process, based on competition for resources and the survival of the fittest.

The new *fin-de-siècle* liberalism, then, abandoned the premise of natural human rights to embrace the new Darwinism. In opposition to the Marxist idea of a class struggle, reactionary thinkers like Arthur de Gobineau (1816–1882) professed a struggle of peoples and races, and thus the reactionary liberals who adopted his line of reasoning were drawn closer to nationalism and imperialism. The 'liberal utopia' of peaceful commercial societies, increasingly interconnected and perpetually progressing (many liberals in the first half of the century even advocated projects of European unification) eventually turned into the dystopia of colonial exploitation, nationalist clashes and militarisation. If liberalism was a revolutionary force in the face of monarchical absolutism, it later became a reactive current against the push for democracy and workers' movements.

Conclusion

In the aftermath of the French Revolution, Europe saw a proliferation of ideologies that shaped the political and intellectual life on the continent. Their common denominator was a new idea of society as something that could and should be planned and shaped along rational principles. The political, social and economic upheavals over the course of the century sparked ideological reactions and counter-reactions that added to this abundance. At the dawn of the twentieth century, the intellectual landscape of Europe was thoroughly

'ideologised', preparing the ground for the violent political and ideological clashes that would characterise the coming decades.

Discussion questions

1. What was Marx and Engels' main criticism of ideologies? Do you agree with them?

2. In which ways is today's politics still shaped by nineteenth-century ideologies?

3. "The European Union is a liberal project." Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

Suggested reading

Burrow, John W., *The Crisis of Reason: European Thought, 1848–1914* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2002).

Fawcett, Edmund, *Liberalism: The Life of an Idea*, Second Edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018).

Head, Brian W., *Politics and Philosophy in the Thought of Destutt de Tracy* (Oxford: Routledge, 1987).

Jaume, Lucien, *Tocqueville: The Aristocratic Sources of Liberty* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

Morina, Christina, *Die Erfindung des Marxismus: Wie ein Idee die Welt eroberte* (München: Siedler Verlag, 2017).

Singh Mehta, Uday, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

Sperber, Jonathan, *Karl Marx: A Nineteenth-Century Life* (New York: Liveright, 2013).

6.2.3 Ideologies in Contemporary History (c.1900–2000)

Ondřej Vojtěchovský, Ido de Haan, and Laura Almagor

Introduction: Typologies and Realities

Ideology acquired a new form and life in the *fin-de-siècle* period, becoming a major driver for the mobilisation of political movements, as well as the justification of state policies and the fuel for domestic and international political conflict. In a way, the notion of ideology regained some of its initial meaning as it was formulated by Antoine Destutt de Tracy (1754–1836) in his *Elémens d'idéologie* (1796): a doctrine of truthful ideas that would serve to create a rational and just social order. Yet it also remained coloured by the way Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and their followers defined ideology: as the opaque justification of social, economic and political power, or as the hegemonic framework through which people (mis)interpreted their true interests, possibilities, and expectations. Ideology thus became both a set of ideas on a society in need of cultivation, monitoring, and dispersal through education, but also a driver of politics that should be treated with suspicion.

Most of the ideologies of the nineteenth century were only ideologies in retrospect, or in the eyes of political opponents. From a critical Marxist perspective, liberalism and conservatism were true ideologies: poorly disguised expressions of class interest that claimed impartiality for a partisan view of society. In a way, this was also the fate of nationalism, the third main ideology of the nineteenth century. Even if nationalists claimed to formulate a prospect for the nation as a whole, for Marxists this notion was based on a delusional understanding of the interests of the people in a capitalist society, interests that in reality transcended the borders of national and also religious allegiances. It was in contestation against these conservative, liberal, and national ideologies that *fin-de-siècle* socialists formulated a set of ideas that developed into an alternative understanding of ideology. Based on a critical diagnosis of the ills of capitalist society, they deliberately proposed a political

programme containing concrete steps towards a future socialist or communist society, to be carried out by an organisation of workers whose capture of the power of the state was the instrument needed to achieve these goals.

This brief typology of the main ideologies defining the political spectrum around the turn of the century were in practice mostly ideal types. Many political movements came to represent a hybrid of these ideologies, mixed in with various local influences. A prime example of such a 'hybrid' ideology was Zionism. A strict typology of ideologies thus disregards internal inconsistencies and disagreements within ideologies.

Conservatives and Liberals

One important aspect of the transformation of ideology into a programme for social revolution or reform is its function in mobilising people to follow the ideological vanguard towards utopia. In the first decades of the twentieth century, tremendous developments in mass media and communications enabled ideas to travel far, both geographically and socially—from the intellectual urban elite to a wider working class in both the cities and the countryside. As a result, ideology became expressed in enticing slogans and formulaic arguments, aimed more towards mobilising the already-converted masses than convincing political opponents.

This shift in the nature of ideology had a serious impact on conservative and liberal politicians and their followers. These figures had thus far justified their political dominance in most of Western Europe by the claim that their ideas were the rational and impartial views of bourgeois men—those with sufficient property to have a stake in society and an interest in social order and stability. Political contestation thus remained limited to civilised parliamentary debate between men with money. Yet these men were largely defenceless against the claim that every decent and productive member of society should have equal political rights. Middle-class women notably supported the feminist cause for the right to vote, often to the consternation of most men. Yet both liberals and conservatives also became increasingly concerned that the 'social question', put on the agenda by socialists in the 1870s, was indeed the result of genuine flaws in the capitalist social order.

In response, conservatives at the turn of the century tried to find a new social basis for support by embracing nationalism as a tool to mobilise larger groups of people. They also merged with confessional groups, with whom they shared concerns about the disruption of familial and communal ties by the corrosive effects of capitalism, as well as a distrust in the subversion of social hierarchies by the egalitarian logic of democratisation.

Notably, the Catholic Church encouraged its followers to militate against secularist and anticlerical tendencies. In Protestant regions of Europe, a new kind of conservative party came to the fore, challenging the legacy of nineteenth-century revolutions. They mobilised their middle- and lower-class supporters to demand political rights and to act against the liberal state. A third variety of conservative ideological innovation was developed by farmers and peasant smallholders. Inspired by a ruralist ideology, in which the values of the countryside were contrasted with the corruption of urban and industrial civilisation, peasant parties appeared at the turn of the century in Sweden, Austria and the Czech Lands, Polish Galicia, Croatia, and Bulgaria.

While this conservative reorientation was mainly focused on rural regions, the ideological transformation of liberalism primarily took place in urban, commercial, and industrial parts of Europe. From the end of the nineteenth century, some liberals began to shift towards a social liberalism, in which trust in *laissez-faire* was replaced by a substantial and programmatic role for the state in the economy, but which also looked for ways to broaden its support from the liberal middle class to the 'respectable' members of the labouring classes. This 'Lib-Lab' alliance was primarily an English phenomenon, although also elsewhere—in Germany, the Low Countries, and France— liberals tried to broaden their support base. This effort failed everywhere, however, due to the reluctance of liberals to stir up the people using ideological rhetoric. Nevertheless, liberals continued to look for reform resulting in the formulation—at a colloquium devoted to the work of Walter Lippmann (1889–1974) in Paris, 1938—of 'neoliberalism' as the most promising concept for liberalism's renewal.

Totalitarianism

Other liberals responded by turning towards authoritarianism, fearing that popular movements would embrace communism. They often coalesced with other opponents of Marxism, notably with Italian fascists and German National Socialists, only to discover that these ideological movements shared some practical realities with the much-despised Soviet communist state. These similarities were expressed in the overarching notion of totalitarianism. As the famous German-Jewish philosopher Hannah Arendt (1906–1975) argued in her classic work *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), totalitarianism differed from authoritarian dictatorships in its total control over all aspects of social life, subjecting all individual interests to the interests of the state. Adopting a Darwinist idea of states immersed in a struggle for survival, totalitarian regimes saw individuals either as assets (productive workers or racially pure

specimens) that had to be nurtured, or as liabilities (enemies of the state or racially impure *Untermenschen*) that had to be eliminated.

The two main examples of totalitarian states at the time of Arendt's writing were Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The underlying ideology of Nazi Germany was National Socialism. Despite its hybrid name, National Socialism was mostly a product of nationalism, with socialist ideals only featuring on the margins. It was also intimately connected to fascism, although it clearly differentiated itself from Italian fascism through its strong focus on race. In comparison to Nazi ideology, Italian fascism, represented since the early 1920s by Italy's fascist leader Benito Mussolini (1883–1945), was more rooted in a grand Italian past, based on actual historical events, and aimed at expansion within Italy's own regional sphere of the Mediterranean. In that sense, Italian fascism was much closer to classical nationalism and imperialism than National Socialism.

Fig. 1: Ludwig Hohlwein, Poster advertising for a propaganda calendar from the Nazi magazine *Neues Volk* (A New People) issued by the Nazi Party Office of Racial Policy (1937), CC BY 4.0, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ludwig_Hohlwein_NEUES_VOLK_1938_ Kalender_des_Rassenpolitischen_Amtes_der_NSDAP_85_Rpf._Aquarell_1937_Arische_Familie_ Nazi_Party_Office_of_Racial_Policy_propaganda_calendar_cover_Pure_Aryan_family_No_ known_copyright_restrictions.jpg. This propaganda poster illustrates the Nazi ideals of an 'Aryan' German race and of 'racial purity'.

By contrast, Nazi ideology went beyond the 'pure' nationalist belief in the right of a particular people (Germans) to possess its own nation-state. Instead, National Socialism created an uneasy cocktail of various political, pseudo-scientific, and pre-modern ideologies, practices, and outlooks. At its core, the Nazi worldview was based on two elements: an extreme and violent form of racial antisemitism (hatred of the Jewish people) and the desire to obtain *Lebensraum* (living space), preferably in Eastern Europe, for the expansion of the 'Aryan' German race. These two ingredients—antisemitism and *Lebensraum*—were intimately connected: the Nazis believed that Jews in both Germany and the rest of the world were part of a large conspiracy that prevented the Aryan 'master race' from reaching its full potential. Jews were accused of conspiring on the one hand with cosmopolitan capitalists in order to subvert the intricate link between German 'blood' and 'soil'. But according to the 'Judeo-Bolshevik Myth' also entertained by the Nazis, Jews were simultaneously conspiring with communists in the Soviet Union to bring a class division into the nation and to prevent Germany from expanding eastwards. The claim to *Lebensraum* in these regions was formulated with reference to a quasi-scientific racial hierarchy, used to justify the expulsion and extermination of a wider set of non-Aryan social and ethnic groups, including Romani people, Slavic peoples, and to some extent also the physically and mentally disabled and homosexuals. However, at the very bottom of the Nazi racial hierarchy were the Jews. The centrality of this virulent, racially defined antisemitism resulted in the death of six million European Jews in the Holocaust.

The Soviet Union was founded on communist principles. After the 1917 February Revolution, the socialists were in agreement that the principal aim was to create a classless society. However, division soon emerged. The Bolsheviks (literally 'those of the majority') followed Vladimir Lenin, who believed in the violent overthrow of the ruling class, the bourgeoisie, in favour of the working class, the proletariat. By contrast, the Mensheviks ('the minority') had remained open to peaceful cooperation with bourgeois organisations while socialist revolutionaries laboured in rural areas on behalf of the large Russian peasant community. With the 1917 October Revolution, Lenin and the Bolsheviks had seized power and by the spring of 1918, they continued to set the tone for the violently oppressive course that the Soviet Union was to fare in the decades to come, reaching its zenith during Joseph Stalin's reign from 1924 to 1953. Marxism-Leninism was transformed from an internationalist and idealistic project into a Stalinist, state-focused regime with nationalistic overtones. Admittedly, some elements of the strong egalitarianism that had underpinned Marx's original ideas were maintained in Stalinism. The Soviet state invested heavily in projects like women's labour participation, universal healthcare, and people-focused technology. Nevertheless, on the most fundamental level,

the only consistent logic of Stalinist ideology was the state and its survival, rather than the wellbeing of its citizens. In this context, disagreement with the 'correct ideological position' became an indication of political unreliability and a motive for persecution of political enemies, resulting in internecine feuds, deadly purges, and state-induced famines that cost millions of lives.

The Second World War represented the culmination of the ideological competition between the communist and national socialist varieties of totalitarianism. Just as Nazism had pursued a total conception of society, its defeat was also total. Nazi Germany was destroyed in terms of its military, material and social infrastructure, and most importantly, in ideological terms. After the extent of the genocide committed against Jews and other groups became manifest, the ideology that had legitimised it lost the support of the many who had initially accepted or embraced it. However, the defeat of Nazism was not coterminous with the victory of communism. For a short while after 1945, the Soviet Union and its ideology were held in high esteem, due to the sacrifice of millions of lives in its resistance against Nazi Germany. Yet in the part of Europe liberated by the Western Allied forces, the notion of totalitarianism served to identify Stalinism as an equally threatening ideology as Nazism. Soon, the division between communism and capitalism, between the one-party state and liberal democracy, came to define the frontline of the Cold War.

After 1945: Sovietisation, Liberal Democracy, and Countercultures

Communism became the leading ideology in the European countries liberated by the Red Army, which the Soviet Union claimed for itself as its own 'sphere of influence'. Local communists backed by Soviet support became crucial actors in the new political system. Though the so-called 'People's democracies' were originally envisaged as an alternative, 'third way' between capitalism and socialism—between liberal democracy and the Soviet order—the totalitarian logic of communist political practice, as well as Cold War escalation, eventually led to the Sovietisation of Eastern Europe. In 1948, with the possible exception of Yugoslavia, specific 'national roads to socialism' were abandoned in the eastern bloc. With pressures and incentives from Moscow, Eastern European communists declared the Soviet pattern of a centralised, state-run economy to be the only valid form of 'socialist construction'. This also included the Stalinist practices of oppressing 'class enemies', purges and show trials, as well as collectivisation of agriculture and forced industrialisation.

The tension, however, between subordination to Soviet interests on the one hand, and the legacy of a national, more democratic and free vision of

socialism (and communism) on the other, persisted through the 1950s. Such Marxist revisionist tendencies manifested in the upheavals in the German Democratic Republic in 1953, in reform attempts in Poland and Hungary in 1956, and in the Czechoslovak 'Prague Spring' in 1968. The Soviet leadership under Khrushchev and later under Brezhnev realised that any profound reform of the Stalinist model could unleash uncontrollable social forces. Until the 1980s, the ruling communist ideology in Soviet bloc countries maintained its dogmatic and rigid nature. When the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev introduced his own reform programme (*perestroika*), this ideology quickly eroded, and as a result, the political order lost its ground. In 1989, socialist dictatorships broke down all over Eastern Europe and soon thereafter in the USSR as well.

After 1945, communism in Western Europe quickly became marginalised. Although the communist parties of France and Italy continued to mobilise mass support, they shared the fate of communists in other parts of Western Europe—excluded from political power, but also deprived of most of their electoral support. After the demise of liberalism and the destruction of democracy in the interwar period, both social democrats and conservative Christian democrats returned after 1945 in a mitigated form, based on the acceptance of an interventionist state and a limited democracy. Social and Christian democrats contested for electoral support on the basis of political programmes that differed marginally in ideological terms. As a result, the personalities of party leaders became crucial for electoral success.

In the course of the 1950s, the state of political contestation in Western Europe came to be characterised by leading intellectuals as the 'end of ideology'. On the one hand, Western liberal democracies were now presented as the alternative to ideological fanaticism. Yet from the early 1960s onwards, this kind of political pragmatism, focused on the delivery of material wealth in exchange for political acquiescence, was unmasked as slavish consumerism and technocratic rule. This made the end of ideology nothing more than the depletion of political imagination.

At the end of the 1960s, the understanding that liberal democracy and the welfare state were in fact the cause of political apathy and materialist self-interest provoked the rise of an ideological counterculture that combined individual liberation with new forms of solidarity. This took shape in a return to Marxism, but this time with a twist: the iron certainties of the Marxist analysis that had encased the unquestionable rule of communist parties in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe was replaced by the inspiration of the early writings of Marx. This rediscovery of Marxism inspired some people to enter the communist parties, only to discover that the Stalinist cadres were unwilling to accept their new agenda. A similar experience plagued the

younger generation of party members in Eastern Europe, who had hoped to create a communism with a human face, until their hopes were crushed through repression, first in Hungary in 1956, and again during the Prague Spring in 1968.

Elsewhere in Europe, 1968 was the starting point for a range of new ideological experiments, in which liberation was primarily defined as breaking the chains of prejudice regarding gender, sexual orientation, skin colour, physical abilities, and psychological normality. These emancipatory ideals fuelled the mobilisation of new social movements, some of which, like the feminist movement and the black liberation movement, were not actually new. Others, like the gay and anti-psychiatry movements, exemplified new characteristics not just in terms of their aims, but also by their turn from collective emancipation to individual liberation.

This diversity gave the new ideologies of the 1970s an ambivalent character. On the one hand, they demonstrated a truly global orientation. These ideologies put transnational issues on the agenda, including the protection of the natural environment, resistance against nuclear energy, and the campaign for nuclear disarmament, reaching far beyond the borders of nation-states. Another global impetus was the connection of the fight against racism and capitalism with the struggle against colonialism and imperialism—including the cultural imperialism ascribed to the Pax Americana that undergirded the liberal-democratic consensus of the post-war period.

On the other hand, however, the new ideologies were decisively individualistic, based on the idea that collective social and global change began with individual reformation. This individualisation of ideological convictions made it increasingly problematic to formulate a common denominator for political mobilisation, with a devastating impact on the loyalty of voters to established political parties. In the end, the individualist streak of the new social movements also created a fertile breeding ground for the ideology that took over the world from 1980 onwards: neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism

Although neoliberalism gained ground in the slipstreams of Ronald Reagan in the US and Margaret Thatcher in the UK, its pedigree was much older. The concept was first coined in 1938, and its main ideas were further developed in the 1940s and 1950s by Friedrich Hayek, Wilhelm Röpke, James Buchanan, and Milton Friedman. Even though the core of the neoliberal creed was the conviction that the market offered the most efficient mechanism for the distribution of goods, it rejected the classical liberal orthodoxy of *laissez-faire*. The market was superior, but also vulnerable and inherently unstable,

and therefore required a strong state to protect it from political interference. Neoliberal policies entailed restrictions on democratic influence, including the curtailment of trade unions and the imposition of strict budget limits. This would be accompanied by an educational, sometimes disciplinary, programme to compel people to become enterprising individuals—if not voluntarily, then by monetary incentive, or by punitive measures, if necessary.

Conclusion

Neoliberalism conquered the world in a perfect ideological storm: the fragmentation of ideologies after the 1960s was accompanied by the demise of the post-war consensus over the values of liberal democracy and the welfare state. Even more decisive was the collapse of communism in the 1980s resulting in the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. At the time, this was experienced as another end of ideology: now that the Soviet Union as the last vestige of communism was relegated to the dustbin of history (ironically a quotation from Marx himself), there were no serious contenders outside the ideology of the West, and as the American political scientist Francis Fukuyama argued, this meant "the end of history". Now that ideologies no longer presented programmatic worldviews that vied for popular support, neoliberalism arguably became ideological in the alternative, Marxist sense of the term: the opaque justification of social, economic and political power, and the hegemonic framework by which people (mis)interpreted their true interests, possibilities and expectations. It is this legacy of what could be termed the Age of Ideologies that laid the foundations for global order in the twenty-first century.

Discussion questions

1. What were the most important changes that ideologies underwent during the twentieth century?
2. In which ways was the Second World War an ideological conflict?
3. In which ways did neoliberalism differ from liberalism and why was this ideology so influential after the end of the Cold War?

Suggested reading

Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Berlin: Schocken Books, 1951).

Bell, Daniel, *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1960).

Eley, Geoff, *Forging Democracy: The History of the Left in Europe, 1850–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Fawcett, Edmund, *Liberalism: The Life of an Idea, Second Edition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018).

Fawcett, Edmund, *Conservatism: The Fight for a Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020).

Freeden, Michael, *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Fukuyama, Francis, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: The Free Press, 1992).

Harvey, David, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Hayek, Friedrich, *The Road to Serfdom* (Padstow: TJ International, 1944).

Huntington, Samuel P., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1996).

Slobodian, Quinn, *Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

CHAPTER 6.3

CENTRES AND PERIPHERIES

6.3.1 Centres and Peripheries in Early Modern Europe (c. 1500–1800)

Stefan B. Kirmse (with Marie-Laure Legay)

Introduction

This chapter discusses centre-periphery relations in early modern Europe, focusing on practical policy and its repercussions, while taking the evolution of discourse into account where appropriate. In so doing, it takes a sensitive view of power asymmetries and violence in early modern state-building; rather than reproducing the rhetoric of different centres, it tries to complement and challenge these narratives with more 'peripheral' perspectives. In addition, the chapter delves into the idiosyncrasies of the early modern period. How did centre-periphery relations during this period differ from earlier times and later developments? As this chapter alone cannot do justice to the variety of European experiences, it will zoom in on two specific contexts—France and Russia—and reveal instructive similarities and differences between these cases.

The notions of centre and periphery are laden with challenges. For most European contexts, the coexistence of central and peripheral institutions characterised both state and religious authorities. Many states had multiple centres, while peripheries were fluid and transient insofar as they became integrated into the heartlands over time. For some larger early modern powers, such as the British, Russian, and Ottoman Empires, the distinction between interior and exterior peripheries is helpful: the former often differed from both central regions and distant frontiers in that they retained the cultural heterogeneity characteristic of peripheries while gradually merging with the core in popular imagination and administrative practice (Scotland and Wales, for example, have been analysed as 'internal peripheries'). Furthermore, new spatial thinking has led historians to see early modern states less as bounded territories and more as relatively open spaces in which historically developed communication routes and the natural environment (rivers, seas, plains, valleys, etc.) facilitated and increased connectivity far beyond state and

provincial borders. There is an open debate on whether the very categories of 'centre' and 'periphery' obscure more than they illuminate.

Either way, each case had its own concerns and peculiarities. For historians of France, territorial privilege and autonomy, along with representation and the social organisation of society, are crucial to understanding the dynamics of centre-periphery relations. Historians of Russia tend to trace these changing relations differently: given the vastness of Russian territory and continuing territorial expansion, the focus is more on the challenges of communication and administration, shifting frontiers, and ever-growing cultural diversity. At the same time, the two cases reveal a degree of contested centralisation that is less evident in cases such as early modern Germany, where the central power was often in no position to impose its will.

France: Territorial Privilege, Royal Power, and Changing Ideas of Representation

In late medieval and early modern France, many territories had privileges. Endowed with assemblies dominated by the nobility, these territories also produced discourses reflecting and reinforcing the ideal of noble governance. However, the social organisation of these privileged territories cannot be reduced to the rule of the nobility and its political identity since, over time, local assemblies that included members of the clergy, nobility, and the third estate evolved as ideological receptacles capable of absorbing and reworking new ideas of representation.

The monarchy had a contractual character: on many occasions, the kings of France conferred privileges, freedoms, charters, and other conventions that would form the basis of the political and fiscal claims put forward by the social and territorial bodies that benefitted from them. The rulers respected this long-standing principle, according to which the lord represented the common good but also had to maintain good customary practice. It was the provincial Estates—assemblies representing the tripartite structure of early modern society—that carefully recorded these kinds of promises. The Estates of Normandy, Dauphiné, Brittany, Béarn and Artois all had such precious charters defining their relations with the King. Provence was proud of its 'constitution', made up of fifty-three requests drawn up by the Estates of Aix in 1482 and presented to King Louis XI at the time of its unification with France. Similarly, Francis I (1515–1547) pronounced a declaration that recognised the privileges of Languedoc in fourteen articles.

The value of such provincial 'constitutions' partly depended on how the lands had been united with the Crown. Some seventeenth and eighteenth-century jurists distinguished between two types of union. The main type (*l'union*

principale) applied to those cases in which territory was given voluntarily to the new sovereign, on the basis of an agreement that enshrined the legal equality of the two 'states' concerned, as in the case of Provence. The other form was an ancillary union (*l'union accessoire*), which subjected the conquered territory to the laws of the centre. The ancillary union fully incorporated the new lands, turning them in a sense into mere provinces, subject only to the conditions of their capitulations. With acquisition by conquest becoming the most common route of territorial expansion in the seventeenth century, the legal integration of the territories took on a more absolute character. At the same time, the *capitulations*—in legal terms, a treaty of surrender and a provincial constitution in the form of notebooks—would set more precise rules for the political game.

The assertion of absolutism in the seventeenth century was a powerful challenge to the regional constitutional claims. Initially only in theory, central law soon imposed itself in practice on the territories that had become 'provinces' of France. According to Cardin Le Bret (1558–1655), a French statesman and jurist, it was for the sovereigns alone to change the ancient laws and ordinances of their Estates, which meant both general and municipal laws as well as the customs of particular provinces. In practice, even if the sovereign respected local privileges such as communal charters, he did not want them to do harm to the kingdom's financial performance. Louis XIII (1610–1643) stopped convening the assemblies of Dauphiné and Normandy, for example, to impose tax reforms. Over a period of five years (1635–1639), the administrative structure of Normandy was shaken to the core, which angered local authorities. Gathered again in 1638, the provincial Estates expressed their profound discontent with the reforms, yet the central authority was not overly concerned. More worried about salt fraud (*faux-saunage*) in these regions, it decided to establish a salt tax, which caused a revolt in 1639. The subsequent clampdown targeted the *parlement* of Rouen—one of about a dozen courts of law spread out across France—more than the provincial Estates, because the *parlement* was suspected of complacency towards the rebels.

It was not until the period of conflict known as the *Fronde* (1648–1653), when the nobility sought to weaken central power and take control over the provincial Estates, that Louis XIV (1643–1715) effectively terminated the latter's existence. The Estates-General had last been convened in 1614 by his predecessor. The King acted comparably in Franche-Comté: after conquering this territory on the kingdom's eastern border, he took the oath of the counts of Burgundy but otherwise reserved the right to legislate for himself. In the capitulation of 1674, he vowed to maintain the provincial estates, but never convened them. The local nobility protested vehemently. Yet the King was all the more determined, since he was faced with a conspiracy that same year,

which called for the reestablishment of the Estates of Normandy with all their prerogatives.

Fig. 1: Samuel de Champlain, *Map of New France* (1612), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Samuel_de_Champlain_Carte_geographique_de_la_Nouvelle_France.jpg.

The growing geopolitical power of the French absolutist monarchy encouraged geographical expansion and, ultimately, the establishment of overseas colonies that added a new dimension to core-periphery relations (and complicated the question of what constituted the 'periphery'). 'New France', as the vast territorial acquisitions in North America came to be known, was initially run by a chartered company before being turned into an ordinary royal province in 1663. Matters of governance, criminal, and civil law were soon organised in accordance with models adopted from mainland France. However, specific offices also emerged and became a hallmark of French colonial possessions: these included the Governor-General, with a mixture of military and diplomatic functions, and the Sovereign or Supreme Council (*Conseil souverain* or *supérieur*), an institution serving as *parlement* in conquered territories and overseeing matters such as justice, police, and finance. These councils were established beyond the Atlantic—in 'New France', Martinique, Guadeloupe, and on Saint-Domingue (today's Haiti), among others—but also in territories that had been incorporated into European France from around the mid-seventeenth century, such as Roussillon in the south and Alsace in the east.

Following the annexation of Corsica in 1768, a *conseil supérieur* was introduced on the island, which had been part of the Republic of Genoa for centuries until it developed a quasi-independence from 1730. Even after 1768,

the island legally remained in Genoese possession but came to be occupied and administered by France. The new authorities, however, found powerful local institutions, with Tuscan Italian as the dominant language. Following a long history of central assemblies with delegates from every part of the island (known as *consulte*), the period of independence turned these gatherings into a veritable national assembly. In 1755, this assembly adopted the Corsican Constitution, which, before the American and French Revolutions, unambiguously declared the sovereignty of the people, introduced the separation of powers, and extended full voting rights for the new parliament, the *Dietà Generale*, to all men over twenty-five years of age. After 1768, the new French authorities would not tolerate such a system on its periphery. A governor was installed on Corsica, along with other agents of the King, and the same system of social distinction and political representation used elsewhere in France was introduced. Notably, the Estates of Corsica were established with sixty-nine deputies, the first twenty-three of whom had to prove their 'nobility', the second twenty-three of whom were members of the clergy, and the third twenty-three of whom represented the 'Third Estate'. Some degree of Corsican 'otherness' was maintained though, as the courts, for example, could draw on French law but also on local customs and the Genoese Statute of 1694. French was prescribed for verdicts, but the use of Italian was permitted in legal proceedings. During the French Revolution, the Constituent Assembly in Paris finally declared Corsica to be an integral part of France. It also abolished the old regime's judicial and administrative institutions and replaced them with new republican ones.

The process of centralisation that drove the transformation of acquired territories into provinces did not only have political consequences. New forms of elite participation in the state apparatus accompanied the development of a uniform administrative frame. The evolution of centre-periphery relations in France also saw the renewal of services and service proposals by traditional social organisations, no longer as expressions of submission to the sovereign but as reflections of the political and administrative roles taken up by the elites. Provincial constitutional rhetoric continued to be expressed until the end of the *ancien régime*. More than that, the traditional elites would mythologise the past, confront the King's agents with the idea of a spurned tradition, and take refuge in the illusion of original freedom. While they became fixated on the specificities of their local privileges, the King's agents would continue to conclude administrative and financial agreements with local assemblies. Provincial law thus emerged from a discourse that the centre took seriously under specific circumstances. At the same time, a general questioning of the essence of government became prominent. Stirred by philosophers like John Locke (1632–1704) and Montesquieu (1689–1755), and more humble thinkers

such as Victor Riqueti de Mirabeau (1715–1789), the constitutional question began to interest wider circles.

Russia: Shifting 'Peripheries', Representation, and Cultural Diversity

The rapidly expanding Grand Principality of Moscow formally adopted the title of the Tsardom of Russia (*Russkoe tsarstvo*) in 1547, before declaring itself an 'empire' (*imperiia*) in 1721. There, centre-periphery relations were also contested and negotiated but, in comparison to France, they were less subject to formal contracts, let alone constitutions. Notably, in various Russian principalities during the Middle Ages, local populations had enjoyed greater autonomy and more influential bodies of representation than they would for most of the early modern era. In the medieval republics of Novgorod (1136–1478) and Pskov (1348–1510), and in many parts of the neighbouring union of Poland-Lithuania prior to 1500, the ruling 'princes' were appointed by, and answered to, popular assemblies known as *vecha* (singular: *veche*), which included nobles as well as poor townsfolk. These forums would not hesitate to reject the decisions of their princes, or even chase them out of office. By the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, however, Moscow had absorbed most rival principalities. Given Russia's developing identity as a great power, Ivan IV (the 'Terrible', 1530–1584), who reigned as the first 'Tsar' from 1547–1584, pushed for ever more centralised rule. First, governors aided by troops and administrative staff were established throughout the expanding Muscovite state. They would receive state salaries while enjoying considerable local discretion. By 1625, the realm counted 146 such governors. Second, dozens of central administrative organs known as *prikazy* emerged in Moscow, with some of them devoted to specific functions, such as foreign affairs, and others to territories, such as the Kazan and Siberian *prikazy*. These proto-ministries would maintain growing numbers of staff in both the capital and the regions, especially for the purposes of taxation, paying salaries, and for meting out justice.

Centralisation, however, remained patchy and contested. The early modern periphery was an open, diverse, and transient space. As the tsardom's border was extended further and further to the east and south, it was secured by ever more fortification lines and (mainly local) military servitors. Still, beyond garrison towns, central rule remained elusive. During rebellions by the fiercely autonomous Cossacks (1667–1671 and 1773–1775), who otherwise offered military service to the tsars, central troops fought for years to re-establish control. Even after such revolts, on the 'Russian' side of the border, most issues concerning justice, finances, military service, and land use had to be negotiated

between various state, religious, and local elites, usually without any written charters or representative bodies. Beyond the open border, by contrast, formal agreements played a role in defining relationships with adjacent allies, including Ukrainian Cossacks. The latter's allegiance to the Tsar, in return for autonomy, was enshrined in the 'March Articles' of 1654 (also known in Russian as the Treaty of Pereyaslav). Written agreements known by the Turkic word *sherty* also formalised relations with Muslim Tatar and Kalmyk nomadic leaders, defining, among other things, reciprocal monetary obligations. Muslim chieftains would receive regular payments from the Muscovite state for their services in securing the border. Ivan IV thus wrote to one of these Muslim leaders in July 1559:

> Come to us with all the people that are now with you. And we will give space to all of you on the frontier [na Ukraine] in Meshchera, where you may wander as nomads as you wish. We will owe you a great salary. ("Posol'skaia kniga: po sviaziam Rossii s Nogaiskoi ordoi, 1557-1561", in *Prodolzhenie drevnei rossiiskoi vivliofiki*, vol. X, St. Petersburg, 1795, pp. 48-49)

Admittedly, the borderland allies did not always feel bound by such agreements, which they saw more as temporary alliances, and continued to raid Russian settlements.

Fig. 2: Portrait of Catherine II of Russia. Wikimedia, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia. org/wiki/File:Portrait_of_Empress_Catherine_II.jpg.

It was only under Catherine II (1762–1796) that the central grip became more tangible, after a series of reforms and territorial reorganisations which also defined the responsibilities and rights of towns, provinces, and districts. By the late eighteenth century, the empire had abolished or violently displaced most formerly autonomous formations on the frontier, including the Cossack settlements. Still, central rule remained territorialised in that many central laws were made applicable only to specific regions, such as the 'western provinces', the 'Volga region', and so on. As a result, the situation of a particular group of subjects (for example, Muslims, merchants of the first guild, or peasants on state lands) could be vastly different depending on where they lived. Administrative centralisation did not deliver legal uniformity.

Territorial expansion and organisation were key to centre-periphery relations in Russia. Assemblies and popular representation were less central to the development of these relations than in France, Germany, and elsewhere in Europe. The Duma, an advisory organ with no formal powers that included between one and two dozen nobles ('boyars') from the most important families in Muscovite society, was regularly summoned to consolidate the legitimacy of, and popular support for, the Tsar's decisions. It coexisted with a larger central institution called *zemskii sobor* (assembly of the land), which the tsars convened every few years between 1549 and 1684 for the same reasons. Historians differ on the question of the assembly's composition but, at different times, it included boyars, provincial governors, lower gentry, Russian Orthodox clergy, townsfolk, and peasants. This central institution, however, did not systematically channel regional interests. With few exceptions (such as the Baltic provinces, which were allowed to retain their German-speaking *Landtage* after the Russian conquest in 1710), there were no regional assemblies or parliaments recognised by the centre. It was only in 1766 that Catherine II introduced 'noble assemblies' at the provincial and district levels and allowed them to look into local matters. In 1767–1768, she convened a Legislative Commission in Moscow and St Petersburg to produce a new legal code, with delegates representing many social groups and regions bearing instructions from those who had locally selected them. Yet, this advisory commission never produced any substantive laws or codes; it was significant mainly in that it provided the Empress with information on local concerns.

The idea of three distinct 'estates' in a Western European sense (clergy, nobility, common people) fails to capture the real-life hierarchies of early modern Russia. Other categories had greater legal impact: poll-tax payers, for example, a category from which not only clergymen and higher nobility were exempted but also rich merchants and many non-Russian rural residents; lesser nobles and bureaucrats, by contrast, often had to pay this tax along with most commoners. Among the clergy and nobility, it also mattered whether someone

was (Orthodox) Christian. Muslim and Buddhist nobles and 'clergy', for example, had more limited privileges while others, including the (Protestant) Baltic Germans, actually enjoyed more privileges than most Russians. As for the rural population, there were so many legal differences between Russian Orthodox and non-Orthodox peasants and between state-owned peasants and privately-owned serfs that the category of 'peasant' meant little. Cossacks and *inorodtsy* (literally, 'those of other descent'), a term that captured some but not all non-Russians, formed separate legal categories altogether. Footnotes in legal texts made sure that many rights were withheld from the Jewish population. Ethno-religious differences were thus just as important as social distinctions in imperial society. Unlike many Western monarchies, the Russian Empire took pride in its cultural diversity and flaunted it wherever possible—while privileging the Russian Orthodox. Since some Russian regions had large percentages, even majorities, of non-Russians, the legal status of these communities would also shape the relationship between Moscow, St Petersburg and their various 'peripheries'. Moreover, the reality of large indigenous communities and predominantly Russian-staffed local administrations would raise the question of which 'peripheries' were also Russian 'colonies'.

Eventually, the centre's advance across Eurasia along with improvements in cartography led the geographer and statesman Vasily Tatishchev (1686–1750) to give impetus in the 1730s to an intellectual debate about Russia's true centre and periphery. By selecting the Ural Mountains as the natural border between Europe and Asia, he not only divided Russia into a 'European' and an 'Asiatic' part—thereby confirming the European identity of St Petersburg's elites—but he also turned the land beyond the mountains into the empire's ultimate periphery. Talk of Russia's 'interior provinces' inside its European half would soon become commonplace. The debate on 'Russianness', however, along with extensive discussions of Russia's geographical core and peripheries, would not gather full pace until the nineteenth century.

Conclusion

In early modern Europe, with few exceptions, the development of core-periphery relations was shaped by centralisation, which gradually supplanted earlier forms of local autonomy. The cases of France and Russia, however, also show that this process was neither completed nor uncontested. Local institutions, demands, and thinking had to be accommodated, to a degree, and left strong legacies, from territorial privilege and constitutional thought to the realisation that the centre's power was sometimes elusive and often negotiable. Early modern states were more open than their modern successors, and less

penetrated and controlled by the centre. Still, this did not stop the centre from meeting resistance with force.

France and Russia both pursued policies of colonial expansion, with new 'peripheries' serving a mixture of geopolitical and economic interests. While both moved into adjacent territories (which in the Russian case extended as far as Siberia), France also engaged in overseas colonialism. These different forms of expansion led to an increase and diversification of peripheries and peripheral societies. At the same time, France tended to reproduce its own, tripartite social structure in newly acquired territories (some of which were not so different in social terms) while early modern Russia had too diverse a society (with many different religions, languages, etc.) and too tenuous a central grip to be able, or even aspire, to impose its social structure on borderlands. This would change dramatically in the modern period.

Discussion questions

1. To what extent did centralisation succeed or fail in early modern Europe?

2. What are the main similarities and differences between France and Russia in terms of centre-periphery relations?

3. Which different notions of representation played a role in early modern rule over 'peripheries'?

4. To what extent is the study of colonies and colonialism relevant for 'core-periphery relations'?

5. How useful is it to apply the spatial logic of 'centre' and 'periphery' to early modern states?

Suggested reading

Carrington, Dorothy, 'The Corsican Constitution of Pasquale Paoli (1755–1769)', *The English Historical Review* 88 (1973), 481–503.

Kollmann, Nancy, *The Russian Empire, 1450–1801* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

Legay, Marie-Laure, *Les états provinciaux dans la construction de l'état moderne aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Geneva: Droz, 2001).

Nolte, Hans-Heinrich, *Internal Peripheries in European History* (Göttingen: Muster-Schmidt, 1991).

Romaniello, Matthew, *The Elusive Empire: Kazan and the Creation of Russia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012).

6.3.2 Centres and Peripheries in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Károly Halmos, Robert Kindler, Irina Marin, and Darina Martykánová

Introduction

In Jules Verne's novel *Around the World in 80 Days* (1872), the protagonist Phileas Fogg discovers in the *Morning Chronicle* of 2 October 1872 that it is now possible to circumnavigate the globe in eighty days from east to west, on a route that alternates between railways and steamships. In its own way, Verne's novel recounted the odyssey of the contemporary world, which his hero, obviously British and a maniac of time, would not have been able to achieve without the immeasurable progress made in land and sea transport. Similarly, new means of transatlantic communication had extended land-based telegraph networks.

The "long nineteenth century" (Eric Hobsbawm) was the century of the steam engine. Due to its amazing power, the exchange of people, goods, and ideas reached new dimensions. Installed in locomotives, the mobile steam engine became the driving force of an ever-faster journey to modernity. Railways were regarded as symbols of progress, transporting products and, so it was thought, values to the remotest peripheries and regions. Most importantly, railroads were able to transcend the obstacles of space, distance, and time. Taken together, they seemed to be a solution to one of the crucial questions of European history, beginning from the mid-nineteenth century: the integration of internal and external peripheries and their connection to economic and political centres. This chapter uses railroads and their infrastructures as a lens to discuss this decisive and ambivalent process that has shaped European history to this very day.

Empirical evidence used in this chapter stems largely from three major empires that were themselves located at the European peripheries. They—the

Habsburg Empire, the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire—were only partially 'European' in some eyes. As examples, they highlight the significance of 'peripheral' regions for larger developments in European history and at the same time they provide important insights into the contingent nature of centre-periphery relations.
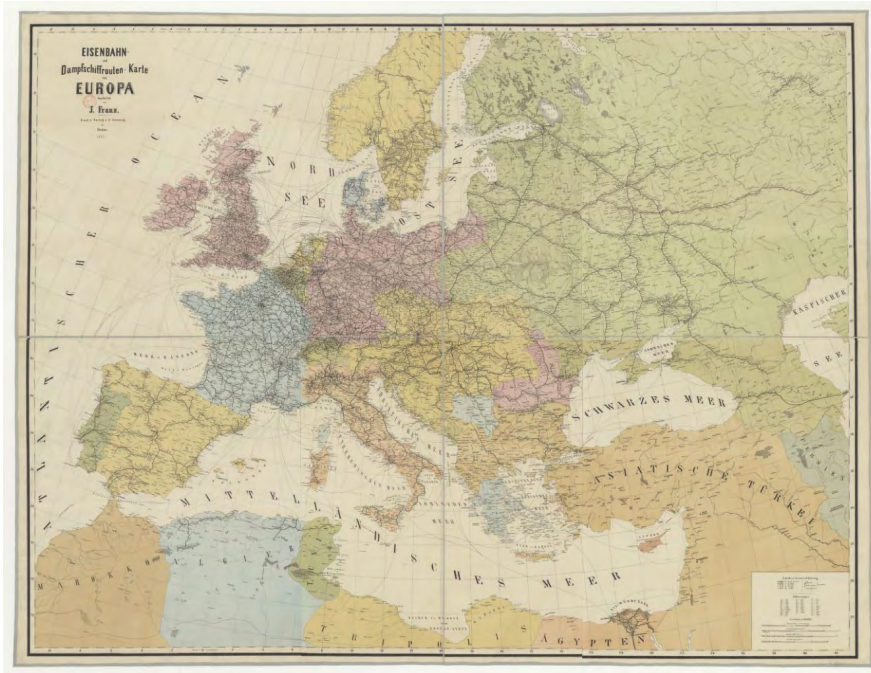
Fig. 1: J. Franz, *Map of Railway and Steamship Routes in Europe* (1883), Bibliothèque nationale de France, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b532394204.

The Steam Revolution and the New European Geography

The geography of transport in pre-railway Europe was highly diversified, depending on three factors: natural conditions, centuries-old legacies, and the extent of the investment efforts made during the Enlightenment and the first part of the nineteenth century to develop a coherent system of trade. The continental states did not wait for the railway to implement a proactive policy of transport infrastructure development. Indeed, faced with the British challenge, the continental countries were in no doubt that Britain's advance was due to the quality of its communications network.

The improvement of infrastructure allowed a complete transformation of transport modes. The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed a veritable revolution on the roads in the whole of Western Europe. France, Great Britain, Prussia, the Netherlands, Belgium, Northern Italy, and Switzerland went

through major changes, thanks to improvements in materials, vehicle design, and energy management, due to improved horse breeding. Thus, the number of kilometres covered without stopping by stagecoaches increased from about nine kilometres in 1780 to twenty-two kilometres in 1850. In this respect, the travel revolution preceded the railway. The same dynamic can be observed for canals. Canals play a decisive role in the history of European transport. Many had been built over many centuries, but the nineteenth century marked a change of scale. Thus, well before the railway revolution, the land transport revolution already accentuated the differentiation of the European space. Hence, in the case of France around 1840, we can counterpose a northern France equipped with a dense network of canals and roads, to a southern and western France still unequally served. Similar contrasts can be observed in Italy and Germany.

From the 1810s onwards, on the Thames and on the Rhine, steamships became the norm. The decisive progress was based less on the increase in speed than on the phenomenal increase in carrying capacity. This revolution in transport made it possible to envisage the crossing of seas and oceans in a different way; this boom in maritime transport led to a considerable growth in port cities, brutally accelerating the phenomenon of global coastalisation.

Steam was also the cause of an upheaval in the means of land transport. Railways had existed since the late eighteenth century: in the mining countries of Western Europe, wagons on rails pulled by animals were used to move the ore. But the advent of steam traction changed everything. The first trials took place in the 1820s and the first general traffic line was opened in 1830 between Manchester and Liverpool. The British origin of the phenomenon led to the imposition of the standard gauge of 1.42 metres almost everywhere—the standard to which the first locomotives exported by Britain were built. The railway made it possible to move heavy loads of people and goods without having to deal with the geography of water. It thus became possible to deeply reshape the geography of the European continent. The availability of transport infrastructure had already been of great importance to Britain even before the nineteenth century: for several centuries the expansion of the British Empire's boundaries had taken place owing to a powerful navy and the domination of global trade routes, with trading outposts gradually turning from informal to formal empire. The arrival of the railways in the nineteenth century gave imperial Britain several advantages: more immediate access to raw materials and markets as well as the faster movement of troops and effective repression to imperial hotspots. In the process, former backwaters such as the Midlands and the northern reaches of England were transformed into booming industrial centres, while far-flung colonies such as India received railways and a modern infrastructure.

Although the first commercial railway line was opened in 1812, the widespread use of trains for transport grew very gradually. The establishment of the railways can be understood as a response to three different requirements. Railways were a response to the demand for transport in countries or regions that were already well served by roads and canals, but where there was strong traffic pressure on infrastructure. This was the case in north-western Europe, where the first railway systems were built from the 1830s and 1840s.

Especially from the 1850s onwards, trains were to serve as a deliberate solution to the problem of economic backwardness—as a response to the backwardness of the land transport system and the economy in general. This was the case in Spain, Russia, southern Italy, and western France. Finally, in the third case, the train was perceived as a means of establishing a system of long-distance exchanges that would enable the national space to be structured and integrated into a larger European space. This was the Portuguese project, but also that of Belgium and the Netherlands. State control of the railways was a guarantee of national independence and allowed the unification of the territory. More generally, whether in France, Germany, Switzerland, or Italy, the debates on railway routes revealed the dual ambition of achieving national unity and opening the country to trade.

This hierarchy of places and spaces was transformed rapidly by the mobile steam engine. The movement of goods increased dramatically thanks to this transport revolution. Between 1840 and 1870, freight costs fell by seventy percent in international trade. This triggered a process of specialisation in the different regions of Europe between agricultural, mining, or industrial activities. A more structured geographical landscape was created, partly embedded in old spatial patterns. The most industrialised and urbanised zone extended from the centre of England to the north of the Italian Peninsula, passing through the Rhine and Rhone regions, accompanied by a few more distant industrial districts, for example in the Iberian Peninsula. This concentration was redoubled by the means of transport: maps of the expansion of the railways outline this area of greater density. As the railway played an important role in the strengthening of central districts and regions, it also, conversely, doomed others to decline. Many once-prospering cities or whole regions faced deprivation when they were cut off from railway infrastructures and the economic opportunities they provided. These new infrastructures could leverage the creation of national markets. And what was more, railways fostered internal and transnational migration on a whole new scale. In search of opportunities people departed agricultural regions for industrial cities, as well as mining and metallurgical regions.

The steam revolution of the nineteenth century did not only transform mainland Europe, but it changed its relation to other parts of the world. Its

acceleration of the reconfiguration of European peripheries thus also occurred on a global scale. The year 1869 proved to be crucial in this regard. The Suez Canal was opened, significantly reducing time and costs for global trade. In the same year, the Transcontinental Railway started operating in the United States, not only connecting northern America, but also serving as a shortcut for the journey from Russia's Far Eastern regions to its capital, St Petersburg. In this process, easier and cheaper communication allowed investment possibilities to proliferate, while quick access to information set profit expectations higher.

Trains and the Reorganisation of European Peripheries

But how did this 'success story' look from Europe's (imperial) peripheries? The history of the railway networks in the three 'peripheral' empires show a very different history from that of Western Europe. Hungary, part of the Habsburg Empire in the nineteenth century, did not have an advantageous transportation infrastructure. Like most other parts of the Habsburg Empire, it was landlocked. On the eve of the nineteenth century it was only the wars of the First French Republic that gave Hungary a chance to sell its grain surpluses. Western urbanisation impressed that there was a demand for grain. Water regulation—partly regulating waterways but also reclaiming arable land—was a new aspiration for Hungarian landowners. Railways were built to connect the large plains of the country to commodity markets. Both developments demanded capital imports and internal accumulation. Not too long after the middle of the nineteenth century, the world's largest capacity for *steam* milling emerged in the commercial capital of the country, the city of Pest. Yet declining transportation costs had made US grain so cheap in Europe that Hungarian exports could not compete outside the borders of the Habsburg Empire. Agriculture could not develop as the country's reformers had imagined. At the same time, news about the rising demand for labour in the US spread rapidly all over the country and, at the turn of the century, migration to the other side of the Atlantic grew.

The Russian experience was different—at least partly. When the Russian Empire entered the railway age in the middle of the nineteenth century, the tracks were a representation of imperial pride and power. A first line (opened in 1837) operated only between the capital St Petersburg and the Tsarist residence of Tsarskoye Selo—connecting only the very centres of political power. Things changed with the construction of the Moscow-St Petersburg line, which opened in 1851. This ambitious project was widely regarded as a major step to overcoming Russia's "illness of space", as the historian Roland Cvetkovski has called it, and to territorialise the empire. Advocates of the empire's speedy 'railroadification' pointed not only to its political benefits,

but also to its economic advantages. Trade would flourish between Russia's remote and isolated regions and its centre. And more than that, the railway was intended to bring 'civilisation' to the 'backward' populations of the Russian peripheries. Planners and bureaucrats alike imagined the integration of empire as a process wherein ideas and normative orders travelled from the centres to the peripheries with goods and raw materials sent back to feed the economy and strengthen the state. The railroad was thought to transport Russia and its multi-ethnic population into modernity.

From modest beginnings, the Russian rail network grew with impressive speed over the next decades. At the end of the nineteenth century, it connected not only the empire's European regions but reached its Central Asian and Far Eastern peripheries. The network was a representation of state power—its lines connecting the metropolis with its peripheries—but it did not provide connections between regions. The Russian railroad network was thus a means of imperial integration and international separation at the same time. Although it was connected to Europe via rail, the Russian Empire used a different gauge than its neighbours.

The construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway between 1891 and 1916 was testament to Russia's urge to integrate its peripheries on the tracks. Even before its final completion the effects of the Trans-Siberian Railway, connecting Moscow with Vladivostok at the shores of the Pacific, were clearly discernible: the railroad enabled the resettlement of peasants from the European parts of the empire to Siberia and the Far East. It also served as an important means for Russian grain exports. Towns and cities along the line were booming. The Trans-Siberian was also strategically important, located dangerously close to the Chinese border—during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, its limited capacities caused severe logistical problems for the Russian Army.

The expansion of the railroad network had several unintended consequences. At first, the lines and networks did not always follow long-established trade routes. Many towns and regions that were not connected to the railway system faced economic decline and lost their former political significance. In other words, where some peripheries grew closer to centres and became less 'peripheral', new peripheries emerged at the same time. Secondly, whereas the railroad and its infrastructures were definitely modern, its impact on societies at the periphery were not always modern*ising* in the sense tsarist elites had hoped for. In many cases, peasants and local elites opposed the construction of new lines or applied their own agency and practices when using them.

Thirdly, the railway contributed not only to the expansion of the centre's power over peripheries, but it also induced change and dynamism in the imperial centres themselves. Around 1900, many observers from the Russian urban elite regarded train stations in major Russian cities as places of disorder

and chaos. They were crowded with people from all over the empire who flocked to the booming cities, searching for work and modest prosperity. The newcomers carried, along with their few belongings, the cultural values of the peripheries to the centres; a single train journey to the city was not enough to transform them into 'enlightened' citizens. In their new role as workers, people from the inner and outer peripheries would soon play a major role in the revolutionary chaos that was about to unfold in the empire. The railway had helped many of them come into position and it was no coincidence that some of the most important episodes of the Russian Civil War were fought along the railway lines. No longer did rail simply connect centres and peripheries, it now represented the very arteries of political power in a disintegrating empire.

The third case is quite different. In its heyday, the Ottoman Empire was the centre of its own world, and all that lay beyond its frontiers was, in a sense, periphery in the eyes of its ruling elites. As for the Ottoman domains themselves, it is tricky to apply the notions of centre and periphery to an empire that was, like many patrimonial empires of that time, based on diversity. This was not only in terms of language, ethnicity, and religion, but also in terms of law, regulation, and the management of different territories. The nineteenth century, with its state-building process, its notion of equality before the law and its standardisation of government intervention, necessarily meant an important change for the Ottomans. Until the early years of the twentieth century, the imperial elites considered their domains in the Balkans, together with western and central Anatolia, as the core lands of the empire. In fact, many of them were born and raised in these regions. A nineteenth-century gentleman from Istanbul understood Libya or Iraq as imperial peripheries— but not the Balkan regions, even if they had acquired a high level of autonomy (Wallachia, for example, but not Thessaloniki or Skopje). In fact, some historians have understood the intervention of the Ottoman government in some of the Arab territories, including the investment in infrastructures, as internal colonisation, legitimised as a sort of civilising mission. Such self-fashioning as the moderniser of 'backward' regions can be understood, partly, as a response to European stereotypes of the Ottoman government as inefficient and a hindrance to the progress of its subjects. In some cases, Ottoman investment in infrastructures in remote territories had a clear political message: the Hejaz Railway, built and funded by the Ottoman government, was to take pilgrims safely and efficiently to Medina, while emphasising the sultan's role as protector of the Holy Shrines and the leader of the Muslim world.

In the Balkans, the interplay of forces around infrastructure was extremely complex, particularly in the case of railways. The actors involved had different, often clashing, interests. The Ottoman authorities were willing to fund infrastructures to boost the economy, particularly promoting the

commercialisation of agricultural products. However, like any nineteenth-century government, they also strove to use modern infrastructure to foster their control of the territory in both military and administrative terms. Local elites shared with the Ottoman authorities an interest in boosting local economies, but often had their own political agenda, such as promoting their region's autonomy, independence, or even future territorial expansion to neighbouring lands. Foreign investors and railway companies also extracted profits while acting as agents of foreign countries and their geopolitical interests. Concerning infrastructures, the Ottoman and post-Ottoman Balkans became, in the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, a true European periphery. Politicians and investors from the wealthy and mighty European centres were able to draw and build the main lines of the railways in the region, while local actors, including the Ottoman government, were able to set their priorities and benefit from roads, ports and a few minor railway lines.

Conclusion

Throughout the nineteenth century, the steam engine reshaped the geography of Europe. The construction of new railway lines brought entire regions out of marginality, or allowed for better integration into increasingly connected markets. This new European geography was not only technological or economic, however. The same process of intensification of exchange can be observed in the cultural sphere, with the same scale effects. To give one example: in the case of theatre, the city of Madrid seemed to lag behind the great cultural capitals of the century, such as Paris, London, and Vienna. As the capital of a country with a fragile central state and delayed entry into industrialisation, Madrid was on the cultural periphery of Europe. However, seen from the perspective of the Hispanic cultural empire, the capital of Spain was the source of many theatrical and musical productions exported to its own Latin American peripheries.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways did the transport revolution of the nineteenth century (trains, steamships, etc.) change international political relations in Europe?

2. In which ways was this experience different between Western and Eastern Europe?

3. Nineteenth-century Europe was dominated by several empires. How did the transport revolution change these empires?

Suggested reading

Alvarez-Palau, Eduard J., Alfonso Díez-Minguela and Jordi Martí-Henneberg, 'Railroad Integration and Uneven Development on the European Periphery, 1870–1910', *Social Science History* 45:2 (2021), 261–289, https://doi.org/10.1017/ssh.2021.1.

Caron, François, 'Introduction: l'évolution des transports terrestres en Europe (vers 1800-vers 1940)', *Histoire, économie et société* 11:1, *Les transports terrestres en Europe Continentale (XIXe-XXe siècles),* ed. by Michèle Merger (Paris : CDU Sedes, 1992) pp. 5–11, https://doi.org/10.3406/hes.1992.1619.

Martí-Henneberg, Jordi, 'The influence of the railway network on territorial integration in Europe (1870–1950)', *Journal of Transport Geography* 62 (2017), 160–171, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2017.05.015.

Otte, Thomas G. and Keith Neilson, eds, *Railways and International Politics: Paths of Empire, 1848–1945* (Oxford: Routledge, 2012).

Rosenberg, Emily S., ed., *A World Connecting: 1870–1945* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2012).

Schenk, Frithjof B., *Russlands Fahrt in die Moderne: Mobilität und sozialer Raum im Eisenbahnzeitalter* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2014).

Stanev, Kaloyan, Eduard J. Alvarez-Palau and Jordi Martí-Henneberg, 'Railway Development and the Economic and Political Integration of the Balkans, c. 1850–2000', *Europe-Asia Studies* 69:10 (2017), 1601–1625, https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2017.1401592.

6.3.3 Centres and Peripheries in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Gabriela de Lima Grecco, Károly Halmos, and Jaroslav Ira

Introduction

Over the centuries, differences between European countries and other nations have been very important in the construction of contemporary European identities as 'European'. In this process of shaping the identity of the European nations, a key part has been played by the experience of cultural and economic contrasts, as well as the 'othering' of the non-Western world. However, differentiation inside Europe has been similarly important in constructing a self-definition of each European country or region. In this positioning of the 'other' and 'self' with a global outlook, an idea has developed of some regions as 'centres' and others as 'peripheries', inextricably bound up with relationships of power. The centre-periphery relationship has particularly been employed to contrast regions that have great social and economic differences. This has created an imaginary classification of 'central' and 'peripheral' countries in the twentieth century, with similar meanings to other divisions, such as the North and the South, the developed and underdeveloped world, or the First, Second, and Third Worlds respectively. On the other hand, we can identify different centre-periphery scales, from the level of the global all the way down to the scale of a single city.

Thinking of Centres and Peripheries

The idea that the world has a centre around which everything else revolves has very deep roots and is closely connected to the birth of colonial empires. However, the proposal to consider the centre-periphery duality as a reference

with which to analyse the relations between countries in the international economy was a product of the Latin American structuralist school. Its main exponent was CEPAL (the UN Economic Commission for Latin America), among whose personnel the Argentinian Raúl Prebisch and the Brazilian Celso Furtado stand out. In the structuralist theory, emphasis is placed on the relationship between industrialised countries and raw material exporters, and the unequal relationships that develop from that basis.

Recent Latin American critical theory, especially from the representatives of decolonial studies, develops the idea of dual relations between centre and periphery. For some decolonial thinkers, it is not only the economy that creates unequal relationships, but also the construction of knowledge. Some historians denounce the *geopolitics* of knowledge, which tries to explain how the peripheralisation of some places and the centrification of others has operated. This reveals the interaction of certain types of knowledge produced by the relationships of subordination and [the] inferiorisation of the knowledge generated in other places (those of the periphery and those of the colonial difference) for the sake of dominating, exploiting, and subjecting the latter. This theory seeks to point out that knowledge as such has often been produced with universalist pretensions in the 'centres'—in schools, academies, universities, by literary and scholarly elites. In reality, this wisdom is partial knowledge on the reality of the world, written from a particular point of view. Centres create discourses, enunciations, and knowledge—including History—and in this sense decolonial studies is an attempt to confront and transcend Eurocentrism as a model of universal development.

In the perspective of European historiography, universal analytical concepts have long been established, including 'development', 'progress', 'modernisation', 'civilisation', and temporality (from the European chronologies of time: medieval, modern, and so on). They are assumed to be valid for the entire world. Historiography thus went on to homogenise the narrative structures of different histories and build uniform methodological standards. This is precisely one of the problems of modern epistemology: the construction of Eurocentric meta-narratives that played (and continue to play) a decisive role in the construction of a history centred on world unity and the evolutionary notion of time, progress, and development. In consequence, actors located in the continents of Latin America, Asia, or Africa usually appear as a secondary element in historiography, because these are the regions considered far from the 'centre' of the world. They are considered to be 'underdeveloped' compared to the North-West of Europe, in a device that creates a kind of 'West-and-the-rest' dichotomy. Therefore, some scholars nowadays recognise that thinking about the past is a positional action and that the illusory notion of a neutral, omniscient narrator must be rejected. In this sense, historiographical

practices should not disconnected from *being* (the historian) and *power* (from where and for whom it is written).

The literary scholar Edward Said developed the notion of 'Orientalism' as an ideological mechanism for the self-definition of Europeans through the differentiation of the 'Other' (inferior) and the 'Self' (superior). This is closely connected to the west-east framework of centre-peripheries. However, within the European continent itself the centre-periphery relationship is also present. It can be observed in both east-west and north-south relations: on the one hand, Eastern Europe, including the post-communist countries that were behind the Iron Curtain in contrast with the 'centre' of Europe (Benelux, France, Germany, or the United Kingdom); on the other hand, the more symbolic construction of north-south, in which Scandinavian countries are seen as modern and developed in comparison with the southern countries of the Mediterranean peninsulas. Nonetheless, some scholars reject these dichotomies, usually in relation to particular countries. In relation to Russia, they argue instead in favour of an "awkward triptych" in which Russia was neither fully western nor eastern but was rather inserted between West and East. Therefore, it is important to note that in this imaginary geography of Europe, built from centre-periphery dualities, some countries receive an 'exotic' representation, such as Russia or even Spain (through Flamenco, Muslim architecture, the idea of religious obscurantism, or the dictatorship of Francisco Franco). Therefore, these symbolic constructions reinforce the *orientalisation* of some countries or regions within the European continent itself.

European Empires: From Pax Britannica to the European Union

There is a well-known map from 1904 by the British geographer Halford Mackinder (1861–1947), on which the developed world is a periphery in relation to the pivot area. What Mackinder designates as the pivot is a large, nearly uninhabited part of the world. History 'happened' in the periphery but, as Mackinder suggests, the real question was that of who ruled the pivot area. Britain at the time of this map's drawing was at the zenith of its imperial power, and this was a very British view of power relations at that time.

Since Britain was the dominant player in European power relations we can characterise the beginning of the twentieth century as a Pax Britannica, the core element of which was to maintain balance among the powers of mainland Europe. The great challenger of the Pax Britannica was the rising power of Germany. This new power was basically confined to Central Europe, and had long-lasting rivalries with the old powers—including France and Britain, with their hinterlands on other continents. This contest led to two World

Wars—global acts of conflict—in the first half of the century. The First World War led to the collapse of the old-type (mainland, monarchical) empires of the continent, while the Second upended whatever European hegemony was left in the world and gave that place to the Pax Americana in Western Europe and to the Pax Sovietica in Eastern Europe.
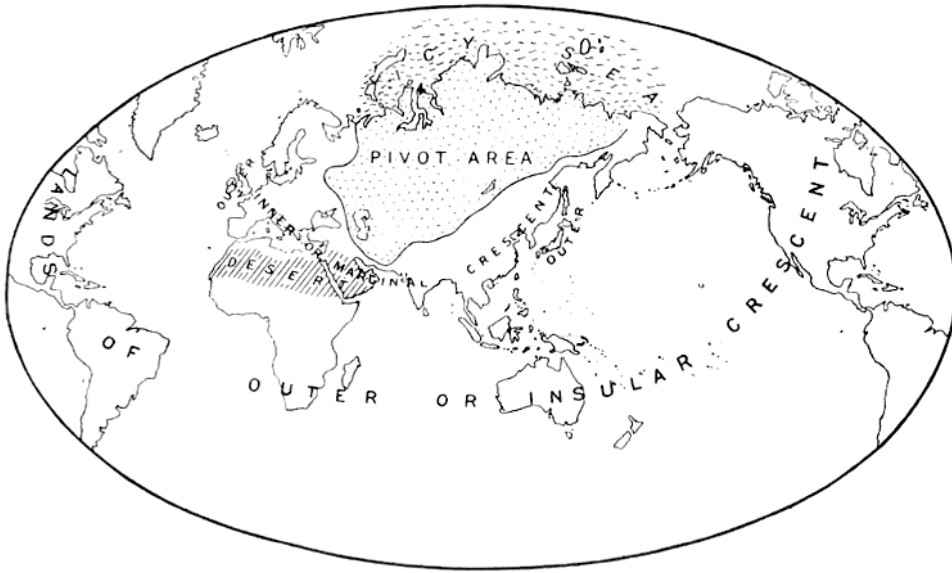
Fig. 1: A map from Halford Mackinder's *The Geographical Pivot of History* (1904), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Heartland.png.

As for the western half of Europe, the United States followed its commercial interests. It intended to stabilise its partners without losing hegemony, which was ensured by forcing the acceptance of the principle of a multilateral system of payments at Bretton Woods in 1944. Stability was then achieved within the framework of the Marshall Plan (1947). The plan expected the coordinated economic cooperation of the European countries, including Germany, mainly in the sphere of heavy industry. The further steps of the process of economic and political integration included: the London Customs Convention (1945), the Benelux Customs Union (1948-present), the Western Union and later Western European Union (1948–1954; 1954–2011), the European Coal and Steel Community (1951–2002), the European Economic Community (1957–1993), the European Atomic Energy Community (1957-present), the European Communities (1958–2009), and finally the European Union (1993-present). Although the United Kingdom and France became nuclear powers, Western Europe (or more precisely, the territory of the Common Market) could not have defended itself without the aegis of the United States. A military defence shield was provided within the framework of NATO. Maintaining limited

military capacities was counterbalanced by the economic successes of the region.

This trade-off is evident in the cases of neighbouring countries and provinces. While some could benefit from the free-trade agreements around the Common Market, others were enlisted in the satellite state system surrounding the Soviet Union. The lands that make up today's Czechia were the most developed territories of the Habsburg Monarchy, on par with Austria and Bavaria. But only Austria and Bavaria were beneficiaries of the Marshall Plan. Two generations (seventy years) later, Czechia was clearly lagging behind its neighbours.

As for Czechoslovakia, the GDR (the capitals of which were to the west of Vienna), and the rest of Eastern Europe, power relations were simple. The military dominance of the Soviet Union that took shape in the form of the Warsaw Pact was practically an occupation; the governments of countries hosting the troops of the Red Army were not even informed of basic facts, such as whether or not nuclear heads were stationed on their territories. As for economic relations, the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA, or Comecon) was not 'mutual' in the sense of multilateralism. In fact, throughout its existence it was based on bilateral agreements. In the framework of the pact, the Soviet Union was importing value, added in the form of processed or manufactured goods, while exporting raw materials, first and foremost crude oil and natural gas. Economic relations were subordinated to defence purposes and were not efficient. The central power of the system, the USSR, exploited its satellite states—and itself, too. On the macro level, no country became rich at the cost of the others. Rather, it was a situation where huge human effort became useless waste. This is why, at the end of the twentieth century, the system of Pax Sovietica collapsed under its own weight.

This economic and political division of Europe influenced the mental maps of ordinary people, too. The continent's prior centre of gravity in the northwest was now extending to the Mediterranean. The traditional mental map of Europe, for much of history, articulated a difference between the north and the Mediterranean south. Although this representation is still present in everyday life (for example, the *topos* of the industrious people of the north going on holiday to the south, where they feel their money can buy more and people know how to live). This image was overwritten for long decades by the west-east split, where the visit behind the Iron Curtain was considered to be an exotic adventure, as if visiting Prague (a city that is more westerly than Vienna) would have been nearly equal to an expedition to Siberia. On the other hand, those everyday people who were living behind the Iron Curtain acknowledged their underdog position—listening to Western broadcasting stations (the US-funded and Munich-based Radio Free Europe,

Radio Luxembourg, the BBC and so on), diligently collecting US dollars and Deutsche Marks to buy products that were only available in special shops that sold goods for what was called 'hard currency'. This mental representation of centre-periphery relations can be still traced in the post-communist countries, even if they have been members of the European Union for at least a decade.

Europe as a Continent

Moving to the continental scale, the centre-periphery model can best be applied in terms of hierarchy and gradient structure. Following developments in preceding periods, the turn of the twentieth century saw north-western Europe firmly established as the core region, marked by a high rate of advanced industry, urbanisation, and consolidated nation-states. Periphery stretched from south-western to northern Europe and was characterised by low industry, less advanced agriculture, and a focus on exporting raw materials. Unequal economic relations, maintained by the core region and serving to its benefit, were complemented by a unidirectional flow of standards, norms and models, such as that of urbanism, towards the periphery. Parts of central Europe formed what has been termed a semi-periphery, the sphere that combines traits of both. Political fragmentation after the demise of the Ottoman, Habsburg and Russian Empires only deepened the hierarchical relations and dependent position of the periphery and semi-periphery—"Europe's Third World", according to the historian Derek H. Aldcroft. The political division of Europe after the Second World War gave birth to a two-pole structure, within which parts of European semi-periphery, such as Czechoslovakia or Eastern Germany, became subordinated to the peripheral yet powerful Soviet Union. With the collapse of the Soviet Empire and the Cold War order after 1989, Western Europe remained as the clear centre, with East-Central Europe becoming a periphery within the EU, and Eastern Europe once again assigned the ambiguous status of European borderland.

As on the global scale, the European scale of imaginary geography has accompanied socio-economic hierarchies. Orientalising discourses are applied to various parts of the continent: 'Balkanism' (Maria Todorova) was one of those. Born amidst the Balkan Wars in the early twentieth century, this discourse has until today produced images of the region as quasi-European (Europe's "Internal Other", as Todorova puts it) and marked by essentialiations such as an inclination to ethnic violence or political fragmentation. In this construction, the Balkans deviate from the alleged standards of the European core. Many of the stereotypes were reactivated during wars in the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia. More recently, the European Debt Crisis of the 2000s, with its proliferating images of a fiscally irresponsible south leaning on the

high-performing and austerity-prone north, re-activated the long-established division of Europe along the north-south axis. These images of idleness and excessiveness, building in part on an older repertoire of stereotyped imagery of south Europe, should not blind us to the role of the north (or the core) in co-structuring the vulnerable economy of the region, such as the volatility of mass tourism and foreign loans. Likewise, it was the core that profited from the cheap labour of migrating southern European and Yugoslavian guest workers, who helped build the economic miracle of the 1950s and 1960s in north-western Europe. Central Europe, too, has been subject to orientalising "discourses of Eastness" (Tomasz Zarycki) produced by the Western core, while also producing these images itself. Unquestioned acceptance of Western norms and models, efforts to assert a distinctively Central European identity, but also a critical stance towards what some see as Western European moral corruption and colonisation, are some of the ways in which the region copes with its semi-peripheral status, defined by, and in relation to, the Western core. Other ways of coping with the semi-peripheral status are some political projects, such as Intermarium, a mid-twentieth century plan for an East-Central European federation controlled by Poland, or ideas on how the region might breed morally superior models of civilisation.

Micro-scale

Further down the spatial scale, many centre-periphery relations were also at play on a micro-level, within the centres and peripheries of Europe, or within individual states. It would be wrong, for instance, to imagine twentieth-century France as a monolithic core country. Rather, a regional discrepancy evolved in the nineteenth century and crystallised in the twentieth, between industrialising northern France and its increasingly agricultural south. Regional discrepancies between the rich Italian north and the poor Italian south are even more pronounced. From the perspective of urban geography, the core region of rich, heavily populated, and globally significant cities has established an "Urban Pentagon" (Heike Meyer and Paul Knox): the territory marked out by London, Paris, Milan, Munich, and Hamburg. Or in Roger Brunet's "Blue Banana", a curved belt can be observed stretching from the English midlands to northern Italy. Peripheries spread out to the east and west of these formations.

Whether a particular country was part of the European centre or its peripheries, smaller internal peripheries have tended to emerge within— or have remained in existence from previous periods. Regions that were comparatively less industrialised, less urbanised, poorly connected and circumvented by railroads and motorways, tended towards a high rate of outmigration. In the first half of the twentieth century, the southern belt

of the Czech Lands was an example of such an internal periphery. Largely circumvented by industry, the territory became notorious for outmigration to Prague and Vienna, to the northern industrial part of Bohemia, and even to Americas. At the same time, the acknowledgement of this peripheral position, known as the Southern-Bohemian Question, gave birth to remarkable efforts by southern Bohemian regionalists to stimulate locally based development, for example by turning to the leisure economy, while also promoting regionalism as a state-wide doctrine of territorially balanced development, with more power given to the provinces. Targeted against 'pragocentrism'—seen as the disproportionate concentration and monopolisation of economic, political, and even cultural power in the capital—regionalists called for a polycentric structure, with peripheral regions becoming self-sustaining socioeconomic and cultural wholes, while also being sources of genuine and high-quality cultural life.

Sometimes, the provinces could be more offensively positioned against the centre. In the Germany of the early twentieth century, for instance, the polarity between the provinces and the all-too-rapidly evolving Berlin carried traits of a pronounced cultural war between metropolitan cosmopolitanism and what was promoted as genuinely national German culture. In yet other contexts, peripheral regions were cradles of what has been called 'peripheral nationalism', including Scotland, Flanders, the Basque Country, and Catalonia. As the last example makes clear, peripheral regions are not necessarily economically disadvantaged parts of the state; Hans-Heinrich Nolte has argued that "internal peripheries" could also be economically high-performing regions. Yet, as they tend to be former independent states themselves, they are also likely to be units that are politically controlled from centres lying elsewhere.

Transition toward a 'second modernity' and post-industrial society in the late twentieth century put new developments on the map, with some of the old industrial centres, such as northern England, turning into peripheries. Elsewhere, areas such as southern Finland became champions of a new, knowledge-based economy, focused on smart-technologies, design, but also healthy and eco-friendly lifestyles. While the spatial hierarchies and disparities remain in existence, they have nevertheless become more complex and less easy to draw on the map, with the rich metropolitan areas of the global cities coexisting with underdeveloped regions, and affluent districts bordering with run-down neighbourhoods. The culture-led development, based on the creative industries, cultural heritage, and tourism, became a new panacea for many deindustrialised regions and other areas that lagged behind, sometimes instigated by national or European cultural policies and frameworks, such as the title of European Capital of Culture. In parallel, more grassroots movements

have tried to challenge pervasive spatial imaginaries, such as association of centre with metropoles and periphery with the countryside. The international Cittaslow movement that emerged in Italy in 1999, and which is composed of small towns with the aim of promoting slow living, may serve as an example of these efforts.

Conclusion

Centres and peripheries are an analytical tool that needs to be used at different scales, providing different levels of observation. This differentiation structures the European continent and its relationship with other continents. It can also be observed within a region, or even within a city, between two contrasted neighbourhoods. Although economic aspects are undoubtedly the most relevant for understanding the relations of the centre-periphery, political, cultural and even knowledge-building issues are also relevant. This construction of the world as we see it in centres and peripheries has deep consequences in terms of politics or culture. How has the habit of Europeans to perceive their world in terms of centre and periphery been affected by the geopolitical changes of the twentieth century?

Discussion questions

1. In which ways has the Cold War influenced the development of centres and peripheries in Europe?
2. Has European integration strengthened or undermined the idea of centres and peripheries in Europe?
3. Is Europe still the 'centre of the world'? Why, or why not?

Suggested reading

Aldcroft, Derek H., *Europe's Third World: The European Periphery in the Interwar Years* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

Brunet, Roger, *Les villes europeénnes: Rapport pour la DATAR* (Montpellier: RECLUS, 1989).

Cronin, Stephanie, 'Introduction: Edward Said, Russian Orientalism and Soviet Iranology', *Iranian Studies* 48:5 (2015), 647–662.

Grecco, Gabriela de Lima and Sven Schuster, 'Decolonizing Global History? A Latin American Perspective', *Journal of World History* 31:2 (2020), 425–446.

Knox, Paul and Heike Mayer, *Small Town Sustainability: Economic, Social, and Environmental Innovation* (Berlin: Birkhäuser, 2012).

Nolte, Hans-Heinrich, 'Internal Peripheries: From Andalucia to Tatarstan', *Review* 18:2 (Fernand Braudel Centre, 1995), 261–280.

Restrepo, Eduardo and Axel Rojas, *Inflexión decolonial: fuentes, conceptos y cuestionamientos* (Popayán: Universidad del Cauca, 2010).

Todorova, Maria, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Van der Wee, Hermann, *Prosperity and Upheaval: The World Economy 1945–1980* (London: Penguin, 1991).

Zarycki, Tomasz, *Ideologies of Eastness in Central and Eastern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014).

CHAPTER 6.4

GENERATIONS AND LIFECYCLES

6.4.1 Generations and Lifecycles in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Feike Dietz (with Stefan B. Kirmse)

Introduction

In the early modern period, life stages—the age ranges into which a human life is divided—were approached as natural rather than social phenomena, which determined the qualities and behaviour that could be expected from people of different ages. A particular interest in the life stages of childhood and youth developed from the sixteenth century onwards. How were young people and their progression from infancy to adulthood imagined, and what behaviour was expected of them? What did these expectations have to do with existing power relations in early modern society? In addition to answering these questions, this chapter also suggests that older (particularly male and upper-class) youths possessed some space to make their own subculture—which sometimes caused generational conflicts with people at different stages of life.

The 'Ladder of Life'

In 1658, the Moravian educator Johann Amos Comenius (1592–1670) published his work *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (*Visible World in Pictures*). This popular schoolbook—first issued in Latin and German, and widely translated into many European languages—innovatively incorporated visual images in language education. One of the images in the book was a staircase representing the seven ages of men and women, accompanied by the following words:

> A man is first an Infant, then a Boy, then a Youth, then a Young-man, then a Man, after that, an Elderly-man and at last, a decrepid old Man, So also in the other Sex, there are, a Girle, A Damosel, A Maid, A Woman, an Elderly Woman, and a decrepid old Woman. (Jan Amos Comenius, *Orbis sensualium pictus; Omnium fundamentalium in mundo rerum & in*

vita actionum, pictura & nomenclatura; Picture and nomenclature of all the chief things that are in the world; Visible world, London: J. Kirton, 1659, p. 77)

In the middle of the seventeenth century, it was not a new idea to depict life as a staircase: many versions of the 'ladder of life' circulated in the early modern period, based on life-stage theories that were rooted in the ancient period (e.g., in the work by Ptolemeaus and Hippocrates), and were frequently repeated and further developed afterwards (by, for example, Augustinus, Dante, or Lemnius). Many of these life-stage theories were collected in reference books such as *Silva de varia lección* (1542) by the Spanish humanist Pedro Mexia (1497–1551) and the *Iconologia* (1593) by the Italian iconographer Cesare Ripa (1560–1622), published in Spanish and Italian respectively, but translated into several languages throughout Europe. As the collections of Maxia and Ripa demonstrate, life-stage theories differed in the particular number of stages that they delineated (between three and twelve—but often seven) and the length of each stage (which was sometimes fixed, but was in other cases represented as rather fluid), among other distinguishing factors.

What these theories share, however, was the idea that the stages of life are and should be distinguishable from each other, as they all have their own typical characteristics. Moreover, the theorists all started from the assumption that age differentiation had a natural (as opposed to social) basis. They often took their inspiration from the theory of the four humours, developed by the physicians Hippocrates (460–370 BC) and Galenus (129–199), and which experienced huge popularity throughout the medieval and early modern periods, especially as a medical theory. The general idea was that the human body consists of four humours—blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm—that directly correspond to the four elements with their own qualities: air (hot and moist), fire (hot and dry), earth (cold and dry), water (cold and moist). The mixture of the four humours within the human body influenced an individual's health (disease was considered to signify an imbalance between the four humours), as well as their temperament: for example, someone with too much black bile in the body had a melancholic temperament. However, the desired balance between the humours varied according to changing circumstances, including age. The dominance of cold and dryness was characteristic for older people, who were thus allowed to be slightly melancholic. A young person's temperament, on the other hand, was naturally dominated by heat and moisture, and could therefore be characterised as sanguine.

This system of thought shaped views of age differentiation as a natural phenomenon: it was considered a natural, even physical, process that compelled elderly people to display different behaviour than the young, and which granted the aged qualities that youths were still unable to possess (and

vice versa). Thus the idea of a fixed life cycle functioned as a disciplinary instrument: it assigned people ineluctable qualities, and demanded that they show the behaviour and talents appropriate to their age.

Many literary texts and images circulating in the early modern period reflected these ideas of natural age differentiation and helped to popularise these theories. The Dutch author Jacob Cats (1577–1660), whose literary works reached a huge amount of literate people in the Dutch Republic, organised his book of emblems *Zinne- en minnebeelden* (*Sense and Love Images*, 1627) according to the ages of different reader groups: he suggested that young readers should pursue each other romantically, according to their natural temperaments, while offering older readers more reflexive and serious texts with recurrent themes such as religion and death. In another of his books, *Houwelick* (*Marriage*, 1625), Cats represented women's life as a development in seven stages, each having their specific qualities and tasks. Moreover, Cats contributed to the popular *Schat der gesondtheyt* (Treasure of Health, 1636), a medical handbook written by the Dutch physician Johan van Beverwijck (1595–1647), in which people were urged to adapt their behaviour and diet to their age. Old people were advised to consume hot and moist food, such as chicken, honey, and well-risen bread, because—according to Cats' accompanying poem:

> The human body is cold and dry during his old days,
> That's why it cannot lack hot and moist things.

> *De mensch is kout en droog ontrent den ouden dagh,*
> *Soo dat hy heet en vocht niet meer ontbeeren magh.*
> (Johan van Beverwijck, *Schat der gesontheyt, from: Alle de wercken*, Amsterdam: Ian Iacobsz Schipper, 1660, p. 199)

As the earlier example of Comenius' *Orbis Sensualim Pictus* illustrates, the idea of age differentiation was also explicitly transmitted to children. Following the widespread traditional image of life as a staircase, Comenius invited young people to approach their future life as a succession of distinct, identifiable stages. Through the image of the stairs, these pupils learnt to understand their own life as a process of ascending and descending, of progression and decline. This process involved a hierarchy between people at different life stages: adults were at the top, children were at the bottom. The naturalised division between ages was thus, at the same time, a social system of power relations.

The Discovery of Children?

Given the fact that children were situated as 'lower' people at the bottom of the social hierarchy, it is worth considering the extent to which they were considered fully as 'people'. How were they valued in society? Several

historians have raised this question and provided different answers to it. In his groundbreaking *L'Enfant et la Vie Familiale sous l'Ancien Régime* (1960)—known in English as *Centuries of Childhood* (1962)—Philippe Ariès argued that Europe had long viewed children as incomplete adults, and had 'discovered' the child only in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when painters started to express the emerging emotional relationship between adults and children. Although several historians traced the discovery of childhood back to the Middle Ages or the ancient world, and many historians rightly questioned the idea of a sudden birth of childhood, the early modern period did witness several pivotal events that spurred the interest in children and child education. Among these events were the rise of print, humanism, and the Reformation.

The German theologian Martin Luther (1483–1546) was one of the people who explicitly argued that religious and social change depended on the education of new generations. His view of children was, however, not very optimistic: he assumed that children had a natural propensity for doing the wrong thing. But by firmly drumming the right ideas and knowledge into children from their first years onwards, people were able to suppress negative tendencies and to develop positive alternatives. What they learned during their childhood, Luther argued, determined the way they were able to act, behave, and believe as grown-up adults.

This trust in child education was a driving force behind the rise of schools and home education, as well as print materials that supported the educational practice. A genre that also emerged during this period was the household manual, including instructions and (heavily gendered) guidance for parents. The *Domostroy* (*Domestic Order*), that came to be circulated and read widely in Muscovite Russia in the 1550s, is a curious example of such a manual. It presents the upper-class Muscovite family as a harmonious miniature kingdom, led by a good-natured patriarch and his supportive wife. The latter was certainly imagined as an awe-inspiring authority: "The wife should […] teach her servants and children in goodly and valiant fashion," it told its readers. "If someone fails to heed her scoldings, she must strike him." On the whole, though, the book reflected the values of Muscovite merchants and clergy, rather than those of warriors (who otherwise played a dominant role in society under Ivan IV, 1547–1584). In matters of child-rearing, for example, it emphasised the role of both mothers and fathers very strongly, which was less pronounced in some Western European contexts at the time:

> If God sends anyone children, be they sons or daughters, then it is up to the father and mother to care for, to protect their children, to raise them to be learned in the good. The parents must teach them to fear God, must instruct them in wisdom and all forms of piety. According to the child's abilities and age and to the time available, the mother should teach her daughters female crafts and the father should teach his sons whatever trade they can

> learn. (Carolyn Johnston Pouncy (ed.), *"The Domostroi": Rules for Russian Households in the Time of Ivan the Terrible*, Ithaca, N.Y., 1994, p. 93)

Compared to the age of Reformation, the Enlightenment developed a more positive view of childhood. In his book *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), the English philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) viewed the child as a *tabula rasa*, which should be inscribed with empirical and physical experiences, and guided by strict but tender educators. In a more radical way, the Genevese writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) in his *Émile ou De l'éducation* (1762) prompted the ideal of natural education, grounded in the child's own exploration of their rural environment. What these Enlightenment voices share is a plea for an educational style that encouraged children to learn on the basis of their own observations and curiosity. This plea should be viewed against the backdrop of the optimistic, Enlightened conviction that society could be 'engineered', and that mankind as such would improve when new generations were granted a pathway to intellectual and moral progress. In the second half of the eighteenth century, teachers, authors, and publishers helped to realise this Enlightenment programme by developing new types of schools and innovative children's books that stimulated young readers to interact with their surroundings. The rapidly expanding children's book market was defined by its transnational character: for instance, bestselling children's books written by German philanthropists like Joachim Heinrich Campe (1746–1818) and Christian Felix Weisse (1726–1804) were widely translated throughout western and northern Europe. The commercial character of the market is similarly striking: the *Little Pretty Pocket-Book* (1744) by the English publisher John Newbery (1713–1767), for example, came with a ball for boys and a pincushion for girls, to attract young consumers. This example clearly illustrates that children—as well as their parents—were being taken seriously as a commercial group with its own desires and needs. The creation of child-targeted books and toys demonstrates that children were increasingly granted their own life and a distinctive 'children's culture', characterised by cheerfulness and a carefree atmosphere. While they were thus taken more and more seriously as a social group with its own identity, however, they also became even more excluded from the real world. In short, they experienced a process of both emancipation and exclusion during the early modern period.

Youth Cultures

Although adolescence has long been perceived as a modern invention, historians nowadays assume that early modern people also gradually developed into adults by means of moral and social transformations, and as such went through a period of youth that was expected to end at the

moment of their marriage. In early modern societies with relatively low life expectancy, this period of youth took up a huge portion of people's lives. This was especially the case in more prosperous and urban parts of Europe, where people married at relatively old ages.

Historical research from the late twentieth century onwards has been partly dedicated to the adult construction of 'youth', a life stage which adults increasingly associated with the need for control and guidance from young elites while keeping (potentially 'dangerous') lower-class youth in check. Scholars also pointed at young people's potential to shape their own identity, for instance by means of peer group interaction. Although 'youth culture' is a contested phenomenon for early modern Europe, it is known that groups of youths were able to set their own subcultures, at least in an informal way.

This phenomenon of informal group and identity formation has been studied with regard to upper-class male youths in the early seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, which is known for its rapid artistic, intellectual, and economic flourishing. Profiting from the prosperity of their families, young men created a shared identity by means of distinct clothing (silk and metallic embellishments, bright colours) as well as long hair and moustaches, and found a shared pastime in the consumption of luxurious illustrated songbooks, widely published on the commercialising book market of the Dutch Republic. The collective activity of singing and drinking helped them to define what it meant to be a growing man. Historian Benjamin Roberts (2012) has compared these adolescents to young people in the 1960s, provocatively defining their lives as ones of "sex and drugs before rock 'n' roll".

Although the Dutch Republic seems to have been a particularly fruitful breeding ground for a flourishing youth culture that was clearly inflected by gender and class difference, such youth culture was not a typically Dutch phenomenon. Thanks to the growth of universities, (male) student cultures, revolving around singing, drinking, and socialising outside the house, proliferated throughout Europe. In fifteenth-century Florence, young males also used clothing—particularly the materials of which it was made—as a mark of youthfulness (and class). Young women, in turn, were far less visible and audible, especially the daughters of the elite. In early modern Russia, high-ranking young women wore veils outside their residences, sat behind screens in church, and moved around Moscow in closed carriages or sledges. The idea was that they should avoid being seen by men who were not family members. It was only from around 1660 that the seclusion of elite women in Russia began to be questioned, partly thanks to the awareness that Western women were freer to move about.

Generational Conflicts?

Peer group manifestations as discussed above regularly resulted in conflicts between youths and adults, who for instance disapproved of the adolescents' practices of growing their hair or drinking extensively. Such tensions can hardly be interpreted as conflicts between 'generations' as defined by the sociologist Karl Mannheim in *Das Problem der Generationen* (1928)—as cohorts of people of similar ages who share common experiences of socio-historical events. Rather than suggesting conflicts between age cohorts, early modern sources reflect generational conflicts between people at different life stages. In a song from the Dutch songbook *Uytertse hylickmaeckers* ("Utrecht Marriage Makers", after 1677), a mother reprimands her daughter, whose dress is too revealing. "Mother, this is the new age", the daughter explains, "it is the new trend" (Anonymous, "Een t'Samen-spraeck, tusschen Moeder en Dochter", in *Uytertse Hylickmaeckers*, Amsterdam: Cloppenburg, n.d., p. 11).

Such "new trends" were sometimes introduced by young monarchs. Inspired by his 'Grand Embassy'—that is, his extensive incognito tour of Europe in 1697–1698—Peter I of Russia, for example, launched many ambitious reforms, some of which caused horror among the older generation. From 1698, he gradually introduced new grooming and fashion styles. He began to wear only plain, Western suits, rather than heavy robes. His hair was kept short and his face clean-shaven, and he ordered his nobles and bureaucracy to follow his example (enforced by bans and taxes). At social events, women were encouraged to dress more revealingly than ever. Partly inspired by his own unhappy marriage, which had been arranged by his mother (and which he ultimately broke off), his decree of 1702 then confirmed the right of parents to choose partners for their children, but gave children a right of refusal. Parents were now legally prohibited from forcing a marriage to occur if either party was unhappy. His reforms thus reflected both generational conflicts and the increasing agency of youths.

Conclusion

Although the idea of an early modern 'discovery' of childhood or youth has been rightly contested, the interest in children, youth, and education did indeed grow during this period. It did so against the backdrop of larger cultural transformations, such as the Reformation and the Enlightenment.

The evolving views of children displayed several key tensions. First, whereas children were at the lowest rung of the ladder of life and portrayed as imperfect and incomplete, they also represented a mouldable promise for the future. Second, children were seen and expected to behave as humble and

modest, but also as autonomous and independent. Thus they came to be seen as an object of discipline as much as an agent. The degree of agency youths experienced in practice, however, largely depended on the young people's gender, class, and geographical location: privileged male adolescents from the Dutch Republic had far more possibilities to set their own youth culture than female youth, and prior to Russia's opening up to the outside world from around 1700, young people in Eastern Europe tended to be more restricted in their cultural practices.

Discussion questions

1. What do ideas about life stages have to do with early modern power politics?

2. Which tensions or paradoxes can be traced in the developing images of children and youth?

3. To what degree did the rise of print, humanism and the Reformation spur the interest in children and child education?

4. What was the role of generational conflict during the early modern period?

5. Was there an early modern youth culture?

Suggested reading

Ariès, Philippe, *L'Enfant et la Vie Familiale sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Plon, 1960).

Eisenbichler, Konrad, ed., *The Premodern Teenager: Youth in Society, 1150–1650* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2002).

Evans Clements, Barbara, *A History of Women in Russia: from Earliest Times to the Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012).

Griffiths, Paul, *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England, 1560–1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

Janssen, Anouk, *Grijsaards in zwart-wit: De verbeelding van de ouderdom in de Nederlandse prentkunst (1550–1650)* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2007).

Levi, Giovanni and Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Geschichte der Jugend, vols I and II* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1996).

Roberts, Benjamin B., *Sex and Drugs before Rock 'n' Roll* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

6.4.2 Generations and Lifecycles in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Károly Halmos, Gábor Koloh, Kevin Lenk, and
Darina Martykánová

Introduction

Lifecycles, intergenerational relations and forms of familial conviviality dramatically changed in nineteenth-century Europe. A wide array of societal changes played into this transformation. The Code Napoleon and the various national forms of civil law succeeding it codified and thus (re-)defined familial and marital relations as well as questions of inheritance and family life. The industrial revolution and subsequent urbanisation drew more and more families from the countryside into the cities. These families adapted to their new surroundings and work, and in so doing changed the way their members lived and worked together. Innovations in medicine, food, and sanitation raised life expectancy and therefore prolonged lifecycles. Moreover, in the late nineteenth century the introduction of the welfare state, especially old age pensions, and the expansion of primary education created phases in the lifecycle in which Europeans were either not yet allowed to enter working life and thus contribute to their family's income, or in which it was no longer necessary for them to work.

Generations

To understand what generations are, it is of utmost importance to first clarify the function of family. According to the interpretation of historical anthropological literature, the traditional family is a closed group of people living together, established by marriage (sexual relations), based on lineage, socially recognised and tailored, having separate legal status, and segregated assets—all with the ultimate aim of creating offspring and ensuring the continuation of these conditions for their upbringing. Thus, families had diverse tasks, including

sexual, weed- and species-maintenance, and educational functions, but in terms of their historical importance, the protective, emotional, cultural, and religious functions of the family have been decisive for centuries. Generations were typically related to each other, although the particular relationship varied depending on the family's composition. The small family, i.e. the cohabiting couple and their child(ren), was composed of two generations. The stem family was typically made up of parents and married sons, or even married daughters. Large families were groups of families belonging to the same kinship, in some places living on a plot of land, under one roof—composed of several generations, typically three or even five.

Fig. 1: Several generations of a German family working, living, cooking and sleeping in one room (ca. 1900), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Familie_um_1900.jpg.

Forms of cohabitation in Europe show territorial differences. While small families were predominant in Western Europe, in Central and Eastern Europe many patterns of cohabitation were displayed. These patterns could sometimes change dynamically. The *zadruga*, which operated in the Southern Slavic regions, was a large and close form of cohabitation: the family often numbered between sixty and eighty people, living in one house or in several houses built on the same plot. A much smaller but still tight-knit unit was the large family that was present in some parts of Hungary. In this case, the married couple lived under the same roof as their children, the parents of either half of the couple, and often with one of the brothers, who perhaps even had a wife and children of their own. However, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, especially after the death of the old parents, this pattern of cohabitation began

to wither slowly—a process triggered by complex economic and cultural conditions. More specifically, the farming system had since the last third of the eighteenth century been transformed. Consequently, tax was levied on individuals rather than on villages and families. This made the economic community more and more superfluous. Alongside this process, the *zadrugas* were abolished by law during the last decades of the nineteenth century. The intention behind this move was to make propriety relations more transparent and individualised. The results of the resolutions were rather weak.

The cohabitation of multiple generations was also dictated by the order of succession. In addition to the universal order of Roman law, the legal folklore of inheritance also prevailed. In traditional places, heirs held to the instructions of an oral will as much as those of a written one, especially if the former was confirmed by local customs. In some regions of Hungary, inhabited by communities accustomed to German legal institutions, it was common practice for a son, usually the oldest, to inherit the land (herd inheritance), while the others mastered craftsmanship with the financial support of their father. In that case, the son who had inherited the land stayed together with his family and with his parents, but his siblings eventually moved out of the household. In the wake of Napoleon's conquests, the Code Civil impacted the various legal regimes to different degrees. In contrast to the earlier regimes, the Code Civil made inheritance by equal share commonplace in Europe. This new practice, typically among those with less wealth, involved the fragmentation of the land. If there was no possibility of emigration, equal inheritance was not only economically damaging, but also a regular source of strife among the brothers. Another option was a practice documented from the end of the eighteenth century, wherein one of the married sons or daughters (with her spouse to support her) entered into a contract with their parents to inherit the parental wealth. Other siblings would receive a small amount of compensation, but they were exempt from the burden of parenting.

Industrialisation and Families

One of the main drivers of the historical change in lifecycles, generational relations and family structures was industrialisation, which went hand-in-hand with urbanisation. Growing cities with lively industrial and service sectors drew in more and more Europeans from rural areas. In Germany for example, sixty-four percent of people lived in communities with less than 2,000 inhabitants in 1871. By 1910 this number had decreased to about forty percent. In that time, the number of German cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants increased from eight, accounting for five percent of the overall population, to forty-eight cities, accounting for twenty-one percent. Living in urban areas

and working in industrial or service jobs forced families to change the ways they lived and worked together, as well as how individual family members related to each other.

Strictly regimented industrial and clerical work in specialised factory or office spaces dissolved the old mode of family cohabitation, in which the family's house was an economic as well as private space. It transformed the familial living space into a purely or mostly private sphere, creating a spatial distinction unknown or uncommon in pre-modern Europe. Urban families adapted to that separation in different ways. Among the urban middle classes, this differentiation of space re-enforced the model of a nuclear family with a male breadwinner, a housewife, and their children. It furthermore strengthened the patriarchal power of the father, since family life was mostly built around the needs of the breadwinner. In these urban middle-class families, the private home became a sphere of retreat and recreation away from work. Although urban working-class families also experienced the separation of the economic and the domestic spheres, their experience was of a very different sort. To finance their livelihoods and pay their rent, working-class families usually lived as extended families in rather crowded apartments. Often, they had to take in lodgers, non-family members living in the same apartment for a certain sum of money. In these working-class families, the women and sometimes even children were often part of the workforce too, making family life much less centred around a single person. Due to the harsher conditions and longer working hours of working-class jobs, working-class living spaces were not regularly used for recreation from work. This situation was barely comparable with the middle-class lifestyle of the nuclear family. Yet skilled workers on the brink of moving up into the middle classes often strove to imitate the nuclear family model with a sole male breadwinner.

Urbanisation also changed the space in which families lived together. The quick influx of mostly low-income, newly urban families firstly caused a rise in mortality. During early industrialisation, mortality rates in urban areas were often significantly higher than in rural areas, mostly due to overcrowding, harsh working conditions, and especially to a lack of public sanitation and clean water, which led to infectious diseases such as cholera and typhoid fever. This made it quickly apparent to urban authorities and social reformers that newly industrial cities had to be carefully planned. Aside from sanitation and public health, that also included the ways families were housed. Whereas the aforementioned rural forms of familial conviviality could vary greatly across Europe, most industrial towns chose a model in which a family lived together in one flat, which they rented, situated within an apartment building consisting of several flats. However, there still were great differences from today's one-family apartments. While today one family within an apartment consists of two generations, in the nineteenth century it was more often three.

Furthermore, nineteenth-century families tended to have more children than today's norm. Familial living spaces were much more crowded and multiple people would have to share one room. Lastly, unlike today, many flats did not have their own sanitary facilities. The apartment building instead had common facilities, in a space shared by multiple families. The United Kingdom remained a notable exception to the apartment model, which still today dominates most urban areas of Europe. There, working-class families were predominantly housed in single-family houses, which remain ubiquitous today in Britain's old industrial cities.

Although early industrialisation and urbanisation initially raised mortality, this effect eventually waned and gave way to increased populations and prolonged lifecycles, with mortality rates strongly reduced all over Europe. The mass production of canned and shelf-staple foods, now relatively cheap, enabled Europeans to consume a healthier and more varied diet with improved nutritional values. This was further supported by cheap, industrial, yet nutritious products such as meat extracts and especially by advancements in medicine, public health measures, and improvements to public sanitation. These trends led to Europeans growing older, backed by the invention of vaccinations and the emergence of bacteriology. More and more infants born to European families now lived to see childhood and adulthood. Of course, the decline of infant mortality varied greatly across Europe and even regionally within European countries. A few examples; from 1800 to 1900 the number of deaths per 1,000 live births dropped from 200 to 100 in Sweden, while England and Wales saw a slower decrease from about 150 in 1840 to 125 in 1880, before registering an increase to the previous level by 1900, followed by a sharp decline. In Austria, infant mortality decreased from just over 300 in the 1830s to around 200 in 1900.

The demographic transition that the European continent was undergoing at the time did not just lead to a rejuvenation of the population. Better health conditions also led to the ageing of populations, albeit unevenly distributed in Europe. At the end of the eighteenth century, only one in five French people reached their sixtieth birthday, but by the beginning of the twentieth century more than one in two would live to see it.

Old age was not only distributed geographically. It also became, more than ever in the nineteenth century, a matter of social class. The promise of deserved rest after work was slow to be fulfilled for working-class populations. Although mutual aid funds, which included old-age allowances, developed during the nineteenth century, many indigent old people still depended on public charity or that of religious orders. In France, assistance became a recognised right for the elderly and the disabled in 1905. but it still had to be earned. In the hospices that replaced the general hospital, the elderly were housed in vast dormitories, forced to work, required to respect strict schedules, and to behave

appropriately on pain of punishment. Above all, however, the nineteenth century is marked by the new role of childhood as a social grouping.

The Welfare State and Primary Education and Its Effect on the Lifecycle

The link between education on the one hand, and childhood and youth on the other is not a modern phenomenon. Nonetheless, since the eighteenth century this relationship has become far more structured, diversified, and institutionalised. The intervention of public authorities has played a key role in this process. In the early modern era, municipalities and religious authorities (Christian, Jewish, and Muslim) had often catered for the basic instruction of young children, boys and girls, whose parents could not afford a private tutor, and talented youths of modest means were spotted and sent to study at institutions of higher learning, together with the sons of well-off families. In the late eighteenth century, ruling elites took an active approach in promoting education, convinced as they were of the benefits that an educated population would have for the wealth and might of the realm. This Enlightenment belief in the usefulness of education permeated both Catholic and Protestant countries, although there were important differences in the priorities of rulers and in the ways this creed manifested in institutions. For example, Catholic Austria, an absolutist monarchy, implemented mandatory education under the Empress Maria Theresa in 1775, while Catholic Spain, a constitutional monarchy with a decades-long liberal parliamentary tradition, did not do so until 1857. Revolutionary and imperial France set the example of a systematic approach to all levels of education, understanding the school not only as a sort of factory producing patriots, but also as the cornerstone of a meritocratic selection of national elites. Not all countries were willing to follow this model and a great diversity of public and private institutions has remained the norm, rather than the exception. But it is undeniable that a state-supervised, three-stage model of education gradually became the norm in Europe, while the mandatory period in school has tended to expand to mid-teen age. Public investment in education has become a substantial part of a country's budget.

The stress on education had a great impact on the lives of children and young people, increasing the hours they spent in school and reducing their participation in labour which, salaried or not, became not only more complicated, but also less desirable for school pupils. Poorer families had to learn how to get by without contributions from their children, sometimes on the promise of eventual social ascension as a result their child's studies. The stress on education as key to the prosperity—or indeed the survival—of a country or an ethnic group sometimes led to arguments in favour of women's emancipation, as in the case of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey.

However, the notion of childhood as a critical period of human development—when intensive moral, patriotic, and scientific education was supposed to take place for the child's sake, as well as society's—generally steepened the requirements of parental involvement, particularly by mothers. While elite couples continued to leave their children with hired women of poorer origins or, particularly in Great Britain, sent them off to boarding schools before they reached puberty, a model of intensive motherhood appealed to all social classes, compounding the division between the figures of the father as the breadwinner and the mother as the caregiver and educator.

The democratisation of access to secondary and, to a much lesser extent, higher education often increased the gender gap between siblings, as the families tended to follow gender, rather than academic criteria, when choosing which child to support through their studies, anticipating that the future respectable professional would, in turn, financially support his parents and unmarried sisters. However, middle- and upper-class women soon understood that the overall emphasis on education and the introduction of meritocratic procedures made their exclusion from higher education hard to sustain. While in some countries this led to a rapid conquest by women of some of the high-status professions (on this front, for decades, the communist countries stood out), in most of capitalist Europe it was a slow process and many women who had received secondary or even higher education became homemakers after marrying a man with a similar or higher level of studies.

Overall, a structured, institutionalised education has come to mark the early lives of all people in Europe and far beyond. Firstly, it demarcated between an age of carefree play and the age of academic learning, a frontier that has become more blurred with the growing focus on 'academic' (as opposed to play-based) learning in childcare, before mandatory schooling begins. It has also created a strong sense of belonging to very specific age groups—a specific year group, even. Education has made youth last longer and, in some cases, has impacted family dynamics, such that going to university now means leaving home. While there are important regional differences concerning the relationship between education and family-generational dynamics, it is remarkable how many of the above-mentioned trends are transnational, despite education being one of the most important areas of intervention for each country's government since the nineteenth century.

Conclusion

The nineteenth century was a period of profound change for family structures. The reshaping of the legal systems inaugurated by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Code redefined family relations and inheritance, and ultimately affected family structure. But perhaps the most powerful force in

the transformation of family structures was the transformation of European economies through industrialisation. By displacing populations and redefining occupations, industrialisation profoundly reshaped social roles within families. At the same time, European elites developed a new family model, which gradually spread to the middle classes. Centred around the nuclear family, this model ascribed a new importance to childhood, which was placed at the centre of attention. It was only in the twentieth century that this model gradually spread to all strata of European society.

Discussion questions

1. Describe the differences between family structures in Eastern and Western Europe in the nineteenth century. Do you think these still have an influence today? Why or why not?

2. What was the impact of industrialisation on the family in nineteenth-century Europe?

3. Describe how the idea of motherhood changed in the nineteenth century. Does this still influence our society today?

Suggested reading

Corsini, Carlo and Paolo Viazzo Pier, *The Decline of Infant Mortality in Europe, 1800–1950: Four National Case Studies* (Florence: UNICEF International Child Development Centre, 1993).

Gestrich, Andreas, *Geschichte der Familie im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2013).

Scott, Joan. W. and Louise. A. Tilly, 'Women's Work and the Family in Nineteenth-Century Europe', in *The Family in History*, ed. by Charles E. Rosenberg (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975), pp. 145–178.

Tenfelde, Klaus, 'Urbanization and the Spread of an Urban Culture in Germany in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', in *Towards an Urban Nation: Germany since 1780*, ed. by Friedrich Lenger (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002), pp. 13–42.

van Voss, L. Heerma, *Van agrarische samenleving naar verzorgingsstaat: demografie, economie, maatschappij en cultuur in West-Europa, 1450–2000* (Groningen: Noordhoff, 2000).

Weber-Kellermann, Ingeborg, *Die deutsche Familie, Versuch einer Sozialgeschichte* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1984).

6.4.3 Generations and Lifecycles in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Ondřej Daniel, Zsuzsanna Gyimesi, Kevin Lenk, and Florence Tamagne

Introduction

When we address the question of generations and lifecycles in the twentieth century, we must approach it on at least two levels. We must look at both how these phenomena change throughout the century and how we talk about them. That is, we have to talk about the evolution of the phenomenon and also about its interpretation.

Generations and Lifecycles: A Theoretical Overview

Human life has always been described by lifecycles with reference to the individual and in terms of generations with reference to wider society, but the criteria of division and the characteristics of life-stages varied between different ages and different cultures. Talking about lifecycles and generations in scientific terms, with the aim to describe and better understand society, is a relatively new phenomenon. While the concept of familial generations (and eventual conflicts between them) has been depicted since the time of ancient literature, the concept of social generations took shape only in the nineteenth century. French philosopher Auguste Comte (1798–1857) in his *Cours de philosophie positive* (1830–1842) claimed that social changes had a lot to do with generational changes. The first theory of generations as a sociological issue belongs to Hungarian-German sociologist Karl Mannheim (1893–1947; *Das Problem der Generationen*, 1928) who defined a (social) generation as a group of individuals of similar ages with the common historical experience of important

events within a set period of time. Another influential theory of generations belongs to American historians William Strauss and Neil Howe (*Generations*, 1991), according to whom historical analysis indicates that the values, behaviour, and worldview of successive generations show a certain cyclical pattern, with each repeated cycle lasting over eighty years and consisting of four stages, or "turnings": High, Awakening, Unravelling, and Crisis. During the twentieth century, describing generations and understanding their behaviour was considered to be more and more important. Lifecycle and generational issues became highly thematised in social, familial, and individual aspects. By the end of the century, they had become a key issue for policymakers and business actors. An understanding of generational preferences is now considered crucial for winning votes, expanding consumerism, managing labour markets, and therefore the capacity to foresee social changes in order to succeed in politics and business. Since the last decade of the twentieth century, generational affiliation has been a frequent issue in both public discourse and interpersonal communication.

Looking back over the twentieth century, the following generations are commonly outlined in Europe and the Americas:

- The Lost Generation, also known as the 'Generation of 1914' in Europe (born from 1883 to 1900), including those who fought in the First World War

- The Greatest Generation, also known as the 'G.I. Generation' (born from 1901 to 1927), including the veterans of the Second World War

- The Silent Generation, also known as the 'Lucky Few' (born from 1928 to 1945), who came of age in the post–war era

- Baby boomers (born from 1946 to 1964). The name references the increased birth rates that were related to the end of the Second World War

- Generation X (born from 1965 to 1980), sometimes called the 'latchkey generation' to portray children returning to an empty home because both parents were working or divorced

- Millennials, also known as Generation Y (born between 1981 and 1996). They are the first digital native generation and are familiar with multitasking

- Generation Z (born from 1997 to 2012), also known as Zoomers, the 'true' digital natives or digital integrators.

While local and national variations are numerous, these generational categories can be applied worldwide due to the processes of globalisation. In

Eastern Europe, the baby boomers are often called the 'generation of the 60s', emphasising their high levels of social and political activity during the 1960s. This phenomenon was closely related to the presence of the Iron Curtain in Cold War geopolitics. Another major historical change in Eastern Europe was the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, preceded by the *perestroika* movement that lends its name to the 'perestroika generation'. In every former socialist country, fundamental social changes followed and marked an entire generation.

Youth Culture and Youth Subcultures before the 1960s

At the beginning of the twentieth century, European youth remained divided along gender and class lines. Although girls had better access to education and joined the labour market in increasing numbers, marriage and starting a family were still regarded as an inevitable path to womanhood. On the other hand, even though upper- and middle-class young men were able to experience a sense of generational identity and sometimes develop an autonomous youth culture while attending boarding schools, for most young men from the popular classes, whether in rural or urban settings, the transition to working life often took place just after primary education. However, in most European countries, military service was seen as a necessary rite of passage and a test of manhood.

Fig. 1: Komsomol meeting at the Magnitka plant (1932), CC BY 3.0, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RIAN_archive_25358_Komsomol_meeting.jpg.

The heavy casualties of the First World War would consequently account for the idea of a 'lost generation' of young men, entertaining a cult of youth in the

interwar period. The 'Roaring Twenties' also saw the rise of new youth cultures, in well-off circles (the so-called 'Bright Young Things') but also more popular groups (swing and jazz fans), as well as new forms of women's emancipation in the form of the co-called 'flappers'. The ideological indoctrination of young people was a central feature of interwar totalitarian regimes, which founded new compulsory youth movements, such as the Hitler Youth in Germany, Balilla in Italy, or Komsomol in the USSR—though eliminating all dissident groups (for example, the 'Edelweiss Pirates' in Germany) was never a complete success.

The Second World War disrupted intergenerational relationships. In Britain, 800,000 children were evacuated from urban areas to escape the Blitz. In Germany, tens of thousands of *Trümmerjugend* (literally, 'rubble youths'), many of them war orphans, resorted to the black market and petty crimes in order to survive. At the beginning of the 1950s most youth movements were on the decline—except in Eastern and Central Europe, for example the Free German Youth in the GDR. Youth delinquency was on the rise and the idea of a 'generational crisis' gained ground. But this should be put into perspective. Firstly, the crisis was not a new topic. As early as the 1920s the rise of youth gangs had been a subject of concern. Moreover, although the post-war youth began to question the responsibilities of older generations for the war—as well as for the nuclear threat and decolonisation in the post-war order—opinion polls showed that most of them identified with their parents' view of society and political beliefs.

Change was nevertheless on the way. In the context of the baby boom, the rise in school leaving ages, and the democratisation of education, the 1950s saw the emergence of a distinct youth culture, cutting across class and gender lines and identified by its own cultural practices and consumption patterns. In a time of affluence and full employment, teenagers experienced an unprecedented increase of their purchasing power, and became a new target for consumer and cultural industries. Clothes (miniskirts), records (rock 'n' roll), radio shows (*Salut les copains* in France, 1959), magazines (*Bravo* in West Germany, 1956), and movies (*The Wild Ones*, 1954; *Rebel Without a Cause*, 1955) were specifically aimed at the new Americanised generation. Youth culture also instigated new uses of space and leisure time. Young people would meet in coffee bars, all the more popular when equipped with a jukebox and pinball machine, or dancing and music venues (like The Marquee in London and the Golf Drouot in Paris), but also at funfairs, amusement piers, stadiums, or more simply in the local square. Young girls, often more strictly monitored than their male counterparts, would develop a specific 'bedroom culture', centred around their current interests—be they fashion or pop idols—and facilitated by the diffusion of new, portable products, including the transistor radio and the

record player. Others nevertheless took an active part in youth subcultures, subverting gender roles and shocking public opinion with open displays of sexual desire—Beatlemania being one example.

In any case, youth culture cannot be discounted as a mere by-product of consumer society. The topic of informal youth groups is closely linked to different definitions of 'subculture'. The Chicago School of urban sociology linked subcultures to concepts such as delinquency, illegality and autonomy. The Birmingham School, or the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, conceptualised informal youth groups as an articulation of class-based resistance against the hegemonic norms of 1960s and 1970s British bourgeois society (Jefferson and Hall, *Resistance through Rituals*, 1993). Throughout Europe, several mostly working-class and partly delinquent youth subcultures—called *blousons noirs* in France, *Halbstarken* in Germany, *teppisti* in Italy, *stilyagi* in the USSR—used music, especially rock 'n' roll, and a bricolage of fashion styles to construct their own identity. In Britain, Teddy Boys got involved in the Notting Hill race riots of 1958, and violent clashes between mods and rockers in seaside resorts sparked a moral panic in 1964–1966.

More political in its expression was the revolt of the intellectual youth, beatniks, or existentialists, against the establishment. In Britain, they joined the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and became involved in the folk and blues music scene; in France or West Germany, some young jazz fans expressed their support for the civil rights movement. In 1957, in Moscow, the World Festival of Youth and Students, which gathered 34,000 young people from 131 countries engaged against war and imperialism, was used by the USSR to promote a cultural and political thaw. From the mid-1960s onwards, students would play a major role on the European political and cultural stages.

Political and Dissident Sub- and Countercultures

During the 1960s, Europe and the US saw the rise of political, mostly dissident, sub- and countercultures, whose activities especially culminated in what is known as the 'global 1968'. During the legendary year of 1968, which in reality stretched from the summer of 1967 to that of 1969, student protests erupted in fifty-six countries worldwide, but particularly Western Europe, Japan, and the US. The movements had comparable aims, addressed comparable social problems, and used comparable methods to do so. Students worldwide protested for more democratic societies, or even a socialist renewal. They demanded a democratisation of universities and more equality and freedom in matters of sexuality and gender. They addressed the problematic pasts of their respective countries and their predecessors, whether fascism or National Socialism in the cases of Italy and Germany, collaboration in the case of France,

colonialism in the case of the United Kingdom, or rampant racism in the case of the United States. The student-run protest movements experimented with new ways of living and loving, alongside new forms of provocative and performative protest, including teach-ins, sit-ins, university occupations, and impromptu political street-plays. To varying degrees in different national contexts, militancy was also discussed and employed. This could range from throwing bags of flour or desserts at police and political representatives, to erecting barricades and hurling stones and Molotov cocktails, or even planting bombs. Closely linked with this global upheaval was the birth of a plethora of interrelated political sub- or countercultures such as the international Hippie movement, the Italian Indiani Metropolitani, the Dutch Provos, or the German Spontis and Gammler. These cultures experimented with new ways of living and relationships, new styles and music, and psychedelic drugs like LSD. They tried to challenge the political and cultural status quo through creative and expressive forms of protest and placed a strong emphasis on self-actualisation, authenticity, and expression.

The political countercultures of the 1960s had a very complicated relationship with consumer culture. On the one hand they were very critical towards it: 1960s political countercultures often perceived mainstream societies as semi-authoritarian, bourgeois, and middle-class, captured by a mindless consumerism that numbed the masses and supressed political dissent. Some German activists who went on to become the founders of the left-wing terrorist Red Army Faction even firebombed two department stores in 1968. On the other hand, these political countercultures built up their own 'alternative' consumer culture, with organic shops, left-wing bookstores, and alternative bars, publishing houses, or fashion brands. Countercultural youths were often decidedly hedonistic in their leisure time and their general outlook on what it meant to be 'authentic'. Finally, the political sub- and countercultures of the 1960s relied on the same relationship with consumer industry as the non-political youth cultures of the 1950s and early 1960s: they used products made by consumer industries, for example fashion, and through a process of bricolage reassembled them in a specific style which to them conveyed a certain dissident political significance or identity. These styles were then perceived as new trends and copied and disseminated further by consumer industries. It was this process that, moreover, extended countercultural movements from the national level to the global level. The availability of countercultural styles through a transnational consumer culture to some extent assisted in the dissemination and stylistic synchronisation of counter- and subcultural movements in the 1960s.

Fig. 2: "Swinging London": Young adults in London's Carnaby Street (1966), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Londons_Carnaby_Street,_1966.jpg.

The political events of 1968 and the young sub- and countercultural movements that sprang from it are often interpreted as the global eruption of a sharp conflict between the young post-war generation and their elders. The rhetoric of young activists in 1968 ('trust nobody over thirty') and the clearly significant impact of generationality on the events around it seems to verify that assumption, but things were much more complicated. Firstly, 1968 was not an eruption. Rather, it was the multi-layered culmination of specific national conflicts and wider societal transformations that most European societies underwent during the 'long sixties' (circa 1958–1974). As explained earlier in this chapter, 1960s European societies benefitted from unprecedented levels of economic growth, employment, and material wealth, accompanied by European integration and the Cold War *détente*. For most Europeans, basic needs were secured. And instead of material security, they could direct their attention towards political matters that were seen as secondary or even dangerous in times of scarcity and geopolitical conflict, such as imperialism, gender, sexuality, consumerism, or deficient democracy in various institutions. Born into this constellation, the post-war generation was shaped by the duality of affluence on one hand, and the politicisation of European societies on the other. The mindset of the parental generation, however, often lingered on the experiences of wartime scarcity and insecurity. The post-war generation was socialised in 'post-materialistic' values and received a prolonged adolescence; European societies had massively expanded the sector of tertiary education, offering an

unprecedented number of young people an extended phase for activism and self-actualisation between youth and adulthood.

Secondly, the lines of conflict between the generations were not as sharp as has often been suggested. Research shows that the families of activists often supported political protest and the goals of their children, making it important to differentiate between familial generational relations and public ones. Public generational relations were often strained during the protests of the long 1968 and afterwards. Left-wing activism even led to conservative electoral backlash, securing the election of conservative parties in Denmark and the US in 1968, or Great Britain in 1970, for example. Despite the backlash, or the explicit radicalism of activists, there was no deep-seated or open hostility between generations. In fact, most Western European countries lowered the voting age to eighteen during the 1970s. Thirdly, the activists who took part in 1968 did not represent their entire generation. Although the degree of working-class activism in the 1968 movements varied from country to country, and was especially high in France and Italy, protests were mainly carried out by highly educated, middle- and upper-class youths. Young, working-class people had a more positive attitude towards the protests than their seniors, but not as positive or supportive an attitude as that among academics.

"Neo-tribes" and Postmodern Subcultures

According to Michel Maffesoli (1988), some of the subcultures of the late-twentieth century could also be understood as a renaissance of tribal social organisation. His "neo-tribes" were often employed in the debates over the early-1990s rave subculture in the United Kingdom. Tribal symbols, rituals, and myths are also often discussed in relation to football hooliganism—and, to a lesser extent, skinhead scenes. However, many of the members of these informal youth groups identified with the symbols, rituals, and overall 'style' of one or more subcultures without necessarily identifying with all of the meanings that were implied. For instance, Czech football support groups of the late 1990s identified themselves by various means: fans could be observed wearing heavy-metal denim jackets and punk-rock t-shirts, combined with skinhead boots. There were also 'normal' fans, who did not display any visible association with a subculture. Skinheads in hooligan gangs often left their Harrington or bomber jackets and Dr Martens boots at home. Instead of Fred Perry or Lonsdale polo shirts, they wore Umbro or Adidas t-shirts and jogging sneakers, adopting a rather 'casual' hooligan style. Nevertheless, hooligan gangs were not composed entirely of skinheads. Their common feature was that they were composed almost entirely of young males between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five, with most participants in their early twenties. Fascist,

racist, and neo-Nazi symbols were sometimes displayed out of pure political conviction—and at other times in order to provoke the police force or society's 'bourgeois ethics'—even if those wearing them did not necessarily identify with the far right. This notion of a "supermarket of styles" and meanings could be closely related to the phenomenon of post-subculture (Polhemus, 1996).

Conclusion

In the twentieth century, European societies experienced a fundamental shift in how generations related to each other and particularly how younger generations expressed themselves through fashion, music and their use of leisure time. The post-war economic and baby booms, accompanied by the democratisation of education and the expansion of consumer culture, enabled the rise of distinct youth cultures in the 1950s. For the first time, youth cultures managed to transcend class and gender lines to a certain extent. All of these dynamics extended well into the 1960s and 1970s, a period in which European societies also witnessed the Cold War *détente* and the rise of post-materialist values. This constellation gave rise to distinctly political sub- and countercultures, each with their own, deeply ambivalent relationship to consumerism and generationality. The 1990s then saw the emergence of neo-tribal subcultures, ranging from ravers to young men provocatively displaying fascist symbols. All of these developments hint at the intimate relationship between media, consumerism, and youth. With the rise of the Internet, new global and local youth cultures have emerged, presenting an line of inquiry for future discussion of this topic.

Discussion questions

1. Why were the 1960s so important in the development of generations and youth cultures in Europe?

2. Describe the differences in the development of youth cultures in Eastern and Western Europe.

3. Do you feel you belong to a specific generation? Why, or why not?

Suggested reading

Hall, Stuart and Tony Jefferson, eds, *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-war Britain* (London: Routledge, 2003).

Hebdige, Dick, *Subculture. The Meaning of Style* (London & New York: Routledge, 1979).

Klimke, Martin et al., eds, *Between Prague Spring and French May: Opposition and Revolt in Europe, 1960–1980* (New York: Berghahn, 2011).

Maffesoli, Michel, *Le Temps des tribus* (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1988).

Mannheim, Karl, 'Das Problem der Generationen' *Kölner Vierteljahrshefte für Soziologie* 7 (1928), 157–185, 309–330.

Polhemus, Ted, 'In the Supermarket of Style', in Steve Redhead, ed., *The Clubcultures Reader: Readings in Popular Cultural Studies* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1998) pp. 130–133.

Reichardt, Sven, *Authentizität und Gemeinschaft: Linksalternatives Leben in den siebziger und frühen achtziger Jahren* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2014).

Savage, Jon, *Teenage*: *The Creation of Youth Culture* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2007).

Schildt, Axel and Detlef Siegfried, eds, *Between Marx and Coca-Cola: Youth Cultures in Changing European Societies, 1960–1980* (New York: Berghahn, 2006).

UNIT 7

CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

The Beatles wave to fans after arriving at Kennedy Airport (1964), Wikimedia, https://commons.
wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Beatles_in_America.JPG.

CHAPTER 7.1

EXPERIMENTS AND AVANT-GARDES

7.1.1 Experiments and Avant-gardes in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Willemijn Ruberg and Phil Withington

Introduction

Early modern Europe witnessed immense cultural change and conflict, with huge ramifications for society and politics. In this chapter we are interested in two cultural processes in particular, and how they resulted in new ways of both imagining society and its normative values and actively creating alternative and experimental modes of living. The first such process was an intensified interest in the lessons of the past, and especially antiquity. Between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries, increasing numbers of people across Europe engaged in a self-conscious 'Renaissance' that involved recovering the knowledge and skills enjoyed by the ancient Greeks, Romans, and Arabs and working to reclaim that knowledge—to translate, learn, and disseminate it in order to improve contemporary societies. The second process concerned religion and faith: the doctrines and practices determining a person's relationship to God—and by extension their fellow men and women—and the institutions by which these beliefs were organised and controlled. Over the course of the 'long Reformation' (from the early sixteenth to early eighteenth centuries), Christian principles and practices were contested, often violently, by a host of 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' denominations, with ordinary men and women often empowered by their own interpretations of the word of God as a result.

One fascinating and complicated convergence of these cultural developments was the publication of *Utopia* by the English statesman and writer Thomas More (1478–1535) in 1516 and the wider dissemination of 'utopian' ways of thinking and living thereafter. More originally wrote *Utopia* in Latin for his educated humanist friends (that is, classically educated men with a direct interest in ancient Greek and Roman culture) and would have liked to have kept it that way. Instead, however, it became a publishing phenomenon: as

well as quickly going through numerous Latin editions, it was translated into national vernaculars across Europe, and subsequently the world, and was used to justify critical and even revolutionary agendas with which More would have been—to say the least—uncomfortable. But, significantly, *Utopia* also gave rise to the concept and language of 'utopianism', the label now used to describe the capacity for people to transcend the circumstances and power structures of their immediate and particular lives in order to imagine ways of living based on idealistic principles. This capacity was not always regarded positively: styling someone or something 'utopian' was as likely to be a criticism as a compliment in the period. However, utopianism nevertheless became an important feature of early modern—and indeed modern—culture. It did so as a new genre, with writers like Francis Bacon and James Harrington famously creating their own imaginary worlds in order to explore and critique arrangements of ideas and values. And it did so as a practice, with men and women responding to the cultural ferment of the Renaissance and Reformation by participating in new and distinct 'societies' and 'communities' based on principles of their own choosing and experimenting with ideas about class, gender, and sexuality that transgressed existing patriarchal and 'respectable' norms.

This chapter considers the impact of *Utopia* in these two respects. The first section introduces the text itself and shows how, through its translation into national vernaculars, More's *Utopia* could take on practical and contemporary relevance despite its fictionality and classicism. The following section then outlines some of those early modern utopian experiments in communal living and patterns of behaviour which contradicted prevalent conventions of patriarchy, society, and sexuality.

Thomas More's *Utopia*

Utopia, meaning 'no place' in Greek, was an imaginary island described by More through a fictional dialogue between a traveller and explorer called Hythloday and a character called Morus. Reflecting the real encounters of Europeans with distant and unfamiliar people in the course of their exploration of the globe, *Utopia* ostensibly described, very credibly, yet another such encounter. However, readers with an appreciation of Latin and Greek would have recognised More's many puns and jokes as well as his deep and critical engagement with classical political theory. They might also have noticed that the longest, final chapter described how the majority of Utopians voluntarily chose a mode of religion with many resemblances to the kind of reformed Christianity espoused by More (albeit a decade before the challenge posed by Martin Luther turned More into both a persecutor of Protestants and a Catholic martyr).

Fig. 1: Title woodcut for Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.
wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Isola_di_Utopia_Moro.jpg.

Juxtaposed to the many social and economic problems facing contemporary
England outlined in Book I, the Utopian customs and institutions described
by Hythloday in Book II accordingly revealed what a civil, reasonable, and
equitable 'commonwealth' might look like. These customs and institutions
were based on a range of classical and Christian values which, in many
instances, were exaggerated for ironic effect. Before agreeing to marry, for
example, Utopian men and women examined each other naked to check they
were happy with the person with whom they would be spending the rest
of their lives; Utopians could believe in a God or Gods of their choosing, so
long as they did not try to publicly harangue others into believing the same;
and, most infamously, in Utopia there was no private property, monetary
system, or even desire for material riches and possessions—householders
lived communally and regarded gold and jewels as frivolous irrelevancies.
The communist system enjoyed by Utopians was supported by a system of
slavery, with unrepentant criminals and captured foreign soldiers living in
bondage and doing unpleasant work like butchering animals and household

chores. Yet so well-treated were Utopian bondsmen and women that peoples from neighbouring countries often requested to be enslaved, as their lives were healthier, safer, and more orderly than the lives of free peoples elsewhere.

Although More originally intended his text for a humanist and Latinate trans-national 'republic of letters', a brief outline of its early publishing history shows its growing appeal across Europe. Three Latin versions appeared between 1516 and 1518, including the original Leuven copy published by Dirk Martens and the famous Basel edition published by the humanist printer Johann Froben. The first vernacular translation of *Utopia*—though only Book II—was published in German in 1524 (as well as in Basel), and an Italian version of both Books I and II was published in Venice by Ortensio Lando in 1548. A full French translation was published in Paris in 1550; an English version appeared in London in 1551; and a Dutch translation was published in Antwerp in 1553. Although a Spanish version was not published until 1637, a Spanish manuscript copy—the 'Gondomar' translation—was circulating as early as 1535. However, it was not until the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that the text appeared in the vernaculars of Eastern Europe and Russia.

Each of these translations created a new, vernacularised version of *Utopia* that was unique in terms of its formatting, wording, interpretative emphases, as well as the cultural and political context into which it was introduced. They also demonstrate how the relatively esoteric knowledge of Europe's educated elites began, over the course of the sixteenth century, to be more widely disseminated socially and used practically. To take just one example of this process: the historian Jennifer Bishop has meticulously reconstructed the circumstances leading to the first translation of *Utopia* into English in 1551. The translator was Ralph Robinson, a well-educated clerk touting for employment in London in the early 1550s. His patrons were a group of London merchants and master craftsmen deeply involved in implementing a 'reformation' of religion and government through their participation in guild, city, and parliamentary politics. Although written by a Catholic martyr, *Utopia* appeared to offer plenty of insights into what a reformed Protestant polity might look like: for example, in its commitment to enlightened political counsel, its prioritisation of the common 'weal' and happiness, and its lauding of the participatory nature of Utopia's political structures (which bore uncanny resemblances to London's civic institutions). While these Londoners were by no means attracted to the communism practiced by Utopians, they nevertheless found the principles of social responsibility and commonwealth espoused by More appealing and a useful mirror through which to view contemporary society. Thereafter, new translations of *Utopia* in different languages tended to coincide with moments of political crisis and, on occasion, revolutionary opportunity.

Utopian Communities in Early Modern Europe

If the text of *Utopia* was one legacy of Thomas More, then the label of 'utopianism' was another. Commentators often used it to belittle political positions. During the English Revolution, for example, the regicide John Cook felt the need to make clear that "I am not of their opinion that drive a parity to have all men alike, it is but a Utopian fiction, the Scripture holds forth no such thing". He likewise stressed that the idea "a man should have money because he dreams of it" was just "a Utopian imaginary Consideration".

Cook's dismissal of these alternative positions was, in fact, testimony to their proliferation over the preceding century across Europe, with the Reformation and Counter-Reformation leading to multiple radical religious groups and sects. These groups offered opportunities to experiment with new ideals and practices regarding gender, class, and sexuality. Radical Protestant or dissenter congregations multiplied, sharing a common belief that separation from the Church, and sometimes complete self-government of individually constituted religious bodies, was the only way to create a pure and spiritually regenerated church. These congregations, such as the Baptists, Levellers, Quakers, and Methodists, often counted a high number of women, offering them new opportunities to have spiritual equality and sometimes to speak in church or even preach. Compared to the traditional Christian demand that women, supposedly inferior to men, keep silent and do not interpret or teach scripture or occupy a church office, these new congregations contained a radical new potential for women. Not only had Thomas More's worst fears, that readers would take his irony literally and use his text as a justification for radical ideas (hence his preference to keep *Utopia* away from the masses), come to pass; his own terminology was now appropriated to describe these experiments in worshipping, living, and loving.

The shoemaker George Fox, for example, as the founder of the biggest dissenter church in England in the mid-seventeenth century, the Quakers or the Society of Friends, asserted women's rights to preach and predict. Quakers held informal religious services in domestic 'meeting houses', where men and women sat in silent contemplation until they felt an inner prompt, 'the light', to speak up and share their inspiration with others. In these visions, both men and women used metaphors in which conventional gender boundaries were transgressed. In addition to using fluid, genderless language, many female visionaries described themselves as 'weak and empty vessels'; as passive, irrational and passionate receptacles for divine inspiration, indicating that exactly their feminine attributes could lead to closeness to God as an instrument of divine authority. Quaker men, in turn, identified with infantile

and feminine qualities such as spiritual babyhood ('bliss'), passivity, emotionalism and the loss of inhibition.

Some women became leaders of spiritual sects. Antoinette Bourignon (1616–1680), raised as a Catholic in the Southern Netherlands, through her visions and conversations with God grew convinced that she had been chosen by Him as His instrument for salvation. She started publishing religious writings and gathered people around her in Amsterdam, Germany, and Scotland. Aiming to restore true Christianity on earth before the immanent end of time, Bourignon called herself "the mother of the true Christians", thus relating to her followers in both an authoritative and affective way. She symbolically turned the hierarchy between men and women and between clergy and laity upside down while highlighting the mother-child bond. As a spiritual mother, she thus united her followers as brothers and sisters. The Flemish prophetess employed the stereotypical images of the empty vessel, the unlearned virgin and the spiritual mother as weapons to gain spiritual leadership over a group of mainly male followers. At the same time, she published her works herself and can be seen as the commercial manager of a religious business enterprise. However, critics accused Bourignon of leading a group of (married) men as an unmarried woman, suggesting illicit sexual contact between them. Some called her a witch inspired by Satan.

Planning to establish a community of true Christians on the North German island of Nordstrand, Bourignon formulated community rules including sobriety, moderation, the abolition of private property, and a certain measure of equality. She also prescribed the breaking of bonds with the outside world. Everyone was welcome regardless of wealth, age, religion, nationality, or (dis) ability. In practice, however, not everyone turned out to be able to work for the common good, thus a remnant of selfishness remained.

Gender and Class in Utopian Communities

In 1675, a similar religious community was founded by the Labadists in the village of Wieuwerd, within the Dutch province of Friesland. With 600 members at its height, the community was oriented around principles of holiness and gender equality. Here, too, all property was communal and sartorial rules emphasised simplicity. Men and women from different countries ate at the same table, often in silence, yet there was a hierarchy distinguishing senior from junior members. In later Labadist colonies in Surinam and Maryland, slaves were held—total equality was a myth. The community in Wieuwerd, moreover, had to re-introduce private property after twenty years as its source of funding dried up.

Both the religious groups of Bourignon and the Labadists included prominent members. Scholars such as the Anglo-Irish natural philosopher and physicist-chemist Robert Boyle, the Moravian pedagogue, philosopher and theologian Comenius, and the Dutch biologist Jan Swammerdam were part of Bourignon's spiritual movement, whereas the founder of the Labadists, Jean de Labadie (1610–1674), a French pietist who had originally been a Roman Catholic Jesuit priest, attracted notable female converts such as the famed Dutch poet, scholar, and author of theological writings Anna Maria van Schurman. Van Schurman (1607–1678), known as the "learned and most noble virgin" of Utrecht, since she excelled in art, music, literature and was proficient in fourteen languages, had already transgressed gender boundaries by becoming the first woman to study at a Dutch university in 1636, attending lectures behind a screen or in a curtained booth so that the male students could not see her.

Thus, these radical religious groups offered women ways to transgress the limitations that conventional religion and patriarchal society had imposed on them. At the same time, these sects also experimented with other forms of equality, notably with regard to class. Moreover, these experiments crossed national boundaries with the help of epistolary networks, partly overlapping with the scholarly republic of letters.

De Sade and Sexual Freedom

Even though mainstream society often vented critique at these radical religious groups, they had considerable freedom to experiment, especially in the Dutch Republic's political and cultural constellation of religious pluralism, with freedom of press and conscience. However, the existing boundaries of religious and moral acceptability were definitely crossed by the French libertine author Marquis de Sade (1740–1814). Sade produced numerous novels—the most infamous being the pornographic *The 120 Days of Sodom or the School of Libertinage* (1785)—as well as plays and pamphlets, many of which have been burnt or lost because of their illicit content, including sexual violence and torture. Because of his writings and sexual abuse, the French nobleman spent thirty-two years of his life in various prisons and an insane asylum. Sade's thought was anchored in individual sexual, religious, and political freedom. He pushed liberty to its extreme, arguing for the freedom to rape and kill, demonstrating a kind of moral skepticism and political relativism. Sade has been regarded both as a cruel, cynical misogynist and as an advocate of religious, political, and sexual freedom. The aristocratic author underlined individualism and bodily desire, thus also critiquing the Enlightenment focus on reason to battle religion and superstition.

On the one hand, Sade's radical atheism and individualism, as well as his plea for violent sexuality, could not be further from the seventeenth-century radical religious sects that emphasised true Christianity and moral decency or, indeed, the mode of civil and communal living espoused by Utopians. On the other hand, both Sade and these sects show how gender, sexuality, religion and politics are inextricably connected in utopian radical thought, which offered new ways to envision society but also transgressive modes of living in practice. More's *Utopia,* the concomitant notion of utopianism, and the religious upheaval in early modern Europe sparked opportunities to imagine a different society. The influence of these early modern utopian experiments endured into the nineteenth century, when socialist authors looked to radical religious groups and to More's *Utopia* as examples of a real sense of community and as precursors of modern socialism. In turn, Sade's transgressive texts have influenced twentieth-century philosophers' discussions of links between the body, sexuality and power, and have also impacted the cultural and sexual politics of the late twentieth century, especially the sexual revolution's recognition of different forms of sexuality. Early modern utopian and transgressive experiments are thus important precursors to modern political theory and cultural practices.

Conclusion

In a period of radical religious upheaval, utopian thought provided a means to envision society in a radically new way, particularly with regard to religion, the relationship between men and women, and shared property. Thomas More's *Utopia* was a jokey book and ironic thought experiment on what an ideal society might look like. But in spiritual sects, communal living and radical religious ideas, 'utopianism' became a basis for practical living. These early modern texts and living experiments would inspire modern socialists and free-thinkers, even to the present day.

Discussion questions

Read and discuss the following extracts from *Utopia* (taken from the 1684 English translation by Gilbert Burnet):

> Hythloday on the religion of the Utopians: 'There are several sorts of Religions, not only in different parts of the Island, but even in every Town; some worshipping the Sun, others the Moon, or one of the Planets: some worship such Men as have been eminent in former times for Virtue, or Glory, not only as ordinary Deities, but as the supreme God: yet the greater and wiser sort of them worship none of these, but adore one Eternal, Invisible, Infinite, and Incomprehensible Deity; as a Being that is far above all our Apprehensions, that is spread

over the whole Universe, not by its Bulk, but by its Power and Virtue; him they call the Father of all, and acknowledge that the beginnings, the increase, the progress, the vicissitudes, and the end of all things come only from him; nor do they offer divine honours to any but to him alone. And indeed, though they differ concerning other things, yet all agree in this; that they think there is one supreme Being that made and governs the World, whom they call in the Language of their Country, Mithras. They differ in this, that one thinks the God whom he worships is this Supreme Being, and another thinks that his Idol is that God; but they all agree in one principle, that whatever is this Supreme Being, is also that Great Essence, to whose Glory and Majesty all honours are ascribed by the consent of all Nations.' (pp. 173–174)

1. What are the key features of Utopian religious belief as described here by Hythloday?

Hythloday on Utopia as a society ('commonwealth'): 'Thus have I described to you, as particularly as I could, the Constitution of that Common-Wealth, which I do not only think to be the best in the World, but to be indeed the only Common-Wealth that truly deserves that name. In all other places, it is visible, that whereas People talk of a Common-Wealth, every Man only seeks his own Wealth; but there where no Man has any Property, all Men do zealously pursue the good of the Publick: and indeed, it is no wonder to see Men act so differently, for in other Common-Wealths, every Man knows, that unless he provides for himself, how flourishing soever the Common-Wealth may be, he must die of Hunger; so that he sees the necessity of preferring his own Concerns to the Publick; but in Utopia, where every Man has a right to everything, they do all know, that if care is taken to keep the Publick Stores full, no private Man can want anything; for among them there is no unequal distribution, so that no Man is poor, nor in any necessity; and though no Man has anything, yet they are all rich; for what can make a Man so rich, as to lead a serene and cheerful Life, free from anxieties; neither apprehending want himself, nor vexed with the endless complaints of his Wife? he is not afraid of the misery of his Children, nor is he contriving how to raise a Portion for his Daughters, but is secure in this, that both he and his Wife, his Children and Grand-Children, to as many Generations as he can fancy, will all live, both plentifully and happily, since among them there is no less care taken of those who were once engaged in Labour, but grow afterwards unable to follow it, than there is elsewhere for these that continue still at it' (pp. 197–199)

2. Why does Hythloday regard Utopia to be 'the only Common-Wealth' that truly deserves that name and the 'best in the World'?

3. In what ways might these descriptions of Utopian religion and society justify radicalism in practice?

The Narrator's conclusion: '… and so taking [Hythloday] by the hand, I carried him to supper, and told him I would find out some other time for examining that matter more particularly, and for discoursing more copiously concerning it; for which I wish I may find a good opportunity. In the meanwhile, though I cannot perfectly agree to everything that was related by Hythloday, yet there are many things in the Common-Wealth of Utopia, that I rather wish than hope to see followed in our Governments; though it must be confessed, that he is both a very learned Man, and has had a great practice in the World' (p. 206)

4. Do you think the narrator is endorsing the commonwealth of Utopia in this concluding sentence?

Suggested reading

Bishop, Jennifer, 'Utopia and Civic Politics in Sixteenth Century London', *The Historical Journal* 54:4 (2011), 933–953.

Sylvia Brown, *Women, Gender and Radical Religion in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

de Baar, Mirjam, 'Transgressing Gender Codes: Anna Maria van Schurman and Antoinette Bourignon as Contrasting Examples', in *Women of the Golden Age: An International Debate on Women in Seventeenth-Century Holland, England and Italy,* ed. by Els Kloek et al. (Hilversum: Verloren, 1994), pp. 143–152.

Mack, Phyllis, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994 [1992]).

Phillips, John, *The Marquis de Sade: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Shrank, Cathy and Phil Withington, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of Thomas More's* Utopia (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).

7.1.2 Experiments and Avant-gardes in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Jochen Hung, Anna Sidó, and Dániel Veress

Introduction

During the nineteenth century, Europe underwent a profound social, political, economic, and technological transformation. The continent's cities grew into global centres of industry and were at the same time shaken by waves of social unrest and political revolutions. New modes of transport such as locomotives and steamboats offered increased mobility to a growing number of people, while the electric telegraph sped up global communications. These changes were not always welcomed: the misery of the growing working class in particular gave rise to radical ideas of social reform and practical experiments of more communal and egalitarian ways of living.

During this tumultuous time, an understanding of the 'avant-garde' as an opposition to dominant bourgeois norms and values, and of the artist as an agent of change took shape. This idea reflected the feelings of upheaval that European societies were experiencing and closely linked art and society. Following the ideas of the French theorist Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), it was another Frenchman, the mathematician and social reformer Olinde Rodrigues (1795–1851), who first used the term 'avant-garde' in this sense in 1825. The revolutions of 1848 and the Paris Commune of 1871 were defining moments in which art attained a new status as a force for change.

While the idea of a socially engaged art was an important aspect of the avant-garde, many progressive artists focused more on formal revolution and innovation, leading to a long succession of artistic '-isms'—realism, impressionism, naturalism—which would come to be seen as an essential characteristic of modern art. According to the influential literary scholar Peter Bürger, it was during the nineteenth century that art became an autonomous institution. Rather than merely serving the Church or the aristocracy, art was now practised for its own sake, invested with purely aesthetic value.

Social Utopias

The social and economic disruptions caused by the development of capitalism and industrialisation in nineteenth-century Europe sparked a wave of utopian ideas and experiments that aimed at imagining and practicing a different world. Most of these utopias were based on ideas of solidarity and egalitarianism, addressing rising inequality in rapidly industrialising European societies by sharing the fruits of labour more equally with the workers and the poor.

These radical ideas, formulated by thinkers like Saint-Simon, the British social reformer Robert Owen (1771–1858), and the French philosopher Charles Fourier (1772–1837), inspired the founding of communes and cooperatives in Europe and the rest of the world. One example is the Guise Familistère, a utopian community founded in 1859 by French industrialist Jean-Baptiste André Godin (1817–1888). Godin wanted to create a "perfect society" ruled by "freedom, equal rights for all citizens, fraternity in all human relations." Following Fourier's ideal of a "phalanstery", the Familistère housed families working at his nearby factory, which he turned into a worker production cooperative. For Godin, the Familistère made it possible to create "equivalents of wealth", meaning all the conditions of comfort and health that the bourgeoisie afforded itself through money and that the residents of the Familistère could now afford through cooperation. The building consisted of 558 flats and 350 houses, with a central courtyard under a glass roof. By contemporary standards, the residents had a very comfortable and luxurious life: all houses and flats had running water, a rubbish chute, and two toilets. There were also collective services like allotments, a nursery and a school, shops, a laundry room, a theatre, and even a swimming pool. However, putting Godin's ideas of cooperative work into practice was not without its obstacles: a series of experiments in shop-floor democracy, in which the workers for example had to vote on who among them had earned higher pay, failed after they often chose whoever would return the favour next time. The factory was eventually turned into a listed company in 1894, with the shares owned by the workers.
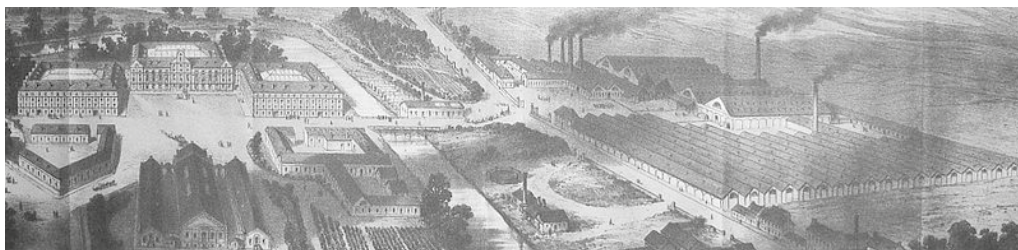
Fig. 1: J.B.A. Godin, *Overview of the Familistère* (1900s), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons. wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Familist%C3%A8re_1.jpg.

The search for alternative ways of living was also reflected in the rise of early science fiction novels, such as *News from Nowhere* by the British artist William Morris (1834–1896). Published in 1890, the novel is set 200 years in the future, after a violent socialist revolution has brought about a society without private property, a monetary system, marriage or divorce, courts, and prisons. There are no big, polluted cities anymore, and poverty and misery have disappeared.

The ideas of Saint-Simon and Fourier also had an important influence on the French Revolution of 1848 and the Paris Commune of 1871. Arguably, the Commune, the short-lived revolutionary government that seized power in the French capital following the defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, was the most famous and influential utopian experiment of the century. The Commune drew up an ambitious programme of socialist self-rule based on collaboration and cooperation, including measures like free education, the nationalisation of church property, and the liberalisation of marriage laws. Although it was crushed after a little over two months and only a few of the planned measures were implemented during its existence, the Commune became an important inspiration for socialist movements around the world.

Painting and Sculpture

During the revolutionary upheavals that shook the continent, art was seen as a force for social change. This sentiment was reflected in the military origins of the term 'avant-garde', which put artists in the same category as the revolutionaries fighting on the barricades. For example, during the days of the Commune, the Federation of Artists was established to support young artists and unorthodox styles.

The jurors of the '*Salon*'—the annual exhibition at the Academy of Fine Arts in Paris that exerted a major influence on the European art world during the nineteenth century—disapproved of this idea of a socially engaged art. They rejected many innovative works that are now considered masterpieces, and by the 1860s the '*salons*' were seen as staid and outmoded. In a review from 1866, the French novelist and journalist Émile Zola (1840–1902) decried the conventional nature of most exhibited works, which, in the face of the changes of their time, amounted to escapism: "Confronted with the invasion of science and industry, artists, in reaction, throw themselves into a dream, into a shoddy heaven of tinsel and tissue paper". By then, the mounting public pressure had led to the establishment, in 1863, of an associated exhibition of the rejected works—the so-called *Salon des Refusés*. This official acknowledgement is often seen as the birth of the avant-garde, marking its beginning as the dominant force in European art and culture.

Avant-garde artists, according to the critic Clement Greenberg, saw it as their primary mission to push artistic and aesthetic boundaries. They did this by "narrowing and raising [art] to the expression of an absolute in which all relativities and contradictions would be either resolved or beside the point." The results of this continuous narrowing of the meaning of art were the birth of the concept of *'l'art pour l'art'* (art for art's sake) and, ultimately, abstraction. In fine arts, the path toward abstraction led through realism and impressionism. The French painter Gustave Courbet (1819–1877), who took an active part in the Commune and acted as the President of the Federation of Artists, argued that "realism is essentially democratic art". He believed that the unvarnished presentation of the existence of workers and peasants could truly help in their struggle for social advancement. From an aesthetic point of view, his paintings can be termed realist since he not only endeavoured to record the nature and the life of workers with visual fidelity, but also abandoned composition, thus the accentuation of any detail.

Despite the long-lasting impact of the socially committed art of Courbet, succeeding generations of the French avant-garde were rather receptive only toward the aesthetic legacy of realism. From the 1860s until the beginning of the following century, progressive painters and sculptors were decisively apolitical and regarded autonomy as their essential principle besides progression. Historically, the last four decades of the nineteenth century seem like a course toward abstraction that can be thought of as a purification process toward pure art, in other words, the gradual attrition of content *vis-à-vis* expression. Around 1860, paintings and sculptures were unanimously lifelike, figurative and meaning-bearing. That is to say, artworks (a) represented visual forms that people could similarly identify as objects taken from their familiar environment (life-world); and (b) bore meaning that referred also to the very life-world in which they were at home.

That consensual understanding of visual art was first broken by the French painter Édouard Manet (1832–1883) whose paintings *The Luncheon on the Grass* and *Olympia* (both 1863) were rejected by the official *Salon*. They caused scandal not because of their sexual overtones but because they depicted nonsense in the eyes the Parisian public, who could not place them in the traditional context of artistic interpretation. Even though Manet painted with almost photographic precision, he can be considered as one of the most important forerunners of abstraction since his works did not seem to express an obvious meaning beyond their formal aspects of forms, colours, light and composition. This is why he is regarded as the first representative of '*l'art pour l'art*'. While Manet abandoned concrete meaning from his paintings, the impressionists gave up the principle of realistic depiction. Impressionists, named after *Impression, Sunrise* (1872), a work by the French painter Claude Monet (1840–1926),

focused on how the world appeared to them at a certain moment in time. Accordingly, they challenged the contemporary convention of the naturalistic portrayal of perspective, flora and fauna, and the human body, a tradition stemming from the Renaissance, and paved the way for a completely new concept of art dominated by personal perceptions and emotions, that is to say, by subjectivism above all. Nonetheless, impressionists remained faithful to the observable life-world by focusing on nature and the built environment.

Fig. 2: Édouard Manet, *Olympia* (1863), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Manet,_Edouard_-_Olympia,_1863.jpg.

Fig. 3: Claude Monet, *Impression, Sunrise* (1872), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Claude_Monet,_Impression,_soleil_levant.jpg.

The year 1882, when the eighth and last impressionist exhibition took place, marked the beginning of the phase that immediately prepared abstraction and that we label as post-impressionism. These following decades embraced the activity of *les Fauves* ('the Wild Beasts'), a group of painters officially existing between 1905 and 1908, who further developed the simultaneously fuzzy and vibrating formal language of impressionists. While the starting point for *les Fauves* was also the subjectively observed view, they, unlike Monet and his group, did not stop there and associated the view with bold, radically unnatural colours that matched their actual sentiments. Some of the Fauvist paintings were overcome by emotions to such an extent that the compositions fell apart in almost unidentifiable masses of brush strokes. The French painter Paul Cézanne (1839–1906), who did not associate himself with any of the avant-garde groups and schools, contributed at least as much to the birth of abstraction as *les Fauves* together. In the course of this quest to explore new avenues of visual expression, including the famous series of *Mont Sainte-Victoire* (1904–1906), Cézanne reached a stage where his paintings became nearly grid-like compositions encompassing elemental geometrical forms, circles, triangles and cubes. He died in 1906 but his innovations had laid the foundations for cubism, the first abstract art style, invented only a year later by the Spanish artist Pablo Picasso (1881–1973), and the French artist Georges Braque (1882–1963).
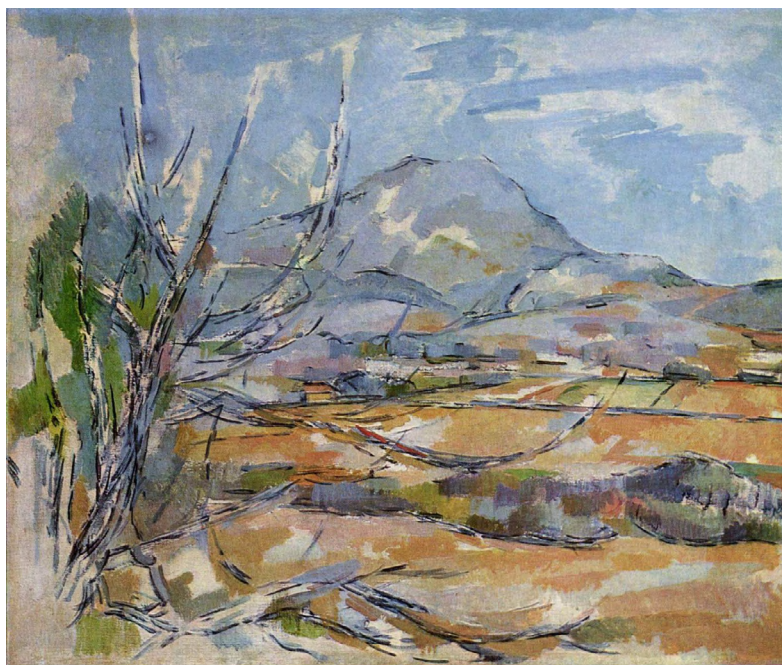
Fig. 4: Paul Cézanne, *Mont Sainte-Victoire* (between 1885 and 1887), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Montagne_Sainte-Victoire,_par_Paul_C%C3%A9zanne_106.jpg.

In many ways, the move towards higher levels of abstraction in fine art, from realism to cubism, was a reaction to the changes in European society in the nineteenth century. The confrontation with new technology, most importantly photography, but also with new ideas about individualism and the inner self, seemed to make the conventional European tradition of painting obsolete and demanded a new mode of expression.

Literature

In literature, likewise, realism and impressionism were stages in the process of abstraction. Literary realism aimed to represent the totality of contemporary society by depicting the quotidian, ordinary lives of people of all classes. In their attempt to portray reality truthfully and objectively, realist writers embraced the growing importance of science and technology in nineteenth-century society. The French novelist Honoré de Balzac (1799–1850) sought to emulate the scientific method of observation in his writing, and, in a similar vein, the British writer George Eliot (1819–1880) defined realism as "the doctrine that all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of nature." In her works, Eliot went to great lengths to capture the specific regional dialects of her characters. While her novels were mostly set in the countryside, many realist writers focused on the conditions of the urban poor. The French author Victor Hugo (1802–1885) and the British novelist Charles Dickens (1812–1870), whose works often focused on the misery and squalor of the underclass in Paris and London respectively, were arguably the most influential artists of their time, shaping popular opinion on the needs of social reform.

Naturalist authors, such as Zola and the Russian playwright Anton Chekhov (1860–1904), took this reformist impulse even further. Influenced by the theory of evolution formulated by the British biologist Charles Darwin (1809–1882), naturalism sought to identify the underlying forces that shaped the actions of its characters, rather than just describing subjects truthfully.

In many ways, literary impressionism was a direct outgrowth of realism and naturalism. The aim was still to observe and represent a subject in as much detail as possible; however, the focus was no longer on the material or social world, but on subjective impressions and experiences. Rather than social totality, literary impressionism aimed for perceptual totality. This subjective viewpoint makes the meaning and even the course of events ambiguous and leaves much room for the reader to draw their own conclusions. Works by literary impressionists, such as the Polish-British writer Joseph Conrad (1857–1914) and the French author Marcel Proust (1871–1922), experimented with many formal innovations, such as stream of consciousness, non-linear timelines, multiple narrators, and visual imagery.

Opera and Classical Music

In the field of nineteenth-century music, if we consider the break with and the reinterpretation of traditions, the renewal of the forms of expression and the appearance of artistic freedom—that is to say, if our topic is manifestations of the avant-garde attitude—then we have to refer first and foremost to the German composer Richard Wagner (1813–1883). Wagner renewed the operatic genre that was dominated by the popular Italian composers of his time, above all Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901). Wagner's concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (a "total artwork"), attempted to free art from commercialisation—the process in which pieces of art became consumer goods. In accordance with the ancient Greek idea of art, Wagner advocated for pure, autonomous art whose branches are united and not hermetically separated from each other. This understanding was manifested in his notion of *Musikdrama*—as he named his mature works instead of using the standard denomination of 'opera'. The four-opera cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (The Ring of the Nibelung), premiered as a whole in 1876, was outstanding even among his own work. Wagner's radical innovation in the composition of this tetralogy was the merging of different branches of art, striving to create a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in which music, text and visuality were fused. He was one of the few composers who wrote both the music and the *libretto* (script) for his operas, and oversaw the visuality and the conceptual details of the stage design. His vision even extended to the architecture of opera houses: Wagner planned and implemented a venue for his own artworks, the *Festspielhaus* in Bayreuth, with many unique features designed specifically for his operas, such as a hidden orchestra pit. Like many artists of the time, Wagner aimed to show the inner life and inherent nature of the human being in all of his works. Besides the revelation of personal psychology, Wagner also tried to confront society's inner mechanisms and the driving forces that work below the surface. He expressed the above-mentioned ideas in the framework of narrative, through the use of slowly developing musical themes. In his music dramas, Wagner introduced the *Leitmotif,* a recurring short musical phrase referring to characters, dramatic situations, or cultic objects. In terms of music, the other highly avant-garde means of expression was atonality, which he experimented with first in *Tristan und Isolde* (1865). Wagner's musical innovations influenced many modern composers such as Arnold Schoenberg and Igor Stravinsky, while his aesthetics had an important influence beyond the sphere of music, inspiring writers such as Charles Baudelaire, Stéphane Mallarmé, Thomas Mann, or Friedrich Nietzsche.
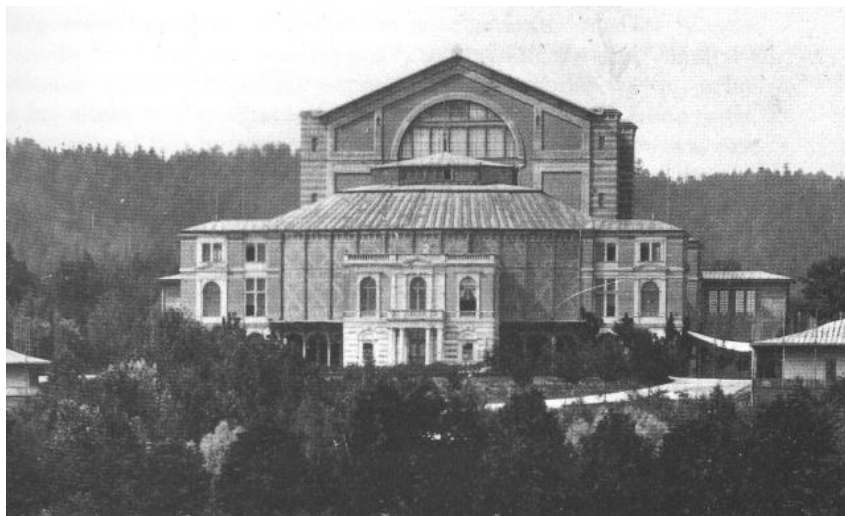
Fig. 5: Richard Wagner's Bayreuth Festival Theatre (1882), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bayreuthfest.jpg.

Wagner also had an important influence on the French composer Claude Debussy (1862–1918), who first embraced and later rejected the work of the German master. Debussy is often seen as the first impressionist composer, a label he himself vigorously rejected. Like in fine art, impressionism in music focuses on the subjective perspective of the artist, conveying moods and evoking feelings. Impressionist composers rejected tradition, emphasising static harmony, instrumental timbres that created a shimmering interplay of 'colours' and unusual chord combinations. With this, they laid the ground for developments in abstraction and atonality in the twentieth century.

Conclusion

The nineteenth century gave rise to the idea of the 'avant-garde'—a small group of innovators challenging society's norms and conventions and pushing artistic, moral, and political boundaries. In many ways, the avant-garde artists and thinkers of the time reacted to the profound changes they experienced, from the growth of the industrial working class to the spread of photography and the advent of the railroad. Science and new technologies of observation and reproduction inspired them to focus on new perspectives to express the sensory totality of this modern world. While the avant-garde often seemed to abandon socio-political engagement for formal innovation and 'art for art's sake', the continuous revolution of '-isms' mirrored the waves of political and social transformation and the contemporary feeling of change as a sign of the times.

Discussion questions

1. What does '*l'art pour l'art*' mean, and why did artists follow this trend in the nineteenth century?

2. Why did people use a military term—the avant-garde—to describe the innovative artists of the nineteenth century?

3. Much of the avant-garde art of the nineteenth century developed towards higher levels of abstraction. Why do you think this was? Which broader societal changes or developments were reflected in this trend?

Suggested reading

Bürger, Peter, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

Callen, Anthea, *The Art of Impressionism: Painting Technique & the Making of Modernity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

Facos, Michelle, *An Introduction to Nineteenth-Century Art: Artists and the Challenge of Modernity* (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis, 2011).

Greenberg, Clement, 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch', *Partisan Review* 4:5 (1939), 34–49.

Kramer, Lawrence, *Opera and Modern Culture: Wagner and Strauss* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

Nochlin, Linda, *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Art and Society* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989).

Nochlin, Linda, *Courbet* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007).

Roemer, Kenneth M., 'Paradise transformed: Varieties of nineteenth-century Utopias', in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. by Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 79–106.

Taruskin, Richard, *Music in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Taylor, Keith, *The Political Ideas of Utopian Socialists* (London: Cass, 1992).

Winders, James A., 'European Culture in the Nineteenth Century', in *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Europe, 1789–1914*, ed. by Stefan Berger (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 291–303.

7.1.3 Experiments and Avant-Gardes in Contemporary History (1900–2000)

Delphine Bière, Zsuzsanna Gyimesi,
Konstantinos Kornetis, and Steven Schouten

Introduction

The meaning of the term avant-garde as we use it today—referring to cutting-edge, experimental, or radical works and people—is an invention of the twentieth century. Historically, it expressed an often dynamic blurring of the distinctions between art and politics and art and life after the destruction of the First World War: the new art movements of the early twentieth century, such as Dada or the Suprematists, not only aimed at revolutionising painting and architecture, but wanted to create a new, utopian world. In contrast to the traditional image of the artist as a genius-like figure remote from society, these avant-garde groups were politically engaged, and some were even actively involved in political revolutions. They put new ways of living—such as communes—to the test, and used new materials, such as everyday consumer items, in their art. The Second World War put an end to most of these artistic and political experiments, but they provided much inspiration to the flowering counterculture and art movements of the 1960s. Today, these experiments continue to inspire artists and societies to pay attention to values such as being different, open-minded, and experimental in works of art and in society at large.

The Idea of the Avant-Garde

The twentieth century gave expression to a whole set of socio-cultural and political experiments in which the artistic and literary avant-garde played a pivotal role. The term 'avant-garde' originates from French military language, referring—in that context—to a small group of soldiers who scout out or explore an area in order to get information about the enemy. However, it

was the Bolshevik revolutionary leader Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, alias Lenin (1870–1924), who explicitly attributed a political role to the 'avant-gardist' at the beginning of the twentieth century. By that time, the term was particularly linked to the arts, due to a notion that art, more than any other domain, most challenged mainstream ideas and values. Artist and art critic Alexandre Benois (1870–1960) was the first to use the term in art criticism in a negative way to describe the works of some young artists who had rejected the idea of beauty (1910). The artists of the beginning of the twentieth century that we consider 'avant-garde' today did not always use this word, however, and they never used it to label themselves. It only became an accepted term in art history in the 1960s.

The background for these artistic developments was the incredibly turbulent era around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a period marked by new inventions, innovations, explorations, developments by scientists, engineers, researchers, and travellers. The results of these changes became widely known among ordinary people and had a deep impact on their thought as well as their day-to-day lives. Science became a reference point for artistic life and vice versa, as intuition in research (an ability traditionally attributed to artists) became more appreciated as a guide for formulating new professional goals. Many Russian avant-garde artists, such as Kazimir Malevich, Wassily Kandinsky, Mikhail Larionov, and Pavel Filonov, believed that the process of creating art was similar to a series of experiments in physics or chemistry and equal to them as a relevant way of acquiring knowledge about the world at large. Still, avant-garde artists were not uncritical of the growing impact of science in life, and many lamented its 'rational' and materialistic dimension. Most famously, Kandinsky argued in 1910 for an art that would not rely on the material world, but rather on the expression of the artists' inner selves, an idea that strongly impacted avant-gardist circles and that, arguably, can also be regarded as one of the core ideas behind avant-garde art.

Another important feature of the avant-garde concept was an eagerness to eliminate borders between creating art and living. The new ideal was the inventor-engineer-artist whose works merged art and the everyday life of the masses. Artists also wanted to participate in the production processes of the world of which they were a part, and functionality was interpreted as an aesthetic category. Industrial design became a matter for artists. Vladimir Tatlin's famous "Monument to the Third International" (1919–1920) was an impressive representation of the way in which the symbolic meaning of the construction of an object became crucial—even though it was never actually built. An interesting experiment of living á *l'avant-garde* was carried out by the group UNOVIS in the Belarusian city of Vitebsk in 1919–1921: the artists transformed the city centre into an open-air museum of Suprematism, with

members wearing 'Suprematist' clothes designed by themselves, and remaking the interior of their school with furniture designed according to the Suprematist principles. In the Soviet Union, during the 1920s and 1930s, several house-communes were built following the aesthetic programme of constructivism and according to certain conceptions of egalitarianism, collectivism, and progressivism. At the same time, and in alignment with the above-mentioned ideas of Kandinsky on the spiritual in art, avant-garde artists, such as the German Expressionists, tried to influence and 'awaken' the world through the expression of their inner, spiritual visions on canvas and paper—which was another way to eliminate the 'borders' between art and living.

Fig. 1: Vladimir Tatlin and an assistant in front of the model for the Third International (November 1920), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tatlin%27s_Tower_maket_1919_year.jpg.

Representatives of the so-called historical avant-garde (i.e., the first generation of avant-garde artists in the 1900–1920s) were convinced that the new arts were meant to literally build a new life with the potential of 'realising the future' here and now—that is, new artistic ideas and methods were treated as guidelines for future life in a broad but very concrete sense. This concept was manifested in the clearest way in the artistic and architectural movements of

constructivism, represented, for example, by the German Bauhaus school and the Russian state art and technical university called VKHUTEMAS (*Vysshiye Khudozhestvenno-Tekhnicheskiye Masterskiye*).
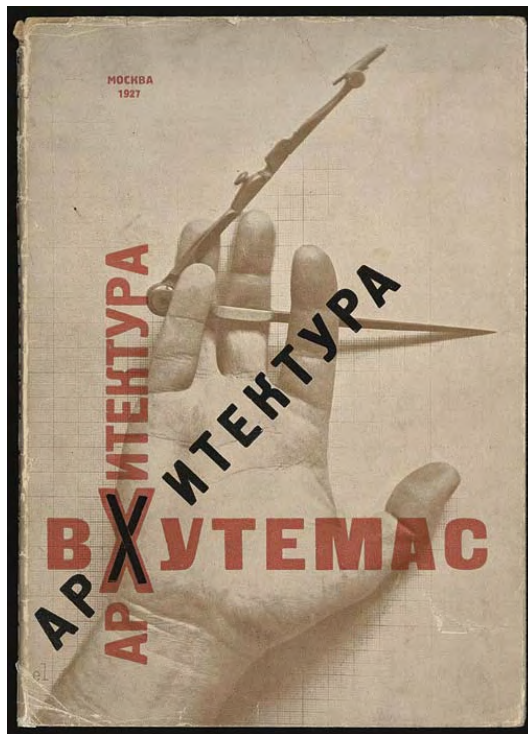
Fig. 2: El Lissitzky, book cover for *Architecture at Vkhutemas* (1927), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vkhutemas.jpg.

Intrinsic to the avant-gardist wish to create and 'renew' for future life was a deconstructive approach based on an audacity for experimentation that was both technical and stylistic. The technique of montage (Cubist, Dada or Surrealist collages, Dada photomontages, etc.), based on a clash between forms, colours, textures, objects, images, and the integration of material objects into art (ready-made, assemblage, combine paintings) testify to the displacement of the image in art from the space of *representation* to that of *presentation*. The use of objects as material proposed a more participatory position for the spectator and radicalised the identification of the space of creation with that of daily, social, urban, and political life. New artistic practices (happenings, events, kinetic art, visual art, installations) and new materials and techniques (neon, television, video, laser) multiplied from the end of the 1950s onwards, while the beginning of that decade was marked by the triumph of the various currents of abstraction. The means of artistic expression cross-fertilised and multiplied throughout the century, renewing the ways of giving form to things and creating new ways for artists and audiences to 'see'. This development

continued until the progressive vision of art disappeared at the end of the seventies.

Art Means Politics

For the artistic avant-garde of the early twentieth century, creating art was a form of social and political activity. While in Western Europe the phenomenon of politically engaged artists was mostly represented by the work of outstanding individuals and small-scale artistic groups (for example Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dalí, Henri Matisse, Robert Delaunay, Lajos Kassák, the artists' group *Die Brücke*, etc.), in the young Soviet Union avant-garde enterprises evolved large-scale social dimensions and fostered a completely new general system of art institutions based on avant-garde principles. In the field of higher education and academic research, the avant-garde took the form of a new network of museums and 'culture houses' throughout the Soviet Union, and institutions like the above-mentioned university, VKHUTEMAS, or INHUK, the Institute of Artistic Culture, carried out scientific research focused on the nature of colour, line, form, facture, and composition as basic components of the fine arts.

The ethos of the avant-garde in Europe was often focused against authoritarianism and—especially—against a bourgeois liberalism, making art a battlefield of ideas and experiments within and outside the confines of artistic discourse. Artists aligned themselves with political views which attacked bourgeois society from both the left and right of the political spectrum. In the 1920s, for example, the new Soviet regime gave space for the fulfilment of (left-wing) avant-garde artistic ambitions as part of their drive to transcend the old, Tsarist regime's habits, fashions, views, and traditions—to open up new ways of doing things for the masses. However, the Soviet government's attitude radically changed at the beginning of the 1930s, when Stalin proclaimed the programme of Socialist Realism for the arts, putting an end to the practice of artistic freedom. Manifesting individual views via individual artistic language—a process that was central to the avant-gardist ambition—became dangerous and could result in different forms of severe retribution, such as prohibition of one's works being exhibited or published, loss of employment, being put on trial (see Kazimir Malevich), being sentenced to the Gulag, or even execution (as in the cases of the theatre artist Vsevolod Meyerhold and the poet Osip Mandelstam). A similar tendency towards repression occurred in the 1930s in Nazi Germany, with the application of the label 'degenerate art' (*Entartete Kunst*) to various avant-garde productions.

A rethinking and critique of the concept of modernity was a fundamental aspect of the relationship between art and politics during this period. While

very much a 'product' of modernity themselves, the ideologically committed avant-gardists positioned themselves as harbingers of the destruction of 'traditional' experience. Faced with radical social and political transformations, new modes of industrial production and rationalisation, and a growing sense of psychosocial and intellectual-spiritual 'alienation' from the 'modern' world during the first half of the twentieth century, the avant-gardists explored new avenues in seeking to create, out of revolutionary activism and an experiential *tabula rasa*, a new art. In so doing, they opposed tradition with creative freedom, which was—to them—the only way to project the "new life" they sought to achieve and to bring their works into the real world. More than mere representation, art therefore became functional: what mattered was how the work functioned, not what it represented. Understanding themselves within a progressive vision of history, avant-garde artists sought to become both inspiration for and actors within a struggle to change objective conditions. Examples of such avant-gardes are the (already mentioned) French art movement of Cubism, the German Expressionist art group *Der Blaue Reiter*, the Russian Suprematist school, the Dutch group *De Stijl*, and the Russian art movement of Constructivism.

At the same time, they emphasised the value of the individual (artist) and his or her activity to oppose an 'empty' modern industrial world, the dehumanisation produced by technology; for them, art contributed to the recovery of creative energies outside the industrial (e.g. in the case of the Dada group and the cultural movement of Surrealism). In their view, art became intersubjective communication, a stimulus, to show people how to see and understand their world: in abstraction, painting 'revealed'—they argued—what existed beneath the appearance of things. As Kandinsky and others believed, art had a spiritual function: it could provide, according to the Dutch painter Piet Mondrian, a de-individualised "new image of the world". To discredit form as representation, Surrealism—inspired among others by Freud—also explored the territory of the unconscious as a means to go beyond the appearances of reality and to enter the realm of what it called "the marvellous" (e.g., the ultimate meaning of reality). In so doing, art became an adventure not only of the soul, but also of the mind. French-American artist and theoretician Marcel Duchamp freed artistic creation from the aesthetic criterion and refocused it on intellectual activity, and the conceptual artists of the 1960s would follow his example.

Faced with the evolution of sensibility in the modern era, the avant-gardes redefined the relationship between the internal and social function of the work of art and sought to fashion a new human out of the rubble of tradition. As a culture of utopia, the avant-garde wanted to return to the roots of artistic creation, while also paying greater attention to what was considered to be

'primitive'. Throughout the twentieth century, the avant-garde looked to non-European arts, as well as to the popular arts in and outside Europe, in which it found forms and symbols that challenged Western aesthetic conventions: primitivism became a 'mode of elaboration', capable of generating particular creative processes and of accessing different modes of thought, such as the shamanism that fascinated the Surrealists or artists such as Joseph Beuys.

Eröffnung der ersten großen Dada-Ausstellung
in den Räumen der Kunsthandlung Dr. Burchard, Berlin, am 5. Juni 1920.
Von links nach rechts: Hausmann, Hanna Höch, Dr. Burchard, Baader, W. Herzfelde, dessen Frau, Dr. Oz, George Grosz, John Heartfield.

Fig. 3: Grand opening of the first Dada exhibition, Berlin, 5 June 1920. The central figure hanging from the ceiling was an effigy of a German officer with a pig's head. From left to right: Raoul Hausmann, Hannah Höch (sitting), Otto Burchard, Johannes Baader, Wieland Herzfelde, Margarete Herzfelde, dr. Oz (Otto Schmalhausen), George Grosz and John Heartfield. Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Grand_opening_of_the_first_Dada_exhibition,_Berlin,_5_June_1920.jpg.

With the Dada movement in the late 1910s and early 1920s, the protest against conventional values had already been pushed to an extreme, to the point of denying all traditional values as well as art itself. Reducing art to pure action, as the avant-garde since Dada tried to do, also enabled avant-garde artists to demystify all values. Although there was no term to describe these attempts as 'action art' at the beginning of the twentieth century, the word 'performance' gradually came to be used in the 1960s. Performance art embodied the spirit of the avant-garde through its desire to 'dissolve' and 'reformulate' artistic categories.

New Waves: Neo-Avant-Garde and After

In the 1960s, a new wave of the avant-garde emerged in both Western and Eastern Europe, with less clear-cut political connotations, but still with a clear orientation to progressive principles and an oppositional attitude toward anything representing the mainstream.

The parallel movements of the '*nouveau roman*' ('new novel') in literature and '*nouveau réalisme*' ('new realism') in the arts in France are typical exponents of neo-avant-garde of the late 1950s and early 1960s. The main idea was to distance themselves from traditional writing and the arts. Conceptual art also followed suit with Fluxus, a loose group of neo-avant-gardist artists on both sides of the Atlantic from the mid-1960s on, trying to bypass the commercialised art world by putting their emphasis on thought processes and production modes as inherent parts of the artwork. Fluxus artworks often had a socio-political dimension and they were habitually left unfinished, making their sale or exhibition difficult. On the opposite side of the spectrum, pop art—especially Andy Warhol's serialisations—came to symbolise a globalised cultural industry. Nevertheless, they were often regarded as connected to the conceptual thinking of the above-mentioned Duchamp, making a conspicuous, albeit clear contribution to neo-avant-garde art.

Fig. 4: Hugo van Gelderen, A Fluxus concert at Kurhaus Scheveningen (1964), CC BY 1.0, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fluxus-groep_gaf_Pop-art_concert_in_Kurhaus,_een_ van_de_bezoekers_schoot_met_een,_Bestanddeelnr_917-1243.jpg.

The idea of bringing art and life closer together was evident in small artistic 'vanguard groups' connected to the fringes of the so-called New Left, like the Situationists in France or the Provos in the Netherlands, intellectual and activist circles which promoted *détournement* and subversion as central elements of their artistic explorations, aiming at restructuring life in the city and ultimately transforming everyday life. Artistic creation was informed by the repertory of feast, play, poetry, and the 'liberation of speech', while its language was inspired by Marx, Freud, Nietzsche, Dadaism, and Surrealism. In terms of film, which increasingly gained territory as an artistic medium in society after the Second World War, there was a neo-avant-garde tendency, directly inspired by the tradition of the 1920s and 1930s.

The concept of 'the underground' was part and parcel of the avant-gardes of the 1950s and 1960s and directly linked to the writers of the so-called Beat Generation in the United States. It was associated with an alternative lifestyle that characterised itself through non-conformity and participation in so-called countercultures, such as the hippies, which contested the established ways of life. A spectacular fusion between 'high' and 'low' culture took place among young people who were influenced by such avant-garde circles and, consequently, between sophisticated intellectual items and popular consumer products. The irreverent posters, subversive poetry, and ironic writing on walls that were manifest in social movements with a utopian project, such as students' mass protests against the bourgeois way of living and thinking in 1968 in Paris, Berlin, Rome, or Berkeley, betrayed the emergence of a new 'structure of feeling' in which irony and collective imagination were prevalent. This dialectic between playfulness and seriousness, *engagé* political action and everyday iconoclasm, illustrates the dichotomies, but also the pastiche and hybrid character of the 1960s artistic movements. Communitarianism as a lifestyle choice of the 1960s was a by-product of this. This phenomenon included rural hippy communes, more politicised communes (like Kommune 1 in West Berlin), or more experimental or artistically transgressive ones, such as the Friedrichshof Commune, founded by Austrian artist Otto Mühl. Inspiration for many of these communes, whether implicitly or explicitly, often came from earlier twentieth-century traditions. Consequently, earlier communitarian ideas, for example those of the German anarchist Gustav Landauer, regained popularity in the 1960s.

In Eastern Europe the rise of the neo-avant-garde had a lot to do with realising and formulating individual needs and rights as opposed to the compulsory and permanently declaimed priority of community interests. Socialist ideology, according to this section of the neo-avant-garde, was the oppression of any kind of individual way of thinking, looking or behaving. Being equal meant uniformity in everyday life. Although a critique of

such practices had already been provided by the artists and underground movements of the above-mentioned generation of the 1960s, these artists tried to breathe life into that idea. To be underground in Eastern Europe in this period meant not only being different, but also being opposed to the state ideology.

Toward the end of the twentieth century, the legacy of the avant-garde movements became an integral part of contemporary artistic life as an inspiration for individual artists just like any other historical art movement. Arguably, the most important merit of the avant-garde is that it put such values as being different, open-minded, and experimental in the limelight, not only in arts but in all fields of social life.

Conclusion

The originality of the avant-gardes rests in their promotion of an idea of a radical beginning in all parts of life—a longing to create from a *tabula rasa,* to make a clean sweep of the past and to start afresh. In so doing, they sought to combine the freedom of the artist with that of art itself. In their art, the longing for a rupture with past conventions was both artistic and socio-political: art aimed to inspire a radical change of the socio-political world. Nevertheless, avant-garde art took very different shapes and forms throughout the twentieth century, reflecting the ideological prerogatives and political ambitions of the time. In this sense, it often ran parallel to the great political revolutions, world conflicts, and cultural revolts of the century. Especially the upheaval of the First World War, but also the rise of ideologies such as communism and fascism, had a direct impact on avant-gardist circles.

During the second half of the twentieth century, neo-avant-gardist artists retained a longing for experimental research and for rethinking and decompartmentalising social and political realities, hence they lost some of the strictly ideological edge of earlier manifestations. The avant-garde increasingly signified a fusion between arts and lived experience, whereby the idea of 'underground' as well as the fusion between 'high' and 'low' culture became pivotal. In the 1960s such circles gained currency, and their heterodox way of thinking or representing art ran parallel to or even directly reflected socio-political movements of the time—such as the global uprisings of 1968. Consequently, avant-garde artists contributed to putting values such as being different, open-minded, and experimental at the forefront of artistic endeavour, as well as of society at large. The seeds of that development continue to blossom up to the present day.

Discussion questions

1. The artistic avant-gardes of the early twentieth century were thoroughly political. Why was this the case?

2. In the 1960s, the differences between 'high' and 'low' culture in the works of artists became more and more blurred. Do you have an idea why this occurred?

3. How do the avant-gardes of today differ from those of the early twentieth century, and why?

Suggested reading

Bürger, Peter, *Theory of the Avant-garde* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

Gay, Peter, *Modernism: The Lure of Heresy from Baudelaire to Beckett and Beyond* (London: Vintage, 2007).

Gough, Maria, *The Artist as Producer: Russian Constructivism in Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

Greenberg, Clement, *Art and Culture* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1961).

Poggoli, Renato, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* (New Haven: Harvard University Press, 1968).

Piotrowski, Piotr, *Art and Democracy in Post-Communist Europe* (London: Reaktion Books, 2012).

Scheunemann, Dietrich, ed., *European Avant-Garde: New Perspectives* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008).

Weber, Andrew, *The European Avant-Garde 1900–1940* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004).

Willett, John, *The New Society: Art and Politics in the Weimar Period, 1917–33* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978).

CHAPTER 7.2

MASS MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE

7.2.1 Mass Media and Popular Culture in Early Modern History (1500–1800)

Kate Davison, Erik Jacobs, and Mónika Mátay

Introduction

The notion of 'culture' was once defined narrowly in terms of great artwork, performance, literature, and architecture. However, under the influence of 'history from below' in the 1960s and 1970s—and the anthropological and sociological approaches it borrowed—culture underwent redefinition. It came to stand for systems of meaning, values and attitudes and the forms in which they were expressed, whether spoken aloud, written down, performed, or embodied in material objects. With this broader understanding of culture, historians were no longer confined to studying elites: the study of *popular* culture was possible. This chapter discusses how historians have applied this approach to the early modern period and surveys their key findings. The chapter will then turn to the topic of print in more detail as an important source in the study of popular culture, and the only phenomenon that approached the status of 'mass media' in early modern Europe.

Popular Culture

Among the most influential works in establishing the history of popular culture in early modern Europe was Peter Burke's *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (1978). For Burke, popular culture was that of the 'subordinate classes'—those below the elite—and it was transmitted and expressed in market squares, piazzas, taverns and other communal spaces. He defined popular culture in opposition to a learned tradition handed down through schools and universities in intellectual traditions of philosophy, theology, and scientific inquiry. Exclude these from the picture of early modern culture and popular culture is what remains: folksongs and folktales, communal rituals, devotional images and objects, cheap print such as broadsides and chapbooks, and—most importantly for Burke—festivals, including seasonal occasions like Christmas,

New Year, Carnival, May, and Midsummer. In 1500, Burke argued, this was a culture in which everyone participated, but over the following centuries, the privileged and affluent steadily abandoned it: by 1800, there had been an elite 'withdrawal' as fêtes, frolics, and rowdy rituals were considered incompatible with the beliefs and behaviours of those higher up the social scale. Burke's book, therefore, was both an argument about an important aspect of historical societies that should be studied, and also an argument about cultural change in early modern Europe.

Many of the elements of popular culture that Burke brought to light have remained prominent in historical research, but our understanding of the richness, complexity, and dynamism of popular culture has continued to progress. We now have a much greater understanding of popular literacy, and that greater understanding has demonstrated the extent to which the written word permeated deeply through society. Literacy levels were higher than once thought, especially in urban areas, and many texts were designed to be read aloud in sociable settings, which meant that even those who were illiterate could access them. Broadside ballads are a good example: they were songs printed on single-sided paper, and addressed a variety of topics, including news, politics, or current affairs, as well as other kinds of contemporary interests, such as courtship or marital relations. They were printed cheaply, costing as little as a penny, and were hawked in the streets and pasted on tavern walls to be sung aloud and enjoyed in company—often with the consumption of alcohol (indeed, many of the ballads themselves celebrated drinking and drunkenness). Historians have also found new ways to access the voices of non-elites: court records have been particularly fruitful, as they include witness statements and depositions given by ordinary people. As Italian historian Carlo Ginzburg argued in his microhistorical study, *The Cheese and the Worms* (1980), the case of one miller from Friuli in sixteenth-century Italy (named Menocchio) and his interrogation at the hands of the Spanish Inquisition revealed not only his reading habits and understanding of those texts, but also his wider religious beliefs and cosmology. Court records have also been particularly valuable in accessing women's voices and experiences—something notably absent from Burke's account. In early modern England, for example, court records have been used to examine popular attitudes towards gender relations and identities, morality, and understandings of sex and reproduction. Her work, and others like it, has helped to focus attention on how popular culture was gendered, and experienced differently by women and men. The study of material objects has also enriched the picture of ordinary people's culture. Whether tools and other household objects, or clothing and personal possessions, this attention to the material world has helped historians access topics that are not accounted for by written sources.

Festivities and rituals have also continued to attract historical attention, although our understanding of them has become more refined. The practice of charivari, for example, was a form of ritualised community censure—a rowdy, mocking demonstration, which sought to shame an individual who had transgressed community norms, especially those concerning marital relations (an adulterer, for example). These processions were once conceived as a characteristic element of European popular culture, but more recently historians have drawn out their similarities with other shame punishments (such as the pillory) enforced by formal legal institutions.

The picture of early modern popular culture today is rich in complexity, so much so that it challenges both Burke's original definitions and his chronology of change. It is clear that people's cultural experiences varied according to gender, social status, education, upbringing, race, religious belief, and place—whether regional, urban, or rural. There is not one homogenous European popular culture that we can study. Moreover, historians are now cautious about drawing sharp distinctions between the cultures of the elite and those below them on the social scale: well into the eighteenth century, there were significant crossovers of interests, attitudes, and mentalities between those at both ends of the social spectrum. Jestbooks provide a useful example. These collections of jokes, witticisms, and comic anecdotes were printed in great volume across the early modern period, brimming with bawdy tales, rude quips, and scatological humour. Historians once categorised these as 'popular' texts belonging to the vulgar masses, but new research has shown that readers were just as likely to be drawn from among the 'better sort'. In light of these challenges, some historians have questioned whether the notion of popular culture is still useful, and whether we can study it in isolation. Whether historians cling to the term 'popular culture' or not, research into the cultural lives of Europeans in the early modern period continues apace, and its plurality, complexity and dynamism is still being unearthed.

One kind of source material that continues to be fundamental to the study of popular culture in this period is the printed word. The first printing press—invented by Johannes Gutenberg—whirred into action in the mid-fifteenth century in Germany. Thereafter print expanded in fits and starts across Europe and, by 1800, it was a routine part of life, which penetrated throughout society—arguably the only form of mass media in early modern Europe.

The Printing Revolution and Reading Habits

Within the Gutenberg Galaxy—a term introduced by the Canadian media scholar Marshall McLuhan, meaning the accumulated body of recorded works of Western art and knowledge—the printed written text occupies a

special position. In her seminal, two volume work *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, published in 1979 and influenced by McLuhan, the American historian Elisabeth Eisenstein examines the enormous consequences of the printing press for Western civilisation. Eisenstein systematically explores the consequences of the shift from manuscript to print culture and argues that printing brought revolutionary change in communication in early modern Europe. The dissemination and standardisation of texts and books, and their increasing availability at lower prices, enabled a wider reading public to have access to information and knowledge above and beyond what was possible during medieval times. In addition, printing contributed to the social success of the Reformation, the Renaissance, and also the Scientific Revolution, all of which played a fundamental role in shaping the history of the modern world. In short, the introduction of the printing press was not just a technical development: it laid the foundation for modern Western communication.

Eisenstein's theory provoked heated academic debates, and she undoubtedly drew attention to major and far-reaching cultural changes. Contemporaries in the sixteenth century themselves acknowledged the importance of Gutenberg's invention. Martin Luther and other Protestant thinkers suggested that the printing press had been God's major gift to mankind, through which the Lord aimed to spread the true religion on earth. Luther had been a professor of theology, priest, and a seminal figure of the Protestant Reformation. He also proved to be one of the most brilliant communicators in the history of the West. He did not only want to write for the elite of his time: his main goal was to address housewives at home, children in the street, and common people in the marketplace. He talked to the people, and also understood that he had to listen to them in order to successfully spread his novel ideas on religion.

In the first half of the sixteenth century the number of printers grew precipitously. In the Holy Roman Empire, France, Italy, and other parts of Europe, a network emerged which produced books at cheaper prices, which led to the rapid popularisation of the written word. Owning books became commonplace for many Europeans. At the same time, the translation of the Bible into vernacular languages had powerful consequences for communication, culture, and literacy all over Europe.

In their classic work, *The Coming of the Book* (1958), the French historians Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin examined patterns of book ownership and the reading habits of the lower classes. Building on Febvre and Martin's work, recent scholarship has refined our knowledge of popular reading habits in wider cultural contexts. In addition to the question of what ordinary people read, historians explored *how* they read the written word and how they purchased books. The French historian Roger Chartier suggests that peasants, trading folks, and artisans often had access to texts which had not originally been produced for them: they consumed the same readings as members of

the upper classes. In addition, all over Europe printed materials became available at popular markets constructed for the common folk. At these unique 'book fairs' readings had to be relatively cheap, available through a network of peddlers, and attractive to a wider public. The American historian Robert Darnton has explored in detail the clandestine book trade of *ancien-régime* France, unveiling the forgotten world of publishers, smugglers, police spies, and forbidden texts. He demonstrates how the literary underground contributed to the ultimate destruction of the *ancien régime*.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, literacy among ordinary people grew on a broad scale. Many people could read very slowly—like Ginzburg's Menocchio—and thus read only a few books during their entire lifetime. Most members of the popular classes could read texts, but were unable to write, or could only sign their names. The majority of people who participated in print culture did not read books themselves, but rather became familiar with these texts by hearing them read aloud by others. Reading, as Chartier reminds us, is always a practice which must be interpreted in its context—in space, acts, and habits.

Early modern patterns of reading radically changed in the middle of the eighteenth century, especially in France and England, where common people—including women—developed everyday reading habits and reading became an ordinary practice for a wider audience. A few decades later, this cultural revolution reached the German lands as well. Intensive reading, which for many people (especially in the countryside) had for centuries focused on the Bible, was replaced by the extensive and individual usage of texts. Reading served to both provide information and to serve as a source of pleasure. Reading became an intimate and private activity. Historians characterise these radical changes in reading habits as 'revolutionary' and have labelled these novel developments 'reading fury'.

According to Darnton, over the past few decades, the importance of a new discipline focusing on the social and cultural history of communication by print—the history of the book—has been recognised. Beyond print, during the early modern age, publics had also been created through other media, such as rituals, ceremonies, public executions and riots, religious iconography, court weddings or funerals. In other words, the 'public sphere'—a term coined by the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas—must be defined as an interdisciplinary territory which bonds together the findings of cultural history, sociology, and anthropology.

News, Politics and Popular Participation

'News' is one of the chief domains of the printed word in which many of the aforementioned aspects of popular culture can be traced. For most people

during the Middle Ages, the flow of information about recent events was limited to rumour and hearsay, garnished with the occasional visit of a government herald. The advent of the printing press brought gradual change to these age-old processes of disseminating information. Between the fifteenth century—in which the first wooden printing presses were installed across Europe—and the nineteenth century, with its massive steam-driven printing presses, gossip and rumour were gradually supplemented with and in some cases supplanted by printed news outlets. During the sixteenth century, pamphlets and broadsheets brought stories about bloodshed, diseases, comets, and other 'acts of God' in faraway places. But gradually during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these one-shot publications were replaced by news magazines and newspapers with fixed days of issue. Periodicity and regularity became an integral part of news coverage. This in turn fuelled the appetite for more 'news' and demand for newspapers and gossip magazines rose.

Fig. 1: Cornelis Ploos van Amstel, after Adriaen van Ostade, *Newspaper reader in interior* (1766), Public Domain, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/nl/collectie/RP-P-OB-24.554.

For most people in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the broadsheets and other news leaflets sufficed to satisfy their demand for something new to

talk about. But for those in trade, news became an ever more important aspect of doing business. Especially in the volatile world of international shipping, information could make the difference between profit or bankruptcy. It is therefore hardly surprising that the early modern newspaper—usually a two-sided sheet with the latest news on wars, international politics, prices of goods and shipping arrivals—first developed in large trading hubs such as Spain and the Italian city-states, and later in Hamburg and Frankfurt, the cities of the Dutch Republic, and London. These newspapers were based on the earlier, handwritten news updates that traders received from private correspondents abroad. Now a local 'courantier' collected these letters, composed and printed them—usually twice per week, but in some cases even more often.

During the seventeenth century high-quality newspapers, especially Dutch ones, were sold in bookshops across Europe. They were readily available in large cities, but in the more urbanised coastal areas peddlers would also bring them to smaller hamlets. An eighteenth-century traveller could find a variety of recent newspapers available in a tavern in a remote settlement of the marshy, southern parts of the Dutch Republic. And even if the original newspapers were not available, just as often people could take note of the latest news via local newspapers that copied—rather shamelessly—the columns of others. Thus, the same news became known far across state borders: between 1450 and 1650, an international network of news had developed.

By the eighteenth century some courantiers aimed their newspapers at this international audience. Their French newspapers, often published in the larger cities of the Dutch Republic, were read across Europe and beyond. The *Gazette de Leyde* for instance was read from Washington to Istanbul. Although newspaper editors catered for an educated audience, newspapers were cheap enough to be within reach of the middle and working classes as well. As mentioned above, in Europe literacy was higher than previously assumed and those who could not read would wait for someone to come by and read texts aloud, either in taverns, in the streets, or at the door. Even though print runs were smaller than for later nineteenth-century newspapers, the reader base for early modern newspapers was thus quite extensive. In urbanised areas, newspapers were read from the smallest towns to the largest cities, and by the second half of the eighteenth century most of the people in the Western world had access to the same news about important international and national events, either through the original newspaper or via a local paper.

The importance of the transnational character of early modern news is exemplified by the spread of the Atlantic Revolutions of the late eighteenth century: in fact, without early modern news, the Atlantic Revolutions would be hard to explain. People in the Dutch Republic followed occurrences in the Thirteen Colonies across the Atlantic through the *Gazette de Leyde*. That same

newspaper would later inform the French people about the aborted attempt at a similar democratic revolution in the Dutch Republic in the 1780s before it would provide a day-to-day account of the French Revolution to its international reader base. Where news of the revolutionary attempts in other countries offered examples and inspiration, it also heralded the advent of the political magazine which catalysed revolutionary efforts in this period. Beginning in the 1780s, the number of political periodicals in the Netherlands and France— to take two examples—increased rapidly, overshadowing other genres, except cheap religious prints. They offered a platform for revolutionaries to explore political ideas and they facilitated cohesion across geographical distances, allowing dispersed revolutionary groups to coordinate their movement and to reflect on the events in similar revolutionary situations abroad. Because of their regularity, they offered an accessible platform for communication compared to one-shot pamphlets. A letter to the editor sufficed to take part in the political debate of the time. Letters columns in both newspapers and magazines became outlets for political views from all strata of society, barring only the very lowest classes, and thus facilitated the political participation of large sections of society for the first time in history.

News has been Janus-faced from its conception. Its roots lie with sensational broadsheets on the one hand and trade correspondence on the other. One catered for a wide audience seeking something interesting to talk about over a drink, the other provided dry, factual news for the purpose of international trade. Out of these two Manichean sources, the printed news of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries developed into two forms: on the one hand, cheap, broadsheet-like street papers wherein facts and fiction were often difficult to distinguish; and, on the other hand, so-called 'high-quality' newspapers which collected facts from dependable international correspondents. And a huge variety of hybrid forms in between. News was transnational from its conception, dealing with disaster and death in faraway places, or with shipping arrivals, royal marriages, and political revolts abroad. Print thus allowed the masses to take part in this news and to become part of a wider international environment. This is exemplified most clearly during the highly politicised last quarter of the eighteenth century, where political news, debate, opinion and scandal reached larger sections of the population than ever before.

Conclusion

Print literature is among the best source material we have for studying 'popular culture' in early modern Europe, and it is the only phenomenon that can lay claim—during this time period—to constituting a 'mass media'. Movable type facilitated the connection between different strata of society

and between disparate pockets of culture and civilisation across the European continent and the Atlantic world. By the end of the period, readership had both expanded and broadened. Although the most important mass media of early modern times would be cheap religious prints (especially in Catholic areas), the demand for other types of reading material steadily increased. Novels, plays, scientific treatises, and books on philosophy and myriad other forms of written text became integral to an ever-growing mass of printed material. Readers no longer repeatedly read the same religious texts, but instead looked for something new to read. This process coincided and was bound up with the expansion of 'news'. Towards the end of the period, transnational networks of readers are discernible, and may be seen as a cosmopolitan expression of American political scientist Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities"—vast groups of people who became aware of occurrences far beyond their local environment.

Discussion questions

1. How did historians define early modern 'popular culture'?

2. How did the introduction of the printing press change early modern popular culture?

3. In which ways was the introduction of the printing press a 'revolution' and how did it build on existing trends?

4. Is our culture still a 'print culture'? Why or why not?

Suggested reading

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2016).

Burke, Peter, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Ashgate: Routledge, 2009).

Chartier, Roger, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994 [1992]).

Darnton, Robert, *Revolutionary News: The Press in France 1789–1799* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).

Eisenstein, Elizabeth, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

Febvre, Lucien and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450–1800* (London: Verso, 1976 [1958]).

Ginzburg, Carlo, *The Cheese and the Worms* (Washington, DC: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

Habermas, Jürgen, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989 [1962]).

Melton, James van Horn, ed., *Cultures of Communication from Reformation to Enlightenment: Constructing Publics in the Early Modern German Lands* (London: Routledge, 2002).

Raymond, Joad and Noah Moxham, eds, *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

7.2.2 Mass Media and Popular Culture in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Rutger van der Hoeven, Sylvain Lesage, and

Malte Zierenberg

Introduction

At the outset of the nineteenth century, Europe was a continent in motion. The Atlantic Revolutions, most prominently in the United States (1765–1783) and France (1789–1799), had created new political energies, had spread powerful new ideas about democracy and individual freedom, and had generated social changes within European societies. These energies were mirrored by technological innovations which transformed Europeans' relationship to information. The combination of new societal energies with the new information technologies that became available spawned the emergence of mass media and shaped the popular culture of the nineteenth century and beyond.

This was a very uneven process, impacting European societies to significantly varying degrees both within states and across the continent. Mainly in urban areas and industrialising regions, but in some agricultural regions as well, this process impacted the way in which exchanges of information took place. Furthermore, it brought about a change in the accessibility of information to different segments of the population, and transformed the information that could be produced and disseminated.

Some of these transformative mass-media technologies were already established at the start of the century: newspapers and publishing, for example, were already widespread, but still saw their audiences grow exponentially over the course of the century, and their role in society was transformed. Other forms of technology were new—such as photography (which was presented to the public in 1839), or sound recording (which was made possible by the development of the phonograph in the 1870s).

Some of these new technologies, like photography, became mass media virtually overnight. Others spread more slowly: the radio, for example, took decades to develop into a mass medium after its invention in the late-nineteenth century. The fact that certain technologies did not rapidly acquire a mass public did not make them irrelevant: even if they may have been in limited use, the adoption of the telegraph in 1830 and the telephone in 1876 fundamentally reshaped perceptions of distance, speed, and communication.

The 'Newspaper Civilisation' of Nineteenth-century Europe

The mass medium which impacted European societies the most—partly because it was already an established form of communication, but more importantly because of its practicality and cost-effectiveness—was the newspaper. Its rapidly expanding readership, which grew over time across the continent to an audience of millions, comprehensively shaped the development of public debates and national identities. This impact was so profound that, according to some observers, the widening distribution and significance of newspapers gave rise to a new 'cultural regime'.

Symbolised by the newspaper, and in particular the daily newspaper, the new urban environment in many European cities has been described as the "newspaper civilisation" (Kalifa, 2011). In the nineteenth century, words printed on paper flooded into European homes: small and cheap editions of books, posters, flyers, magazines, and newspapers. Before the nineteenth century, reading had primarily been an activity for the elite, geared towards religion or the acquisition of knowledge. But in the nineteenth century, reading became a popular activity, increasingly oriented towards pleasure, news, and opinion. Newspapers became the matrix of minds, and the main shaper of opinions. As the German philosopher Georg W. F. Hegel (1770–1831) wrote: "Reading newspapers is the morning prayer of the modern citizen".

The costs of paper, printing, and the distribution of printed material all significantly decreased in the nineteenth century, in part because of increasing economies of scale. At the British newspaper *The Times of London*, for example, the introduction of the Koenig steam press in 1815 accelerated its production to 1,000 sheets per hour, and the Applegarth printing press, acquired in 1827, increased it to 4,000 per hour. This allowed *The Times* to be printed later in the day, and therefore to offer readers more up-to-date news than the competition. At the same time, print runs increased significantly: the circulation of *The Times* went from 5,000 copies in 1815 to 40,000 in 1851.

All facets of newspaper production were similarly impacted by modernisation, from paper (the introduction of cellulose in 1938) to printing

methods (most importantly the rotary press, introduced in the 1840s) and typography. A decisive step in this last facet of newspaper production was the introduction of the so-called hot metal typesetting, used in linotype machines. Until then, the preparation of a text for printing did not differ fundamentally from the methods used in Gutenberg's time: each typeface had to be selected, aligned and justified, all by hand; after use, the typefaces were removed for reuse. With the Linotype, introduced in the 1880s, the process was automated, making typesetting six times faster.

The increased newspaper production was matched by a similar growth in demand for news. Over the course of the century, increased access to education (often public education, offered by the state) led to mass literacy in the industrialising countries of the continent. At the same time, political censorship eased in many countries. These developments allowed newspapers to take a central place in the European cultural landscape over the course of the nineteenth century. Cheaply produced and cheaply sold—for half a penny in England and five centimes in France—popular newspapers fitted neatly with an economic model based on growing popular consumption and advertising. Especially towards the end of the century, newspapers and other periodicals blended a variety of subjects: news items next to women's pages, an airy layout and large headlines, a sports section, economic news, and betting competitions. Circulation figures reflected the cultural position of newspapers. France, for example, was a country of around forty million inhabitants at the start of the twentieth century, and counted four newspapers that exceeded one million copies in 1914.

Visual Culture, Photography and Cinema

Not only text, but also images penetrated the lives of millions of Europeans. Before the nineteenth century, most Europeans came across few images in their daily lives. The pious could see religious paintings in Catholic or Orthodox—but not Protestant—churches. Some countries, most notably the Dutch Republic, had a popular painting culture. But this was the exception: as a rule, paintings were commissioned by the church, the nobility, and economic elites. The cost of image production kept their reach limited. As a result, visual culture was limited to a small segment of society.

This changed in the nineteenth century. Shortly before it began, lithography—a method of printing images that used limestone or metal plates—was invented by the German author Alois Senefelder (1771–1834). In the beginning, lithography was used primarily for printing sheet music and maps, but technological advances spread its use to fine prints and posters.

Print shops that sold these prints and posters sprang up across the continent. The printing press incorporated images as well, often as woodblock print.

In newspapers, these wood engravings were first used for the mastheads, but increasingly served as visual depictions of newsworthy people or events. From the 1840s onward, illustrated newspapers sprang up in countries across the continent. The *Illustrated London News* was the first to reach a mass audience, swiftly followed by other notable titles such as the *Illustrirte Zeitung*, published in Leipzig, and *L'Illustration* of Paris, and later by other illustrated newspapers from Portugal's *A Ilustração* to Russia's *Vsemirnoy Obozreniye*.

These illustrated newspapers did more than simply present news in an attractive way. They expanded and democratised the audience for news, and reshaped the way the public related to events. Where news had always been delivered in oral or printed form, news now also became something visual, changing how audiences across the continent understood the world around them, and increasing the knowledge that broad segments of European populations could engage with or possess.

Visual knowledge was accessible to the illiterate, and could include representation of the wider world: prints and 'views' of monuments and landmarks, such as the pyramids in Egypt, became popular illustrations and increased Europeans' mental reach far beyond their physical travels. And because an international market developed for such prints—illustrated magazines buying each other's engravings, printmakers exporting their wares to print shops abroad—a continental visual culture started to take shape.

The photograph played the main role in this process. The invention of the photographic process led to a craze in the 1840s for the first type of photograph—the so-called daguerreotype, invented by the French painter Louis Daguerre (1787–1851). As early as 1840, one year after the presentation of photography at the French Academy of Sciences, a satirical sketch by the caricaturist Théodore Maurisset (1803–1860) mocked *'la Daguerreotypemanie'* ('Daguerreotype mania'), with throngs of people jostling to see, buy and take photographs (see Figure 1). Photographs in this period were mainly portraits, but were also still lives, or depicted natural wonders and cityscapes. Other types of photography soon followed the daguerreotype: types that were cheaper and—crucially—could be reproduced endlessly.

The spread of photography not only added a new medium for disseminating information, but also implied a mental revolution: changing people's conception of what was true, real, and verifiable. It also created a demand for family portraits, *cartes de visite,* and stereographs (which could be viewed in 3D), to be sold in print shops. A market emerged for *cartes de visite* of notable people, as well as posters where they were arranged in groups

(such as 'opera singers' or 'kings and queens'), creating the first outlines of a celebrity culture.

Fig. 1: Maurisset, Théodore, *La Daguerreotypomanie* (1840), Library of Congress, https://www.loc. gov/resource/ppmsca.02343/.

At the very end of the century, the advent of moving images profoundly shaped the reach and influence of visual culture in Europe. Widely credited as the pioneers of popular cinema, the French photographers Auguste (1862–1954) and Louis (1864–1948) Lumière invented an early motion-picture film mechanism consisting of a movie camera and a film projector. Their first commercial public screening of several short films on 28 December 1895 at the Salon Indien du Grand Café in Paris is commonly seen as the birth of European cinema. The audiences of nineteenth-century Europe, who had already experienced one explosion of visual culture through illustrated newspapers and photography, immediately took to the new medium. While it retained the character of a curiosity or novelty until the first decades of the twentieth century, cinema created completely new media audiences and ways to engage with culture that were not modelled on earlier, mostly bourgeois ways of media consumption, such as contemplative listening or reading. Its visuality, which cut through barriers of language and education, suited a society characterised by migration and illiteracy.

The Transformation of News

Communication increased in volume and accelerated in speed. At the beginning of the century, the rapid transmission of news and messages was achieved by networks of special couriers and carrier pigeons. The speed of transmission exponentially increased with the development of the electric telegraph, in use from 1845 onwards. Whereas the news of the victory of Austerlitz in 1805 had taken ten days to reach Paris, it took no more than two hours for a speech by Napoleon III to be known in Algiers in 1858. From 1851, a cable linked Calais to Dover and by 1866, a cable connected both sides of the Atlantic.

News was relayed by news agencies, the first of which was founded in 1835 in Paris by Charles-Louis Havas. Two employees of his Agence Havas (now Agence France-Presse, AFP) started their own agency: German-born Paul Julius Reuter founded Reuter's, first in Aachen and then relocated to London, while his compatriot Bernard Wolff founded Wolffs Telegraphisches Bureau. In 1865, these three formed a news cartel, somewhat grandiosely called the *'Grande Alliance'*, in which they divided up Europe amongst themselves and agreed to share and monopolise news on the continent.

The laying of submarine cables and the invention of text transcribers made the electric telegraph the essential instrument for transmitting news. All major European newspapers were equipped with it, and the telegraph contributed to structuring centres and peripheries within countries. These were linked 'by wire' to the capital. Later, newspapers were among the first to subscribe to the telephone. Using all technological improvements to deliver information before other newspapers became the central aim, making speed a key element in the competition between news media.

The railway allowed reporters to travel faster, and also increased the circulation of newspapers and other journals. This generated new audiences and helped to forge national identities, rooted in nationally-oriented news and collective debate. These national identities sometimes corresponded to state boundaries, while in other cases they did not. In Bohemia for example, which was under Austro-Hungarian control, several daily newspapers were published in Czech in the 1860s: *Čas*, *Národní Listy*, and *Pokrok*. In 1890, there were 418 periodicals available in Bohemia, 253 of which were in Czech, a testament to the relative freedom enjoyed by the various nationalities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

In Italy, nationally-oriented newspapers, such as *La Nazione* (founded in Florence, 1855) preceded Italian political unification. More generally, the countries that were unified at an early stage had a press that was more centred on their capitals (Paris, Copenhagen, Madrid), while un-unified countries such as Germany and Italy were distinguished by a more fragmented communication and information structure.

Thus in European countries both national and state audiences emerged; often, but not always, these audiences overlapped. Journalism and media entrepreneurship appeared as professions, and their practitioners often associated with professional bodies. Cultural societies and associations were founded, on a larger scale than the reading rooms of the eighteenth century. Indeed, the emergence of new social classes meant that the audiences of the nineteenth century mass media could be class-based. Especially with mass media focused on the working class, the political dimension of new media content was never far from view. Mass media in the nineteenth century were therefore also bound up with the development of new democratic parties and political audiences.

Fig. 2: Oscar Begas, *Evening reading circle in a Berlin artists' house* (1849), CC BY-NC-SA, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, https://www.europeana.eu/de/item/2064108/Museu_ProvidedCHO_ Kupferstichkabinett__Staatliche_Museen_zu_Berlin_DE_MUS_018511_1502506.

Mass Media Communication and New Ways of Experiencing Space and Belonging

The nineteenth century saw a massive reconfiguration in the spatial organisation of societies. This was not only due to the impact of new media and their uses. Mass migration, for example, also played a role in this process. But the new media landscape was a primary cause behind this new conception of space, contributing to the redefinition of the mental maps of people in Europe. New forms of communication, including the mechanised printing press, the

telegraph, and photography, helped to open up new ways of imagining the world, allowing individuals to view their own local experiences in the much broader contexts of national, transnational, or even global belonging. At the same time, the use of individual media created new forms of spatialisation, with people socialising in literary salons, reading the newspaper at home, or communicating with one another via the telegraph.

New information and communication technologies as well as new forms of travel and increased mobility found their way into popular discourse and became topics of some of the best-selling books of the era. For example, in his 1872 novel *Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours*—which was rapidly translated into English, German, and other languages—the French author Jules Verne (1828–1905) depicted a British gentleman who made a bet that he would be able to travel the world in eighty days. Starting from his local London gentlemen's club, the readership of Verne's novel followed its hero on his journey around the globe.

Fascinated readers were introduced to both modern and 'exotic' means of transportation, but also to the newest forms of communication, which often played an important part in the plot. The telegraph featured prominently in the book, creating a sense of connectedness between the British Empire's centre in London and various other stations around the world. The very fact that the story started in an armchair in a gentlemen's club in London from where it linked the Mediterranean, the Indian Subcontinent, the 'Far East', the United States of America and several other places together, was mirrored in the experience of the novel's many European (and international) readers while reading the book itself.

The use of media and its capacity to reorganise the experience and meaning of the world had a long past. During the French Revolution, a prominent cultural practice was reading placards and looking at the latest—often satirical—illustrations. In fact, the new symbolic order of the French Republic emerged from the dissemination and reception of a vast number of emblematic publications which combined written information with easily identifiable and formative visual content. The expansion and increasing importance of public communication during the revolution helped to establish a transnational mode of observation that addressed mass audiences in many different countries. This process relied on and developed new or reinvigorated print industry networks and newly established illustrated magazines like *The Illustrated London News*. Photography soon became one of the most important media which established a new mode not only of 'knowing' the world but also which inspired feelings of solidarity or hostility toward people across the globe.

At the same time, the reorganisation of the perception of the world did not mean that the nineteenth century only witnessed an ever-growing expansion

of the arena of national or transnational communication. A combination of different developments in fact altered the spatial organisation of society. The practice of reading, for example, changed drastically during the nineteenth century. While literacy had risen to new heights over the course of the century, thanks in part to the introduction of new school systems, these new reading audiences no longer met in public libraries or clubs to exercise reading as a social practice in public venues. On the contrary, at the end of the century the vast number of newspapers and books that had become available at least to an urban population was mostly read in private. The reorganisation of space created by new media during the nineteenth century therefore had an ambiguous character. It started to link people together, establishing new realms of belonging (not least the nation, as an 'imagined community'), while at the same time laying the groundwork for more private and individual practices of media use and reception which—to an observer in the twenty-first century—would appear more recognisable. New media also created new divisions, for example between a media avant-garde in major cities—people who had access to the newest media trends and incorporated them quickly into their lives—and less well-connected people in Europe's peripheral regions.

Conclusion

Europe in the nineteenth century was as diverse as at any point in its history, and new developments influenced its various regions in different ways. Nonetheless, new technologies for mass communication affected all European countries, and profoundly impacted and shaped popular culture in its cities and more connected regions: spreading new ideas, creating new audiences, accelerating the rise of new political parties and classes, and changing people's outlooks on the world. The new media of the time—such as illustrated newspapers, photography, or the electric telegraph—created new mass audiences that extended far beyond the elite circles of earlier media consumption. At the same time, they created new divisions between mainly urban audiences with easy access to media content and rural or peripheral audiences that were often excluded from this new media landscape.

The popular culture of the nineteenth century was thoroughly shaped by these new media technologies, becoming more visual, more easily accessible and available, more political, and more urban. The novels, newspapers, and images of the period often reflected the transnational nature of this new popular culture, in both their content and form—as was the case with photography and cinema, which transcended barriers of language. At the same time, the rise of nationalism in the nineteenth century was closely linked to the development of new media technologies.

Discussion questions

1. In which ways did the new media of the nineteenth century contribute to a politicisation of culture?

2. Why was the new visuality of nineteenth-century popular culture so important?

3. What is the role of the mass media today? Do they contribute to a sense of national belonging? Or do they create a sense of Europeanness?

Suggested reading

Albert, Pierre, *Histoire de la presse* (Paris: PUF, 2018).

Arnold, Klaus, Susanne Kinnebrock and Paschal Preston, eds, *The Handbook of European Communication History* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2019).

Kalifa, Dominique et al., eds, *La Civilisation du journal: Histoire culturelle et littéraire de la presse française au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Nouveau Monde, 2011).

Pettegree, Andrew, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know about Itself* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).

Schwartz, Vanessa and Jeannene Przyblyski, *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

Smits, Thomas, *Looking at the Same World: The European Illustrated Press and the Emergence of a Transnational Visual Culture of the News, 1842–1870* (Nijmegen: Radboud University, 2019).

Winseck, Dwayne and Robert Pike, *Communication and Empire: Media, Markets, and Globalization, 1860–1930* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

7.2.3 Mass Media and Popular Culture in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Ondřej Daniel, Gabriela de Lima Grecco, Florence Tamagne, and Malte Zierenberg

Introduction

The twentieth century witnessed the transformation of popular culture as well as an enormous growth in mass media's power to inform (and form) societies. Both of these processes also gave birth to new fields of intellectual reflection: the study of popular culture and media studies. Every history of media and popular culture in the twentieth century, therefore, needs to reflect upon the actual evolution of different media structures and the growing contemporary awareness of the effects of mass media on society. Following these trends, this chapter first aims to provide the reader with an overview of theories reflecting the development of mass media in the twentieth century. Second, it gives specific historical examples of the power and control of media by fascist and Nazi regimes as well as with the far-right dictatorships on the Iberian Peninsula. Third, it will examine the theory of popular culture, discussing the case of different practices related to popular music.

Theories of Mass Media

Critical reflection about the changes that new media and new means of communication brought for modern societies began to take shape in the nineteenth century. One of the first authors who not only experimented with the possibilities of photography as a new medium but who also elaborated theoretically on its political utility was the American abolitionist Frederick Douglass (1817–1895). Douglass wrote four essays on the potential of

photography in the struggle to democratise society and liberate slaves, evaluating the medium's unique ability to represent slaves as human beings to a mass public and to document the horrific conditions of their enslavement in the American South and elsewhere.

Other authors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who began to discuss the overall effect of modern mass media on society included American sociologist Charles Horton Cooley (1864–1929). Cooley's *The Process of Social Change* (1897), for example, underlined the chances he saw in the modern newspaper and other new means of communication to enhance public knowledge and to counter misinformation which, as he believed, lay at the heart of conflicts and wars. Here a topic entered public debate which would continue to be discussed throughout the twentieth century, namely the optimistic narrative of media change which tends to focus on the enlightening and democratising effects of new media, an interpretation that was echoed when the Internet began its growth as a medium. These theories became almost immediately countered by more pessimistic interpretations, a framing which led to two strands of media discourse that have been with us since the nineteenth century.

The establishment of a new field of knowledge dedicated to the study of media was inspired by various social, political, and cultural reorientations within a more complex media landscape in the first half of the twentieth century. In the context of the First World War and its aftermath—when state-driven propaganda and new ideas about the possibilities to inform or (mis-)lead mass audiences opened up new ways of thinking about media and their effects on society—the impact that single media or media ensembles have on individuals as well as on societies came under scrutiny. Some of the most prominent texts that still inform our interpretations today were written in the interwar period when systematic approaches to media communication became a common feature in different arenas of public life. Sociologists, critics writing for newspapers, 'so-called newspaper scholars', and psychologists—all professional observers of society—started to engage in a field of knowledge that might be called media studies *avant la lettre*. Two strands stood out. One of them was the approach that investigated the possibilities and the constraints of mass communication using empirical methods. Different actors from scholarly as well as political and commercial backgrounds engaged in these activities. The other strand of voices took a more critical, sociological approach. Theorists like Siegfried Kracauer (1889–1966) or Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) influenced and helped formulate the contemporary view of media as creating a new mode of communication which in turn sometimes also worked in favour of undemocratic or fascist political powers, and they also informed an influential way of thinking about media that (through the so-called 'Frankfurt School') still resonates as an interpretation of mass media communication today.

These two strands of research also influenced thought about media and society throughout the 1940s and into the Cold War era. Media theory is often described as having taken a turn in the 1960s with the establishment of university departments dedicated to its study and the growing prominence of Marshall McLuhan's interpretation of the media as extensions of man's bodily perceptual apparatus. Canadian media scholar Marshall McLuhan's influential phrase—the "medium is the message"—conceptualised media not solely as the neutral transporter of particular content, but instead focused on the very process of communicating via media as a formative practice in itself that creates rather than simply identifies certain individual recipients or collective audiences. Nevertheless, one should not forget that some of these more structural aspects had already been discussed by Cooley and others. Furthermore, new approaches (from Deleuze, Foucault, and Kittler, among others) opened up new ways of thinking about media, which called for the analysis of the non-hierarchical, rhizomatic structures of digital communication and the overall importance of media as co-creators of the world we live in.

The example of McLuhan, however—who famously made a cameo appearance in Woody Allen's film *Annie Hall* (1977)—speaks to a phenomenon that became more important during the second half of the twentieth century. Instead of remaining an experts' discourse, reflection about what it means to live in an age of mass media and mass communication became part of a broader and much more popular conversation. Some of the most prominent analyses of the television era by Neil Postman and others broke new ground for a widespread and almost omnipresent discourse about media, digitalisation, and the fundamental shift of communication at the beginning of the twenty-first century. How digital media changed, and continue to change, media societies is very much a current question, although at least the battle of optimistic against pessimistic interpretations of mass media might remind us of the fact that these debates are well-established, and have a long history.

Mass Media under Control

Growing awareness of the potential power of mass media led to its strict control and its deployment for political goals. This can be well illustrated through the example of authoritarian regimes of the mid-twentieth century. Once in power in Italy and Germany, the fascist governments' first objective was to enforce a particular ideology and implement the cultural policy necessary to maintain it. Thus, in contrast to the liberal state, the fascist regimes aimed to directly control both the sphere of culture, as well as a group of ideologically engaged intellectuals, where culture would be tied to the political objectives set by the state. As such, the newspaper and literary industry were to be controlled entirely by the government.

In line with this approach, the Italian Fascist regime (1922–1943), ruled by Benito Mussolini, sought to erect a fascist national culture. Some artists, such as the poet Filippo Marinetti or Gabriele D'Annunzio, provided the building blocks for a new art inspired by violence, war, and aggressive nationalism. Under this approach, all artistic creation was meant be in tune with the new regime, and—because of that—Mussolini ordered the confiscation of newspapers and books that criticised the regime. The *Ufficio Stampa della Presidenza del Consiglio* was the institutional body in charge of controlling literary production. Moreover, the Italian Academy compiled a list of books which they believed should be banned, and in 1939, a purging policy was set in motion which prohibited more than 900 texts.

A similar process took place with the Third Reich's *Black List* under the Nazi regime (1933–1945), and towards the end of 1938 the number of banned books in Germany rose to 4,700, including texts written by Bertolt Brecht, Emil Ludwig, and Oskar Maria Graf. In order to ensure this prohibition was effective, combat committees were formed and assigned the task of registering private bookshops or commercial libraries, and confiscating thousands of texts to be destroyed and burnt. The ritual of a public burning incited terror in the spectator, but also a shared sense of belonging to a symbolic community. This type of public ceremony was carried out from the early years of the rise of Nazism. On 10 May 1933, thousands of books were burned in Berlin's Opera Square, in the presence of a large number of students who emitted cheers each time a book was thrown on to the flames.

Fig. 1: Georg Pahl, *Book burning by students on Berlin's Opernplatz* (1933), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_102-14597,_Berlin,_ Opernplatz,_B%C3%BCcherverbrennung.jpg.

In line with their overall totalitarian agenda, the Nazis sought control of all expression of culture and thought. Both in the media and in the arts, they attempted to purge all traces of liberal or Marxist values, and any kind of critical, progressive, or pluralistic thinking. These values and perspectives were indistinctly termed 'decadent', 'Jewish', 'Bolshevik', or 'black'. On 4 February 1933 Hitler persuaded President Paul von Hindenburg to sign an emergency decree (*Verordnung des Reichspräsidenten zum Schutze des Deutschen Volkes*), which authorised the state to prohibit publications or meetings that "abused or treated official bodies or institutions with contempt", and as a result of this decree, many communist and social democratic newspapers were suppressed.

On the other hand, writers such as Friedrich Griese or Ina Seidel were distinguished novelists who participated in the nationalist literary movement during the Third Reich, and who endeavoured to construct an idealised conception of the German *'spirit'*. Creative work represented an opportunity for the Third Reich to unify the national community based on themes which found their main source of inspiration in the experience of war. The press, the radio, cinema, literature, libraries, the university and schools served to diffuse the Pan-Germanic ideal and brought the masses into line with the regime. In 1937, rural novels, historical novels, and novels set in the native landscape were bestsellers. From 1939 onwards novels glorifying the initial struggles of the Nazi Party moved to the top of the list. Despite this, these low-quality novels were only momentarily successful and, as a result of the exile of important communist, liberal, and Jewish writers, German literature within the country itself suffered a decline in quality and diversity.

In other European dictatorships, such as those of Francisco Franco (Spain, 1936–1975) or António de Oliveira Salazar (Portugal, 1926–1974), censorship was also widely used. Franco and Salazar believed that culture and the press should serve the national community and adapt to 'the official version of the facts', and censorship had the goal of entirely obstructing subversive ideas that could breed dissent. In Spain, the Law of 22 April 1938—which was in large part inspired by new fascist legislation in Italy—established an *a priori* process for the censorship of books and newspapers. On the other hand, in Portugal, the regime counted on António Ferro as director of the National Propaganda Secretariat, which was the organ *par excellence* for Salazar propaganda and censorship. Texts of a political or social nature were forced to be submitted to prior censorship before publication.

Theories of Popular Culture

The concept of popular culture relates to the everyday culture of the general public and encompasses mainstream culture as well as its subcultural counter-narratives. On the one hand, popular culture in particular historical times and

spaces referred to the traditional patterns of culture (preserving folk besides the newly-developed mediatised cultural production). But on the other hand, popular culture simultaneously became consciously fashionable and globalised.

Departing from the notion of cultural capital as formulated by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1979) as a tool for distinguishing social groups, we may view distinct musical tastes in a similar way to tastes in any other cultural field: they reflect status inequalities based on their bearer's socio-economic position, education, and networks. One large-scale study in the United Kingdom, conducted by a group of British researchers, defended this model against critiques drawn from US research in the 1980s. The upper classes, the UK researchers found, were not omnivorous music consumers as the US study had claimed. Rather, music was a contested cultural field where certain borders would not be crossed.

Views radically different to those of Pierre Bourdieu, as well as those of the theory of mass culture elaborated by the Frankfurt School, were championed by scholars from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham, the so-called Birmingham School. In their predominant view from analysis of working-class culture, culture was conceived as a site of struggle for hegemony. Stuart Hall and other writers participating in this current followed a line of Marxist thought represented by Italian theorist Antonio Gramsci and German philosopher Louis Althusser, giving importance to ideology and the different means of its reproduction.

Since the 1990s, with a shift of interest from the culture of the working class towards the cultural activities of the middle class, scholars like the British sociologist Beverley Skeggs drew upon the tradition of cultural sociology, adding two important dimensions: gender and race.

Although in the nineteenth century, popular music referred to work songs and traditional melodies collected by folklorists, in the twentieth century, it more and more came to designate a commodified genre produced by the record industry and broadcasted by mass media. As such, it was strongly criticised by intellectuals from the Frankfurt School, who analysed pop music mostly in terms of standardisation and easy consumption, a point of view contested in the 1970s by sociologists from the Birmingham School, who preferred to emphasise the listeners' agency and the way popular music could participate in the construction of individual, social, and political identities.

Popular Music

Popular music witnessed dynamic evolution over the course of the twentieth century, with the emergence of new styles and genres, as well as technological

innovations and the changing social functions of music. At the beginning of the twentieth century, music-hall, a theatrical genre which involved a variety of popular songs and speciality acts, established itself as one of the favourite forms of entertainment in Europe. Revues, which eroticised female bodies, triumphed on the Parisian stages of the Folies Bergère or Moulin Rouge, while the 1920s saw the golden age of German cabaret, with composers such as Kurt Weill and vocal groups such as the Comedian Harmonists, whose careers were interrupted by Nazism. Artists like Maurice Chevalier or, later on, Edith Piaf benefited from an international reputation. North American influences were also obvious at the time, whether in the form of jazz or swings bands, or of Tin Pan Alley standards, interpreted by crooners such as Bing Crosby, or later Frank Sinatra.

Born in 1954 in the United States, rock 'n' roll conquered Europe through juke-boxes, the cinema (with films like Richard Brooks' *The Blackboard Jungle* from 1955), international radio stations (such as American Forces Network or Radio Luxembourg), and television shows (such as the British shows *Ready, Steady, Go!* and *Top of the Pops*, launched in 1963 and 1964, respectively), but also local imitators, such as Johnny Hallyday in France and Cliff Richards in Britain, who covered American hits. Hailed as the music of teenagers, rock 'n' roll was nonetheless associated in the media with juvenile delinquency and sexual promiscuity. Rock music was also part of the Cultural Cold War between East and West. While the Voice of America radio station broadcasted Western popular music in Eastern Europe, countries such as the GDR tried to censure *beat* groups.

Notwithstanding cultural Americanisation, national music genres, such as the French *chanson*, the Italian *musica leggera*, or the German *Schlager*, remained very popular locally. From the 1960s onwards, the 'British Invasion', with bands such as the Beatles or the Rolling Stones, and, later on, *Krautrock* bands of the 1970s, or *French Touch* house music of the 1990s, demonstrated the—often short-lived—capacity of European pop music to be successfully exported. On the other side, European artists, following the example of the British pop musician George Harrison learning sitar, became more and more open to non-Western musical instruments and sounds. Despite some racist outbursts, reggae was also favourably received in Britain.

Popular music could also convey political or counter-cultural demands. From the 1950s onwards, folk music, following the examples of artists such as Bob Dylan or Joan Baez, gained more and more support in Europe, being used for example during the British anti-nuclear Aldermaston marches. From the 1960s onwards, psychedelic rock, born in San Francisco, but relayed by British bands like Pink Floyd, became the soundtrack of the hippie revolution. Music festivals, such as the Isle of Wight Festival of 1970, attracted hundreds of

thousands of young people, although such festivals were sometimes forbidden in France, Germany, or Italy, for fear of unrest.

Fig. 2: Young people listening to the bands at the Isle of Wight Festival, 1970, CC BY-NC-SA, Rolf M. Aagaard, Aftenposten, NTB scanpix, https://ndla.no/subject:52b154e8-eb71-49cb-b046-c41303eb9b99/ topic:105e337f-4f5f-4b24-a6d3-9d1835094e15/topic:a1595e33-1e32-4c7d-a0e8-c6a6bfd33545/ resource:c92b951f-e877-4083-ba5e-a124d935c166.

Although rock music had gone mainstream by the middle of the 1970s, some genres—such as glam rock, by challenging gender norms, or punk rock, with its anti-establishment stance—could still be viewed as subversive. In the 1980s and 1990s, other successful popular music genres, such as electronic music and hip-hop, were the subject of moral panics, either because of fear of drug abuse or allegations of violence. Nevertheless, even highly commodified events, such as the Eurovision Song Contest (created in 1956), can function as a platform for political or social demands, for example regarding LGBT+ rights.

After the Second World War, new formats and equipment, such as LPs and single records (1948–1949), high-fidelity and stereo recording in the 1950s and 1960s, audio tape recorders (1948), and synthesisers (1964) revolutionised the record industry, generating spectacular growth. The 1980s saw new technical innovations such as the compact disc (1982), as well as the emergence of music videos and a new way to experience music thanks to portable cassette players like Sony's Walkman (1979). Although the record industry has always been dominated by a few major labels, independent record labels have contributed to the dynamism of the music scene, by supporting music genres held as non-profitable by big companies.

Conclusion

European societies in the twentieth century have witnessed an unprecedented growth of mass media and its applications. Media was gradually exploited by both democratic and non-democratic regimes, market and state-controlled economies—by different political and economic regimes for their own purposes. Similarly, popular culture became more important for Europeans of the twentieth century, not only as a tool of state propaganda but also as a means of self-identification and resistance, which is perhaps best illustrated in the case of different uses of popular music.

Discussion questions

1. How did the ways in which people thought about popular culture and music change over the course of the twentieth century?

2. Why did the authoritarian regimes of twentieth-century Europe try to control popular culture and music?

3. In this article, popular culture is described as a site of political struggle. In which ways was popular culture politicised in the twentieth century? Can you think of similar examples from today?

Suggested reading

Bennett, Tony et al., *Culture, Class, Distinction* (London: Routledge, 2009).

Bourdieu, Pierre, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987 [1979]).

Frith, Simon, *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Longhurst, Brian, *Popular Music and Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

Peterson, Richard A. and Roger M. Kern, 'Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore', *American Sociological Review* 61:5 (1996), 900–907.

Skeggs, Beverley, *Class, Self, Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004).

CHAPTER 7.3
SPORTS AND LEISURE

7.3.1 Sports and Leisure in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Sonja Kleij and Tomáš Masař

Introduction

In many respects, across different eras, the ways in which people spend their free time has not changed. Although sports and leisure activities were far less organised, commercial, and international in the early modern period compared to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, people of all social strata did enjoy exercising together, playing games, meeting with friends and family, or watching entertainment. Whether rich or poor, they could participate in various activities after their daily work, during work, and sometimes even as their work. Although the forms of activity differed across time and space, the concept of people relaxing and enjoying their time while practicing some kind of sport or leisure was known in all cultures across all continents. Whether they were physical, intellectual, or spiritual, there were many activities that people undertook to entertain themselves.

This chapter presents a range of these activities, including the performing arts as well as games and sport, with an eye to several particular aspects. One such aspect is the role of social status in shaping access to and pursuit of leisure. While social status constrained the sorts of activities in which one might be able to engage, the choice was still varied. Some types of sports and games were restricted just to upper classes. Hunting—for instance—was a leisure activity for the nobility, while other activities like theatre and music were more popular and accessible forms of entertainment. Additionally, the early modern period saw the emergence of new sports and the transformation of older ones: several modern sports began to take their current form in the early modern period. Other overarching aspects this chapter will examine include the transfer of leisure activities across cultures and the many roles of leisure beyond amusement.

Performative Arts as Entertainment

Storytelling is probably the earliest form of entertainment. Expressing oneself through creative means is a fundamental human need. Performance through such mediums as music and theatre is an important way of telling stories and expressing oneself in front of an audience, or—from the other perspective—of being entertained and moved emotionally by performers. In Europe, the roots of many performing arts can be found in antiquity. In Ancient Greece, the arts were considered so important that each major art form was given its own goddess, representing one of the seven muses. Euterpe is the muse of music, while Melpomene is the muse for tragedy, the dramatic genre which—for Aristotle—held the highest esteem. The purpose-built *theatron*, where plays were performed during festivals (among other occasions) to honour the gods, would later inspire the spherical shape and layout of early modern theatre buildings.

Theatre continued to be a major form of entertainment during the Middle Ages and was a popular leisure activity in the early modern period. Depending on the place and occasion, performances could take place at court, in purpose-built theatres, makeshift stages on market squares, town halls, churches and more. Performances were fairly accessible. In England, for example, theatre became a commercial enterprise as early as the sixteenth century. The aim was to attract a large audience and therefore the cost of admission was staggered, with the cheapest being standing places in front of the stage. A general labourer could afford to see a play fairly regularly—about once a week. In countries such as England, France and Spain, scripted theatre became common practice as early as the sixteenth century. But in other regions *Commedia dell'arte*—which combines script with improvisation through the use of stock characters—prevailed. This was a major form of professional theatre in Italy that remained popular from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century.

Writing drama could also be a form of leisure. In the Low Countries, most cities had a *Rederijkerskamer*, a 'Chamber of Rhetoric'. These were literary societies where merchants and other fairly prosperous men gathered to discuss topics of interest, (local) news, and to write songs, poems, and plays together. These plays were often performed within the society's own premises or, on special occasions, on market squares, at the invitation of the municipal government. These works were often published under the motto and name of the chamber rather than individual members; but over time, as ideas of authorship started to change, more space opened up for individual names. During the golden age of the chambers in the sixteenth century, regular competitions took place for chambers from multiple cities. At these competitions, they would respond to questions or statements in a creative and

persuasive manner. These spectacles were entertaining for both the performers and the audience, which often consisted of members of other chambers, and citizens of the host city. If there was an entrance fee, the profits would usually go to charities, such as orphanages.

Large, purpose-built theatres were mostly reserved for capital cities. But if someone lived outside of the capital, they might still have the opportunity to see a drama when a theatre company went on tour to perform in local town halls and churches: Italian *Commedia dell'arte* troupes, for example, would often travel from city to city. In the Holy Roman Empire, German plays were performed by touring companies along with translations of Dutch, French, and English plays. Theatre was thus both a local and individual experience of entertainment, while it also served as a 'transnational' space, facilitating the exchange of stories across different nations, regions, and languages.

Performing and listening to music was another popular form of leisure that was enjoyed by all social strata. The lute, the harpsichord (an early form of the piano), drums and the flute were popular instruments, though some of these were more accessible than others, depending on price and space requirements. Singing, however, was free and this activity had a prominent place in daily life. In many Western European countries, people used broadsheets—single-page sheets printed with lyrics—which were sold cheaply by street vendors and thus reached a wide audience. Songbooks were also published. The Low Countries in particular saw a lively trade in such publications, which were affordable for most labourers. These songbooks would often have a theme: for example, love songs were used for courting, or religious songs were used to express faith. Singing was thus not only practised in church. People would sing together at social gatherings, in the street, in the tavern, during work, and at home.

Writing contrafacta—applying a new text to an existing, often well-known tune—was a lively practice in the early modern period. It eliminated the need for printing sheet music (which could be more expensive to produce due to the need for specialist printing tools) and it also eliminated the necessity of reading sheet music, a skill which a majority of the lower classes did not possess. Another benefit was that it was possible to write a new song fairly quickly. Producing contrafacta thus also became a way to report and respond to recent news or to create new material for festivities or other occasions. An example of such a tune was 'Fortune my Foe', probably the best-known secular melody in early modern England, where it first appeared. The tune was prominent in all layers of society in England, and was played in taverns as well as court (and even at executions). The tune also travelled abroad. For instance, in the Low Countries, it was known as 'Engelsche Fortuyn' (English Fortune), acknowledging its place of origin. Based on a search of the Dutch

Song Database, at least 223 songs were written to this melody. Both composers and playwrights used the song to write new pieces about love or morality, or to express some misfortune. Its prominence in song culture started in the 1560s and would continue into the eighteenth century, and it can thus be considered an important song in the soundtrack of the early modern period.

Sports and Games

The roots of sports and athletic competition are almost as old as mankind itself. The first evidence of these pastimes, in the form of cave paintings, hails from the Palaeolithic era. Among the first fields of athletic competition were several forms of martial arts with or without arms, shooting or throwing any kinds of missile, horse riding, and chariot racing. All of these skills were useful for warfare and combat. From incidental contests in daily life several kinds of organised competitions developed, like the ancient Olympic Games, or gladiator battles and chariot races all over the Roman Empire. The latter two of these practices were denounced and abandoned by the emergent Christianity of late antiquity. Christian warriors nevertheless created their own culture of knighthood and chivalry, which peaked in the High Middle Ages. These cultures came to an end with the appearance of professional armies, which led to a decline of armoured cavalry.

Fencing and sharpshooter competitions, as well as horse racing, survived as legacies of the earlier era, and all of these sports were favoured by the aristocracy. Various forms of equestrian racing and competitions were practised across Europe and also beyond in the early modern age. In Italy, for instance, several kinds of *palios* (horse races) were commonplace, with *Campo* in Siena being the most famous. The tradition of horse racing was very long and rich in England as well. During the Commonwealth (1649–1660), it was temporarily abolished by Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658) in his position as Lord Protector, since horses were needed for his New Model Army. But after restoration of the monarchy, Charles II (1630–1685, r. 1660) took on the tradition of his Stuart predecessors and became one of the greatest equestrian enthusiasts, making Newmarket Racecourse one of the cradles of modern horse racing.

Boxing, too, has its roots in ancient forms of fighting and wrestling. In contrast to sports practised mostly by aristocrats, boxing was practised mainly by poor and underprivileged people. Developing from local fights and brawls, where strong men fought each other, it evolved in early eighteenth-century England into a sport with a standardised set of rules, organised tournaments, and widely recognised champions. Famous champions were not only able to earn money, but also ran boxing schools, teaching their boxing techniques to curious young aristocrats. These new participants, in turn, changed the sport

from a violent means of entertainment for the poor into a fashionable sport for 'gentlemen'.

Many modern sports and games originated in the late Middle Ages and early modern times. As suggested by the etymology of the word *sport*, coming from Latin *deportare* meaning 'to enjoy' or 'to relax', they were intended as an opportunity for people to enjoy their free time. Some of them were simple pastimes enjoyed—usually on Sundays—by peasants and the labouring classes, since that was often the only day when they were not forced to work. This custom was often regarded with great dismay by church officials, who thought that Sundays ought to be dedicated exclusively to God. This changed in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when several monarchs started to officially license spaces where people were allowed to engage in early forms of organised sport and games.

As England (later Great Britain) became the leading economic and political power in Europe, the British Isles became the cradle of many modern sports. The British nobility and gentry used their wealth to amuse themselves with many diverse activities, including sport and games. Hunting and falconry were forms of entertainment reserved for the aristocracy, where noblemen exhibited their ability to ride and use weapons. In England, as well as in most other European countries, it was strictly prohibited by law for the lower classes to hunt game. This aristocratic affection for the sport also gave the word *game* new meaning. In most medieval Germanic languages it was usually connected with expressions of 'joy', 'pleasure', 'amusement' or 'merriment', but in modern English it can also refer to any kind of hunted animal—in addition to its typical sense of a form of amusement.

Games like cricket, golf, or curling have their roots in medieval times, but they really started to flourish during the early modern period. Several references to cricket come from English written sources of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, which mention the game's rules and record its first matches. Since the late seventeenth century, cricket grew very popular across the whole of England and spread quickly to its colonies as well. It became another favourite game of the aristocracy, and even some members of the royal family were enthusiastic players—for example Frederick, Prince of Wales (1707–1751), who was supposedly killed by an injury caused by a cricket ball. With regard to golf, in 1502 Scottish King James IV (1473–1513 r. 1488) overturned a ban issued by his grandfather, James II (1430–1460 r. 1437), which had prohibited golf from being played in the kingdom. It soon became very popular among Scottish people, with the Old Course at St Andrews considered the oldest known golf course in the world. Like golf, some claim a Scottish origin for curling, although the Dutch claim to have invented this sport as well. We can see depictions of people playing early versions of curling, for

example, in the paintings of the Dutch master Pieter Breughel the Elder (c. 1525–1569).

Frozen lakes, ponds, and canals were also ideal for skating. Moving on ice with wooden or bone blades was already popular in prehistoric Scandinavia, but it was the introduction of metal blades in the Low Countries that transformed the practice from a form of transportation to leisure. As with skating, skiing was most probably invented by the ancient inhabitants of northern Europe, and instances of it can be found in Norse mythology. It was not only the easiest means of travel during winter—as illustrated in the famous story of Birkebeiners rescuing infant King Haakon IV Haakonson (1204–1263, r. 1217) from his assassins—but also gradually became a popular recreational activity in Nordic countries.

Fig. 1: Hendrick Avercamp, *A Scene on the Ice* (first half of the seventeenth century), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hendrick_Avercamp_-_A_Scene_on_the_Ice_-_WGA01076.jpg.

There were many other popular ball games aside from cricket. Russian sources mention a game of bandy in the eleventh century, but it was in the age of Tsar Peter I (1672–1725 r. 1682), that this became truly popular and was played on frozen ponds and rivers with sticks and skates. Similar games were also played in Scandinavia and the Low Countries. The Irish played a game called hurling for centuries, but the eighteenth century—when the gentry formed local teams that competed at the county level—is considered the golden age of this game. So-called 'royal tennis', which originated in France became popular among the English nobility, and even monarchs like Henry VIII (1491–1547 r.

1509) or Charles I (1600–1649 r. 1625) enjoyed playing the game. As the most popular and widespread modern sport, football also has deep historic roots. Almost every ancient culture has some evidence of a game that involved kicking or hitting a round-shaped object or ball (often made from inflated animal bladders). Several countries claim to be the birthplace of football. Some sources mention the so-called 'mob football' in medieval England and Ireland. Around the same time, the traditional *Calcio Fiorentino* was played at Piazza Santa Croce in the Italian city of Florence. There are even reports that Alessandro de' Medici (1510–1537), the Duke of Florence, sustained a minor injury while playing football with some servants. But it was English public schools that laid the foundations for modern football, establishing most of its codified rules.

Another game enjoyed mostly by the nobility was billiards, or similar games where the aim was to hit balls with a cue (to carambole them, or to shoot them into pockets). Several versions of cue or billiard sports with different rules and apparatus were played all across Europe, mostly by the rich and the aristocracy. Versions of billiards played on the ground, the precursors to modern croquet, emerged in Italy and France and swiftly spread to other European courts, where they became a favoured leisure activity of royals and nobles.

Other forms of popular amusement included many different board and card games. As with sports, evidence of card and board games can be found in most ancient civilisations. Chess, originating in sixth-century India, came via Persia and Arabia to early medieval Europe. Spanish and Italian merchants spread it across the continent, with France becoming the centre of European chess during the eighteenth century, attracting the greatest masters and theoreticians of the game. Other board games like backgammon, draughts, and dominoes had their roots outside of Europe as well, hailing mostly from the Middle East. Cards also came to Europe from the Middle East during the fourteenth century, apparently from Mamluk Egypt. Playing cards became popular and widespread with the invention of the printing press, and were one of the first products to be made by printing companies. Assimilating the original Mamluk tradition, European card sets maintained four suits of colours with thirteen cards per set. Tarot cards increased the size of a set up to seventy-eight cards. Various games, such as Triomphe (also known as French Ruff), Ombre, Whist and Piquet developed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, using the standard deck of cards with four colours.

With the growing popularity of sports and games, gambling became more prominent. Card games were often played for money and betting on the winner or the result of the game became very popular. This brought increasing amounts of money into the sport environment, which radically changed the

way it was perceived. For many people, sport became not only an activity for fun and leisure, but also a means of earning money: playing sports emerged as a profession. As early as the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, professional boxers, jockeys, or cricketers were hired to fight or compete not only for prizes and rewards, but also for regular salaries.

With the increasing competitiveness of sports, the meaning of terms such as 'measuring' or 'recording' shifted, due to their use in the sporting context. Rather than viewing competition as the main feature of sports, some humanist philosophers such as the Czech thinker John Amos Comenius (1592–1670) emphasised its pedagogical capacities. In works such as *Schola ludus seu Encyclopaedia viva* (1656) or *Orbis pictus* (1658), Comenius emphasised that physical activity and game-playing were important not only for physical development, but also for intellectual development (see also Chapter 6.4.1). Games were an integral part of education, permitting children (under a teacher's supervision) to acquire new knowledge faster and more easily. On the other hand, Comenius always saw sport and games as a means of education and relaxation; he never considered them the most important or fulfilling part of life. This contrasted with the competitive or combatant attitude to sports, which emerged in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Conclusion

Sports and leisure activities changed considerably during late medieval and early modern times. Many of them grew from local forms, whose performance and practice were restricted to particular regions, to widespread pastimes, crossing national and cultural borders. The growing interconnection of the world during the early modern period allowed particular musical instruments, theatrical forms, games, and sports to spread and gain popularity across the globe. For the same reason, particular tunes and plays became popular across various countries as well. Physical activities that had their origins in combat and war were increasingly reinvented or reshaped as sporting activities, with the new goal of leisure and recreation instead of conquest. As sports and entertainment became more commercial, these activities were professionalised, with actors and athletes earning their income by providing spectators with their moment of leisure.

Discussion questions

1. How did social status shape the ways people in early modern Europe spent their leisure time?

2. What was the role of economics in the spread of sports and entertainment in early modern Europe?

3. How were early modern leisure practices—such as sports or card games—political?

Suggested reading

Borsay, Peter, *A History of Leisure, The British Experience since 1500* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006).

Burke, Peter, 'The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe', *Past & Present* 146 (1995), 136–150.

Huizinga, Johan, *Homo Ludens: proeve eener bepaling van het spel-element der cultuur* (Haarlem: H. D. Tjeenk Willink, 1938).

Dutton, Richard, *Shakespeare's Theatre: A History* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018).

Huggins, Mike, 'Early Modern Sport', in *The Oxford Handbook of Sports History*, ed. by Robert Edelman and Wayne Wilson (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2017), pp. 113–130.

McClelland, John and Brian Merrilees, eds, *Sport and Culture in Early Modern Europe / Le Sport dans la Civilisation de l'Europe Pré-Moderne* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2009).

Van Der Poel, Dieuwke, Louis P. Grijp and Wim Van Anrooij, eds, *Identity, Intertextuality, and Performance in Early Modern Song Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

7.3.2 Sports and Leisure in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Alejandro Camino, Sylvain Lesage, Tomáš Masař, and Frank Reichherzer

Introduction

Pleasure and amusement, as well as idleness and boredom, are integral experiences and features of human life. Recreation and fun as experiences are not limited to a 'leisure class' or the wealthy. It would be too much to describe 'leisure' as exclusively a modern, European, bourgeois or nineteenth-century invention. But one can argue that in the framework of modernity, 'leisure' acquired a specific (if heavily contested) meaning which increasingly shaped and affected individuals and their societies. In fact, the nineteenth century saw the arrival of what Peter Burke has called the "European system of leisure" and—by 1948—the "right to rest and leisure" was codified under Article 24 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

But how did this system of leisure come into place? What are the core characteristics of *leisure time*? How do people experience and make sense of this time? As this chapter argues, manifold processes came together in the emergence of the leisure system. The first part gives an overview of how leisure emerged during the nineteenth century. In the following section, the urban leisure-scape of nineteenth-century Paris, the relationship between sports and (inter)nationalism, and the professionalisation and commodification of sports all highlight cultural, political and economic aspects of practising and experiencing (leisure) time.

Towards a European Leisure System: Modern Times and the Emergence of 'Leisure'

The widespread use of reliable timekeepers—like watches and clocks—and the commodification of work and personal freedom were overarching forces

that underpinned and enabled the rise of industrial capitalism. This modern, evolving time regime put forward a notion of time as empty and composed of uniform and discrete mechanical units. This new conceptualisation of time could be described as a long-lasting process of rationalisation and differentiation. Other ways of conceptualising time did not vanish, and these different ways of conceptualising time continued to overlap and colour everyday life: the reassembly of time was a long-lasting—sometimes heavily opposed or disputed—process of diffusion, adoption, and amalgamation.

During the nineteenth century, clock-time became dominant and formative, reconfiguring the temporal order of the modern world, even if its impact varied in different places and times. At the dawn of the twentieth century, clock-time emerged in many parts of Europe and around the globe as a powerful symbol and means not only of temporal but also of political and social order. According to English historian E.P. Thompson, in its new, specifically modern understanding, "time orientation" began to interfere with "task orientation." Old, "polychronic" habits were overwhelmed by a newly dominant, "monochronic" framing of human behaviour.

This modern understanding of time broke the day and the week down into discrete and exclusive temporal segments, with different qualities and tasks appropriate to each. The battle-cry of the late nineteenth century moderate working-class movement for "eight hours for work, eight hours for rest and eight hours for what we will" makes this temporal demarcation clear. Employers accepted the separation of time into discrete segments, and fought over the precise length of time assigned to the working day. Here, a fundamental aspect of the modern European leisure system becomes clear: first, leisure is a specific period of time. Second, leisure-time is separate from but strongly connected to work. Third, leisure is a distinct period that differs from breaks, or time dedicated to essential activities such as sleeping and eating. Fourth, even if leisure-time could be imagined as a "realm of freedom" next to the "realm of necessities" (as Karl Marx did in the third volume of *Das Kapital*, published in 1894), the self-determination of time is under siege and colonised from many sides. Setting distinct boundaries between periods of time marks them both. Nevertheless, these boundaries are always challenged and can become blurred. Hence—fifth—the question of how leisure time should be used is contested, with potential competing uses that include idleness as well as education, physical and mental health, consumption, hobbies, or self-improvement. A history of leisure is therefore not only a history of amusement, fun, idleness, the weekend, or a growing leisure industry, but is equally a history of fierce cultural, political, social, and economic struggles over the 'right' or 'proper' use and allocation of time for individual men, women, and children, as well as society as a whole.

Paris and the New Experience of Leisure

In the process of defining leisure and using it as a tool to reshape social hierarchies, cities played a key role. More than any other city, Paris embodied the transformation of leisure practices in Europe in the nineteenth century and constituted a model that both fascinated and provoked imitation. The ambivalent image of Paris as a capital of pleasure dates back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but it became more prominent in the nineteenth century. This idea of Paris as a capital of pleasure was developed in the travel guides that were published from the 1830s onwards—travel guides from Baedeker, Conti, or Joanne—which offered an organised catalogue of places, itineraries, schedules, and activities to experience '*le gai Paris*'.

Time and leisure in Paris were organised around the cityscape and the public spaces created for the enjoyment of urban life. Urban developments that had been taking shape since the seventeenth century were accelerated in the second half of the nineteenth century, when Napoleon III returned from his British exile with the idea of making Paris a festive and monumental capital adorned with green spaces, a project of reconstruction that was undertaken by Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann (1809–1891) and engineer Adolphe Alphand (1817–1891).

It was then that Paris took on its current form, with the construction of major arteries (*boulevards*), the widening of sidewalks, and the creation of promenades, parks, and gardens. This redevelopment of the urban landscape corresponds to a transformation of urban rhythms and sociability in a city that itself became a landscape worth seeing. In the urban planning project that turned the boulevards into open-air lounges, public benches, which had previously been reserved for gardens, were adapted to the city—introducing a new sociability. Installed along the boulevards, they were presented to walkers, allowing them to pause and relax while enjoying a street scene. Beyond the bench, the boulevards, which rethought urban traffic, also offered a new commercial organisation of pleasure and entertainment: public entertainers, organ players, magic lantern artists, acrobats and street vendors attracted dense crowds which could stroll and stop between the benches, kiosks, and advertising columns—an experience embodied by the French writer Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867) in the figure of the '*flâneur*'. But the boulevard was above all the home of cafés—hubs of sociability that have proliferated in Paris since coffee first arrived as an exotic alternative to alcohol in the second half of the seventeenth century. In fine weather, the terraces overflowed onto the pavement, attracting crowds of customers and bystanders. In the café, Parisians and tourists alike could experience the pleasure of not doing anything more than reading and watching passers-by.

In addition to the boulevard, Parisian urban planning was redesigned to include parks and gardens which would provide Parisians with air and help them to 'expel the miasma', i.e. to turn the busy and industrious city into a modern and healthy one. The park did not only bring fresh air to the city, it was also essentially an experience of aesthetic and cultural recreation. Napoleon III had the Bois de Boulogne and Bois de Vincennes developed on the model of Hyde Park in London, but distributed on the western and eastern outskirts of Paris. In the 1850s, the Bois de Boulogne was arranged with viewpoints, around ninety-five kilometres of alleys and pathways, floral gardens, lakes, islands, rivers, and waterfalls. Cafés and restaurants were set up there, promoting the sociability of the boulevard. In addition, there were two horse racetracks (Longchamp, then Auteuil) and a zoo offering a profusion of exotic leisure activities, including camel rides, llama-drawn carts, a Chinese pavilion, and more.

Fig. 1: Béraud, Jean, *The Cycle Chalet in the Bois de Boulogne* (ca. 1900), CC BY 1.0, Paris Musées, https://www.parismuseescollections.paris.fr/fr/musee-carnavalet/oeuvres/le-chalet-du-cycle-au-bois-de-boulogne#infos-principales.

To the east of Paris, the Bois de Vincennes had similar features. But it was the Bois de Boulogne that became the heart of worldly society—it was the place where worldly men and women went to be seen before lunch in town, and then again in the afternoon before drinks on the boulevards and the shows that followed.

Paris, its parks, and its boulevards redefined the experience of pleasure and the sense of urbanity for elites and the middle class. Its model radiated

throughout Europe and attracted masses of tourists, in a city made accessible by a rapidly expanding network of train lines.

Sports and Nationalism

As nationalism grew during the age of the Napoleonic Wars, it became apparent that sport and physical education would be influenced by nationalistic ideas. Public health and physical fitness were seen as one of the major aspects of national welfare. The healthier and fitter the nation was, the better its economic productivity and military capacity would be. In these terms, healthy and fit nations could better compete for resources not only against other European nations but against countries all over the world. Political and economic leaders of states and nations therefore argued in favour of organised sport and physical exercise programmes.

Unlike in Great Britain, where competitive sports clubs were most popular, in continental Europe gymnastics and collective exercising were initially dominant. In contrast to sports like football or rugby, gymnastics was non-competitive. Thus, while developing and strengthening the bodies of individual gymnasts, it also focused firmly on group cooperation and building a spirit of mutual solidarity between team members.

One of the first individuals to realise the potential of physical education in the service of the nation was German pedagogue Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778–1852). In 1810, influenced by nationalist anti-Napoleonic philosophy, Jahn and a group of colleagues founded the Deutscher Bund, a secret organisation which—through organised group exercise—aimed to increase patriotism among German people and prepare them for the battle of national liberation.

For most of the first half of the nineteenth century, Jahn's Deutscher Bund and the German gymnastics movement (*Turnbewegung*), which was based on his ideas, were forbidden in German lands. After the Revolution of 1848, many of the so-called '*Turner*' were forced into exile outside Europe. The majority went to the USA, where their ideas swiftly spread. Jahn's principles for exercise were also adopted in many other European countries and were used to further the formation of physically strong and healthy populations. Jahn's contribution to Germans' physical abilities was first fully recognised after the successful process of unification of Germany in the 1860s and 1870s. The praxis of '*Turnen*' as a popular form of physical education was gradually expanded to all German-speaking areas in Central Europe, but would later be heavily exploited by Nazi ideology.

The idea of collective exercise inspired by Jahn was also instrumental to the formation of national sports movements in other countries. One example is the Czech Sokol organisation, which also became popular among Czech

diasporas around the world and also, to a lesser extent, in other Slavic nations during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Sports movements were significant in stateless nations (i.e. ethnic groups without nation-state sovereignty) not only for their role in strengthening national ideas, but also in some cases for their contribution to clandestine training of the male population for future independence struggles—for instance, the Voimaliitto resistance organisation in Finland during the period of Russification in the early twentieth century.

The end of the nineteenth century saw a growing internationalisation of sport, which created new arenas for national agendas and interests. Among many other emerging international championships and races, a new phenomenon in sport—the modern Olympic movement—appeared. Inspired by growing interest in ancient archaeology and contemporary excavations of ancient Greek Olympia, French pedagogue and historian Baron Pierre de Coubertin (1863–1937) gained enough support from the wider sports community to found the International Olympic Committee in 1894. The first modern Olympic Games took place two years later in Athens, Greece. Even though it took several years to amass a broader public audience, the idea of modern Olympism proved to be vital, and the games' popularity increased after they were hosted in London in 1908.

The Olympic Games also posed an ideal stage for stateless nations. In the pre-1914 Olympiads, members of the Hungarian, Czech, or Norwegian nations (before Norway gained independence from Sweden in 1905)—later joined by Finns and Icelanders—competed in their own national teams. The integration of these nations into the sports community not only affirmed their equality with other national sporting communities, but also enabled them to exhibit their skills and abilities through physical accomplishments.

Medals and records won in international events were often seen as an achievement of the nation as a whole, which helped to create bonds between citizens, as well as stronger national loyalty. Particularly in the case of stateless nations, any success on the international level strengthened a sense of national belonging, while also helping individuals to perceive the nation as a concrete group of fellow countrymen rather than an abstract entity.

Professionalisation and Commodification of Leisure Activities

The boundaries between leisure and sport were blurred in the nineteenth century. Many activities, such as football, rugby, cycling or athletics, were halfway between sport and a purely leisurely pastime. However, in the 1860s some sports began to be professionalised. For that reason, a strong struggle

between amateurism and professionalism took place within and between European countries, with different factions defending different stances on sport and its purposes. On the one hand, amateurs—usually from the upper and middle classes—saw sport as a leisure activity played for personal satisfaction and a love of the game. They played sports intensely, but strove to show that they did not take their outcome too seriously, emphasising effortless achievement and values such as fair play and character-building. There was also an interclass amateur associationism, with highly regulated competitions, in which each association represented a local, regional, or national identity—in these contexts, the result clearly mattered. On the other hand, outside of these amateur competitions, professionals defended the right to compete for cash rewards.

Cycling, which developed as a leisure and sporting pursuit from the 1860s, is a good example of the struggle between amateurism and professionalism. In particular, from the 1890s onwards, cycling engendered transnational flows of ideas and practices, as racers crossed borders with increasing swiftness. However, each European country regulated cycling competitions according to their own nation's prevalent position on the question of amateurism versus professionalism, with different paths emerging. While the cycling associations established in Great Britain, the Netherlands, Spain, and Germany during the early 1880s resolutely adopted amateurism in competitions, in Italy and especially France racing for monetary reward soon became the dominant mode of competition. Countries like Belgium went for a middle ground between the two stances.

Fig. 2: Jules Beau, *Participants of the Paris-Roubaix cycle race before the start* (19 April 1896), Public Domain, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Btv1b8438637g-p030.jpg.

An example of the conflict between amateurism and professionalism within a country is the FA Cup football tournament. The leading competition in Britain, the FA Cup tournament started in 1871 with amateur rules. When the northern clubs with predominantly working-class memberships entered the competition soon after, the FA tried to defend the amateur status of the game against incipient signs of professionalism, such as the regular payments that some working-class teams started to offer to some of their players so that those could focus on playing football. This happened clandestinely, of course, as professionalism was not allowed, for instance by formally providing them with supplementary jobs. In 1883, Blackburn Olympic became the first professional club (and the first from a working-class background) to win the tournament and in 1885 the FA legalised professionalism.

At the end of the nineteenth century, sport was becoming increasingly professionalised and internationalised. There were attempts to institutionalise the rules of various sports on an international scale to ensure that international competitions were staged fairly. For that reason, in the 1900s and 1910s, most major sports created international bodies, from cycling (UCI, 1900) and football (FIFA, 1904), to swimming (FINA, 1908) and athletics (IAAF, 1912). However, these organisations often struggled to assert authority over countries where sports were not dominated by amateurism. Amateurism gradually began to decline from the late nineteenth century onwards, although it still survived for a considerable time in certain sports. For example, while the first modern Olympic Games had taken place in Athens as early as 1896 (without female participants), professionals were excluded from the games until the Seoul Olympics in 1988. Amateurism was also the essence of Rugby Union until 1995, with rugby remaining the last significant international sport to sanction professionalism.

The development of professionalism at the end of the nineteenth century, taking advantage of the modern market society, initiated a quick commodification and commercialisation of sports (as well as its leisure side). However, amateurism also stood fast against commodification: defenders of amateurism felt that if sports were commercialised, victory would become more important than participation, and sports would not remain a friendly activity. Cycling is a perfect illustration of this commodification process. There was a growing international market for bicycles of all kinds, a cross-border flow of technological advances and bicycle manufacturers, and a growing interest from the sporting press in cycling. Newspapers had a principal role in all of these shifts because they advertised technological advances, as well as new models of bicycle, and competitions in other countries. Additionally, another form of leisure was reading sports newspapers, as fans sought to be informed about results of road races, because these competitions, which

covered long distances were (unlike other sports) impossible to watch in person. For this reason, some newspapers became race organisers, with the aim of increasing their sales and earning more money from advertising. In fact, the Tour de France (1903)—which revolutionised competitive racing worldwide—and later, the Tour of Italy (1909) and Tour of Spain (1935), were created, respectively, by the newspapers *L'Auto*, *La Gazzetta dello Sport*, and *Informaciones*, successfully seeking to profit from the commodification and commercialisation of sport.

Conclusion

During the nineteenth century, leisure evolved as a more or less clearly defined concept. Developing in close connection to a reframing of work and labour in an age of industrialisation and modernity, leisure emerged as a discrete unit of time. Leisure was more than non-work, rest, or recreation. The leisure system did not appear overnight in Europe: it was the product of deep social, economic, political, and even cultural transformations. From a macro perspective, the nineteenth century could be seen as a formative period for the modern time regime. But from a micro perspective, we can observe that the modern condition of time, and hence leisure, emerged in different places, different periods, and even different forms. But these diverse manifestations of modern time transcended common categories and binary distinctions of urban/rural or industrial/agrarian.

Leisure and sports are an important part of the history of the nineteenth century. Leisure activities and sports did not take place in a vacuum: leisure was coupled with other political, social, cultural, and economic trends like urban planning and entertainment, social movements and nationalism, professionalism, the commodification of leisure and sports, and much more. Analysing the constitution of modern temporalities from the perspective of leisure and sports poses fundamental questions: how and by whom were leisure and its practices conceptualised—and for what purpose? When and where did specific forms of leisure like sports appear? And, especially, how did people and groups make sense of their (free) time? By asking questions like these, one can identify core mechanisms characterising nineteenth-century societies and advance to a fundamental understanding of the modern world.

Discussion questions

1. What was the role of capitalism in the development of leisure culture in nineteenth-century Europe?

2. How did people and groups make sense of free time? What power structures could be identified in the use of time?

3. Why did sports play such an important role in the development of nationalism in nineteenth-century Europe?

4. What is the role of sport and other leisure activities today? How does it differ from the nineteenth century?

Suggested reading

Borsay, Peter, *A History of Leisure: The British Experience* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006).

Burke, Peter, 'The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe', *Past & Present* 146 (1995), 136–150.

Corbin, Alain, *L'Avènement des loisirs, 1850–1960* (Paris: Aubier, 1995).

Cronin, Mike, *Sport: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Keys, Barbara J., *Globalizing Sport: National Rivalry and International Community in the 1930s* (New Haven: Harvard University Press, 2006).

Llewellyn, Matthew P. and John Gleaves, *The Rise and Fall of Olympic Amateurism*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press 2016).

Schwartz, Vanessa, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-Siècle Paris*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

Thompson, E. P., 'Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism', *Past & Present* 38 (1967), 56–97.

7.3.3 Sports and Leisure in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Pauline Dirven, Irene Mendoza Martín, Frank Reichherzer, and Sylvain Lesage

Introduction

The twentieth century was characterised by a great expansion of 'free' time—time that was not taken up by work or other duties, and was at the disposal of individuals to fill as they pleased. Through changes in legislation and technological developments, ever greater parts of the population in Europe could enjoy this privilege of 'free' time. However, it is uncertain how 'free' people really were in their choices of leisure activities. Throughout the twentieth century, modern pressures and social constraints like self-control or body image shaped the ways that free time was spent in Europe.

Freeing up Time? Modern Experiences of Sport and Leisure in the Twentieth Century

The concept of 'leisure' is an invention of modern times, which began to develop in the mid-nineteenth century. In the twentieth century a greater number of people gained access to free time, which they spent on different types of leisure activities. The democratisation of leisure was made possible when trade unions started to contest the long working hours of the working classes, and gradually achieved the regulation of the day into eight hours of work, eight hours of sleep, and eight hours of free time. As a growing group of people thus gained the opportunity to use their spare hours as they wished, questions arose about how free time could, and should, be spent.

Throughout the twentieth century, one answer to this question was offering people the opportunity to go on holiday. The worker's right to holiday was first made possible by the extension of the welfare state, which gradually came to include paid holidays. In 1936, France established two weeks of paid holiday. In Great Britain, a week's holiday became available in 1938. Thanks to the regulation of working hours and modern means of transportation—such as the railway, and later the car and the plane—the twentieth century saw the gradual evolution of tourism from a unique activity for the elite to a set of practices involving wider circles.

The same evolution occurred in sport. During the nineteenth century, the aristocracy was the social class with the greatest access to sport, and the most popular sports were activities like horse riding. Non-aristocratic classes had access to sport as a form of pastime that became established over time through, for example, the establishment of football matches related to political associations or trade unions. In the case of dance culture, dancing had long been organised along the lines of social class. In the twentieth century, by contrast, it became an integral part of urban nightlife, with people from diverse social backgrounds crossing paths and all doing the same, popular dances.

The increase in free time and the development of new leisure activities were conceived as 'modern'. These changes were not only made possible by modernisation processes, such as the development of new forms of transport, they also offered people a way to make sense of the new epoch in which they were living. In other words, it allowed them to experience and cope with the fast-changing society of the twentieth century.

On the one hand, this development of more free time and more leisure activities could be seen as a progressive development: it was exciting to engage with leisure activities related to new technological developments, gender emancipation and urbanisation. On the other hand, the development of 'free' time could also serve as a reminder of constraint and discipline. How much freedom people actually enjoyed in their 'free' time is debatable. For many people, engaging in these activities functioned as a way to escape from a fast-paced and depersonalised modern society, which was perceived as alienating and overwhelming. In addition, leisure time was controlled and mediated by different entities, such as governments, states, sporting associations, and social organisations, or NGOs. These groups managed to limit when, where, and how society could spend its free time and even, in some cases, prescribed how individuals could move their bodies. As the century went on, people internalised this regulation of leisure time and bodily control and aimed for self-regulation in their leisure activities.

In sum, modern sport and leisure can simultaneously be understood as an experience of freedom and a practice of constraint. In this respect,

the democratisation of leisure activities illustrates the ambiguous nature of modernity and the complex experience of living through the twentieth century.

Modern Sport: Making Sense of Free Time

A city map of Berlin, published in 1928, listed sporting facilities in the city for different kinds of activities—like athletics, cycling, swimming, sailing, field games and many more. In less than twenty years, the number of sports grounds increased from twenty-five before the First World War, to 324. The immense widening of the 'sportscape' was not only a phenomenon of metropolitan areas. Around the 1920s, smaller cities, towns, and even villages constructed play- and sports-grounds. During the twentieth century, playing and even spectating sports became an important phenomenon of mass culture and a leading leisure activity for men and women, old and young, poor and rich, urbanites and countrymen alike. However, sport was more than pure fun or entertainment. The twentieth century saw the developments of the spatialisation and commodification of free time, and the rise of a sports and leisure industry. In modernity, physical exercise became a powerful tool for both making sense of and colonising free time.

Even if sport was often labelled as 'free' leisure activity and dissociated from work, the realm of sport was nonetheless 'utilised' for other purposes. Sport evolved as a powerful biopolitical device (Michel Foucault) through which to administer life and populations. During the first half of the century, physical exercise was seen as a proper means for the 'right' use of time. Play and sport provided an important and effective instrument for the 'improvement' of society. It was seen as a tool to tackle the alleged degenerative effects of industrialised modernity and to cure the ills of modern life, which ranged from unhealthy working conditions to loitering, idleness, and drinking, or other 'deviant' patterns of life and behaviour.

By the nineteenth century, sport became obligatory in schools in many countries across Europe. Social reformers, politicians, and government officials believed that sport could enhance collective moral values and the physical strength of society. Representing a fundamentally modern approach, these policies were implemented in liberal democracies, as well as in fascist, socialist, or authoritarian regimes—even if these modern forms of government differed in their ultimate aims, the ways in which they intervened in personal freedom, and the manners by which they exerted social control. Indeed, in twentieth-century Europe, the striving for betterment and control went hand-in-hand. This was as true for the private sector as it was for governmental organisations. Since the early twentieth century, companies and factories had built sports grounds and used sports as incentives for employees and as means

of control for their life after work. Even the military used sports in peacetime as a body-, mind- and character-building force as well as a means of organised entertainment and restoring order and discipline during the World Wars.

In the late twentieth century, during what has been termed the 'Age of Fitness' (Jürgen Martschukat), sport lost its claim to bettering societies. Forms of regulation shifted from state, government, and civil society to self-regulation. Since the 1970s, sport has addressed the individual. Running in parks, doing aerobics (or later yoga) in front of the television, working out in gyms and other forms of lifestyle sports are bodily practices that focus on the optimisation and enhancement of human capabilities in all aspects of life. For example, someone might see it as a duty to go jogging before or after office hours to obtain a healthy, energetic, and even sexually attractive body. Increasingly, as a leisure activity, individual sport has become work, or a way to work on oneself.
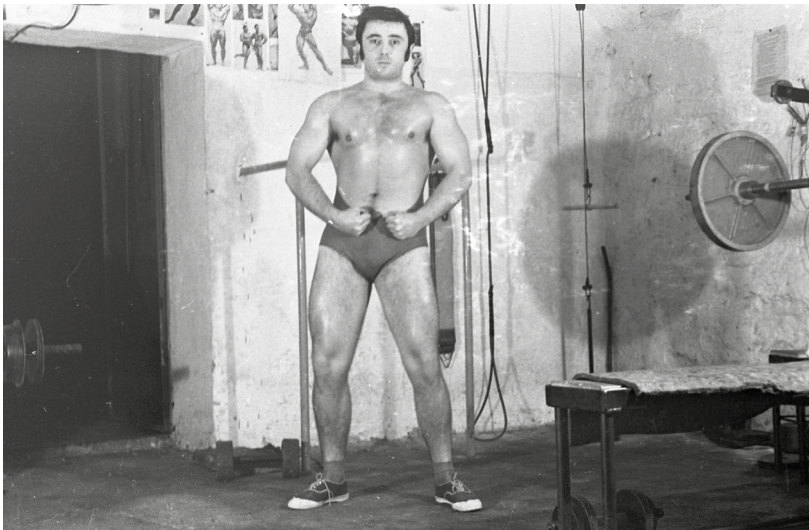
Fig. 1: Tamás Urbán, Bodybuilder in the gym of Vasas Kismotor és Gépgyár Sport Klub, Budapest (1970), Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sneakers,_gym,_dumb-bell,_body_building,_muscle_Fortepan_87118.jpg.

Looking back at sport in the twentieth century, one thing becomes clear: the boundaries between work and leisure—the normative setting of eight hours of work, eight hours of rest and eight hours of 'free time'—were porous, if not fractured. In the modern age, as people strove to achieve an unquestionable order and a functional differentiation of time, free time was never really free—all the more so, because leisure could not exclusively be pleasure. In sports, the ambiguities of the modern condition become apparent. Time was not permitted to be 'empty' or 'wasted', and sport was intended to make sense of time.

Shake, Shimmy, and Twirl: Modern Excitement in the Dutch Interbellum Dancehall

In the early twentieth century, social dances, such as the two-step, the turkey trot, the tango and the Charleston, made their way into Western European ballrooms, restaurants and dancehalls. These 'modern dances', as they were called, had developed in the United States and Latin America (in the case of the tango). To execute them, couples stood in a close embrace and were encouraged to wildly and loosely move around the dancefloor, kicking their legs and shaking their torsos. Especially during the roaring twenties, this new style of dancing became immensely popular in Western European cities such as London, Paris, The Hague, and Berlin. It offered growing groups of young, urban, and increasingly female professionals new and modern ways to use and display their bodies, engage with members of the opposite sex, encounter people of other social classes, and cope with the changes in modern society.

This new experience excited many, but also aroused moral panic. For example, critics in the Netherlands wondered whether these American dances were too superficial for 'intellectual' and 'elegant' Europeans. And there was also the question of whether the assumed sexual nature of the dances morally degraded the dancers. As a social debate developed in the Netherlands about the suitability of American dance culture for Europeans, the dancehall became a space where different experiences of modernity came together and were negotiated.

The dances offered many people a way to cope with the urbanised and industrialised society of the early twentieth century. The quick and wild movements required to execute the dances reflected the rushed and fast-changing way of life in the modern, industrialised metropolis. Simultaneously, a night in the dancehall could be a way for people to escape from modernity. It was a way for people to cope with the individualised industrial mass society in which they were becoming more estranged from each other and from the work they did. It offered people an escape from their daily lives and the opportunity to keep fit or at least to reconnect with their bodies after sitting for long hours at the office. Moreover, some dancers came to dancehalls to overcome the modern feeling of 'estrangement' and argued that dancing could trigger instinctive, primal emotions that allowed people, if only for a moment, to experience a connection to each other.

However, not everyone believed that the dancehall offered a means for coping with modernisation. Cultural critics and religious organisations doubted that such superficial experiences could remedy the loss of interpersonal connection in modern life. Moreover, they were suspicious of 'modern' interactions between men and women on the dance floor.

The debate that followed this critique offered people a platform to make sense of the rapidly changing gender norms and sexual mores during the interbellum. The dancehall was a space where members of the opposite sex from different social backgrounds, unchaperoned, could jointly spend their leisure time. Moral panic arose about this new social arrangement, especially because the African-American dances were considered to be sexual in nature. Influenced by racist ideas, cultural critics, dance teachers and Dutch governmental committees suggested that the people of colour who had developed these dances expressed their perceived 'primitivism' and 'hypersexuality' through the wild movements of jerking torsos, swinging hips, and shuddering shoulders. These officials considered such an inflammatory display of 'primal' and 'sexual instincts' inappropriate for 'modern' Europeans who they believed to be 'civilised' and 'intellectual'. They feared that participation in such movements would arouse dancers' sexual desires and lead to immoral behaviour, such as pregnancies out of wedlock.

An easy and modern remedy to this was found in the regulation of the dancehall and the discipline of dancers. Dance teachers adapted African-American dances, rejecting the wild movements and developing strict guidelines for male-female interactions to allow the dancers to retain a sense of 'elegance and modesty', which they considered to be representative of 'European values'. Moreover, the Dutch government and municipalities started to regulate the space of the dancehall, for example by issuing laws on alcohol consumption and limitations on the maximum number of visitors allowed. Regulated in this way, parents, dance teachers, and governmental organisations believed that the dancehall offered young men and women a modern space for a traditional goal: finding a marriage partner.

However, a growing group of women were not so eager to adapt their behaviour or to conform to this normative ideal. For them, dancing was not a modern means to a traditional end. It was fun. They enjoyed the flirtations, the sensual experience of being held by different men and the ability to move their bodies more freely. This sometimes led to frustrated or even aggressive responses by their male partners. In effect, for women, the dancehall was a place where they simultaneously experienced sexual liberation and attempts to discipline their bodies according to traditional gender ideals.

The dancehall was a modern space *par excellence*. It was an ambiguous place that brought together ideas about 'primitive', 'traditional', and 'modern' bodies. Most importantly, dancing offered people the opportunity to experience both the excitement and the anxieties that the new age offered.

Sea, Sex and Sun: Mass Tourism and the New Geography of Leisure

In the twentieth century, debates about the regulation of time raised the possibility of providing people with a few weeks of time off work, and paid holidays were legally regulated in various European countries. The right to holidays was officially endorsed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 24) adopted by the United Nations in 1948 and, consequently, mass tourism became a reality in Europe. However, the question did not end with simply granting holidays to people: governments and philanthropic movements undertook measures to supervise the masses of people now accessing leisure. For instance, it was the desire to provide healthy, supervised leisure activities for young workers that gave rise to youth hostels in Germany at the turn of the century.

In the 1960s, there was a massification of access to holidays, growth in the tourism industry, and the establishment of leisure mobility as a social norm. This led to a collective and individual increase in tourist consumption, which is reflected in the high share of leisure and holiday expenditure in household budgets. These changes brought about a transformation in transport which redrew the map of European tourism. Individual cars and highways and planes and airports provided access to areas that, in turn, began to progressively specialise in welcoming tourists. Great summer migrations from the northern countries to the new seaside resorts, particularly in Spain, became widespread throughout Europe. If the car allowed and conditioned the considerable tourist boom of the 1950s-1970s, the last decades of the century saw a boom in air travel, which became increasingly accessible for more and more people. The opening of Malaga Airport in 1968 accelerated the urbanisation of the Costa del Sol thanks to charter flights. In addition, from the 1990s onwards, the appearance of low-cost flights further amplified this dynamic to include other parts of Eastern Europe, such as the Dalmatian Coast.

The development of tourism as a mass phenomenon was finally made possible and supervised by major development projects that changed the scale of leisure infrastructures. La Grande-Motte beach resort, on the French Mediterranean Coast, is an example of these logics, between the promotion of a social ideology and regional planning. In contrast to the uncontrolled development of tourist urbanisation on the Côte d'Azur, the French government wanted to take advantage of the desire for holidays to redevelop the Languedoc coastline. In the 1960s, the French government cleaned up the mosquito-infested swamps that lined the beaches and built large resorts capable of absorbing tourist flows, revitalising the regional economy, and

attracting French and foreign tourists to deflect competition from the Costa del Sol. In this respect, the beach can be seen as constructed by local and national governments and companies, working together with different but converging interests: planning urban development, structuring a new sector of touristic service, and shaping new bodies.

Fig. 2: Tourists at the Costa Brava in Spain (1991), CC BY 3.0, Wikimedia, https://commons. wikimedia.org/wiki/File:August_Playa_Sol_Roses_-_Mythos_Spain_Photography_1991_-_ panoramio.jpg.

Compared to the previous century, tourist use of beaches differed not only in the scale of development but also in the affirmation of new bodily practices. The upwardly mobile middle classes imposed faddish new standards of bodily behaviour, such as tanning or semi-nudity. The beach thus appeared as an emancipating space that allowed for separation from the roles of daily life, a blurring of social differences, and a favouring of expressions of individuality. It could be seen as a place of political, social, and economic struggle where, at least temporarily, social identities were erased and transformed.

Conclusion

During the twentieth century, some of the trends of the nineteenth century, such as massive population growth and the development of leisure as a daily activity, became firmly established. As the hours of the day were increasingly allocated to specific functions (sleep, work, and recreation) more people could enter leisure spaces. However, the granting of 'free' time also brought with

it attempts to regulate and control that time from different entities—states, governments, parties, companies, industries, activists, and other agents of civil societies.

The experiences cited above demonstrate the multifaceted nature and ambiguities of modernity. Modernity was a complex phenomenon that provided new freedoms, but also new constraints. As such, historians dealing with sport and other leisure activities should always ask how these 'lands of freedom' were repeatedly framed, constituted, used, colonised, and ordered.

Discussion questions

1. To what extent did organisational, social and cultural pressures and constraints shape the way people filled and experienced their leisure time in the twentieth century? Can you think of others that do not appear in the text?

2. In which ways were holidays a counterpoint from 'normal' life? Why do you think people thought this difference necessary?

3. Can you think of any constraints that shape the way you fill your free time? Are they different to those that were predominant in the twentieth century?

Suggested reading

Bale, John, *Sports Geography* (London: Routledge, 2003).

Borsay, Peter, *A History of Leisure: The British Experience since 1500* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

Campbell, Timothy and Adam Sitze, eds, *Biopolitics: A Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).

Corbin, Alain, *L'avènement des loisirs: 1850–1960* (Paris: Flammarion, 1995).

Kuchenbuch, David, *Pioneering Health in London 1935–2000: The Peckham Experiment* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).

Martschukat, Jürgen, *The Age of Fitness: How the Body Came to Symbolize Success and Achievement* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2021).

Snape, Robert, 'Continuity, Change and Performativity in Leisure: English Folk Dance and Modernity 1900–1939', *Leisure Studies* 28:3 (2009), 297–311.

van Eijnatten, Joris et al., 'Shaping the Discourse on Modernity', *International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity* 1:1 (2013), 3–20.

CHAPTER 7.4
HERITAGE AND MEMORY

7.4.1 Heritage and Memory in Early Modern History (ca. 1500–1800)

Sonja Kleij and Jan Zdichynec

Introduction

Memories are narratives—representations and retellings of events—which provide a shared sense of the past. Through memory, communities (and not just individuals) can remember events, such as the emergence of modern states, or the history of a town or religion. Memory is often a collective and social act constituted in the present by the telling and retelling of stories about the past.

In the early modern period, memory played an important role as a foundation for and a legitimator of laws, privileges, customs, and—on a larger scale—of political and religious systems. Memory played an especially large role in the case of 'confessional history', which sought to explain and affirm the beliefs and attitudes of various religions, such as Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, Calvinism and more. While this understanding of memory implies a certain stability in practices and in forms of one's own religious identity, the use of memory could also be applied as a justification for major changes in such systems: by pointing to a (perceived) continuity with the past, a proposed change could actually be portrayed as a restoration of stability or a return to a lost state. Religious reform movements—not just Protestant, but also in the core of the Catholic Church—saw the solution to contemporary crises in a return to the Golden Age of antiquity and the early Christians. However, the rise of humanism also brought with it a change in the way history was studied, used, and perceived. Relative to medieval historiography, history was now less oriented in a teleological way to transcendent topics and the history of salvation.

There are differences between the early modern historiographies of Western, Southern, and Central Europe. Thus, this chapter presents examples which deal with the past from different areas of Europe—namely England, the Dutch Republic, and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown. They nevertheless display very well these basic tendencies related to memory and its use, though with

certain variations. We take four examples with an emphasis on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and based primarily on written sources, but still informed by an awareness of memory and heritage in material culture and in other media as well, such as visual arts.

Uses of the Past to Improve the Image of a Stigmatised Country: Humanist Histories of the 'Heretic' Czech Lands

The historiography of the Czech Lands, meaning the Lands of the Bohemian Crown (*Corona Regni Bohemiae*), a conglomerate of territories which in the beginning of the sixteenth century included Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Upper and Lower Lusatia, is a good example of how humanist intellectuals dealt with history. The writing of the history of the Czech Lands by humanists between the second half of the fifteenth and the first quarter of the seventeenth centuries was influenced by at least two important factors: first, this part of Central Europe could not build on the classical tradition, because it had not been part of the ancient Roman Empire, which contributed to a sense of inferiority. Second, the Kingdom of Bohemia was discredited in the eyes of Catholic Europe as an 'heretical land' because of the Hussite movement, a Proto-Protestant Christian group that followed the teachings of reformer Jan Hus (1372–1415), while the other Crown lands maintained the Roman Catholic faith. The goal of the humanist intellectuals was thus to improve the country's image and to invent a connection with antiquity. Religious notions were intrinsically bound up with notions of ethnicity, with the religion being particularly prominent in defining the Czech people (who are referred to as the "populus", "natio" or "gens" in period sources) since the late Middle Ages. The basic question was: who were the good, proper Czechs: Catholics or Hussites?

Humanist historians from Bohemia were usually ethnic Czechs of various denominations, including Catholics, members of the Unity of Brethren, a Protestant church founded in the mid-fifteenth century and following more radical streams of Hussitism, as well as Utraquists, the denomination which resulted from Hus' teachings, representing something of a middle ground between the two. From the wealth of historical works written in Bohemia in the humanist era, two examples can demonstrate some of these trends: the work of conservative Utraquist preacher Bohuslav Bílejovský (ca. 1480–1555), published in Nuremberg in 1537 under the title *Kronika česká: způsob víry křesťanské pod obojí způsobou těla a krve Pána Jezu Krista i také pod jednou v sobě obsahuje* (*Czech Chronicle, containing the way of Christian faith of communion under both kinds*), and the similarly titled *Kronika česká* (*Czech Chronicle*), published in 1541, a book on Czech history coming from aristocratic Catholic circles, written by the Catholic priest Václav Hájek of Libočany († 1553).
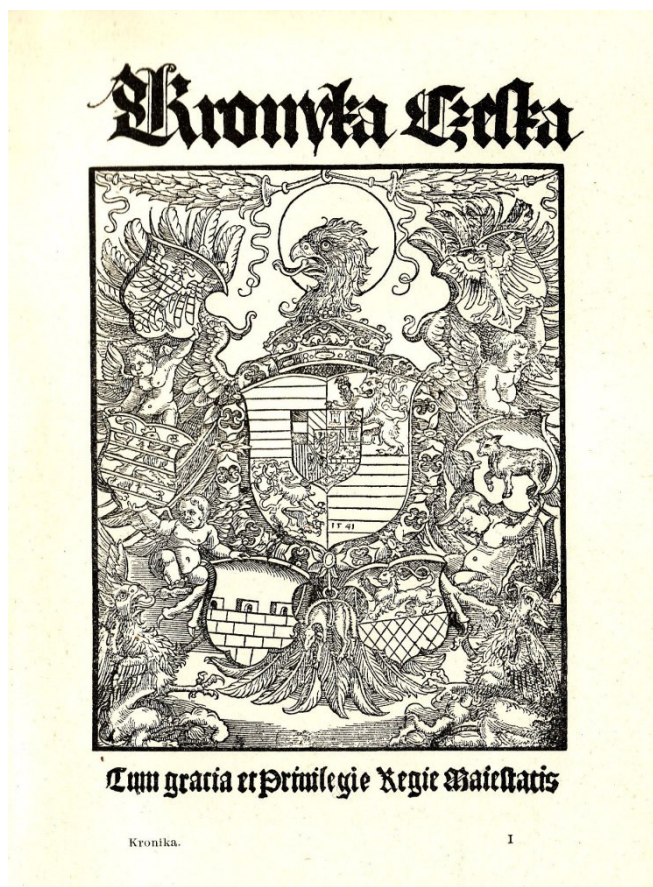
Fig. 1: Václav Hájek, "Hajek Kronyka" (1541), Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hajek_Kronyka.jpg. The frontpage of the Latin manuscript *Kronyka Česká* (1541), which recounts the history of the Czech lands from ancient times to the first quarter of the twelfth century.

Although Bílejovský wrote the history of and stories about Bohemia and the Czechs in the Czech language, his main aim was to present the history of the Holy Communion in both forms—i.e., wine and bread. The Holy Communion of Christ's Body and Blood was considered the most significant belief element of the Czech Utraquist movement. Historically, he regarded it as older and truer than the communion in one kind, with just bread representing the Body of Christ. The work of Bílejovský railed against the Catholics, who served Holy Communion in just one form, but also against a variety of other Christian sects, including the Unity of Brethren, and partly against the Lutherans. Hájek's work, on the other hand, was of a popular character and partly fabricated, his main goal being to "cultivate our Czech homeland". He attempted to rally the Czech people against the perceived belittlement and insults of them by their neighbours and enemies. Hájek was patriotic and anti-German; the religious issue, by contrast, was not so strong in his work.

Bílejovský shows when and how "our predecessors" accepted the Christian faith, and seeks to prove that from the very beginning, these predecessors served the Eucharist in both forms, as they had since the days of St Cyril and Methodius (since the ninth century). The heirs of this tradition are, according to Bílejovský, Utraquists. Bílejovský also argues for a continuity of liturgy in a Slavic language. For Bílejovský, the Holy Eucharist in both forms was first doubted by Germans in Bohemia; at the beginning of the fifteenth century, "the Germans came to Bohemia in tremendously huge numbers", particularly to its university, and "were helping ecclesiastics opposing the truth"—that is, they fought against the Holy Eucharist of the Body and Blood of Christ. The confessional factor was however more important than the national difference for Bílejovský. Many biblical parallels are present here, with a clear comparison of the Czech Hussites and the "people of Israel".

Hájek's different take on the mythic history of pagan Czechs is noteworthy—it was not so important for Bílejovský. Hájek presents it as an integral part of Czech history and discusses it with "exact data". This is why Libuše—the legendary ancestor of the Přemyslid dynasty, which ruled Bohemia, and a purported prophet—is a real Czech duchess for him, the matriarch of the Czech tribe who, according to Hájek's story, actually contributed in the mid-eighth century to the construction of the Czech state, its power structure, its castles and towns, its economy and its legal system. Hájek also disputed the idea that Slavic Bohemia was in fact German land, as Pope Pius II (1405–1464) and many others argued. Hájek reached an interesting compromise, saying that "we Czechs have our land from Germans, and our kin and language from Slovaks," i.e., Slavs.

In Hájek's narration, many events have a clear national (rather than confessional) edge. The Battle of Brůdek in the Šumava Mountains in 1040, in which the Czech duke Břetislav defeated the Roman-German King, is an illustrative example. This event was cherished by many generations of Czech nationalists—throughout history, a victory of Czechs over Germans was hard to find.

Hájek's chronicle influenced many subsequent generations of Czech historians (much more than Bílejovský), although it cannot be labelled official, state historiography, unlike, for example, the *Book of Martyrs* in England, which is discussed in the next section. It is also worth mentioning that his work was translated into German (quite early) in 1596, and it influenced the whole of Europe through the Latin history of Ioannes Dubravius, Bishop of Olomouc, who accepted many of Hájek's theses and stories.

The works of these two authors highlight features of Bohemian historiography of the time, which was not only 'confessional': while religious confrontation was present, the need to 'catch up' with neighbouring Germans

was even stronger. Historiography influenced the identity—or identities—of Czech people in the era, which were not always homogeneous. These particular examples also demonstrate the importance of history-writing in the creation of the image of the Bohemian people in Central Europe.

Uses of the Past to Legitimise Religious Movements: Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* and English Protestants

In order to legitimise the Reformation movement in Europe, it was argued that it was necessary to return to the early days of Christianity. The idea was that by retracing those steps, religious practice could return to Christ's original intentions, before—in the eyes of the Reformers—the Catholic Church had corrupted the faith. According to this logic, Protestantism was the 'true' Christian religion. John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments of these Latter and Perillous Days, Touching Matters of the Church* (published in 1563) was an example of this Protestant interpretation. The book was part of an effort by English Reformers to collect evidence of an unbroken English tradition of ecclesiastical independence from Rome. The aim was to justify the English decision to break with the papacy, which took place between 1534 and 1535 through a series of parliamentary actions. The English break with the papacy famously included Henry VIII (1491–1547) declaring himself the Head of the English Church in 1534.

John Foxe's (ca. 1516–1587) use of the word "monument" in his title indicates his aim to commemorate a "perilous" past and indicates how this book sought to use memory to discuss "matters of the church" in the present. The book is a martyrology, in which Foxe tells the stories of numerous Christian martyrs in European history, but with a special focus on English (proto-)Protestants. *Actes and Monuments* continues the narrative beyond Henry VIII to his successors. Significant space is dedicated to the rule of Mary I (1516–1558), who decided to return England to Catholicism, and who—in so doing—persecuted Protestants, earning herself the grim nickname 'Bloody Mary'. *Actes and Monuments* presents those persecuted as martyrs of the Protestant faith. It further recounts how Mary imprisoned her sister, Elizabeth (1533–1603), for fear that she would head a Protestant rebellion against her and usurp her throne. This fear provided a strong foundation for Elizabeth's Protestant rule, proving that she could have been a martyr for the Protestant cause as well, if fate had not intervened. The book was incredibly popular and became widely known as *Foxe's Book of Martyrs.* As head of the Anglican Church, Queen Elizabeth I even ordered every parish to buy a copy so that it would be available to read as well as use in sermons. By making the book so widely available, the Crown hoped to ensure that as many citizens as possible

would hear this version of events. This was not merely an act of propaganda for the monarchy, but also a means of creating a collective identity for English Protestants, by providing them with a foundation in history.

Uses of the Past to Legitimise Political Movements: Batavians and the Dutch Revolt

The Batavians, a Germanic tribe, were often cited as the ancestors of the Dutch. They revolted against Roman overlords in 69–70 AD, and parallels between this rebellion and the Dutch Revolt were frequently made. Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), a major political thinker of early modern Europe, wrote a book on this subject called *De antiquitate rei publicae Batavicae* (*On the Antiquity of the Batavian Republic*), which was published in 1610. Grotius' aim was to establish continuity between this Germanic tribe and the Dutch Republic to support his argument that the Dutch had been a free people from antiquity onwards. In the first chapter Grotius states: "Now this is the most lawful beginning of a free state: that a people of free origins found it on free soil". In doing so, he links ancestral freedom to both the Dutch people, and their land. Grotius argued that the Dutch were free to elect or remove a sovereign if they did not fulfil their duty to act in the best interests of the people. This was an oft-used justification for the Dutch Revolt: Philip II had not acted in the best interests of the Dutch and therefore they had the right to rebel and even to remove him from power.

Thus, we can argue that the Batavian Rebellion was viewed as having prefigured the Dutch Revolt against Spain. Just as Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* was intended to help create a sense of common identity amongst English Protestants, the Batavian Myth created a sense of common origins for the Dutch Republic. This was expressed in various ways. For example, in 1613 the States General—the main governmental body of the Dutch Republic—bought a series of twelve paintings by Otto van Veen about the Batavian Rebellion to be displayed in the room where its assemblies took place. Displaying such images at this significant political location created a connection between this past rebellion and its present government. The myth was represented in more public spaces as well. Geeraerdt Brandt (1626–85), for example, did so in the theatrical performance he was commissioned to write for the public celebrations in Amsterdam marking the Peace of Münster (1648), which officially ended the war with Spain. The title neatly summarised the piece's argument: *Vertooningen van den Oorlog der Batavieren Tegens de Romainen, vergeleken met one Oorloog tegens Spanje* (*Displays of the War of Batavians against the Romans, Compared with Our War against Spain*). These performances were first put on at the market square, then the Municipal Theatre, and eventually they were printed and sold

as well, allowing for wider dissemination of their argument. These examples demonstrate how memory was used to legitimise major political and religious changes and to create a sense of collective identity, by arguing that these were in fact based on ancient practices and foundations.

Fig. 2: Otto van Veen, "The Batavians Surround the Romans at Vetera" (ca. 1600–1613), Rijksmuseum. nl, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.6800. In 1613, the Dutch parliament (States General) commissioned Otto van Veen to paint twelve paintings depicting the revolt of the Batavians against the Romans in AD 69 and 70. These were displayed in the *Binnenhof*, the central government building in The Hague. In the early years of the Dutch Republic, many compared their own revolt against Spain to the Batavian uprising.

Uses of the Past to Foster Urban and Regional Identities: Upper Lusatian Town Chronicles

The use of the past to create a sense of collective identity in the present can also be seen when examining events in Upper Lusatia, a region of Central Europe, which is today divided between Germany and Poland. In the ninth century, the region was colonised by the Slavic tribe of Milzener and in the tenth century, it became a part of the Holy Roman Empire. The territory ultimately became part of the Bohemian Crown Lands, united through their ruler. The region was dominated by the royal towns of Bautzen, Görlitz, Zittau, Löbau, Lauban and Kamenz. In 1346, these towns formed an alliance called the League of Six Towns (*Hexapolis*).

In terms of the volume and scope of historical works written on the subject, writing on the Upper Lusatian towns compares to that of the most significant cities in the Holy Roman Empire, such as Nuremberg or Augsburg.

The oldest chronicles on the region date from the late Middle Ages, which began in Central Europe after the 1350s. Lauban (today, Lubań in Poland) is an appropriate example. It had about 6,000 inhabitants and was located in an extremely important position on the trade route called the *Via Regia* (Royal Route).

The chronicles of the town flourished in the sixteenth century, with the arrival of a new generation of Protestant, humanist-educated historians. Many of them were members of the municipal administration, others were teachers, or Lutheran clergymen. They sought to craft a history of the town from its earliest days in accounts which stressed patriotism and Christian (especially Lutheran) morals. This concept is clearly demonstrated in the introductory chapters of town chronicles, where authors often referred to well-known historians from the Classical era. Apart from this, the main goal was to celebrate their *Patria* (Fatherland), usually meaning the town where they were born or where they lived. When writing about the Middle Ages, they used older local chronicles as well as a variety of other resources as sources of information.

A number of Upper Lusatian chronicles displayed a traditional, cyclical approach to history and time, summarising events, like epidemics, great fires, executions, floods, tragic deaths, frosts and heatwaves, storms, periods of economic difficulty, and more. In this context, the descriptions of key moments and crises nevertheless challenged more static perceptions of time. These crises of history were decisive points shaping regional historical awareness and identity. We can identify four such key moments in the history of Upper Lusatia from the ancient era through to the seventeenth century: Christianisation and the founding of towns; the towns' evolving relationship with the ruling dynasty; the reflection of the Utraquist movement and the effect of the Hussite Wars; and the Protestant Reformation and the process of consolidation of the new Protestant denominations.

Regional awareness developed among the burgher elites of Lauban. Writers focused on the earliest roots of their towns, and formed the town's identity based on its supposed ancient character, its links to the rulers of Bohemia, the Holy Roman Empire and Brandenburg, its early adoption of Christianity and Lutheranism, and the Slavic presence there. They created a fairly stable record of the town's early history, which was extended up until the nineteenth century, but they very often lacked a clear concept of wider history. More often, these writers described a mere sequence of events, emphasising moments of crisis. Their main goals were to serve as a source of information for the people of their town, as well as to offer them moral guidance.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have discussed how the past was used for building collective memory, shaping identity, political legitimation, and fostering national identity. Through these examples we have sought to show that there were many different ways in which memory could—and did—play a role in early modern society. Here, we have focused primarily on examples from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but such applications of the past continued in the eighteenth century as well: during the Enlightenment, *philosophes* would frequently refer to antiquity to support their arguments and the study of old and rare objects and their history would become a popular practice. While the usage of memory continues to shift and evolve over time, in many ways it continues to fulfill a key function in European society.

Discussion questions

1. Describe the ways in which memory was used to legitimise changes in early modern Europe.

2. Describe the ways in which memory was used to shape identity in early modern Europe.

3. Do you think that the uses of memory described in this text still influence Europe today?

Suggested reading

de Boer, Dick E. H. and Luís Adão da Fonseca, eds, *Historiography and the Shaping of Regional Identity in Europe: Regions in Clio's Looking Glass* (Tournhout: Brepols Publishers, 2020).

Pollmann, Judith, *Memory in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

van der Steen, Jasper, *Memory Wars in the Low Countries, 1566–1700* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

Wiszewski, Przemysław, ed., *Memories in Multi-Ethnic Societies: Cohesion in Multi-Ethnic Societies in Europe from c. 1000 to the Present* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2020).

7.4.2 Heritage and Memory in Modern History (ca. 1800–1900)

Jaroslav Ira, Stéphane Michonneau, and Gábor Sonkoly

Introduction

The use of the past for contemporary purposes was hardly a new phenomenon in the nineteenth century. The period nevertheless saw profound change in how societies related to the past and its tangible and intangible remnants. There was a new sense of radical discontinuity between the past and the present: the past became a distant and distinct sphere, inaccessible and yet open to the curiosity of historians and amateurs alike. A modern historical culture emerged that was marked by widespread interest in the past and its remnants. History provided a reassuring sense of continuity and progression, sanctioning national claims and rooting these claims in the past. History could provide a measure of advancement and a signpost for future development. The past became a matter of public interest and an important foundation for the construction of modern, national identities. No wonder, then, that by the late nineteenth century, the social relevance of history was in evidence virtually everywhere: from the founding of new museums to historically-informed street naming, from school curricula to urban heritage preservation initiatives. This chapter brings this development to the fore, while focusing in particular on the creation of national heritage, the dissemination of national memory in public spaces, and the construction of urban heritage.

The Making of National Heritage

The rise of national heritage was a process during which antiquities and artworks were appropriated and reinterpreted as representing a national past and belonging to a particular nation—rather than belonging to their previous princely, ecclesiastical, noble, or municipal owners. The French Revolution played a seminal role in this process. The initial destruction of cultural artifacts

which had belonged to the feudal aristocracy and the Catholic Church was soon condemned as a counterrevolutionary act of vandalism by Abbé Grégoire, while the plundered symbols of feudalism and the *ancien régime* were reclaimed and redefined as 'national property' created by the genius of the French nation. The transfer of artwork and monuments from the countries occupied by the revolutionary armies to French museums was another formative experience. The calls for the 'repatriation' of monuments after the end of the Napoleonic Wars reflected a growing sense among European cultural elites that the remnants of the past belonged first and foremost to a particular nation, and were bound to their country of origin, even if they embodied common heritage of the European civilisation as well.

Increasingly systematic measures of heritage preservation were prompted by growing concerns about the irreversible loss of monuments or dispersal of national heritage due to acquisition by private collectors. The century thus saw the formation of networks of heritage inspectors, the making of monument registries, and the enactment of protection laws. Measures like these were normally the consequence of both state action and pressure from below, though in some countries (such as France) the state played a stronger role than in other countries (such as Germany) in which voluntary associations and professionals were arguably a more important factor. In the Austrian Empire, for instance, the Imperial and Royal Central Commission for the Study and Preservation of Artistic and Historical Monuments (*K. K. Zentral-Kommission* für *Erforschung und Erhaltung der Kunst- und Historischen Denkmale*) was established in 1850, and was soon followed by a network of state-appointed conservators who oversaw several districts. Still, the system was deemed insufficient, partly because the protection measures were not sufficiently enforced. Some of the Czech advocates of preservation therefore appealed to the Bohemian Diet and the self-governmental bodies of the counties to take initiative in heritage protection as well, particularly in spreading an awareness of it among municipalities and individuals. Many regional and municipal museums, which from the 1880s increased in number throughout the Czech Lands, were instrumental in broadening the protection measures. At the turn of the century, a robust preservationist movement was triggered by the controversial clearance of the historical heart of Prague. This clearance was especially focused on the former Jewish Ghetto, and gave birth to the influential Club for Old Prague, which soon launched branches in other Bohemian cities and towns. In Czech society, as elsewhere in Europe, the preservation of historical monuments and heritage became an integral part of nation-building and an indicator of a country's or a nation's cultural advancement.

Newly formed nations constructed themselves around notions of continuity, rootedness, and cultural distinction. In seeking out such symbols

of continuity, rootedness, and cultural distinction, the attention of cultural elites turned to the medieval past and to vernacular traditions, finding new interest in remnants of Gothic architecture, Celtic monuments, Nordic Sagas and ancient eposes and legends, some of which were fabricated rather than discovered. These relics were used to construct a sense of connection, linking the nationalist movements of the present back to the mythic past. They supplied public historical culture with myths, heroes, and symbolic places, as well as themes for artistic development. For example, the adoption of the medieval Gothic style as a 'national style' by French, English, and German intellectuals shaped the development of architecture in those countries. Others, like Czechs or Poles, looked back to the Renaissance for inspiration, viewing the period as one of national flourishing. Historians crafted influential narratives of the national past, constructing sometimes precarious continuities and depicting major national dramas, constituting 'golden' or 'dark ages' in national history. Often a particular version of the past prevailed and would influence historical culture for several decades. In the Czech case, František Palacký's *Dějiny národu českého v Čechách a v Moravě* (*History of the Czech Nation in Bohemia and Moravia*, 1848–1872) prevailed, though German historians did develop alternative interpretations of Bohemian history. Sometimes, different 'schools' competed for an appropriate narrative. Polish historiography provides one example. Some accounts of Polish history idealised the early modern 'democracy of the nobles' and blamed neighbouring predatory states for the ultimate failure of the Polish state, other accounts emphasised the internal deficiencies of the ill-fated political system of the *Rzeczpospolita*. Other examples of contestation included disputes over the meaning of the Norman invasion in British history or historiographical disputes about the French Revolution.

Nationalism within existing states and the aspirations of stateless nations found expression in the birth of national museums, which stored and studied pieces of national heritage, while also creating powerful representations of national history and the homeland. Many of these museums developed from regionally or imperially focused institutions. The Czech National Museum in Prague, for instance, was founded in 1818 as a patriotic museum for the Kingdom of Bohemia, and only gradually became the principal museum of the Czech nation. Later ethnographic museums joined in representing folk national heritage, for which the open-air Skanzen Museum in Stockholm was a prototype. Expositions of rural and regionally specific cultures, ultimately subordinated to nations, had their parallel in colonial museums in the overseas empires. To be sure, other rationales alongside national ones stood behind the proliferation of museums. Museums of decorative arts appeared in many cities, with the intention of cultivating industrial production, interweaving the tradition of arts and crafts with ambitions of industrial modernity. City

museums bolstered urban pride and local identity, and in some cases—such as the Prague City Museum, founded in 1883—underpinned claims for the historical importance of would-be capitals. But they also stored remnants of the vanishing urban landscapes, with some of them developing in part as a response to the massive destruction of the historical city centre—like the Musée Carnavalet in Paris, which was created in the wake of the renovation of Paris under the French official Georges-Eugène Haussmann (1809–1891).

Heritage and Memory in Public Spaces

Until the late nineteenth century, schooling only played a relatively small part in disseminating a nation's history: novels, pictures, historical paintings, architecture, and theatre were more prominent channels for creating a sense of nationhood. To reinforce the historical perception of the nation, the nineteenth century saw the creation of commemorative rituals to bind the national community together and to propagate a national history for the population as a whole.

Maurice Agulhon has described the years 1870–1940 as being "statue obsessed"—during this period, European cities created numerous sites for public remembrance. But such memorialisation was not merely expressed through statues. Memory took hold of public space in many different forms, with commemorative plaques, street names, pantheons, cemeteries, and more. In many ways, this enabled the deployment of a tangible and concrete applied history, and is indicative of the mania for history which intensified in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

It was in the 1860s that remembrance initiatives grew in scale, developing a new political ritual which was initially restricted to the ranks of the elite. The nationalisation of the masses became a conscious programme to rewrite history through the evocative names of famous battles and great men. In Barcelona, for example, Víctor Balaguer (1824–1901)—a Romantic intellectual—set about naming the streets in the new *Ensanche* districts of the expanding city. He chose to follow a logical progression telling the history of Catalonia in Spain, taking inspiration from a book he had written, the *History of Catalonia and of the Crown of Aragon* (1863). Like his contemporaries, he thought that Catalonia was a prototypical land of freedom, as demonstrated by its anti-centralist tendencies. Catalonia thus acted as a guide for Spanish liberalism, and placed itself at the head of Spain's nationalising agenda. Thus, in the street names of Barcelona, alongside the great men of the seventeenth-century anti-centralist resistance movements, Balaguer included the names of battles against Napoleon, which in his mind symbolised the birth of the Spanish nation.

Fig. 1: Jean-Louis Prieur, *Triumph of Voltaire, 11 July 1791* (1804), Library of Congress, https://www. loc.gov/item/2005691833/. A nineteenth-century print showing the funeral procession moving Voltaire's remains to the Panthéon in Paris from an abbey in Champagne in 1791.

Such coherent programmes are few and far between. Most of the time, the imposition of a singular interpretation of history on to public space sparked intense political conflict. In France, for example, championing the writer and philosopher Voltaire (1694–1778) became a battle cry for those opposing the Church's social and political influence in nineteenth-century society. Between 1814 and 1824, liberals published 1.6 million copies of Voltaire's works to counter the Bourbon Restoration. Between 1841 and 1845, quarrels over the freedom of education fuelled a battle to erect a statue of the philosopher. The project was revived by the famous historian Jules Michelet (1798–1874) in 1867 to bind together opponents of the imperial regime. After the advent of the Third Republic, the centenary of Voltaire's death in 1878 marked a victory for republicans over the Catholic Church. Victor Hugo transformed Voltaire into a prophet of the nineteenth century, and the secular republican camp was unanimous in championing him. In 1879, the boulevard running from the Place de la République to the Place de la Nation in Paris was symbolically renamed for Voltaire. Among those opposed to the philosopher, this apotheosis triggered an equally fervent negative response, in the form of the cult of Joan of Arc. Festivities in her honour, reintroduced under Napoleon, provided King Louis XVIII with a passing opportunity to promote this historical figure. But liberal historians seized upon the moment, and in 1853 Michelet published

Jeanne d'Arc, his famous history of the Maid of Orleans and her holy mission. It was the defeat of the French Army against Germany in 1870 that turned Joan of Arc into a symbol of spiteful patriotism. Four years after being brought to life by Sarah Bernard at the theatre in 1874, Catholicism seized upon the figure of Joan, henceforth presenting her as a saint opposing Marianne, an abstract republican figure adopted by supporters of the Republic since the 1840s. After 1890, clerical and nationalist celebrations of Joan of Arc took root. Between the two wars, she acted as an object of memory for nationalist leagues, and has more recently been taken up by the far right. Mobilising history thus provided a way of unifying one's political camp and marshalling one's troops against a political opponent.

Remembrance policies are by nature conflictual, in that they exploit history for political ends in order to legitimise the present. In the nineteenth century, historians played a leading role in promoting national memory through remembrance. In return, they benefited from the financial and political mobilisation of these projects. They thus set themselves up as prophets of the nation, reinforcing the moral power or authority they claimed to embody. Political authorities were rarely behind such initiatives, which tended to issue from intellectual elites. But in the early twentieth century, remembrance policies expanded, recruiting new sections of the population hitherto indifferent to an insistent worship of the past. A model of mass commemoration emerged, maximising strategies to mobilise crowds as never before, with civic parades, or the use of flags, songs, and gestures, festivals and fêtes, public lectures and plays to trigger the enthusiastic support of ever larger crowds. Nationalist society thus used emotion to extend its hold over the social body, bending it to exercises in commemoration on which it placed excessive value.

In the early twentieth century, established commemorative practices started to decline in certain European societies where political expression was channeled through other efforts, particularly voting rights, strikes, and demonstrations. Equally, the historical sciences started criticising the instrumental use of history for political ends. In democratic societies, the subsiding obsession with statues did not necessarily indicate a decline in commemorative practices. On the contrary, memory played a discrete yet persistent role in most social activities. Mass tourism, for example, paid worship to the past through a passion for heritage and the invention of tradition. But there was no diminishment in authoritarian regimes' love of monuments, which were deployed with ever greater means to mobilise the masses.

The Construction of Urban Heritage

The European city provided a crucial setting for furnishing public places with tokens of nation building and for the political instrumentalisation of public

remembrance. The roles of capitals, big cities, mid-sized cities and small towns varied in these efforts to represent a national story. While capitals became the focal points of national identity thanks to their wealth of cultural institutions (i.e., museums, theatres, opera houses, research universities) and other big cities and regional centres strove to achieve cultural significance through the establishment of similar institutions, small towns gradually began to be perceived as backward and incongruent with modern sensibilities. The construction of nineteenth-century European urban heritage can be understood via the paradox of modernisation—the paradox being that modernisation was a source of development and yet simultaneously generated nostalgia for the traditional world that this very development destroyed. Depending on their level of dynamism, cities acted and were regarded as agents of modernisation, or—conversely—as guardians of traditional values and activities against cultural centralisation and ruthless industrialisation.

A city's dynamism was shaped by the role that it played in urbanisation. Urbanisation as a demographic process affected large, mid-sized, and smaller cities and towns, all of which together gradually constituted an urban hierarchy across Europe, described as *structural urbanisation*. The growing number and size of population concentrations are described as *demographic urbanisation*. As a result of this process in the nineteenth century, modern urban life became an everyday reality for millions of people, as metropolitan life did for dozens of millions of people, whether they lived in cities or not: they got involved in urban behaviour and participated in urban modes of thought and activity—a process which is described as *behavioural urbanisation*. The construction of urban heritage in individual cities was co-determined by the local characteristics of this triple process of urbanisation.

Though the concept of 'soft power' was unknown in the nineteenth century, European powers gradually expanded their economic and military rivalry to the domain of culture and the preservation of monuments. By the last third of the nineteenth century, great powers were expected to possess the necessary expertise and institutions for both national and local as well as international and global monument protection. Urban heritage was integrated into the register of national and local heritage through the demarcation of historic cities or quarters and the protection of noteworthy historical monuments. In an urban context, these monuments were not necessarily Gothic cathedrals or royal palaces, but could simply be typical urban edifices. The preservation of the remains of Crosby Hall in London provides one example. This fine secular example of medieval domestic architecture in London, a rare survivor of the Great Fire of 1666, narrowly escaped destruction as the result of a public campaign initiated in the 1830s and led by antiquarians and men of letters. In the same decade, the first state institutions dedicated to the protection of historical monuments were created in France.

The conceptual scope of urban heritage and its legal definition was debated and refined by prominent nineteenth-century intellectuals, who each had different views about the protection of threatened monuments and buildings and their role in rapidly growing industrial cities. Urban growth was one of the major challenges for nineteenth-century Europe. This challenge led to the gradual institutionalisation of urban planning—the methodology and the discipline of managing urban development and its social consequences. In this context, urban heritage did not seem to be a priority, since it represented the past, the deteriorating urban residue which rational urban planning was seeking to transcend. Nevertheless, the restructuring and redesign of the historic centres of European capitals such as Barcelona, London, Paris, Rome, or Vienna immediately raised objections from intellectuals and locals, who felt nostalgic for and attached to the threatened urban past. This dilemma—stemming from the conflict between urban development and the preservation of urban heritage—elicited different responses from different quarters, which are fundamental for the practice of urban planning even today.

These major responses—embodied in particular theories and practices—can be illustrated by three classic works: John Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice* (London, 1851–1853), Eugène Viollet-le-Duc's *Entretiens sur l'architecture* (Paris, 1858–1872), and Camillo Sitte's *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen* (Vienna, 1889). Ruskin (1819–1900), an English writer and philosopher, regarded the historic city as an organism in which decay, i.e., the eventual destruction of historic buildings and monuments, is acceptable as in nature. Thus, the authenticity of the European city lies in its capacity for survival, development, and reconstruction. In contrast, the French architect Violet-le-Duc (1814–1879) refused reconstruction in the name of historical authenticity and fought for the development both in practice and in theory of monument protection. In his renovation projects—as in the old town of Carcassonne, the City Hall of Narbonne or several medieval cathedrals such as the Notre-Dame of Paris—he placed the urban quarter or monument in a polished and imaginary past, which became a static enclave within the urban environment. The Austrian architect and urban theorist Camillo Sitte (1843–1903) appreciated the irregularity of premodern cities and towns in opposition to the standardised urban spaces imposed by modern and contemporary architecture. Thus, he considered historic European cities as principal reference points for modern urban design, which he felt should not be rejected or separated, but rather integrated within urban development. Though standards of urban heritage protection were subsequently defined to favour renovation over reconstruction and to separate and demarcate the historic urban quarter from the rest of the city, the organic and integrative theories and practices,

partially stemming from Ruskin's and Sitte's approaches, also continue to remain part of the debate on the urban design of historic cities.

Conclusion

The nationalisation of society, rapid and large-scale urbanisation, and the rise of the mass society were among the major processes that shaped uses of the past in the nineteenth century and gave birth to the modern concept and practice of heritage. The idea of national heritage and the instrumental uses of the past to foster national identities became ubiquitous. Urban spaces were essential to the dissemination of public memory, while becoming an object of heritage in itself. To be sure, the nation and the city were not the sole focal points of memory and heritage—regional and local memories and heritage were zealously cultivated by local patriots throughout the nineteenth century, with the *fin-de-siècle*'s crisis of modernity witnessing a new wave of interest across Europe in regional culture and heritage. But even this regionalist movement was nevertheless intrinsically bound up with nationalisation and urbanisation, although it positioned itself as its alternative or adversary.

Discussion questions

1. Describe the role of the French Revolution in the development of heritage and memory in nineteenth-century Europe

2. What was the role of nationalism in the way people remembered and used the past in nineteenth-century Europe?

3. Do the uses of the past of the nineteenth century still influence our heritage and memory today? Why, or why not?

Suggested reading

Agulhon, Maurice, *Les Métamorphoses de Marianne: L'imagerie et la symbolique républicaines de 1914 à nos jours* (Paris: Flammarion, 2001).

Aronsson, Peter and Gabriella Elgenius, eds, *National Museums and Nation-Building in Europe 1750–2010: Mobilization and Legitimacy, Continuity and Change* (London: Routledge, 2015).

Fritzsche, Peter, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

Gerson, Stéphane, *The Pride of Place: Local Memories and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).

Jensen, Lotte, Joep Leerssen, and Marita Mathijsen, eds, *Free Access to the Past: Romanticism, Cultural Heritage, and the Nation* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

Swenson, Astrid, *The Rise of Heritage: Preserving the Past in France, Germany and England, 1789–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Thiesse, Anne-Marie, *The Creation of National Identities: Europe, 18th–20th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2022).

7.4.3 Heritage and Memory in Contemporary History (ca. 1900–2000)

Jaroslav Ira, Gertjan Plets, and Gábor Sonkoly

Introduction

The nineteenth century is often viewed as the birthplace of 'heritage' because of the establishment during this period of so-called GLAM institutions—Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums. As highlighted in the seminal work of British sociologist Tony Bennett, it was in the aftermath of the French Revolution that heritage became a public good used primarily by the state to foster nationalism and modern norms and ideas around the industrial political economy and scientific progress. The birth of the nation state ensured the development of a concerted interest in heritage and memory, not only because of the role it served as a tool for cultural governance, but also because of a growing pressure on the historic environment due to industrialisation and fast-paced modernisation.

At first glance, the twentieth century can seem like a postscript to the previous century when modern ideas first became normalised. However, the post-1918 period is significant in the context of heritage and memory for a number of reasons: first, heritage became further institutionalised and bureaucratised; second, mass tourism and post-1945 development led to a 'heritage boom'; and third, academic interest in heritage and memory grew to such an extent that the new sub-disciplines of heritage and memory became dominant fields in the humanities. In this chapter, we will first broadly outline the growing interest in heritage and memory in and beyond academia. Subsequently, we will zoom in on key domains of heritage and memory practice in Europe in the twentieth century. As Europe witnessed a series of violent conflicts during this period, we will discuss developments in the field of post-conflict memorialisation. Urban heritage developments will also be explored. Finally,

the role of Europe itself in European heritage and memory activities will be explored, with a critical examination of the growth of a European heritage and memory industry.

The Twentieth Century: The Heritage Boom and Birth of New Disciplines

The roots of heritage preservation and its first legislation can be traced back to the three decades before the First World War. Over the course of the twentieth century, heritage became increasingly institutionalised. In the aftermath of the destruction of the First World War, the League of Nations debated international standards in the fields of heritage conservation during times of conflict. Between the two World Wars member nations of the League of Nations agreed on key principles, formulated in the 1935 Roerich Pact, which advocated the creation of a "Red Cross for heritage" in times of conflict. Although the League of Nations was primarily concerned with heritage preservation after conflict, its attention signaled a growing regard for cultural property and a willingness to find institutional protections for heritage. It took another World War and its associated destruction before the principles of the Roerich Pact were translated into the 1954 Hague Convention. This convention was not only signed by most UN nations, it was also ratified and implemented in local laws, putting systematic heritage protection on the political agenda for the first time. Equally important was the foundation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as part of the United Nations system after the Second World War. Through UNESCO, a multitude of conventions encouraging UN member states to implement heritage legislation were drafted. At the same time, a post-war economic boom in Europe resulted in the disappearance of heritage sites at an unprecedented rate. As new housing, transportation infrastructure and industrial zones were developed in and around historical centres, much heritage was threatened by destruction. This triggered both bottom-up calls for heritage protection as well as the adoption of expansive heritage protection laws and monument lists across many states in Europe from the 1960s onward.

This institutionalisation of heritage protection went hand in hand with its bureaucratisation. Although local heritage workshops, often grassroots organisations of amateurs and heritage enthusiasts, continued to be very active and to call for the protection of vernacular and industrial heritage, the proliferation of lists, laws, and paperwork meant that heritage increasingly became an expert-driven practice defined by architects, archaeologists, museologists and conservation specialists. The World Heritage Convention of 1972 drew even more attention to heritage as an issue on international and

national agendas. Although this convention is best known for encouraging nations to work together to protect sites of outstanding universal value as World Heritage Sites, through its ratification on the national level it also enacted a greater institutional awareness of the need for protecting natural and cultural heritage.

Consequently, the heritage field witnessed growth and more concerted bureaucratic attention for heritage tourism. Additionally, a growing awareness of and concern for a rapidly vanishing past contributed to a 'heritage boom'. The growth of mass tourism in Europe, which began in the 1960s, also contributed to the development of a heritage industry. Heritage and culture thus began to accommodate and cater itself to the gaze of the tourist. UNESCO's World Heritage Label, for example, became the most sought-after branding tool for attracting tourists. Although the heritage industry was quite advanced in the capitalist West, in socialist Europe as well, a tourist industry began to develop in the 1960s. In the Soviet Union, for example, the Kremlin invested heavily in the medieval heritage sites of the so-called 'Golden Ring' (which included Moscow, Rostov, Yaroslavl, and Suzdal) to develop their tourism industry.

Fig. 1: Olga Ernst, UNESCO World Heritage plaque at Þingvellir National Park, Iceland. CC BY 4.0, Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:World_Heritage_plaque_ at_%C3%9Eingvellir_National_Park.jpg.

As this heritage boom expanded over the course of the 1970s, postmodern perspectives on culture and identity, and a broader cultural turn in the discipline of history drew attention to the political and cultural nature of heritage and memory. Throughout the 1980s academia started to shift its attention from solely finding solutions for heritage management to also studying how societies and states remember, and how they transform 'things from the past' into culturally meaningful heritage, or even invent traditions. By the end of the 1990s, this research into the power relations which defined heritage policy and the Western hegemonic discourses encoded in many global heritage conventions began to fundamentally change the way heritage was approached.

Many academics called for a more critical stance towards dominant and especially institutionalised heritage practices and canons. The work of Australian heritage scholar Laurajane Smith is particularly important. Smith coined the concept of "Authorized Heritage Discourse", critically questioning the dominance of Western, expert-driven engagements with the past. An awareness of the important role of Western norms and the role of the state in heritage initiatives resulted in the establishment and rapid growth of a new field—Critical Heritage Studies. Equally important within this trend are the discussions around colonial heritage, which intensified throughout the 1990s. Debates around colonial statues and collections in Europe have not only encouraged academics to take a more activist stance, but these discussions have also ensured that the intrinsically Western conceptions of heritage have been challenged.

Such calls within academia for sharing authority between experts and ordinary people or the decolonisation of heritage practices—which, as mentioned above, had their roots in the end of the twentieth century—have also been adopted outside academia during the beginning of the twenty-first century. Over the past decade, museums across Europe have embraced the idea of becoming 'participatory' and creating room for co-curation with citizens and visitors. In archaeology, citizen science is becoming a cornerstone of archaeological resource management. Generally, four decades of critical engagement with the politics of heritage have started to change our engagement with the past in the present. The sector is increasingly aware of the disciplinary dangers intrinsic to heritage and memory work, and there is also increasing attention to difficult pasts and heritages. However, polarisation and the nationalistic mobilisation of history in the public domain still takes place, reminding us that heritage will always remain a political issue. Slowly, the discourse around colonial collections is also changing. The decision of the French president Emanuel Macron to repatriate the so-called 'Benin bronzes', artifacts looted from Benin during the colonial period and held in the Quai

Branly Museum in Paris, was a watershed moment. While these might all be twenty-first century developments, they build on changing paradigms from the late twentieth century.

Urban Heritage

In the first half of the twentieth century, the European history of urban heritage followed the nineteenth-century pattern of the identification of historic urban quarters, towns and centres and the protection of urban monuments. Initially, up to the 1970s, cultural heritage was primarily used to provide a solid basis for different—but primarily national—levels of identity-building endeavours by mobilising both professionals and amateurs through protection projects. During this long process, 'historic centres/towns' were defined and protected all over Europe.

From the perspective of the evolution of urban heritage, two major shifts can be identified. The first major shift saw the globalisation of the concept of cultural heritage as the common culture of humanity, through institutions such as UNESCO. In the second half of the twentieth century, the designation of historic centres and towns spread across Europe and there were extensive debates about the reconstruction of these locales in the aftermath of the Second World War and the rapid urban development of the post-war period. As a result of these debates and discussions about the new professional standards of world heritage, preserved urban entities were re-defined as 'urban heritage sites.'

The second shift started in the 1990s, when cultural heritage had become a global concept, with hundreds of European cities, towns and monuments recognised as World Heritage Sites. Despite the unmistakable success of the world heritage label, the Western conceptualisation of the World Heritage Convention has suffered constant criticism. The expansion of the notion of heritage as both a global and local reference point for identity building also required a flexible concept, which could extend beyond definitions based on the distinction between 'cultural' and 'natural' heritage, as standardised by the World Heritage Convention. This holistic approach to cultural heritage, sought after by heritage professionals, re-defined the principles and the categories of previous heritage interpretations. In the case of urban heritage, this conceptually expanding renewal leads to the concept of the 'heritage city', according to which the city reflects the current holistic concept of heritage (uniting tangible, intangible and natural aspects) and is managed by its community.

The global importance of European urban heritage is indicated by the fact that the three most important standard-setting instruments were formulated in European cities, and these played different roles according to the evolution of this notion of urban heritage. The international regulation of urban

heritage preservation is thought to have started with the Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments in 1931, which was assembled by the participants of the First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, organised by the International Museums Office to provide the first internationally approved norms of the preservation of historic cities and sites. However, this standardisation became systematic only with the Venice Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites of 1964, which was drawn up by conservation professionals to provide an international framework for restoration, thanks to the efforts of UNESCO and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). In 2005, the Vienna Memorandum, named at a conference co-organised by UNESCO and the City of Vienna, introduced a prominent redefinition of the conceptualisation of the historic urban landscape (HUL) approach. Athens was a symbol of ancient European values and Venice was a globally recognised example of a monumental city threatened by nature. However, their roles as cities were rather passive in the wording of the standards. Vienna, on the other hand, contributed actively to the development of the HUL and that of the 'heritage city'.

This conceptual development reveals complex economic, political, and social changes in many European historic centres and quarters, which decreased in importance during the deurbanisation process that took place before the 1970s. These historic areas regained significance from the 1980s onwards as (1) abandoned historic quarters became major touristic destinations; (2) rust belts became trendy residential areas; (3) slumming artisanal quarters became innovative venues of creative industries; (4) gentrification replaced monument protection in many European historic cities, where reconstruction of historic monuments, harshly refuted by the Venice Charter, became possible in the name of identity politics and of the heritage communities of these historic cities and towns.

Memory

If the nineteenth century gave birth to national memories alongside nation-building processes, cultivation of national memories remained no less important in the twentieth century. The new states that emerged after the First World War, such as Czechoslovakia, Hungary, or the Baltic states, deployed an official collective memory to forge national identities, which materialised in new monuments and memorials, names of streets and squares, or the introduction of new state holidays. This undertaking was replicated again after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia in the 1990s, as the successor states (re)invented their pasts. Furthermore,

many regime changes, such as those that oversaw the installation of socialist regimes in Eastern Europe, led to the imposition of ideologically motivated master-narratives in official memory cultures. These master-narratives often intertwined concepts of historical materialism with the existing heroic story of the nation. Thus, for instance, the Hussite Reformation movement of early-fifteenth century Bohemia, the Czech national revival of the nineteenth century, and the ultimate 'victory of the working class' in 1948—i.e., the installation of a communist regime—were interwoven in a continuous narrative that affected the ways history was disseminated in socialist Czechoslovakia, not least in popular genres such as historical movies.

The twentieth century also witnessed the growth of theoretical reflection on how the past has been collectively remembered, and the birth of the new discipline of Memory Studies. As early as the 1920s and 1930s, French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs theorised the social dimension of collective and individual memory. Much later, in the 1980s, another French scholar, Pierre Nora, introduced the concept of *lieux de mémoire* (realms of memory), an inventory of—and reflection on—many topoi in French collective memory, an approach that has been replicated in many other national contexts. Other scholars explored media and mechanisms of cultural memory as a sphere of cultural reproduction. Collective traumas of twentieth-century wars, oppressive regimes, and violent atrocities, as well as the spectre of their being denied or forgotten, were additional impulses for Memory Studies, namely in setting the agenda for how to deal with the difficult past. The Second World War and the Holocaust were in many ways seminal in this respect.

The memory of the Second World War unfolded through several phases, while also following different trajectories in Western and Eastern Europe. Official amnesia, reinforced by Cold War divisions and a clear-cut differentiation between perpetrator and victim countries, prevailed in the West until the 1960s, when questions about the past were raised with new urgency. (West-)German controversies about the unresolved Nazi past were paralleled in other countries, such as Italy and Austria, which strove to integrate periods of authoritarian regimes into their national narratives. In some of the countries that had hitherto styled themselves as victims, the memory of the Second World War became unsettled by questions about collaboration with Nazism and complicity in the persecution of the Jews. In France, for instance, these disturbing issues became known as the "Vichy Syndrome" (Henry Rousso), a strand of thought which argued that the Vichy regime, the common name of the French government after the country's military defeat, was in fact an integral part of a distinct strand of a broader French political and intellectual tradition (antisemitic, conservative) as opposed to a mere aberration imposed by a German military victory.

In Eastern Europe, the official memory of victimhood held firmly until 1989. Only then were some darker aspects uncovered, such as collaboration with Nazi Germany or complicity in the Holocaust. Illustrative are controversies surrounding Polish society's role in the Holocaust. These were reawakened by the book *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland*, published in 2000 by Polish-American historian Jan T. Gross, which dealt with the massacre of Jews in the small town of Jedwabne in 1941, and the recent decision of the Polish legislature to criminalise any mentions of 'Polish concentration camps'. The latter case is just one of many examples of the regulation of memory by law, a controversial but common practice in contemporary Europe. The Ukrainian 'decommunisation laws' adopted in 2015, which banned the use of Nazi and Soviet symbols—while also honouring the paramilitary organisation of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) and the far-right terrorist and politician Stepan Bandera (1909–1959)—are another example. This act led to a massive renaming of streets and statues, but also raised concerns about freedom of speech and the obscuring of UPA atrocities, such as the massacre of Poles in Volhynia in 1943. On the other hand, the fall of the Iron Curtain has facilitated reconciliatory processes across East-West divides, such as the adoption of the *Czech-German Declaration on Mutual Relations and Their Future Development* (1997), in which the signatory states apologised respectively for Nazi crimes and the annexation of the Czechoslovak borderland in 1938, and the forcible expulsion of Sudeten Germans after the war. Many reconciliation measures, such as symbolic gestures—the 'Kniefall von Warschau' (Warsaw genuflection) by German Chancellor Willy Brandt in 1970 being the most iconic case—or bilateral historical committees that worked on acceptable interpretations of the difficult recent past, were often present before 1989.

While facilitating memory debates on a truly European scale, the fall of the Iron Curtain also revealed discrepancies between Western and Eastern dealings with the past, both in content and in form. The Holocaust became the cornerstone of the Western and globalised memory culture, reaching the status of the utmost evil. In contrast, the crimes of Stalinism were compared with other atrocities in European history. Moreover, different parts of Europe have their own particular traumas and memory issues. While the legacy of socialism remains an important issue in many Eastern European countries, the legacy of colonialism has haunted many Western European societies. Coming to terms with the latter has caused more than public debates about how to tackle the colonial past in museums or schools. Recently, this process also included the pulling down of statues of many historical figures who embody or symbolise colonial oppression, a movement that was much less popular in the post-socialist countries, who were reluctant to share self-criticism for

a past they do not considered as 'theirs'. Whereas many Western countries experienced a pluralisation of memory and a return to more affirmative national narratives, in post-socialist countries the new state elites attempted to impose an official version of the memory of communism. This was often centred around the actions of so-called 'totalitarian' regimes, marginalising many private memories that did not fit simple schemes such as repression and resistance, or that were often disregarded as mere nostalgia. Such differences in memory cultures were often described as a contradiction between the 'politics of regret', supposedly typical of Western Europe, and the 'politics of truth', pursued by post-socialist countries and embodied by state-funded institutions for the study of the recent past, such as the Institute of National Memory in Poland or the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes in the Czech Republic. In the context of EU enlargement, Western mnemonic standards became a soft criterion for candidate states, which are evident for instance in the expectations that Turkey discuss and acknowledge the Armenian genocide (1915–1917).

Fig. 2: A plaque in Warsaw commemorating Willy Brandt's genuflection during his visit to a Warsaw Ghetto Uprising memorial in 1970, Public Domain, Wikimedia, Szczebrzeszynski, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Willy_Brandt_Square_02.jpg.

Europeanisation of Memory and Heritage

Recent decades brought efforts to create a collective European memory, either by endorsing common ways of dealing with a divisive past, or by searching for a shared European narrative. While some interwar intellectuals, such as the Austrian-Japanese politician Richard von Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894–1972), could still call on the traditions of antiquity, Christianity, or the Enlightenment to champion projects of pan-European unity, the experience of the Second World War, the Holocaust, and decolonisation undermined efforts to ground European identity on a resolutely positive story. Instead, the focus turned to the painful points of a difficult past, such as colonialism, totalitarian regimes, or forced migrations, with the Second World War and the Holocaust conceived as the negative founding myth of Europe and the 'zero point' of post-war European integration. Some historians followed the *lieux de mémoire* approach and completed inventories of the European realms of memory, drawing up lists of personalities, events, places, or traditions, which reflect European myths, aspirations, values, or traumas, or have shown enduring power to generate diverse meanings, conflicting appropriations, and contradictory views. Most recently, the House of European History, a museum created on the initiative of the European Parliament which opened in 2017 in Brussels, has endeavoured to present a shared European history, while trying to hold space for diverse perspectives and interpretations.

The second half of the twentieth century has also witnessed a Europeanisation of heritage. This entailed the reinterpretation of tangible and intangible remnants of the past as having a distinctively European value, while making heritage a resource that should foster a sense of European identity. The concept of 'European heritage' was coined by the Council of Europe in the European Cultural Convention of 1954 concerning the preservation and accessibility of heritage deemed a shared European treasure. But the major turning point was the crisis of the European integration process in the 1970s, which gave birth to cultural policies of the European Community (later the European Union). Cultural heritage became an operational term for ongoing integration on a cultural basis. Over the past four decades, these cultural policies have manifested in many programmes designed to promote the European dimension of cultural heritage, such as European Heritage Days, the European Capital of Culture, and more recently, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe and the European Heritage Label, which represents a counterpart to UNESCO's World Heritage Label.

Conclusion

Memory and heritage in twentieth-century Europe have fundamentally been shaped by the traumatic events of this period, such as the Second World War, the Holocaust, and Cold War divisions. These experiences have impacted the ways in which European societies deal with the past. The later part of the century has witnessed an unprecedented concern with these legacies. It has seen efforts to overcome divisive moments in European history, but also the instrumentalisation of memory for current political agendas. At the same time, over the course of the twentieth century, heritage and memory in Europe have seen an internationalisation and a Europeanisation. With respect to internationalisation, the reconstruction of the devastated continent gave rise to a new understanding of heritage, with urban heritage sites, historic town centres, and heritage cities growing into important international tourist attractions. This internationalisation was accompanied and shaped by the development of new supranational institutions, such as UNESCO, and the establishment of two new academic disciplines—Heritage Studies and Memory Studies—which have provided a critical framework for making sense of these processes. With respect to Europeanisation, amid ongoing European integration, the later part of the period has seen considerable efforts to cultivate a distinctively European heritage and memory.

Discussion questions

1. Why was there a 'heritage boom' in the second half of the twentieth century?

2. What role did international institutions such as UNESCO play in the development of heritage and memory in twentieth-century Europe?

3. Think of the most important monuments or memorial sites in your home town. How do they fit into this process?

Suggested reading

Bennett, Tony, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995).

Den Boer, Pim et al., eds, *Europäische Erinnerungsorte* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2012).

Graham, Brian, and Peter Howard, 'Heritage and Identity', in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, ed. by Brian Graham and Peter Howard (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 1–15.

Gross, Jan T., *Neighbors: the Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Halbwachs, Maurice and Lewis A. Coser, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

Hicks, Dan, *The Brutish Museums: The Benin Bronzes, Colonial Violence and Cultural Restitution* (London: Pluto Press, 2020).

Nora, Pierre et al., eds, *Les lieux de mémoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984–1992).

Müller, Jan-Werner, ed., *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe: Studies in the Presence of the Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Pakier, Małgorzata and Bo Stråth, eds, *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010).

Patel, Kiran Klaus, *The Cultural Politics of Europe: European Capitals of Culture and European Union since the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 2013).

Smith, Laurajane, *Uses of Heritage* (London: Routledge, 2006).

List of Authors

Almagor, Laura (University of Sheffield)

Barillé, Claire (Université de Lille)

Bartha, Eszter (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Basabe Martínez, Nere (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Behrisch, Lars (Utrecht University)

Bière, Delphine (Université de Lille)

Boter, Corinne (Utrecht University)

Brassart, Laurent (Université de Lille)

Bravo Lozano, Cristina (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Byrappa, Ramachandra (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Camino, Alejandro (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Carmichael, Sarah (Utrecht University)

Cleall, Esme (University of Sheffield)

Conrad, Benjamin (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Csorba, László (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Daniel, Ondřej (Charles University Prague)

Davison, Kate (University of Sheffield)

De Vita, Lorena (Utrecht University)

Dietz, Feike (University of Amsterdam)

Dijkman, Jessica (Utrecht University)

Dirven, Pauline (Utrecht University)

Erdősi, Péter (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Fabian, Sina (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Faure, Justine (Université de Lille)

Galvez-Behar, Gabriel (Université de Lille)

Gottlieb, Julie V (University of Sheffield)

de Graaf, Beatrice (Utrecht University)

Graf, Tobias P. (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Grote, Mathias (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Gyimesi, Zsuzsanna (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

de Haan, Ido (Utrecht University)

Halmos, Károly (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Hansen, Jan (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

van der Hoeven, Rutger (Utrecht University)

Horn, Ildikó (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Huijnen, Pim (Utrecht University)

Huistra, Pieter (Utrecht University)

Hung, Jochen (Utrecht University)

Ira, Jaroslav (Charles University Prague)

Jacobs, Erik (Utrecht University)

Janáč, Jiří (Charles University Prague)

Juterczenka, Sünne (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen)

Karamouzi, Eirini (University of Sheffield)

Kindler, Robert (Freie Universität Berlin)

Kirmse, Stefan B. (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin)

Kleij, Sonja (Radboud University Nijmegen)

Klement, Judit (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Koloh, Gábor (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Kornetis, Kostis (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Koura, Jan (Charles University Prague)

Krász, Lilla (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Křížová, Markéta (Charles University Prague)

Kuipers, Matthijs (Utrecht University)

Kurdi, Krisztina (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Lange, Sophie (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Legay, Marie-Laure (Université de Lille)

Lehmann, Lars (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Leng, Thomas L. (University of Sheffield)

Lenk, Kevin (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Lesage, Sylvain (Université de Lille)

de Lima Grecco, Gabriela (Universidad Complutense de Madrid)

Lutz, Martin (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Malinowski, Mikołaj (University of Groningen)

Marin, Irina (Utrecht University)

Martínez Bermejo, Saúl (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Martykánová, Darina (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Masař, Tomáš (Charles University Prague)

Mátay, Mónika (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Meiss, Marjorie (Université de Lille)

Mendoza Martín, Irene (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Metzler, Gabriele (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Michonneau, Stéphane (Université de Lille)

van Miert, Dirk (Utrecht University)

Moses, Julia (University of Sheffield)

Mostert, Marco (Utrecht University)

Mourits, Rick J. (Radboud University Nijmegen)

Nic Dháibhéid, Caoimhe (University of Sheffield)

Ozavci, Ozan (Utrecht University)

Pan-Montojo, Juan (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Pekelder, Jacco (Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster)

Pérez del Puerto, Ángela (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Permanyer Ugartemendia, Ander (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Pešta, Mikuláš (Charles University Prague)

Plets, Gertjan (Utrecht University)

Prak, Maarten (Utrecht University)

Quirós Rosado, Roberto (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Raben, Remco (Utrecht University)

Rákosník, Jakub (Charles University Prague)

Reichherzer, Frank (Zentrum für Militärgeschichte und Sozialwissenschaften der Bundeswehr, Potsdam)

Reid, Colin (University of Sheffield)

Rodríguez García, Margarita Eva (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Ruberg, Willemijn (Utrecht University)

Sander-Faes, Stephan (University of Bergen)

Schad, Thomas (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Schellekens, Christophe (Utrecht University)

Schmidt, Jürgen (Museum Karl-Marx-Haus, Trier)

Schouten, Steven (Utrecht University)

Schouwenburg, Hans (Utrecht University)

Schwertner, Tonio (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Serrier, Thomas (Université de Lille)

Sidó, Anna (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Simal, Juan Luis (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Sipos, Balázs (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Sonkoly, Gábor (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Stienen, Daniel Benedikt (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Surun, Isabelle (Université de Lille)

Szívós, Erika (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Tamagne, Florence (Université de Lille)

Tarafás, Imre (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Tompkins, Andrew (University of Sheffield)

Vadas, András (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Varga, Zsuzsanna (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Vartija, Devin (Utrecht University)

Veress, Dániel (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

Vojtěchovský, Ondřej (Charles University Prague)

von Tippelskirch, Xenia (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Wagner, Martin (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Wieters, Heike (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Wille, Arndt (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Withington, Phil (University of Sheffield)

Zdichynec, Jan (Charles University Prague)

Zierenberg, Malte (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Index

This book need not end here...

Share

All our books — including the one you have just read — are free to access online so that students, researchers and members of the public who can't afford a printed edition will have access to the same ideas. This title will be accessed online by hundreds of readers each month across the globe: why not share the link so that someone you know is one of them?

This book and additional content is available at:

https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0323

Donate

Open Book Publishers is an award-winning, scholar-led, not-for-profit press making knowledge freely available one book at a time. We don't charge authors to publish with us: instead, our work is supported by our library members and by donations from people who believe that research shouldn't be locked behind paywalls.

Why not join them in freeing knowledge by supporting us: https://www.openbookpublishers.com/support-us

Follow @OpenBookPublish

Read more at the Open Book Publishers **BLOG**

You may also be interested in:

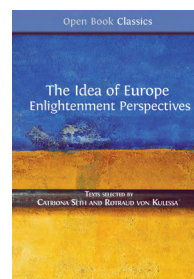**History of International Relations**

A Non-European Perspective

Erik Ringmar

https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0074
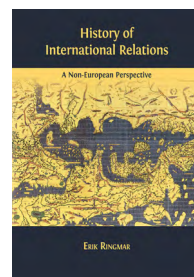
The Idea of Europe

Enlightenment Perspectives

Catriona Seth and Rotraud von Kulessa (eds)

https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0123

Politics and the Environment in Eastern Europe

Eszter Krasznai Kovacs (ed.)

https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0244

THE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

A Multi-Perspective History of Modern Europe, 1500-2000

Edited by Jan Hansen, Jochen Hung, Jaroslav Ira, Judit Klement, Sylvain Lesage, Juan Luis Simal, and Andrew Tompkins

This volume brings together the expertise of nearly a hundred historians from eight European universities to internationalise and diversify the study of modern European history, exploring a grand sweep of time from 1500 to 2000. Offering a valuable corrective to the Anglocentric narratives of previous English-language textbooks, scholars from all over Europe have pooled their knowledge on comparative themes such as identities, cultural encounters, power and citizenship, and economic development to reflect the complexity and heterogeneous nature of the European experience. Rather than another grand narrative, the international author teams offer a multifaceted and rich perspective on the history of the continent of the past 500 years. Each major theme is dissected through three chronological sub-chapters, revealing how major social, political and historical trends manifested themselves in different European settings during the early modern (1500-1800), modern (1800-1900) and contemporary period (1900-2000).

This resource is of utmost relevance to today's history students in the light of ongoing internationalisation strategies for higher education curricula, as it delivers one of the first multi-perspective and truly 'European' analyses of the continent's past. Beyond the provision of historical content, this textbook equips students with the intellectual tools to interrogate prevailing accounts of European history, and enables them to seek out additional perspectives in a bid to further enrich the discipline.

This is the author-approved edition of this Open Access title. As with all Open Book publications, this entire book is available to download for free on the publisher's website. Printed and digital editions, together with supplementary digital material, can also be found at http://www.openbookpublishers.com

Cover image: Wilhelm Gunkel, *Fly Angel Fly* (2019). Cover design by Katy Saunders